

Key Events

**3rd Early
Celebration,
Discovery Church,
The Meeting Place,
Walk this Way.
#Sundaze**

7th Staff Meeting

**10th Leaders and
LinkUp Meeting**

**21st Leaders'
Huddle and Meeting**

Relay



**Welcome to the February edition of the
ChristChurch Relay magazine**

Scripture Focus for February

Psalm 1:3 They will be standing firm like a flourishing tree planted by God's design, deeply rooted by the brooks of bliss, bearing fruit in every season of their lives. They are never dry, never fainting, ever blessed, ever prosperous.

**An encouragement to extend our
roots into the living water.**



Cherished – shared by Angela on 17th Jan

Cherished, celebrated, cared for deeply,

Held within His tender heart.

Everlasting love engulfs us,

Repairs us when we fall apart.

I am in His holy family,

Strength and succour found in Him.

He holds me high, I thank Him gladly,

Each and every part within.

Deeply cherished with an unfathomable love, I praise and thank my Father above



Let each one of us keep spurring one another on in this great adventure and eternal journey with Jesus. It's amazing how God changes and accelerates what He is doing in us as we journey and adventure together in community. Discipleship is sharing life and mission TOGETHER as family. We were not designed to make it on our own!! That is one of the core values behind our introduction of Missional Communities (MC) at CCW. In MC through extended family relationships that share life and mission together we sharpen and strengthen our lives as disciples. Through that process we aim to become disciples who make disciples. Inviting and introducing people into New Territories as they get to know the King and His kingdom.

Let's keep going for it, as individuals and as family, in each and every one of the territories

Love and prayers,
Blessings,

GARETH 

Church and Community Emergency Night Shelters – Andrew Williams

One of the volunteers from ChristChurch writes:-

We come in from the cold and start transforming the quiet church hall into a homely welcoming place. Lacy table cloths and tulips on the tables, chicken casserole bubbling away in the kitchen, fresh socks on the foot of each bed, and we wonder about the guests who we will be privileged to serve this evening. Katie comes in and is grateful for a meal and after settling on her bed spots the keyboard and plays a little. "I love music, it makes me smile," she grins. "–but I'm disappointed in myself because I was awake so very early this morning and can't play very well just now." She tells me how she is going to start singing in a local choir again this week and is looking forward to it. Her resilience and beauty shines through. "I want to invent a crystal piano, it would shine, rainbows dancing all around it as the light touched it and the music would be beautiful, transparent, clear and radiant." Her bed is next to a sort of Doctor Who Tardis prop for a play or something. "I wish I could go back in time," she laughs, looking at it. The guests are very thankful for a warm meal and bed. Only two weeks in, it has already been a much-needed stepping stone and helping hand by which some of them have been able to move forward and find new hope.

This is an excerpt from 'The Leader':-

Around 200 volunteers have donated their time to set up camp beds each night in a different church, while a guest table is laid so they can offer the homeless a home-cooked meal.



The volunteers have spoken about how they are helping out at Wrexham Methodist Church in Regent Street.

Elaine Matthieson, from ChristChurch in Acton, said: "You can't go around Wrexham without being aware of how many more people there are homeless on the streets. It is so cold at this time of the year, but there are a lot more.

"This is what Christian hope is all about. It is about saying this situation is not good enough and something needs to be done. It is about getting up and saying we are going to volunteer to try and improve the situation.

Council leader Mark Pritchard said: "This is a wonderful scheme extra provision which is needed during the cold months. They have to be registered as rough sleepers with Ty Nos and never quite know the numbers.

You can read the whole article at:- <http://ow.ly/rzX030ny2UV>

The good news from the project is that:- One person who moved into accommodation after last year's Pilot Shelter is still in accommodation!

And that for this year a generous donor is covering the cost of a 9-seater people carrier, aka 'the bus', for the duration of the project

However, to highlight the importance of the project sadly, Six people known to have slept rough in Wrexham have died in the past year! (Although they were not necessarily sleeping rough when they died.)

Since Nov 18, we have sent a total of £737.50 to the Night Shelter.

There has been a regular supply of "ring fenced" donations.

Regards, George



Poem from Mary

When I'm at ease in my bed
with a pillow for my head
I think of folks not so blessed
whose hardships I would detest-
(For a bed a cardboard box?
and owning no shoes or socks?)

My old Granny used to sigh,
"Where can our Wil be tonight?)

When it's Winter and it snows
anxiety grows and grows.

Often when she cannot rest
she would just lie there and weep,
praying "Oh please, please Lord
be with my brother e'er I sleep."



