



ARENACHURCH

IT'S CHRISTMAS!!!!

GOODNEWS

Reaching into Communities, Sharing Good News, Making a Difference

THE GREATEST ADVENTURE

BEAR GRYLLS FACES HIS FEARS

Why the greatest adventurer is part of the greatest adventure

Bear Grylls is a well-known adventurer, famous for his survival skills. Star of several TV shows, he's climbed Mount Everest, crossed the Atlantic in an 11 metre boat, held a dinner party at 25000 feet in a hot air balloon, climbed mountains in the Antarctic, and jumped off Everest with a propeller strapped to his back.

What could possibly be a

greater adventure than all of that?

Bear, born Edward Michael Grylls, was appointed as Chief Scout of The Scout Association - the youngest Chief Scout since the role was created in 1920. With the responsibility of being a role model and leader for so many young people, a whole new avenue of excitement and adventure opened up before him. But there was still more adventure to be had than all of that.

Imagine for a moment living in a land of deserts and bandits and having to travel many miles - on foot - across that desert landscape. You need to find the small town that your family used to live in. To complicate matters, you live in a country that is occupied by a foreign army, and need to take your wife with you.

Sounds like a bit of an adventure, doesn't it?

Add in the fact that your wife is heavily pregnant, and even though you have a donkey she can ride on, the fact remains that she is heavily pregnant. It's not a comfortable ride.

You finally reach your destination after quite some time, and realise your going to have to draw on your

survival instincts in a Bear-Grylls-like manner. Nobody booked a hotel, and everywhere is full. This adventure is turning into a nightmare.

A kind inn-owner eventually lets you sleep in the barn with his animals, and during the night, your wife has the baby. Is this the end of the adventure? No, this is just the beginning.

From the moment the baby, Jesus, was born, he started his own adventure that no man could ever match. Born of a virgin in a stable, crucified just over thirty years later, risen from the dead, and going from glory to glory. Jumping off Everest? Not even close.

You might never imagine Bear Grylls being afraid of anything, but as a Christian, it took him some time to summon up the courage to speak about it publicly. Bear describes his journey of faith as his "greatest adventure".

"I really, desperately have learnt in my life that I need my faith, and I'm just not strong enough on my own. I try to start every day by kneeling down and saying, 'Lord Jesus, I ain't got it all right, and I'm nervous about today. I will give it my all, but will you help me?'"

Aware that a relationship with Jesus is fundamental rather than using religion, Bear also says, *"The heart of Christianity is just about saying, 'I need help, and will you be beside me?' And I don't think anyone has a problem with that. What they don't want is religion - and I totally get that."*

If you want to be like Bear, come along to any of our events over the Christmas season. You'll see what it's all about, and have a chance to see what church is like when you put relationship first, rather than religion.



JOIN US THIS CHRISTMAS:

CELEBRATIONS

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

SEE OUR FULL FESTIVE PROGRAMME ON PAGE 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



LIFE AS A NURSE



WORLDCHANGERS



COMMUNITY

Photo of Bear Grylls by Kalei Brooks, Alaska National Guard



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Find us or write to us at:
1 RUTLAND STREET, ILKESTON, DERBYSHIRE, DE7 8DG

Or contact us by email at:
ADMIN@ARENACHURCH.CO.UK

Founded in 1929, Arena Church Ilkeston has been pioneered and guided by many faithful leaders. We plant and repurpose new churches both locally and further afield. Hundreds of people serve on our Dream Teams, impacting and serving thousands of people every month throughout local communities.

We have outstanding connections with local charities, business owners, Government leaders, MPs and the Police. Everybody is somebody at Arena Church, and all are welcome to connect through our Small Groups, where strong relationships are formed and discipleship is nurtured.

Come and see how exciting and vibrant church can be when the focus is clear and people are free to seek God with passion.



