

intouch



**From heaven high,
the Prince of
Peace is come**



**With us to cry,
to make our world
His home**



Christmas at South Parade: Page 18

As Advent begins and Christmas approaches it's a busy time at South Parade with a long list of concerts, parties, services, meals and other events going on in every part of the church (page 18/23). In all the busyness it's even more important that we find time to speak to God and allow him to speak to us, as Jake Womack reminds us in his timely article on page 27. To reflect on who is at the heart of our Christmas celebrations, start by dwelling on the brilliant words of John Copperwheat's song on page 23. And then make sure you arrive early to get a seat at the ever-popular Candlelit Carol Service on 22 December to hear the song performed live. Happy Christmas!

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Matthew Newman Editor

Informed, Involved, Inspired... Intouch!

Contributions to: magazine@spbc.org.uk or to the Church Office
Deadline for contributions: 17 January 2014
Next edition published: 2 February 2014

From the Ministry Team

Nobody Does It Better

I was trapped into one of those dreadful conversational spirals. Someone had asked an innocent question to which a straightforward answer was given only to be topped by someone else's reminiscences of when they faced this issue... and so it escalated until the last person to contribute implied that he had a scheme to deal with the entire United Nations agenda for world peace (I exaggerate a bit!). You know the kind of thing...

"When I were a lad we ate us teas off newspaper"...

"When I were a lad we 'ad no tea, we just ate newspaper..."

"Going Deeper", our theme for the year can be a bit like that, with each of us consciously or subconsciously vying for position in the spiritual maturity stakes. Spiritual pride is an awful thing, but the bigger trouble is that this kind of thing tends to feed our sense of inadequacy because

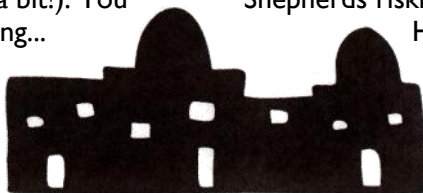
everyone else seems to be so much more spiritual than we are.

Imagine this playing out in the story of Christmas. Who goes the deepest? Elizabeth giving birth in old age? Mary as a pregnant, unmarried teenager? Joseph, challenged to accept a baby that is not his? Strangers travelling hundreds of miles to visit with expensive gifts? Shepherds risking their livelihoods?

Herod throwing away his credibility in a reckless and cruel bout of infanticide? The inn-keeper – centre of attention in a gossip riddled town?

Nobody outdoes Jesus Christ, God come in human form! You can't outdo God in anything. Paul grasped it when he documented the great early Christian hymn to Christ in Philipians 2.

With every entitlement to live as a full member of the Godhead Jesus



*No matter how low are,
he has gone deeper,
to reach underneath
and lift us up*

did not count this something to be snatched at but emptied himself, taking on the true likeness of humanity. As the Message paraphrase puts it, “*God became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood*” (John 1.14). He was obedient even to death. No matter how low we have got, he has gone deeper, to reach underneath and lift us up.

The song *Nobody Does it Better* (famously the title song for the Bond film *The Spy who Loved Me*) begins to catch the mood. Nobody goes deeper than God. Nobody does it better than the One who is the best. In response to this knowledge St Paul writes that we should have an attitude which is the

same as that of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2.5) It’s the attitude that lays down reputation, empties out pretentiousness and grasping at status, however much we may be entitled to it, and surrenders to the will and purposes of our Father.

As Christmas approaches, here’s a challenge. Could you stop trying to be top dog? Could you let go of pride? Could you stop playing spiritual games by trying to be the holiest person around? Could you stop trying to be a saviour to all and let the One who does it the best, the One who went deeper than all of us out of love for us, reach underneath you and lift you up? That’s why he became flesh and lived among us. That’s why they call him Jesus – the One who saves.

Nobody does it better!

Brian



*A child has been born for us.
We have been given a son who will be our ruler.
His names will be
Wonderful Advisor and Mighty God,
Eternal Father and Prince of Peace.*

Isaiah 9.6 (CEV)

Around the Church

Cragg News

The theme for this season is “Going Deeper”. It is a good theme, one we heartily agree with but what does it actually mean? How might we achieve that which touches beneath the surface of our busy lives so that this season’s theme doesn’t pass happily on and become yesterday’s conversation?

Without any intentionality, we have found sermon after sermon pointing us towards prayer, a deeper prayer which isn’t simply reflecting our needs or anxieties but is inviting us into deeper relationship with God. Alongside that, at different levels of church life we have been asking healthy questions together about



We found sermon after sermon pointing us towards a deeper prayer, inviting us into deeper relationship with God

how we celebrate the Lord’s supper. We want this beautiful meal to be so much more than a bolt-on to our services, something we do once a month but rather something we fully engage in, understanding the depth of the symbols: a meal that truly nourishes us.

In November Cragg held what is becoming an annual bonfire with food, fireworks and fun. There was a really good turnout with lots of people bringing along their friends and several of the neighbours coming too. We had homemade soup, hot dogs and loads of cakes, two sets of fireworks, one more gentle and then some at the end to satisfy those of us who like a banger to really go bang (if you know what



Cragg Collection

I mean). There were also treasure hunts, doughnut dangles and apple bobbing. On the theme of going deeper, Nathan learnt that cheating never pays and was suitably dunked into a barrel of water for not playing by the rules.

Members at Cragg have also been involved in setting up a Foodbank in Horsforth which aims to launch in December. We had a special harvest service, where our local community was leafleted and invited to bring gifts for the Foodbank in a time before the service. Several did come and give and some stayed for the service. The Foodbank is being organised by a group from across the Horsforth churches including Sam Newby Wright and will be linked into the network of Trussell Trust foodbanks in Leeds.

Deepening friendships have also been a theme too, with a scrabble



Doughnut Dangle

afternoon, men walks and cycle rides and the women's social all becoming regular features of Cragg community life. The women's group recently made Christmas boxes for the Samaritan Purse.

Duncan Stow

Cragg Mission Community Leadership Team

Reflections on 2013 at Adel

Adel like all the Mission Communities has had a busy year.

We've sought to live out our lives loving, learning about and living our lives for Jesus. We've had many activities – building fellowship, sharing meals and outings together in twos and threes, in our small groups and as a community.

A number of us shared a weekend away together at Thornleigh in Grange over Sands. We were



Easter Flowers
Remembrance Poppies

Birthday Cake
Burton Agnes Hall
Easter Eggs

*We've been loving,
learning about and
living our lives for Jesus*

blessed through being able to spend longer periods of time relaxing together hearing God speak to us. Paul Rockley led our sessions on the theme of grace. It was particularly encouraging that three contacts from Café Church joined us for our weekend away.

