



Recent Nativity Highlight in Burnt Lane



The recent *Christmas Carol & Candlelight Service* which took place on Saturday evening of 22 December in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Burnt Lane was a great success. Visitors from the community joined church members for the annual service. Everyone seemed delighted with the programme. In addition to the usual Scripture readings and carols sung by the congregation, we also featured a beautiful solo by Janna Wilkinson, and a heartwarming message on the meaning of Christmas from Pastor Mark Borrett, who celebrated his first Christmas with us in this district since he took on his assignment last February. The highlight of the whole evening was a nativity play performed by the children of the church. They did us all proud and it was lovely to watch the little ones contribute a very important role in the service. The play was written by Eunice Sampson of Lowestoft and choreographed by Norma Borrett.



During the service a voluntary collection was taken up in aid of the *East Coast Hospice* that is to be built in Gorleston. Our church has supported this project in recent years. On this occasion, the amount we raised came to £188.15. We would like to thank everyone who made a contribution. After the service, everyone was invited upstairs to the Function Room where we were able to mingle and chat while enjoying a welcome repast of warmed minced pies and mulled berry punch.

A Word in Season . . .

Once again, another year has rolled away into the past to make way for the new. What is to unfold during the course of this year is yet to be disclosed. If the democratic choice of the British people is to be upheld then 2019 will become a landmark not only in British history but also in European history as well.

Speaking of historical landmarks, last year was the centenary of World War I, and this year marks 75 years since the D-Day Landings. These are landmarks of ugly, tragic chapters in world history; but for landmarks on a brighter event, did you realize that a hundred years ago in 1919 the first transatlantic flight was made by the British aviators Alcock and Brown? That flight lasted for 16½ hours. Just think of the giant strides in technology over those 100 years. Today it takes 7-8 hours to fly from London to New York in a modern passenger jet. Yet Concorde could do the journey in 3½ hours. I recently read about the "Ultra-rapid Air Vehicle", nicknamed Concorde 2.0, which is on the drawing board. It will be a hypersonic plane that will do the journey in just 1 hour! It will travel up to 4½ times the speed of sound - i.e. Mach 4.5, compared to the original Concorde that flew up to Mach 2.5. It is also the 100th anniversary this year of the first commercial airplane service between London and Paris.

I reckon that the greatest landmark in human history, although many may wish to disagree, was the coming of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of our world. Without that event, our world would be consigned to eternal doom! It is only through Him that we have hope for the future. Hope is something people are looking for today. Many are bewildered, dismayed and discouraged by current affairs. The Brexit issue is one of those issues that is leaving many wondering, shall we end up remaining in the EU after all? Are the 'remainers' going to achieve their aims by craft and political means? If so, what will the outcome be? Our democracy will be undermined. Could this lead to civil war?

It is good to have the hope that Jesus offers to this world. It is hope in a better, brighter, fairer future. He promises to renew this planet into its pristine beauty and bring us peace, harmony, happiness and a wonderful future with Him in His Eternal Kingdom. Therefore, even though I do care about what happens in the UK, in Europe and in the rest of world, my life is in His hands because I believe and welcome what He offers to all who commit their lives into His hands. "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope" - Romans 15:4.

- Michael I. Walker

Food for Thought . . .

"Sometimes God calms the storm - and sometimes He lets the storm rage and calms His child" - Anon.

The Anvil of God's Word

By John Clifford



Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

"And so," I thought, "The Anvil of God's Word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon,
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unchanged, the hammers gone."

Services of the Church: -

Bible Study/Discussion . . .

Saturday 10:00 am

Children's Class . . . Saturday 10:00 am

Family Worship . . . Saturday 11:15 am

Church Family Fellowship . . .

First Saturday afternoon in each month after the Worship Service and a fellowship meal.

Bible Study & Prayer . . .

Monday 7:30 pm

We operate a child protection policy.
Marriages – Child Dedications – Believers
Baptisms – Funerals

The Link is produced by your local Seventh-day Adventist Church in Burnt Lane, Gorleston, NR31 0PG as a community service.

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<https://greatyarmouth-adventist-ork.uk.adventist.eu>

Editorial

On behalf of the Church, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a very happy and encouraging new year!

This month we turn our attention to a very serious situation that is rife in our world. There are some extremely disturbing accounts that are emerging from certain countries of the world where human rights are being violated. Persecution and murder are becoming common place for those who live in those places. We ask you to spare some thought for them and their plight; and if you believe in God, then please place them on your prayer list.

Do take note of the next Vegetarian Cookery demonstration as advertised below; and also place an entry in your diary for the New Year Social to which you are cordially invited to attend for a time of food, fun and laughter - *Editor*.



