

Grace  
has appeared  
bringing  
salvation  
for all

Titus 2:11

Newsletter Winter 2017

network



Bedford  
Salvation Army  
Church and Community Centre

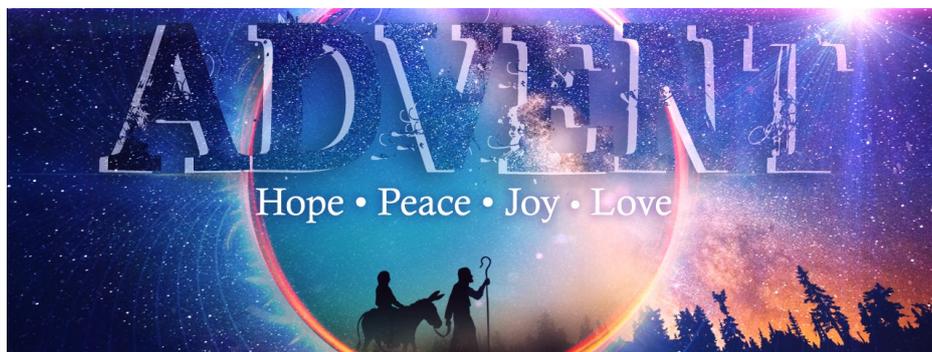


## FROM THE PLATFORM

*Major Graham Bailey - Corps Officer*

It's nearly time for Christmas again! The shops are full of the Christmas decorations, lights and adverts on display, trying to entice us into buying things we didn't realise we needed! We will have had 'Black Friday' by the time you read this, and there will have been billions of pounds spent in a couple of days – not, of course, that we are influenced by the adverts! But it can be all too easy to get caught up in the hype of the month of December and all that the Christmas Carols do if we are not careful is to just add a certain 'quaintness' to the whole feel of the season. December is also the time of Advent; the time when we think again about the first coming of Jesus – when God acted to inaugurate His Kingdom; to implement His plan of salvation by sending Jesus. It's also about the second coming of Jesus when He comes to complete all things; the time when the whole earth will be full of the knowledge and glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

We have a choice as to which one we get involved in. May we each be encouraged this Christmas to take the time to spend, not money but time with the Lord. May we be willing to tell folk the good news that there is hope! That things do not have to be like they are at the moment, indeed, they are not meant to be like this – we can make a difference! ***This coming season of Advent gives each one of us the opportunity to speak about the reason that we celebrate Christmas, it's a topic of conversation.*** We can say that God loved each of us so much that, as the Message Version puts it, "*The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood.*" (John 1:14) – into our neighbourhood! God is not a god who is far off, aloof from His creation. He is involved in our everyday. God sent Jesus, as the pinnacle of His plan to reconcile man to Himself, thereby 'giving us a hope and a future.' (Jer.29) Let us ensure that this Christmas we take this opportunity, we have several Carol Services that you can invite friends, family and neighbours to, where they can hear the Christmas story & message but more than that, ***let's be the Message!*** To coin a phrase, "***They will know we are Christians by our love***" – may it be so. We pray that all of us will know the wonder & reality of Christmas this year, and that God will use all that we do for Him, for His glory!



# Advent

## ELSTOW ENHANCED

*New life given to our Home in Elstow*



OFFICIALLY OPENED!



Band

Officially opened by our Deputy Mayor, Cllr Roy Reardon, who opened with a prayer.

Thanks were expressed to all who



Before



After

made this project possible. Particularly Elaine Jarrett & Graham Penfold who worked tirelessly keeping the work on schedule.

Our thanks also went to Bedford Borough who kindly donated a tree at the entrance to the area

However, without 'army' of workers who did so much digging and heaving the newly refurbished garden would not have happened.