We've worshipped together – on Sunday mornings at Adel and from time to time with the other Mission Communities in Headingley. We've been blessed through the year by having members of the community sharing their experiences of mission overseas, in Thailand, Guinea Bissau, and Albania: sometimes it seems like Adel has contacts across the world. At one of the services we asked people to put a flag on a world map naming either countries or people they were praying for and supporting. It was exciting to see the flags covering all the continents.

We've recently relaunched regular prayer opportunities for the whole fellowship in addition to the small groups who meet regularly.

We've had many outreach activities both in Adel and within the wider

Leeds 16 area – leafleting in the local area, prayer walking, services in one of the local sheltered housing complexes, a quiz evening which is well supported by friends from the communities we live in. Many of our members are also part of the ABC coffee shop and Cafe Church teams.

Over the Christmas season we have many activities planned ranging from giving Advent candles to friends and neighbours, to carol services including the Christingle Service, a Christmas Celebration meal, not forgetting to mention various activities with the other churches in Leeds 16.

At Christmas, as throughout the year, we seek opportunities to allow people to develop and use the gifts that God has given them.

The Adel Mission Community send their greetings to all *Intouch* readers, wishing you God's blessings at Christmas and a happy, peaceful 2014.

Margaret Greer

Adel Leadership Team

Madness Reunited

The weekend of 16-17 October played host to the Redmire Reunion 2013! Songs, games and ice down the trousers to name a few of the meeker activities that took place.

Approximately 45 kids gathered together in South Parade to cause as much chaos as possible; or so it seemed for the leaders! This included going above and beyond in enthusiasm in some of the classics: crab football, the shoe throwing game and our beloved bogbrush hockey. Of course all the energy used must have come from somewhere and for the first (and last) time during the weekend, we were gladly greeted with silence as Redmire chicken was served up.

The weekend was greatly enjoyed by everyone, despite a mere four hours sleep, and some kids being smellier than others...

Slightly plagued with fatigue, we boldly marched on and devoured as much of the chocolate fountain as we could manage followed soon after by homemade candy floss (well, we all need a treat sometimes!) The sleepover followed various themes but was based around ideas from the film *Shark Tale*. Group discussions took



Newspaper Ninjas!

place using this and the children were encouraged to respond to questions relating to their ordinary life, this was done to hopefully allow the kids to take something away with them from the weekend and remember how Christians respond to everyday situations.

All in all the couple of days were greatly enjoyed by everyone, despite a mere four hours sleep per person, and some kids being smellier than others. The night was a huge success and no-one can wait for Redmire in May next year!

Emma Hall

Autumn to Christmas at Headingley

Headingley Morning Mission Community have enjoyed a good “autumn term” together. We have been pleased to welcome many visitors and new people to the

morning worship services, and the congregation is now happily diverse with a wide age group, and people from all sorts of different backgrounds.

Student lunches in the Green House every Sunday have provided a both a welcome and introduction to students coming for

the first time and returning. The scent of delicious home-cooked food wafting through the sanctuary has proved somewhat distracting towards the end of the services!

The youth band are now a regular feature of worship life. All-age talks are an increasingly popular feature of the services, thanks to a great group of presenters challenged to produce something good every week. Matthew has written a wonderful song (the “tick tock song”) to remind us that Jesus is with us every moment of the day (it is so catchy you may find that the tune is with you in your head every moment of the day too!)

We participated in The Big Welcome with a successful jazz cafe in the courtyard that hot and sultry afternoon. In amongst these events and those of Vision Sunday regrettably we sidelined Harvest, to the dismay of some members. We intend to set a date for next year well in advance and are considering a suggestion that we challenge the secular aspects of Halloween by reclaiming the pumpkin as a neutral vegetable... anyone want to join us?

We have continued to host prayer breakfasts from time to time on a Saturday with good numbers attending: all are welcome.

Our declared intention is to build community in Christ. In this we have built deeper and closer relationships, and none more so than with some of our members who are suffering greatly. Paul declared that when one part of the body suffers, all suffer and so it has been. But out of this has also come joy and love and grace, and a recognition that the veil between life and death, and earth and heaven is a thin one, and one that Jesus came through for love of us. He came from heaven as a baby, God with us, Emmanuel, and returned to heaven in glory, triumphing over death to prepare a place for us. As we think on the wonder of the birth of Christ, we rejoice with each other, with millions round the world, and with those who have gone before us: *Hark, the herald angels sing “glory to the newborn king. Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”*

Barbara Crosse

Headingley Leadership Team

...informed...

Share news from Around the Church, from your Mission Community, homegroup, cell group, project or meeting by emailing magazine@spbc.org.uk.



Meet Nathan

In October Nathan Shipley began work as our Associate Pastor for Youth and Young Adults. *Intouch* invited him to share about what he's been up to during his first four weeks.

Week 1

I was a little bit too keen on my first day as I arrived at the Headingley site before any other members of the Ministry Team. Fortunately, Richard was on reception and he did an excellent job of welcoming me. The church's first impression is in safe hands!

I spent the first half of the week bringing order to my office - rearranging furniture, moving equipment and sorting out resources. I also uncovered a random box of fireworks!

As part of my induction I had meetings with Brian and Gemma. It was great to be able to meet up with Heather, Kate Churchill and Lawrence too – they each shared about different activities taking place with the youth and young adults.

On my first official Sunday, Amy and



Nathan and Amy

I went to Cragg, before heading to the Student Lunch in Headingley. We rounded off the day at SENT, where Amy felt the baby move for the first time!

Week 2

I began my second week by getting together with Ben Cordy from Leeds Youth Cell Network. I also attended Connect 2013 hosted by Network Leeds, which gave me a sense of what the Church is doing city-wide.

Amy and I headed back to Cambridgeshire on the Wednesday to sign some paperwork and to collect our cats, Top Cat and Dibble. Thankfully, they have settled well in Leeds and are making themselves at home with the Parks!

I also wrote a blog for the church website about SENT's Light Up Headingley initiative, which saw light bulbs delivered to the streets surrounding the church.

We spent our second Sunday morning at Adel, followed by another Student Lunch. At SENT in the evening, we were able to welcome friends and family from near and far as I had my Commissioning Service.

Week 3

At the beginning of week three, I set myself the task of sorting through the filing cabinet in my office and I ended up recycling my own bodyweight in outdated paperwork.

