

# the Christian Worker MAGAZINE



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# 2025

*Happy  
New Year*

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# MY PERSPECTIVE



## Another New Year

The door has closed on 2024 and a new door opened for 2025. What does the new year hold in store for us? Will it be a good year? Or will it be a year when everything falls apart?

How are we doing spiritually? Are we growing in our faith and trust in Jesus? Or is the world pulling us back to a life where we ignore God and his word?

What about the congregation where we are? Are we, as a group of Christians, healthy spiritually? Are we concerned about helping others and growing collectively in our faith?

The new year we are entering will have its challenges – each year does – but it will also have highlights that encourage us. What we do with this year is largely dependant on how we decide we are going to move forward. Here are some thoughts from James' letter that might help us as we move into a new year.

*“Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’ As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.” (James 4:13-17 NIV)*

James pointed out to Christians going through struggles that we can make all the plans we want but that doesn't mean its going to happen. I'm sure we already know that! How many times do our detailed plans go awry because of something which

was out of our control (or maybe it was just bad planning on our part!). We don't know what is going to happen today let alone tomorrow or the next day.

One of my favourite films is *It's a Wonderful Life* – our family watches it each Christmas Eve. In that film George Bailey, played by James Stewart, thought he had his life planned out. Yet it didn't happen according to his plan. The sudden death of his father, followed by his being needed to run the family business, and then the stock market crash all worked together to insure that his carefully made plans did not happen.

We can so easily be like that. Perhaps our despair at how our life has turned out doesn't lead us to contemplate ending our life as George Bailey did, but it can hinder our moving forward.

How should we plan for our future? Notice what James said: *“Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’”* What was James telling Christians? He was simply saying that if we want to live the best life possible, don't leave God out! He was not saying that if we pray about it we will get what we want – and I've heard some Christians teach this. But if God is in our plans it doesn't matter whether what we planned works out or not because God will work it out for our best.

Sometimes we set our sights too low. Making plans is good. Praying about them is good. But then we need to realise that God knows more about what we need than we do. We need to trust him more!

Jon



# CONGRATULATIONS!



Olivia Mentore

## Two immersed in Wembley!

We are happy to share the news of two recent baptisms. On Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> December, **Olivia Mentore** was baptised into Christ. We rejoice with her and her parents, Ezra and Bethan, at Olivia's decision to follow Jesus.

Further joy was experienced on Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> December, as **Bartosz Frankowski** was also baptised. He has been worshipping with us for several months and we rejoice with him at his decision to become a follower of Jesus.

We thank God for our new sister and brother, and pray that God will bless them as they each begin their new life in Christ.

John Griffiths

## A new brother in East Kilbride!



John Steven (centre) with his daughter Janet and son-in-law Chris

On Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> December, there was great rejoicing as **John Steven** was immersed into Jesus for the forgiveness of his sins. John has been attending our worship each week on Zoom since the pandemic along with his wife Margaret, who was immersed a number of years ago in Cumbernauld. Margaret went to her eternal reward in November and John began attending at East Kilbride with his daughter and son-in-law, Janet and Chris Conner. This had long been prayed for and we rejoice

with the John and his family. Keep him in your prayers as he begins his new life in Jesus.

Jon Galloway

## A new Christian in Cumbernauld!

Another brother in the family! After studying with Adam Barr, Charlie was baptised into Christ on 17<sup>th</sup> December. We rejoice with his mum, Leanne, as he starts this new journey!

Nicole Barr



Charlie immersed by Adam Barr



# BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES

## A look back and a look ahead

This has been a very busy year for the British Bible School. Our weekly online classes which started during the Covid pandemic continue to thrive. Attendance at Study Weekends hosted by various congregations have also increased. Our autumn Residential Study Week was well attended. In addition there were two retreats carried out in the UK.

This past year there were eight studies delivered online. Some centred on Bible texts (1 Timothy, John's gospel, and the letters of John); others looked at characters in the Bible; some were studies about various aspects of Jesus' life; others concentrated on our own study and understanding of the Bible; and there was a look at God's covenants.

A new round of classes will begin on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> January. On Monday evenings John Griffiths will be leading a study of Titus and 2 Timothy whilst Patrick Boyns will be leading a study of Isaiah on Thursday evenings. Links to join these classes can be found in the BBS social media as well as our website. Both classes are from 8.00-9.00 pm.

This past year study weekends were held in Northampton (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter and Jude), Wembley (Hebrews), Aberdeen (Ezekiel) and East Kilbride (Gospel of John). We are

planning more studies for this coming year. If any congregation would be interested in hosting two weekends of study, contact us! Thus far we are planning a study of Christian Evidences in Northampton in March.

