

the Christian worker MAGAZINE

January 2024 • Vol 56 No 1



CONTENTS

- 3 MY PERSPECTIVE
A time for memories
- 4 "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST"
article by Trevor Williams
- 7 AT REST
■ Geoff Ellis (Kirkby-in-Ashfield)
- 7 NEW YEAR SONG
"For All That You Have Done"
- 8 FAMILY NEWS
■ Ilkeston
- 9 AROUND THE WORLD
■ Update from India
- 10 APPEALS
 - Malawi
 - Netherlands/Ukraine
 - Urgent appeal for Pakistan
 - Ukraine
- 11 DIARY OF EVENTS
- 12 THE FINAL WORD
Can you believe it?



Front cover by Jill Willington from pexels.com; above: brief snow fall in Netherburn



EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION

The Christian Worker Magazine is published monthly as a news magazine for Churches of Christ in the United Kingdom. The first issue was published in January 1969.

Editor-in-Chief: Trevor Williams

twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk

(0115) 837 6895

195 Hickings Lane, Stapleford, Nottingham NG9 8PJ

Production Editor: Jon Galloway

jdgalloway@mac.com

(07906) 060618

5 Aklins Lane, Netherburn, Larkhall ML9 3FH

Treasurer: Jenny Sparks

Website: Emmanuel Uwujare

Header Design: Kevin Nicholson

UK Congregation Directory Online: www.churchesofchrist.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/christianworkeruk

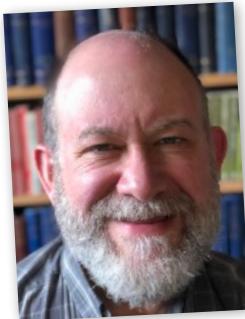
Previous Editors: Albert E. Winstanley (1969-1973; 1980-1987); Robert C. Eckman (1973-1980); Graham A. Fisher (1987-2014)

All articles and news items should be sent to **Trevor Williams** by the 21st of each month. Late items may be accepted until the 25th. Publication is the first day of each month.

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.



MY PERSPECTIVE



A time for memories

There are times throughout the year where memories of the past seem to come flooding back. For me Christmas is one of those times.

I remember when we first celebrated Christmas with grandchildren. Those were so special! This year was particularly exciting as we had three of our six grandchildren with us to open gifts and explore new toys.

I remember Christmas days from my childhood. These memories were enhanced this year with the arrival a few days before Christmas of a shipment of items I inherited from my parents' estate. As Arlene and I have opened the boxes and unpacked a few pieces of family furniture it has brought us joy to now have a bit of my 'home' in our home. It brings back memories to see the items I grew up seeing in my parents' home (wherever that happened to be).

I also remember my Dad at this time of year. He left this life on Christmas Eve in 2018. His birthday was also in December. As we lived in Finland for a brief time when I was growing up, I use the beginning of December and the Finnish observance of 'Pikkujoulu' (little Christmas) to remember my Dad. We eat Finnish food, exchange one gift (in the Finnish tradition), and play the games that my Dad enjoyed. We remember.

Memories are something everyone should treasure. This past year we have had many Christians go on to their reward. It is right that we remember their lives and the influence they had on us.

We can reflect on the time we made the decision to follow Jesus and are reminded of that commitment and what it still requires of us even if it is many years later.

God wants us to remember certain things. At least fourteen times in Moses' final address to the Israelites in Deuteronomy we find the word 'remember'.

"Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands...Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and follow carefully these decrees... Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you." (Deuteronomy 8:2; 16:12; 32:7 NIV)

Remembering is vital as we serve God. We need to remember where we have come from and what we now are because of Jesus.

"Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called 'uncircumcised' by those who call themselves 'the circumcision' (which is done in the body by human hands) – remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:11-13)

As we begin a New Year may it be a time we can remember who we are because of Jesus and continue to live for him.

