



District NEWS

Also available electronically on www.sheffieldmethodist.org

A SPIDER'S-EYE VIEW OF YOUTH CONFERENCE

It wasn't just the noise, but the colour and energy that impressed me. Having sung with such joy and enthusiasm, the applause and cheering which echoed around the hall at the end of every worship song spoke of the commitment these hundred or so young people had for their faith and their God.

In the theme, "Let my people go", the young people recalled how the prime movers in the abolition of slavery had started out as just ordinary people, but people with a mission. They were then reminded how they, as just ordinary folk, could help in the successful removal of modern day forms of slavery if they were so motivated.

But I also sensed in the enthusiasm and commitment of those young people, and the many more they were representing, was a wonderful work of God, of faith set free from traditional bounds and of motivation to make the world into God's Kingdom.

It wasn't just a pleasure, but a privilege and an inspiration to join in worship with those young people at the Youth Conference and be assured that God is on the move, even if we don't always immediately recognise it. But there again, I think that was also the experience of some people in the Christmas story! In acclaiming "Emmanuel" (God with us) we sometimes forget that he is with others and working with them, too. This Christmas let us stand in awe and see, not just what he has done, but what he continues to do.

"The Gen inside this issue"

Youth Conference Worship . . . Messy Church . . .

Sheffield South . . . Planet Earth . . . ".God" . . .
Christian Aid . . . Peace Builders . . .

Sheffield District in Festival & other events

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE DISTRICT

District Network



Christmas Event at Victoria Hall, Sheffield

Friday 7th December from 10-00 am onwards
Coffee will be served from 10 am and there will be various stalls.
A lunch of soup and roll, mince pie and a cup of tea will be served at 12 noon - cost £2. All proceeds from this event go to the World Church Fund.

District Day on Friday 14th March, 2008

District President, Carol Wignell will launch our new Project which will be raising funds for the Women's Skills Centre in Sierre Leone. We have had contact with these Women for some time but this is the first time that we have really raised money for them.

Advance Notice - Network Quiet Days 2008

Wed. and Thurs. 9th and 10th April, at Whirlow Grange and Bawtry Hall.

Salaam Bethlehem

Looking beyond the wall
An evening with the Riding Lights
Theatre Company
Priory Place Methodist Church
(Doncaster)
Friday 21st December 2007, 7.00 pm
St Oswald's Church,
(Sheffield)
Thursday 20th December, 7-30 pm
Tickets £10 (concessions £7) or
groups of 10+ at £6
Tel: 01904 613000
or www.salaambethlehem.com

Doncaster Methodist Circuit invites
you to join them to

Walk Through the Bible

– Old Testament

Saturday 23rd February, 1

0 am to 5-30 pm

Cost £12, booking forms and further
details from Andrew Pottage,

01302 572724, or

www.doncastermethodistcircuit.org.uk
after Christmas

District News is produced quarterly by the Sheffield Methodist District. Please feel free to copy, or cut and paste articles in your magazines as you wish. It is also available on the District web-site - www.sheffieldmethodist.org

For the next issue please direct any contributions and comments by 1st February to:

The District Communications Officer (District News), Rev Arthur Harbottle
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Editorial Apology

The lateness of this edition is hugely regretted. The starting of a new course of study this summer has added pressure to that of normal Circuit ministry, and was then compounded by the demise of my computer, as always happens, just at the wrong time! Some material offered for inclusion has not yet been recovered – so, sorry, if it was yours. This is also the reason for the absence of the “Focus on Action and Enabling Groups” article which was held over from the last issue ... but may now be lost forever!

The compiling of the Newsletter is the one thing which I could happily lose to someone else to allow me more time for the more established work of the DCO. Anyone interested to know more is encouraged contact either myself or the District Chair.

HOPE FOR PLANET EARTH

Hope for planet earth is a national multi-media tour exploring the science behind climate change from a Christian perspective and its impact on people and the planet.

Leading experts from Tearfund, A Rocha, John Ray Initiative, the Faraday Institute and Share Jesus International are working together to create stimulating, educational, interactive and challenging presentations for students and adults.

The nearest venues are Nottingham High School on Thursdays 21st February and Henry Fanshawe School, Dronfield on Thursday 28th February.

