

Hilltop

December 2018 / January 2019

Newsletter of The Church at Bents Green



Carol Service

***Sunday 15th December at 6.30pm
including songs by the children's choir***

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Christmas Café Praise

***23rd December at 6.30pm
Led by the Worship Group
with the Young People's Choir***

Christingle Christmas Eve at 5.30pm

***Christmas Day
Service at 10.30***



A community church sharing the love of Jesus

Church news

Thank you for supporting the Harvest Appeal for Christian Aid's Breaking the Barriers project. This Harvest Christian Aid has focused our thoughts and prayers on Aster who lives in the south of Ethiopia, where the Women's Support Association is helping women like her to withstand the devastating effects of climate change. You contributed a wonderful £953.60. With EU matched funding, this comes to £4,768. Even better, £695 was gift aided so the total is almost £5,000 for this very worthy cause.

You can still donate to this project at <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/harvest-appeal> and the donation will receive matched funding.

Thank you for donations to the **Shoe Box appeal**. 27 Shoe boxes put together by the Games, Craft and Chatter group have been sent off.

We were sad to hear that **Kathleen Watson** has died following illness. Her funeral will be at Hutcliffe Wood on Friday 30th November at 12.30pm. Refreshments are at Bents Green Church after the service. Please keep her family and friends in your prayers.

Congratulations to **Rebecca and Nat Seviour** on the birth of their son (a grandson to Daphne Wilkins).

Advance notice that Holiday Club 2019 will be from Monday 5th to Friday 9th August in the afternoons.

Prayer – If you would like us to pray for you confidentially you can contact us by email reyarp42@sky.com or leave a note in the Prayer Box in the church corridor (side entrance) which is emptied daily.

Holy Habits - Gladness and Generosity

Over the next couple of months at Bents Green we are celebrating Christian joy and gladness, with Christmas at the heart of it. Christmas is not a truly joyful occasion because of the festivities, the decorations, the food and drink, and so on, although they can be great fun. It is not even a truly joyful occasion just because it brings families back together, important and happy though this is. Christmas is most of all a joyful occasion because it celebrates the coming of Christ into the world, God shrinking Himself into a tiny baby in that animal shed in Bethlehem, God with us, Immanuel.



The joy of Christmas fades when the food is eaten, the decorations are taken down, and families disperse, but the joy of Christ remains all the time, whatever the circumstances, and becomes a habitual part of our lives. *God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life (John 3 verse 16)*. Jesus embodies the generosity of God. He himself is the greatest gift of every Christmas. To know Jesus is to have that deeper joy that he promised his disciples, which is ours even in the hard times of our lives.

During the Last Supper, just before Jesus is betrayed, arrested, tortured and crucified, he said to his disciples, *I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete (John 15 verse 11)*. To say something like that, he must have known that beyond the awful experience just ahead of him lay his awesome Resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit who keeps the promises of Jesus to His followers. Christian joy is not dependant on the circumstances of life, whether our team has won a match, or someone has given us a present or said something lovely to us. It is a deeper joy that underpins our life.

Joy is infectious. If we get good news, how we long to share it. Babies bring happiness, whether or not they're our own baby. A young couple getting married brings happiness to everyone who sees them. If we know God's joy and gladness in our lives, how can we not want to share it with other people? It has to lead to generosity of heart and of action, not only to the people we know and love, but to all people in this needy world.

Bents Green Church, like nearly all the Methodist churches in Sheffield, is currently following a journey through the Holy Habits that characterised the early Christian church in Jerusalem 2000 years ago. **Gladness and Generosity** are what we are looking at over the next couple of months. The **Generosity** of God in giving us so much to enjoy throughout our lives, and especially the greatest gift of all, as we celebrate at Christmas. The **Gladness** and joy that underpin our lives through the grace of God.

