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MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends

I wonder what the most asked question is around this time of year? Have a think for a moment and while you do have a read of the verse below which is taken from one of the new Christmas Carols that appear in our new hymn book *Singing the Faith*

Who would think that what was needed
to transform and save the earth
might not be a plan or army,
proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think, despite derision,
that a child might lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven
coming here on Christmas day.

Ok, have you had time to think and come up with an answer? Well I don't have any accurate market research to back up my suggestion, but I suspect that somewhere in the top answers would be the simple question "What would you like for Christmas?" Maybe you have asked it yourself, or maybe you have been lucky enough to have been asked it.

My Christmas wish this year, being a realist, would be that the church starts to really take seriously some of the sentiments in this song. For me Christmas is about the beginning of something very different happening, it is about transformation, it is about new beginnings, about difficult choices being made by ordinary people who put the will of God and the needs of others before themselves and their own desires. We, as the people of Lidgett Park, and you as an individual are, and indeed have to be, part of this wish.

As a church, as a section, as a circuit and as part of the Christian movement in our community we need to take seriously this issue of transformation. And this transformation has to begin with us looking at *what* we do, *how* we do it, *where* we do it and *why* we do it. I firmly believe that it is essential for us to recognise that we have to do this, not because we want to save what we have,

but, if we are serious about our discipleship as followers of Jesus, then we do it because our calling is to show and live out our belief of “God’s unconditional love for all” and “that God is with us”.

So, this Christmas, would you like to give the gift of an open, welcoming, transformed Church to help future generations to know the unconditional love of God? Or would you rather receive the gift of a failing Church that stays the same but meets your desires?

Christmas blessings

Andrew

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

02	10.30	Rev. George Lovell	
		Gift Service	Holy Communion
	6.30	St Edmund’s	Ecumenical Service
09	10.30	Rev. George Bailey	Parade Service
	6.30	Alwoodley Park	United/Circuit Service
16	10.30	Rev. Andrew Atkins	
	6.30	Rev. Andrew Atkins	Holy Communion
23	3.00	Rev. Graeme Dutton	Carol Service
24	4.30	Mrs. Patricia Davies	Children’s Service
	11.30	Rev. Andrew Atkins	Holy Communion
25	10.30	Dr. Karen Illingworth	
30	10.30	Rev. Graeme Dutton	
	6.30	Chapel Allerton	

WORSHIP IN JANUARY

06	10.30	Rev. Andrew Atkins	Holy Communion
	6.30	Chapel Allerton	
13	10.30	Mr. Michael Prince	
	6.00	Cross Gates	United/Circuit Service
20	10.00	St Edmund’s	Ecumenical Service
	6.30	Rev. Mark Harwood	Holy Communion
27	10.30	Rev. Graeme Dutton	
	6.30	St Andrew’s	Ecumenical Service

LADIES GROUP

The Ladies Group meet fortnightly on Thursdays usually in the Youth Hall. All are welcome

13 December 7.30 p.m. Carol Service. All are welcome – even men. Come and have a good sing.

10 January 7.30 p.m. New Year Party “Serendipity”

24 January 7.45 p.m. Rev. David Pickering “Pilgrimage to the Hebrides”

LADIES GROUP INVITE EVERYONE

.. to join them for their annual Carol Service on Thursday 13th December.

As usual it will be held in the Community Hall and start at 7.30 p.m.

If you haven't been before do join us. The Hall is usually packed and in an informal and friendly setting. The evening is always most enjoyable and ends with light refreshments. Not only an excellent way to get into the Christmas feeling but also one to chat to people.

The collection will go to MHA - our President Margaret Leake's chosen charity.

We very much hope we will see you on the 13th December.

Joyce White

THANK YOU

Emily Pritchard would like to thank the church members for the friendship shown to Kenneth while he has been at Lidgett Park. He has been happy there and felt so welcome. Thanks also to all who visited while he was ill. As a family we would also wish to thank all who helped in any way at his funeral; we are very grateful.

Emily Pritchard

The amount collected at the funeral for the Air Ambulance was £201.

OAKWOOD FARMERS' MARKET

This takes place on Saturday 15 December 9.00am - 12.30pm at Oakwood Clock. It's the perfect opportunity to buy all those last minute presents and fantastic seasonal food for festive parties and Christmas celebrations.

