
Hope
Times



Dec 07 /
Jan 08



Hope Church

Hillfields

Invites you to join in the

Christmas Events

Wednesday 19th December
6.45pm ~ Traditional Carol Singing
on the Streets
for the Hillfields community

Sunday 23rd December
10.30am ~ Family Christmas Service
6pm ~ Christmas by Candlelight

Christmas Day
Tuesday 25th December
9-9.45am ~ Christmas Day Communion





Forgiveness ~ *God's gift to us*

'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us...'

Matthew 6:14

At the baptism service the other week, John talked about us being disciples of Jesus and reminded us that the definition of the word 'disciple' is 'learner'. So it doesn't matter how long we've been Christians we're all still wearing 'L' plates. That means that we all make mistakes from time to time. And that means that we should be gentle with one another and accepting of each other.

Forgiveness is essential to happiness

There are also times when we need to actively forgive one another. Psychological research increasingly shows that being a forgiving person is essential to happiness. People who forgive do better on almost every measure of wellbeing than those who won't forgive – better health, longer lives, better marriages, stronger social support, etc. So Jesus' command that we forgive others is as much about our own welfare as it is about the healing of relationships.

What *is* forgiveness?

Forgiveness is letting go of the ill-will we have towards those who have hurt or offended us and becoming more understanding and compassionate in our thoughts and actions towards them. It is a deliberate choice of the mind, not a fuzzy feeling of the emotions.

It can take a long time to come to a place of forgiveness, especially when the hurt has been caused by a deliberate, malicious act and there are times when we need to call upon God to help us.



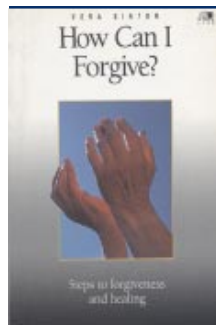
What forgiveness is not

Forgiveness is different from condoning, excusing, reconciling and forgetting: When someone condones or excuses, he or she realises there was no unfairness involved. Reconciliation is when two people come together again in mutual trust. The act will not be forgotten, but with forgiveness comes a different attitude towards the memory.

Nine steps towards forgiveness

- ▣▣ Acknowledge your emotional reaction to the wrongdoing.
- ▣▣ Go beyond identifying the person who hurt you and think about the specific behaviours that upset or hurt you.
- ▣▣ Make the *choice* to forgive.
- ▣▣ Consider the other person's vulnerabilities.
- ▣▣ Make a commitment to not pass along the pain you have endured even to the person who hurt you in the first place.
- ▣▣ Decide instead to offer the world mercy and goodwill. At this stage, you may wish to reconcile with the other person (but that's not necessary).
- ▣▣ Reflect on how it feels to let go of a grudge. Find meaning in the suffering you experienced and overcame.
- ▣▣ Discover the paradox of forgiveness: As you give the gift of forgiveness to others, you receive the gift of peace.

Maybe the best Christmas present you can *receive* this year is to know the love of God and his forgiveness and the peace that this brings. Maybe the best Christmas present you can *give* is to choose to forgive someone who has hurt you and to let them go. You too will be set free.



If you want to know more, this very practical booklet is ideal. It goes carefully and gently through the steps to forgiveness and healing from a Christian perspective.

Title: How can I forgive?

Author: Vera Sinton

Price: £1.99

www.lion-publishing.co.uk

Some of this information is drawn from an article by Martin Seligman, Director of the University of Pennsylvania Positive Psychology Center, USA.

A note of thanks...

from David and Sue...

Thank you to everyone, for making David's birthday, and our last Sunday at Hope for a while, so special. Special thanks to Gavin & Viv for the lovely cake and it's 'eternal flame' . We WILL be back!



It was a real blessing to us to serve you all the bread and wine. It was a very moving experience. By the time you read this we shall be in New Zealand, returning mid March when we look forward to celebrating Easter with you. We shall be thinking of you, particularly as Hope moves into a new phase in the new year.

May you all have a wonderful Christmas, and a blessed New Year
God Bless



and from Garry and Mandy...

Thank you so much to everyone who has given and prayed so generously for the building of the house of refuge in Azerbaijan. We have received a total of £3800 which far exceeded anything we could have imagined, we were overwhelmed.