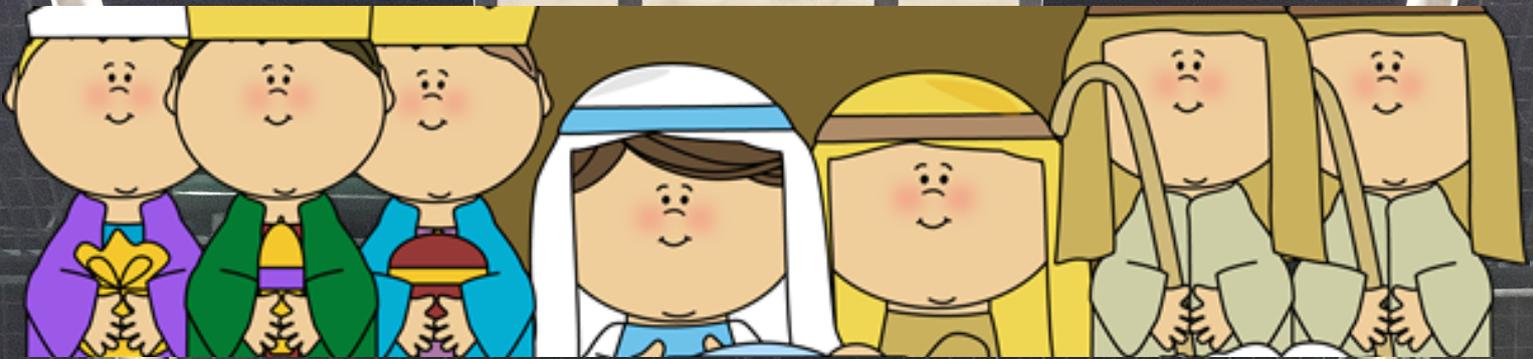
**SO WELL DONE EVERYONE!**



**BCH youth** are always around and about

doing various bits and bobs. We recently had a bonfire night celebration where we got creative with some sparklers and we had our first ever under 18 event. We had a Minute to Win it competition, U18's vs Leaders... the leaders definitely did dominate the competition in the end however the other team did put up a good fight! There was a lot of fun to be had with watermelons, toilet rolls, oreos and more! If you ask the young people I'm sure they'd be happy to let you know all of the interesting things we got up to! Also, in youth news we have re-started our youth cell group called Re-energize, we are currently preparing for the YP carols service and are **looking at the possibility of starting "Youth Church" so watch this space!!!**





## The football cage and Woolpack are absolutely buzzing... especially on a Tuesday night!!



October we were able to partner with the council and some local people to re-paint the lines on the pitch in preparation for the football tournament that kicked off in the half term. There's always a bit of hype around a tournament and there was definitely some competitive spirit in the air but with the help of the council it was a fantastic night of football and a lot of food.

From the group of people who were for the tournament we counted 17 different nationalities: Bulgarian, Romanian, Polish, Turkish, Kurdish, Jamaican, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Swiss, Austrian, Congolese, English, Brazilian, Nigerian, Uganda, Portugal and Australia. It's amazing to see how football brings people together!!

### DEBT ADVISORY SERVICE

much of the good work and Ministry of our Corps that goes on week by week may go unnoticed by some of us, and because of its confidential nature, the Debt Advice Service is one such example. **Tucked away upstairs**, we work to support and relieve the pressures from people struggling with low income and increasing financial burdens. We aim to assure those

who need to use the Service that they are not alone, that we genuinely care for them and that this care is given in the name of a loving God. We are licenced, regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, and monitored by Territorial



**Karen Lister**

Headquarters, Community Money Advice and the FCA. As an

Organisation we are members of Advice UK, locally we are members of the Bedfordshire Advice Forum and we continue to work in this area with Community Money Advice at St Andrews. Thank you for your continued support of The Debt Advice Service.



### HIS BANNER OVER ME IS LOVE

#### How about making Banners for the Hall?

With so many skilled people in our church family why not use those talents to help us make suitable Banners to enhance our walls?

If you could help please speak to **Majors Angie or Graham or Elaine Jarrett**



Thank you!



