



March 2011 Newsletter



But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' **Matthew 25:6**

Minister's Letter



Dear Friends,

Just for a bit of fun I did a "word search" using my Bible Concordance programme on the computer and found that in the Jewish Scriptures (what we call the Old Testament) there are 23 references to "census" between the books of Exodus and 2 Chronicles. Yet another piece of useless information from John, I hear you say!

Invariably the taking of a census was tied in with the contentious issue of raising taxes but there is an especially interesting story in 1 Samuel 24 when "after David had taken the census his conscience began to trouble him"!

We might also recall that it was a census that took Mary and Joseph from their home town of Nazareth to David's "family" town of Bethlehem where Jesus was born (Luke 2).

So what are we to make of the recent National Census Day? Another instance of interfering bureaucracy? A waste of public money? I think not. To plan for the future (eg provision of school places) we need to have as accurate a picture of population trends as possible. And questions about ethnicity and religious allegiance are surely not inappropriate as long as they are of a factual nature?

I recognise that statistics can be used and abused, and we need to be aware of inappropriate conclusions that might be made from the information gathered. And as a Christian I would want to affirm that I am not a statistic but an individual, cared for and loved by God who "calls me by name" (Isaiah 43:1).

As we approach Easter, and we recall how "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son" (John 3:16) we might reflect on the fact that he did this not as a corporate gesture but for each and every one of us individually, that is for you and for me personally. Many of the Easter hymns affirm this as we "survey the wondrous cross".

What is your response to this amazing truth? It is not something that will be recorded in the National Census but it should make a significant difference to our lives, and thereby to the society of which we are part..

Peace & Love.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hudson".

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Cinderella

Who said, “Never work with children or animals”? From your wonderful feedback, I think we’ve proved the old adage wrong again! *Cinderella* was packed with children, kittens, bears, horses and a forest of bugs! And all came together to produce a magical show which many of you say was the best we’ve put on by far!! The scenery, costumes, choreography, music and special effects all enhanced the hard work put in by every member of the cast (and the support team behind the scenes) as they performed their hearts out on stage in a spellbinding show that outshone all previous pantomimes - and raised £3,500 for the church. We are already looking forward to the next one! See you there!!

Next Pantomime: 11-18 Feb 2012

ROBINSON CRUSOE

John Hudson wrote:

They say that laughter is infectious. The production of *Cinderella* proved this and it was a delight to be part of an audience enjoying themselves and to see the cast clearly experiencing the same! Many thanks to ALL involved in an excellent 25th production!

Don't forget to order your
Cinderella DVD - only £7.50

Jennifer Smith wrote:

I do want to thank you yet again for another magical evening on Tuesday. We all thoroughly enjoyed the performance of *Cinderella*. It was so well done - and the costumes and sets, as well as the actors, were amazing. So many hours work from all concerned! Hugely appreciated. As always, it was lovely to see our 80 and 90 year olds joining in with the children and singing along. Another happy, memorable evening.

Many many thanks!

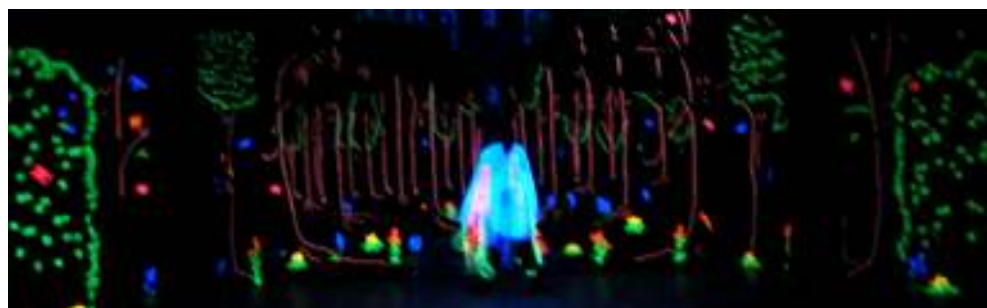
We are truly grateful to the Worth Valley Ward councillors for their generosity in supporting the pantomime and other community groups with a grant of £3,000 towards the £7,000 cost of replacing our radio microphone equipment rendered obsolete by the digital switchover. Offcom have subsidised the cost with a further £3,800 grant. The new mics arrived in time for the pantomime and David is pictured with some of the equipment and Councillors Glen Miller and Russell Brown when they dropped in to meet some of the cast and see how their grant has been used. The radio mics really enhance our shows!