Jon



"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST"

'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests' (Luke chapter 2 verse 14)

Over the past number of weeks, I have been carefully studying this passage in Luke and have come to realise there is something of intrinsic beauty within it. We often think of angels and shepherds only for the time of Jesus' birth and our minds may well go to the nativity scenes played by our children in their schools. However, the passage indicates far more than this.

Some of the things that I realised was that here we have a group of men who were the poorest of the poor often sleeping on the soil, without the few facilities of a normal home life. Their constant work with their sheep would have made them dirty, smelly, and greasy, living their lives for their animals. It was to these people, poor as they were, that the glory of heaven opens. They were certainly frightened to the depths of their souls on seeing the angel, but they were encouraged not to be frightened.

I have asked myself how do you address an angel? 'My Lord' or 'Sir'? In most cases when we read about the visitation of angels throughout the scripture the angel must speak first and assure the person they are speaking to that there is nothing of which to be frightened.

Also I have wondered about the choir, this great company of the heavenly host who are praising God saying those beautiful words, '*glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.*' For how long did they sing? How many of them were there? How much of the sky was filled with their presence?

Many of us may enjoy choirs. Sometimes a choir can be made-up of thousands of people, but I wonder how many thousands of the angels burst out of heaven praising

God. And then there is a little note of sadness as we read that the angels left them and went back into heaven. It must have been then that the shepherds came to themselves, decided that they needed to go and do what they were told. I have the impression that Mary and Joseph were on the edge of the town and perhaps the shepherds didn't have to look very far.

I wonder what the shepherds said as they approached the place where Jesus was. What did they say to Mary and to Joseph? Did they have a polite handshake introducing themselves by their names? Or did they simply stand there until they were invited in? How did they react to the Christ-child? In Luke 2:17 we find that when they had seen Jesus, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child. It was not the apostles who told others about Jesus first. It was the poorest of the poor, it was the people who smelt badly and who did not look glamorous. It was these who first told others that Jesus Christ is alive.

It's interesting to note that even in our own age the gospel seems to be more readily accepted in the poorest of places in countries where there is war, opposition, or hunger. It is these people who are looking for a saviour. However, we do not live in a poor country but in one of the wealthiest countries on the face of the earth. We look around and few are interested in the gospel story and many Christians are ashamed or frightened to tell it freely.

In 2024 may we have courage to share the good news of Jesus. May we find those who are seeking the one who can change the world. May we realise that we are shepherds looking after each other and those who are still looking for the Lamb of God.

Trevor Williams

Geoffrey Ellis 1934-2023 (Kirkby-in-Ashfield)

It is with mixed emotions of human sadness and spiritual joy that we announce the passing of Geoff Ellis from this life into the care of our Lord on Saturday, 18th November.

A feeling of sadness at the loss of a stalwart brother of the congregation at Beulah Rd, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, who for many years lead the singing with an incredible knowledge of hymns and music, but also a feeling of spiritual joy as he has now entered into the 'Joy of our Lord' and is receiving that eternal rest and reward to which we all look forward.

Geoff was immersed into Jesus at the Hindley Bible School along with our late brother John Dodsley almost seventy years ago. After marrying Marion he took on the Lord's work and travelled to many of our sister congregations preaching and teaching God's word.

It's fair to say that he was a larger than life character who always had a twinkle in his eye and a mischievous grin on his face. He was always present at worship and served the congregation well until the last couple of years when ill health began to take its toll on him. Although he will be greatly missed we can thank God for the example and witness of his Christian life.

Dennis Faulks

A New Year's Song (tune: *Auld Lang Syne*)

Your grace will never be forgot, your mercy ever lives,
Will be our goal forever sung our story and our hymn.
From mountain tops to valley low,
Through laughter and through tears,
We're sure the goodness of our God,
Will follow through the years.

Chorus

For all that you have done for us,
For every battle won,
We'll raise a song to bless your heart
For all that you have done.

You know our failures and regrets, you always lead us home;
Redemption's arms have raised us up, our triumph in the storm.
In unity we'll stand as one,
As family we will go:
Shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand
Into the great unknown.

