

Newsletter Advent 2011 - Supplementary

Street Pastors

You may not have heard of the 'Street Pastors' scheme, but in several towns around Scotland it is proving a great success, and Lothian and Borders Police have asked the churches in Bathgate to consider starting a group here.

What would it involve? It would involve twice a month (usually a Friday or a Saturday) being part of a group of half a dozen people who are available to be a 'calming presence' in the centre of Bathgate between the hours of 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. Under no circumstances do Street Pastors get involved in any 'trouble'. Instead, a Street Pastor is a listening ear, a caring presence, for those who, for example, are left stranded after someone else has been arrested, or who just need to sober up a bit before setting off for home. In Perth, where the scheme has been operating for several months, Tayside Police reckon that it has led to a noticeable drop in crime on the nights when Street Pastors were around.

The scheme can only start if there is a minimum of twelve volunteers. There are nearly enough people who have expressed an interest, and if two or three people from our church were to volunteer then we might be in a position to start a Street Pastor group here in Bathgate. If you are interested, have a word with the minister, or with Kathleen Grant.



And now on the lighter side-

NEW CHRISTMAS REGULATIONS

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS - HEALTH & SAFETY

JINGLE BELLS

Dashing through the snow on a one-horse open sleigh,
Over fields we go - laughing all the way.

A Risk Assessment must be submitted before an open sleigh is considered safe for members of the public to ride.

The Risk Assessment should also consider whether the use of only one horse is appropriate - particularly if passengers are of larger proportions.

Permission from landowners must be gained before entering any 'Open Fields'.

To avoid offending those not participating in the venture, it is required that only 'moderate' laughter is used and not at a noise level likely to be of nuisance to others.

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED

While shepherds watched their flocks by night

All seated on the ground,

The Angel of the Lord came down,

And Glory shone around.

The Union of Shepherds has complained that it breaches Health & Safety Regulations to insist the shepherds watch their flocks without appropriate seating arrangements being provided.

Therefore, benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs must be available. Shepherds have also requested that, due to inclement weather they should watch their flocks via CCTV cameras behind centrally heated shepherd observation huts.

The Angel of the Lord is reminded that before shining his / her Glory all around, the shepherds must be issued with glasses capable of filtering out any harmful effects of UVA, UVB and Glory lighting.

LITTLE DONKEY

Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road,

Got to keep on plodding onwards, with your precious load.

The RSPCA has issued strict guidelines with regard to how heavy a load a donkey of small stature is permitted to carry. Also in the guidelines are permitted feeding breaks, and at least one rest break in a four-hour plodding period.

Due to the risk of pollution from the dusty road, Mary and Joseph are required to wear facemasks.

The 'Little Donkey' has expressed his discomfort as being labelled 'Little' and would prefer to being simply referred to as 'Mr Donkey'.

Comments upon his height or otherwise are considered to be a breach of his equine rights.