

PRAYER MEETING (Seven:14):
Every Wednesday Evening at 7.14pm

BOY'S BRIGADE:

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

Alternate Tuesdays at 10.00am Bible Study
-14 Cottage Farm Close, Madeley.

COFFEE MORNINGS:
10.30am Every Monday and Thursday in
church

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

When shopping on line, go to: www.buy.at/madeleyBC and you will find all manner of major stores who will donate a percentage of what you pay them to MBC - **shop on line and support our church and the work which continues in Madeley.**

Remember, remember - The Care Bears who are ready to **pray** with you - **chat, visit** or even **just give a hug!** They will also seek to arrange **practical help** when they can do so! We still have a **prayer request box** in church and of course **the cross** to attach your notes to! Please approach one of the Care Bears (listed below) if you would like someone to share with!

Marjorie 630113
Steve 881106
Chrissie 505945



Lesley 275994
Pearl 596320

Use a post-it note to stick your prayer request to the cross, or write a note and put it in the prayer request box and one or more of the Care Bears will be there for you.

A "schoolboy" joke...(Guess which schoolboy supplied me with it!)
Peter heard God call: "Come forth, Peter & you will win eternal life!" Peter came fifth - he won a toaster!
(I know - groan groan!)



Madeley Baptist Church

News Letter for w/c 11.07.10



A warm welcome to our Services today.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Services Today:

10.30am: **Boys' Brigade Parade & Service**

6.30pm: Preaching Evening with Arturs Petrovski

Services Next Sunday: 18th July 2010:

10.30am: Ministry morning with Communion led by Keith and @ 6.30pm: Discussion Mtg - Open Doors with Monica Catley

Did anyone work out the answer to the riddle in last week's newsletter?
NOTHING!!!

Church Members Meeting on Monday 12th July at 7.30pm in Church.
Saturday 17th July @ 6.30pm: Cuckoo Oak Supper for Madeley Baptist Fellowship.

ANCHORS

The Anchors (Junior Branch of the Boys' Brigade) are holding a Display and Presentation Evening on TUESDAY 20th JULY @ from 6 - 7 pm Refreshments will be served and it would be great to have the support of as many Church members as possible to this hour on Tuesday night 20th July.

Photos of the Caribbean Party are on Facebook and will shortly be on our website. Here are just a couple from that happy event last Saturday.



Sitting around the table chatting and then playing musical chairs - Marjorie won! Is she competitive or what!!?



Tea Rota today: Marjorie and Ruth

A Pause for Thought – ‘Damascus Road’

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. (Read Acts Chapter 9)



Some Christians tend to compare their personal conversion experiences to Saul's encounter on the road to Damascus.

Not all of us, of course, talk freely about what happened in us and to us on the way to becoming Christian.

Our levels of comfort with such talk vary widely depending on our congregational culture, our notions of evangelism and our ability to be self-revelatory. But when we do think about that journey, and when we're willing to say about it, we say that our conversion was -- or was not -- a Damascus Road. We tell our young people that their experience does not need to be a Damascus Road experience, although it can be. There are many paths of Christian transformation -- and the light from heaven is only one of them.

In much of our thinking about this story, there is a tinge of wistfulness, a yearning. Saul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus was so definite, after all. So *sure*. Even if we dare to describe our own story as similar in some way, it pales next to the drama of the light from heaven. We do not really want something so strange and frightening to happen to us, but we would like the definitive proof that God does exist and that God cares enough about our lives and how we spend them to stop us in our tracks. But perhaps we focus too much on the style, the process, and not enough on the content. One aspect we sometimes overlook in reading this passage is that violence is the key issue. Saul is characterised in the opening verses as a man of violence. He is a young man in this story; we have been introduced to him in Acts 7 as the young person who took care of the coats of the people who stoned Stephen. The narrator notes that Saul approved of the execution, and he is pictured dragging men and women believers from their homes and imprisoning them.

But then the story veers away from Saul and the tragic events in Jerusalem to follow Philip to Samaria and on to Gaza. When we return to the story of Saul in Acts 9, his violence is still very much a problem. He is breathing threats of murder, obtaining letters from the high priest that authorise him to search for believers in Damascus and bring them back in chains to Jerusalem.

Saul is described almost exclusively in terms of his violence, and it is this violence that Jesus addresses when he speaks out of the heavenly light.

Saul hears a voice and the double address of "Saul, Saul" -- alerting the biblical reader that something worth paying attention to is coming next. "Why do you persecute me?" Jesus asks. Saul does not immediately recognise this voice -- and when Jesus identifies himself, he addresses the issue of violence again, this time in a statement rather than a question: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." By identifying himself as the one whom Saul is persecuting, Jesus identifies with the believers in their suffering. This identification is in the same spirit as the story of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25. But Jesus is not only identifying with the believers here. He is also making Saul's violence the central issue of his conversion -- an emphasis that Saul later confirms when he describes his pre-Damascus Road self as one who persecuted the believers to the point of death.

Another aspect that we sometimes miss in our interpretation of what happened on the road to Damascus is that this conversion of Saul is not an individual matter. The community of believers in Damascus plays a critical role. Saul is undergoing his own catharsis; he neither eats nor drinks for three days, and is blind. But another man, Ananias, is about to be transformed too. When Ananias first hears from the Lord what his part in the drama is to be, he is understandably doubtful. He protests. He knows Saul by reputation, and that reputation is not only unsavoury but frightening. In his dialogue with the Lord, however, Ananias is assured that this unsavoury and violent character is indeed someone whom the Lord has chosen. We hear the transformation in Ananias's mind and heart when he calls Saul "Brother." The light on the road and the voice that spoke out of the light stopped Saul cold, but his transformation is taken the next step by the ministrations of Ananias as a representative of the Christian community in Damascus. The insight that Saul claims in the last verse of the passage, that Jesus is the Son of God, is not a private matter between him and Jesus: "It took a community." And a man of violence is then transformed into a missionary for God. And what a missionary! He went on to write the epistles that we all know and love, with their assurances, warnings, encouragement, and everything else that is good. He recognised Jesus when Jesus spoke to him -- do we? We will not all be stopped in the road by a brilliant light. We will not all hear a voice calling us by name out of that light, nor have a vision in which the Lord instructs us to go to a specific street and find a specific person and perform a specific ritual. But we can be transformed in the ways Saul was transformed. Relinquishing the selfishness and violence in ourselves and in our culture, trusting our Christian community to help us do that, is not easy. But it is what Jesus, calling to us from his solidarity with the oppressed and persecuted, is asking. *Answering that call will transform us.*