I continued networking, chin-wagging with Poppy from Christian Aid, Jimmy from St Augustine's Church and our very own UCCF hero, Ed Preston!

On Saturday we headed over to Brian and Elsie's for a Ministry Team get-together, which allowed us to get to know the families behind my colleagues. From there we went to a friend's birthday party, at which I won an incredibly intense game of Musical Hats. Rumours that I cheated are completely without merit!

This week ended with Connect on Sunday morning and SENT in the evening.

Week 4

My fourth week began with a walk around Golden Acre Park with Paul, where we discussed arrangements for my own pastoral support.

On 5 November, Amy had her twenty-week scan and we were thrilled to see the baby doing well. (We decided against finding out the

baby's gender!) Whilst at Jimmy's we also popped in to see Stari. In the evening, I was able to go to Cell at the Vipan's, where we each shared our faith journey to date.

I put together a Parental Consent Form for Outtakes (see below), before heading up to Durham to spend a couple of days with Amy's parents.

On the Sunday, we went to Headingley in the morning and stayed around for another scrumptious Student Lunch! It was fantastic to be at SENT for Matt and Tom's baptisms and to hear of the work God has done in their lives.

Nathan Shipley

Associate Pastor for Youth and Young Adults

...inspired...

Nathan's prayer requests:

- Praise God for all those involved formally or informally with the youth and young adults.
- Please pray for discernment as this new role begins to take shape.
- Please pray that there would be no further delays with our house sale and purchase. The sooner we've moved in, the sooner we can invite you round for tea!

Outtakes Youth Drama Group

Aimed
at young people
school years
7 - 11

Only £1 per
week
includes
refreshments

Every Friday
7:30 - 9pm
during term time
Begins first Friday
after half term

Music

Drama

Games

Cakes

At South Parade Baptist Church, Headingley.
For more details contact the church office on
0113 2754989 or email kate@doc-linux.co.uk

BMS World News

A little boy's pain and God's glory

Hazel is just two years old, but she has become her big brother Blessing's eyes.

Blessing was born a healthy baby boy in Zimbabwe, but just before his first birthday he caught meningitis. The illness was severe and it left him blind, partially deaf and epileptic. "We began to ask why God would allow an innocent child to suffer such pain," says his mum, Evelyn.

She felt that God answered her question with these words: "*Neither this man nor his parents sinned,*" said Jesus, "*but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him*" (John 9.1-3).



Blessing and his family

Understanding this, Blessing's parents accepted their son's condition and gave him even more love than they used to. They are unendingly proud of their little boy, but living with disabilities in Zimbabwe is a constant struggle.

Until a few months ago, Blessing and his family had not received any

medical follow-up, help or advice since he was discharged from hospital in 2011.

Thankfully, BMS speech and language therapist in Bulawayo, Lois Ovenden, has recently

befriended Evelyn and helps her every Monday morning.

"We know that God can use the hurt we suffered for the healing of others."

“Disability is often hidden here and there is a lot of stigma attached to having a child who is disabled,” says Lois.

Through their pain, Evelyn and her husband Phillip are an inspiration. “We know that God can use the hurt we suffered for the healing of others,” says Evelyn. “Our desire is to get involved in the ministry of helping others who have suffered the same problems as us to accept their children’s conditions.”

Blessing is four years old and loves to explore. Of course, without being able to see, speak or hear fully, every adventure is wrought with challenges – but there is hope.

Please pray for Blessing and his family as they grow together in faith and their ministry.

Cheap clothes: think before you buy

On 24 April this year 1,127 factory workers lost their lives when the Rana Plaza complex in Dhaka, Bangladesh, collapsed.

A campaign was launched by churches and other organisations, calling on people to ask MPs to make representations to the Bangladeshi government and UK retailers selling Bangladeshi clothes to improve factory working conditions.



Rob [not his real name], a BMS worker seeking to improve factory conditions in Bangladesh, thinks we should question why clothes are so cheap. “If someone decides they want to buy a cheap pair of jeans,” he says, “they should ask themselves – how was this made? Has somebody been exploited?”

Steve Sanderson, BMS Manager for Mission Projects, welcomes the new church campaign. “It is excellent to see that the Church in Bangladesh and in the UK is making a timely and relevant plea on behalf of vulnerable garment workers,” he says.

You can read more on Fashion’s True Cost in the autumn 2013 issue of Engage magazine, or at bmsworldmission.org/engagecatalyst

*I know that you, God, are on the side of victims,
that you care for the rights of the poor.*

Psalm 140.12 (The Message)

Come Prepared

Preaching Themes and Readings

Date	Morning Services	Evening Service
1 December	Acts 1.1-11 <i>The promise of his return</i>	Alternative Advent Event
8 December	Malachi 2.17-3.5 <i>The challenge of his return</i>	Matthew 25.1-13 <i>Waiting for the Master</i>
15 December	Matthew 25.14-30 <i>Payback time</i> <i>(or Nativity service)</i>	Matthew 25.31-46 <i>Sheep or goat?</i>
22 December	Micah 5.2-5a <i>The hope of his coming</i> <i>(or Nativity service)</i>	John 1.1-18 <i>The God whose arrival</i> <i>changes everything</i> Candlelit carols
29 December	Matthew 2.1-12 <i>The search for his coming</i>	Psalms 102.12-28 <i>Another year,</i> <i>the same confidence</i>
5 January 2014	Matthew 2.13-23 <i>Time for a change of plan</i>	James 1.1-18 <i>Solid guidance for a New Year</i>
12 January	Matthew 3.1-12 <i>Straightening the bends</i>	James 1.19-27 <i>Listening AND doing</i>
19 January	Matthew 4.1-11 <i>Resisting the devil</i>	James 2.1-13 <i>Mercy triumphs</i>
26 January	Matthew 4.12-25 <i>When the message</i> <i>goes public</i>	James 2:14-26 <i>Faith and deeds</i>

*You are always the same.
Years cannot change you.*

Psalm 102.27 (CEV) (29 December)

Christmas 2013 at South Parade...

Headingley

Carol Singing at the Arndale Centre Saturday 14 December 11am - 1pm
Nativity Service Sunday 15 December 10.30am
Communion Christmas Eve 11.30pm

Cafe Church, Holt Park

Christmas Lunch Sunday 8 December 1pm
Music for Christmas Sunday 15 December 3pm



Café Church @
Holt Park

Under 5s Headingley

Teddy Praise! Thursday 5 December 1.30- 2.45pm
Christmas Parties 9-11 December 10 - 11.30am
Christingle Fun Tuesday 17 December 10am - noon

Junior Church Christmas Party



Saturday 14 December 3.30 - 5.30pm.
Come along for bouncy castle, activities, games and food.
Bring your friends!