Our Residential Study Week at Bassenfell Manor has become a highlight during the autumn months. This past year we spent a week studying 'The Divided Kingdom of Israel', led by Patrick Boyns, Jon Galloway and Mark Hill.

The dates for this year's Residential Study Week will be **3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> November 2025**. Make plans now to attend this week of study and fellowship. We will announce what we will be studying in the next few weeks, but in the meantime put this in your calendars and planners and make plans to be with us!

Due to Bassenfell Manor being closed this winter for needed renovations, our winter retreat held there each January will not be able to take place this year. We will keep you posted on plans for further retreats.

It is vital that we increase our knowledge of God's words. Peter wrote at the end of his second letter: *"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

*To him be glory both now and for ever! Amen"* (2 Peter 3:18 NIV). The British Bible School exists to help Christians to grow in our knowledge of Jesus. Plan to join us this year in one of our studies, whether online or in person. I'm confident that you won't be disappointed!

Jon Galloway

[britishbibleschool.com](http://britishbibleschool.com)



Mark Hill teaching at the BBS Residential Study Week

# IN THE NEWS

## Kids carol service criticised for 'promoting Christianity'

A children's carol service in Prestwich has faced criticism after a complaint was lodged, alleging the event 'promoted Christianity' and should not have been allowed to take place.

The service, held at the Rectory Green complex near Prestwich village centre, featured students from St Mary's CE Primary School singing carols, performing Christmas songs, and dancing.

The event was organised by the Prestwich and North Western Housing Association.

The association's CEO, Mike Corfield, [in] the *The Bury Times* [said] that the event was well-received, describing it as 'a delight' enjoyed by all attendees.

However, a complaint was raised before the event, arguing that the carol singing had a religious focus and was inappropriate for the community.

In response, the association's December newsletter acknowledged the complaint, with Corfield stating: "When we agreed to support this event, we had no intention of causing offence to anyone."

The association is now surveying the views of Rectory Court residents.

So far, around 40 tenants, or 20 per cent of those living at Rectory Court, have responded to the survey, and all expressed support for the event.

Corfield explained that the carol service was in its second year and had originated from a local community member's idea.

"We thought it was a good idea and were happy to collaborate with St Mary's to make it happen," he said.

He also noted that many tenants helped decorate the space, and the children and teachers put in significant effort rehearsing for the performance.

"The event was attended by many tenants and some parents of the children. It was a delightful evening, with carols, Christmas songs, and entertaining dances," Corfield added.

"Supporting the carol singing is an important part of building community spirit and bringing joy during the festive season."

Corfield emphasised that all complaints are taken seriously and that the association adheres to the housing ombudsman's complaints handling code.

"We want to ensure we are providing a service that residents support, and the views of our tenants are the most important," Corfield concluded.

The results of the survey will be published in the new year.

Lydia Davies

Premier Christian News

<https://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/kids-carol-service-criticised-promoting-christianity>



# AT REST

## Florence Amoaba Sarfo

1965-2024  
(Sheffield)

Beloved, we bring to your notice the demise of one of our sisters, Mrs. Florence Amoaba Sarfo. She was part of the Sheffield congregation. She passed on after a short illness. She left behind a daughter and a son.

Please, pray for the family and all loved ones for God's comfort and strength in this difficult time.

Patrick  
[poppong20@yahoo.com](mailto:poppong20@yahoo.com)



## Robert Hunter (senior) (Newtongrange)

It is with joyful sadness that we announce that on 25<sup>th</sup> December, our brother in Christ, Robert Hunter senior passed from this veil of tears to his eternal rest in heaven.

Robert had been a stalwart of the Newtongrange congregation for over half a century, a faithful servant and shining light to God in the local community.

I have known Robert for several decades and, in that time, I know he has not enjoyed the best of health. That was especially so in the last few years but now he has been blessed with release from earthly pains to enjoy his citizenship in heaven free from all those aches and troubles.

Robert enjoyed singing hymns and was fond of those written by Fanny Crosby. When he presided on the Lord's Day he would often select at least one of her compositions for singing at worship. The verse below sums up his departure from this life.

*We are going home rejoicing,  
Where our Father's dwelling stands,  
We are going home rejoicing,  
To a house not made with hands;  
We are going home to Jesus,  
Who redeemed us with His blood,  
Hallelujah! hallelujah!  
Soon we'll cross the swelling flood.*

Fanny J. Crosby

At this time, we commend to God's care and providence, Margaret, and the Hunter family.

