

'By All Means...'

Darlington Methodist Circuit News

- *Making Disciples*

OUR VISION: By all means
to save some
1 Corinthians 9 v22

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Passion For Prayer: From the earliest days of the church, the season of Lent has been used as a time to reconsider the rhythm of our lives, in preparation for Easter. Christians through the ages have been helped through Lent by the spiritual disciplines, which are regular practices that help us bring a rhythm to our lives that aligns with God's rhythm. This Lent, as a circuit, we are going to explore one of the most obvious of these spiritual disciplines: prayer. Prayer is good for our souls — it quiets them in faith, or stirs them to action. Prayer involves our whole beings — our posture, our internal thoughts, our words, the things we give, the things we withhold. Why not join us in this spiritual discipline this Lent? On Thursday nights from 23rd February, we'll be exploring 'Prayer for Everyone', with engaging teaching on various aspects of prayer.

And on Sunday 26th February, the circuit Passion for Worship service will be 'Passion for Prayer', with breakfast at 9am, Sunday School for all ages at 9.40am, and a communion celebration at 10.30am.

breakfast@9: The first breakfast@9 was held on 15th January at Bondgate, with around fifty people of all ages from across the circuit. Thanks to Bondgate for their generous hospitality to us. We shared breakfast together, before being introduced to our theme for the morning: 'accepting', the first of our collective's core values. After some worship with the band, we split into two groups, an 'Adult Sunday School', which went out to have some seminar-style teaching with Andrew Stobart, and a children and youth group that stayed in the Memorial Hall with Mark McKnight. Gathering together again for worship and prayer at the end, everyone agreed that breakfast@9 was a brilliant new venture. So we look forward to welcoming you at our next breakfast@9, on 12th February, 9am in the Memorial Hall at Bondgate.



Cockerton Ghana Trip with Grace Project by Clive Beecham

Have you ever been on a holiday and returned thinking it has been a change, but suddenly things are back to normal before we know it? Following a recent 3 week visit to Ghana we both can say that things will never be normal or the same again. Our visit took us to the town of Ho in the Volta region of Ghana.

We had made contact with The Grace Project to offer our skills within 'education' to be used within the Grace Project School. This school has been built and gradually modified by the efforts of a group of Salvation Army folk from Castleford. Over the past 6 years they have continued to resource the school and have encouraged visitors to the school and the Volta area.

What did we find? A school with many needs, but children happy to learn. Teachers willing to teach, but lacking in so many basic resources. Ghanaians having nothing but prepared to give everything. Our daily work within the school began from 7.45am and finished around 2.00pm. Children at the school travel from the local village (a leper village until recent years) and from villages that are 4/5 miles away. The school starts each day with assembly, followed by a typical timetable but the whole atmosphere is far more 'flexible' than in any of our schools.

Throughout our stay Pauline setup a functioning library/resource centre with the many books that have been sent over the past months. We had a great time within the foundation classes, teaching them songs and joining in with their own play activities. Clive spent many hours with teachers discussing their needs, frustrations and desires. In a number of these situations we were delighted to resolve the frustration simply by visiting the town and buying basic classroom equipment.

During our stay we have recorded, with many photos and videos, many of our activities/visits we made. We are happy to relate these to any group/organisation that contacts us on 01325 462196. Our memories will stay with us.... but more important is the fact that Cockerton Church has committed itself to supporting, through financial giving, prayer and regular links (Skype, e-mail and text) for a period of some 12 months, and have already amassed the total of around £1000 in the first few months.

We hope to return within the year and be able to meet all those who made our first visit so memorable. Hopefully some major project will have been completed or be in progress financed by our giving through the Church. If you would like to help in any way do contact Pauline or Clive, Selby White or any of our Stewards.

We hope to be planning a number of things during the coming months. Please listen for information and join with us. If you wish to talk further about The Grace Project do contact Pauline or Clive Beecham (01325 462196) or click on the link www.graceproject.co.uk



holiness + risk

We seek to:

- MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

- FIND NEW WAYS TO EXPRESS THE GOOD NEWS

- FACE THE FUTURE WITH REALISM AND FAITH

- DISCOVER AND USE OUR GIFTS

- FOCUS ON PEOPLE RATHER THAN PROGRAMMES

- PRIORITISE PRAYER

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF: MARK MCKNIGHT:

Someone said to me recently, 'Mark, I know you say you're a children's and youth worker. But what do you actually do?' Well, for your entertainment, here's a pretend average week.

