

the Christian Worker MAGAZINE

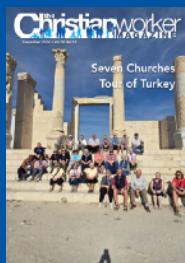
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Seven Churches Tour of Turkey



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I wish it could be Christmas everyday!



Front cover: Seven churches tour group in Laodicia; above: Tour group at tomb of John in Ephesus



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To receive *The Christian Worker Magazine* as a free pdf, send your e-address to jdgalloway@mac.com. Professionally printed copies are available at cost. Please contact Trevor for details – twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk.



CONGRATULATIONS!



New Christians in Reading!

Tendai and Kuzi Nyamatore were baptised on Saturday, 26th October 2024 at Northampton's chapel. They will be part of the Reading congregation. Keep them in your prayers that they will grow as Christians in the Lord's service.

Augustine Nyamatore



Two added in Hyson Green (Nottingham)

Judith Fosuaah and Warda Ahmed were immersed on 10th November by Philemon, one of the leaders of the congregation. They were grateful for the use of Ilkeston's chapel.



Trevor Williams

A new sister in Cumbernauld!

After Jennifer Williams and her husband had been studying with Adam and Melanie Barr, Jennifer came to the decision she needs to be baptised for the forgiveness of her sins! More rejoicing with the angels as we witnessed her giving her life to Jesus.

Nicole Barr





Trip of a Lifetime: Seven Churches Tour of Turkey

On Monday, 4th November, a group of seventeen left Edinburgh Airport to travel to Istanbul to spend a week touring sites related to the New Testament. We were joined in Istanbul by four Christians from the USA and six more from England and also by a Turkish tour guide who was able to not only talk about the sites we visited but to also let us know about Turkey. Our tour was organised by Ian Starrs and with the purpose of visiting the cities where the letters to congregations from Revelation 2 and 3 were located, although we visited other sites as we travelled – some were mention in the New Testament and others were historic.

Our tour began on Tuesday in Istanbul where we visited several sites without a connection to the Biblical text: Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, the Grand Bazaar, Topkapi Palace, and Hagia Eirene. As we travelled towards the coast on Wednesday there were also stops at Gallipoli and Troy. Visiting a Turkish cemetery in Gallipoli drove home how truly devastating was the battle that took place there. After a riding a ferry across the Dardanelles we arrived in Canakkale to be greeted by the Trojan horse from the film *Troy*. The next morning we visited ancient Troy before beginning the part of our tour connected with Biblical places – if you've seen the film they greatly enlarged the city.



Visiting sites connected with the New Testament text began later on Thursday with a visit to Troas and Pergamum. Although excavations at Troas began fairly recently it was thrilling to look out at where the harbour would have been and look towards Macedonia, recalling the vision Paul had and subsequent travels into that area.

Pergamum was a city set on a hill. With temples dedicated to pagan worship all around we recalled that there were



Greek theatre at Pergamum

easily imagine what it would have been like when they received the letter from Jesus.

From Smyrna we travelled inland to Sardis. Here there were two main structures to visit: a large Jewish synagogue and a Roman gymnasium. The synagogue was from the 4th-century and was large enough to hold 1,000 people, indicating a large Jewish population resided here – from the mosaics that have been uncovered it would seem that they were quite wealthy. Next door to this was the Roman gymnasium dating from the late 2nd or early 3rd-

Christians who lived here and some were killed for simply being Christians.

Although we visited fewer sites each day than we have on tours of Israel, due to the distances that had to be travelled, it was nice to be given free time to explore the various places where we were. We spent Thursday night in Izmir.

Izmir was the location of the Roman city of Smyrna, where we began on Friday.

Most of what can be seen dates from after the 2nd-century earthquake but you could



Roman street in Smyrna



Roman gymnasium at Sardis

archaeology from the first century there although there was a later basilica that we could have been seen. We were rescued and spent the night near Hierapolis.

Hierapolis was known throughout history for its hot springs. Even in recent times resort spas had been built near the springs – formations known as Pamukkale. Even today people can swim in the warm waters around Roman pillars that fell due to earthquakes in the past.

century. Athletes would have trained on the grounds. It contained Roman baths of which only the frigidarium has been excavated (cold water pool). Some shops dating from the Byzantine period were also visible.