FOOD SERVED UNTIL 1.45PM

- BREAKFAST -		- JACKET POTATOES -	
BACON SANDWICH	£1.85	WITH BUTTER	£2.50
<small>Served with 3 rashers of bacon</small>		<small>Served with salad garnish</small>	
BACON BAGUETTE	£2.10	CHEESE, TUNA, COLESLAW, BEANS	£0.50 EACH
<small>Served with 3 rashers of bacon</small>		CHILL CHICKEN, CURRY OR PRAWNS	£3.85
BACON, MUSHROOM & MELTED CHEESE BAGUETTE	£2.60	<small>Served with salad garnish</small>	
BEANS ON TOAST	£1.80	- SALADS -	
TOAST	£1.10	CHOOSE FROM A VARIETY OF TOPPINGS:	
<small>2 slices served with butter</small>		EGG, TUNA, HAM OR CHEESE	£4.00
JAM OR MARMALADE	£0.20	<small>Served with half a baguette and butter</small>	
- TOASTED SANDWICHES -		PRAWNS IN ROSE MARIE SAUCE	£4.35
CHEESE	£2.30	<small>Served with half a baguette and butter</small>	
<small>Served with salad garnish</small>		- DRINKS -	
2 FILLINGS	£2.60	YORKSHIRE TEAS	£1.10
<small>CHOOSE FROM: HAM - MUSHROOM - ONION - TOMATO - TUNA</small>		FILTER COFFEE	£1.40
<small>Served with salad garnish</small>		CAPPUCCINO	£1.90
- SANDWICHES -		LATTE	£1.90
CHOOSE FROM:		WITH SYRUP	£2.25
EGG, TUNA, HAM OR CHEESE	£2.20	MOCHA	£2.20
<small>Served with salad garnish</small>		HOT CHOCOLATE	£1.85
PRAWNS IN ROSE MARIE SAUCE	£2.85	FRUIT TEAS	£1.20
<small>Served with salad garnish</small>		- KIDS LUNCH BOX -	
- BAGUETTES -		A CHOICE OF CHEESE, HAM, EGG OR TUNA SANDWICH WITH CRISPS, KRISPIE CAKE, FROMAGE FRAIS, AND CUP DRINK £2.35	
CHOOSE FROM:			
EGG, TUNA, HAM OR CHEESE	£2.60		
<small>Served with salad garnish</small>			
PRAWNS IN ROSE MARIE SAUCE	£3.00		
<small>Served with salad garnish</small>			

- SUNDAY SPECIALS -

**CAPPUCCINO, LATTE AND HOT CHOCOLATE £1.00 EACH
TEA AND FILTER COFFEE FREE OF CHARGE**

Our Coffee Shop has gone through a refurbishment and rebrand and is now:

“Blend and Brew” at Arena Ilkeston

Opening times
Monday, Wednesday and Saturday 10am to 2pm

We have an updated menu and a selection of speciality coffees available.

Wednesday Special £4.99
Choice from the menu + choice of cake
Filter coffee or tea including a refill

Look out for our festive specials throughout December



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA
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GOOD NEWS - IT'S CHRISTMAS!



Welcome to our Christmas edition!

As I reflect on Christmas, the "season of goodwill", I do so with a degree of concern and sadness.

LONELINESS IS AT EPIDEMIC LEVELS IN THE UK

Loneliness is defined as "sadness because one has no friends or company."

Take a look at these stats:

Over 9 million people in the UK - almost a fifth of the population - say they are always or often lonely, but almost two thirds feel uncomfortable admitting to it (British Red Cross and Co-Op, 2016)

Over half (51%) of all people aged 75 and over live alone (ONS, 2010)

Two fifths all older people (about 3.9 million) say the television is their main company (Age UK, 2014)

You see, whilst many enjoy the company of others, have daily interactions with others, or live among family, there are many who are alone!

This is a sad fact that nearly 4 million people say TV is their main company. I applaud both national and local charities that work among

the elderly but it's not just older people who are lonely.

In fact, you can be in a crowd and yet still feel alone. There are many young people, business people and housewives who feel alone.

Jesus came to invite the LONELY

Jesus came to invite the lonely, the abandoned, the broken hearted, the hurting and the confused. The Christmas message is that God came to earth in the form of a baby.

Jesus grew up and walked among people, he faced every trial and temptation known to man yet was without sin.

He became a "friend to sinners" and through his death and resurrection provided forgiveness, pardon, and grace to all who will receive.

A bible verse often used on Christmas cards and preached at Christmas services is:

Matthew 1:23 (NIV) - "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"

(which means "God with us")

Immanuel - God with us.

Jesus came into the world so people do not need to be alone! He wants to be present, involved in all of our lives. He can be as we invite him.

Arena Church offers a welcome to everyone. We believe everyone is a somebody at Arena Church. We value every person and we want to create services and environments where people can gather in groups and services.

This Christmas at Ilkeston, Mansfield, and Belper we have organised gathering points that are relevant to all - from toddlers to those older in years! Take a look at the Christmas events page. We would love to welcome YOU.

I would love to be able to welcome you personally.

Have a wonderful Christmas and may God bless you and give you his peace.

Kristian and Caroline

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

AT ARENA CHURCH ILKESTON

COMMUNITY CONCERT

SUNDAY 9TH DECEMBER • 10.30AM

With our local dignitaries and special performances from local schools.

ARENA KIDS

SUNDAY 16TH DECEMBER • 10.30AM

The little stars of Arena breathe life into the season with their Christmas presentation.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

SATURDAY 22ND DECEMBER • 6.30PM - 7.30PM

Our traditional carol service and local school performance.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE after the Service, with lots of festive treats: mince pies, hog roast, Santa's grotto and fair ride.

ARENA CHRISTMASTIME

SUNDAY 23RD DECEMBER • 10.30AM

Our ultimate Christmas presentation with Christmas carols, media and an inspiring message telling the Christmas story like you've never heard it before.