David Ferguson  
Newtongrange Nourisher



# FAMILY NEWS

## BIRMINGHAM

Christians at Summer Lane collected for the Shoe Box appeal this year – we did really well filling 26 boxes in total.

Also we collect food for the food appeal and sent a large amount of food to St Basils who in turn hand it out to the people in need.

Trevor Ralph

## FROM PHILIP SLATE

A friend of mine, Dr. Bruce Terry, who was in the Missions Department at Abilene Christian University when I was Chair of that Department, later went to Ohio Valley University to serve for many years as professor in their Bible Department. Recently, he sent to me the following link to a fascinating recreation of what the temple of Herod, the temple of Jesus’ time, most likely looked like.

To my knowledge, no one has made a reconstruction of the temple from as many pieces of information from the architectural structures ordered by Herod. He had all sorts of buildings constructed, including the wondrous structures at Masada (pull it up on the Internet for aerial photos and reconstructions). At any rate, I think you will enjoy this presentation on the temple.

Philip Slate

<https://www.patternsofevidence.com/2024/08/23/new-biblically-accurate-3-d-animated-model-of-herods-temple/>



Shoebboxes ready to be sent away

## TELFORD

Congregation details:

**Christians:** 55

**Meeting Place:** Park Lane Centre, Woodside, Telford TF7 5QZ

**Sunday meetings:** 10.00 am

**Midweek:** Wednesday on Zoom, 7.00 pm  
(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8305748501?pwd=UWxFUktaLzdSQVVSZHFTNEVwZUZMdz09>)

**Contact:** Kwabena Afriyie – Tel. 07446 467152

**Email:** [coctelford24@yahoo.com](mailto:coctelford24@yahoo.com)

## ILKESTON

We started a new project know as ‘Warm Space’ at the beginning of December. This is held each Monday from 11:00 am until around 3.00 pm. We offer, free of charge, warm drinks and a light lunch for everyone who cares to drop in. We set out a variety of books, magazine, games, etc. We have started to receive a few visitors from the community. The project will run until the last Monday in February. This is meant to be a service for the community – anyone is welcome to come and go as they wish.



# Family News

We also joined the Barnabas Aid project collecting dried food for those in persecuted countries. Twelve boxes were collected.

For many years the town council in Ilkeston sponsored a Christmas Eve carol service – sadly with financial cut-backs this has been cancelled. The local Anglican minister offer the availability of the parish church, which is located in the middle of the town, as a suitable venue provided that it became a shared service between the various churches in the town. Last year I preached the sermon and this year I led the prayers. The building was packed and showed that when possible churches can work together and there is still a need among non-church goers to share a time to remember the birth of Jesus.

We held a toy service on the evening of 8<sup>th</sup> December. Dozens of boxes of brand new toys were brought in by those attending. These were passed on to a local charity know as ‘Home Start’ for children up to the age of ten who are living in difficult or deprived situations in our local area. We do not know who received these gifts but they were sent with our thanks to God and with our love for those who received them. And, yes, we did have visitors to our meeting.

Trevor Williams



## Winter Warm Space

Winter can be a difficult time for many.  
Cold, dark, damp days can feel long and lonely.  
We are offering a warm space, with plenty of warm drinks, a light lunch and friendly faces.



**EVERY MONDAY FROM  
2 DECEMBER-24 FEBRUARY  
11AM-3PM**  
(COME AND GO AS YOU WISH)

Adam Street church of Christ, Ilkeston, DE7 5BE  
(Bottom of Nottingham Rd  
between Zebra Musik and Lobinas)

STRATFORD CHURCH OF CHRIST WOMENS MINISTRY



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WOMENS MINISTRY EST. 1987

# BE ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN SO THAT I MIGHT SAVE SOME

*1 Cor 9:22-23*

GUEST SPEAKER  
SISTER BRIDGET REYES FROM  
ARIMA CHURCH OF CHRIST  
TRINIDAD

ZOOM ID:  
8540976249 |  
PASSCODE: SC2020

UK TIME: 6PM - 8PM | SATURDAY 18TH JAN 25

# 'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

'Twas the night before Christmas,  
But nobody in our church  
Was anticipating a midnight service –  
We have a different approach.

The virgin birth was important,  
It brought God down to earth,  
But nowhere does the Bible tell us  
To commemorate Jesus's birth.

The shepherds were watching their sheep  
Out in the fields, remember  
But where does the Bible say  
Anything about December?

