

Events in 2012

Weekend of Family Fun in St James Park, September 8-9th 2012

2012 has been a notable summer in the UK. Apart from being the wettest for 100 years, it has seen the celebrations marking 60 years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and London hosting the Olympic and Paralympic games. This has all had a very positive impact on the country, and there has been great talk of ensuring that we leave a lasting legacy from these events. Churches Together in Shirley and District has made its own small local contribution to this memorable summer. Over the weekend of September 8-9th, it hosted a Weekend of Family Fun in St James Park in conjunction with Miracle Street. The aim was to provide a fun event drawing our community together and also an opportunity to share the love and truth of Jesus.

We were blessed with great weather for both days. On the Saturday hundreds of people of all ages saw the Miracle Street team present their unique roadshow. This included various competitions for all ages such as sack races and penalty shoot outs. In the context of this summer, the prizes could only be gold, silver and bronze medals. We were also treated to some of Steve Lee's entertaining magic and illusions.



Alongside this there was a bouncy castle and slide, and face painting and hair braiding, all of which proved extremely popular. Interspersed with the fast moving action of the roadshow Steve presented some thoughts about God and the Christian message. The refreshments tent selling hundreds of home made cakes was also a popular attraction.



On the Sunday, several of our churches cancelled their usual meetings so that their congregations could join together for Church in the Park. Around 600 people gathered for

this meeting to worship God and hear teaching from the Bible. The worship was led by Alun Leppitt of Bridge Christian Fellowship together with a band made up from musicians and singers from different churches. Steve Lee then talked about the story of the Samaritan woman who met Jesus and learnt about the living water that he could give her. The message was that this living water is still available to us when we come to Christ today in the 21st century. Several people were prayed for in the prayer tent after the service. Many stayed on to share a picnic lunch together in the glorious sunshine.



We are very grateful to Steve Lee and his Miracle Street team for putting together such an excellent programme on both days. Thanks too to all the volunteers from across our churches who made the weekend possible. We were pleased to be able to provide a good fun day for our local community and to share some of the good news of Jesus at the same time. It was great to be able to come together as churches in putting on the event and then to join together in worship on the Sunday.

See also Steve Lee's reaction on putting on an event in his own area.

<http://www.miraclestreet.com/2012/09/>

And finally a comment from one of our church members:

"What a fantastic occasion to have all the Churches meeting in one place!"

Carols in Shirley Precinct 2012

(Singing in the Rain)

Churches Together in Shirley and District had its annual Carols in the Precinct event on Saturday December 22nd. In contrast to our last event in St James Park in the summer, the weather was not ideal. However, despite the rain, about sixty or so hardy souls turned out to take part, accompanied by the Salvation Army Band. The meeting was led by Rev David

Mapes of St Mark's Church, and various different local ministers took part in the readings and prayers.



During the service the church leaders also took on a different role. Taking Jesus encouragement to be servants, they took round trays of mince pies and chocolate orange pieces to offer to the people taking part in the service and to passers by. The significance of the chocolate oranges was to become apparent in the short talk given by Linda Hayes of Freemantle Baptist Church. Linda considered the make up of a chocolate orange, which comes as both a whole orange shape and many individual pieces. She used this as a picture of God's interest in us. Jesus came as God to the whole earth but also comes to us as individuals and is interested in each of our lives.



Alongside the service the Healing on the Streets team were offering to pray for people for healing, as they do each Saturday morning from 10.30 to 12.00. A number of people asked for prayer and two in particular received a clear healing touch.

As the meeting went on the rain became very light and everyone was able to enjoy celebrating the wonderful story of Jesus coming to the earth to be God with us. It was again encouraging to worship together as the church in the area, and we hope that it will have caused people passing by to have reflected on the real reason to celebrate at Christmas.

We would like to thank all those who took part in the event and also those who helped in the background with the preparations.