Chorus





FAMILY NEWS

ILKESTON

For several years the Ilkeston Town Council has sponsored a carol service in the town's market place with the mayor addressing the crowds. This year, because of cutbacks, the town carol service was cancelled. Leaders of the various churches in town met together to hold an ecumenical carol service and this was held in the Parish church. I was invited to speak.



Trevor Williams

About 500 people gathered on Christmas Eve in a building packed to capacity with many standing. The lesson was taken from Luke 2, which speaks of the shepherds coming to see the baby Jesus. This quickly led to tell the story of Jesus including his death and resurrection and the start of the church in Acts 2. It was probably many years since baptism for the

remission of sins and the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit had been mentioned in that building but the message was told.

All too often congregations hide themselves away believing that we cannot mix with anyone else. Our forefathers in the 1800's considered preaching to those who have faith vital for ministry. We are a restoration church not a condemnation church.

Trevor Williams

Up
on the
Mountain

**Mid-Winter Family Weekend
Retreat**

Friday, 19th to Sunday, 21st January 2024
at Bassenfell Manor in the Lake District

www.britishbibleschool.com

**Field of Refuge
Women's Renewal 2024**

**"From His abundance we have
all received one gracious
blessing after another"**
John 1:16 NLT

Venue: Tulliallan Castle, Alloa FK10 4BE
Theme: New Beginnings, when Grace abounds

Date: 19th - 21st April 2024
Arrival time: 16.00 pm (no earlier)

Price: Single room £170.00
Double room: £155.00 per person
Deposit: £45.00 (non-refundable)



AROUND THE WORLD

INDIA

This year has been a very productive and engaging year for the Lord's people in Gollaprolu. We, as a congregation, have conducted 28 Gospel & Gratitude meetings, one women's retreat, one Women Empowerment Workshop, one children's retreat (at Pithapuram), eleven women's outreach meetings in nearby villages, one family blessings meeting, and eleven DMM (Disciple Making Movement) training sessions in Pithapuram and Thimmapuram. Five souls (Blessy, Jason, Nani, Venkata Laxmi, Sathibabu) were added to the Lord's body. Our regular benevolence programmes (Elderly Care, Meal and Medical Assistance for Pregnant Women, and the Rice Bank) are going well, giving the congregation an opportunity to instil the imprints of love in those around us.

Our current meeting place is 32 years old – it is a tiled roof shed constructed

in 1991 which replaced the thatched shed from 1968. Now the building needs serious work on the roof and we need to create more space for the growing congregation. It is becoming expensive to maintain and repair this old structure. Keeping all these and future needs in mind, we are prayerfully considering rebuilding the building in 2024. Please pray that God provides and strengthens our hands to start and complete this work.

Bethsaida Child Care Centre. This is our third year since we shifted from Residential Child Care to Non-Residential Child Care. Bethsaida Child Care Centres (BCCs) are running successfully at three locations : Kathipudi, Yerravaram and Gollaprolu. At the beginning of the year we had 112 children enrolled in these centres but now we have of 126. They are being provided with a daily tuition of after school hours, nutritious snacks, periodic health care and spiritual mentoring. We see tremendous transformation among these children. Most of these come from a very marginal backgrounds and illiterate families. They have no one in their families to mentor or monitor them. Our teachers and mentors in these Child Care Centres fill this gap and help them in their holistic development.



Baptism at Gollaprolu

Children at Bethsaida Child Care Centre



Around the World

Bethsaida Extend Education Support helps deserving teenagers in their professional studies offering scholarship and career guidance. At present we are helping five teenagers in this programme. They are studying General Midwife Nursing, Medical Lab Technology, a Bachelor's degree in Dentistry, Bachelor of Engineering degree and job training.

Please pray for our **New Project BASE (Bethsaida Academy for Self-Empowerment)**. We have not been using our Bethsaida building to its full capacity after we closed the residential care. We have been praying to God to lead us into ways and means to best utilise the building and we think the BASE program will not only put Bethsaida back into action, but also allow us to empower young boys and girls with life skills, both spiritually and academically. Lord willing, we look forward to starting this from April 2024 onwards. Please pray for this programme.