It is a virtuous circle: the **Generosity** of God brings **Gladness** to his people, which spills over into **Generosity** of heart and action. Holy Habits indeed. **Glenn Evans**



In the footsteps of our master

Have you seen the Currys PC World ad, 'The magic of Christmas upgraded'? A Dickensian street scene, straight out of A Christmas Carol, is 'upgraded' with the addition of modern technology – headphones, drones, a massive flatscreen television. These gadgets, we're asked to believe, are what it's all about this year. These are the gifts to give, or better yet, receive – this is how to upgrade Christmas!

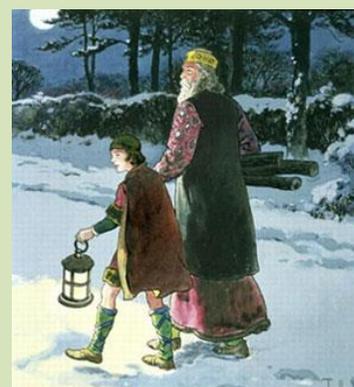
In the soundtrack, a choir sings 'Good King Wenceslas'. As the ad is short, they only just make it to the end of the first verse, and the lyrics are almost drowned out by a snoring woman and a buzzing drone. But you can still just hear the start of the story told in the song: 'When a poor man came in sight, gathering winter fuel...'

There's no poor man in sight in the ad, of course, but in our real high streets and real world it is hard to remain completely blind to the existence of poverty. Anyone spending time in larger towns and cities will have seen the signs that begging and rough sleeping are increasing. Universal Credit has begun to be rolled out in Sheffield, just before Christmas leading to increased demands on food banks. There is real hardship around us, even in a rich country like ours. For those worried about getting a decent meal at all this Christmas, an upgraded experience will be far from their minds.

In the carol, Wenceslas and his servant respond to their encounter with the man by going to fetch him food, drink and fuel. They don't do it for show – it's dark and no one is around. And they don't do it because it's easy for them; the 'bitter weather' and 'rude wind' make it a costly endeavour. But they do it all the same, giving generously, doing their duty with everything they have. The servant even reaches the point of collapse as a result of the effort, but is saved by being invited to walk in the warmth of 'his master's steps'. The song finally ends, in a not very advertising-friendly fashion, with a moral message: 'Ye who now will bless the poor / shall yourselves find blessing'.

This then, is Christmas upgraded, kingdom-style. Not to chase after wealth and rank, status and show, or the latest must-haves; but to recognise our duty to follow in the footsteps of our master, giving to others generously, simply and sincerely, even when it costs us dearly. May your Christmas be full of gladness and generosity. Peace Tim

With acknowledgement to Rebecca Froley's writing in 'Roots' Magazine which inspired this article.



♪ Chitty Chitty Bang Bang we love you! ♪

We very much hope that you will love **Chitty Chitty Bang Bang** when we perform it for you during February half term as our annual children's and young people's pantomime. Not only do we have jolly good jokes, superb singing, dazzling dancing, amazing acrobatics and cute and classy costumes, we also have the genuine car for you to admire as she soars over your heads, looks down over Bents Green and flies to the rescue overseas.

And that is not all. You read two Hilltops ago who first created the car and how it was further developed by Ian Fleming, so you should not be surprised by the James Bond connection. We are giving you what the film producers refuse to do – yes, a female James Bond. 007 of them in fact. With all the characters you love and hate, and new ones as well, this is a pantomime with a difference. But fear not, it is a traditional family pantomime for all ages, in which you, the audience, also play your part.

There are 3 performances: Friday 22nd February at 7.30pm, Saturday 23rd February at 7.30pm, and Sunday 24th February at 4.30pm. You must have a ticket to come, but the tickets are free. We hope for generous donations to cover our expenses. Members of the cast can order tickets in December, worshippers at the church (who give us amazing help and support) can order tickets in January, and everyone can order tickets in February. Somehow, we have always managed to squeeze everyone in.



To order tickets, please email dglennEVANS@hotmail.co.uk



Hello from Bents Green Pre School.

