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Dear Brethren,

I always find leap year to be special with the extra day in February. I am amazed how long ago it was discovered that adding a day every fourth year would keep the seasons and the months more or less in line. The ingenuity with which God has blessed men, makes it difficult to fathom why men think they evolved. Do animals care what the date is? Not so long as they can find food and shelter in season.

Church Growth

On Sunday February 10th, Sheelah Hampton was immersed into Christ. Sheelah is the wife of Ian Hampton, who was immersed 2 years ago. Just last year, Ian and Sheelah were married, it was such an incredible boost to see Ian bring his wife to Christ. Last Sunday, there were 95 in attendance for morning worship, and Sunday evening 2 Bulgarian emigrants attended our services.

Evangelism Workshop

The evangelism workshop seems to be going very well. We have now met three times, most recently in the home of Lesley Hunt and her family. We have been investigating the principles Jesus used for personal evangelism, and after discussing targeting interactive groups, last Thursday we began compiling a focused and personalized 'gospel message' which they can share with their friends. Next month we are intending to work on overcoming the excuses which are sometimes obstacles to sharing our faith, and we will also begin practicing answering challenging questions that are often posed by those with whom we share the gospel.

Reading Singing Workshop

Ten of the members here travelled over to Reading on Saturday the 23rd for an afternoon of singing. There were ninety brethren present there for the afternoon and the singing was so encouraging. The day had been divided into 4 sessions with themes. It was my privilege to lead a session on spiritual warfare with some rousing marching hymns. The song which seemed to make the greatest impression was 'Hard Fighting Soldier', a song I remember from my youth when many years ago Willie Franklin used to visit with us at Westside. I recall that it was one of his favourites, too. I must confess, it sounds quite different with a British accent.

Prayers

Iris Forster- is suffering from depression and is still unable to leave her home at the moment.

Joanne Amadasun- a sister who is the Spiritual leader in her family and has two small children is going through a difficult time as her workplace is restructured. She does not yet know how this will affect her family. Furthermore, her husband Thompson is currently out of work. It's a very stressful time for them.

Vickie Nelson- is expecting her first baby.

Just Us

Heidi and I spent a week with my family in Colorado this month. We spent 2 days trying out skiing. After one day of lessons, we hit the slopes with my brother and his family (they are very proficient!) and enjoyed ourselves. Heidi really has quite a knack for it. I discovered that every time I tried something new, I fell down. Our instructor taught us to ski down hill—I fell down. He showed us how to stop—I fell down. We got on the moving carpet way—I fell down. We rode the ski lift—I fell down. So, I learned to fall without doing permanent damage!! Not a bad analogy for the Christian life sometimes. The key: perseverance. (Is that code for stubbornness?)

We found that, although we were capable of getting down the easy lopes, snow tubing was probably more my speed, and far less likely to run me into trees!

Thanks for all you do for us. God bless you,
Heidi and Jason Snethen