



# Newsletter

We wish all our supporters a very **Happy New Year!** and would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for standing with us throughout 2012. We hope and pray you will continue to support us in whatever way you can as we step into 2013, reaching out, as ever, to the homeless and needy, with the love of Jesus.



*Keep Calm* followed by various phrases seems to have been a recurrent theme throughout 2012, and as we say Goodbye to some people, things and events from 2012 and before, and welcome what lies ahead for us, sometimes we do need to remind ourselves to *Keep Calm* and *Keep Faith*. Keith shares with us some of the ups and downs of life on the Bus in Matlock from 2012.

The wheels on the bus go round and round. Or do they?! Ours go up and down so to speak!!

We have our downs, like the sudden and sad death of a young mum recently, and another down was a regular user being sent down. Our ups include the increased usage, the start of a Bible sharing time on Thursdays at Hurst Farm Estate, and our newly released user calling at the Bus on the way home from HM Prison!

We have just spent 3 days on a stall at Matlock's Victorian Market doing a bit of publicity. We met lots of interesting and interested people and as a result one church in Matlock will now be supporting where previously it did not show much interest. Praise God!

Next week (Dec.12) we have our Christmas meal and party when we hope to get in some carol singing!! We are having the meal in a room above the Christian Bookshop. ( 25 turned up for the Pie and Pea Party, all receiving presents kindly donated by supporters)

We have seen an increase in the number of people needing food of late and have had two rough sleepers come to us . Thankfully both of these have found temporary accommodation now, one with a friend of old he met up with, and the other through meeting up ( by chance ---no such thing) with a lad who was himself homeless some time ago.

Three of our volunteers have been treading the boards lately! Pete, Mike and Keith have been appearing in a Panto at Bank Rd Methodist Church Matlock. The panto is Cinderella and Pete and Keith are the ugly sisters (type caste I know!) and Mike is a Gardener called El Cid. So you see what we get up to when not on the Bus!!

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Chesterfield enjoyed a *Buffet on the Bus* for their Christmas Party, with 35 attending and all receiving donated gifts.

And the observant amongst you will notice that the party was not held on the Black Bus this year.... Yes, you've guessed, the Black Bus is one of the Good-byes of 2012. However, we look forward with excitement to its replacement early in the New Year. The layout of the Bus in the picture (which is the single decker, library style Bus used in Matlock) is much more conducive to conversation, allowing people to gather round a table and socialise. It creates a feel of family and belonging, everyone included. This has extended to the prayer time at the end of the evening which has become a much more open culture of praying together and for one another, with those not so sure, able to observe from a safe distance and join in when ready and comfortable to do so. We hope to purchase a similar bus soon that can be fitted out to suit our purpose.

Another sad Goodbye in 2012 has been a re-structuring within Church Army which has meant that our dear friend and staunch supporter Peter Graystone has moved to pastures new. We shall miss him dreadfully as he has been such a tower of strength in his faithful support of all we have sought to do. We wish you God's blessing in your new role within Church Army, Peter, and take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for all your hard work behind the scenes for us over the years. Peter's role has been taken up by Neville Willerton from Church Army, and Neville has demonstrated his enthusiasm for the project by having come out on the Bus with us already. *Welcome aboard Neville!!*



## ***Prayer Points***

- A new Bus for Chesterfield, that is easier to drive, will open up more opportunities for the Bus to be taken out during the day. Please pray for a speedy purchase and refurbishment of a suitable Bus
- Please pray that a suitable venue for parking the Bus during the day can be found
- Please pray for guidance on how we can best nurture people at a deeper level. We are currently exploring the possibility of using a daytime session to minister through art
- Please join us in giving thanks to God for His many blessings through this work

## ***And Finally...***

If you would like to invite Captain Alan to come and speak at your church about the work of Church on the Bus, then please do contact us using the details overleaf. Testimonies from those who have come to the Bus are a real inspiration and encouragement to us to keep going. Steve from the Bus, mentioned in our October Newsletter, gave his testimony at the Mission Sunday service at St Thomas' Church in Chesterfield on 14 October, when Church on the Bus was the mission focus. It provides a great opportunity for those who have found faith to begin to witness to what God has done in their lives. Steve's testimony can be heard as a podcast on [www.st-thomas-brampton.org](http://www.st-thomas-brampton.org)