We are the local pre school run from the Bents Green church building for 2-4 year olds. We have been enjoying this gorgeous autumnal half term back at pre-school. We have held a fundraiser bun sale and been exploring the autumn leaves on our local nature walk.

We are already getting ready for Christmas by designing our own Christmas cards and learning songs for our nativity. The committee are busy organising our main fundraising event of the year, our Christmas Fair. This year it is on Saturday 8th December 10am -1pm. Please do come along for a drink and cake plus the opportunity to buy Christmas gifts and help the pre school raise vital funds.

We are also on the hunt for a new book-keeper to keep our pre school running. It is a paid role and will entail approximately 4 hours a week. It involves recording transactions, paying expenses, drawing up termly accounts and an annual budget. It also includes filing accounts with the Charity commission, processing salaries and pensions, plus providing ad hoc financial advice to the committee. For more information please contact Fran 07805625933 or Alex 07815614044.

If you would like any further information about the Pre School please contact us on 07714502472 or bentsgreenpreschool@hotmail.co.uk.

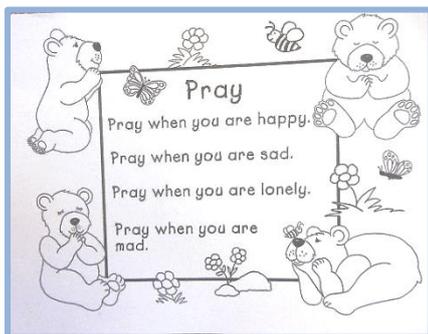
Holy Habits series on prayer *excerpt from the last email in the series*

We've arrived at the final weekly mail in the Holy Habits series on Prayer (sighs of relief all round!). I hope you agree with me that it's been an exciting journey, because I know I'm in a different place from where I was 9 weeks ago 😊. Wow, we've come a long way, haven't we! I will be honest with you: although the Holy Habits booklets give pointers to the things that might be covered in each phase of the programme, God through his Spirit has most definitely shaped the learning that we have been receiving at Bents Green through these weekly messages.

Before we leave prayer, let me share with you a testimony from Ruth about how Holy Habits has made a real difference in introducing prayer to her Sparklers group (children aged 2½ to 5) on a Sunday morning:

"I was at first concerned at how to present prayer in a meaningful way to such young children – so I began by praying about it! I then looked at the material from the Holy Habits team, and also 'Googled' prayer crafts for children.

"Over the five Sundays in September we have looked at prayer, using different activities. We've played the Prayer Bear board game (which encourages good prayer habits);



made a prayer wristband (different coloured beads signifying different things/people to pray for); made a prayer cube (the faces having different prayer types – sorry, thank you, please, etc.); using fingers to prompt different prayers (the prayer hand); hung thank you prayers on a 'washing line'; made a prayer card based on the Lord's Prayer.

"Each week with the children I have discussed what the Bible says about prayer. I have tried to make the sessions fun and practical to help them learn more readily. The weekly preparation for the sessions has helped my own prayer life and given me different ways to pray. God has shown me how to expand and revitalise my own prayer life!"

Isn't that thrilling? And that's just one example of what God is doing amongst us. We sure have reasons to be cheerful right now! **Martyn Read** (A booklet of the weekly emails about prayer will be ready before Christmas)



Together We Make

It's the first Christmas we have celebrated since starting our new business and we are having a great time making lots of Christmas themed pieces as well as our usual variety of necklaces and other jewellery. We have a stall at the WI Christmas Fair at Bents Green church on Wednesday 28th November, from 7pm. We will also be showing our pieces at Craft and Chat in the same afternoon. Why not pop in and see us either in the afternoon or the evening?



The Chocolate Bar *Continuing our series about local businesses and organisations*

Most of us pass by the **Chocolate Bar** regularly on the bus or in our cars. Every now and then when passing the shop I have noticed a car stop and someone pops into the shop and comes out soon after with a beautifully wrapped little box. Customers come from far and near for the specialist chocolates and sweets sold in the shop.

