

# STONES METHODIST CHURCH

## MONTHLY NEWS

### DECEMBER 2014 & JANUARY 2015

Dear Friends,

I am sure some of you will know of the short radio program on BBC Radio 4 on a Sunday morning entitled 'Bells on Sunday'. The sound of bells being rung from a different church tower within the United Kingdom is broadcast about 5:43 am weekly most Sunday mornings. Now it may well be that you have not heard of this program and it was a reminder, to me anyway, that there is so much that takes place around us of which we are unaware unless through personal encounter or by someone telling us.

How much more significant than any radio programme then, that in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago, a child was born, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whose immediate impact was upon Mary and Joseph, and the Shepherds and Magi who came to worship him, but whose birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension to heaven changed the course of human history and gave hope for the whole world:

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him;  
John 3:

I wonder though how many people today amidst the shopping and the celebration are aware of the real meaning and impact of Christmas and of the history changing reality of the coming of Immanuel, God with us. How can we share the Good News of Jesus and what is our role in enabling that personal encounter with the 'Prince of Peace'? I pray that at this Christmas time, and as we move into the New Year, we may know the love and peace of God through Jesus in an ever deepening personal relationship and that the Holy Spirit may refresh and renew us all as we each seek to celebrate and proclaim the Good News of Jesus' birth, and of that wonderful day when we are invited, as Graham Kendrick writes, to:

Wake up wake up it's Christmas morning  
Christ's eternal day is dawning  
Angels sing in exultation  
Fill the streets with celebration  
Now to God on high be glory  
To the earth proclaim the story  
Ring the bells in jubilation  
Tell the news to every nation  
Christ has come

Love Francis

Readings – December 2014

7 <sup>th</sup>	14th	21st	28th
Isaiah 40:1-11	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13	Psalms 126	Luke 1:46b-55	Psalms 148
2 Peter 3:8-15a	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	Romans 16:25-27	Galatians 4:4-7
Mark 1:1-8	John 1:6-8, 19-28	Luke 1:26-38	Luke 2:22-40

## Rotas - December 2014

Date	7th	14th	21 <sup>st</sup> (Nativity)	28 <sup>th</sup> (Comm)
Preacher	Christopher Robinson	Rev Francis Neil	David Brackenridge	Rev Colin Sherwood
Steward	Jean Slim	Sue Rosborough	Craig Brown	Jane Godfrey
Reader	Joan Cross	Jean Little	Sunday School	Ian Slim
Prayers	Ian Slim	Joan Cross	Sunday School	David Wilkinson
Welcome	Nona Hirst	Louise Littlewood	Caroline Smith	Mark Travis
Flowers	Nona Hirst			
Coffee	Nona, Maureen, Kathleen	Hilary & Jill	Jacky & Caroline	David, Irene, Jenny

## Readings – January 2015

4th	11th	18th	25th
Jeremiah 31:7-14	Genesis 1:1-5	1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)	Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalms 147:12-20	Psalms 29	Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18	Psalms 62:5-12
Ephesians 1:3-14	Acts 19:1-7	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	1 Corinthians 7:29-31
John 1:(1-9) 10-18	Mark 1:4-11	John 1:43-51	Mark 1:14-20

## Rotas – January 2015

Date	4th	11 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup> (Family service)	25 <sup>th</sup> (Covenant)
Preacher	Stuart Brook	Ian Slim	Rev. Graham Smith	Rev. Francis Neil
Steward	Craig Brown	Irene Wilkinson	Sue Rosborough	Craig Brown
Reader	Sue Rosborough	David Normanton	Maya Little	Jenny Crane
Prayers	Jenny Crane	Craig Brown	Matthew Neil	Sue Rosborough
Welcome	Roy Galloway	Jacky Heywood	David Normanton	Jean Slim
Flowers		David & Irene Wilkinson	Jane & John Godfrey	Maureen Holroyd
Coffee	Jane & John	Sue & Louise	Jean & Ian	Mike & Sue

## December Diary

5<sup>th</sup> December 12.00 pm Luncheon Club

13<sup>th</sup> December 7.30pm Halifax Concert Band

## SPECIAL CHRISTMAS SERVICES

### Stones

Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	10.30am	Children's Nativity and Family Service
	6.30pm	Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Eve 24 <sup>th</sup> December	4.00pm	Half Hour Family Service
Christmas Day 25 <sup>th</sup> December	10.30am	Half Hour Family Service