Christmas Services



Word Search - Complaining

A group of well-paid former students visited their old university professor. The conversation soon turned into complaints about stress in work and life. Offering his guests coffee, the professor brought from the kitchen a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups - some plain-looking, some expensive, and some exquisite - telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

After all the students had a cup of coffee in hand, the professor said: "If you noticed, all the nice looking expensive cups were taken, leaving the plain and cheap ones. While it is normal to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress. Be assured that the cup itself adds no quality to the coffee. It's just more expensive and in some cases even hides what we drink. What all of you really wanted was coffee, not the cup, but you consciously went for the best cups and then began eyeing each other's cups."

"Consider this: Life is the coffee. The jobs, houses, cars, things, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life, and the type of cup we have does not define nor change the quality of life we live. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee."

"Enjoy your coffee. Being happy doesn't mean everything's perfect. It means you've decided to see beyond the imperfections."

C O N V E R S A T I O N J S G E E
K C O N S C I O U S L Y R N U Y T
I H E F I L N E K A T A I T E T I
T I C O F F E E P I C T S S S I S
C D U O E T S S S R A P L E T L I
H E E N M B N R C R O O A B S A U
E S J T O P E E T H E B P E V U Q
N O T J I V L N M X A R L N H Q X
Y T E U I S E A P T O N O E M C E
D C O N D C I E I F R I G O M S S
N E U O N E N V E N T O N E S S H
O F T O L S N S A I T E S E D L A
Y R C N I S S T S A Y S R S D L P
E E O V A O F O S L U T D N A H P
B P E S R W P C U P S K N I R D Y

Find all the blue words from the passage above in the grid opposite and then read the message hidden in the unused letters!



Good News

Marriage

Congratulations to Julie and Lee Harrison who were married at Gretna Green on 12th March 2011.



Baptism

We welcomed Eleanor Sophia Webb into the church family at her baptism on 12th December 2010. She is pictured above with mum, Sharon.

Gabriella Amy Reed-Griffiths was similarly welcomed at her baptism on 6th March 2011 and she is smiling at us below with mum, Adele.

We pray God's blessing on both families as they nurture their children in the Christian faith.



Fundraising

Thank you for your response to the recent appeals and events.

- The ever popular Christmas Lunch raised £220. Thanks to the staff who put on such a wonderful meal. See photos on page 8.
- Christmas Gift Envelopes brought in a magnificent £330 this year.
- The Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation was delighted to receive £240 from John's section of churches from collections over the Christmas period. These gifts enable their community outreach programmes to continue in the Greater Bethlehem area.
- The Ladies' Group February Brunch was well supported, raising £163.

News Snippets

In Memoriam

We commend Betty Midgley, Ellis Wright and Alice Waite into God's hands, assuring family and friends of our continuing prayers and sympathy.

In her younger days, Betty could be described as a stalwart at church - always there, ready to give a hand. In fact she used her hands to great effect over many years making thousands of greeting cards to sell. She raised over £40,000 for Arthritis Research and the church benefited from her card sales as well. Betty and Elizabeth ran a Holiday Gift Stall at church for some years before launching the Sunshine Bags which continue to be popular to this day. Though failing health kept her away from church physically for many years, her interest never waned and we are grateful for her life of service.

There is a tribute to Ellis in the Circuit News section of this newsletter, so I will simply record here our deep gratitude to Ellis for all he gave to this church, both as organist and Property Steward for many many years. The packed church at the very moving Service of Thanksgiving to celebrate his life said it all.

Grateful Thanks

We give thanks for the donation received from the members of Keighley Vocal Union in memory of Ellis:

"Dear Oakworth Methodist Church. We would like to make this donation in memory of Ellis Wright. As you know, he was our choir accompanist for a great many years. He will be remembered by all of us as a wonderfully talented, musical, kind and gentle man. He never sought praise or accolades but his talent and character spoke for themselves. He was one of the best of men and we feel privileged to have been part of his life."