That afternoon we visited a site where ancient Philadelphia would have been. All that could be seen was the Basilica of St John which dates from around 600 AD. Due to trouble with our coach we were unable to make it to Thyatira. There is no



Calcium carbonate and limestone hot springs at Hierapolis



Theatre at Hierapolis

Although not one of the seven churches of Asia, Hierapolis is mentioned in Paul's letter to the Christians in Colossae (Colossians 4:12-13). Today the site is quite large and besides the hot springs, the Roman gates into the city and a Roman street can be viewed near the agora. A temple to Apollo, the theatre and the gates to the underworld are also featured. The ruins of a basilica built over where it is believed the tomb of Philip the apostle is located can also be visited.

From Hierapolis a short drive brought us to Laodicea. Although excavations began fairly recently much has been uncovered and can be explored. The marble street, which went from Laodicea to Ephesus, can be walked on. Along the street are temples, theatres (one of which has been restored), the agora, a painted Roman wall, and a 4th-century church building with a baptistry for immersion. In Revelation Laodicea is known for being lukewarm – in contrast to the hot springs of Hierapolis or the cold water of Colossae.



Roman marble street in Laodicea



Theatre and Harbour Street in Ephesus

431 AD. A short drive brought us to the 6th-century Basilica of St John, where the apostle John was said to have lived and been buried. From here we could see where the temple of Artemis stood.

Monday was spent visiting Miletus, where Paul had his tearful farewell with the elders from Ephesus. Tuesday was our flight home, bringing many memories that will stay with us as we study God's word.

Jon Galloway

Sunday was spent exploring Ephesus. This was one of the most extensive sites visited, although only about 10% of ancient Ephesus has been uncovered. The library is notable, although it dates just after the first century (see photo on page 4). We walked from the eastern gates, through the political centre of the city, past many residences, temples, public toilets, the agora, the theatre to the western part of the city. We broke bread in the ruins of the Church of St. Mary, where the council of Ephesus was held in



Theatre in Miletus



HOW TO CELEBRATE WITH THOSE WHO HAVE NOTHING

We are entering the month of December. This is the final month of the year, the month in which many all over the world commemorate the birth of Jesus. For many, it is also a month that symbolises time with family and friends, gifts, good food and drink, and parties. December is often called the ‘festive month’, a month in which a lot is celebrated. But celebrating – what does that actually mean? When I think of the word ‘celebrate’, I am initially inclined to think of a party or a gathering full of joy where everyone seems happy and cheerful. Yet, is that the only meaning of celebrating?

The reality of shelters

For most people in the shelters, there is little to celebrate in this regard. Joyful occasions are scarce, and many find themselves feeling anything but cheerful. This is not surprising; many are very uncertain about their future and are separated from loved ones whom they cannot see and whom they deeply miss. Additionally, many have faced significant hardships in their home country and during their journey here. While December is a month of joy for many, for those in shelters, however, it can be a time of reflection on their struggles. With so much

difficulty behind them, there is not much to celebrate joyfully, right?

They lack the basic comforts that many of us take for granted – a place to call their own, furniture, work, and personal belongings. Their living conditions are basic, with a bed and food provided and a small allowance for essentials like shampoo and toothpaste. Beyond these, they have nothing, so to speak.

Who are the people at the shelters who seem to have nothing? These people have almost nothing in material terms and are uncertain about their future. Most people face significant challenges and struggles in many ways – their whole life is turned upside down. Yet, what do I see in this group of people who seem to have nothing? A rock-solid, strong faith in God. They turn to God. That is the certainty and foundation that they do have and to which they cling strongly. I have seen this in all of them. Do I really want to keep saying that they have nothing?

What also stands out to me about those who seem to have nothing is the mindset they have. As for the people I have supported, I have never heard any of them blame God or express disappointment in him or anger about their circumstances. They felt safe with me to express their feelings about it; if they felt like that, they would have had every opportunity to do so. Without exception, they all believe that God will one day bring justice for all the injustice that has been done to them. What does it truly mean to celebrate in the face of hardship?

