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Winter 2024-25 issue 29

Quarterly news and information service for the members, friends, and community of Bedlington and surrounding areas.



Sunday Worship...Morning Service at 10am.

Sunday School at 10.45am.

Corps Officers : Majors Carrie & Philip James

The end of one year and preparing for the next is always a busy time. A lot has happened in 2024, which in many ways has been a good year for our fellowship. As Christmas approaches, we are busy with the carolling programme and other events, so by the time Christmas Day arrives it can be tempting just to breathe a sigh of relief. But all that effort is for a good reason. At this dark time of year we celebrate the entry of God into the world as a baby – of whom John wrote:

4 In him was life, and that life was the light of mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never mastered it. (John 1:4-5)

This truly is something worth celebrating, and we can face the new year having been reminded that that light can be ours. I wonder what 2025 will bring to us as individuals and as a Corps? In John 15, where Jesus talks about the vine, he promised that if we remain connected to Him we will bear much fruit and our prayers will be answered. There have been some changes within our fellowship and these will continue. We have started a prayer list and weekly prayer meetings. Please continue to pray for each other – and for us. And let us all pray that together we can grow closer to God and hence be effective in our mission.

Wishing you all a great Christmas and happy new year God bless Philip & Carrie

MY FIRST, FAVOURITE AND FUTURE CHRISTMASSES



Here (right) is a picture from my first year of Christmas music ministry with the Hong Kong Corps when I was 15 years old. My most memorable Christmases were two opportunities I had to create 'Jesus Was Born in a Manger' for church (left). Time was short and I had to do it alone, so it was very stressful. But after finishing, I was very grateful to God for letting me serve in this way, reminding us of the good news of

the birth of Jesus. My future hope is to celebrate Christmas with my family.

Angela C



• 奏演隊樂灣筭加參空抽中之忙百在也人老誕聖
 Santa took time out of his busy schedule to play in the Shaukiwan Corps Band.

From my earliest memories of Christmas, I can always remember my dad reading the Christmas story from this huge KJV Bible before we could open any presents. One of my favourite Christmases was the first one after being married. It felt great to work together to find out how we would celebrate, decorate etc as a couple. As my children get older and have their own busy lives, my hope is that we can still get together and celebrate Christ's birth as a family each year *John E*

First Christmas: being together as a family at home. My favourite Christmas was playing carols at the Metrocentre, Gateshead. Future Christmas: will be seeing souls won to Christ through his birth. *Paul R*

An early memory of Christmas I have, I'm not sure if it's my first memory of Christmas. I remember getting a keyboard for Christmas and a desk for my birthday (only 2 days apart). I never did get very far in learning the keyboard. I also am well aware of my first Christmas, as told by many over the years. I still have the bauble and stocking giving to me and they come out every year. I don't think I could single out just one Christmas. I just love Christmas. My favourite thing it's a time of having all the family together. Very happy memories of my Grandparents coming on Christmas morning to see what presents we have and all the chaos. Captured on film so we can still watch and reminisce today. I hope future Christmas's continue to be filled with family and just as much chaos. And that the real reason for Christmas won't be come lost in the ever growing commercialisation of Christmas. *Rachel W*

I think I was about 3 when I got a doll for Christmas. She had a label saying her name was Mary. I didn't like the name, so my grandma took me to the Home League, where the Corps Officer 'dedicated' my doll and gave her the name I had chosen Monica Violet May! Don't ask!! My favourite Christmases were definitely in Africa. They were not commercial in any way and we were reminded every year of the true meaning of Christmas. We had to be imaginative about gifts and one year I received two slices of liver and a jar of pickled onions! I would hate them now, but they were gratefully received on that occasion. For the future; my prayer would be the same as every year-that people would remember the greatest gift that God gave the world. His love through his Son. Names are important and the most important of all is 'Jesus' which reminds us of love, sacrifice and redemption. *Marlene B*

This issue of Outlook is one that covers an interesting period of time for us within The Salvation Army. As I write this, I'm reflecting on the activities of our remembrance weekend, where we were able to pause and think of the sacrifices made by so many to protect the freedoms and lifestyles that we enjoy today.

It was also good to be part of the remembrance parade in Bedlington, which our band plays such an important part in leading. Whilst this was, of course, a reminder of the horrors of war and the price paid by so many, I was also encouraged to see so many people on the parade – local people from emergency services, cadets, scouts, guides, councillors and more in addition to our own presence and the local clergy – all people who commit to local service and making the place we live a better place.

Sometimes we forget that all of these groups and activities exist in our community, and it is a helpful reminder of the good that sits within our communities that we might not always see.