- MONDAY:** *Morning* – admin, planning & preparation, try to achieve the impossible task of emptying inbox (only achieved once in my lifetime – it didn't last long)
Afternoon – Drop-in for QE 6th for students at Bondgate, meet with North Team staff, often including cake if one of us has been baking over the weekend, children's club at Harrowgate Hill
Evening – Alf Hind Big Band rehearsal (fulfilling a lifelong ambition!)
- TUESDAY:** *Morning* – 'Friends Of Northwood PS' meeting, Assembly, Churches Together prayer meeting
Afternoon – Admin, planning & preparation
Evening – Disciple (bible study) at Northland
- WEDNESDAY:** *Morning* – Some kind of meeting e.g. ministers, holiday club, etc., pray with colleagues, prepare service for Sunday
Afternoon – After school club at Harrowgate Hill Primary School, 'Kidz Club' at Haughton
Evening – Some kind of meeting e.g. church council, circuit meeting, local preachers
- THURSDAY:** *Morning* – Planning for Manna trip to Uganda, update safeguarding policy
Afternoon – Christian Union at QE, one-to-one mentoring with young people (usually in Starbucks)
Evening – Management meeting for Harvest youth festival
- FRIDAY:** DAY OFF!!!!
 Except for coffee with a young person because there's no other time in the week to meet :(
- SATURDAY:** *Morning* – Prayer Breakfast
Afternoon – Shopping, try to accomplish the impossible task of getting the house tidy!
Evening – Youth Club at Elm Ridge
- SUNDAY:** *Morning* – Preach somewhere around the circuit
Afternoon – Zone XL at Pierremont
Evening – Cell group at the manse



The 401st Anniversary of the King James Bible!

I can't believe it is a year since we set off on our Biblefresh journey as a Circuit, but it is!



During the last year we have had a number of opportunities to connect with God's word through reading, training and experiencing the Bible. Over 100 people signed up to a Bible Reading plan, a group of 7 committed to the Disciple course in September and our various events have attracted between 50 and 100 people. Lots of school children have participated in our handwritten Bible project and we look forward to the publication of the Darlington New Testament in 2012. We finished the year with our Old Testament Walk Through the Bible on the first weekend in February. We have also raised money through our various events to support the translation of the Bible for Burkina Faso.

So is Biblefresh all over? Well yes and no; yes the year of Biblefresh has come to an end but as disciples of Jesus Christ we will never be finished with God's word. We have been reminded throughout the year that God's word is our guide - to tell us the story of his salvation plan through Jesus Christ, to inspire us, to give us a glimpse of his Kingdom, to help us to see how we can transform God's world into God's Kingdom and share his light and love with those around us, inside and outside the Church. So the year of Biblefresh may be over but our reading, training and experiencing of God's word is most certainly not!

As a Circuit we are committed to making and developing disciples of Jesus Christ and continuing to provide opportunities to learn about God's word is key to this. What else would you like to learn about God's word, what questions do you have at the end of this Biblefresh year, what would you like to read next? If you have any thoughts on this questions please do share them with your Church stewards, local preachers or the Circuit staff and stewards so that they can be considered when we plan our ongoing discipleship programmes in the Churches and Circuit.

Thank you to everyone who participated in or helped to organise our Biblefresh year. We hope the year had inspired you to connect with the Bible and that you will continue to do so in the future.

David Goodall & Andrew Stobart

Prayer Stations - Means of Grace

The Presbyteral Session of the Darlington District Synod will meet at Northland Methodist Church on Tuesday 20th March.

Before the synod formally starts at 5pm, there will be a number of prayer stations setup on the means of Grace in the Church at Northland. These are open to everyone, if you would like to come and share in some prayer with others around these stations, please drop in anytime between 3pm and 4:30pm.

If you need any further information please contact Rev'd David Goodall (01325 381972, rev@davidgoodall.co.uk)

Fish & Chip Babies! New born babies in South Africa have been nick-named fish & chip babies due to their mothers wrapping them in newspapers, as they have nothing else to keep them warm. Several people around the circuit are knitting small jumpers for the tots to be sent over. If you would like a knitting pattern please contact the circuit office (tel: 282 491). The jumpers are being collected at Elm Ridge Methodist Church.



Diary Dates

MARCH		
1st	7.30 pm	Prayer for Everyone – Pierremont
3rd	8.15 am	Prayer Breakfast - Harrowgate Hill
7th	12 noon	Ecumenical Lenten Service - Cockerton
8th	7.30 pm	Prayer for Everyone – Pierremont
14th	12 noon	Ecumenical Lenten Service - Cockerton
15th	7.30 pm	Prayer for Everyone – Pierremont
20th	3 – 4.30 pm	Means of Grace Prayer Stations - Northland
21st	12 noon	Ecumenical Lenten Service - Cockerton
22nd	7.30 pm	Prayer for Everyone – Pierremont
28th	12 noon	Ecumenical Lenten Service - Cockerton
29th	7.30 pm	Prayer for Everyone – Pierremont
APRIL		
5th	7 pm	Maundy Thursday Communion - Cockerton
6th	9.30 am	Good Friday Service - Bondgate
	11 am	Town Centre Witness - Pease Statue
	11.30 am	Good Friday Service – St. Mary's Gainford & on the Green
	2.30 pm	Service – Harrowgate Hill
7th	8.15 am	Prayer Breakfast - Hurworth
7th	3 pm	Easter Musical – Northland
MAY		
5th	8.15 am	Prayer Breakfast – Pierremont
16th	7.30 pm	District Ordinands' Testimony Service – Richmond Meth. Church