

Excited about Mission!

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Ivinghoe & Pitstone WRU Church (Buckinghamshire)

Pastor Halbo Chou writes : 'Hope is Born' - this was the catchy title of the leaflets that we presented to the parents as they collected their children from school. It was an invitation to join at our Carol service - but more - an opportunity for a little chat - about family life, holiday plans and the meaning of Christmas! Initially, we wanted to serve hot chocolate, but it didn't seem practical to do so, this year. Next year perhaps! Mission work is seasonal - as we all know - with a time for sowing and a time for reaping. Please pray for the Lord of the Harvest - not only to send workers - but especially to produce a bountiful harvest for the workers to work with! For now, we rest on the promise that 'His word shall not return void'.

Syresham Chapel (Oxfordshire Area)

Dorothy Dunkley writes : Please pray for the four Churches as we continue to pray and think through the the discussions we had with Andy, Cliff and Alina on February 14th, regarding regional worker. Pray that they will prove fruitful and give us guidance for the future. We had a busy run up to Christmas –Christmas Eve we had a two hour craft session with children from 2 years and upwards – lots of helpers and wonderful crafts were produced the Sunday school was a real hive of activity and it was so good to see so many parents joining us. Paula made a Christingle with each child and then we had a Christingle service led by Paula with people from the village joining us. One lady even offered her services to come and help this coming year. We met again later in the evening and carol sang round the village raising £300.00 for Action for Children and finished with soup sausage rolls etc and a time of prayer at Rosemary's home. Christmas morning saw a good number joining us for our service at 9.30am led by beryl and a covenant service on New Year's day proving a real blessing and enabling us to send 3200.00 to our twinned Church in India. Just a big thank you to everyone for all their help to make this time so special.



Richmond Church (Sheffield Circuit)

Wendy Hudson writes : Our pastor, Jim Braddock is due to retire at the end of April and his successor has been a matter of prayerful concern for some time. We are delighted that Martin Ludbrook, who some of you will know from his work in the Union, will be joining our current elders as Lead Elder and particularly taking on the responsibility for preaching and teaching in the church as this is the area where God has truly gifted him. In the longer term, he may develop his skills to take on the full role of pastor, but for the moment we are delighted in this answer to our prayers and are happy to look to the Lord for future guidance as things develop. Please pray for Jim and Joan as they look to relocate nearer their family and for Martin as he takes up his additional responsibilities at Richmond from 1st April.

December 2016 was an encouraging month for us. We were blessed by a baptism service for three members of our fellowship, who have come to the UK from Iran. Two were already Christians, but it has been a joy to see the third member of the trio come to faith and begin to grow in the Lord. Please pray for them and for their future situation, that the Lord will continue to bless them, keep them and guide them.

Our Christmas outreach services (All-Together Christmas service and lunch, Carols by Candlelight, traditional carol service and Crib Service) did attract some visitors who heard the gospel clearly presented. Please pray for the impact and that we would have further opportunities to share the good news with these folk in the coming months through our Tiddlywinks play group, two children's clubs and our monthly café service. One family is coming along to our morning services more regularly as a result of this contact, so we thank God for that.

Oughtibridge (Sheffield Circuit)

We are very thankful to God for the continuing good relationship with our local primary school. They have a new Head Teacher who seems very happy to have us continue presenting our Open the Book assemblies and run a lunchtime Bible club for Years 1 and 2.. We go in once each half term and share a dramatized Bible story in assemblies for both Infant and Junior sections of the school; we follow the Open the Book programme. This works through some of the major stories of the Bible to tell the big story of God and His people. We would recommend the programme to any churches wanting to take God's Word into their local school – Open the Book is now operating under the wing of The Bible Society and you can find details on their website (or we would be happy to help if we can).

Just before Christmas the school asked if they could use our church for the school choir to present a short concert of Christmas music. We were glad to welcome them and their families for this event.

In the weeks running up to Easter we will be holding another series of Ladies' Nights, using Becky Manly Pippert's "Know" course. We have been much encouraged by the response to the "Live" and "Grow" courses run previously and by what God is doing in women's lives as a result. So we are praying that God will continue to use His Word to change lives during the coming sessions.

We are also planning to have an exhibition of prints by Jenny Hawke called "One Friday"; the prints represent the stations of the cross and are produced by CPO. We plan to open the exhibition to the local community on Easter Saturday morning, with refreshments; there will also be opportunity for the prints to be viewed following an Easter Concert being given by the City of Sheffield Teachers' Choir on Saturday 8 April (which will include Stainer's "Crucifixion") and after our Easter Sunday service.

Church on the Rock (West Midlands)

Jackie Clarke writes : We have had excellent nativity with many parents and grandparents staying. Our Christmas cracker was a lot of work but also loads of fun. Folk all dressed up on a space theme. Hundreds came through the door and found out that church can be fun.