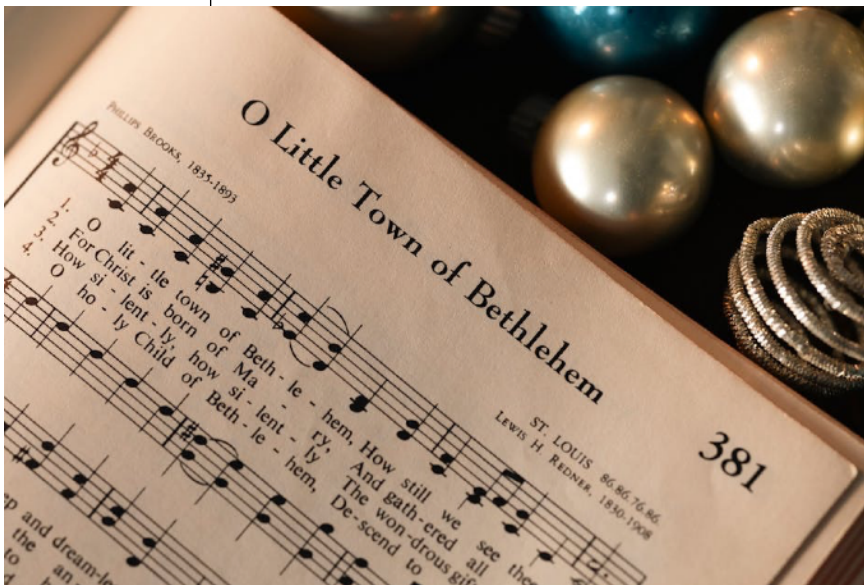
Some kings came from the Orient,  
Three of them we are told,  
But they came and found him in a house  
Not in the stable so cold.

The baby born in the stable  
Who in a manger did lie,  
Became the man despised by the world  
Of whom they said, 'crucify!'

Yet this is the same person  
Whose birthday the world celebrates  
By giving each other presents  
And an excuse for more holiday dates!

Then, when their parties are over  
And they've opened all the gifts that  
were bought,  
They return to their work and their  
leisure  
And never give Jesus a thought!

Stephen Daniell



## SHEPshed YOUTH DAY



**SATURDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2025**  
**(DETAILS TO FOLLOW)**

Liverpool Young Adult Fellowship Weekend  
Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025  
Arrival Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> 10:00am-10:30am

**Influencer or Follower?**  
**Which ONE are you?**

Ages: 18+



Address: Liverpool Church of Christ, Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH  
RSVP to Bro. Rexford by email on [rboahen@outlook.com](mailto:rboahen@outlook.com) or through Eventbrite link



# DIARY

## January

3<sup>rd</sup> – **Livingston:** Scotland-wide Youth evening, beginning at 7.30 pm. Venue: Livingston meeting place, Garden Place, Elburn, Livingston EH54 8RA. Contact: Mark Montgomery ([daytimer73@gmail.com](mailto:daytimer73@gmail.com)).

6<sup>th</sup> – **British Bible School evening class:** “Titus and 2 Timothy” led by John Griffiths each Monday, 8.00-9.00 pm, for twelve weeks on Zoom. Links to join the class can be found on the BBS social media and website: [www.britishbibleschool.com](http://www.britishbibleschool.com).

9<sup>th</sup> – **British Bible School evening class:** “Isaiah” led by Patrick Boyns each Thursday, 8.00-9.00 pm, for twelve weeks on Zoom. Links to join the class can be found on the BBS social media and website: [www.britishbibleschool.com](http://www.britishbibleschool.com).

18<sup>th</sup> – **Stafford:** Ladies’ online lesson – “Be All Things to All Men So That I Might Save Some”, 6.00-8.00 pm on Zoom (Zoom ID: 8540976249 Passode: sc2020). Speaker: Bridget Reyes. Contact: Bernie Wells ([bern.wells@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bern.wells@hotmail.co.uk)).

## February

8<sup>th</sup> – **Shepshed:** Youth Day – Contact: Stephen Woodcock ([stephen.woodcock@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stephen.woodcock@hotmail.co.uk)).

8<sup>th</sup> – **Cumbernauld:** Men’s Day – “Together”, 10.00 am-4.00 pm. Speakers: Charles Takyi, Mark Hill, Charles Yankiah, Leigh Halliday. Venue: 2 Carron House, Town Centre, Cumbernauld G67 1ER. Contact: Graham McDonald ([graham@gmcd.net](mailto:graham@gmcd.net)).