The Chocolate Bar has been on Ecclesall Road South for about 50 years. It is near the traffic lights with Carterknowle Road. It used to be a tobacconist shop, selling cigarettes and sweets. But, as the demand for cigarettes decreased, the shop took on a new role as a specialist chocolate and sweet shop. Just over two years ago the previous owner, Mrs Stones, retired. Matt Whitehouse was working in the City Council at the time but was looking for a change of career. When he heard that she was planning to retire he was interested and took over the shop in August 2016.



It was a steep learning curve! He had to learn about book-keeping and running a small business as well as finding out where to order all the many specialist chocolates and old-fashioned sweets. Mrs Stones was very helpful even after she retired. She had run the shop for about 30 years and had a lot of experience in sourcing different kinds of chocolates and knowing what would sell well. Matt spent a lot of time in his first months setting up accounts with all the different suppliers.

The walls of the shop are lined with jars containing old-fashioned sweets as well as boxes of chocolates and bars of locally handmade chocolates. The sweets are much appreciated by children on their way home from school each day. Another busy time is Saturday morning when younger children call in with a parent to buy their Saturday treat of 100g of sweets (the equivalent of a quarter of...). Sometimes the parent is sent by their child to get the sweets! The shop stocks many old types of sweet but Matt said he could double the number of sweet jars if he included all the sweets he has been asked for.

Matt is currently stocking up for Christmas and is happy to take advance orders. Just call in at the shop and discuss the order with him. He is happy to gift-wrap any purchase at no extra cost and has a selection of attractive boxes to fill with chocolates and decorate with ribbon. Immediately after Christmas he will start thinking about orders for Valentine's day and soon after that for Easter. We all enjoy celebrating with chocolate.



The time of my life



Is there a year that stands out for you as the best, the most important, the most thrilling? For me, it was 1968, yes, half a century ago. I was 18. I got a summer job and earned some money. I passed my A levels and started university. My football team got promoted to the first division. I passed the driving test. On the world stage, there was the May revolution in Paris and the Prague spring – heady stuff for a teenager.

Oh, and I became a Christian. I remember David Watson talking to students about faith in Jesus, making it all sound logical, life-changing, adventurous, fun. And I remember meeting a man who lived by faith. He said his needs were modest, but he had no income, so he prayed, and things turned up. Suddenly it wasn't just words – this stuff worked!

50 years on, have I progressed? I must have learnt a bit, but God is so immense and wonderful that most of the time I feel I'm still a beginner. There's so much to learn and do. Great, isn't it? **John Wilkins**

Yes, we have no bananas

How fortunate we are at Friendship Club to have such good speakers and entertainers. There are certainly a lot of talented people out there!

Since September we have enjoyed various musical items, all of which have been fun, especially Sheffield U3A Ukulele Band – we all loved their enthusiasm and the fact that they played so many songs that we all know; we all joined in!

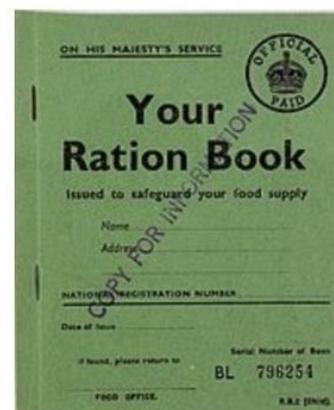
We've also had some great speakers: Dr Andrew Raftery who entertained us with an amusing talk about Retirement, Stephen Gay, who is an old friend to Friendship club, who continued his Woodhead Tunnel talk, Gerry Kersey, another old friend, who told us about his father during WW1... very poignant this year.

This brings me on to the Ration book talk. Rationing was introduced several times during the twentieth century by the British government and the vast majority of our members remember rationing during and after WW2. Do you remember the quantities allowed? 8 ounces of butter, 8 ounces of bacon, 8 ounces of cheese and so much more. Virtually everything was rationed apart from bread and vegetables many of which were home grown. I remember in the early 50's the local grocer whispering to me, "Tell your mum we have some bananas"!!!!