Sara, a very special moment

I was deeply impressed by and touched by a particular moment during my work. Sara is a Christian who, for many years, did not



How to celebrate with those who have nothing

have access to a Bible and lacked the presence of fellow Christians. When she arrived in my country, all she had were the clothes she wore. By working hard at the shelter, she could afford a second-hand phone. I installed the Bible app for her, which also included her native language. I opened the app, and her eyes became three times as big. The Bible that she had been able to carry only in her heart for so many years, she could finally read again. What a genuine moment to celebrate for both of us! A week later, she met with me again. For the first time, I saw her with a smile. Her first words were, "I have a bed, I have food, I have the Bible, and I even found a sister, I have everything". I will never forget that blissful look in her eyes. She has faith, hope, and love. Do I really believe that she has nothing?

Most people here have little or no possessions and are poor, which, of course, has a negative impact on their lives. However, the lack of material possessions and comfort does not mean they have nothing, and it certainly doesn't mean they have nothing to celebrate.

I create a safe space for them where they feel noticed and heard. I see them as fellow humans,

and they know that I genuinely care for them. Isn't that something worth celebrating for those who often feel forgotten, unheard and unnoticed?

Could I change the definition of celebration from a joyful occasion where everyone seems happy and in a good mood to a special occasion where celebrating with those who have less can mean providing food, company, a listening ear, or just the feeling that they are valued and loved? Could I adapt the so-called celebration to the occasion and the needs of the celebrant?

May we all take the time to celebrate with those who have less in a way that truly meets their needs!

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." (Hebrews 13:16)

Anna

***Disclaimer:** The name 'Sara' used in this article has been changed to protect the individual's privacy and safety. Any resemblance to actual persons is purely coincidental.*



FAMILY NEWS

ILKESTON

From 2nd December to 24th February the Ilkeston congregation will be hosting a 'Warm Place' in our chapel. We intend to be open each Monday from 11.00 am - 3.00 pm, offering a warm drink and a light lunch plus friendship, crafts, games, and a chance to talk for those who wish to come along. This is a new venture for the Christians here and we invite members of local congregations to come over and join in. The event is free of charge.

Trevor Williams

ULVERSTON

Please note that the Ulverston congregation closed some time ago and Bill Thistlethwaite passed away around three years ago. His widow Rose has been receiving a large number of phone calls asking for the meeting times. The meeting place is now closed and has been sold and no congregation is now meeting there.

Trevor Williams



APPEALS & UPDATES

NIGERIA

This is an appeal for Udeme King, an evangelist in Nigeria. He was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2016 and required a bone marrow transplant. Several congregations and individuals worldwide raised the funds required for his cancer treatment in India several years ago. The cancer treatment at that time was successful.

Sadly the cancer is back and we are once again appealing for help. He is continuing to undergo some treatment locally but desperately needs to go to India for a bone marrow transplant. The hospital he is going to is in Vellore, India.



Udeme King

To date, around £6,000 has been raised. However around £2,000 of this has been spent on his local treatment and medication at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH).

We still need another £7,000-8,000 for the treatment alone. This does not include funds for transportation, accommodation and sustenance while staying in India. The last time he went for treatment 4-5 years ago he spent eight months in India, so we are expecting he will stay 6-12 months this time. I have around £600 which I have raised through GoFundMe (<https://www.gofundme.com/f/udeme-king-cancer-treatment-2>)

and from Christians at the Reading congregation.

UPTH has written the hospital in India for an invitation letter to travel to India for the treatment. The invitation letter is expected within the next few weeks after which he will apply for a visa, so we hope he can travel to India before the end of the year.

Any donations from Christians in the UK will be greatly appreciated. In addition to the GoFundMe page, donations can also be sent to the following account.

Bank Name: Wise (formerly TransferWise)

Account Name: Lawrence Okorafor

Sort Code: 23-14-70

Account No.: 86219080

Kindly let me know if you need any more information.

Lawrence Okorafor
laurensmails@yahoo.com

PHILIPPINES

We are finally having a break from all the typhoons. Imagine, four typhoons in two weeks without any break – just one after the other. Thankfully, my family and I are safe. We braced for a monster typhoon that changed its course. Thank you for your prayers.

