



January Key Events

8th Community
Sport Plus
Service

13th & 14th

Ichthus
Leaders
Conference

22nd Cytun
United One
World Service

26th Growing
Leaders

Don't forget
to pray for
Gareth, Jean,
Rebecca and
Daniel



Relay



Welcome to the January edition of the Relay magazine, and it is a bumper edition this month! The focus is Youth and Children's Work - we have updates from Andrew W and Liz J.

Scripture Focus for January

Isaiah 9:2+6 and
John 12:44-46

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. ⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁴⁴ Then Jesus cried out, When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me.

⁴⁵ When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me.

⁴⁶ I have come into the world as a light, so that no-one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

Interim Leader's LogIt's January again!

It's January again! Christmas; eagerly anticipated, frantically prepared for, lovingly celebrated, is over and gone. Soon all will be back to normal, the school run, the daily journey to work, the washing and the ironing, the endless cycle of things that need to be done and probably ought to have been done yesterday! So it won't be altogether surprising if we didn't feel just a little flat.

Hold on though...not so long ago we were celebrating the new Light that came into the world but that Light didn't come just for one day or even one season in the year. Jesus became man precisely in order to share our ordinariness and transform it into something beautiful. He went to school, lived in a family, learned a trade was a mother's son and brother's brother and did all that so that we could become all that God wants us to be.

Jesus is the Light of the world; the Light that Isaiah prophesied would dawn, but Jesus calls us to be light too.

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl instead they put it on a lampstand and it gives light to the whole house. In the same way let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and praise your Father in heaven.

Matt 5:14-16



In our everyday lives; in our relationships with family, with colleagues, with friends; in our homes, our workplaces and our leisure pursuits we are called to shine! Let the love of God, the love He showed to us, shine out of us so that others see that there is something different about us, something that they want to share.

Jerusalem, stand up! Shine! Your new day is dawning. The glory of the Lord shines brightly on you. The earth and its people are covered with darkness, but the glory of the Lord is shining on you! Nations and kings will come to the light of your dawning day. Isaiah 60:1-3

There's a wonderful promise in those words! As we live in the Light others will come.

We're called to shine by being different; to live lives that reflect the light, the glory, the love of God in all we do, all we say all we aspire to. As individuals we will shine in different ways and in many different places; as ChristChurch we shine in Hightown and we shine in Acton. The Messiah we proclaim,

Emmanuel, God with us, will be lifted high as we bring a message of hope and as we work out our mission of love in both locations.

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

Every blessing be on ChristChurch and all its people in 2012.

Sue



Can you help??

We need more people who can provide lunch for students after church on a Sunday.

If you think you can help please contact Liz Williams asap.



Local Leadership Team Reports

The **Carol Service at Acton Community Centre** on December 18th was well attended (about 65 we think) and had a really lovely family atmosphere. The Hairy Feet Drama group performed three scenes, and most of the hall was filled with their family and friends. We raised £32 For Hope House Hospice and gave out the 'Why Christmas?' booklet to several people. Thanks to all whom helped set up, brought cakes, involved in the dramas (done with only three weeks of preparation), served and tidied!

Community Sports Plus has been postponed from January 1st to January 8th this month and will be followed by a **Friendship Meal**. This will be a 'bring and share' lunch at Acton Community Centre for anyone from CS+ and ChristChurch who wants to take the opportunity to get to know one another.

We will continue to have a **Friendship Meal** every other month at Acton (Community Centre for now!) to enable us to continue to get to know families in the community, it won't necessarily always be a bring and share. Please keep an eye on the notices to find out details. These lunches will also be great for us as a congregation to deepen friendships and to provide students with a meal!



It has been a year of change and progress, though slow, is being made for the Kingdom through ChristChurch being in Hightown.

The work within **Communities First** is challenging as it is now going through a period of transition. I am on the steering committees for the **new community centre** here and communities first cluster group. Both are out of my comfort zone with loads of local authority language but I'm learning to hold my own! These are both influential positions where the church can offer something towards the direction things go and I'd value your prayer support.

