

PRAYER MEETING (Seven:14)
Every Wednesday Evening at 7.14 pm
BOY'S BRIGADE

Tuesdays: Anchors 6.00 pm - 7.00pm (In church)
Juniors 6.30 pm - 8.00 pm at Madeley Rest Room (Church Street)
Company Section (11 - 15yrs) Fridays 7-9pm in church
Contact: Wayne Trumpeter - 07824 618061

COFFEE MORNINGS
10.30 am Every Monday and Thursday in Church

MBC

13th December 2009

www.madeleybaptist.org.uk



A warm WELCOME in Jesus' Name to all our services

John 1: 1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

3rd Sunday in Advent

This morning:

13th Dec **10.30am:** Ministry Sunday

**6.30pm: Darby Singers Community Choir -
Christmas concert at MBC**

20th December 1

10.30am **ALL AGE Service** (Meena) + Communion

6.30pm Carol Service



Notes for the Diary

16th Dec 7.00pm Carol Singing - in Woodside - meet at the Park Lane Centre. St. Michael's event, STAC invited to join in.

18 Dec 6.30pm Carol Singing - Telford Town Centre - we meet with other churches and the Salvation Army band outside House of Fraser (by the fountain) WANTED - a few hundred Christians!

19 Sat 11.00am Carol singing in Madeley shopping centre (outside Tesco). STAC event.

20th December 10.30am **ALL AGE Service** (Meena) + Communion
6.30pm Carol Service

23 Wed 6.00pm Carol Singing in Hills Lane. Meet at church 6.00pm for prayer, Hills lane at 6.30pm. MBC event, STAC invited to join in.

24th Dec 7.30pm Communion Service led by John and Bron Battye at MBC.

25th December **10.00am Christmas Day Family Service**

27th December **10.30am End of Year Service No evening Service**

31st December **8pm - Social - bring food to share, then at**

11.00.p.m. Watchnight Service

Friday 1st January 2010: Communion at 10.00am

1 Corinthians 13 – a Christmas Version

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way. Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure for ever.

Unknown Author

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Check out our website for lots more info and the Minister's blogspot.

A Message from Keith:

The Management of Telford Town Centre have agreed to **Telford Town Centre Carol Singing at 6.30.p.m on Friday 18th December in the Fountain Square outside the House of Fraser (formerly James Beatties).** **The Salvation Army have agreed to provide their full band.**

Not only have the town centre senior management actively supported this event, they have also designed and printed the posters and arranged local news coverage and for a poster campaign throughout the Town Centre during the week leading up to the carol singing. They have also agreed to print and distribute 600 copies of the carols to all those attending on the night.

This is a level of support from Telford town centre management which has not previously been experienced. I would strongly encourage our church fellowship to attend and give your enthusiastic support to this act of witness - **putting Christ into Christmas in the midst of the commercial and retail centre of our town.**

It is hoped that in the new year two chaplains will be appointed to work in the town centre and this event will help to pave the way for the work on which these chaplains will embark.

Pause for thought this 3rd week in Advent

How can it possibly be time for Christmas preparations ? It seems only yesterday that we were planning our summer holidays and now we are looking forward to Christmas. Or are we? How often, when you mention Christmas to people, do they just groan and moan about how much there is to do - shopping for presents, putting up decorations, preparing food, and so on? Christmas has become a chore because we put so much pressure on ourselves, and in the process we have lost the anticipation and wonder of waiting for the arrival of the Christ child. We rush around the shops trying to buy better presents than we did last year and undoubtedly many people put themselves deep into debt because they feel they must keep up with those around them. Have we lost the meaning at the heart of Christmas giving? Maybe, so let me tell you the story of the littlest shepherd:

On the night the angels came to tell the shepherds about the birth of the baby king the littlest shepherd was there too. He went with the others to Bethlehem to see the baby, but as they walked he trailed behind them, not because he was tired although his little legs did ache with the effort of keeping up, but because he had no gift to give the baby. The three wise men had their gold, frankincense and myrrh. The other shepherds had gifts of woollen cloaks. But the littlest shepherd had nothing.

When they reached the stable he wanted to hide, but one of the angels gave him a gentle push into the stable. What was he going to do? He reached into the small leather pouch he carried and touched something. It was his little spinning top, but surely that wasn't good enough to give to the baby king? But then he remembered how he often set

it spinning to make his little baby brother laugh, so he took it out, put it on the manger's edge and with a flick of his wrist set it spinning. There was a gasp from all round the stable. The three wise men shook their heads. "Not a proper gift," they said. Joseph, the baby's father, tutted in disapproval. The shepherds agreed. "Take that dirty thing away!" But then the baby reached out his tiny hand and touched the top, which made it spin even faster.

"A miracle," thought the littlest shepherd. Then in the silence that fell over the stable, Mary, the baby's mother, spoke. "You have each brought fine gifts fit for a king and we thank you. But see - only the child has brought a gift fit for a child". As the present-buying stress increases as we get nearer Christmas, let us all remember the story of the littlest shepherd.

Another pressure many people put on themselves at Christmas is to have a perfect house - everything clean, sparkling and perhaps even freshly decorated. Listen to this salutary tale from Russia of Baboushka.

She was an old woman who lived alone and kept herself busy all day cleaning her house. One morning as she was sweeping her steps after a great fall of snow she saw three riders approaching. She knew they had to be kings because they wore crowns of gold and silver, although she did not know what the strange animals were that they rode - larger than horses with an odd hump on their backs.

To cut a long story short, the kings asked to stay with Baboushka and sleep during the day because at night they followed a star which was going to lead them to a newborn king. When it came time for the kings to leave they said to Baboushka "Come with us to see the baby king". But Baboushka shook her head. "I must sweep up first. I cannot leave my house in such a state". The kings looked sad as they told her they must go without her because they followed a star and did not know how long the star might shine. So Baboushka shooed them out on their way like a mother hen with her chicks. Then she set to and cleaned her house from top to bottom. When she finished she was exhausted so she fell fast asleep. When she awoke snow had fallen and covered the tracks of the three kings. Baboushka thought it must have been a dream, but as the days passed she thought more and more about the baby king and the more she wondered about him the more she wanted to find him. So, one day she cleaned her house for the last time, locked the door and set off to search for the baby king. Every baby she saw she peered into the cradle asking "Are you the One?" In every cradle and in every child's bed she dropped a little gift - just in case it was Him. She is still looking. As we prepare for Christmas let us not be so busy with our preparations that we miss the One for whom we are preparing! Remember the words of the final verse of "In the Bleak Mid-winter":



***"What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I could bring a lamb
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him, Give my heart"***