The devastation from these typhoons are massive. The north was hit by each typhoon. The Bicol region (south) was struck twice. One that is closer to home is in Batangas near Taal Lake. Several homes were buried in mud due to the heavy rains. There are sixty families badly affected. These families were the

Appeals and Updates

same people we served and many were baptised after Taal Volcano erupted in 2020. They were in a refugee camp then, but were dispersed when the pandemic hit. Now they are reunited by this mudslide in San Nicolas across the volcano. Their needs are great. And since my home is only about an hour from them, I can easily go to assist in some way.

Will any Christian or congregation consider helping? They are still needing food and basic items such as mats, blankets, cooking pots and pans, as well as building materials to repair their damaged houses. Please help if you are able.

Again, we are grateful for your many prayers.

Gigie Carranza

UKRAINE

On behalf of CW readers we have sent £500 to help Ivan and the children he supports in Ukraine and £500 to Alexander to help Ukrainian children who have managed to leave Ukraine. We have done this in faith and if anyone would like to help us in these gifts please send to The Christian Worker HSBC Bank 40-45-03 account 91058533.

Thank you so much, on behalf on the Ukrainian children.

Trevor Williams

Three Minute Videos by
Tony Coffey

Avoiding Adultery
<https://youtu.be/1nj9TaoroOc>

Forgiving Adultery
<https://youtu.be/hj-Y8TLJYCE>

SHEPSHED YOUTH DAY



**SATURDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2025
(DETAILS TO FOLLOW)**

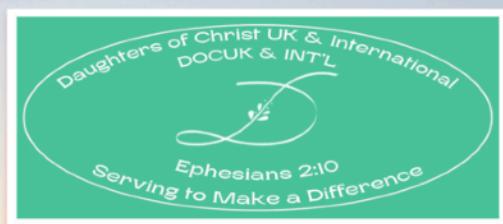
Liverpool Young Adult Fellowship Weekend
Saturday 5th - Sunday 6th April 2025
Arrival Saturday 5th 10:00am-10:30am

**Influencer or Follower?
Which ONE are you?**

Ages: 18+

An illustration of a man holding a megaphone, with several speech bubbles around him containing words like "Fun", "Business", "Food", and "Games". Below the illustration, there's a small group of people walking together.

Address: Liverpool Church of Christ, Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH
RSVP to Bro. Rexford by email on rboahen@outlook.com or through Eventbrite link



5th International Day of Songs, Prayers, Scriptures and Exhortation

Hosted by: Daughters of Christ UK & INT'L (DOCUK&INT'L)

Saturday, December 14th 2024, 1:30 pm-4:30 pm

Theme: "The Beauty of Togetherness" – John 13:34

Zoom Link: <http://bit.ly/4hWEiZN>

Meeting ID: 6816234697 - Passcode: DOCUKlm21

Email Contacts: Docuklm2021@gmail.com or service.laura@gmail.com

All are encouraged to fast within the 24 hours leading up to the start of the program at 1:30 pm time



DIARY

December

7th – **Loughborough**: Youth Day – “Narrow or Wide?”, for ages 13+, 10.00 am-3.45 pm. Venue: Christians Meeting House, 17a Oxford Street, Loughborough LE11 5DP. Please email Calum.Hill@hotmail.co.uk or Liam.bates1992@gmail.com to receive a registration form.

14th – **Daughters of Christ UK**: International Day of Songs, Prayers, Scriptures and Exhortation – “The Beauty of Togetherness”, 1.30-4.30 pm. Venue: Zoom link – <http://bit.ly/4hWEiZN> (Meeting ID: 6816234697 / Passcode: DOCUKlm21). Contact: Anne Airebamen (anne-andrew@live.co.uk).

22nd – **Livingston**: Annual carol service, 6.30 pm. Venue: Livingston meeting place, Garden Place, Eliburn, Livingston EH54 8RA. Contact: Mark Montgomery (daytimer73@gmail.com).