Of course, it wouldn't be the Christmas market without mince pies and carols!

Helen Ellis

THE MISSION OF LIDGETT PARK CHURCH AND THE NEW LEEDS NORTH & EAST CIRCUIT

The main purpose for creating new and larger circuits is to release new energy, new enthusiasm and new ideas for mission, because this is an integral part of being a Christian.

Let's start with a story:

Walking along a beach a man noticed a figure some way ahead of him, dancing. As he drew nearer he could see the 'dancer' was in fact gently picking up starfish from the beach and throwing them back into the sea. "Why are you throwing starfish into the sea?" He asked. "Because it's getting hot, and if I don't throw them back they will die," replied the dancer.

The man looked around him and said "But there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish, what difference can you make?" The dancer smiled, picked up another starfish and gently tossed it beyond the waves, back into the sea, "*I made a difference to that one!*" he said.

"**I made a difference to that one!**" seemed to us, to be key phrase as we explored mission possibilities on behalf of the circuit during the last 6 months.

We began with this statement from the **Circuit Mission Strategy** document in 2010:

We believe that God's mission is about:

* revealing God's love; * changing human beings; *building people up
into communities of faith; " So our mission as the church is about the many
ways in which we join in with that activity.

The most deprived areas in our city have many resources poured into them so we looked at the next most deprived areas where there is significant need but fewer resources.

So each of us took one of these areas in North East Leeds and talked to various agencies and individuals to find out first hand about local issues. A number of common themes emerged. We also met with Nick Morgan of the Citizens Advice Bureau, brainstorming possible ways to '**disrupt poverty**' and attended a meeting about Welfare Reform at Leeds Church Institute to learn more about the difficulties which will arise when this is fully implemented and to discuss with other representatives how the church might respond.

This produced some exciting possibilities including the development of **Food Banks** in some areas of Leeds and '**Faithful Advice**' which points people towards the help they need. It seemed significant that as we pushed at

various doors, they opened and we were left feeling ‘we should be able to contribute something here’

Within the group, we raised a number of issues:

1. Since the Moortown Children’s worker project closed, there has been no clearly identifiable circuit mission project
2. Many of our members are actively involved as individuals in wide ranging different community groups, both high profile and those which are largely unseen
3. It is easy for some to see fund raising as the main response to need, and several churches raise large sums for charity each year through social events. How can we raise awareness of other possible practical responses?
4. There are a lot of people in the circuit with considerable professional expertise, which is desperately needed elsewhere
5. It is difficult to fund and sustain a long term project on our own
6. Implications for development with a new circuit in September 2013 are unclear

We would like to propose ‘**The Starfish Project**’, an umbrella activity, which seeks to enable individuals to make a difference to the lives of other individuals, disrupting poverty and countering social exclusion by

1. Raising and maintaining the profile of mission activity
 - a. through a website linked to the Circuit website
 - b. through presentations at meetings
 - c. through challenging groups and individuals to ask ‘what can we do this month/summer/year?’
2. Celebrating and raising awareness about all the different things people do already
3. Raising awareness about other possibilities, helping everyone to see there is something they can contribute and nothing is too small
4. Liaising with other agencies, churches, community groups and linking in to current initiatives (currently Food Banks, Faithful Advice)
5. Planning occasional events.

At the moment this is a Leeds North East Circuit initiative led by Angela Britton. Mary Patchett and I have been involved in the discussions. There is a meeting about setting up “Food Banks” in North Leeds on Monday December 3rd at 10.30am at Stainbeck U.R.C. More people are welcome to this. Let us hope that we find a new enthusiasm and energy for this work of the Church.

Patricia Davies

LOST FOR WORDS AGAIN



So far Audrey (Gabbitas) has suggested
“The Beverley Sisters prepare for a night
out”.

Colin Watson has come up with two
suggestions’

“Not any old nightwear but M & S
nightwear”

and

“A Lidgett Park Drama Group audition for a
very western version of “ The Mikado”.

Nice ones both of you – anyone think they
can do better?

MORE WATER INTO WINE

Dear Ed,

I cannot help but respond to your comment to Colin Watson in the November of the Link re "water into wine". I can say that for some of our congregation Jesus would have been made most welcome, never mind asked to leave as the following will demonstrate.