UNWRAPPING CHRISTMAS

TUESDAY 25TH DECEMBER • 10.00AM

Our Christmas day service with Christmas carols, a short message and a chance for kids to come and show their new toys

AT ARENA CHURCH MANSFIELD

ARENA KIDS CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION

SUNDAY 9TH DECEMBER • 10.30AM

The little stars of Arena breathe life into the season with their Christmas presentation.

COMMUNITY CONCERT

SUNDAY 16TH DECEMBER • 10.30AM

With our local dignitaries and Special Performance from The Prince's Trust.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

SATURDAY 22ND DECEMBER • 6.30PM - 7.30PM

Our traditional carol service.

FROM 5.30PM

Brass Band, festive treats and giveaways.

ARENA CHRISTMASTIME

SUNDAY 23RD DECEMBER • 10.30AM

Our ultimate Christmas presentation with Christmas carols, media and an inspiring message telling the Christmas story like you've never heard it before.

UNWRAPPING CHRISTMAS

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CALLED TO BE A NURSE



By Sarah Gilbert

Hi, I'm Sarah I have been part of Arena Church for around 15 years now. I love this church and I love my job.

I registered as a nurse 7 years ago and now I am a Deputy Ward Sister of an oncology ward at the City Hospital in Nottingham.

I love being a nurse and it's always been a passion of mine to help and care for other people.

Being in charge of an acute oncology ward comes with its difficulties especially being a Christian in a work environment. I have always felt that nursing is a calling, and I have always known that God wanted me to care for people.

The job itself can be difficult at times and sometimes quite political, but I remind myself why I wanted to be a nurse and separate myself from the daily stresses of management to try to connect with my patients. I especially love washing their feet, just like Jesus did,

I am able to care for people and show compassion to those who need it on a daily basis. I do sometimes pray for patients quietly to myself and I ask God to help me throughout my day. My colleagues do recognise that there is something 'different'

about me.

Most colleagues know I'm a Christian and are quite inquisitive, which I love, and I tell them all about church. Staff and patients do often wonder why I'm quite chirpy and happy most of the time, and I always seem to have a smile on my face. That's because I'm doing the job I love, and I have Jesus with me every step of the way.

A few years back during a night shift a lady started refusing her antibiotics, there was no reason why she didn't want them. It was just that she felt she'd had enough.

My colleague tried to explain to her that she needed these medications to make her better, but she still refused and sent him away.

My colleague asked if I would try and talk to her, so I did. It turned out that she was also a Christian and we started talking about church.

She said if I prayed with her, she would have the medications she needed. So we prayed together and my colleagues were amazed!

Because she asked me, I was happy to pray for her. I will never forget that shift. I'm so thankful that I could be part of her journey and I helped her feel better.

OUR LIVES IN RETIREMENT

By Bob & Mandy Tye

fact we find ourselves busier than ever.

Hi, for those who don't know us, our names are Bob and Mandy Tye. We have been married for 40 years, and have been Christians for 39 of those 40 years.

Recently, our lives have taken a new direction as we both decided to take early retirement.

A study has shown that 65% of retired people believe retirement is the best time in life to give something back to the community. The study went on to say: "Retirees have the greatest amount of time, savings, life experiences and skills they can contribute to charitable causes"

In the Bible, the book of Ecclesiastes (chapter 3, verses 1 and 2) says, "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven, a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot."

As keen gardeners we are well aware of the meaning of seasons and in our lives, we have experienced many seasons: marriage, building a career, raising a family, and becoming grandparents. Now we are in a new season, the season of retirement.

Some would think this is a season to sit back, relax and take life easy. But we have not experienced this, it's been just the opposite!

When we were planning to retire, we thought we would just be sat at home thinking about what to do next. However, this has not happened - in

The thing is, you can retire from your job, but you can't retire from God. When the door closed on our working lives, He opened many new doors and many new opportunities came our way.

We are involved with Supported Housing, we run a Small Group from our home, and serve on various groups involved with differing aspects of church life. And we can honestly say, in all of this we have never been happier or more fulfilled.

Retirement for us hasn't meant the end, it has been a new beginning. As Dylan Thomas said:

"Do not go gentle into that goodnight, old age should burn and rave at close of day, rage, rage against the dying of the light."

We feel God is telling us to rage against poverty and injustice, and to help the marginalised. Everyone can make a difference, even in their retirement years.

Retirement is not the end, it is the start of a new season.

If anyone reading this is approaching retirement, we pray God will open doors for you and show you clearly the path he wants you to walk.

Following God's plan for our lives has given us a Retirement season which is Refreshing, Renewing and is definitely Rewarding!



THE PROJECT

Bath Street, Ilkeston



FOLLOW THE PROJECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA
@theprojectarena

WWW.THEPROJECTILKESTON.CO.UK



The Project is located on Bath Street, Ilkeston in the old Woolworths building. We opened in January 2017 and have gone from strength to

strength since then.