Peter is also on the community centre committee and is also heading up the drive forward of **Men in Sheds**. He now has Vy Cochran on the case who is great at getting things done for the community. **Artscene** is going well with 5 male members! When Peter started he was the only male!

Coffee and Craft, which was initiated by ChristChurch members has proved to be a good time of getting to know one another whilst making Christmassy things. We've had expert help to make Christmas cards and exploding boxes by Audrey, one of the residents here

I'm making great inroads in friendship with young people through **Youth Crew** on a Monday eve., having decorated cupcakes one week and made Christmas cookies with them another week. Rob Parkinson and Huw are also getting to know young folk through **Street Pastors** and Rob helps with the **youth club** at Community Centre.

Finally our **Carols and Festive tea** went well. The people from Hightown chose the carols and some of them read poems and readings from Luke. It was a happy time with about 35 people and about half of those were from the community including some children who attend Youth Crew.

We've helped at many events over the 15 months we've been here and it has been much appreciated. The children who attended the summer **Holiday Club** keep asking when are we going to have another one!

Our thanks goes out to all those who are supporting the vision for Hightown in one way or another, it is all part of ChristChurch's call to the Harvest Field and building up the body of Christ. Thank you all once again.

A very blessed and fulfilling 2012 to you all.



Youth and Children's Report by Andrew Williams

ChristChurch's current ministry with children and young people began in the summer of 2000 with a mission by YWAM (Youth with a Mission) to Wrexham. A group of young people came to stay in Wrexham, to train and provide children's clubs in Acton and Garden Village. Elizabeth, myself and our 3 children joined the team, sleeping on the floor in Trinity School Room.

I had just finished 2 years in Bible College, and ChristChurch asked me to provide follow up to the mission. This was the beginning of CATCH and later C2.

When I first started CATCH I believe that God gave me this scripture:- Acts 2:14-21

¹⁷“in the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. ¹⁹I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ²⁰The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. ²¹And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

From which I understand that God wants to build a believing community here in Acton (as everywhere else) and that this, in part, is what God's community will look like.

As well as the overall vision, God showed me that I needed the next small step. There were three goals:

- a club to serve the children, a place to make contact with the children in the community.
- a club to talk with children about faith, Jesus and Christianity.
- a club for children who are Christian. This could take many forms for example, a children's Bible study group, discussion group, worship service, or families meeting together in a Christian context. This could be a town-wide, or local, or ChristChurch group.

The first 2 have been achieved (but always changing), in CATCH. The third is still unrealised.

The weeknight clubs meet on Fridays. CATCH is for children in school years 2 to 6, and C2 is for children in year 7+. Both clubs serve children from the Acton areas. Most children come from the community immediately around Acton Community Centre where we meet. The children are visited each week. We take a puzzle for them to do and bring back to club.

In CATCH we play a lot of games, and have about half an hour teaching about Jesus. For many of these children this is their only point of contact with Church and the Gospel. We aim to teach in a fun way that will interest the children and introduce them

to our Saviour. Numbers at CATCH have fallen this term, please pray that more children will join in January.

C2 is very different. The youngsters enjoy talking, playing pool, or badminton. They also enjoy cooking, making toast or hot drinks. There is a mixture of boys and girls. If anyone could volunteer to do anything (such as play football, or do make up, or simple cooking) just for one evening we would be very grateful. Numbers are growing and so too is relationship, please pray that there will be a growing interest in the Gospel. C2 is about building relationships with the young people and their families. The youngsters know it is a Christian club, and we do have conversations with them about God and the Gospel.

C2 could change and develop rapidly this year as Bekki begins her work with Young Life and ChristChurch. We look forward to her inspiration and to the help and support of Young Life.

It is great to meet so many children and their families. Our aim is to minister for the whole person, body mind and spirit.

My dream for the future is from that passage in Acts 2. I long to see

- God at work in the community of Acton
- Children and their families engaged in Christian activities and lifestyles; (did you know that research indicates that most people form their beliefs before the age of 13?)
- children engaged in Mission (Mission Shaped Church and Mission Shaped Children);
- more adults from ChristChurch engaged with youth and children. We would love to have people join us for just one session (or more), either to do something specific or just to be there.
- prayer central in the community.
- Children and young people engaged in random acts of kindness.