Trip to Romania with shoeboxes December 2018 Dorothy

Sun 2nd Dec - Up at 2am to set off for the airport for the flight to Amsterdam, where we met the rest of the team from Birmingham. Then we flew to Bucharest. We were met by our driver Florian, who drove us around for the week. It was a 3 hour journey to the hotel in Braila – near the Danube.

Mon 3rd Dec – 4 distributions today, temperature -7°. We picked up the boxes from where they were stored in the hall of the family run orphanage. This had 4 houses with about 10 children in each. The first distribution was in an orphanage in Dograbuta with about 50 children. Back in the bus and on to a school where we went around the

classroom giving out boxes. Unfortunately, we were only able to distribute to the younger children as we had no teenage boxes. Next, we went to 2 gypsy community centres, the first started off well, but when we started giving out the boxes things started getting out of hand as they all rushed forward to get a box! We then moved on to another community centre which was a bit more organised but we had to make sure they didn't come back again for another box. After discussing this problem, we came up with the idea of putting a mark on their hands to show they already had a box.



Tue 4th Dec – Loaded up the cartons. -4° today so getting warmer! First distribution to a school – lots of fun and shrieks of joy – lovely to see.

Next trip to another gypsy community and we thought we had things under control giving the boxes out, but the parents are the ones who cause the trouble – especially the gypsy mamas!! We decided to abandon the trip and make a run for it, so we threw the remainder of the cartons in the van and left.

Wed 5th Dec – Up early today as we had a very long journey to our first distribution. First, we went to a church to pick up the boxes, it was very icy and slippery. Onto 3 schools – children very excited, listened to some singing, teachers very excited to see the children getting boxes.



On to another gypsy community in Babadag, but this time much better organised, instead of giving the boxes to them outside we went into their homes – if you could call them that. Only one room, no flooring, electricity, lighting, running water or even a toilet. One bed for them all to sleep in, a wood burning stove for cooking and heating and they did their washing in a baby bath – no other furniture apart from the bed. Between 6-12 people lived in these 1 roomed houses. We were told by our translator that when a girl reached the age of about 12, she would be sold and the money used to buy a house or something like that. The girl would be married off to the son of the person who bought her and used as a slave.

When giving out the shoeboxes to a young girl in these communities, it was always tinged with sadness to what her future would hold.

Today was my birthday and we celebrated it with a wonderful cake and bunch of flowers – it felt very special.



Thurs 6th Dec – More schools to visit – one for children with disabilities

– a very happy place full of laughter. One boy was hiding all the items from his box all around the room and the staff explained he came from an orphanage and they had taken all his toys away, so that is why he was hiding everything.

Fri 7th Dec – visited the place when they have summer camps for the children, run by volunteers – looked a bit bleak in the snow, but I am sure great in the summer. More distributions in schools and churches. Last trip to a school where we met staff and had drinks, cake and a photo taken with all the teachers outside. We said our goodbyes and set off for a 2 1/2 hour drive to our last hotel near the black sea. Lovely hotel, with pool and spa – a treat after all the long days travelling to various places.

Sat 8th Dec – Up early for the 4 hour journey to the airport, this gave us time to assimilate all we had seen and heard on this trip.

The power of a simple shoebox is so relevant today as nearly 30 years ago – and this year we did better than ever with over 51,000 boxes from all around the country. This was only the 5th year of Teams4U doing boxes, the first year only 4,00 were collected. As we now have our own warehouse in Llay it is a lot easier to work from and I pray we will go from strength to strength to delight more children.

I have started already collecting items, just by putting in a bar of soap or tube of toothpaste in your trolley when you go shopping – it all mounts up and when you come to do a box you have a head start!!

It was a great trip and I thank God that I am able to go and give out the boxes - the smiles make it all worthwhile
Thanks Dorothy

Irene testimony

It was the beginning of the year and I had been more in hospital than I'd been at home. On this particular occasion the chest pains were bad, really bad. There was a nurse there, she came and put that spray on, but instead of easing it, it just felt worse. I really, really thought I'm not going to see tomorrow and I said this to the nurse. I said I'm not going to make it am I? And she said not on my watch. She carried on doing this and she went away for some reason or other and I was lying there thinking she's wrong, I'm not going to make it. And all of a sudden it went very, very quiet. I couldn't hear anybody. And then this voice, it was a beautiful voice, it really was. I try to bring it back now but it won't come, but I can remember it. But all it said was not today Irene. I looked around and thought there is no men in this ward, we're all women and I lay there and I thought No God doesn't talk to me. He doesn't talk to the likes of me, don't be ridiculous. But this voice... if I lie very, very quiet I can still hear it. I don't know who it was, but it is lovely to think it was God, that I had this very special visit. I've never heard anything like it, it was like music, so gentle, very gentle.

