



# THE MESSENGER

DECEMBER 2011



## Message from the Minister

The clocks have gone back. It is dark halfway through the afternoon. My garden is filling up with the leaves that the trees have shed almost faster than I can collect them to make the leaf mould that gives nourishment to our somewhat poor sandy soil. The central heating is back on. Halloween, Bonfire Night, and Remembrance Day are all in the past. Shops seem to have radically changed their stock. We must be getting close to Christmas!

All the foregoing inclines me to join with Scrooge in his well-known cry of "Bah! Humbug!", but that would be to confuse the time of year with the Christian Festival, the trappings with the essential Good News, and I fear I am not alone in the tendency to do that. Of course there are many other things that help me to keep a proper focus on the season. I am currently working on the two-page spread that the churches in Crewe will have in the Chronicle on 14<sup>th</sup> December, and I am reminded of all the services and all the celebrations that will be held. Not all of these are in churches. The witness on the Square on 10<sup>th</sup> December is to proclaim that amazing good news of Christmas: God loved and loves us so much that he sent his Son to tell us all about it. School nativity services will carry the same message. And as Jesus came not simply to proclaim but to show the love of God in acts of service, so I am reminded of all that this Christmas will be done in Crewe in his name by the fellowships of the town to those who are alone, are burdened by debt and poverty, are homeless and hungry.

I am grateful to all those from our own fellowship and those across the town who willingly and faithfully give themselves to these tasks. If it does not seem glamorous, or the sort of Christmas that is beamed at us from our television screens, then neither was that stable at Bethlehem, But that, as we may well sing in the coming weeks, is where love came down, and it lay, not neatly and gaudily wrapped in paper and tinsel, with muzak blaring out in the background, but bundled up in spare strips of cloth, amidst the detritus of a world, which rushed around, obviously attending to its business. But, as we know, not everyone did. Some came to wonder, to acknowledge and to worship the newborn Son of God. They were a tiny minority – Mary, Joseph, shepherds, wise men, Simeon and Anna - so if we feel we are a minority in our times then we stand in good company. We, of course, know we have more to celebrate; we are sure of the real significance of that baby; so let us in the coming weeks be whole-hearted and full-throated in our acts of service, of worship and of celebration. As the (amended) words of the carol go: Good Christians all rejoice!

May you have a joyful Christmas and a God-filled New Year.

**Andrew Taylor**

### UNION STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

Minister: Mr Andrew Taylor  
Tel: 01270 781318  
Secretary: Mrs. Helen Birtles  
Tel: 01270 560865

Find us on the Internet: [www.crewebaptist.co.uk](http://www.crewebaptist.co.uk)



## DEACON'S DIARY

"Actions speak louder than words" – a common proverb often used in the English language and embodied in principle by St Francis of Assisi who is widely credited with saying, "Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary."

Since taking part in the local school presentations organised by Churches Together in Crewe to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the King James' Bible, the meaning behind this proverb has become all the more real to me. It was a joy to see the expressions in the children's faces as they experienced "The Bible in 15 minutes" during their assemblies – the concentration, emotions of laughter, sadness and amazement as they watched Andrew, Helen and I acting out some of the stories of the Bible and the Good News of Jesus. It would be interesting to know how many could remember what they had seen and if the effect would have been the same if the passages of the Bible had just been read out to them. Indeed, one of the teachers was prompted to tell us that she would use drama more regularly as a learning resource within the curriculum, after seeing the enthusiasm showed by the children from ages 5 to 11 years old. How many of you who witnessed the sketch on Gift Day in church can remember all the stories portrayed – lots, I hope!

Following some research on the origins of the proverb, I discovered a quote from Confucius: "I hear and forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." By the time the Messenger goes to print, many of you will have seen the choir's latest Roger Jones' performance of "Two Sisters and a Funeral" – the story of Mary, Martha and Lazarus and their meeting with Jesus. The story follows the contrast between the lives of Mary (the thoughtful and quiet sister) and Martha (the 'doer' and sister of action) as they mourn the loss of their brother, Lazarus and rejoice as Jesus brings him back to life. Jesus teaches them that there is a place for actions and words and we must all learn to stop and focus on God's love for us as he guides our actions through His Holy Spirit. He reminds us "I am the resurrection and I am the Life. Whoever lives and trusts in me will never die."

We have had a very busy autumn at Union Street with a wide variety of experiences to enhance our journey through life. The wonderful, haunting voice of Fiona Simpson with Bryan Adams delivered some new songs and thought provoking messages to uplift us all; a very busy Gift Day service which also celebrated new life and our Church Anniversary, where Revd Dr Anne Phillips encouraged us to take an active part in the service to help us to give thanks for all the different aspects of church life, past and present.

As we look forward to the Christmas season, we think of those who need your prayers - may they know the comfort of your eternal love. As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, may we grasp every new opportunity to share the Good News by putting your words into actions which reflect your life on earth. May the Peace and Joy of this Christmas be forever in your hearts. God Bless.

**Gill Lindop**

## BMS NEWS

The BMS Mission Innovation Fund, which supports creative initiatives that might not normally come under their partner grants process, is supporting an exciting project which is motivating young Christians in Thailand to become more active in cross-cultural mission.