We were able to restart our iconic **School Bag Project**, helping children to stay in school. Since 2010 we have been involved in this annual programme, but it was stopped during the Covid years. Thankfully we were able to restart this year. A total of 210 children from Yerravaram, Gollaprolu and Akiveedu Villages received this year's School Bag kits which contain a school bag and school supplies. The smiles these kits bring to the innocent faces of these children is what keeps us going from year to year. Thank you all for your prayers and support.



In May 2023, I was asked by Tabitha Campus congregation to help them as their part time

preacher due to Paul Nehru (a graduate of BBS) being ill and unable to serve them. I agreed to help until they find a replacement. We have temporarily shifted the meetings to Bethsaida Campus and a group of 25 members including children meet every Sunday from 8:30 to 9:30 am. After this I travel to my home congregation in Gollaprolu which is a 15 minute drive.



Jason, Joel, Ruth and Greson Madiki

Ruth, Jason and Greson are doing well. Both our boys are teenagers now and it scares me sometimes when I think about them and the challenges they have to face in this fast-changing world. Jason will be going to University next year. He was baptised earlier this year – please pray that he continues to remain faithful. Greson is now in the final year of middle school and, Lord willing, will start his secondary school next year. Ruth is actively involved in Women and Children's work along with my sister Sudha. I am so blessed to have a very supportive family.

Joel Madiki

Links to Tony Coffey's three minute videos on the Parables of Jesus on YouTube.

Video 1:

<https://youtu.be/td-yMRHvFqw>

Video 2:

<https://youtu.be/AkZk3dz7C0w>

Video 3:

<https://youtu.be/z3MTZPeAg0k>

Tony Coffey
tonycoffey@gmail.com



APPEALS & UPDATES

MALAWI

Our brother Lungster, graduate of the British Bible School, is asking Christians to visit him and the work in Malawi. There are many congregations of churches of Christ in Malawi.

There is a need for medical aid from those qualified to help.

There is also a need for those who can preach/teach/encourage as well as people who can be of practical help, such as builders, engineers, etc. Most of the congregations have ladies' classes so there is an opportunity for Christian women to help lead, teach, and encourage with Bible or health issues.

In fact if you can do something to help, can raise the needed funds, and have a spirit of adventure you will be welcome.

Pauline and I are more than willing to share our memories of visiting the warm heart of Africa and spending time with a delightful people who have so little of this world's goods but have a deep and lasting faith.

Contact Lungster Mlotha
lungster.chawanangwa@gmail.com or
Trevor_twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk

Trevor Williams

NETHERLANDS/UKRAINE

We are inviting you to become a part of the ministry to Ukrainian youth who found a refuge in the Netherlands. Our family has been in the Hague, the Netherlands, since March 2022. Work with the youth and young people has

been a main part of our work here, just like it was in Ukraine. Working with the youth we are looking for ways to support, help, encourage and tell them about Jesus. Within our year and a half here we've organised five camps. In each we had about 35-40 kids in attendance with 15-20 staff members serving them.



Our main goal is to help youth find answers and hope in Jesus Christ. Day Camps is a wonderful tool to meet new people and build relationships where we can reveal God's love to them. The audience of our projects is non-believing youth. We are able to meet new children and build relationships with them where they can see God and be drawn to him. Also, camps are a perfect opportunity to meet the parents and invite Ukrainian families and youth to worship.

Each camp is unique in its own way and is a great blessing not only for the children but for the team as well. For us it is yet another opportunity to see each other and be an encouragement to one another. Not everyone in this group is a Christian yet but each project we work on together is another seed sown into their hearts.

Every day of the camp starts with a devotional and a prayer. In every camp we've had non-believing people on the

Appeals and Updates

team. For each of them it was the first time to do something with a group of Christians. For us it is an honour to see what impact these camps make on their lives.