I heard the voice again once since, it was just you know "Be brave". Not a long conversation, just makes a statement. It is a great comfort. Living alone, you can get fed up, but I can sit down and think about it. I'm not on my own, I am not alone. I wish I could describe the voice, it was beautiful... it was indescribable! I can remember it, I did hear it. Of course, then the nurse came back and the moment was gone.

An Encounter with God – Andrew Williams

Liz and I have done a few secular and Christian counselling and listening courses, and I also did some counselling modules whilst at Bible College. It was therefore with great interest that we began the Sozo Prayer Ministry training course. So far we've looked at the need for forgiveness and especially our need to forgive. When we don't forgive we put ourselves in prison (Jesus' parable of the unforgiving servant Matthew 18:15-35), which ends with the lines 'This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

In last week's training we looked at our need for God to enable us to face different situations. I was reflecting on a difficult experience, and this is what God led me through, which is based on the training we received that week.

I don't like being faced with unexpected danger. I believe it stimulates some people, but in the fight or flight response I definitely saw myself as a runner.

I opened my Bible at 2 Timothy 4:9-22 at random. (I don't usually read at random, but was so upset that I just wanted to absorb God's word). I read how Paul dealt with difficult and probably unexpected situations. 2 Timothy 4:14-15 "Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message." 'The Lord will punish him' I don't need to be involved. It's God who pays back those who hurt us. V15 I need to learn to guard myself. V16 Paul is very hurt by others (the unexpected?) but prays for their forgiveness.

I thought I'd see how that helped me with facing the unexpected, following the training pattern. First I asked God to show me where this started. Next I forgave those who should have prepared me to face the unexpected. (This lack of preparation was clearly not a conscious or deliberate omission). Then I renounced the lie (which I discovered I firmly believed) that I would be unable to cope with the unexpected. Next I invited Father God into that situation ('Where were you God when the unexpected has happened?'). And God showed me how he was there preparing me beforehand for the unexpected – after all it wasn't unexpected to God. 'The Lord stayed with me and gave me strength.' 2 Tim 4:17.

God showed me a picture of me standing in the middle of a storm (waters or events) which were rushing past all around me, but like an obstacle in the river, washing around me as I stood firm. In the picture I took a moment to assess the situation and began to move slowly forward, taking ground. I realised that this is what in fact has happened when I've faced the unexpected. I haven't taken flight, but slowly, with God's help, stood firm & even claimed new ground.

Sozo is a prayer ministry approach which facilitates a way of encountering God, and inviting God into situations we find difficult. It's a wonderful way to bring God into our everyday life, fears and expectations.

Zambia report – AOG Lulamba

Greetings Rev Gareth,

It is with a joyful heart that I write this. Firstly, seasonal greetings from my family and the church here. We are grateful that you undertook your missionary trip to Zambia. I believe your sacrifice was not in vain. We were all blessed very much in an unspeakable way. You brought an unadulterated word so sincerely and so faithfully.



We are aware of how much your family missed you and the church too, being so far away from the people you know and love. Nevertheless, the outpouring of God's Presence was unmatched. We are grateful to the Lord who allowed you and Evangelist Alan to come and pour your hearts with the demonstration of power from Above.

The testimonies of transformation are so vivid. Thank you for impacting our congregation in such a manner. We shall try to post some photos. We remain thankful for you having come to minister and for the gift of resource books. May the Lord give you double increase for every increase we have experienced since you passed through and availed your time and resources.

I've much to write, but I can only say more open doors be given for ministry here and wherever He guides.

In His Service, Milton.

| | 3 rd | 10 th | 17 th | 24 th |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | communion | Offering | communion |
| Setting Up | Gareth | Andrew | Richard | Rob |
| PA | | Rob, Adrian | Eth, Colin | Eth, Colin |
| IT | Rob | Dan | Dan | Rob |
| Music Group | | Lesley, Genni | John | Adam |
| Celebration Leader | Gareth | Andrew and Liz | Rob | Sue |
| Speaker | Gareth | Andrew | Gareth | Gareth |
| Prayer Team | Marilyn, Ffion | Alan, Sue | Paul, Gill | Elizabeth, Lucy |
| Tea | Campbell, Glenys, Myra | Jennie, Bill, Elizabeth | Andrew, Elizabeth, Joe | Dorothy, Lynsey, Angela |
| Mega & Mini Quest | No Junior Church | Genni? Sarah | TBC, Jean | Katy, Sarah |
| EAT | | Kev | Kev | Kev |

If you have any queries please call Gareth Jones - ChristChurch Senior Church Leader on 01978 354805, or see

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