Organist/Pianist

We are also very grateful to all the organists and pianists who have given their time and talents to play for our services over the last few months since Ellis retired. At our recent Church Council meeting, it was confirmed that we would like to appoint a new organist if at all possible, so if you know anyone who would be interested in becoming our organist, or anyone else willing to join the interim rota to play organ or piano for services, please let David or the stewards know. This is becoming quite urgent now as it is unfair to keep going to organists from other churches to play for us on their week off!

Lent 2011

Once again we are following the popular "York Courses" programme during Lent. This year the theme is "Rich Inheritance: Jesus' Legacy of Love" with contributing speakers Bishop David Hope, Archbishop Vincent Nichols, Dr Paula Gooder, Rev Jim Wallis and Rev Inderjit Bhogal.

We are meeting on Monday evenings at 7.30 pm with alternating venues between ourselves and Christ Church (see Diary Dates). Do come to as many as you are able.



Strategy for the Future

At our Church Council meeting in March, I gave a presentation under the heading 'Strategy for the Future'. This was the result of two years worth of ongoing work looking at the strengths and weaknesses of our church and considering various options for addressing those weaknesses whilst working with and developing the church's strengths at the same time.

By early autumn 2010, I had come up with a draft plan which I intended putting on one side until Cinderella was out of the way. However, over winter a series of events prompted me to bring forward my plans so I discussed them with John, Andrew and Peter (Minister, Senior Steward and Property Secretary) before bringing them to the Church Council.

In brief, the points addressed in the presentation were:

- Lack of storage space
- Suitability/placement/access to some of our rooms
- Health & Safety considerations
- Restrictions of current temporary stage
- Panto audience capacity

The draft plan I presented to address those points (which is by no means final) is to extend the building backwards towards the lower park wall. The back row of rooms and the outside stage store would be removed and a new Wesley Room, Utility Room, additional meeting room and various new store rooms would be rebuilt around and above a central permanent stage.

Our Church Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 10th of May will be open to anyone involved in the life of our Church, where the main topic under discussion will be this strategy. At the end of the meeting, the Church Council members who are present will vote on whether or not to proceed with a Feasibility Study. Between now and then, I will be meeting with each group who use our premises to get their input, thoughts and feelings about the strategy.

If anyone has any comments or questions, please do get in touch with me, either directly or via the 'Strategy for the Future' page on our website.

Peter



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Special Events & Services

Spring Market

Saturday 2nd April 10.00 - 1.00

**Lots of stalls to buy from
Easter gifts, birthday presents!**

Have a Coffee and a chat

Stay for Meat & Potato Pie and Pea Lunch

Please sign the list in the porch



**Share fellowship
as you spend!**

Mothering Sunday All Age Praise & Parade Service



Sunday 3rd April 10.30am

**Led by Louise, Helen and the
Young People; with drama,
lots of participation and
daffodils for all the mums!**

Maundy Thursday

**Hot Cross Buns &
Holy Communion Service**

Thursday 21st April 7.30 pm

led by Rev Terry Porter



Sunday School Anniversary

Sunday 8th May

10.30 am

All Age Praise Service

**Led by Louise,
Helen and the
Young People**



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Sunday Worship & Young People