However, our journey started in late 2014 when Arena Community took on the lease of the building. After receiving

funding, we managed to refurbish the ground floor and start trading.

Our retail area sells restored and shabby chic furniture, as well as 'pre-loved' clothing, soft furnishings, candles and toiletries.

The Workshop Cafe, located on the ground floor near the retail area, serves delicious meals, snacks and drinks at affordable prices. It is a spacious area, with seating for up to 40 people and room for disability scooters, wheelchairs and pushchairs, and offers a full menu for children.

Our aim at The Project is to connect and serve our community with a view to

creating strong bonds whilst giving training and employment opportunities. We believe that 'everybody is somebody at The Project'.

Our trading hours are Monday to Saturday from 9am to 5pm; the Workshop Cafe is open 9am to 4pm. For more information, please visit our website at www.theprojectilkeston.co.uk.

Telephone 0115 9441462

The Project accepts donations of good quality clothing, and we offer a delivery and collection service for furniture.

FACTORY HUB

Belfield Street, Ilkeston



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ARENACOMMUNITY.CO.UK

By Tracy Newton

Not that the hub is ever quiet but the winter months, and especially the run-up to Christmas, brings about a new level of busy-ness and bustle.

Aside from the Foodbank opening two days a week, we have now started opening our doors on a Monday and Thursday. We aren't doing



anything complicated or heavily planned - we are simply opening our doors to those who may be cold, hungry or alone and creating a place of belonging.

People wander in and out, stop for a coffee, have a read of a paper, and a chat. For a moment, they belong somewhere. They are home.

Today it's cold and rainy, a miserable day and three familiar faces have popped in for a warm drink. Scott, Sonya, and Gaz have been coming to the hub for about 4 years. Sonya explained that she first came to the hub when she had been evicted and her benefits had been stopped.

Sonya's life hasn't been easy but her face breaks into a huge smile as she explains that the Hub is like her family, she beams 'You don't get judged here!'

Gaz joins in and agrees that the Hub is a place where people take you as you are, no judgement. We have a laugh and chat and the conversation turns to what they want out of life.

All three are initially confused

by the question until I say, "If I had a magic wand and could give you anything you wanted, what would you want?"

Scott jumps in immediately with "I just want a door I can lock! A place I can call my own."

Gaz follows with "I just want to stay clean".

It doesn't seem much, does it? But Scott is homeless. He doesn't have a door of his own to lock and Gaz has battled addiction - and for the moment he is winning.

We chat a little about the importance of hope and how constant disappointment can be heartbreaking. Then we have a look through the papers, another cup of coffee, put the world to rights, and then move on with our day.

That flash moment of reality is enough for all of us for now. In a moment we acknowledged the elephant in the room, the reality of what brings them to us each week.

The fact is that we don't have a magic wand, the team have no superhuman powers to fix the wrongs life has dealt them, but what we do have is shed loads of heart.

We care and it's that care that will keep these three going. It's that care that will restore their hope and continue to bring them to a place where they feel that they belong.

Factory Hub Stats

By Kitty Bailey

FOODBANK - Between 2011 and June 2018, we have given out 12,252 food parcels which equates to over £36,000. Over 52% of the food parcels given out have been for families of 3 or more. We have also provided over 15,500 hot meals.

Rehabilitation services such as probation and Add Action have sent roughly 29% of clients since opening, while government run services such as Surestart and the NHS have sent roughly 30% of clients. The largest sector of clients - 41% - are self-referred.

FOLLOW UP PROGRAM

- Out of the 2,621 people we have given food parcels to with addiction issues in 2014-2018, roughly 54% have been referred to further resources for them to get help.

Over 60% have used this service, from helping with hospital appointments to finding the clients a therapist.

SHARED HOUSING - We have a total of 4 houses for vulnerable adults who face mental health issues, addiction, or have been recently released from prison.

We now also have a Moving On flat with 1 tenant.

FURNITURE COLLECTION - On average we collect around 15 items of furniture weekly from houses as well as businesses.

GET TOGETHER

By Josh Turner

In my house Christmas is a pretty big deal. Last year we started way too early, my wife and I watched our first Christmas film on October 1st! This year we have been more restrained and waited until 1st November! Needless to say - we love Christmas.

I always remember these big family parties that we had when I was a child where the whole family would get together, laugh and celebrate Christmas. From Great-Grandparents, to aunts and uncles to distant relatives who I hadn't seen for most of the year - Christmas was the banner under which we gathered.

To this day, this is my favourite thing about the Christmas season, these times together

with family and friends. It gives a great opportunity to catch up, to play games and eat way too much. I remember my Grandad singing Christmas songs, my Mama's legendary dinners, getting way too competitive over a game of 'words with friends' (Let me tell you, there is nothing friendly about that game!) and going to Arena to experience one of our amazing Christmas presentations.