In the 1960s I was secretary and subsequent chairman of the then Guide and Brownie Parent Committee. One Christmas time we received an invitation to join the Old Centralians at their annual dance, at the Astoria, with half the ticket price being returned to us for our committee funds. We were very pleased to accept and some 20 to 30 Lidgett Park members attended. A bar was available and we all looked on whilst the Centralians availed themselves.

After a while Bill Robinson, our then chairman, started at one end of our contingent and asked a question which was answered with a shaking of heads. When he arrived at yours truly he asked "Ron would you like a drink?" "Bill" I said " I would love one". In no time at all the queue behind us was not tee, but totally methodist!.

What more can I say? but Merry, sorry, Happy Christmas to all.

Ron Gelsthorpe

Dear Ed,

I assume that your comment regarding the “water into wine “miracle was another one to arouse controversy. Surely you are not seriously suggesting that Jesus would refrain from enhancing a joyous wedding celebration by deferring to an edict from our Wesleyan founding fathers or more recent Conference decisions? I don’t think so.

Colin Watson

Of course not Colin. One thing we know about Jesus is that he did what he thought was right regardless of what others might think.

But as I was somewhat flippant in my comment I should say, in fairness to those who espouse teetotalism, it is a fact that excessive consumption of alcohol was (and still is) a major social problem. So even those of us who like a drink now and again should appreciate where they were, and are, coming from.

LIDGETT PARK FINANCES – Fred Langley (Church Treasurer to 31 August 2012)

The accounts for the year to 31 August 2012 have been approved by the Church Council and are now with Thomas Coombs & Son for independent examination. A summary is given below and a copy of the full accounts is on the notice board in the lounge. The final sum raised for the Sylvia Wright Trust project, £12,635, has now been handed over: there was a letter of appreciation from Sylvia in the November Link. The surplus for the year of £8,489 was much higher than expected thanks to a one-off special donation from a church member together with a significant reduction in money spent on repairs and maintenance over the 12 months. This was because of work done voluntarily by church members and by the postponing of some jobs until the overall financial position became clearer. Much of the surplus was transferred to the Property Repair Fund recognising that there are expensive property renovations or improvements still to be done. We received a gift of £1,500 to be used for something lasting in memory of the late Gwen Bramham and Joan Thomas. It had been hoped that solar panels could be installed on the church roofs; this would have merit for environmental reasons as well as bringing financial benefits for years to come and the cost would be acceptable as a charge against the Mary Raine bequest fund (£35,000 is invested with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes on our

behalf). Andrew Benson spent a great deal of time and effort in investigating this and despite initial difficulties in getting approval it now looks as though we will be able to go ahead subject to some modifications to the original plan. With increases in fuel costs and in the Circuit assessment coming next year it is hoped that we can at least maintain the level of regular giving. I, or our new Church Treasurer Alan Wittrick, would be pleased to discuss any aspect of the accounts.

GENERAL FUND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2011/12	2010/11
<u>INCOME</u>	£	£
Freewill offerings	65,149	60,966
Gift Aid tax refunds	15,276	14,811
Property lettings	27,340	27,739
Interest and other income	<u>2,376</u>	<u>3,900</u>
Total income	<u>110,141</u>	<u>107,416</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Circuit assessment	58,000	55,000
Maint'ce/Caretaking/Cleaning	15,662	22,774
Electricity/Gas/Water	8,454	7,441
Insurance	5,481	5,318
Grants and donations	8,900	9,054
Other expenditure	<u>5,155</u>	<u>4,505</u>
Total expenditure	<u>101,652</u>	<u>104,092</u>
Surplus	8,489	3,324
Transfer to Property Repair	<u>(6,000)</u>	<u>(3,000)</u>
	2,489	324
Opening bal of General Fund	<u>27,011</u>	<u>26,687</u>
Closing bal of General Fund	<u>29,500</u>	<u>27,011</u>

CARING FOR LIFE PROJECT FUND

	£
Opening balance	9,858
income	<u>142</u>
Paid to Caring for Lif	<u>10,000</u>

SYLVIA WRIGHT TRUST PROJECT FUND

income	13,486
less Expenditure	<u>851</u>
Balance at 31 August 2012	<u>12,635</u>

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 AUGUST 2012

General Fund	29,500
Sylvia Wright Project Fund	12,635
Memorial gift	1,500
Property Repair Fund	<u>16,338</u>
	<u>59,973</u>
Cash and bank accounts	13,467
CFB deposit account	27,550
Debtors less Creditors	<u>18,956</u>
	<u>59,973</u>

Fred has always prepared his documentation for The Link immaculately and I have then messed it up trying to get it onto the pages. So if you have any queries about the above it will be my fault. However I'd still rather you contacted Fred or Alan if you do have queries.