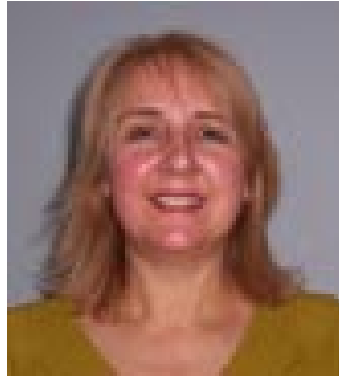
Phil 4: 18-19: 'I have received full payment and even more I am amply supplied now that I have received the gifts you sent, they are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice pleasing to God and my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.'

God bless you all.

Congratulations...

... to **Marg Patterson** on her appointment as **Hope Cafe Coordinator**.

We thank God for the gifts he has given to Marg and we pray that he will be close to her as she prepares to spearhead this new development for Hope Cafe. Marg will be co-ordinating a team of volunteer staff, promoting the cafe and supporting the use of cafe facilities to the wider community.



... to **Karen and Adey** on the birth of **Keira Mae** who was born on 21 October, and to **Joe and Ruth** on the birth of **Grace**, born on 27 October.

We thank God for these babies and for the gift of new life. We give praise to God for the wonderful healing for Grace.

Psalm 127: 3 *'Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord.'*

...and to **Matt and Charlotte** who celebrated their wedding on Saturday, 10th November.

May they know the love of God in a deep way as they commit themselves to each other in marriage.

God bless you both.



Children & young people

Parent & toddlers

Every Monday
10 - 11.30am (Term time only)
@ Hope Centre
Contact: Heidi Davies

Creche @ Hope Church

for pre-school children

GLOW @ Hope Church

for primary age children

Every Sunday *except*
1st Sunday of the month
Contact: Marg Patterson (Creche)
or Mark Johnson (GLOW)

Youth Emmaus

for 11 - 16 year olds
Every Sunday after worship time
Contact: Michelle Williams
or Anna Cramp

Nooma Group

for 16-25 year olds
3rd Sunday of every month
6 - 8pm Hope Centre
Contact: John & Marg Patterson

Regular events

Hope Coffee Bar

Live music
7.30 - 9.30pm
Everyone welcome!

2nd week of the month

Homegroups
Various venues

3rd Wednesday of the month

Holy Communion
with prayer for healing
8-9.30pm
Hope Church

4th week in the month

Homegroups
Various venues

5th week in the month

Other activities,
such as outreach

**If you wish to join a homegroup,
please contact John Patterson.**

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Prayer events

Intercessory Prayer
Mondays
7 - 8.30am
Hope Centre
Contact:
Michelle Williams

Turkey Prayer Group
Bi-monthly
Contact:
Mary Lindley

Men's prayer
1st Saturday of the month
8 - 10am
Hope Centre
A time for fellowship
and prayer.

**Contact details can be
found in the
Hope Church
Address Book or
by phoning
024 7663 3500.**



Hope cafe volunteers

Hope cafe will be soon be re-opening as a part of the ministry of Hope Church. This is an exciting development for us. The cafe will open each weekday from 10am to 3pm. We will be serving a straightforward, value-for-money menu within a warm, welcoming atmosphere.

Marg Patterson has been appointed as Hope Cafe Coordinator and part of her job is to recruit volunteer staff. A number of people have already come forward to offer their time preparing and serving refreshments, but there are still gaps in the rota. All volunteers will receive training and support. You can either make a commitment to the same time slot each week or be part of a 'bank' of volunteers on standby.

If **you** would like to become a volunteer at Hope Cafe and could give 21/2 hours per week or more, please contact Marg.

Bible translation: is it really necessary?

'The Bible is indispensable to true evangelism. The Word of God itself provides both the content and authority for all evangelism. Without it there is no message to preach to the lost. People must be brought to an understanding of at least some of the basic truths contained in the Scriptures before they can make a meaningful response to the Gospel. Thus we must proclaim and disseminate the Holy Scriptures in the heart language of all those we are called to evangelize and disciple.'