It has been said that the Great Commission can be translated in a slightly different way. It could read *“As you go about your normal everyday life, tell those you meet about me, overwhelmingly immersing them into my worship and service”*. Which neatly sums up what we want to do in our children’s clubs.

I really want to thank the teams who make Fridays possible and even enjoyable. **The teams are enthusiastic and committed, God is honoured, and the children are blessed.**

We would like to have a team of people who will commit to **praying for the clubs**. If you think you could do this then please talk to me or one of the team.

We are planning to take the children on two (or possibly three) camps again this summer: 8-11’s; 11-14’s and 14-18’s.

Please continue to pray for us, for the clubs on Fridays and for our visiting on Thursdays, if you want to more, please ask.

Junior Church report by Liz Jones



*"Our Father, who does art in heaven,
Harold is his name."*

"And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us some email"

Sunday school teacher:

And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?

Child: **Because people are sleeping.** (Taken from "Kids' Klangers" by Richard Benson)

I was given the book "Kids Klangers" for Christmas this year. "Children say the funniest things" so many people say and I certainly have had a good chuckle as I've looked through this book. The children who attend our Junior church often make me smile and laugh. On one occasion when we were making Plasticine models together a young girl made a person holding a globe in one hand and a cylinder in the mouth. When I asked her to tell me about it she explained that it was God with the world in his hand and He was eating a sausage!

As well as the amusing I am also privileged to witness the touching and profound. To see a group of children sharing communion with one another and telling each other about what Jesus has done for them or to watch and listen as they pray, is something beautiful. They never cease to amaze me with their questions, which often challenge me in both my attempt to give them an answer and in the way I question things myself.

As someone who is with children in one capacity or another everyday, an understanding of how they view spirituality and faith is immensely important to me. I suspect it should be something that is important to us all as we consider Jesus words "[...] anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it" (Mark 10:15)

One thing that is clear to me is that children rarely develop their faith in the way that I might expect. Here is an example of Rebecca Nye's thoughts on children's spirituality from a book called "Through the eyes of a child" (edited by Ann Richards and Peter Privett):

"While others in the [children's group] then choose to paint, draw, write or work with the story materials to 'explore some more how it makes them feel', these particular boys just 'opted out' and made aeroplanes-every week. Some people in the congregation

began to hear of this and mutter complaints. This was surely not Christian spiritual education? But two things happened which taught me, yet again, the value of setting aside the adult 'norms' of spiritual evidence [...]

The first thing happened in conversation with two of the boys as they gave their aeroplanes test flights. I asked, perhaps pointedly under the circumstances, if they thought there was really any point in having a time at church for 'children's group'? Though they were apparently just mucking about by now, they were adamant it mattered, saying, 'you need a time and place to just rest and be yourself'. As I considered those words (and saw past the aeroplanes), I realized this was possibly the most genuine understanding of Sabbath I'd heard in a long while. And I wondered how many of the adults (including myself) came even close to an authentic peace and presence in church. The aeroplanes suddenly seemed crucial to this-they were the safe, familiar, relaxing way of 'being' here. This was an offering of 'themselves', a response freely chosen by them, not coerced or offered to impress me or the congregation.

The second thing happened some weeks later when I was clearing up after most of the group had gone back into church. I picked up yet another paper aeroplane from the edge of the table, though this was a high-tech model, made from card and with art straws on one side down the length and across the wings-for balance maybe, or as undercarriage, I thought. It was also white on one side, black on the other-perhaps they'd not had time to finish making the whole thing black, like those stealth bombers they sometimes talked about. I sighed and asked my son if he knew who this aeroplane belonged to, knowing that he and the other boys had been busy together in their usual manner. He gave me a puzzled look, the one that says, 'Mum, don't you understand anything?' He explained that 'aeroplane' was Jack's 'Risen Christ' and he pointed out the side with Jesus' body hanging from the dark cross, and the empty cross on the other in brilliant shiny white card. Who can judge what spiritual development might look like? [...] But perhaps the Sabbath function of making aeroplanes for those boys had leapt that week into a different set of possibilities, finding that the religious language and symbolism offered week by week could be used to make meaning, at a moment, and in a way that was so right for them".