The party this year will raise money for Bliss, in memory of Millie Grace Hestbech French.



Christmas Day

Christmas Celebration for all ages Headingley 10.30am
Offering for St George's Crypt and Caring for Life

Cragg Hill

Carol Service Saturday 21 December 4pm
Nativity Service Sunday 22 December 10.30am



SENT

Alternative Advent Service Sunday 1 December 6.30pm

Adel

LS16 Churches Together Carols Tuesday 17 December 6 -7pm, Holt Park Centre
Community Carol Service Friday 20 December 2.30pm ABC Coffee Shop
Christmas Worship Sunday 22 December 10.30am
Christingle Service Christmas Eve 5pm Adel Primary School, Tile Lane



Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 22 December
6.30 pm
at Headingley

Carols in the Park



Saturday
14 December 4pm
Hall Park, Horsforth (see page 34)

...informed...

These are just some of the highlights of Christmas at South Parade that we know about so far. For more details of these and other events see the noticesheets available weekly in all Mission Communities and at the church website:

www.spbc.org.uk



Prayer Diary



December 2013 - January 2014

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
For those who lived in a land of deep shadows -
light! sunbursts of light!
Isaiah 9.2 (The Message)*

December

Sunday	1	SENT's Alternative Advent service today
Monday	2	Paul Rockley
Tuesday	3	Rooted
Wednesday	4	Stari Gunarathne
Thursday	5	Drop-in at Cragg
Friday	6	Jayne Godfrey
Saturday	7	Brian Nicholls
Sunday	8	Other Baptist churches in Yorkshire and the YBA
Monday	9	Children's Christmas Parties this week
Tuesday	10	Adel Mission Community
Wednesday	11	People who attended the Alpha Course in the autumn
Thursday	12	The Elders
Friday	13	Nathan Shipley
Saturday	14	Churches Together in Headingley, singing at the Arndale Centre today

December		
Sunday	15	Cafe Church in Holt Park meeting today
Monday	16	Church @ Little London
Tuesday	17	Under 5s Christingle Service today
Wednesday	18	Mary Taylor, new YBA Regional Minister
Thursday	19	Headingley Mission Community
Friday	20	Geoff Greer, Church Secretary
Saturday	21	Carol Service at Cragg today
Sunday	22	Visitors to nativity and carol services today
Monday	23	Those who can't get to church on a Sunday any more
Tuesday	24	Adel's Christingle Service
Wednesday	25	<i>Celebrate Immanuel, God With Us</i>
Thursday	26	Local churches of other denominations
Friday	27	Heather McLeen
Saturday	28	The work of Kidz in Kampz
Sunday	29	Adrian Howe, Church Treasurer
Monday	30	Lawrence Cockrill
Tuesday	31	"Jane" in North Africa
January 2014		
Wednesday	1	Pray for yourself and your place within South Parade this year
Thursday	2	ABC Coffee Shop and its volunteers
Friday	3	Steve and Ismay Green
Saturday	4	The Deacons
Sunday	5	Geoff King
Monday	6	The work of Christians Against Poverty
Tuesday	7	TLG volunteers in local schools
Wednesday	8	All the activities that happen in the Green House

Thursday	9	Those in hospital or waiting for treatment
Friday	10	The work with Under 5s
Saturday	11	David and Ann Macfarlane in Italy
Sunday	12	The Outtakes Drama Group
Monday	13	Gemma Eastwood
Tuesday	14	Tim and Delphine Minard
Wednesday	15	SENT Mission Community
Thursday	16	Jane Waites
Friday	17	The CAP centre based at South Parade and Andrew Bedingham
Saturday	18	Barnabas Bunch
Sunday	19	Joanna Project
Monday	20	Cragg Mission Community
Tuesday	21	Ed Preston and his work with UCCF
Wednesday	22	Chris and Dorothy Gnanakan
Thursday	23	The work of St George's Crypt
Friday	24	Your small group leader
Saturday	25	Becky North
Sunday	26	Kate Burkett
Monday	27	The Retired People's Fellowship
Tuesday	28	Jill and Colin Jones and their work in Normandy
Wednesday	29	The work of the church office
Thursday	30	Levi Booth
Friday	31	Connect Mission Community
February		
Saturday	1	Someone you know who doesn't know Jesus

Prayer for the Philippines

Creator God,
This is an awe inspiring planet,
wonderfully but fearfully made.
In Typhoon Haiyan we see again
the vulnerability of humanity
to the full force of nature's energy.

We pray for all those affected:
Those who have lost loved ones,
Those who have had to witness mass burials,
Those who make up the faceless millions affected,
Those who need shelter, water, food, sanitation and medicine.

We pray for the emergency response teams:
For safety and strength as they assess the damage,
For communication lines to be restored,
For a quick and effective response to their findings,
For the resources required to be made available.

We pray for the long term recovery and resilience work:
That the growing intensity of typhoons would not be ignored,
That the erratic nature of recent monsoon rains would be noted,
That this vulnerable nation would not carry the challenge of climate
change alone,
That the international community would respond with generosity
and with justice.

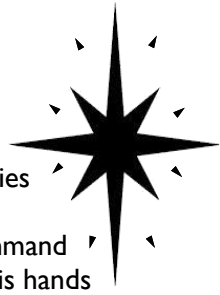
Amen.

From www.christianaid.org.uk

*God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear,
though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.*

From Heaven High

*From heaven high, the Prince of Peace is come
With us to cry, to make our world His home*



Exchanging heaven's glory for the manger where He lies
The wisdom of the ages for an infant's senseless cries
A wretched shivering baby with the world at His command
This child so weak and small who holds creation in His hands

*From heaven high, the Prince of Peace is come
With us to cry, to make our world His home*

Dumb beasts surround the babe who made angelic choirs delight
The world's illumination, smothered in the night
The Word of God struck speechless, the Eternal tied and pinned
Confined in swaddling bands the limbs that strolled upon the wind

*From heaven high, the Prince of Peace is come
With us to cry, to make our world His home*

The tiller breaks the hard ground, the soil entombs the seed
I dive but cannot reach the depths you plumbed to meet my need
The spotless Lamb of God is torn and broken on the tree
His glory fled and gone, my Saviour crucified for me

*From heaven high, the Prince of Peace is come
With us to cry, to make our world His home*

O Lord give me the freedom won by your captivity
The riches of your grace delivered through your poverty
The power your strengthless hands impart, the cure for which you bled
The joy wrung from your broken heart, life unto the dead



*O Lord of Heaven, my Jesus, God and man,
Your all You've given, my all will I return
From earth below
To heaven high*

John Copperwheat

Gnanakan News

Aging Simeon's Hopes and Fears

Chris Gnanakan writes: Warm regards from your mission partners and oh how we long to see you again. We were hoping to be able to come en route one of my trips to Asia this December-January but it will have to wait as relocating into our house in Virginia has taken its time and toll on us. Nevertheless we will seek to make it happen this year. I put together this article on Simeon, one of my favourite Christmas characters. I serve the aging, realising I'm one, whether I like it or not! Our warmest regards to our South Parade "sending" family.