Please would everyone pray for us at church on the Rock. We seem to have been hit by a lot of sickness lately. We also need to continue to promote new leaders for the future but we would have those with God's heart.

We are planning a craft day on April 1st.

We are also in the planning stages for Men's breakfasts for growth of our young men. Also working on ways to outreach to women we are already in contact with.

God seems to be giving us contact with individuals who need salvation. May God give us wisdom in how we use our time.

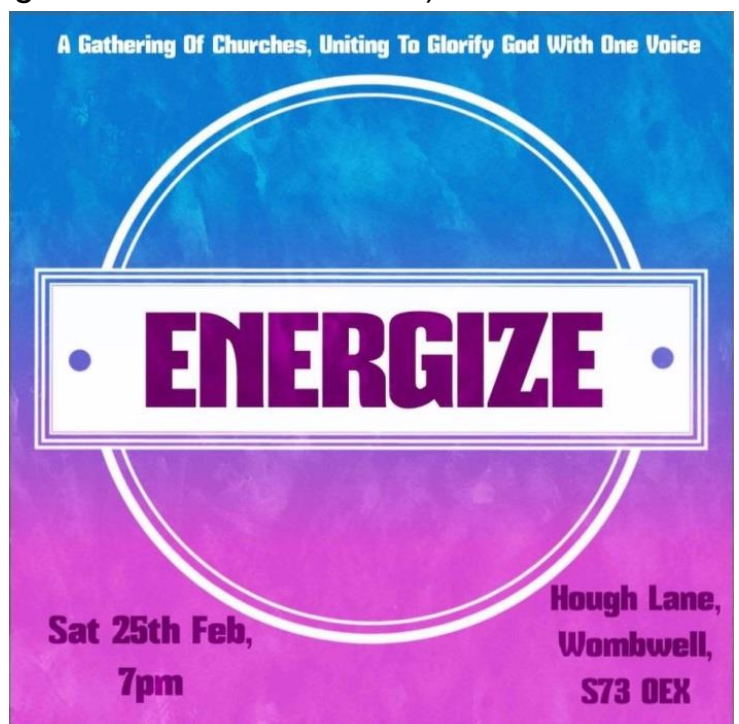
Hough Lane (Rotherham, Mexborough and Doncaster Circuit)

Hannah writes :

Energize : "A gathering of Churches,
Uniting To Glory God with One Voice
It's a night of worship and a little word.

It's going to be amazing.

Saturday 25th Feb 7: Hough Lane,
Wombwell, S73 0EX.



St James Old Hill (West Midlands)

Colin Bolton writes : This is a little hot off the press.



On Sunday 29th January we held our first Believers Baptism service at St. James.

We baptised two people a father and daughter Lionel and Cheryle. Just over two years ago I conducted the funeral for Lionel's wife Audrey and we invited Lionel to the church for a memorial Service in the December following the funeral and we as a church have been walking with Lionel since. In November of last year his daughter Cheryle returned from Spain and her first weekend home she attended a conference that we held on healing and how we can pray for people to receive helping. At the evening service Cheryle gave her life to the Lord.

So on Sunday we celebrated them both coming to faith in Jesus as we baptised them.

I want to encourage everyone who reads this not to be afraid of the conversation don't be afraid to spread the good news and to talk to people about Jesus after all 'He is the yesterday, today and forever.' We are praying that this is the first of many.

Bethel Community Church (Bradford Circuit)

Margaret Denison writes : At Bierley we have been encouraged that more people than in previous years have accepted our invitation to join us for our Christmas events. We were thrilled to welcome parents alongside their children to a pre-Christmas Activities and Games Evening in conjunction with our Ignite Group and then our Christingle, Carol Service at the Life Centre, and Candlelight Carol Service were further opportunities to welcome people. Our work with young people the majority of who are unchurched young people continues to grow numerically with extended and increased sessions including a newly formed Cell Groups. Our Church@5 time continues to grow and we now have a Family Service once a month after a slightly earlier Communion Service. Our prayer is that we will be able to reach out to young families by this very lively activity. Our objective in the coming months is to build on what we are already doing as we feel we are seeing fruit from our prayers and labours. Our text for the year tells us that we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength. We continue to ask Him to guide and direct us to those who need Him

Bozeat Chapel (Wellingborough Circuit)

Peter Norton writes : Bozeat are running a course on pastoral care, it's called **Paraclesis** (if you look it up its about coming alongside others.) The course will run consecutive Sunday's from the 5th of March through to the 9th of April, starting at 2-30pm for just over an hour. We would welcome any who are available to join in this time together. This could be seen as a Lenten course.