Christmas is of course to celebrate the arrival of Jesus here on earth, but it's also a time for family, a time for friends, a time for community - it's a time to come together.

I think there is a bit of a movement away from these gatherings of family and friends, and I appreciate not every family is like mine, but whatever



your social circle looks like this Christmas, you can be a part of a community.

I would love to invite you to my community, Arena, we have loads of different events over Christmas that you can get involved in. You will find a warm welcome, fun, and hopefully a place that you can one day call your community.

This Christmas why not make a decision to reach out to that friend you haven't seen for a while, or mend that relationship with that family member? Why don't you make a conscious effort to bring your family and friends together to celebrate the season? Create some new Christmas memories!

CHRISTMAS COLOURING FOR KIDS





peace and goodwill' can often camouflage real conflict. As someone said 'Give all the broken pieces to Jesus and He will give unbroken peace'

LOVE - Often expressed in the giving of gifts. The greatest example of all? God gifting His Son to the earth for the ultimate purpose of our forgiveness and the restoration of broken relationship

JOY - The depth of joy is that it is more than just a passing 'beery night out'. It creates a deep strength to carry us through every situation both good and bad.

So here at Arena Church we want to help you prepare well for December 25th. To do that we have got some brilliant gathering point services throughout December

Sunday December 9th at 10.30am - The Community Service - Local schools will be taking part, Civic Dignitaries will be in attendance, and you are welcome too!

Sunday December 16th at 10.30am - The Kids Church Presentation - A not-to-be-missed fun-filled time with children at the heart of it

Christmas Services on Saturday December 22nd at 6.30pm and Sunday December 23rd at 10.30am - Christmas celebrated in a contemporary setting. Bring your friends with you.

May this Christmas of 2018 be your best ever. With the babe Jesus, now the King of Kings, at the centre. It works best when we prepare well.

PREPARATION

The Christmas Season in Ilkeston

By Pastor Phil Pye

For many it seems the onset of the Christmas Season gets earlier and earlier. Maybe in your family it has become a game to see who can spot the first Christmas selection boxes or decorations in the shops. My eye was alerted to a whole range of Christmas goodies in early September! The 'guilty supermarket' will remain nameless.

Of course, retailers will argue that they are seeking to help their customers be early and effective in their readiness for the festive end of year celebrations, and in

fairness to them it captures the thought that preparation is very important.

It impacts us in many areas of life. Preparation for that new employment, an examination you are about to sit. Preparation for that long-anticipated holiday, the devastation of turning up at the check-in desk to find your passport is out of date! Yes, looking ahead helps us plan and process the joys, enjoyments, and challenges of life

In the Christian Calendar the fourth Sunday before Christmas is designated as the beginning of Advent - this word speaks of 'arrival' or 'coming' and is seen as

a time where Christians prepare their hearts and internal world well for the remembering of Jesus Christ coming to the earth as a babe.

Advent carries four major themes. We will look at them briefly and the encouragement is to apply them to your life, it really will help your preparation.

HOPE - It seems often there is so little hope around, it's opposite is fear. I love the part of the Christmas story where the angels from heaven appear to shepherds - ordinary working-class blokes working into the night on a hillside - telling them not to fear. It might seem hopeless, but there is always hope.

PEACE - Temporary truces at many levels in this 'season of



Have I made the right decision

Am I good enough

Why aren't they replying

Am I in the right job

Is there more to life than this

Alpha

Got questions about life? #TryAlpha

If you have any questions about life, Arena Church, or the Christian faith, you might want to try an Alpha course.

For more information, please either visit

alpha.org

or email

admin@arenachurch.co.uk

MANSFIELD

During 2018, we have carried out extensive building works at the rear of our building on Leeming Street. By December we will have a dedicated Kids Church room, offices and rooms available for hire for conferences and business meetings.

In addition, our new facilities will enable us to extend our community projects and work with the homeless in Mansfield.

As well as our own church and community activities, we already have external groups using our venue, including The Prince's Trust, REACH Learning Disability and NCS through Notts County FC Football in the Community... we are looking forward to hosting other business and community groups going into 2019.



Community News

by Louise Richardson

Here at Arena Mansfield, Care for a Coffee continues to grow from strength to strength.

Running on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10am - 2pm, in the last 12 months we have welcomed over 1600 people and served an estimated 4500 hot drinks with cake and biscuits!

We topped the scale one week during the month of October when we had the highest number of visitors to date. It's always a pleasure to welcome new people daily, and when they bring their friends the circle just grows.

The most exciting news we have to share is that we have launched a new community

initiative called the 'Snap Team'. Why 'Snap'? Snap is Nottinghamshire slang for lunch and we're snapping into action to be ready for Sunday December 2nd.

For 13 Sundays from 2nd December to 24th February the Snap Team are providing a hot snack at lunchtime to homeless men and women in Mansfield.

Two new community teams are being formed to enable the Snap Team to operate.