The last few months have been exceptionally varied for members of the **Over 60's Friendship Club**. We have shared with several different visiting speakers and groups that have given of their time to share with us. The Over 60's **Fellowship Band** provided an exciting program of music and even the jokes and stories told by Bob Barron were new. A visit from The Corsairs. A singing group who gave a brilliant vibrant afternoon of music. One speaker from the Red Cross and Home-Instead have given a wealth of advice to our members. We shared in a Remembrance Service and were gratefully loaned a model Cenotaph, for a display in the hall. (Loaned to us by Shire's Funeral Service) The highlight for the past year was our special Sunday with the meeting led by Majors Derek and Helen Tyrell. A FREE **"Roast Dinner"** was provided for all those in our Corps who share in our Adult Ministry (Over 60's Friendship Club, the Luncheon Club and the Home League) and over 50 shared in this. A special word of thanks to those who worked so Hard in the kitchen to provide this for us all. One member asked of we could provide this every week. (I went back home and took another Paracetamol). On a serious note it was a fabulous weekend for us. We will be celebrating the Advent Season with a **visit from Priory School, a Carol Service and Christmas Dinner**. General Andre Cox recently said: "We are to show the love of God and the life of Christ through our lives. Its is an unbelievable privilege but also an incredible responsibility..." The aims of the Over 60's Friendship Club is just that: **"To show the love of God through our friendship and sharing together"**





## CAN YOU HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY DONATING SOME OF YOUR VALUABLE TIME?

We have some opportunities for you to use your gifts & talents as a volunteer. We need help with

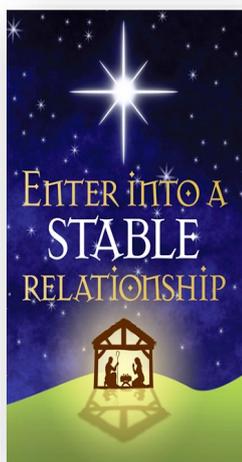
- ☐ Reception Desk (training given) ☐ SAMM (SA Meal & Meeting)
- ☐ Open House ☐ The Cold Weather Shelter

Please speak to Angie or Graham (B) who will be glad to point you in the right direction and THANK YOU!!

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### *To all our friends at Bedford*

*We wish to say that you are remembered with great love and affection. May the Christ Child be at the centre of all that you do this season. May Christ's love, joy and peace fill your hearts*  
**Ray and Joyce Ebden**



### ***A POEM FOR CHRISTMAS***

*Away in a manger no crib for a bed  
 The little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head.*

*A murderous king with evil intent,  
 Was planning to have the holy child dead.*

*Peace on earth goodwill to all men.  
 Was the message the angels brought,  
 To a sinful world.  
 And still men's hearts with evil are wrought.*

*Three kings brought their gifts  
 To the stable door.  
 Symbolic of the infant king.  
 What do we poor mortals have?  
 What offering is ours to bring?*

*Dear Lord we pray that you will visit us.  
 Like you did the wise men and shepherds,  
 On that first Christmas morn.  
 Come into our hearts,  
 That we may be reborn.*

**Theodore Armstrong**



volunteer @ the  
**COLD WEATHER SHELTER**  
**WINTER NIGHT CAFÉ**  
 We need more helpers to get involved.  
 Contact Graham Penfold as soon as possible

## THE BLESSING TREE

PJ

Recently, I read about a young couple whose business had failed, and they had little money to spend at Christmas. They were going to have to move out of their house after the new year. But they didn't want their holiday season to be spoiled because of it. So they decided to throw a party. When the guests arrived, they saw a cedar tree decorated with one string of lights and small rolled-up pieces of paper tied to the limbs with ribbon. "**Welcome to our 'blessing tree'!**" they said, beaming. "In spite of hard times, God has blessed us in so many ways that we decided to dedicate our tree to Him. Each piece of paper describes a blessing He has given us this year." This couple has faced more trials since then, but they have chosen to stay focused on the Lord. They often remark that the Christmas with the "blessing tree" was one of their most beautiful, because they could testify as Mary did: "**My spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour. . . He who is mighty has done great things for me**" (Luke 1:47-49). Whatever your difficulties this year, they needn't spoil Christmas, for nothing can spoil Christ! Stay focused on Jesus and seek ways to share His blessings with others—perhaps through your own "**blessing tree**"

