



November

Thursday 4
8.00pm Family forum

Saturday 6
10.30am Beanies dance group

Sunday 7
11.00am Community service and meal, Philip Jinadu
6.30pm Terry Wicks

Monday 8
2.30pm Inside Out, talk on Boots Plc

Tuesday 9
10.00am Men's group

Wednesday 10
8.00pm Bereavement group, continues for 6 weeks

Saturday 13
8.00am Men's breakfast
9.30am Christian dance day; all welcome
4.00pm A taste of 'New Wine'

Sunday 14
9.15/11.00am Remembrance day, Michael Wood
6.30pm Dave Finney

Monday 15
12.30pm Ladies That Lunch

Tuesday 16
10.00am to 12. Pray day 4 schools
6.00pm Thornbury Christmas lights evening outreach

Thursday 18
8.00pm Prayer evening

Sunday 21
9.15/11.00am Dave Day
6.30pm David Ling

Tuesday 23
10.00 Men's group

Sunday 28
9.15/11.00am Advent 1, David Lawrence
6.30pm Peter Hatton

December

Saturday 4
10.30am Beanies dance group

Sunday 5
11.00am Advent 2, Community service, baptism and meal, Paul Green
6.30pm Peter Hatton

Tuesday 7
10.00am Men's group

Friday 10
Inside Out

Saturday 11
8.00am Men's breakfast

Sunday 12
9.15/11.00am Advent 3, Dave Day
6.30pm Malcolm Grey

Monday 13
12.30pm Ladies That Lunch
2.30pm Inside Out musical afternoon and Christmas tea

Tuesday 14
Men's group Christmas lunch

Sunday 19
9.15/11.00am Advent 4, Mike Levy
6.00pm Carols in the community

Tuesday 21
10.00am to 12.00 Children's Christmas party (Infant age group)

Friday 24
6.00pm Christmas Eve celebration, Paul Ferguson

Saturday 25
10.00am Christmas day family service

Sunday 26
10.00am All age family service
6.30pm No evening service

Friday 31
11.30pm New Years Eve Watchnight service

Are you into mission ???

It is easy to listen to or read about great missionaries and be in awe of their wonderful work. Or to think of the likes of Billy Graham and Luis Palau and marvel at their gifts of evangelism. Or to hear the feedback from a group who has been abroad recently and either wonder why you are not asked to go or hope desperately that no one asks you to join them and then feel guilty because you don't think you are involved in mission. If you have ever felt like that then the good news is that by being a Christian and by being a part of Thornbury Baptist Church you are involved in mission. Mission doesn't just happen in foreign places it occurs wherever you are.

In 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 Paul speaks of Christians as being 'the aroma of Christ' and Jesus spoke of us being salt and light (Matthew 5:13). We are not commanded to be these things, we just are, as we reflect Jesus in our lives. Smells can become unpleasant, salt can lose its flavour and light can become dim so we bear some responsibility for how others experience Jesus through us.

The people we meet day to day will all have a different view of God and of Christians. Some will have no time for God. They view him as malevolent, the one to blame for all the ills in their life and in the world. Their impression of Christians is that we are at best a bunch of sad, deluded people and at worst dangerous fanatics. For others the picture is not so negative. Lawrence Singlehurst, in his book '*Sowing, Reaping, Keeping*' speaks of evangelism as having three main stages, with the aim of every encounter we have with non-Christians being to leave them more positive about God and Christians so that their next Holy Spirit encounter enables them to move closer to entering into a relationship with God through Jesus.

In the first stage Singlehurst identifies he says that our aim should be to simply show people 'God is good and we (Christians) are OK'. This we can easily do by showing love, care and kindness to those with whom we have dealings in our

everyday lives. As a fellowship we have many activities which are set up to do this and where individuals are already doing this, including: Two By Two, Lunch Club, Adventurers, Holiday Club, Basement and Attic Cafes, Holiday at Home, Fit to Live, Inside Out, running activities in Leyhill Prison, Julian Trust Homeless Shelter, New Start Debt Advice, and Helen's work in schools. We are not seeking to convert people when they come to such activities, but to show them something of God's love.

