



BLUE CROSS HERALD

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Let us GO to Bethlehem

The Christmas season is already upon us and my family and I recently went for a dander into Belfast, sampling the festive treats in St. George's Market and enjoying the lights and decorations in Victoria Square. It was a sobering reminder that in the West the countdown to Christmas is marked more by the number of shopping days left to go, rather than a month of reflection and spiritual expectation.

Christmas is that time of year when families come together to celebrate, and to give and receive gifts. It is the time of year when beautiful memories of the past are resurrected in our hearts and minds. Sadly for some this season is full of pain, as memories of lost beloved ones, or hope deferred is more poignant than at other times. In the midst of all this commotion and emotion, it's very easy for us to forget and lose sight of the true spirit of Christmas.

Christmas was a long awaited event in human history and all generations looked forward to the day when that first Christmas would come. The prophets, kings, and all God fearing men looked up to the skies to see any sign of when the true Christmas would come. The expectation of this first Christmas day was not viewed as a day of feeling isolated, depressed or distressed. On the contrary it was a day of hope inspired, and dreams coming true. It was a day of experiencing the full presence of God with us, abiding and dwelling among us.

It is no wonder that when the angels announced this day had come to the shepherds, they said to each other "*let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass*", Luke 2:15. Do you know that Bethlehem actually means the 'house of bread', emphasising that God brought his Son into the very place that meant food - that which gives and sustains life. The shepherds had to leave their comfort zone in that familiar place they had known from birth. This journey into Bethlehem was no ordinary one, it was focused on seeing the One who was born to be the true bread of life. They knew they had to go and see Him and feed on Him.

I hope that as we anticipate the Christmas season, we also will take some time amidst our busy lives to gaze on high and ponder the gift of that baby who is the true bread of life and allow Him to feed us with his presence which sustains us for our eternal journey.

When the shepherds arrived and saw Jesus they returned to their fields...their place of work and their families, glorifying and praising God for all he had done. I am sure after their Christmas had been revealed to them they went home with great joy and warm hearts. May that be our experience as we celebrate Christmas this year?

Along with Karen, Joshua and Abigail, I wish every one of you in our Glenburn family a very joyful Christmas and Happy New Year, knowing that no matter what the year ahead brings us, God still remains our Emmanuel - God with us. As ever, we are so grateful for your love, support and prayers.

Merry Christmas to you all and God's blessing for the New Year.

Let us now go to Bethlehem and worship Him!

Shalom Shalom

John





What does Glenburn mean to me?



A Question of Music?



From baptism in the 'big hall' until to-day, this lady has featured in all aspects of musical production in Glenburn. She marched with the G.L.B. Cadets, sang with the Sunday School Choir and played the piano for countless groups from the Youth Fellowship to MAD. She even found her husband playing for the services in the YOC at Hydebank Wood.

The enduring musical focus of Jean McCartney's life has been the Choir! She joined when she was twelve years' old, and is now the choir mistress. Occasionally she misses the traditional style of organ and hymnbook, but the modern way allows many to take part. Jean feels that we are blessed in Glenburn with the range of opportunities to worship and praise God through the Choir, All-age Praise Group, Praise Band and many church organisations. The music of Christmas is her favourite; so make sure you do not miss the Carol Service on Sunday 21st.

Part of her spiritual journey is her role as organist. She is often asked to make choices of hymns and anthems. Through prayer and inspiration she feels she is able to interpret the music. It never fails to amaze Jean that God's love is expressed through music, confirming His Word. The Bible readings are a special part of the worship each Sunday, as she feels it is the only time that anyone reads to her. Her dependence on God is just as real in the challenges of life, with so much to thank Him for at the end of each day.

From the youngest member to organist and choir mistress, Jean's faithful service shows the opportunity that God gives us to serve Him in the local Church.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT GLENBURN?

If you want more information about Glenburn Methodist Church visit us at:

Website: glenburnmethodist.co.uk

Facebook at [Glenburn Methodist Church](#)

Or contact us by email at info@glenburnmethodist.co.uk

Recordings of services can also be accessed through the website. Should anyone wish to know more about this facility or obtain a specific recording for someone at home please contact us.

