



# Carol Service

All invited

Friday 17th December 7:00 pm

Traditional Readings and Carol Singing

Followed by Refreshments

at

PROVIDENCE Baptist Chapel  
Park Lane, Blunham

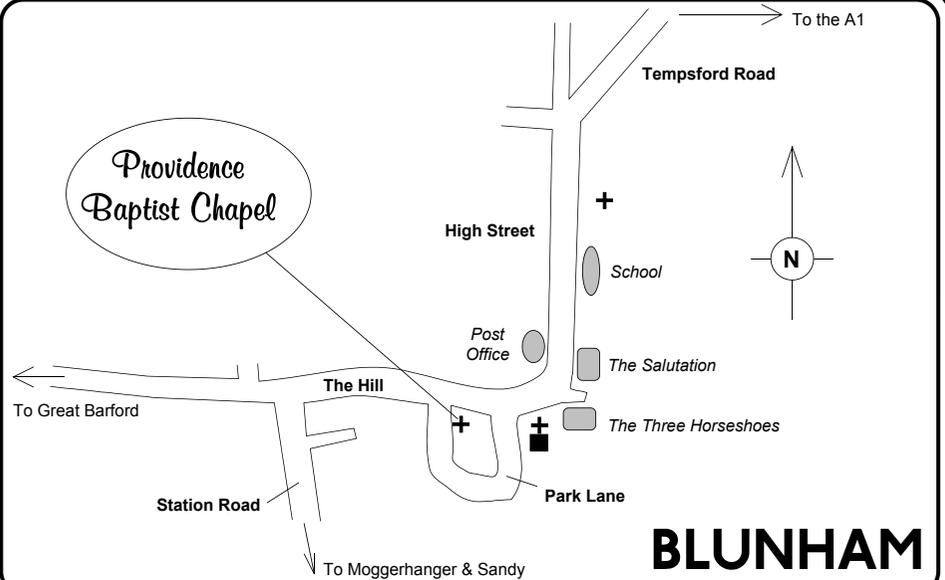


### Times of Services:

Sunday Morning 10:30 am

Sunday Evening 6:00 pm

Week evening (Friday) 7:00 pm



Any enquiries should be addressed to Mr. David Green, 'North Lodge', 104d Green End Road, Great Barford, Bedfordshire, MK44 3HD. Tel: 01234 870 681



# First Steps

December 2004 No.11

*A "Happy Christmas" to you all  
from us all at Providence Chapel.*

We have been hearing recently through the media, the words "Do they know it's Christmas time at all?" Whilst Bob Geldof is to be applauded for his efforts in trying to help our fellow human beings in relieving their pain, suffering and hunger, there is something even more needful than this.

Whereabouts in all the things we shall be doing, or be involved with, will the true message of Christmas and the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem be?

The birth of Jesus was a truly remarkable event over 2000 years ago, but it's not just something that happened and is now history. This event is still as real today as it was then.

Jesus said when he lived here on earth and went about the people, "Come unto me and I will give you rest."

Take a little time this Christmas and come to our Carol Service on the 17th at 7 pm and our Christmas services on 19th and 26th at 10:30 am and 6 pm and sing and read and hear about Jesus.

*With our Best wishes for Christmas  
and the New Year  
David Green.*

# Christmas Trivia

True or false? According to the Bible:

1. **Three wise men visited the baby Jesus.**
2. **Jesus was born in a stable.**
3. **The shepherds followed the star to Jesus.**
4. **The wise men visited Jesus in a house.**
5. **Jesus was born on Christmas Day.**



Answers below.

So, who cares about the details? As long as the basic story is right and we understand the real meaning of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas?

An impartial observer with no knowledge of history might be forgiven for thinking a 21st Century Christmas is about nothing more than shopping, overeating, partying, flashing lights and presents. But is that why the baby Jesus was born?

Does the Bible give a reason? Yes indeed. One of many verses makes it particularly clear.

*"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"* (1 Tim 1:15)

But that doesn't apply to me, you say, *"I'm not a sinner - I'm a good person."* Well, let's see if that's true. Here's a test, using three of the Ten Commandments.

Have you ever told a lie? Even a white one to get you out of trouble? What does that make you? Think about it - how many murders do you have to commit to be a murderer? How many lies makes you a liar? Just one. That finds you guilty of breaking the ninth commandment.

Have you ever stolen anything - no matter its value? Ever made a copy of copyrighted music or software? Ever stopped work when the boss wasn't looking, thus stealing his time? Ever not declared 'earnings on the side'? Ever cheated on a test? What does that make you? You guessed it - a thief. That breaks the eighth commandment.

What about using 'O my God' and 'Jesus Christ' in vain, no matter how infrequently? That breaks the third commandment. So, to get back to our original point, would you say that a lying, thieving blasphemer was a good person? Let's take it further. Imagine you died today and faced God 'in your sins' - would you go to heaven or hell?

Hold on a minute, you say, what about my good deeds? According to the Bible, they don't count. Sin must be punished and cannot be cancelled out by charity or even religious effort. "The wages of sin are death" (Romans 6:23)

But surely God is too good to send me to hell! Really? Think about it. Good judges never compromise with sin. The goodness of God will only ensure that all your commandment-breaking is eternally punished in hell. According to God's word the Bible, you are lost and in need of a Saviour.

Now, *that's* why Jesus was born! He came on a divine rescue mission - not to give the world a 'Happy Christmas' - but to save ungodly men and women, by dying for their sins and then rising from the dead. God now offers salvation to sinners who fully acknowledge the inner corruption of their own hearts, forsake their wicked ways and thoughts and turn in faith to the Lord Jesus - believing in Him alone and asking Him for salvation and forgiveness of sin. "Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

# The Greatest Gift

John 3:16 has often been called "the heart of the Bible" and "the gospel in miniature." It especially expresses the true meaning of Christmas - the reason Jesus came into this world.

Consider these simple, powerful words:

**God**

*the greatest Lover*

**So loved**

*the greatest degree*

**The world**

*the greatest number*

**That he gave**

*the greatest act*

**His only begotten son**

*the greatest Gift*

**That whosoever**

*the greatest invitation*

**Believeth**

*the greatest simplicity*

**In him**

*the greatest Person*

**Should not perish**

*the greatest deliverance*

**but**

*the greatest difference*

**have**

*the greatest certainty*

**Everlasting life**

*the greatest possession*

Answers:

1. False. The Bible does not say it was three.  
 It is assumed to be three only because three gifts are mentioned.  
 2. False. The Bible does not mention a stable -  
 only a manger - many historians suggest it was located in a cave.  
 3. False. Only the wise men followed the star.  
 4. True (see Matthew 2:11)  
 5. False. Christmas Day is not mentioned in the Bible.