

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sundays	10.30am	Morning Worship
Tuesdays	9.00am	Prayer Meeting
	10.00am	Little Treasures
	5.15pm	Kingsquad (Yrs 3-6)
Wednesdays	8.30am - 12.00pm	Friendly Bean Café
	2.00pm	Ladies' Fellowship
Thursdays	8.30am - 12.00pm	Friendly Bean Café
	7.00pm	Housegroup (Church)
Fridays	10.30am	Fellowship Group (Church) – <i>Alternate Fridays</i>
	7.00pm-9.00pm	Powerhouse
Saturdays	9.00am	Who Let the Dads Out? – <i>3^d in the month</i>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3/12	Members' Meeting (Budget)
17/12	Fellowship Christmas Lunch
17/12	Christmas Family Service 3pm (no morning service)
24/12	Quiet Reflective Carols
25/12	Christmas Day Service
14/01	Covenant Service

'As Pastor Rick Warren says, the birth of Jesus means 'Peace with God, peace with others, and peace in your own heart'. Sharing that story of hope is surely the most precious gift we can give to a child at Christmas.'

The launch of the resource is the latest initiative to support the organisation's, 95 Campaign, which was launched earlier this year and focuses on the alarming statistic suggesting that 95% of children and young people don't go to church. Order your free copy of *The First Christmas* now by joining The 95 campaign at www.the95.org.uk or by calling 01908 856000.



To know Christ and to make Him known

December 2017

I will make you a light for the nations. You will show people all over the world the way to be saved.

(Starting in Borstal)

Isaiah 49:6b

Welcome to our service. We pray that you will meet with God here. There is a loop system in use, just turn your hearing aid to the 'T' position. Children are welcome to stay in the service or go out to Sunday School, which is held downstairs. You are warmly invited to stay for coffee or tea after the morning service. If we can help you in any way, please don't hesitate to ask – we are here to serve you. Do please sign the visitors' book before you leave.

Prayer



- Our Christmas services: that we might share the joy of God's love, shown in the Birth of Jesus, with those we know and those we don't yet know. Who will you invite?
- The sharing of 50 *First Christmas* books to the children with whom we have contact. (see article about them elsewhere on sheet)
- Those for whom Christmas is a sad, difficult or painful time. For Medway Foodbank, CAP, Medway Night Shelter and others who will care for the poorest in Medway
- Andy and Jane and the family, Hilda's sons William and Robert, any facing illness or tests and results.

From the Manse:

The details of the Christmas story are very well known but, in the midst of so much busyness at this time of year, how much do we think about what Christmas really means? How often do we stop and think about the fact that God loved us so much that he came to earth to save us?

This is not easy to understand, and many still struggle with that truth - and to believe in God abiding in a human body is even more difficult. Yet these are the basic truths of our Christian belief, so we need to find time to think about the Christmas story, and to reflect on what it means for each of us.

If our God is truly a personal God then this must shape our lives: who we are and what we do. The story starts in a room at the back of a pub in Bethlehem and grows outward to impact the world. God came to us to share our human nature and to save us, personally, and the world from the human pride and selfishness that we hold on to.

We need to find time to wonder about what happened at that first Christmas and consider what it means for us today. We live in a world that is still torn apart by conflict between nations, within nations, and between individuals. These conflicts so often involve the innocent, the young, the frail and anyone in the way; refugees that our hearts go out to, but whom we struggle to accommodate - the list is long. The world needs to know God's love.

My prayer is that we may find ways to lead by example and show the love of God this Christmas and next year, so that those around us may see and be helped to believe and experience God's love.

CONTACT US!

Minister: Julie Aylward ☎ 303428
Elder: Bryan Johnson ☎ 842283
Secretary & Deacon: Suzanne Rogers ☎ 07809 433723
Deacons: Lynda Gilbert ☎ 686671
Jan Rogers ☎ 868136
Website: www.borstalbaptistchurch.org.uk

'MORE THAN THE SOUTH POLE AND SANTA'

A new Christmas resource that aims to share the real Christmas story with thousands of children has been launched.

The Scripture Union resource *The First Christmas* is a retelling of the real Christmas story by award winning author Gemma Willis and illustrated by celebrated artist Grace Alton.

It has been produced in response to worrying statistics suggesting that many children have little or no understanding of the nativity story. In a recent study, 35% of the children asked believed that Jesus was born at the South Pole, 52% stated that 25 December was Santa's birthday and one in five children thought Jesus Christ was a footballer for Chelsea FC.

Tim Hastie-Smith, National Director for Scripture Union England & Wales said, 'With the lack of engagement in the Christmas story, it is little wonder that few children know that Christmas is about the birth of a saviour who can give meaning and purpose to their lives.'

'This amazing resource is a book that children will not only read, but are sure to treasure - whatever their faith.'

More than 100,000 copies of the resource have been printed and the charity aims to share the book with as many children as possible this Christmas. Through partnerships with a number of Christian organisations, *The First Christmas* will also be received by around 80,000 disadvantaged children for whom Christmas is likely to be a difficult season - particularly those spending Christmas in hospital, those with a parent in prison and those whose families find it hard to make ends meet.

The Trussell Trust and Christians Against Poverty (CAP) will distribute copies along with Christmas hampers for children whose families are struggling financially. The Prison Fellowship will give copies as gifts to children of prisoners through their Angel Tree programme, and many hospitals will also ensure that the sick and injured children in their care receive copies.

Tim said, 'We are delighted that so many key partners have joined with us to get this message of hope out to some of the most vulnerable children in our nation.'

(Continued overleaf)