LIFE IS WORTH EXPLORING

THE ALPHA COURSE



Glenburn and Cregagh announce the launch of an Alpha Course on 25th January 2015 at 6pm in Glenburn. Many members of Glenburn and Cregagh have enjoyed the experience of an Alpha Course, some became Christians as a result. The course provides an opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith, in a friendly, open and informal environment.

If you or someone you know wants to learn more about life and Christian faith come along to the launch, you won't be disappointed.

MAD



Tickets for the January MAD production of 'Beasty and the Beaut' are still available. There will be nightly performances from 8th to 10th January 2015, with a matinee on Saturday afternoon 10th January 2015.

Parties of ten or more will receive a discount and special rates will also apply to families of two adults and three children. Book now and avoid the rush. For tickets see Andrea or Heather, telephone 07935333447 or contact us at info@glenburnmethodist.co.uk

Adults £8.00, Child £4.00 and Family £20.00



Lest We Forget

At this time of year we celebrate the birth of Christ and enjoy the festive season and all that it brings. Let us not forget that this year is the centenary of the start of the First World War and the sacrifices that so many people made. The remarkable display at the Tower of London highlights the enormous loss of life made by 888,246 British and Commonwealth soldiers who died between 1914 and 1918. Members of the Armed Forces are still serving in areas of conflict and facing injury and death. Our Remembrance Day Service was moved by just such service when we watched the US marines singing 'These are the Days of Elijah'. Should you wish to view it again or show it to friends, it can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1my79LtsdU>



PRAYER

Glenburn prays for all those who suffered loss in the past months. They hold them up to God and ask that he stretches forth his loving arms to surround them in their time of sorrow.



From September 2014

Jean Ludlow, Jack Maxwell, Pat Spence



In addition your prayers are needed for those who suffer from illness or other problems they are facing in life. If you, or someone you know, need prayer for any reason, prayer teams in Glenburn are always available and willing to answer that need.

I said a prayer for you today
And know God must have heard
I felt an answer in my heart
Although he spoke no word
I didn't ask for wealth or fame
(I knew you wouldn't mind)
I asked him to send treasures
Of a far more lasting kind
I asked that he be near you
At the start of each new day
To grant you health and blessings
And friends to share your way.

Contributor: Cecil Brownlee

A Winter's Tale



It was on a cold winter's night in December.
The snow was ankle deep from what I remember.
As I walked down the road, I felt a tap on my shoulder.
The chill that I felt could not have been colder.

It was a man with his face all a glowing
He asked was I alright and where was I going.
I felt kind of safe as he had a kind smile.
He offered to walk along side me for a while.

He asked me did I know the Lord Jesus our Saviour.
If you trust in him you know you will find his favour.
I asked him how I could find this wonderful guy.
He said just believe in your heart it's easy if you try.

Jesus is watching over you, he loves you so much.
He wants you to receive from him a very special touch.
Talk with him tonight and you shall see.
Tell him that you were talking to me.

Do you believe in angels he said with a smile.
Did you know that you have been walking with one for the past mile.
Jesus sent me down to light up your way.
To tell you that he cares and has seen your tears today.

Don't worry my child and this is what he said.
And as I turned to ask him more the angel had fled.

What a happy Christmas this will be.
To know that Jesus loves and cares for me.
Tonight I'll pray for each person here.
That the presence of Jesus will always be near.

God bless you all this Christmas and all year through.
Bless all your family, friends and acquaintances too.

In 2015 I pray that you will find.
The purposes for your life, keeping Jesus in mind.



Contributor: Angela Gibson

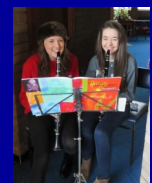


In November Glenburn's foyer was the scene of elegance and sophistication when Christmas Afternoon Tea was served. The reputation these events have achieved was upheld by the endeavours of the usual team of 'front of house' and baking perfectionists.

The contented faces of some of those who partook of the extensive 'fare' reflects a job well done. Over £650 was collected which will go to Church Funds and Open Schools World Wide. This charity provides schooling/ education for children who would not normally have access to full-time schooling. To date 3,000+ children world wide have been provided with an opportunity to start an education.



The Maître De and waiters



The Musicians

House Groups (3rd week in month)
Monday or Wednesday 8.00 pm

Open Door Drop in on Thursday mornings:
Sept to June 9.00 am – noon July & August 10.00 am - noon