Growing older, I'm learning that practical faith and Christian living doesn't mean I won't have serious doubts. God gives faith as a gift to yielded believers who, like Simeon yearn to see his glory! I've watched some youth act "old and grumpy" yet many a Simeon or Anna "growing old gracefully". Humans age and develop anxiety over the condition of their bodies, yet they've learnt the art of being not just happy, but full of hope amidst fears! Let me comment on some fears that old folk have then on the Hope that Simeon had that first Christmas.

Personal-Physical Fears

The one thing that happens to us the moment we are born, that we can be 100% sure will happen in this life is - decay and death. I've jokingly confessed, "I don't fear death, I just don't want to be there when it happens!" Being elderly has disadvantages and even if you try doing things you once did, you don't quite enjoy them the same way! The Bible does not tell us how old Simeon was: tradition says 113 years. Anna with him was a poor 84

year-old widow. As physical faculties fail, fears set in and health concerns are inevitable!

Social-Financial Fears

Coupled to the inability to earn is the depletion or even disappearance of one's finances. This creates an increasing dependence on others, especially family and loved ones.

Godly, aging, grandparents usually don't want to be a burden to their children or others. This puts them in a precarious ask-or-not-to-ask situation. Older folk feel neglect, loneliness and soon withdraw, panic or lose the will to live! As in Bible times, our society takes advantage of and exploits widows, hence the church is charged to care for them in their distress!

National-Spiritual Fears

For "righteous" Simeon and godly Anna watching the religious affairs of Israel increasingly bringing disgrace with its pharisaic religion must have been painful. This disobedient nation had taken God out of their system and was under Rome's rule and oppression. Moreover God, their King, had not spoken to "His people" for some 400 years! These old folk must have wondered, "Does our nation have any future and hope?!" Elderly believers I meet in the USA have such lurking fears. Simeon's response is instructive:

Old Simeon's earnest expectation was not in human wisdom or strength. It was in the Gospel – God's gracious gift revealed in Christ, the new-born King!

Old Simeon surely had "an evangelical theology of hope!" His earnest expectation was not in human wisdom or strength. It was in the Gospel – God's gracious gift revealed in Christ, the new born King! Note his hope amidst all his fears:

- **Perception:** We with eyes need Simeon's spiritual insight and vision of hope. Physically there wasn't much to differentiate the baby, yet the Spirit revealed truth and Simeon in faith obeyed so his eyes did see God's salvation in Christ. He recognised Mary was there for her purification, yet her presentation of the child was nothing else than God's offer of salvation for "all nations".
- **Reception:** Simeon took this baby in his arms and saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus! This was his defining moment, Israel's red-letter day and the

focal point of world history. At last God had spoken His final Word – Jesus, the believer’s only hope of glory! Simeon’s life-long quest now realised in receiving God’s salvation, he asks to be dismissed from service in peace!

- **Adoration:** Simeon had waited long enough: now in worship he witnesses to so great a salvation. His prophetic song brought clarity and confirmation to Christ’s earthly parents, Israel, the Gentiles and was joy to the world. Simeon’s and our Lord takes away sin and one day all sufferings but importantly Christ came to bring salvation. It’s Life and Health and Peace!

I’m eager to grow old gracefully. Simeon shows us how! We must be **insightful:** perceive how God has worked and receive his “great salvation” before death! As we age

let’s be **graceful:** full of gratitude for today, a gift and lease of life. We are not just getting older we are nearer home (who’s afraid of going “home”? unless in trouble with “Dad”!) Finally, like Simeon or Anna in the temple, stay **useful:** serving God assured of strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow!

I wonder what eulogies were said at Simeon’s funeral service? His was a **life of faith** “just and devout” with a **living hope** “waiting for the consolation of Israel” and amidst fears of aging, he had a constant, loving companion: “the Holy Spirit was on him.” What an epitaph to have!

Chris Gnanakan

Executive Director of OTAN (Outreach To Asia Nationals)

...involved...

Find out more about OTAN, follow Chris’s news and keep your prayers for his work informed by visiting Chris’s website at www.chrisgnanakan.com

“Lord, I am your servant, and now I can die in peace, because you have kept your promise to me. With my own eyes I have seen what you have done to save your people, and foreign nations will also see this. Your mighty power is a light for all nations, and it will bring honour to your people Israel.”

Luke 2.29-32 (CEV)

Step of Faith

Devotional Tetris

Beginning a new course of work and studies prompted Jake Womack to look at his devotional life and consider how he could fit God into a busy schedule. We asked him to share his thoughts with the readers of *Intouch*.

Do you have no time for God, or are you not making time for God?

When the proposition was advanced that I ought to write a short article for you all in this magazine, the first thing that came to mind was, “and you think I have time for that?” To provide you with a little

context for such a sharp and sarcastic mental reaction I shall briefly outline my circumstances.

For three years I have been a happy student sailing along the gentle sea of a BA in Religious Studies.

Oh how my life was good, at least, in that I had more time than I knew what to do with. As it happened, I judged that the best use of many of my spare hours would be lengthy sleep-ins, extended sofa sittings and put more generally, all around lazing about. My life was one big pyjama party! It goes without saying of course that there was plenty of time for God too, well, there would have been if I had been bothered to invite him around.

As a slightly more mature Christian now, though I still require a great deal of development, I have far less time. This is because in the month of September I began the dreaded PGCE. For those of you who are not acquainted with this less than amiable acronym, it stands for “Post Graduate Certificate in Education”.



Yes, I had embarked on a teacher training course. Now behind the glossy tabloid surface of those rather misleading “lazy teacher” bashing headlines, such a profession requires a huge commitment of time and energy. As I am sure you can guess, this came as a shock to me, the young adult who knew not the hours before half past nine late in the morning (half twelve on weekends).