For children growing up in the 40's and 50's sweet rationing, which finished in 1953, was hard and I remember so well the off-rationing days when we children would form a very long queue at the little corner shop...all for 4 ounces of sweets!

How lucky we are now when we seem to live in a land of plenty. However, let us remember the people in our beautiful, but sometimes torn and ravaged, world who are not as fortunate as we are, especially at Christmas.

Happy Christmas from Friendship Club. 🎄🎄🎄 Do join us on Tuesday afternoons at 2 o'clock. **Pat Hutchinson**



Child's ration book, used during the Second World War.

Just another trench casualty

Following excellent World War 1 articles in the last HILLTOP, by Pat Hutchinson and Eileen Tattersall, I am moved, even though a little after the 100th anniversary, to recount the misfortune of Billy Candlin.

Private William Henry Candlin was a Sheffield boy who somehow ended up in the 8th. South Staffordshire Regiment, and was involved, according to my research at Kew Records Centre, in action at the infamous Delville Wood, Vimy Ridge and Arras, in 1917.

How, and where he was shot through the leg, was, and still is, a mystery (and of course, as with most war veterans, he refused to talk about it). We think that he was probably used as a runner (no field phones), and was therefore a prime target for a sniper.

The only scrap of information we have, is that he probably lay in the trench for anything up to 48 hours, and was eventually rescued by American Infantry, and taken to U.S Army Base Hospital No. 5, with gangrene, "gas crepitations", temp. 103.2F., and "very foul odour with sero-sanguinous discharge". (I have the original, well-yellowed, Medical Case Sheet). It was deemed impossible to save the leg, and so it was amputated well above the knee, under ether anaesthetic.

He returned to Blighty, married Miriam Cooper, and had four children, one of whom, Joyce Farmery, was my wife for 62 years, and whose remembrance service was held here, at Bents Green Church, on August 31 this year.

His prosthetic leg was, unlike today's multi-jointed limbs, very basic, making walking very difficult, but he rode out the great depression of 1929, got a job as a gatekeeper at a steelworks, and was never late, or had a day off until he deteriorated, was forced to retire, and died on Christmas day 1955, aged 61.

Typically, he never ever complained about his lot in life – a characteristic he passed on to his offspring.

Peter Farmery



Christmas Fair at Work Ltd
on Saturday 1st December from 10 am
 Come and join us to view our wonderful
 hand-crafted gifts on sale
 Or visit the online shop
<http://www.workltd.org.uk/shop/>



Regular church activities and contact details

Services at the Church at Bents Green

All are welcome at these services

Sunday mornings at 10.30 am During morning services there is a crèche for little ones, Sparklers and Sparks Clubs for younger children and Fireworks and Sunday Club for older children and young people.

Sunday evenings at 6.30 pm - An informal service often including tea, coffee and time to chat about the Christian faith.

Café worship on the first Sunday of each month. Breakfast from 10.00, with worship at 10.30. This is an informal service, so please make yourself at home. Drinks are available at any time.

Wednesdays at 10 am: Midweek service.

Covenant Service Sunday 13th Jan, Rev Tim Crome

Contact Details:

Lay Assistant Minister: John Wilkins
Tel 0114 2361306 (First contact)
Email: johnwilkins73@googlemail.com

Minister: Rev Tim Crome
Tel. 0114 4389012
Email: Tim47Crome@msn.com

For Room Bookings contact:
Peter Larder Tel. 0114 2686507

Church website:
www.bentsgreenmethodist.org.uk

Church office answerphone:
0114 2361912

Activities for Children and Young People

New members are welcome at these activities at the church.

Contact the named person for more details.