The Youth Mission Team Project, run by the Thailand Karen Baptist Youth Convention (TKBC), is set to provide opportunities for young people from the Karen tribe to work among other faith groups within the country – and over the border too.

BMS worker, Pete Maycock, is the project leader and says, "There is a tendency in the Karen Church to think that mission to non-Karen people is something done by foreign mission workers.

"I hope that this project will provide opportunities for young Karen Christians to be involved in cross-cultural mission, and have their eyes opened to the possibilities and challenges of the adventure of mission."

Other projects funded by the Fund in 2011 include the "Schools Without Walls" in former Soviet states, and "a teaching video initiative" and "church accessibility project" both in Lebanon.

Further information and details can be found on the website <http://www.bmsworldmission.org>

We receive regular letters from Judy Cook, our link Missionary in Thailand. These and other interesting BMS news items can always be found on the Notice Board in the Friendship Room.

*Thank you for your continued support in prayer, donations and stamp collecting for BMS World Mission. If you would like to give regularly using monthly envelopes, a Mission box or joining the BMS Birthday Scheme; or just want to know more about BMS World Mission, please have a word with Pamela Taylor.*



## SECRETARY'S NOTES

Churches Together in Crewe are now planning the Christmas Day lunch, previously provided by the Methodist Churches for 26 years. This is primarily for people of Crewe who expect to be on their own on Christmas Day and, in addition to a meal, transport and entertainment are also provided. If you know of anyone who may wish to join in the event please will you tell me? We are also looking for helpers for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and with transport. There is no charge to our guests.

We are looking forward to our Christmas events as follows:

**Sunday 27 November 6.30 pm** Churches Together in Crewe Advent Service at All Saints

**Monday 5 December 7.30 pm** Organ Concert by Richard Bower.

**Saturday 10 December 7.00 pm** Kipling Singers Christmas Concert.

**Sunday 18 December 10.30 am** Christmas Parade Service

**Tuesday 20 December 7.00 pm** Christmas Carol Service

**Sunday 25 December 10.30 am** Christmas Day Service

**Sunday 1 January 2012 10.30 am** Cafe Church

**Sunday 8 January 2012 10.30 am** New Year Covenant and Communion Service

We hope to see you on some of these occasions, and we wish all readers a Very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

***Helen Birtles***

### **music@USBC**

The next events in our series of music at Union Street are;

Organ concert by Richard Bower on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at 7.30pm tickets £7

The Kipling Singers Christmas concert on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December 7.00pm tickets £7 including a buffet supper.

Buy tickets to both events and save £2



## **Flower Rota**

### **December**

- 4 In memory of Mr & Mrs G Helsby & Sophie Piziuca
- 11 In memory of Nancy & Charles Lythgoe
- 18 In memory of Mr & Mrs R Cornes
- 25 Mrs M Ollier

### **January**

- 1 In memory of Brian Skelton
- 8 Mr and Mrs W Birtles
- 15 Joseph and Grace Oh
- 22 In memory of Fred Hope
- 29 Mr and Mrs E Denyer



## **BMS Birthdays**

Remembering your birthday with a gift to the BMS medical missions

### **December**

- 15<sup>th</sup> Ivy Hart
- 18<sup>th</sup> Mary Ollier
- 21<sup>st</sup> Sandra Riley

### **January**

- 13<sup>th</sup> Nora Broadbent
- 24<sup>th</sup> Bill Birtles

We are coming to the end of the 400th Anniversary Year of the King James Bible and to help everyone in their busy lives have found this more concise version.

**The Bible in 50 words**

God made  
Adam bit  
Noah arked  
Abraham split  
Jacob fooled  
Joseph ruled  
Bush talked  
Moses balked  
Pharaoh plagued  
People walked  
Sea divided  
Tablets guided  
Promise landed  
Saul freaked  
David peeked  
Prophets warned  
Jesus born  
God walked  
Love talked  
Anger crucified  
Hope died  
Love rose  
Spirit flamed  
Word spread  
God remained

**"Two Sisters and a Funeral"**

Recently the USBC augmented choir presented their first performance of the new Roger Jones musical "Two Sisters and a Funeral" at USBC. If you missed this performance, or thoroughly enjoyed it, you can see it again on the following dates;

29<sup>th</sup> January 2.30pm at Minshull URC  
15<sup>th</sup> April 6.30pm Alsager URC

**REGULAR ACTIVITIES  
at UNION STREET**

**Sunday**

**Morning Worship & J-Club for children 10.30**

**Monday**

**Playaway - Parents & Toddlers 9.15 - 11.15**

**T-Club 13.30 (on 2nd and 4th Mondays)**

**Rainbows, Brownies from 17.00**

**Tuesday**

**Choir 19.00**

**Wednesday**

**Contact Club 19.30 (on the last Wednesday each month)**

**Thursday**

**Coffee and Refreshments 10.30 - 12 noon**

**Midweek Worship (From 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012) 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday evening, time to be confirmed.**

**Friday**

**Beavers, Cubs, Scouts from 17.00**

**Saturday**

**Social Events as announced**

For more information  
please contact the Secretary

*May we wish you all a  
joyous Christmas and peace  
and good wishes for 2012.*