In a similar way, we are about to embark on our biggest mission drive of the year. We may not always think of our Christmas programme in that way, but the purpose of it is clear – to take the message of the good news of Jesus to our communities. There will be people who hear our carols, or come along to our Christmas market or one of our Christmas events who need that reminder that we are still here, and that we still talk about the impact that the birth of that baby had and continues to have in our lives today.

So, as we head towards the start of another new year, my prayer is that we will continue to be the beating heart of Jesus within our community, the hands of Jesus to those who need us, and that we will continue to seek out ways to share this good news with those we come into contact with in 2025.



**Thoughts from
our Corps
Sergeant-
Major,
Steve Gibson**

Bedlington Youth at Salvation Army Summer Schools



Henry attended this year's Junior Camp and as part of the royalty theme attended Newcastle Castle. This was particularly exciting for Henry as he is an avid history fan but also important as he spent the week being reminded that he himself was royalty as he is the child of a king.

Zachary and Michael attended the SA USA Southern Territorial Music Institute. A highlight for Michael was the midweek service where the song "All my life you have been faithful" was used and the delegates were encouraged to respond to this by "singing of His mercies". Zachary particularly enjoyed the band piece "Holy Spirit You are Welcome Here" as it was challenging both musically and spiritually.

Daniel was the only representative of Bedlington to follow the media programme at Northern Summer School. Although one of the standout features for him was that he was able to sleep in later than some of the other delegates, he also has come away from the experience excited about the opportunities to use non-traditional ways to spread the word of God.



Jacob and Samuel both enjoyed the experience of playing with the band, particularly the piece "Life Ablaze" which includes the melody to the "Potter's Hands" and speaks of being moulded for God's work. The theme for the week "Gathered and Scattered" reminded them of their responsibilities to be witnesses for God both within their church and in their daily lives outside.

Annie, Millie, Grace, Abigail, Evie and Mia all took part in the choir programme. A stand out song for Grace and Annie was "You Say" as it was a reminder to the group that despite often feeling weak, falling short or numb to the world around God replies with the answer that they are His and in Him, they find their strength. LE



WEEKLY PROGRAMME

SUNDAY

Morning Service 10.00am

Sunday School 10.45am

MONDAY

Home League. 1.30-2.30pm

A varied programme, including guest speakers. Meet new friends, all welcome.

TUESDAY

Slimming World. 9.30am

WEDNESDAY

Little Lambs Toddler Group 9.15-11.15am

Children up to 3yrs must be with an adult.

Call Arleen to book a place.

Seniors Lunch Club 12.00pm

Two Course meal for Over 60s.

Please call Arleen to book a place

Over 60s Sunshine Hour 1.30—2.30pm

All welcome (if you're over 60)

FRIDAY

Little Lambs Toddler Group 9.15-11.15am

Children up to 3yrs must be with an adult.

Call Arleen to book a place.

Thankful Friday 10am-noon.

Free refreshments & all welcome

DECEMBER

Sunday 1st

Advent 1 (Toy Service) 10.00am

Churches Together Advent Service 4.00pm

(Colliery Methodist)

Wednesday 4th

Ladies' Fellowship 7.00pm

Sunday 8th

Advent 2 (Little Lambs Nativity) 10.00 am

Band & Songsters at Stakeford Methodist 2pm

Sunday 15th

Advent 3 10.00 am

Band & Songsters Christmas Concert 5.30pm

Thursday 19th

At Home with the young musicians 6.00pm

Tickets £3 (or pay at the door)

Sunday 22nd

NO morning service

Carols by Candlelight 4.00pm

Tuesday 24th

Christmas Eve Family Service 6.00pm

Christmas Day

Christmas Morning Service 10.30am

Sunday 29th

Morning Service 10.00am

JANUARY

Friday 3rd

Thankful Friday returns 10.00am

Wednesday 8th

Community programme returns

Ladies Fellowship meal 7.00pm

Wednesday 22nd

Men's Fellowship meal 7.00pm

Friday 24th

Churches Together quiz 7.00pm

(at St Cuthbert's)

Wednesday 29th

Corps Council 7.00pm



Love God
Love Others

FEBRUARY

Sunday 2nd

Self Denial launch 10.00am

Wednesday 5th

Ladies Fellowship 7.00pm

Saturday 15th

Coffee morning 10.00am

Wednesday 19th

Men's Fellowship 7.00pm

Monday 24th—28th Half Term

MARCH

Sunday 2nd

Self Denial Altar Service 10.00am

Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th

Young People's weekend

Office Contact for all enquiries:-

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Food Bank Referrals Mon-Wed & Fri 08.00– Noon. For Collection.

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