Doors open 7 pm, presentation commences at 7-30 pm

Tickets £6 adults, £3 under 18's, from 0845 0944414

CHRISTMAS STAMPS

Rumour, and I hasten to reaffirm that it is only rumour, has it that this year's Christmas stamps (Angels) will only be given out at Post Offices on request following protests from the secular lobby. Whether or not this is true, it would still be worth asking for the Christmas stamps if you are not offered them

SHEFFIELD DISTRICT IN FESTIVAL

With this edition of District news is a copy of the brochure for the **Sheffield District in Festival** at Cliff College on Saturday 24th May 2008.

Please can you publicise this day and encourage people to go – why not bring a coach load from your church/circuit?

This is an All Age Event and we wish to encourage Children and Young People to attend – so please make sure that leaders see the brochure.

Please note the early booking date – 31st January 2008. This is because we need to know numbers in order to plan accordingly, especially for the Children's and Young People's activities.

So

Publicise – Encourage – Plan - Book

And make Sheffield District in Festival a success.

“. God” (that is dot God)

“.God” is a newly formed group which aims to network socially with young Christian adults in Doncaster area who enjoy just spending time together doing activities. We have only been running for a few months now but have found the interest and response from people has been very positive. Due to this we plan to form a new group in the New Year called “. Godextra” which will basically be a cell group for people in the 20's and 30's to explore contemporary faith issues and our response to them in 2008.

“.God” would welcome any new members from any denominational background or people just wanting to join in to meet new people. Our events vary and are held on various nights of the week and at weekends. We realise that people in this age group are the most socially mobile and generally speaking are going through major life changes involving family, friends, careers and getting on the property ladder etc. As a church group we recognise that the Methodist Church needs to reach out to these key generations to ensure that our churches represent all generations.

For more information about future events email Andrew Pottage on robdrew3@hotmail.com or on 01302 572724.

Christmas. Christ with us. It's about so much more than Xmas trappings. It's about unconditional, majestic love that came down to change the world forever. Love that spoke of compassion and liberation for the poor.

How will your church express this love at Christmas?

Valentino is devastated by the loss of five of his nine children to HIV-related illnesses. Like many people in Zambia, he is caring for his family without a sufficient livelihood. But he's determined to be a father to his eight orphaned grandchildren.

Valentino's granddaughter Vestina, 14, (pictured with her grandparents in front of their maize field) is HIV+ and lost both parents to HIV related illnesses. She is visited by volunteer caregivers weekly, who advise her grandfather how best to care for her, and help access vital ART medicines and nutritional supplements that keep her healthy. "Without the help of the carers I would have lost her" says her grandfather, Valentino Phiri. "With this virus I did not believe she would survive."

Christian Aid's partner ADL are providing practical help to make this possible.

£172 could pay the school fees for two orphaned children in Zambia for a year.

Virtual gifts can make a real difference – they're not just presents, they give futures to people in the world's poorest communities.

Get your **congregation** to do their Christmas shopping differently by ordering plenty of catalogues and giving them out. Give them to as many people in your **community** as possible.

Schools find Present Aid captures the imagination, businesses fundraise at Christmas and the town centre is a great place to hand out catalogues... maybe at the same time as you're carol singing!

It is not too late – to order free Present Aid resources and Christmas worship materials from Christian Aid please contact our Yorkshire office:

Christian Aid, Oxford Chambers, Oxford Place, Leeds, LS1 3AX
0113 244 4764 leeds@christian-aid.org

THE MESSY CHURCH

If you ask most people what they think of when you say 'church' – MESSY is not one of them. But at Endcliffe Methodist Church, Ecclesall Rd this is exactly what church will mean to the young families in the area from December.

At Endcliffe they have recognised that the 'traditional' service on a Sunday morning does not fit into the busy lives of many of the young families in the community and are now opening their doors on a Saturday morning for 'Messy Church'. Messy Church is an up and coming concept which is sweeping the country. The worship will take the form of an informal fun session based around a timely religious theme. There will be singing, games, bible stories, music and lots and lots of messy play.

Messy Church will take place once a month, on a Saturday morning 10am – 12noon. The activities are aimed at 0-11 year olds (and their parents/carers). It is a chance to spend some quality time with your children doing some fun different things and getting a bit messy.