### A REQUEST FOR SUPPORT (in her own words)

Hello, my name is Megan Little and I would like tell you about the trip I will be taking in the summer of 2016, when I will travel to Tanzania with a group of students from my school, North Halifax Grammar School. This is a four week long expedition and whilst I am there I will be involved in improving standards of living and education in rural communities, protecting vulnerable habitats and reforestation projects. There is also a challenge element to the trip, which will be a trek up Mt. Meru, the 4th highest African mountain. I think this will be a very challenging but fun, and a rewarding trip enabling me to integrate and work with the African cultures and communities. This opportunity will help me develop important life skills such as confidence and team work. The trip itself is quite expensive, this is where I would appreciate your help. I, along with my Gran, Jean Little, will be holding a bake sale every family service from January. If you were to support me by purchasing the things on offer I would be extremely grateful as any donations to my fundraising will help. For any more details please visit my website: [megantanzania2016@weebly.com](http://megantanzania2016@weebly.com)

Many thanks

Megan

## Financial Stewardship

The Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2014 were approved at the November Church Council.

The financial affairs are stated in the document included with this newsletter. if you would like a copy of the full accounts please ask me for one.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to another successful result. Your faithful giving through the collections and envelope scheme combined with gift aid meant we again covered the cost of our assessment. Our current assessment is £29438. This figure will be revised in January 2015 when all the Church Treasurers meet to review figures based on all the 31 August 2014 Accounts and updated membership and average attendance figures. I expect our assessment to be revised to around £30500. This equates to a weekly average of £587. We meet this commitment with approximately £100 tax back per week and the rest £487 has to be our weekly average from cash & envelope giving. We need about another £40 per week to meet the revised assessment.

Our building is constantly in use thanks to our community user groups & individuals who contribute significantly in a number of ways not least financially. We are very grateful for their input and contribution to our church life.

Many thanks for your continued faithful giving to ensure our witness in the community remains strong under the leadership of Rev Francis Neil.

PLEASE NOTE THE 2014/15 BUDGETED WEEKLY COST IS £1129 - £587 ASSESSMENT £542  
CHURCH RUNNING EXPENSES

David Normanton - Stones Church Treasurer

## Church Christmas Cards – volunteers needed!

As an ongoing major act of mission in Ripponden, Stones and Rishworth we will once again be distributing Christmas cards along with St. Bartholomew's and St. John's which will advertise and act as an invitation to the three churches Christmas services. The order has been increased to 2,300 to reflect the greater number of households in the Ripponden area and if you can help to deliver cards either to where you live in Ripponden or if you are prepared to help on a wider basis will you please speak to Andrew as soon as possible so that delivery routes can be finalised. As the card says - "Come and worship Christ, the new born King."

# FOOD & SUPPORT DROP IN

email:fooddropin@googlemail.com tel:01422 342719

The aim of the project is to enable vulnerable people who have a chaotic lifestyle to access a drop in on a weekly basis and collect a free food parcel and gain support and guidance to enable them to move on from their current situation. The Food & Support Drop In is run by volunteers and they rely on donations to provide the food and essentials which they distribute.

THIS IS A PROJECT WHICH BRINGS RESULTS !

Over the last twelve months no less than fifty people have been baptised into the Church as a result of their association with this Drop in Centre.

We can be proud to be associated with it

Please help them to help.

Any donations can be delivered to Ebenezer Methodist Church on Wednesday evenings 7 pm-8 pm or on Saturday mornings 9:30 am-11:45 am. Donations can also be left at any time at Stones Methodist Church near the kitchen area.

## Further help needed.

The Church Christmas decorations will be put up on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December 1.30pm onwards in readiness for the Concert on Sat 13<sup>th</sup> and the Christmas services and any help would be much appreciated – jobs for all.

The Church candles will be put up on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December for the Candlelight services again from 1.30pm and if you can help then please come along.

## Date for your diary

What goes up must come down and all the Christmas decorations will be taken down on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January from 1.30pm. This is a big job and as much assistance as possible would be appreciated.

# OPEN TO GOD Every Wednesday 10 am to 10:30 am

## Leaders for January 2015

January	Leader	
7th	Ken Speake	New Ebenezer
14th	Alistair Newton	New Ebenezer
21st	Christine Perry	New Ebenezer
28th	Colin Sherwood	New Ebenezer
February		
4th	Graham Smith	Boothtown & Southowram
11th	Paula Prosser	Boothtown & Southowram
18th	Andrew Jacobs	Boothtown & Southowram
25th	Ken Speake	Boothtown & Southowram
March		
4th	Francis Neil	Highgate
11th	Stella Christie	Highgate
18th	Paul Welch	Highgate
25th	Graham Smith	Highgate
April		
1st	Colin Sherwood	St Andrew's
8th	No Meeting	No Meeting
15th	Ken Speake	St Andrew's
22nd	Alistair Newton	St Andrew's
29th	Stella Christie	St Andrew's