We are looking for people who'd love to be a part of this work. Every camp costs us €4,300 (£3,730). As of today, we are \$2,055 (£1,800) away from the total needed. Please, contact me if you want to be a part of this or if you know somebody who'd love to contribute to this project.

Oleksandr Nikolaienko
nikolaenkoshasha@gmail.com

URGENT APPEAL FOR NAEEM IN PAKISTAN

The passing away of our brother Tony Styles has left a hole in our support for Naeem Sabir in Pakistan. Tony was sending £200 a month from his pension, I'd like to appeal to see if any congregation or individual can help this be replenished. If any Christian or congregation would like help with this, please send cheques to:

Barbara Fisher (Pakistan Account)
5 Portway, North Marston
Bucks MK18 3PL

Naeem and the Christians in Pakistan would be most grateful.

Barbara Fisher

UKRAINE FUNDS

Funds are still being sent to help Ukrainians. This month we have sent £300 to assist two to arrive in Britain and £500 has gone to help support young Ukrainians who are living in The Netherlands. There is still much help needed.

If you would like to give or would like more information please contact me.

Trevor Williams
twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk

CHURCHES OF CHRIST EUROPE
YOUTH
European Annual
LECTURESHIP
Z024

Theme: Be an Example

26th-28th JULY'24

FEATURING

Youth Singles ENRICHMENT LONDON 2024

Youth Couples NIGHT LONDON 2024

EARLY BIRD

Accommodation & Attendance	£180
Attendance Only	£ 60

HOTEL

EDMONTON CHURCH
Lieutenant Ellis Way
Cheshunt
Herts EN7 5FB

Featuring: LONDON MELODIES LONDON MELODIES

For Enquiries Please Text +(44) 7780 917590

18+



DIARY

January

8th – **British Bible School** evening class: “The Last Week of Jesus” taught by Mark Hill each Monday, 8.00-9.00 pm, for twelve weeks. Links to join the class can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

11th – **British Bible School** evening class: “Characters in the Bible” taught by various teachers each Thursday, 8.00-9.00 pm, for twelve weeks. Links to join the class can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

13th – **Livingston**: Devotional Evening, 7.00 pm. Contact: christianwoman@btinternet.com.

19th-21st – **BBS Family Retreat** at Bassenfell Manor. Theme: “Up On the Mountain”. Cost for adults: £75 per person (discounts for children). To register: <https://britishbibleschool.com/news-and-events/upcoming-events/bassenfell-manor-family-retreat-2024/bassenfell-family-retreat-registration-2024>. For further information: see our website (<https://britishbibleschool.com/news-and-events/upcoming-events/bassenfell-manor-family-retreat-2024>).

February

2nd – **British Bible School** quiz night: a light-hearted, educational Bible quiz hosted by Steve Whitehead, the first Friday of each month from 8.00-9.00 pm. Links to join the quiz can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

3rd – **Cumbernauld**: Men’s Day: “The Resurrection”, 10.00 am. Numbers needed to help with catering. Contact: Graham McDonald (graham@gmcd.net).

19th-25th – **Gemünden, Germany**: Advanced Bible Study Series I and II, Keynote Speaker: Jeremy Barrier. Contact: Paul Brazle (brazle.paul@gmail.com).

29th-3rd March – **European Ladies’ Retreat**. Contact: Bernadine Wells (BERN.WELLS@hotmail.co.uk).

March

1st-2nd – **Hyyvots Bank and Kirkcaldy**: Joint gospel meetings, speaker: Daniel Chapman. Contact: Nick Wilson (nick-donelda@blueyonder.co.uk) or Alan Moyes (alan.J.Moyes@gmail.com).

2nd-3rd – **Northampton**: British Bible School Study Weekend. All day Saturday and Sunday morning worship and class. Contact: Mark Hill (marks@uwclub.net).

2nd-3rd – **Northampton**: British Bible School Study Weekend. All day Saturday and Sunday morning worship and class. Contact: Mark Hill (marks@uwclub.net).