SILLY JOKE

Adam was talking to God and asked, "why did you make Eve so pretty?"

God replied, "So that you would love her".

Adam then asked, "why did you make her such a good cook?"

God replied, "So that you would love her"

Adam asked, "Why does she have such a heavenly smile?"

God said "So that you would love her".

Finally, Adam asked "Why did you make her so dumb?"

God replied, "So that she would love you!"

This was fetched all the way from a Cockermouth church magazine by someone who had better remain anonymous. It is a joke that manages to be rude to both men and women simultaneously. Still it backs up my contention that there are very few funny Christian jokes.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

You said that the idea of Jesus dying for the sins of the world did not make any sense to you.

I found this very sad and point you in the direction of John Wesley who had an inward religion "The Religion of the Heart" and he claimed to be "a man of one book". However in the ten years he was at Oxford he read six hundred and ninety two books!

John Wesley was godly, learned and dedicated to the salvation of souls, full of faith and the love of God, full of belief that he had been saved from the law of sin and death, and who repeated his well known text :-

" Repent, and believe the gospel"

EDITOR Jesus dying for the sins of the world: does make sense. Before the judgement seat of God we shall not be judged by our own or other people's standards, but whether we looked to the Lord for forgiveness, cleansing and guidance.

Jesus says in St. John 3 v14& 15 "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life"

Let us therefore accept in faith God's great, free gift of salvation. upon the cross of Jesus

We need to turn our eyes upon the Cross of Jesus and sing this old song loved by so many and written by George Bennard in 1913.

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame,
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best,
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

So I'll cherish the Old Rugged Cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down
I will cling to the Old Rugged Cross
And exchange it someday for a Crown

Joyce Wood

FOR ALL THE SAINTS by Colin Watson

Edward, how I agree with your comments regarding the American Halloween import and your views on the wonderful diversity of the congregation we have sadly, but very naturally lost over the last few years. All Saints' Day would be a most appropriate day to give thanks for their lives and the contribution they have made, not only to Lidgett Park but also to the much wider community.

The celebration of their lives would, I imagine in most people's opinion, be more meaningful than praying to the "saint" responsible for finding a parking space used almost exclusively (naturally) in America. (Source: the Rev. Richard Coles, Today programme 1st November, 2012. Yes 1st November not 1st April!).

As an indication of how Halloween has infiltrated the fabric of the country, it (Halloween) appears on my 2012 calendar but there is no reference at all to All Saints' Day. Previous calendars, which I keep for record purposes, have at least All Saints' Day listed elsewhere; usually under Notable Dates.

I trust the recently published 2013 Church Calendar will recognise All Saints' Day.

Colin Watson

Wow – Colin agreeing with me must be a first!

We thank thee, O God, for the saints of all ages; for those who in times of darkness kept the lamp of faith burning; for the great souls who saw visions of larger truth and dared to declare it; for the multitude of quiet and gracious souls whose presence has purified and sanctified the world; and for those known and loved by us, who have passed from this earthly fellowship into the fuller light of life with thee.

Anonymous

SIMON ON THE STREETS

This year's church project was launched at a dinner on October 27th when Clive Sandle the charity's director was our guest. Clive gave us an insight into the sort of circumstances causing people to sleep on the streets and the ways in which the charity could offer support and encouragement towards improving their prospects. He will later be taking part in one of our morning services: the date is still to be fixed.

Simon on the Streets relies on voluntary giving to fund the work so fund-raising is an important element of our project and those attending the dinner took the opportunity to make personal donations. Needless to say other donations will always be welcomed as will support for the further events being planned.

One of these is a Christmas concert to be given on December 14th by Joe Roberts and the acclaimed Wendel Singers, with guest artistes. Tickets are still on sale at £6 each.

Calendars featuring photographs taken by the late Donald Nicholson and processed by Mary Patchett are also still on sale (£7.99 each) as are copies of the “All Creatures . . .” quiz (£2 each).