For younger children

Crèche	0-3	Sun 10.30	Ruth	2686507
Sparklers	4-5	Sun 10.30	Ruth	2686507
Sunbeams	0-4	Wed 9.15-12	Katie	07464 824462

For children and young people

Sparks	5-11	Sun 10.30	John	2307556
Fireworks	12-14	Sun 10.30	Emma	07707 500226
Sunday Club	15-18	Sun 10.30	Sue	2307556
Girls' Brigade	5-18	Thurs evening	Marian	2361316
Lighthouse	5-11	Wed 3.45	Cherry	07853278612
Lampstand	12-18	Fri 8-10	Cherry	07853278612
Craft Services	3 -12	Festivals	Sue	2307556
Drama group	All ages	Various	Glenn	2351057
Pantomime	All ages	Annually	Glenn	2351057
Musical	All ages	Special events	Christèle	07912207661
Holiday Club	4-11	August 5 th -9 th	Lesley	2686461

Regular church activities

Games, chat, crafts

Wednesdays 12.30 to 3 pm in the church.
Indoor bowling, scrabble, chess, dominoes, jigsaws and cards, knitting and crafts.
Contact Ruth: 0114 2686507

Coffee Mornings in the Church:

On the first Saturday of every month
from 10.30 am – 12noon

Harbour Coffee

On Wednesdays in term-time from 3.30 – 5.45 pm in the Music Room

Tea, Toast & Time 4 Thinking:

Thursdays @ 10.30 am each week. Upstairs in the Church Lounge.

A time to reflect on what following Jesus is all about. A place for all those seeking answers. Carers of young children especially welcome.
Contact Sue: Tel 0114 2307556

House groups

Many people in the church belong to a house group and meet regularly to pray together, read the bible and talk about the Christian faith. If you are interested in joining a house group contact Sue: Tel 0114 2307556

Friendship Club Programme:

Tuesdays at 2 pm in the Church Hall (enter by side door opposite the shops). A warm welcome awaits any who would like to come along – especially men and women over 60.

Tues 4th December	Brass Band
Tues 11th December	Christmas celebrations and Choir with Olive
Tues 8th January	Steve Drinkall talks nature
Tues 15th January	Whirlow Hall Farm
Tues 22nd January	Ami Evans entertains: singing and dancing
Tues 29th January	Vintage Voices

**For more information contact: Pat Hutchinson: 0114 2497280
and Jackie Smith: 0114 3483069**

Hilltop Editor:

Tricia North Email: tn-bg@live.co.uk

Please send material for the next issue to the editor by Sunday 20th January 2019.

If you would like to receive **Hilltop** by email please email the editor: tn-bg@live.co.uk



Christmas events 2018 Everyone welcome

Christian Aid Coffee Morning – In the Church on Saturday Dec 1st - Refreshments, stalls and games.

Decorating the Christmas tree - Sunday 2nd December from 3pm to 5.30pm
Craft activities for all the family. People of all ages are welcome: please bring food to share.

Library Staff Carol Service - 7.30pm on Tuesday December 4th

Pre-School Christmas fair - Dec 8th 10 am to 1pm

Pre-School Nativity in the church - Tuesday 11th December - 11am

W.O.R.K. Ltd Carol Service in our church - Wed 12 Dec at 10.30am

Carol Service - Sunday 16th December at 6.30pm with Children's Choir and Young People's Choir

Mince pies served to shoppers - Sat 22nd Dec

Christmas Café Praise - 23rd December at 6.30pm led by the Worship Group with Young People's Choir, and Nibbles and drinks. A look at the Christmas story in a modern way with some familiar and some new carols.

Christingle Service - Christmas Eve at 5.30pm with Children's Choir

Christmas Day service - 10.30 am at Bents Green Church. Everyone welcome



New

Porter Valley Dementia Café starts on Thursday 6th December in Bents Green Church
Snacks and refreshments, a range of activities, relevant speakers and guests, free entry
To be held every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month from 2pm-4pm. All welcome including carers
More information from Kath Horner (email: kathmhorner@gmail.com or tel 07757 619009)