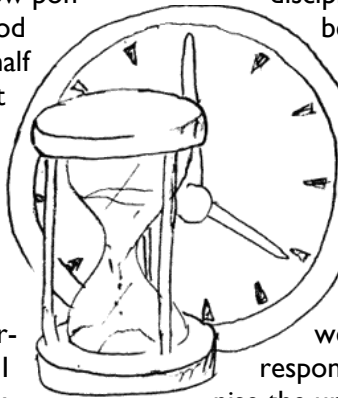
We need to conclude this game of devotional Tetris and strive to imitate Christ and make time for the Father in our lives

As a result of my circumstances, and in conjunction with the faith that I had discovered late in those sleepy university years, I now pondered on how I could fit God into my life. I now rise at half past six and return home at six in the evening. Quite often I arrive home later, but either way I am often awake and working into the small hours planning lessons and marking work. Now, I have never been particularly good at Tetris but I am sure you can picture my dilemma. How could I possibly fit God into the time that I have?

In rejoinder to this question I reflected that even when I had time for God I choose to devote it to other things. Now, though my circumstances are different, the situation remains by all spiritually derived measures exactly the same. A new question then came to mind: is it that I do not have time for God, or is it that I do not give my time to God?

On posing that question I ruminated that I was like this disciples in Matthew 26.36-45. While Christ was beckoning me, I was failing to respond to his call. The final verse in this passage reads “*Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners.*”

In this excerpt Jesus is saying to the disciples “I called you, I beckoned you, I wanted you with me but now my time has come”. To put this into perspective, our time is short. Jesus pleads that we join with him in prayer, but we consistently fail to respond; we do not recognise the urgency that corresponds with the short time we have on this Earth.



Now, let me pose my earlier question again, is it that you do not have time for God, or is it that you are not making time for God? Just as Jesus was whisked away to his death, so too will our earthly lives come to a close. The real question is however, will we, as Jesus, prepare for that time through our devotion, or will we be too busy?

To focus my relatively incoherent ramblings and to bring this piece to a close, I want to leave you, as my-

self, with a challenge. Ask yourself the question, am I making time for God? There will always be reasons, justifications and barriers to addressing the solution to this question, but we need to conclude this game of devotional Tetris. Don't be like this disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, strive to imitate Christ and make time for the Father in your life. Do it today.

Jake Womack

Cragg Mission Community

...inspired...

If you want to share part of your spiritual journey for the "Step of Faith" column to inspire and encourage others, email magazine@spbc.org.uk

More Than Just...

In your Christmas shopping, don't forget gifts and cards from

Traidcraft, Tearfund and Christian Aid. They are "more than just" a simple present as they give twice – a gift to a friend and a gift of support to the producer. New this month (if you're still stuck for ideas!) is a superb cookbook "Bake a Difference" – look out for it on the next Fairtrade stall.

Pam Roe



TRAIDCRAFT
Fighting poverty through trade

All people in Britain experience weather, and they talk about it readily and repeatedly. If only disciples of Jesus Christ in England did the same thing about Him.

Archbishop of York John Sentamu, November 2013

Questions

Atheist Church Anyone?

Did you respond in anger at the invasion of St John's Leeds by an atheistic mob?

I am sure you would not use such antagonistic language but I was irritated by the pictures of mostly student-age well-presented young men assembling to sing secular songs in a deconsecrated church. Without knowing any of the few titled songs given on TV, we are left to wonder at the content and purpose of the words, whether spoken or sung.

The spokesman in Leeds said they were entitled to look at this impressive building and its contents, and of course they are, but does it suggest that there is something missing in their materialistic faith? What does atheism leave for posterity? Do they sense the values that they have excluded from

consideration? Are they driven by the folly that science can explain everything?

Have we allowed ourselves to be characterised as cosy singing communities?

Do we need urgently to enlarge the message?

But there is a bigger question. Why do they think that singing together demonstrates that they have taken the core of Christian worship and there is nothing else to copy? God has given us the wonderful gift of music in which we have celebrated His praise from before Purcell and Bach and onwards. Have we allowed ourselves to be characterised principally as cosy get-together singing communities? Do we need urgently to enlarge the message? Singing is praise to God and asks for God's presence in our walk of obedience to His will. It is joyful and uplifting, acknowledging God's goodness offered to all men and women.



Church is about striving to be followers of Jesus not only in his amazing teaching, but as the living presence in the Holy Spirit, though we need to recognise that the evil that surrounds us causes us to fail and has in history caused some monumental failures. As Paul observed, boasting of good works is not Christian, but how do we

demonstrate love of God and neighbour while giving God the glory for the long tradition of compassion, both in Judaism and Christianity, even though with much backsliding?

Cyril Snell

Headingley Morning Mission Community

New Regional Minister

“Catch the wave dude!” That was the message to the wellwishers who gathered for the induction of Rev Mary Taylor as Regional Minister with the Yorkshire Baptist Association. Surfing was a prominent image throughout the event – highlighted by Mary’s wetsuit and bodyboard which took pride of place on the platform. “Our new regional minister is a surfer,” said the Rev Kezia Robinson during the pre-induction talk. She also said: “She is a nice, good woman – but she is a Regional Minister with a backbone of steel.”

Andy Amoss spoke about catching the wave of what God was sending our way – and later people were invited to show their commitment to this by signing posters bearing the scripture Luke 14.18-19: *“God’s Spirit is on me; he’s chosen me to preach the message of good news to the poor...”*

Regional Minister and Team Leader Rev Graham Ensor led the induction at Destiny Church, Wakefield. He encouraged the YBA churches to give Mary prayer support in her role with all of its joys and challenges.

Mary said she felt she was at the start of an adventure – and it was an enormous challenge. “Churches in many ways are standing at a place of death – but I want to encourage you that at the place of death, for those who trust in Jesus Christ it is the place of resurrection.

“I don’t come with a programme, plan or strategy – but primarily I believe God wants me to come as myself. That’s what I bring. I want us to walk together to discover the possibilities God has for us.”

Joolz Walker

www.yba.org.uk

yorkshirebaptist
●●● association

Recommended Reads

Living Lightly Upon the Earth

***Living Lightly, Living Faithfully:
Religious faiths and the future of
sustainability***

**Edited by Colin Bell, Jonathan
Chaplin and Robert White**

In 2013 most of the world's politicians, business people and consumers had "stalled economic growth" on their minds. Most in the West live in the ultimate flowering of a high consumer society. The way we have lived over the last 30-40 years has never been experienced before. Not me, you say: take a good look round. The benefits of the consumer society are obvious and are often listed by its acolytes and exponents, beginning with unprecedented life expectancy and continuing with health and material wealth.