The people we meet day to day will all have a different view of God and of Christians but we can all show God's love to our community

The second stage is to explain the basics of the Gospel message: that humans have a problem i.e. our selfishness which separates us from God. But God has an answer - the death and resurrection of Christ. We should only do this when people are ready and want to hear this. We

should not try to trick people into hearing the gospel or it will result in their experience of God and Christians being a negative one where they feel violated. If someone chooses to come to Two by Two they come because they want to meet with other parents and children. They could be invited to another event at which something of the gospel message is explained. For example before Christmas those attending Two by Two are being invited to stay for lunch and it is clearly stated that part of it will be the Christmas message. Activities which take place within TBC which already do this include the work in schools with 6thGen, Morph and the Assemblies Group, Sunday groups for children and youth, and aspects of some of the activities in the first stage. The third stage is where the implications and cost of the Gospel are explained and then how to receive Jesus as Lord and King. Alpha is a good example of this, along with the Bible Studies in Eastwood Park Prison and at Beech House.

Many of us may find the idea of explaining the gospel and helping someone at the stage of actually becoming a Christian rather daunting but we can all show God's love to our community either as individuals or by becoming involved with one of the many activities listed above. Let's realise that we are all involved in mission.

Visit to Kenya

In April this year, I went to Kenya with my mum and friend Jess to visit the Open Arms Orphanage near the town of Eldoret and it was the most amazing ten days!

There are 31 kids (mostly orphans) who have been taken in and given a future. There are 3 homes each with two house parents who are amazing!. They have full responsibility for all the children in their house (ranging from 10-16 kids!) and they are all one big, happy family. It was amazing to see; you couldn't tell which children were biologically theirs and which were 'adoptively' theirs, and their love was never ending. Jess and I stayed in one of the houses, called Upendo house, which housed 14 children and the two house parents, Peter and Stella, who were lovely! Whilst at the village we spent time playing with the kids, everything from football to having our hair 'played' with. It was amazing to share in their lives and build relationships with them. They were all so trusting and loving! We took out activities and resources for them and they really enjoyed taking part and showing off to us and each other. Occasionally we were also given the chance to bless the house parents and assistant house parents by helping with cooking, cleaning and washing up.

For two of the days we went to the local slum, Kambi Teso. Open Arms runs a feeding programme at the slum four times weekly providing 120 children with a hot meal, often the only one of the day. The children there were incredibly friendly and welcoming. We helped to hand out food and then had some time playing with the children and showing God's love. The stench of home brew in the slum was horrible and the children in the feeding programme have to live there, often with parents who are drunk, abusive or out for days leaving the eldest child as the responsible one. Another day we visited a community centre and Eldoret rubbish dumps who are both working with very young street children. Boys younger than me were living there, with very little hope for the future. It was

heartbreaking to see children and adults living on the streets and dumps; many were addicted to glue and had bottles hanging from their mouths. They have some hope in a man called Morris who

is working with them, but it was still a very harsh reality compared to our luxurious lifestyles!

The trip was awesome. We became part of the Upendo and Open Arms family for ten days and it was very difficult to leave! The kids there are so



lucky to have education and a bright future. The trip really impacted my faith: so many of the slum and street kids knew Bible verses off by heart, and although they had nothing, they knew God's love and were full of joy through Him. It really challenged my faith and how, over here, it can be put in a box and complicated by life's challenges and consumerism; however out in Kenya, they have nothing, so they rely on God and have a much, much simpler and, I think, purer

faith. The trip confirmed for me that mission and helping people is what I need to do with my life, and I'm excited to see how God will continue to bring that about. Thank you to everyone who prayed and supported us, we were truly protected and surrounded by your prayers, it was a real blessing so thank you.