A warm welcome awaits you as we worship together

- Mar** 6 10.30 am Rev John Hudson - **Baptism Service**
 13 10.30 am Rev Barbara Walls - **All Age Worship**
 20 10.30 am Rev Alan Sharp - **Holy Communion**
 7.30 pm Ecumenical *Heartbeat* Service - Christ Church
 27 10.30 am Mrs Tanya Short
 3.00 pm Service at Oakworth Manor
- Apr** 3 10.30 am Louise, Helen + Young People -
Mothering Sunday All Age Praise & Parade Service
 10 10.30 am Rev John Hudson - **All Age Church Anniversary**
 17 10.30 am Rev Terry Porter - **Palm Sunday Holy Communion**
 7.30 pm Ecumenical *Heartbeat* Service - Christ Church
 21 7.30 pm Rev Terry Porter - Maundy Thursday -
 Hot Cross Buns + Holy Communion Service
 24 10.30 am Mrs Sylvia Thompson - **EASTER DAY**
 3.00 pm Service at Oakworth Manor
- May** 1 10.30 am Mrs Olive Bastow - **Reader's Service**
 8 10.30 am Louise, Helen + Young People -
Sunday School Anniversary All Age Praise Service
 15 10.30 am Rev David Cooke - **Holy Communion**
 7.30 pm Ecumenical *Heartbeat* Service - Christ Church
 22 10.30 am Rev Marc Pattern
 3.00 pm Service at Oakworth Manor
 29 10.30 am Mrs Irene Mitchell - **Reader's Service**
 6.00 pm Rev John Hudson - **United Holy Communion Service**
 - Christ Church

Sunday School / Junior Church also meet at 10.30 am

All Children and Young People are welcome

Creche facilities are available when required



Details of Circuit Events and Services can be found
in the Circuit News section of this Newsletter

Diary Dates



Tuesdays 11.30 am Pre-lunch Fellowship (alternate weeks)
 12.15 pm Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
(closed 26th April and 31st May)

MARCH 2011

Wed 2 11.00 am Monthly Prayer Time - in church
 Fri 4 2.00 pm Women's World Day of Prayer - St John's, Newsholme
 Tue 8 1.45 pm Ladies' Group - 'On the Buses' - Robert Auty
 Tue 8 7.30 pm Church Council
 Mon 14 7.30 pm "Rich Inheritance ..." Lent Group 1 - Methodist Church
 Tue 15 7.30 pm Circuit Meeting - Silsden Methodist Church
 Wed 16 7.30 pm Wednesday Club Planning Meeting - 217 Fell Lane
 Mon 21 7.30 pm "Rich Inheritance ..." Lent Group 2 - Christ Church
 Mon 28 7.30 pm "Rich Inheritance ..." Lent Group 3 - Methodist Church
 Tue 29 7.30 pm Dick Whittaker - Touchstone Celebration Pantomime

APRIL 2011

Sat 2 10.00-1.00 **Spring Market + Stalls/Coffee/Lunch**
 Sun 3 11.30 am Joan Jones' 80th Birthday celebrations
 Mon 4 6.00 pm Cinderella's Pantomime Party - DVD/Food/Games
 Mon 4 7.30 pm "Rich Inheritance ..." Lent Group 4 - Christ Church
 Wed 6 11.00 am Monthly Prayer Time - in church
 Mon 11 7.30 pm "Rich Inheritance ..." Lent Group 5 - Methodist Church
 Tue 12 1.45 pm Ladies' Group AGM + Scarecrows - Bill Palmer
 Tue 12 7.30 pm Fashion Show - Exley Head Methodist Church
 Wed 13 7.30 pm Wednesday Club Meal - The Grouse
 Thu 21 7.30 pm **Maundy Thursday Holy Communion Service**

MAY 2011

Wed 4 11.00 am Monthly Prayer Time - in church
 Sat 7 10.00 am District Synod - Lindley, Huddersfield
 Tue 10 7.30 pm Church Annual General Meeting (open to all) in church
 Wed 11 7.00 pm Wednesday Club Walk
 Sat 14 10.00-3.00 Circuit JMA Walk - Bingley > Long Lee > Bingley
Information for June Newsletter to David this week please

JUNE 2011

Wed 1 11.00 am Monthly Prayer Time - in church
 Wed 8 7.00 pm Wednesday Club - Archery

Further details and information can be found on our
Website: www.OakworthMethodists.org





We invite you to our

Celebration Pantomime

Dick Whittaker



7.00 for 7.30 pm

Refreshments from 7.00

on Tuesday 29th March 2011

at Oakworth Methodist Church

For our 21st Anniversary Celebration, members of staff are starring alongside other friends of Touchstone in a pantomime written specially to celebrate the support given to us by Rev Peter Whittaker during his time as District Chair.



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