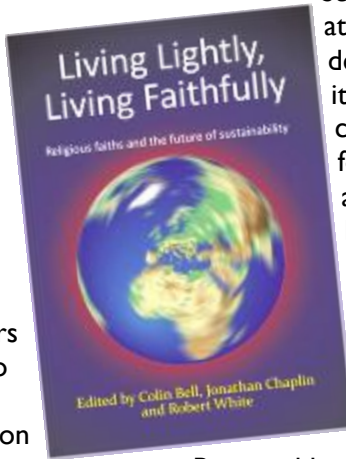
*Can the religions of the
world offer anything
worthwhile towards the
goal of a truly sustainable
way of living in the
twenty-first century?*

Yet it is important to recall that many of these benefits are often tied to earlier periods in this consumer society. The most significant increases in life expectancy, for instance, came in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when we implemented basic improvements with regard to public sanitation and health. The crucial point is that consumption in the West has passed a tipping point and become counterproductive. It is no longer producing enough benefit to outweigh the harm.

In 2013 the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide reached 400 parts per million for perhaps the first time in a million years. For many years this was held

as a maximum target to avoid seriously detrimental climate change.

Can the religions of the world offer anything worthwhile towards the goal of a truly sustainable way of living in the twenty-first century? Today we are witnessing a growing aspiration in many sectors and parts of the world to cultivate a new global ethos of “living lightly upon the Earth”. This book contains the edited proceedings of a lively multidisciplinary and interfaith conference devoted to addressing exactly these questions. The conference, Sustainability in Crisis,



was held at Murray Edwards College, Cambridge University in September 2011 and attended by over 100 delegates. Sustainability, it seems is reaching crisis-point. Prospects for a sustainable future are in danger of becoming increasingly bleak. Most of the lectures were by people of international standing, and interestingly of deep Christian belief.

Presumably the consumer society has little attraction for such people!

John Lockwood

Cragg Mission Community

...inspired...

This book is **free to download** in electronic formats from the Faraday Shop at www.faraday.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/Shop

If you've read a book recently that inspired you, recommend it to the church by emailing space@spbc.org.uk

The challenges of sustainability are increasingly engaging the energies of representatives of the world religions. But, strikingly, more and more secular observers are also beginning to recognise the vital contribution that religions might make in promoting sustainability.

From the Introduction to Living Lightly, Living Faithfully

Church Noticeboard

Carols in the Park Saturday 14 December 4-4.30pm Hall Park, Horsforth

“What a wonderful way to enter into Christmas,” one lady said. She had just handed back her carol sheet after spending thirty minutes around the fairy light-covered Hall Park bandstand, huddled together with friends singing carols, eating free mince pies and holding a much-needed warm cuppa.



Carols in the Park aims to be a Christmas celebration that is accessible to the whole community and which is family-friendly. It is organised by Horsforth Churches Together to try and help the whole community celebrate the story of Christ with us.

Horsforth Leeds City Brass Band will be playing the music, along with a few singers using microphones to help us keep in tune and in time. Children are encouraged to come dressed up (ideally above their normal clothes as it may be cold) as kings, angels, shepherds, Mary or Joseph and have their photographs taken by their parents around the crib.

The event starts at dusk so people will arrive in the light and leave in darkness except the fairy lights of the bandstand. This creates a lovely atmosphere, with all the children given a glow stick to help them read the carol sheets or to just simply wave around in the darkness. The last two years have been well attended with crowds estimated at four hundred people. We hope you will come and why not invite someone else, let's help Horsforth celebrate Christ this Christmas!

Duncan Stow

To add something to the February *Intouch* Church Noticeboard email magazine@spbc.org.uk

Children's Christmas Cheer

Saturday 7 December 5.30 - 7.45pm
at South Parade Headingley

- Miaoyin's and Ilias's students will perform a medley of enchanting music in aid of the Syria Appeal for Save the Children.
- Adults £3 / Child £2
- Everybody is welcome!
- For ticket sales, donations or more information, please contact Irene via the church office



Save the Children

HELP WANTED

Women's World Day of Prayer

Hazel Holmes has represented South Parade for many years on the local organising group for this annual event. She has now stepped down and we would like another volunteer to take on this (not very time consuming) role. If this is you please speak to Hazel, Brian Nicholls or Pam Roe.

The Baptist Times Weekly Round-up...

... is a four-page A5 digest of news, views, jobs, baptismal and death notices, and links to articles on the website. Subscribe or download from the BU website www.baptist.org.uk

Scarborough Weekend 11-13 July 2014



We've booked places at the Rowntree Centre at Cober Hill near Scarborough next summer for a weekend of fellowship and teaching. This is primarily for Headingley Morning Mission Community, but others are welcome to book too. Places are limited as there is another conference in the centre at the same time. An early expression of interest to Brian Nicholls by email or written note is advisable. The likely cost per person is £150 for adults or £75 for children. Listen out for more information over the next few weeks!

South Parade in Numbers

Part Five

Thanks to contributions and help from many individuals, families, Mission Communities, Under 5s and the Retired Lunch Fellowship we put together

40 shoeboxes for the **Samaritan's Purse**

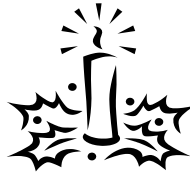
organisation to distribute to children around the world.



Sally Howe

250

Candles will be used at the Adel **Christingle Service** (24 December 5pm)



5

Rehearsals for the **Christmas choir** in December - it's not too late to join! See Colin Jones for details

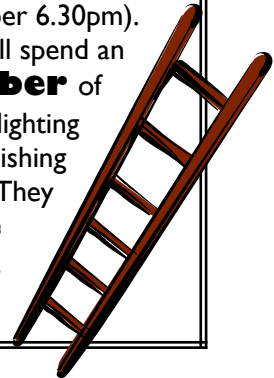


2

Accusations in this magazine of **Nathan Shipley** cheating (pages 6 & 12)

Roughly **1500**

candles will be lit at the **Candlelit Carol Service** at Headingley (22 December 6.30pm). Delessa and his team will spend an **unknown number** of hours setting them up, lighting them, and safely extinguishing them after the service. They will use at least **one** ladder to complete this mammoth task!