17<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> – **Gemünden, Germany:** Advanced Bible Study Series I & II, in person and on Zoom. Presenters include: Jim Baird, Amanda Nichols, Jeremy Barrier, Jerry Ross, Robin Barrier, and Trina Ross. Cost for ABSS I is €144 and ABSS II is €72. Contact: Paul Brazle ([abss.gemunden@gmail.com](mailto:abss.gemunden@gmail.com)).

28<sup>th</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> March – **East Coast Gospel Meetings:** Friday at Hyvots Bank (Edinburgh) and Saturday in Kirkcaldy, 7.30 each evening; speaker: Joe Scobbie. Contact Nick Wilson ([nick-donelda@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:nick-donelda@blueyonder.co.uk)) or Alan Moyes ([alan.J.Moyes@gmail.com](mailto:alan.J.Moyes@gmail.com)).

## March

15<sup>th</sup> – **Brandon:** Ladies’ day. Contact: Marie O’Donovan ([07545 119486](tel:07545119486)).

15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> March – **Northampton:** British Bible School Study weekends. Module: Christian Evidences; teachers: Mark Hill and Jon Galloway. Contact: [study@britishbibleschool.com](mailto:study@britishbibleschool.com).

## April

5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> – **Liverpool:** Young adult fellowship weekend – “Influenced or Influencer? – Which one are you?”, Ages 18+. Arrive 10.00-10.30 am on Saturday at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, L22 8QH. RSVP to Rexford ([rboahen@gmail.com](mailto:rboahen@gmail.com)) or use the link.

## July

4<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> – **Camp Heatherbell:** Theme: “Transformed.” Cost = £185. Venue: Compass Christian Centre, Glenshee Lodge, Blairgowrie. Contact: Adam Barr ([07889 631218](tel:07889631218)), Graham McDonald ([07748 787744](tel:07748787744)), or email [info@campheatherbell.org.uk](mailto:info@campheatherbell.org.uk) for more information or to request an application.

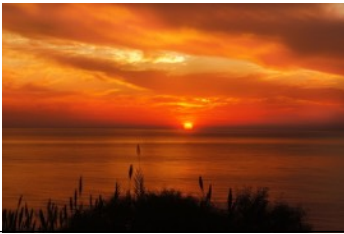
12<sup>th</sup> – **Edmonton (London):** Men’s Workshop. Contact: [info@edmontonchurchofchrist.org.uk](mailto:info@edmontonchurchofchrist.org.uk)

## October

31<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> November – **Peterborough:** Ladies’ retreat. Contact: Marsha Erysthee ([merysthee1@aol.com](mailto:merysthee1@aol.com)).

## November

3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> November – **British Bible School Residential Study Week** at Bassenfell Manor. Contact: [study@britishbibleschool.com](mailto:study@britishbibleschool.com).



# THE FINAL WORD



**In season  
and out of  
season**

A certain gardener bought tomato plants for his greenhouse so that he might enjoy their fruits later in the year. He bought new potting compost and carefully looked after his plants. After a few weeks, the plants grew but very weakly and eventually it was realised that they were not going to produce what was wanted and so the gardener threw them out and, as it was now late in the season, decided to go without his home-grown tomatoes.

It had been a cold and wet spring and summer. Roses thrived and grew taller than ever; the apple trees were loaded and were weighted down with their crops. Other fruit and flowers were fine, but no tomatoes grew.

That is until one day he saw a tiny tomato plant starting to spout in the soil near the bean plants. Somehow or other a tomato seed from a previous year had been kept alive in the compost and though spread out on the soil months ago had done what it was supposed to do – grow. Although late in the season

the gardener could not possibly throw out what looked like a healthy plant, so it was potted up and put into the conservatory where in the warmth of the autumn it became healthy.

One day the gardener saw a little green ball growing then others started to appear. The little balls grew into tomatoes, but it was winter when they were ripe. They were out of season – but no matter they were growing, and the gardener had his tomatoes.

The apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:2 said, ‘Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season.’ It does not matter when the good news of Jesus is shared – it could be the right time for that person. It might be in a place where Jesus is not normally talked about, perhaps at work or the super-market, on an email or website. It may also take months for the fruit of the gospel to appear but if the word has been spread like compost in the garden it can do good and be a surprise for you as well as the gardener in Heaven above.



*Great God, who brings life and second birth, we pray for our nations that with the preaching of the word souls might be saved. Bless the sowers, the reapers, the gardeners in your kingdom that there might be a great ingathering of souls into your kingdom. Amen.*

Trevor