

Letters from the Churches

What is oblong, recycled and for a needy child? Answer - one of the thousands of shoeboxes that many of us cover with Christmas paper, fill with appropriate gifts for boys and girls of different age groups, so they can be sent abroad for distribution.

What is any shape, recycled and for a needy person? Answer - a box not covered with Christmas paper, and filled with a homeless person huddled in a shop doorway or the like.

In God's eyes the child in a foreign land, the homeless person, you and I are equally needy and special. Christ came with His love, a love that gave His life for each human, a love that can be ours for the asking. This is the only relationship that gives us life long security and purpose, and a place in heaven.

What was an unknown shape, recycled and filled with a baby? Answer - the manger in which Jesus lay; Operation Christmas Child of 2000 years ago.

A few years ago I heard of a primary school class who were each to hold one letter of the words CHRISTMAS LOVE at the end of their Nativity play. Thirteen little people stood proudly in front of a packed room. However, the child holding the middle letter had hers upside down – the ripple of laughter quickly became a poignant silence for the message now read CHRIST WAS LOVE, and wonderfully He still is.

Operation Christmas Child 2008 is more than a box of goodies to thrill a child's heart in foreign parts, it is Jesus and He can thrill all hearts in whatever parts.

Reverend Gillian Belford
01652 632148

As the year draws to a close many of us will look back on the turbulent financial dealings of 2008 with mixed emotions. A few may be rejoicing that they have profited from the worldwide financial uncertainty. The majority of us will probably have received depressing statements advising that our investments are worth significantly less than they were a year ago.

As I write this, on the day before the clocks are to be put back an hour, the daily newspapers offer no prospect of recovery in the immediate future. As we adapt ourselves to the literal darkness of the winter months that lie ahead, many of us are asking if there is any light at the end of the tunnel in the world of finance?

As human beings, we need the light as much as we need oxygen. Fears, worries, depression and the bad things of life so often seem to be drawn out at night time, while daylight and Spring brings hope, a fresh start, clarity and purpose.

Well, light nights are some way off. Financial recovery may be even further away. In the midst of the darkness though we will pause to remember the old, old story. Christmas is all about Jesus Christ- God's Son, born on earth as a baby and living a life that would change the world forever. And one of the ways Jesus described Himself was as 'the light of the world- a light that would never go out.

Why not join us at church this Christmas, and find out what it means not only to follow 'the light of the world', but to know his love, forgiveness and purpose in your life? Come and join our celebration - you'll be very welcome! It won't improve the state of your investments, but it might just give you a different perspective to what really is important in life.

Reverend John Girtchen
01469 530357