The Amsterdam Declaration

Submitted by Keith and Lorraine Doust

The legend of the Christmas Tree

Why do we have a decorated Christmas Tree? In the 7th century a monk from Crediton, Devonshire, went to Germany to teach the Word of God. Legend has it that he used the triangular shape of the Fir Tree to describe the Holy Trinity. Those who were converted began to revere the Fir tree as God's Tree, as they had previously revered the Oak. By the 12th century it was being hung upside-down at Christmastime in the living rooms of Central European homes as a symbol of Christianity.



It was in the year 1510 that a number of black-hatted merchants placed flowers on the fir tree in the Old Town of Riga, one of the Baltic states. It's likely that these men were linked to the Society of Unmarried Men who owned the beautiful Black Head House in the Town Hall Square. When the celebrations were over they burned the tree. Historians believe that this was the start of the tradition of decorating Christmas trees. In year 2010 Riga will celebrate the 500th anniversary of this tradition.



Town Hall Square, Riga

What line of work do you do?

Separating life into distinct categories of 'secular' and 'sacred' damages, sometimes irreparably, any attempt to live a whole and satisfying life, a coherent life with meaning and purpose, a life lived to the glory of God. Nevertheless, the practice is widespread. But where did all these people come up with the habit of separating themselves and the world around them into these two camps. It surely wasn't from the Bible. The Holy Scriptures, from beginning to end, strenuously resist such a separation.



The damage to life is most obvious when the separation is applied to daily work. It is common for us to refer to the work of pastors, priests and missionaries as 'sacred' and that of lawyers, farmers and engineers as 'secular'. It is also wrong. Work, by its very nature, is holy. The biblical story is dominated by people who have jobs in gardening, shepherding, the military, politics, carpentry, tent making, homemaking, fishing and more.

Nehemiah is one of these. He started out as a government worker in the employ of a foreign king. Then he became - and this is the work he tells us of in these memoirs - a building contractor, called in to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. His co-worker, Ezra, was a scholar and teacher, working with the scriptures. Nehemiah worked with stones and mortar. The stories of the two men are interwoven in a seamless fabric of vocational holiness. Neither job was more or less important or holy than the other. Nehemiah needed Ezra; Ezra needed Nehemiah. God's people needed the work of both of them.



We still do.

(Introduction to book of Nehemiah, The Message, Eugene H. Peterson)

A Christmas Carrier of Hope

Please will you consider putting a few items into a carrier bag to enable people living in dire poverty or absolute destitution to have a more hope-filled Christmas?



Coventry Refugee Centre, Broad Street New Communities' Drop In and Coventry Peace House are all in touch with such families and are hoping that the generosity shown last year by so many can be activated again.

Items that would really help are as follows:

- Soap
- Kitchen roll
- Toothbrush
- Toilet rolls
- Nappies
- Cleaning products for the home
- Cash or supermarket vouchers that could be converted into any of the above.
- Washing up liquid
- Flannel
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Toiletries

Maybe a little message or treat hidden at the bottom of the bag – imagine yourself opening the bag ... what would you like to find?

If you are able to fill a Carrier of Hope or make a donation to this appeal, please take to Sue Sampson, Room 14, Civic Centre, Coventry or to any of the following distribution points:

Coventry Refugee Centre

15 Bishop Street
024 76 22 72 54

www.covrefugee.org

Coventry Peace House

311 Stoney Stanton Road
024 7666 3031

www.covpeacehouse.org.uk



~ NOTICEBOARD ~



**Hope Church
Sparkbrook Street
Hillfields
CV1 5LB**

Sunday services 10.30am

**See front page for details of
Christmas services and events
at Hope.**

1st Sunday:

Family communion service with
prayer for healing

2nd, 3rd and 5th Sundays:

Regular service

4th Sunday:

Seeker service

Taking care at Hope

As part of our 'safeguarding' policy can we ask everyone to be alert to any dangers for the children, young people and vulnerable adults of Hope Church.

This applies to all areas of the premises, but especially in the cafe, corridors and car park.

Parents, please be especially diligent concerning your own children.

Thank you

Disabled parking

We would also like to remind drivers not to park in the disabled parking bays outside Hope if you do not hold a blue badge certificate.

Thank you



Next newsletter

Please send any items, notices, testimonies, book reviews, etc for the next Hope Times to Amanda Kay - e-mail: amanda@copsewood.net. The deadline for contributions is Monday, 28 January 2007.