8th – **Cumbernauld**: Men’s Day – “Together”, 10.00 am-4.00 pm. Speakers: Charles Takyi, Mark Hill, Charles Yankiah, Leigh Halliday. Venue: 2 Carron House, Town Centre, Cumbernauld G67 1ER. Contact: Graham McDonald (graham@gmcd.net).

April

5th-6th – **Liverpool**: Young adult fellowship weekend – “Influenced or Influencer? – Which one are you?”, Ages 18+. Arrive 10.00-10.30 am on Saturday at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, L22 8QH. RSVP to Rexford (rboahen@gmail.com) or use the EventBrite link.

July

4th-11th – **Camp Heatherbell**: Theme: “Transformed.” Cost = £185. Venue: Compass Christian Centre, Glenshee Lodge, Blairgowrie. Contact: Adam Barr (07889 631218), Graham McDonald (07748 787744), or email info@campheatherbell.org.uk for more information or to request an application.

October

31st-2nd November – **Peterborough**: Ladies’ retreat. Contact: Marsha Erysthee (merysthee1@aol.com).

Winter Warm Space

Winter can be a difficult time for many. Cold, dark, damp days can feel long and lonely. We are offering a warm space, with plenty of warm drinks, a light lunch and friendly faces.



EVERY MONDAY FROM
2 DECEMBER-24 FEBRUARY
11AM-3PM
(COME AND GO AS YOU WISH)

Adam Street church of Christ, Ilkeston, DE7 5BE
(Bottom of Nottingham Rd
between Zebra Musik and Lobinas)

January

7th – **Livingston**: Scotland-wide Youth evening, beginning at 7.30 pm. Venue: Livingston meeting place, Garden Place, Eliburn, Livingston EH54 8RA. Contact: Mark Montgomery (daytimer73@gmail.com).

February

8th – **Shepshed**: Youth Day – Contact: Stephen Woodcock (stephen.woodcock@hotmail.co.uk).



THE FINAL WORD



I wish it
could be
Christmas
every day

"Well, I wish it could be Christmas every day!"

I enjoy Christmas. I like its familiarity, the same Bible story, carols, food, visits and all the rest of the hullabaloo. Then of course there are presents, which I leave up to my long-suffering wife.

The things I do not like is when I am asked what I want for Christmas. Very rarely do I want anything. Then I start thinking about what I really want and there is nothing that will cost money. I want to hold my children in my arms and spend an hour or two with each one, just the two of us talking and listening to each other. I want to see a smile on the faces of those who have gone through a tough year. I want to stop hearing about the war in Ukraine or any other place because there is no more war. I want to hear about the poorest of countries having bumper harvests, enough clean water and homes to live in and schools for their children.

I would love to see our places of worship filled to overflowing with people who love Jesus; that there is good positive preaching in our pulpits and singing that

will ring the bells of Heaven (if there are bells there). I want those who come to worship to come early enough so that I can give them a welcoming hug and find out how their week has been. I want to see smiles on people's faces and teenagers without a phone in their hands. I want genuine love to be seen more than talked about.

I know that the presents I want are too many and too costly. So, I will go back to the book I love and read again the genealogy of

Jesus and marvel how Matthew can speak of five women and tell the history of the Old Testament, how he carefully creates lists of 3 x 14 and only uses 41 names. I will think again of Mary and wonder how she felt and the fear she must have had as she told her family she was expecting a baby, that she had been visited by an angel and then expected that the man she was to marry would shun her. And so, for a time, she was alone, bewildered, not knowing what would happen tomorrow let alone in the future. She had no idea that her son would heal the sick, raise the dead, preach eternal life among the people and be mercilessly murdered as a sacrifice for mankind.

Here in the celebration of his birth we also celebrate his life and his death. We reassure ourselves of faith that leads to life in Heaven. We see in our endless study of the sacred Scripture the fulfilling of the desire of mankind, things which angels longed to see. He was here, our Emmanuel. He came to seek and save that which was lost, he goes to prepare for us a place in Heaven. He gives his Holy Spirit as the guarantee and seal of our trust.

Yes, I wish it could be Christmas every day. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end."

Dear Lord, as you consecrated your life for us, so we again consecrate our lives to you. Through your life we are reborn and through your death we rise to walk in newness of life. Thank you Jesus. Amen

Trevor