Lisa Ashmore and Carolyn Lumb are two young mums behind this messy revolution. With young families of their own, they know what appeals to little ones. They are being supported by the minister at Endcliffe Methodist Church, Rodney Hill, who is very excited about this new concept and hopes that young families will give Messy Church a try. Asked how this idea differs from the traditional Sunday School, Rodney replied,

"We are completely revamping the way we worship with young people, they are not interested in listening to long sermons but that is not the only way to communicate the Christian faith. Each session will have a religious theme, which will be explored through a variety of activities. We want the Saturday morning sessions to be full of noise and creativity. We are planning drama, dressing up, music making and singing and lots of art and craft, which I have been reliably informed, will get a bit messy. Our motto is Fun & Faith."

The first session is a Christmas extravaganza on Saturday 8th December. There will be lots of activities including: - an impromptu nativity with dressing up, making festive biscuits, carol singing (tambourines, wave drums for the younger ones) Christmas tree decoration making (heavy on the glitter) and lots, lots more.

The next sessions will take place:-

- Saturday 26th January - New Beginnings
- Saturday 23rd February - Love
- Saturday 22nd March – Easter

One traditional element of Church that Messy Church will hang onto is at snack time - homemade cake!

For further details please email endcliffe@btinternet.com....

EXCITING EVENTS IN SHEFFIELD SOUTH

Several new ventures are being undertaken in Sheffield South to explore new ways of being church.

- Saturday Night at the Movies – watch and discuss a contemporary film while drinking pop and eating popcorn
- Read and Digest – discuss two books while enjoying brunch – the first one was the latest Harry Potter and Purpose Driven Church, the one in November was Atonement and The Savage Garden
- Radical Bible Study – December's is a new look at the Christmas Story
- Study Day – to introduce the new Lectionary Gospel
- Quiet Days – December's theme will be Winter, other creative days are planned for next year
- Celebration of Ash Wednesday Guatemalan style
- Good Friday Procession of Flowers around the Circuit
- Community Development Discussions
- Faith at Work Workshop
- Lifelong Learning
- Pray For School Day Activities

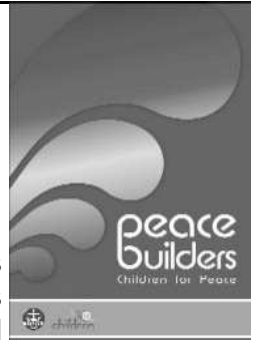
In addition, there are two existing services:

- Praise@8 – a monthly informal, interactive service at 8.00 p.m. on Sundays with worship band, now going on tour around the Circuit with Tour T-shirts
- Healing Touch – a monthly healing service which particularly attracts the unchurched

For more information about any of the above please contact the Circuit Administrator Heather Rotherham on 0114-2489988 or email admin@sheffsthcircuit.f9.co.uk

Peacebuilders

Children for Peace - an exciting interactive and flexible resource for engaging children



Peacebuilders is a brand new project which does exactly that, it is designed to take the Church into its community to explore what practical steps children and adults of all groups might be prepared to take to build peace in the neighbourhood and in the nation. We often teach children about peace, but letting them take a lead could be just what many communities need. The Peacebuilders booklet offers 36 pages of ideas and activities and churches are being encouraged to set up Peacebuilders groups in all their churches and schools. Personal peace, community peace and world peace each receive attention in biblical and practical ways intentionally leading to suggestions for improving ourselves and our world.

The project is a ground-breaking co-operation between The Methodist Church, The United Reformed Church, The Church of North India and the Henry Martyn Institute, Hyderabad. The Indian connection has brought a wealth of experience from its work with the marginalised and communities in conflict.

Ruby Beech, Vice-President Designate of the Methodist Conference, officially launched Peacebuilders at the Methodist Conference in Blackpool, along with a representative from the Church of North India. A focal point of the project is a travelling **Peace Box**, which encourages children and adults to share possibilities for building peace and understanding while engaging with different groups in the community. Our partners in the United Reformed Church sent a Peace Box from their Assembly full of prayers and messages of Peace from the children of the URC Pilots groups. The Peacebox was received at conference by Rev. David Deeks General Secretary.

This resource is free and obtainable from mph www.mph.org.uk.

Peacebuilders has its own website with downloadable supporting material, access to the website is via www.methodistchildren.org.uk or www.peacebuilders.info.