God is so good in the way He works in the hearts and minds of children and young people. Let's give them authentic opportunities to develop their faith in Him through worship and service. Let's try, with God's help, to give them a real example to see in our own lives. Let's pray that they would know God and make Him known.

BOOK NOW for the Weekend Away - 24th to 26th Feb

Hymns: The songs of faith

This month to start the new year, Richard has chosen a favourite hymn. After last month's hymn was full of great truths of the faith, this hymn enables us to express our personal gratitude to Jesus for His love & His being our personal friend.

***My song is love unknown, My Saviour's love to me;
Love to the loveless shown, that they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake My Lord should take, frail flesh and die?***

***He came from His blest throne, salvation to bestow;
But men made strange, and none the longed for Christ would know:
But O! my Friend, my Friend indeed, Who at my need His life did spend.***

***Here might I stay and sing, no story so divine;
Never was love, dear King! Never was grief like Thine.
This is my Friend, in Whose sweet praise I all my days could gladly spend.***

After the first two verses above, there are three verses (see below at the end of the article) which relate how Jesus love was expressed in his life and death through the events of Palm Sunday and all of Holy week leading to Jesus body being placed in the tomb. This makes it a very suitable hymn for the weeks before Easter. I think the words also lend themselves for use in times of preparation for communion or in our reflection and response after communion & their devotional nature also mean these are lovely words to say or sing in our daily quiet times.

I was really surprised to find the words are very old. They were published in 1644 in a pamphlet 'A young man's meditation' written by an Anglican minister Samuel Crossman. But it wasn't until the 20th century when a Cheshire organist John Ireland was asked to compose a tune to fit the words (he did so within 15 minutes!) that they became a popular hymn. Ireland's tune is the one most of us will know, but locally I have heard the hymn sung to another tune 'Rhosymedre', written by a local Vicar of Rhosymedre. You can sing along to both tunes on this website if you have a computer: <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/m/y/mysongis.htm>

As something for you to reflect on, try & imagine what was in the author's mind when in a song in which he testifies to his wish to praise Jesus as his personal friend, he wrote in the first line: ***My song is love unknown***. What do you think he was trying to express? Finally below in small print, are the missing verses.

Sometimes they strew His way, and His sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day Hosannas to their King:
Then "Crucify!" is all their breath, and for His death they thirst and cry.

They rise and needs will have my dear Lord made away;
A murderer they saved, the Prince of life they slay,
Yet cheerful He to suffering goes, that He His foes from thence might free.

In life, no house, no home my Lord on earth might have;
In death no friendly tomb but what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heav'n was His home; but mine the tomb wherein He lay.



Art

ChristChurch Monthly Rotas

	1 st Jan	8 th Jan	15 th Jan	22 nd Jan	29 th Jan
		communion	offering	communion	
Setting Up	Peter	Sue	Art	Peter	Richard
PA		Eth	Rob	James	Eth
IT	Frank	Frank	Campbell	Lucas	Campbell
Music Group Leader		Colin	John	Huw	Colin
Service Leader	Ros	Rob	Mike	Rob	Sue
Speaker	Andrew	Sue	Sue	Major Ian or Pam McCredie (Wrexham SA)	Peter W
Tea	No Tea/coffee	Jan, Steve, Dorothy	Peter, Elaine M, Marilyn	Myra, Ffion, Meg	Andrew, Elizabeth, Lucy
Crèche	All Age	Lucy	Val	Sally E	Jo
Little Ones	↓	Dorothy	Meg	Andrew and Liz	Dorothy
Junior Church	↓	Community Sport +	Jean, Mandy	Lizzie, Mandy	John, Lizzie

If you have any queries please call Sue Allen - ChristChurch Interim Team Leader on 01978 756719,

see our website www.christchurchwrexham.org.uk,

or see www.facebook.com/ChristChurchWrexham

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