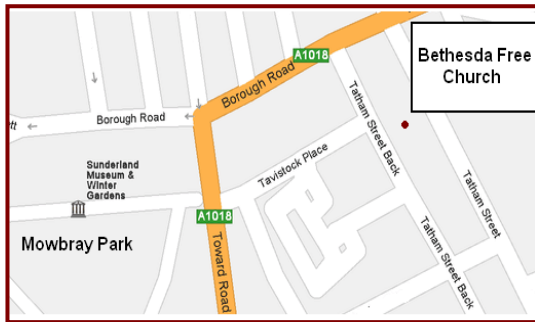


Christmas Eve Carol Service

We are very excited about the 24th of December; the young people of Bethesda Free Church have organised a Christmas Eve Carol Service followed by hot drinks and mince pies.

The meeting will be held in the Marshall Hall on Back Tatham Street at 7pm. Everyone is welcome!




www.talkingaboutheaven.com



Unwrapping

Christmas



Bethesda Free Church
Tatham St Back, SR1 2QB
0191 567 9152
Sunday - 6.30pm

Christmas is a wonderful season. As the days sneak closer to the 25th of December, the festive mood fills our hearts and a buzzing excitement seems to fill the air. Adults and children alike get caught up in the merry atmosphere that this time of year is known for.

Christmas is the season where the words **'It is better to give than to receive'** really come to life. These words of Jesus are proved true as we watch the happy faces of loved ones enjoying the gifts we gave.

Could you imagine though, if this Christmas, you gave someone a gift and they asked 'How much would you like for that?' You would be offended at the question.

A gift is not a gift if you have to pay for it; a gift is something we are given for free.

The Bible talks about an incredible gift for which we do not have to pay. It is a gift for which we could not pay. This gift was bought by someone else. It is the gift of forgiveness, and it was paid for by Jesus.

God's standard is perfection, a standard which no one can achieve. Because we have all done wrong we are not perfect and so we must either be punished or find a way to be forgiven.

The good news is that God provided a way for us to be forgiven.

The 25th of December is the day the world celebrates the birth of Christ. At this time of giving we remember that **'God...gave His only begotten Son'**.

Christ came down from heaven as a baby; He lived for 33 years and reached the perfect standard of God then died on the cross in agony because of our sin.

The Bible tells us that **'He was manifested to take away our sins'** 1John3:5

Then three days later the stone that stood outside His tomb was moved aside and Jesus was alive!

The Bible also tells us that being saved by God from the punishment of Hell is a gift of God, and something for which we cannot work. **'It is by grace ye are saved through faith...not of works'** Ephesians 2:8-9

We don't have to pay for this gift with good works and money, we must simply **'Confess with [our] mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in [our] heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, and [we] shall be saved'** Romans 10:9

Consider snow, notice how white it is and think about this verse **'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.'** Isaiah 1:18

Will you accept the greatest gift this Christmas?