On Friday mornings there will be a preparation team collecting, storing, and packing snack pack food parcels which will be given out on Sundays.

At 12.15pm after our Sunday morning service, a distribution team will serve the food and hand out the snack packs.

To date we have 13 people signed up to join these teams. They are preparing for 2nd December and they're making great progress. As they always say 'many hands make light work' so if you and a friend are thinking of giving an hour of your time a week for some charity work this Christmas time then please get in touch.

The people of Mansfield and Ashfield are very generous towards the soup kitchens and foodbanks, especially during the winter months. If you would like to donate food, then here is our shopping list:

- chocolate biscuit bars
- tinned rice pudding
- bottles of water
- toilet roll & baby wipes
- deodorant
- tin opener
- sugar
- tea bags / coffee
- biscuits
- cake
- plastic spoons
- pot noodle/rice/pasta

Donation drop-off point is Arena Church, 66 Leeming Street, Mansfield, NG18 1NG
Sunday morning 10am - 12noon

Tuesday and Wednesday 10am - 2pm

For further information:
tel: 01623 624099
email: louise.richardson@arenacommunity.co.uk

- tinned meat
- baked beans
- tinned fruit
- fruit juice
- crisps

BELPER

Our Belper Campus is now in the process of launching, with David and Jeanette Blyth heading it up.

As with all campuses of Arena Church, regular meetings and Small Groups will be an integral part of the

campus, along with an Alpha Course for those who are new to the Christian faith.

If you are interested in finding out more about this new campus, please get in touch with any existing campus of Arena or visit

our webpage and fill in your details at

www.arenachurch.co.uk/belper

The site will be updated with all the news and events over the coming months. The

launch of a new site is always full of excitement and things can happen at a very quick pace, so get in right at the start and watch as the journey unfolds.

We'd love to see you there!

A CHANGE OF OUTLOOK

by Paul Stokes

Hi everyone, did you hear about the police officer that was sat in his patrol car one dark, stormy, winters night when a car passed him. The officer noticed that the vehicles offside rear light was out.

The officer activated his "blues and two's" and set off after the car. The driver pulled up and the officer said to the driver "Good evening Sir, is this your vehicle?"

The driver responded "Yes officer, is there a problem?"

The officer said "Yes Sir, can you get out of the vehicle and come with me to the rear of your car."

The driver did so and the officer pointed out that the rear offside side light was not working. The man immediately put his head in his hands and started sobbing saying, "Oh no, I don't believe it, I just don't believe it, how could this have happened?"

The officer was surprised about this dramatic reaction and said "It's alright mate, it's only a light bulb. I am not going to report you, I only wanted to let

you know, don't get upset."

To which the man said "It's not the light. Where's my caravan gone?"

I know this is only a silly story but I have known many people who have been "driving along life's highway" thinking life is going OK without realising that something is missing.

I know that is true because for many years I was just like that. I joined the Police Service straight from school aged 16½ years old. I was made up to a Police Constable when I was 18½ years old and after my initial training I was let loose on the public.

My first posting was at Newark on Trent where I performed foot and patrol car duties, responding to calls from the public for help and assistance, dealing with crime reports, dealing with sudden death reports and all kinds of events.

After I had been a police officer for about 7 years I was getting quite disillusioned with "The Job". You see I quickly began to realise that I seemed to be dealing with the same people, the same families, day in day out.

It seemed to me that a



small minority of people where committing the majority of the crimes in the local area.

I began to get quite hard hearted in my outlook to these people, who one day would be calling you all the names they could think of and then the next day asking you to help them.

I had always tried to be fair but I was starting to think that nothing would change their lifestyle.

Then I started working with a Christian guy who saw things different to me.

He explained to me that as a Christian he believed that we live in a broken damaged world and that God had sent Jesus Christ his only Son to die on the cross so that people could be set free from everything that binds them, be set free from living chaotic lifestyles, free from addictions and impulsive behaviours.

That as Police officers and Christians we should see beyond people's behaviour and understand the deeper reason why they behaved as they did.

At this time my own personal life was in turmoil, my marriage was breaking up due to my unfaithfulness, my father was dying of cancer and I knew that something was "missing" from my life.

My work colleague led me to an understanding of who Jesus

is and I recall very vividly one night crying out to God saying "God, I don't know if you are real or not but if you are take over my life because you cannot make a worse mess of it than I have done."

As soon as I had said this, I felt an overwhelming sense of peace. I started going to Church and reading the Bible and started on an incredible journey.

My attitude to my work changed almost overnight as I began to have more and more compassion for people who I was dealing with.

I no longer used to blame them for getting into such a mess but had more understanding of the bigger picture.

Yes, I lived many years with something "missing" in my life but when I became a Christian that hole, that gap was filled. I still face challenging times both at work and in life but now I know that I have someone watching my back, helping me in life's troubles.