We are grateful for support already given including Margaret Wilks’ coffee morning and Kathy & Co’s afternoon tea together with attendance at the regular Saturday open coffee mornings. Other events will be planned for the New Year. Thank you.

Fred Langley

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH’S QUIZZES

1. The first man did not speak this ancient language. (4, 5)
ADAM, LATIN = DALMATIAN
2. Do not make a mistake during the ritual. (3, 4)
ERR, RITE = TERRIER
3. A daring ear! (4, 3)
BOLD, LUG = BULLDOG
4. I will shadow the people who send up rockets. (4, 4)
TAIL, NASA = ALSATIAN
5. Mr Dodman has a kitty. (2, 4)
ED, POOL = POODLE
6. Shakespeare’s exam. (4, 4)
BARD, ORAL = LABRADOR
7. I rest in the mountain pass. (3, 3)
LIE, COL = COLLIE

If you didn’t get those you deserve to be in the doghouse.

1. The candle fat laments!! (6, 5)
TALLOW, WAILS = SWALLOWTAIL
2. The male cats don’t like salty water. (4, 5)
TOMS, BRINE = BRIMSTONE
3. Did you see a monkey or a male bird? (3, 4)
APE, COCK = PEACOCK
4. Brad (not Pitt) was one of the pack. (4, 4)
NAIL, CARD = CARDINAL
5. Cultivate the ground at the convent. (4, 6)
TILL, FRIARY = FRITILLARY
6. She went up the steps to get the fish. (5, 4)
STAIR, HAKE = HAIRSTREAK
7. We need a policeman to find the corded cloth. (3, 3) .
COP, REP = COPPER

They are all butterflies

BUMPER QUIZ SECTION - THANKS TO GILLIAN CLEMENTS

Gillian has come up with a selection of quizzes for you to do after Christmas lunch. They differ in type, so if you find one hard to do or not to your liking you can try another. And they will get your brain in gear for Fred's annual brainbuster.

CHRISTMASSY QUIZ

Each clue provides two words which differ by one or two letters (eg aunt, ant [1], ant, plant [2]. The differing letters, when rearranged, make two animals.

Part 1

1. They used cans for the sparkly Christmas decorations. (4,6) [2]
2. The boat was called "The Ilex". (3,5) [2]
3. I do not like the gift. (6,7) [1]
4. Reveal the shade. (4,6) [2]
5. He had bundles of Christmas tree decorations. (5,7) [2]
6. The NT king had a lot of cows. (5,4) [1]
7. You could do this in an oven. (5,4) [1]

Part 2

1. The elephant tusk was entwined with hедера. (5,3) [2]
 2. A sailor twinkled in the sky! (3,4) [1]
 3. The trio danced round the elm. (5,4) [1]
 4. Pull this to make a noise and get a paper hat. (5,7) [2]
 5. The aged yellow metal. (3,4) [1]
 6. The farm worker found a broken piece of pottery. (8,5) [3]
 7. This spherical fruit grows on a chain of mountains. (6,5) [1]
-

LINKS

Place a word in Col B which turns the words in Cols A and C into longer words. The words in Col B are three letter words except for no. 5 which is a four letter word. The first letters of the words in Col B when read downwards make a word (clue: Grab some nuts and you have this.)

	<u>Col A</u>	<u>Col B</u>	<u>Col C</u>
1.	RAT		RING
2.	POT		LESS
3.	CAT		PER
4.	SUN		TIME
5.	MONK		CAKE
6.	ALL		A
7.	PAL		TING

ONLY CONNECT

This puzzle is based on a section of the BBC show “Only Connect”. Arrange the 16 words into 4 groups of 4. Beware, some of the words could fit into more than one group. A computerised version of this type of puzzle can be found on www.bbc.co.uk/onlyconnect.

TSAR, SULTAN, PEACOCK, TOM, TORTOISESHELL, MOGGY,
EMPEROR, RATS, KITTEN, EMIR, QUEEN, ARTS, KING, STAR,
BRIMSTONE, RAJAH

Well that should keep you busy for a while. More to come in the great February issue.



And here are the shepherds at the crib. Not a very exciting picture but at least it hasn't got the awful donkey in it. I'm writing this on Bonfire Night so it's a bit early to feel the Christmas spirit. I don't consider it Christmas until I've heard "Lonely this Christmas" playing in a supermarket.

But may you all have a

*Very Happy Christmas and a Joyful
New Year.*