

2007

CHRISTIANITY EXPLORED

We are delighted that around 40 people have signed up for the *Christianity Explored* courses we will be running this autumn - so far! It's not too late to join a group and invite your friends to do the same. We have planned five or six groups, on different days of the week and at different times of day, to try to suit as many people as possible.

- There will be three groups on a **Monday night** in various people's homes to cover the areas of Saltwell, Bensham and Staithes.
- There will be a **Wednesday lunchtime** group at the Church, from 12 noon – 2.00pm, with lunch included!
- There will be either one or two groups on a **Wednesday evening** at the Church, according to demand, beginning at 7.30pm and 8.00pm.

Use the flyers that are available to publicise the courses as widely as possible. Everyone who attends a group will need a Participants Guide, available for £3. You might like to purchase a copy of John Blanchard's excellent book, *Read, Mark, Learn*, which will take through Mark's Gospel in 45 daily portions, with helpful explanatory, life-related notes.

Gillian Gartry in Concert

Tickets are now available for this excellent outreach opportunity. The concert, which is taking place on **Friday 9th November**, is less than five weeks away. So let me encourage you to get your tickets for it as soon as possible. Pray about whom you could bring along with you, and buy some tickets for them – in faith! Last year, for our Geordie Night, we had a turn out of excellent 100 people. It would be good to repeat that number, if not exceed it!

Just 10 and Hope 2008

Around 200 volunteers are being sought to help out at the J John *Just 10* mission meetings next year.

- The **Marshalling Team** will be responsible for car parking, etc.
- The **Stewarding Team** will be responsible for showing people to their seats.
- The **Set Up Team** will be responsible for getting the venue ready before each event.
- The **Resources Team** will be responsible for odd jobs, like moving chairs.
- The **Ministry Team** will be responsible for talking to and praying with people who respond to the message each evening.
- The **Signing Team** will be on hand to serve the deaf and hard of hearing.

Further details are given on the Church Notice Board. If you are able to help, you will need to fill in a **Volunteer's Form** and return it to the organisers by 16th November. Let me know if you would like one. Every application has to be endorsed by a Church Leader.

A **Hope 2008 Road Show** has been organised for our area, to help bring people up to speed with what will be happening next year. It will take place on **Thursday 15th November** at the **Bethany Christian Centre**, Houghton-le-Spring. The programme, which will run from 7.30pm – 10.00pm, is as follows.

- **Welcome & update** on Just 10 and Hope 2008.
- **Workshops:**
 - (1) **The 'Breaking News' Course:** How to deliver a personal witness training course within your small groups structure.
 - (2) **Overview of Hope 2008** including information on regional events, projects and resources available to your Church; plus what's on for young people.
- **Getting the most out of Just 10.** How *Just 10* is going to be promoted in the region. What will happen at Just 10 each night? Plans for response and follow-up.
- **Just10/Hope 2008 Prayer Strategy.** How to get your members praying for all that is going on in 2008.
- **Making Just 10/Hope 2008 work effectively.** Response Team, Follow-up Team, Stewards etc

It would be good if several people from the church attended the Road Show. Let me know if you are interested.

News Round Up

At our recent Church Members' meeting, several important decisions were taken.

- It was a joy to accept **Ray Ward's** application for baptism and church membership.
- We agreed to suspend offerings to our newly established **Welfare Fund**, as we are not any of any at present who meet the criteria for it (not in receipt of any state benefits, not able to work, and with no family to support them). Offerings can be resumed if we become aware of needs in the future.
- We agreed to put part of this year's **Thank Offering** toward the purchase of a video projector and screen for the church, costing around £550. So far, contributions to the Thank Offering have amounted to around £3,600, for which we praise God!
- The fellowship was updated on the progress we are making in bringing **Youth Interims** across to the Church from America, to help with our work amongst young people in Gateshead. We are still targeting January 2008 as our starting date, subject to the availability of suitable candidates. Please make this a matter of prayer, and pray too that the Lord will provide all the necessary finances for the project.
- The go-ahead was given for further vital **roof work** – repairs to a valley gutter over the church hall and completing the renewing of the roof over the games equipment room. We are grateful for a grant of £1,500 from the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust to help cover the cost of this work, which we estimate to be around £6,000 maximum.
- We have commissioned our architect, Michael Drage, to produce a **Quinquennial Report** on the building, which will help us plan future work and be useful to show potential funders.
- We are planning to bring the large **room over the kitchen** into use, so that it can house the extra children from our Thursday Club who have indicated they would like to attend the Sunday School. Jens Rahmann has organised a skip for Fri/Sat 12-13th October to help us dispose of the rubbish up there! Please see him if you can offer him your assistance. We are also planning to dispose of unwanted items in our storage annexe, so that it can be brought into use for our Sunday morning services as, in

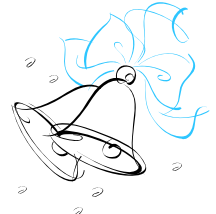
God's goodness, they continue to grow in attendance.

- Prayer was requested for our Monday **Ladies Fellowship** as we seek God's will for its future.
- A further brief discussion was held on the subject of our **membership policy**.

Dates for your Diary

October

- **7.00-9.00pm, Tuesday 9th October** – *Mezzanine Musical night*. Come along with a contribution!
- **Saturday 27th October**. Wedding bells will be ringing for **Chris Hedley and Lucy Parkhouse**. We send them our very best wishes for their special day!



November

- **7.30-9.00pm Friday 9th November** – *Gillian Gartry in Concert*
- **7.00-9.00pm Tuesday 13th November** - *Mezzanine Night* – details to follow
- **7.30pm, Wednesday 21st November** – our *Church Members' Half-Annual General Meeting*. This is the meeting at which we agree our budget for the following year.
- **Sunday 25th November: 5.30pm International Fellowship Tea and 6.30pm Evening Service with Tony and Judith Sykes**, our BMS World Mission link missionaries.

December

- **11.00am-12 noon, Sunday 2nd December: All-Age Advent Service**. This will be a new venture for us, designed to encourage young and old alike to look forward to Christmas and Christ's return as King.
- **7.00-9.00pm Tuesday 11th December** - *Mezzanine Christmas Special*
- **Sunday 23rd December: 11.00am All-Age Christmas Service, and 6.30pm Christmas Carol Service**.

For your Prayers

We extend our prayers and sympathy to Chris Thompson, whose mother was called home to be with the Lord whom she loved and served, at the end of last month.

David Hunt