You are Invited To A Vegetarian Cookery Demonstration

And Afterwards to Sample the Food
by sitting down to enjoy a healthy free meal

at 12.30 pm

on Sunday 10 February 2019

In the Function Room,

Seventh-day Adventist Church

Burnt Lane, Gorleston, NR31 0PG

This is a free Community Service Programme



**Why Not Come Along and Enjoy
a Few Hours of Fun and Laughter?**

Sunday 17 February 2019

at 3 pm

**Function Room,
Adventist Church,
Burnt Lane, Gorleston**



**Time for community
fellowship!
Food to eat!
Fun & games!
You are welcome to
join us!**

Reports Gleaned from Release International

The following reports have been gleaned from *Release International - Voice of Persecuted Christians*. It used to be known during the former years of the infamous 'Iron Curtain' as *Voice of the Christian Martyrs*. The organization is based in Orpington, Kent. It does a remarkable work in seeking to bring aid to those suffering for their faith. If anyone wishes to make a financial contribution to *Release International*, you may do so by calling 01689 823491 - Editor.

Nigeria

In June last year, 10 communities near a state capital, Jos, were raided with guns and machetes; and in Ngar village it was reported that all the homes were torched and over 70 people killed.

Fulani herdsmen killed over 200 people in what was mainly Christian villages in Plateau. Thousands in the Barkin Ladi Local Government Area have been deprived of their homes and crops.

Release partners reported that missionaries trapped in a particular village were able to send messages via social media about the attacks, requesting prayer for staff and children at their school. While there were heavy casualties in the area, the school was protected.

Christian community leaders is being murdered by suspected Islamist extremists. For instance, a revered tribal leader of a majority-Christian region in Southern Kaduna was kidnapped in May, last year, and four members of his security escort were executed. Raphael Maiwada Galadima was abducted when he was returning to his palace after visiting the market site in Kaduna where dozens of Christians were killed. He was also finally killed even though a ransom had been paid.

The Nigerian government are being urged to negotiate for the release of Leah Shariba and other Christian girls and women who are held captive by Boko Haram terrorists.

Gyang, a 27-yr old student at the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Jos is the only surviving member of his family of seven. His village came under attack by Fulani militants. Gyang called home to his father, Rev. Adamu Gyang, only to find his father's phone was unobtainable. He felt something was wrong, so tried to call his mother only to find the same response. He then called a friend who informed him that his parents, his young siblings and his grandmother had been killed. During that horrific attack, the Fulani burned 95 homes and destroyed most of the village crops that were virtually ready for harvesting.

Egypt

Christians in Egypt often suffer persecution, such as Hannah with her children, who has struggled with poverty and persecution for several years.

Iran

It was reported on 10 January that more than 150 Christians were detained in just a few weeks. It was also mentioned that in late-November, about 70 Christians were arrested near Karaj, Alborz Province, while a further 30 arrests took place in Damavand and other areas of Tehran Province. Further detentions were reported in December in the north, northeast and southwest of the country.

In Mashhad in northeastern Iran, Amir Taleipour and his wife, Mahnaz Harati, were arrested in front of their seven-year-old daughter on 6 December. Four days before, two sisters, Shima and Shokoofeh Zanganeh, were arrested in their homes in Ahvaz. Reports claim they were beaten by security officials who interrogated them before transferring them to Sepidat Prison. Repeated efforts by their family to pay the sisters' bail have been rejected. Since Christmas, it was stated on *Radio Farda* that the Iranian state-run news agency *Tasnim* said that nine more Christians had been arrested in Alborz Province, north of Tehran.

In spite of the persecution, *Release International* reports that the Church in Iran is growing and that "some analysts interpret the recent crackdown as an attempt to intimidate people interested in Christianity".

India

Christians are also targeted in India by opponents of Christianity. Pastors are frequently persecuted in some areas. A particular example is Pastor Suryadev who was thrown from a moving train by Hindu nationalists because he was carrying Bibles in his rucksack. He was found unconscious on the concrete platform having suffered a fractured skull, shoulder bone and ankle.

China

Pastor Yang Hua, who was released last June, endured 2½ years in jail on false charges, during which time he was tortured and suffered seriously ill-health. As has been mentioned on BBC News bulletins, *Release International* also confirms that several Chinese lawyers have been detained indefinitely and have had their licenses revoked (Source: *China Aid*).



Editor's further comment: We are aware that there are other countries where people are targeted and suffering persecution simply because they are Christians. Frequently we obtain reports of individuals being falsely accused of blasphemy and imprisoned or even sentenced to death. On various occasions, we have drawn attention to some of these cases in *The Link*.

The above-mentioned comment about Christianity growing in Iran despite the persecution is not only true of Iran but also of other countries too. There are a number of occasions where our church receives reports of increasing numbers of converts where there is severe opposition and persecution. It reflects the experience of the Early Christian Church as reported in the New

Testament that as they were persecuted, 'they were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the word' (Acts.8:1-5, 12; 11:19).

The amazing wonder of it all is that in spite of the apparent odds against the survival of Christianity throughout history, instead of being destroyed it has survived and expanded. Jesus stated that His followers would suffer hatred and persecution for His name's sake (*c.f.* John 15:18-21). See also 1 Peter 4:12-19. I myself have witnessed individuals in Egypt who have come under sentence of death simply because they became Christians. Let us uphold these faithful Christians in our thoughts and prayers.