



Copmanthorpe Methodist Church
www.copmanthorpemethodist.org.uk
Churches Together in Copmanthorpe LEP

Newsletter – December 2015



As we approach our celebration of the birth of Christ and the end of the year, it is always a time, perhaps more than any other, when we all feel some poignancy and perhaps sadness, as well as joy, as events throughout the year and in previous years take on a sharper significance for us. This year the crisis in Syria cannot fail to have touched each of our lives in one way or another and there have been many different reactions locally and nationally to taking in refugees. At one time or another we all experience the pain of loss, isolation and vulnerability whether in the physical sense or emotional, and we too become refugees.

It is at those times that we realise the importance of belonging to a family who love us. Whilst we prepare for our own individual Christmas with our own families, let us also remember the worldwide family of God that we are all part of, and prepare to welcome Jesus into our cities, homes and churches in the stranger and the refugee, for Jesus said “Whenever you did it for the least important of these, you did it for me”.

Advent is a waiting time, a time of anticipation and expectancy for what God will do. May you find joy in the surprises and be ready to say “yes” to God when he asks something of you that you were not expecting.

With every blessing for peace in your hearts this Christmas.

Julia

Financial Matters

Monthly Donations, November 2015

The total Church donations for the month of November were £2,263.11, with the weekly and monthly payments outlined in the table below.

01-Nov-15	£22.00	Joint Service @ St Giles
08-Nov-15	£0.00	Remembrance Day
15-Nov-15	£278.72	
22-Nov-15	£119.40	
29-Nov-15	£127.99	
Standing Orders	£1,715.00	
Benevolent Fund	£0.00	
September Total	£2,263.11	

The level of giving and expenditure was discussed at the recent Church Council meeting on 25 November 2015. Our minimum monthly expenditure on Assessment, utilities, insurance and cleaning comes to around £3,500. This is before any additional one off expenditure and Church donations. As shown above, our income for the month of November, which is in line with recent trends, comes to considerably less than this, even assuming that we can claim Gift Aid on the entire amount, which would bring the total to around £2,800.

Whilst we do obtain some income from letting the building, as well as from other one off donations and fund raising, it is clear that the current level of giving is insufficient to meet the ongoing expenditure. In the short term this can be met from our reserves, but this is not a sustainable situation in the long term.

We will be having a Gift Day on Saturday 30 January 2016, and in advance of that all Church Members are asked to reflect and pray on this situation.

Gift Day – 30 January

You are all warmly invited to join us for a day of fellowship, food and fun on 30th January. We hope that it will be an opportunity for us to spend time together as a church family, whilst we reflect upon our gifts and our giving. The stewards will be finalising the plans in early January and we would welcome any input and offers of help from you.

Current ideas include but are not limited to breakfast, a family walk (dogs welcome!), art and music workshops, flower arranging, bring and share lunch, a film, Bible study/ discussion, ending with afternoon tea.

Please see Debbie or contact her on 708206 if you would like to get involved in what promises to be a wonderful day to celebrate God's love and remember to save the date in your 2016 diary.

The Persecuted Church Family Matters

INDONESIA

Attacks have frequently been carried out on churches in Indonesia at this time of year, especially on Christmas Eve. Please pray for a peaceful Christmas and that a recent interfaith riot in Papua would not lead to further attacks on churches.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

As we celebrate Christ's birth in Bethlehem, remember the small Christian community in the Palestinian Territories. The past year has seen increased pressure on Christians, especially in Gaza, because of the presence of extremist Islamic movements.

Pray that their faith will remain strong and that they will have courage to share the `good news of great joy that is for all people.`

UK AND IRELAND

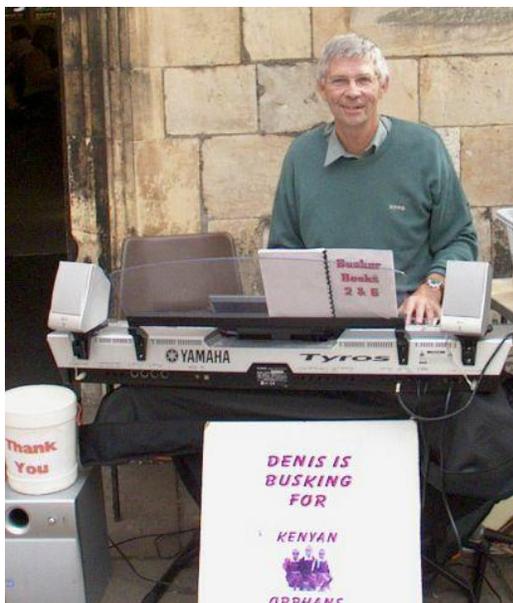
Give thanks for every person who said `Yes` to their persecuted family in 2015. As we look to the increased challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in 2016, please pray that God would continue to stir the hearts of His people in the UK and Ireland to pray, give and speak out for the persecuted church.