This Christmas the best advice I could ever give to anyone facing a dark, stormy period in their life would be to call out to God, for He is just waiting to be asked to step in and to help.

He did for me and I know He will for you.



GUITAR AID



By Andi Richardson

What links Sir Cliff Richard, Tim Hughes, Martin Smith of "Delirious"? Matt Redman and Bryn Haworth? Yes, yes I know they are all musicians but also - they all endorse the work of Guitar-Aid!

What is Guitar-Aid?

Guitar-Aid is a charity that was founded in 1990 by Dave Sumner and seeks to equip musicians in churches all over

the world who otherwise could not obtain or afford instruments. To date Guitar-Aid has supplied over 3250 guitars, mainly electric and acoustic, but also bass guitars, drums and keyboards.

Dave is an accomplished musician himself and serves on the worship team band at Riverside Church, Exeter. As well as playing, Dave also has the skills to set-up and repair guitars and felt a growing passion to supply to the less-privileged musicians in other

parts of the world. This is funded entirely by charitable giving and Dave gives up most of his holidays to take trailers full (or aircraft holds!) of instruments to churches

Dave's very first guitars, a refurbished batch, was given in Romania in 1990 shortly after the fall of the Ceausescu regime. As I write he is on his way back from Romania and other countries in Eastern Europe 28 years later!

He has given guitars from Panama to Philippines, Egypt to Ukraine and beyond. Dave now designs and produces his own guitars in partnership with music equipment supplier John Hornby Skewes.

On our recent Arena Church Serve Day we had a 'jam session' for aspiring musicians. The guitars were all supplied by Guitar-Aid - thanks Dave!!

Charity Guitars?

Of course, some would say that musical instruments are not one of life's necessities (most musicians would disagree), but this project gives a gift that will bring joy to whole communities for decades. Someone once said to Dave, "You can't eat a guitar",

to which Dave replied 'But you can't play a tin of beans'. Can't argue with that, ask any busker!

But seriously, doing good for others is not just about the immediate physical needs. Guitar-Aid enables those supported to serve in literally thousands of churches around the world. These churches now not only have talented musicians in their worship groups, but have talented musicians playing quality instruments. This assists their congregations in doing the greatest thing we could ever do in this life - praising and worshipping God.

How does it work?

There are two ways you can practically support this superb ministry. You could give a small monthly amount to support a church/worship leader in another country. Alternatively, for £50, Guitar-Aid will deliver a sponsored guitar with a tuner, case, strap and of course a spare set of strings!

You can find out all the details by going direct to Guitar-Aid.com and following the instructions. Your donation WILL result in a community praising God!

"Guitar Aid is a fantastic way of combining passion for music with passion for justice. This is a great way to make a difference."

- Tim Hughes (UK singer/songwriter)



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WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT CHRISTMAS?

By Nathan & Joanna Butcher

It's almost that time of year again and as the Christmas seasons approaches, we always hear that question from someone - "what's your favourite thing about Christmas?" It's a question that we love to think about but that we really struggle to answer!

There's the unwrapping of presents on Christmas Day, the succulent Turkey Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, especially pigs in blankets that only seem to be made at Christmas. Then there's the festive music, those Christmas songs that are repeated year after year like they've never been heard before. There are the Christmas decorations, the time spent with family and loved ones and the

delight (or despair!) seen on their faces once gifts are opened. We personally love all of these things at Christmas and many more.

The special and unique thing about Christmas is that it is enjoyed by so many people around the world, those that believe in Jesus and those that don't. They may not follow the exact traditions but there would be some element of Christmas that exists. You could almost say that it is universally celebrated in some way in most countries of the world.

In a similar way, at Arena Church we have a youth ministry called 'Universal' that runs for 11-17 year olds every Friday night. We named it 'Universal' as we wanted to create a youth gathering that was open to every young person, whether they believed in God or not. Two and a half years ago, we launched 'Universal' in our Mansfield campus youth and over this small period, it has developed so much. Our vision is to create a vibrant and exciting place for young people, which is inclusive and encourages young people to be passionate about God. We love exciting games, great food and relevant discussions around the Bible.

One of the highlights of the year has been our recent annual trip to Alton Castle, a youth

retreat centre 5 minutes from Alton Towers. We arrive Friday night and have contemporary and lively worship music and an engaging message. Saturday night, after a whole day at the theme park, we have another service and a themed after-party, it is a pretty packed but awesome day! This year, the theme for the weekend was World Changers and we encouraged everyone to come to the Saturday after-party dressed as their favourite world changer. There were many varied costumes but the winner of best dressed went to a young girl who dressed up as Judy Garland. The theme of the weekend was also reflected in the messages shared to them by the leaders. We had around 50 young people attend Alton Castle this year and about 20 of those responded to the messages which is amazing. We are so excited to see what God has in store for these young people and we can't wait for next year!

If you're ever available, we would love to see you at Universal Mansfield on any given Friday. For further information, please visit our website - www.arenachurch.co.uk

Have a great Christmas and an even better new year.