Natalie Harrison

Meeting teenagers in Hull

During July a group of young people from Thornbury travelled to the Bransholme estate in Hull for a three day visit with teenagers there (plus youth workers Nik and Tiff Strode) in a residential centre.

We spent a lot of time before we left Thornbury preparing for our trip. We decided to give testimonies, under the name "stories", to introduce the group to God and to let them learn about what He has done in all our lives. We all had different things to share and helped each other to make a simple yet meaningful testimony.

After an eventful journey, which included a trip to MacDonalds, a burst tyre and a visit from a RAC man, we eventually arrived in Hull where we met Nik and Tiff who explained to us about the young people. They really had a heart for them, and were grateful that we wanted to spend time with them, but warned us

that they had very short attention spans, and that some of them came from very difficult backgrounds. Travelling through the estate we were shocked at the environment in which the

kids lived. There were many small terraced houses, some boarded up, and their local school looked old and run-down. Then we met the young people and it was clear that some of them had never left the estate, so they were very excited. After a tiring evening, including a particularly long night walk we all settled down in anticipation of our first day of mission.

That afternoon we went to Scarborough beach where the two groups mixed freely. The bravest of the group, Chloe from Hull and Will J, had a quick dip in the sea, despite freezing temperatures! Kites were flown and a game of rounders was quickly started up. The less competitive of the groups sat down and chatted, trying not to get too cold!

In the evening we had a BBQ in a forest by a stream, where there was a massive play area which everyone enjoyed and another game of rounders. Josh H was in control of the BBQ, serving us burgers and marshmallows. It was amazing and wonderful to see everyone relaxing and having fun together, and we all loved watching the group from Hull slowly let their guard down, enjoying the trip as young people rather than the adult role they have to take on back at the estate.

On the last day we decided as a team to give a gift from the church to the group of £50. Later that evening we amazed everyone with our singing skills when we sang Mighty to Save. Following an incredibly surprisingly positive reaction in which we were told we should go on the X-factor we had an impromptu disco, following Josh's lead, which got most of us dancing crazily. The two groups had bonded really well and we were very sad to leave the next morning, with the group from Hull asking us to visit again!

I hope you can tell from all this that our trip to Hull was amazing. It was inspiring to see God working and watching how open the young people were to our testimonies. We were astonished but pleased when Chloe decided to join in our prayer. Nik and Tiff have kept us all updated, and some of the boys were touched by the Holy Spirit a few weeks later, while



everyone has been asking loads of questions about God. We have also sent personalised Bibles to the rest of the group, and are praying that they will learn more about God and really start to trust and believe in Him. The whole team began with fairly low expectations of the Hull group's response to us as Christians. However, the mission really served to reaffirm our faith in a God as so much bigger than our own personal expectations.

Emma Barnes & Sarah James

Holiday at Home

This August volunteers from Thornbury Churches Together provided a 'Holiday at Home' for local people who are unable to go away for a holiday. This is the second year of this event and it took place over a period of three days at the United Reformed Church. A good number of mainly elderly people came along, some of whom had taken part last year, and everyone found it to be

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a most enjoyable opportunity to get out of the house and either make new friends or catch up with older ones. Everything necessary was provided; door to door transport made getting there very easy and there were refreshments and lunches during the day. During the morning sessions participants were able to join in quite a number of activities ranging from craft

demonstrations, music making and indoor games. There were lively talks during lunch followed by entertaining music and community singing of some well remembered golden oldies. Altogether it was a wonderful time for all concerned, whether holidaymaker or volunteer helper; in fact several people said they would certainly like to come along next year.

Ladies That Lunch

Have you heard about the *Ladies That Lunch* yet? This is a new group for ladies, and in particular, young mums, but all ages are very welcome.

They plan to meet once a month over lunch to do such things as socialise, discuss and consider topical subjects from the Bible and generally have an enjoyable time. If you would like to come along or would like a few more details then please contact Annette Stone on 01454 414274—see the calendar overleaf for the next two meeting dates.