

Battle Baptist Church

Being Transformed Together



★ ALL-AGE ★
COMEDY SHOW
★
STARRING
STEVE LEGG
4PM SUNDAY
16TH DECEMBER
FREE - TICKETS
FROM THE OFFICE

A lesson from Mary and a Chinese brother...

In the midst of uncertainty, accusations, misunderstanding, false narratives, and question marks over the future, one woman sets off to visit her relative in the hill country of Judea. But rather than commiserate, they celebrate: blessings abound, babies leap, the Spirit comes! Something new is about to be birthed, a light shining in the darkness – incomprehensible to a world in chaos, yet the glorious hope to those who can receive God's revelation. Mary, this lowly-in-heart, willing servant, is the first recipient of God's Kingdom breaking into the world; God's salvation birthed in her womb. And so while the Romans oppress, while Herod rules, while religious authorities persecute, while people suffer and while Mary's future hangs in the balance: her community scoffs, her family turns in shame, her marriage in peril... Mary bursts out in praise to her God! The God who has shown her favour, who has lifted her up, who has chosen her... the God who keeps his promises, whose Kingdom is coming and will turn everything upside down.

God's blessing brings a joy that all the scorn of the world cannot vanquish. God's Kingdom transcends our current struggles – personal, familial, societal, political... Hebrews 12 says we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken; 1 Peter 1 tells us we are receiving an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. What joy, what blessed hope we have!

This hope holds fast in all situations (Hebrews 6:19). You may be aware of the persecutions facing the church in China. On the 10th

December Li Yingqiang (李英强), the last elder of Early Rain Covenant Church to be arrested, wrote a letter to the church just a few hours before being found in his hideout and arrested. In it he said:

"Beloved brothers, sisters, and fellow workers:

Thank the Lord! Just as the year 2018 is about to end God has given us a reward in the form of this large-scale persecution that arrived on December 9.

Since yesterday evening until noon today, over 100 pastors, elders, staff, brothers and sisters have been taken away. As of now we still do not know where they all are, and even if we did know it would be difficult for us to help them. But, thankfully, we know for certain that the Lord's loving face is shining upon them. They are within the gracious, sovereign providence of the Lord. He will be with them in the midst of their chains and trials."

He goes on to quote 1 Peter 4:12-14 and issues out a plan to the church with his arrest imminent (a plan that gives no hint of backing down). He closes with these words:

"Beloved brothers and sisters, I am writing this letter in "hiding." May you all be filled with joy in the gospel of Christ. May you welcome, filled with hope, the even heavier cross and more difficult lives that lie ahead of you.

"Christ is Lord. Grace is King. Bear the cross. Keep the faith." This is the vision Early Rain Covenant Church received from the Lord. May we all obtain it, cherish it, put it into practice, and live it out! Loving you all, Elder Yingqiang"

It seems all too glib to mention the challenges our nation faces in the light of this, suffice to say we have much to learn from Mary, much to learn from our Chinese brother. May we all have the grace and faith to face worldly challenges with transcendent joy, hope, peace and love in Christ, showing compassion to the weak and being a light to the nations, knowing our anchor holds secure, praying for His Kingdom to come.

Your servant in Christ,
Mark

**Family
Carol Service**
4pm 23rd Dec
**Carols, drama and
fun for all ages**
There will be an
opportunity for children
and adults to dress up &
take part in a nativity
with a difference...

**Christmas at
BBC**
TODAY
4pm All-Age Comedy Show
with Steve Legg
18th December
Tuesday Fellowship carols
23rd December
4pm Family Carol Service
24th December
8pm Communion
25th December
10am Christmas
Celebration

PRAYER POINTERS

COMEDY SHOW	CALENDARS	PASTORS
Thank God for Steve Legg and his ministry. Pray that his show would be a catalyst for people to find out more about God.	Churches Together have funded Advent Calendars being given to all of the primary school children. Let us pray for these children and their families.	Pray that as Pastors preach the good news of the birth of our Saviour, the message will be heard and clearly understood by those who hear.

NEWSLETTER

16th December 2018

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Battle Baptist Church is part of Life with Hope Trust; registered charity 1134288, Mount Street, Battle,

East Sussex TN33 0EG.

- Website: www.battlebaptistchurch.org.uk
- Telephone and answerphone (01424) 774825 • Email: office@battlebaptistchurch.org.uk
- Caterpillar Preschool direct telephone line: (01424) 774997.

Church maintenance issues:
zionpremisesteam@gmail.com

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CHRISTMAS NATIVITY WITH A DIFFERENCE: as part of the family Carol Service on 23rd December at 4pm, there will be an opportunity for children and adults to dress up and be part of the nativity. No rehearsals are necessary - just come. However, to help with planning, Pauline Glover would like to hear from the parents of any Sunday club children who know their child will be there and would like to dress up.

MEMBERSHIP: an application for membership has been received from Stephen Boutell. If any member has any observations concerning this application, please talk to one of the pastors or elders.

CHRISTMAS CARDS: received to the

Church are displayed on the board next to the Christmas Tree.

THE BBC 2019 CALENDAR: is here! We have printed enough for everyone so please pick yours up. To cover costs, for those who are able we are suggesting a donation of £4.

FRANCIS & MARK: If you would like to contribute to a marriage gift for Mark & Izzy and a retirement gift for Francis please either make your donations to the church office or place in a clearly marked envelope in the collection.

Emergencies over Christmas: please contact the Church Manager or Elders if there is anything that requires urgent attention over the Christmas holidays.

TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP CAROLS

18th December at 2pm
You are all very welcome.

CHURCH OFFICE

The office is closed from midday 21st December until 9am on Wednesday 2nd January.

ADVENT PRAYERS

8am every Tuesday and Friday in advent at the Roman Catholic Church (no Friday early morning prayers during this time)

What's on this week

in addition to Caterpillar Pre-school (Monday & Tuesday)

Sunday, December 16th.

- 8am: **Breakfast** in the Manna House. ● 8.20am: **Pre-meeting Prayers** in the prayer room. ● 8.45am: **Chapel Gathering** with communion. ● 10am: **Refreshments** in the Manna House. ● 10.20am: **Pre-meeting Prayers** in the prayer room. ● 10.45am: **Chapel Gathering**. ● 6pm: **All Age Comedy**.

Monday, December 17th.

- 3.45-5.15pm: **Chosta** in the Youth Room.

Tuesday, December 18th.

- **8am: Advent Prayers** at the RC church. ● 9.15am: **Prayer-for-Healing Group** (prayer room). At 10.45am there will be prayer for all who come. ● 10.30am: **Walking Football** on the M.U.G.A (Battle Rec.). ● 2pm: **Tuesday Fellowship**. Carols & Readings.

Wednesday, December 19th.

- 6pm: **BBFC training** at Claverham. ● 7pm: **Battle Baptist Runners** meet at the church.

Thursday, December 20th.

- 9.30-10am: **prayer for Sunday gatherings** in the prayer room.

Friday, December 21st .

- **8am: Advent Prayers** at the RC church. ● 10.30am: **Coffee Club** in Youth Room. ● **1.00pm Office closes**.

Sunday, December 23rd.

- 10.00am: **Chapel Gathering**. ● 11am: **Refreshments** in the Manna House. ● 4pm: **Family Carol Service**.

Monday, December 24th.

- 8.00pm: **Communion** in the Chapel

Tuesday, December 25th.

- 10.00am: **Christmas Day Family Celebration** in the Chapel.

Sunday, December 30th.

- 10.00am: **Chapel Gathering** with Francis Willoughby.