



As we embark upon another year, perhaps wondering what it will bring, it's so reassuring to know that although we may be uncertain of what lies ahead, God has already gone before us and will equip us to face whatever comes our way. We can trust an unknown future to our known God and what we can be 100% sure of is that in Jesus we have a pearl of great price, even if the world we live in may often regard our pearl as cheap and worthless. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. The price he paid for us was enough to forgive our past, give us purpose for the present and a certain hope for the future. Isn't that good news that's worth talking about?

## **Christmas Passed.....**

*Well, Christmas was coming, the geese were getting fat, and we were panicking about our first events without Mandy! Well, not really panicking, but certainly praying! And once again God was so good to us.*

*We had 4 Christmas events this year and the team comprised Nicki, Elaine, Peter and Tim plus a combination of Neil and/or Steve on drums and percussion and Steve P and Derek on sound and lights. Our first event took place in our own home town of Chesham on 5th December followed by Bracknell, Hereford and Staines over the weekend of 12-14th December. The theme was 'Christmas Memories' and the idea was to look back at festive moments and see that through all the different things, God remains with us always.*

*There was a children's nativity sketch (Nicki in a sheet and halo and Tim in a dressing gown and tea towel!), songs old and new and even a panto scene where Tim had the audience in stitches every night! We then went as far back as the first Christmas to see what those memories might be like, and showed that although more than 2000 years have passed, we're not that far from Bethlehem (sounds like a cue for a song!).*

*Immanuel God with us - a message not just for our audience but for the team too. We could not have done those events without the reality of that promise and all of us will testify to that! Praise God for his faithfulness to us and for his ability to use clay pots.*

*We know that at all the events, there was a large number of people for whom a seed was sown. Christmas is a time when people are perhaps more open to the gospel and we pray that those seeds will germinate and open up many conversations.*

*As a final note, I must say that we really missed Mandy but did enjoy ourselves and for our final night in Bracknell she joined us on stage which was wonderful!*

## **DIARY**

### **JANUARY**



- 14th** Band Rehearsal
- 19th** PIFT-Fishponds Baptist Church, Bristol
- 20th** Youth Rehearsal  
Trustees Meeting
- 27th** Youth Rehearsal

### **FEBRUARY**

- 3rd** Worship and Prayer Morning for the work of Chrysalis. Management Meeting Youth Rehearsal
- 4th** Band Rehearsal
- 6th** Bucks Blind Club Nicki, Mandy & Elaine
- 10th** Rayners Nicki, Mandy & Elaine Youth Rehearsal
- 11th** Band Rehearsal
- 18th** Band Rehearsal
- 24th** Youth Rehearsal
- 25th** Band Rehearsal

## Phantom Update

We thought it might be a good idea to update you on news from the last prayer letter where we mentioned that Mandy was about to go into the cast of Phantom of the Opera in the West End.

Mandy writes

*Well two and a half months into the contract and I'm still living to tell the tale! Despite lots of late nights, an endless rehearsal schedule which is still ongoing, a jam packed crazy Christmas show schedule, and hundreds of top 'C's!!!*

*My time here has really flown and despite being a lot of work it is great fun!*

*The cast and crew on the show are so nice - many of the existing team giving the new cast cards and flowers on our first night - they really could not have been more warm and welcoming which has been such an encouragement.*

*I am building up some great friendships, and am often asked about my work with Chrysalis which makes it very easy way to talk about my faith in a low key 'matter of fact' way! Because I know so clearly that God has led me to this place of work I really want to utilise my time here to the maximum and so early on decided to pray every day for Her Majesty's theatre and all who work within it. God has been opening up many great opportunities through conversations and friendships already. Please pray that I will continue to be salt and light and for protection too. So many are searching for something and are asking the question; "There has to be more to life!" - something people often think can be found through performing, and so need to experience the freeing love of Jesus - Please pray for the cast and crew - thanks so much - your prayers are so important.*

## Youth Report

One of the challenges of working with the Youth team is that it is an ever evolving group. Unlike the older Bands whose personnel remain fairly constant, this group has used different players for different events. So the line up for their recent concert was, Peter Laws, Steven Griffiths, Mike Ward, Amy Brown, all of whom had performed before, plus Jo Hammond, Peter Reynolds and Jake Woods. In fact Jake had to step in at the last moment due to the sudden hospitalisation of our third bass player! Please pray for bass players as they appear to be in short supply!

Rehearsals were full of fun and laughter as well as noise! I must confess that I have never heard 'heavy metal' style Jingle Bells before, nor as many musical versions of many other carols. However, what was very evident at all times was that these youngsters have a real heart for their lost friends.

The X-Night is an event where local youth groups all join together. This Alternative X-Night Carol Service, was a straightforward carol service, just slightly tweaked here and there to be a bit different. So the evening was presented by a donkey (in the form of a deliberately lo-tech sock puppet). The carols were played in all sorts of styles from Nu-Metal and Ska to 70's Disco. The night went really well with about 80 or so young people turning up. Lots of the young people were able to bring their non-churchy friends along and many of them found it fun and interesting. Ed O'Niell the Lay Assistant at Emmanuel Church spoke briefly before cakes and drink were served.

Please pray as we prepare for another evening event in Chesham in April.

### PLEASE NOTE

Our new e-mail address is [office@chrysalis.org.uk](mailto:office@chrysalis.org.uk) The old address will continue to connect for the next six months only.



## Derek's Desk

A few years ago *The Times* newspaper ran a series in its correspondence columns about New Year resolutions. I like the letter from the man who had been turning out his mother's loft and found his own diary for 1946. As a boy on January 1st he had written, 'I have resolved to keep a dairy' (I am sure he really meant 'diary'.) It was the only entry for the year!

I prefer Paul's resolution in Philippians 3:13-14 (RSV) '*One thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*' Let those of us who are mature be thus minded (Paul's words, not mine!)