“I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY THAT WILL BE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE...A SAVIOUR HAS BEEN BORN.” Luke 2:10-11

Church Council

The last meeting took place on 25 November. A copy of the minutes will be displayed on the notice board in the foyer if you would like to know what was discussed.

Music & My Faith – Denis Sharp



I come from a musical family on my mother's side. Mum was grade 8 and somehow managed to acquire a superb Bechstein upright piano right from the start of her marriage. Her dad was an organist and choirmaster at a big church in Edinburgh. Mum's mum also played. On our rare visits as children, Gran and Grandpa would play duets crossing over hands etc. Most impressive!! Mum sent me for piano lessons from aged 6 but I hadn't the willpower to practise.

It wasn't until I was 44 that music became part of my faith. I had a wonderful experience of the Holy Spirit which gave me a love of the modern worship songs and Christian musicals. e.g. "Messiah"; Roger Jones etc. I joined various choirs and music groups and this motivated me to go to the piano and play the parts I had to sing.

The next development was in 1988 when we moved to Copmanthorpe and I bought my first keyboard. Bob Lawrence, a leading light in the circuit asked if I would play for his monthly praise services at different churches. Again a strong motivation to improve my playing. I had bought an amplifier/speaker to improve the rather weak volume of the keyboard. My first 'gig' was at Lidgett Grove M.C. Disastrously, during a quiet prayer time, my amp picked up a nearby police radio - "*This is Victor Romeo One to base. Are you receiving me? Was this the Lord responding to our prayers!*"

To my surprise I found myself helping out at church. I was desperate to get the worship songs going with a swing, but the church organ we had then was an old domestic thing which made that impossible. Derek Bowen helpfully suggested we get advice from the "Methodist Organ Advisory Service". A helpful Mr Henderson attended the church, tried the organ and agreed we needed a new one and also a clavino for the worship songs. Church Council concurred. We had a fundraising day and purchased the two instruments for £7,500! Nothing short of miraculous.

Christian Aid at that time held an annual market at a redundant Anglican church at the bottom of Micklegate. It was in May and lasted ten days or so. I set my keyboard up outside in front of the church and began a bit of busking. Five minutes later an angry man in a pinstriped suit march up to me pointing to an open window overlooking the market: "Do you realise I'm trying to run a solicitors office dealing with matrimonial problems and we DON'T want to hear "*Happy Days are here again ...!*"

From about 1990 the Methodist Church had appointed an 'Evangelist', Rob Frost. He initiated two ambitious national missions - 'Easter People', and 'Share Jesus' The former involved several thousand Methodists gathering at a large conference centre e.g. Scarborough; Bournemouth; Blackpool; to enjoy a week of Bible study, worship and hear internationally famous speakers. 'Share Jesus' involved five or six hundred Methodists converging on an area, splitting into teams of a dozen or so and joining a local church in a week of outreach according to the particular wishes of the church.

In 1997 I found myself and my keyboard on a Light Ship in Tiger Bay , Cardiff. On August Bank Holiday Monday I was on the helicopter deck connected to two enormous amplifiers, playing worship songs audible within a two mile radius. There were thousands on the dockside dancing and jiving to the music. Then disaster again – a gust of wind took all my music off the keyboard into the dock below!

In July 2004 our Minister, Rev. Maurice Staton, took a dozen of us on a three week visit to Kenya. We visited orphanages which were part of the KOST group founded by Mabel Parris, a pastor from Leeds and a friend of Maurice's. On the first Sunday morning Maurice led a service at a big Methodist church in Nairobi . There were three or four hundred in the congregation. There was a keyboard at the front and Maurice called me to play "*When the spirit of the Lord...;*" I had never seen this keyboard before so had to ask the Lord to allow me to do justice to the song. Prayer answered. I found a perfect rhythm. There was dancing in the aisles and we had encore after encore!

It was on this trip that we met 'Hope Women's Group' and orphans who sang, danced, and recited for us at our hotel in Kisumu.. These were street children rescued by a group of Christian ladies from a local evangelical church. Several of us were moved to tears and resolved to support this marvellous group. Since then we have been blessed in our fundraising effort sending over £100,000. Part of it raised by my busking at the station, Tesco's, St Crux and entertaining at various Age Concern homes.

I give thanks to God that He has used my very limited musical ability to spread His Word and follow His Gospel message to love and serve the needy.

The next newsletter will be issued on Sunday 24 January. Please send articles, photographs, reports of events etc. to the church office by Thursday evening 21 January.