23rd-24th – **Ilkeston**: Singing weekend with Alan Dods. Contact: Trevor Williams (twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk).

29th-31st – **European Lectureship 2024**. Venue: Verona, Italy. Contact: Kojo Mensah (kojom262@gmail.com).

April

5th-6th – **Wembley**: British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: Hebrews. Contact: John Griffiths (griffiths.jhg@virgin.net).

12th-13th – **Wembley**: British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: Hebrews. Contact: John Griffiths (griffiths.jhg@virgin.net).

19th-24th – **Field of Refuge Women’s Renewal**: “New Beginnings, When Grace Abounds”. Venue: Tulliallan Castle, Alloa FK10 4BE. Cost: £155 per person sharing a room (£170 for a single room); £45 deposit on booking. Contact: fieldofrefuge@hotmail.com.

May

11th – **Kirkcaldy**: Annual Social Day. Venue: Hayfield Community Centre, Hayfield Road, Kirkcaldy KY2 5DG. Speaker: Jon Galloway. Contact: Allan Hughes (allan580@virginmedia.com).

June

29th – **Shepshed**: Fellowship Day. Contact: Stephen Woodcock (stephen.woodcock@hotmail.co.uk).

July

26th-28th – **Edmonton (London)**: Youth Lectureship – “Be an Example” (including a Singles’ Enrichment programme and Young Couples Night); ages 18-35. Early bird price (until 31st March): £60 for attendance only and £180 for attendance and accommodation. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/european-youth-annual-lectureship-tickets-741443757237>. For further information text: 07780 917590.

October

28th-1st Nov – **British Bible School Residential Study Week** at Bassenfell Manor. Info will be available at www.britishbibleschool.com. Contact: Patrick Boyns (pkb@britishbibleschool.com).



THE FINAL WORD



Can you
believe
it?

Some of us are still surprised when we change the calendar each year and realise just how many years have gone by since the Millennium when we changed to 2000. We remember all the prophecies of doom that would happen to computers and clocks around the world. That all came and went again into the history book.

Perhaps more people inside and outside of our church life have been concerned about our nation's young people being pushed into classes in school where sex education has seemed age inappropriate by many parents. From this seems to have developed an increase in boys wanting to be girls and girls wanting to be boys and some ending up in a state that they do not know what they are.

Young people are highly impressionable, and confusion can reign supreme in their lives. Most people go through times of physical and mental development whereby we do not understand our bodies or our minds, and few can talk to their parents about it. It seems to me that teachers are under an incredible strain trying to deal with these problems which ought to be dealt with at home. Teachers are there to teach.

On top of all the confusion major religious groups are now permitting same sex marriages. On Sunday, 17th

December, the State church, the Church of England, offered prayer for same sex couples. The first to take this up were

two women, ordained Anglican priests, who during the communion service were given a blessing upon their association. Undoubtedly some will rejoice but I can't help wondering what Jesus would say. As I understand it in 2024 the CoE will be offering full blown marriage ceremonies for same sex couples. It is interesting to note that many in the Anglican fellowship are now looking for premises in which to worship as they believe same sex marriage is against Scriptural principles. My hope is that they will return to the Bible with open hearts and minds.

In a war-torn and shattered world that seems to know neither right nor wrong, Christians have a huge responsibility to pray and to develop teaching that is understandable to all including those who are concerned about their sexuality and emotions.

In the spring of 2023, I was asked to teach what the Bible said about same sex relationships. I knew what the church leaders wanted me to say but I opened the class by asking, if a same sex couple came into the worship what would you do? Some were quick to want them to leave, while some wanted to tell them they were wrong. The more we talked the more I encouraged them that they should be made welcome to come into the assembly so that they would have a chance to hear the gospel.

It is not a group of people who are to sit in judgement on anyone, but we are to preach the love of Jesus. The good news can touch the hearts of people so that they can be more like him. It is Jesus who saves. It is the Spirit that turns people around. Can you believe it?

Trevor