Bible Emergency Numbers

- When in sorrow, call John 14
- When men fail you, call Psalm 27
- When you have sinned, call Psalm 51
- When you worry, call Matthew 6.19-34
- When you are in danger, call Psalm 91
- When God seems far away, call Psalm 139
- When your faith needs stirring, call Hebrews 11
- When you are lonely and fearful, call Psalm 23
- When you grow bitter and critical, call 1 Corinthians 13
- When you feel down and out, call Romans 8.31-39
- When you want peace and rest, call Matthew 11.25-30
- When the world seems bigger than God, call Psalm 90
- When you want Christian assurance, call Romans 8.1-30
- When you leave home for labour or travel, call Psalm 121
- When your prayers grow narrow or selfish, call Psalm 67
- When you want courage for a task, call Joshua 1
- When you think of investments/returns, call Mark 10
- How to get along with fellow men, call Romans 12
- For great invention/opportunity, call Isaiah 55
- For Paul's secret to happiness, call Colossians 3.12-17
- For idea of Christianity, call 1 Corinthians 5.15-19
- If you are depressed, call Psalm 27
- If you want to be fruitful, call John 15
- If your pocketbook is empty, call Psalm 37
- If you're losing confidence in people, call 1 Corinthians 13
- If people seem unkind, call John 15
- If discouraged about your work, call Psalm 126
- If you find the world growing small, and you great, call Psalm 19

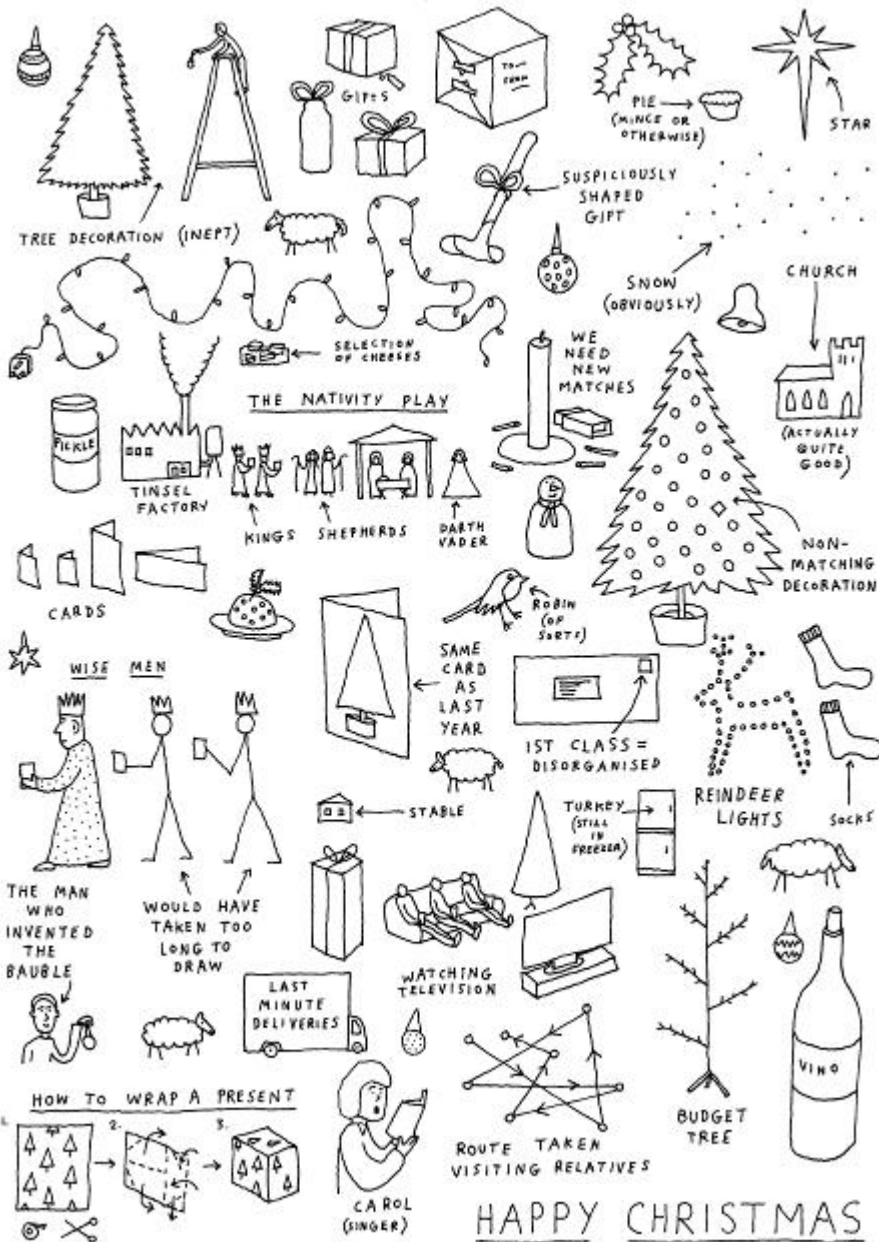


Spotted at www.facebook.com/SPBaptistChurch

*What is the difference between the Christmas
alphabet and the ordinary alphabet?*

The Christmas alphabet has Noel

Spotted on the Traidcraft Advent Calendar 2013





South Parade meets as five distinctive Mission Communities across Leeds: in **Headingley, Adel and Cragg** on a Sunday Morning, and as **SENT** at Headingley on Sunday evenings. **Connect** meets at different locations in the community in Bramley. We also have projects in Little London and Holt Park. To find out more, visit the website or contact the church office.

Together, we have a shared vision to **build community in Christ**. We hope that all who meet us will be helped to **belong** to Christ and his people, will discover what it means to **believe** in him, and will **become** all that he invites them to be in character, lifestyle, witness and service.

Senior Minister
Minister

Brian Nicholls
Paul Rockley

Associate Pastor for
Youth and Young Adults
Children's Worker
Church Worker
Administration Manager
Associate Pastor
Under 5s Co-ordinator

Nathan Shipley
Heather McLeen
Geoff King
Gemma Eastwood
Lawrence Cockrill
Kate Burkett

Elders

Andrew Bedingham, Judith Briggs
Adam Clayton, Claire Ginn,
Geoff Greer (Church Secretary),
Adrian Howe (Church Treasurer)
John Pelham, Rosemary Stirk

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LEEDS LS6 3LF

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gemma@spbc.org.uk



“

*And the Word was made flesh,
and dwelt among us*

”

John 1.14 (KJV)

intouch

 **SOUTH PARADE
BAPTIST CHURCH**
Building Community in Christ