UNIVERSAL

**UNIVERSAL
EVERY FRIDAY
MANSFIELD 6:30-8PM
ILKESTON 7:30-9PM**



ARENA FC

By Douglas Pink

In 2012, Mark Ancliffe and I, Douglas Pink, set about launching a football team to represent Arena Church in the Derby Church League. The main aim of the team was to be an outreach into the local community to bring Christians and non-Christians together to play a game that we all love.

We were sponsored by Arena Enterprises, the business and conferencing arm of Arena Church, and continue to be sponsored by them to this day. Their financial support has enabled us to purchase three different kits.

We chose to play in all green as this meant we only needed

one kit to start with, as no other team played in green only.

Our first season started with a not-so-proud record of playing 8 matches...and losing 8. We scored 7 goals, but unfortunately conceded 47...

From this rocky start, we managed to get enough points to finish fourth from the bottom by the end of the season. The following season, we appeared in two cup finals, which we lost - but we made up for it by becoming league champions and remaining unbeaten all season, winning 16 games and drawing 2.

We retained our league title the following season whilst also completing the double by winning our first cup final.

Mark Ancliffe stepped down

as manager at the end of that season, and the position was filled by Martin Gribby. He took us to the runners-up position in a season that saw a number of players coming and going.

After this difficult season, Martin stepped down and handed the role over to Joshua Holmes. Josh has since led us to a third league title and two more cup finals - one of which, we won.

In total, we have played 6 seasons, winning the league 3 times and the cup twice. We finished as league runners-up once, and three times were runners-up in the cup.

I have been the club secretary since the very beginning and along with club chairman, Pastor Phil Pye, have had the pleasure of working alongside three great managers. We have seen many players come and go but have always maintained the way we play football - sporting, fair, and in a way that is an example of the standards that we believe is a

credit to Arena Church.

I have had the pleasure to call all of the players who have worn a green shirt my friends, and only wish that I could have played alongside them when I was a lot younger.

I am a sportsman who loves to win, but as a Christian, winning a trophy is secondary to me. My getting up early on a Saturday for the past six years was made worthwhile when on one particular Saturday one of the players came to talk to me. I had built a great relationship with him and he wanted to let me know that the previous weekend he had given his life to Jesus after a training session led by ex-Nottingham Forest player Phil Starbuck.

So to sum Arena FC up, we have 3 league titles, 2 cup wins, and 2 players led to Christ. Not bad considering we started out with an idea and no players!



MATCH REPORT: ARENA v BEESTON

By Elliott Stockdale

Tom Randall.

Arena FC were denied all three points after a goal was controversially ruled offside in the last minute against Beeston.

In the last few moments of the game, Josh Holmes's side thought they'd got the winner from forward Joe Gent, only to see a late flag from the linesman raised.

The game had started off well for the Green Army, with a good high tempo from the away side. Beeston were struggling to get any form of attack going and began to create their own issues at the back when a loose ball was poked into the path of striker Bernard, whose quick feet allowed him to ease past his man and fire into the bottom left corner past the despairing dive of

Beeston forced a corner 10 minutes later, after good work down the right-hand side. The ball into the box caused havoc for the Arena defence, relying on Tom Bailey to clear off the line. His clearance landed on halfway, where previous goal scorer Bernard controlled well and found a lung-bursting run from No.7 Gent, who calmly slotted home with his right foot into the bottom left to make it 2-0.

Arena goalkeeper Marcus Raikes saved well following a free-kick from 25 yards out from the home team, holding on to the dipping set-piece comfortably. He couldn't stop the next Reds attack though, after a fortunate breakaway saw the No.17 shoot off the under-side of the bar to make it 2-1.

After the break, Arena got their 2-goal advantage back. Gent played a ball inside from the right, which was dummied perfectly by Bernard, allowing Tim Bradley to curl in a spectacular curling shot into the top right corner, leaving the keeper with no chance.

It was only a few minutes later though when Beeston were fighting back once again. The No.10 saw his long-range strike take a huge deflection of opposition captain LJ, catapulting it over the keeper's dive and making it 3-2.

The comeback was then complete for the home team when talisman Matt Forde 'scoop' turned past his man and fired into the bottom corner to shatter any confidence that Holmes and his team had built up.

The controversial moment of the game came in the dying embers, when Raikes sent the ball high and long over the top of the defence. Midfield maestro (or Pastor Josh to some) allowed the ball to cleverly go over his head, paving way for Joe Gent to go one on one and score. Celebrations had started to ensue, only for the referee David Barlow to rule it out for offside after the linesman had raised his flag. The decision was caught by the cameras there and replays showed the player in question was around 2 yards inside.

The game ended shortly afterwards with the score-line at 3-3, leading to Arena chairman Phil Pye, assistant manager Douglas Pink and a number of players to make their valid opinions known.