

CharisMatters

‘Christian Beatles’ ?

Skip Heitzig, pastor of the 12,000-strong Calvary Chapel of Albuquerque, N.M., has always been an innovator, so when he announced that his newest outreach project was going to be a “redeemed” Beatles band, no one was shocked.

The name of the group is Sgt. Shepherd’s Lively Hearts Club Band. Heitzig’s vision was for it to play Beatles melodies (in addition to some original music), but with “redeemed” lyrics that successfully conveyed the love of Jesus Christ for the world in a very untraditional way.

“I wanted a group that has four guys in it, and the four guys play the exact instruments and the songs in the exact key and the exact part as the Beatles,” Heitzig said. “For example, if a guy is playing the John Lennon part, he should have a Rickenbacker guitar, and play rhythm guitar and sing John Lennon’s part in the key John sang it.”

The band’s first few concerts were a success. “It was lot of fun,” Heitzig said. But there’s more than just fun at a “Lively Hearts” concert. Heitzig told Charisma: “We wanted to show them that God will use anyone. A premise of His is that He uses the foolish and weak things of this world. This is something pretty foolish—Beatles songs ‘redeemed.’”

The band has performed across America in addition to venues in

India, Scotland and England. Heitzig said he doesn't have a "major vision" for the band, other than giving him and other band members additional opportunities to reach people for Jesus. "As long

as there are opportunities to do that we'll play anywhere."

Band members are Heitzig, Calvary assistant pastor Paul Scozzafava and church members Sandy Dunn and Ken Riley.

Scozzafava said the band operates under "parody" laws that allow them to perform Beatles tunes "live"...with different lyrics. No word yet on how the real Beatles feel about Sgt. Shepherd's Lively Hearts Club Band.

For additional information about the band, go to [www .](http://www.scozzafava.com), or call (505) 344-0880, extension 177.

—Jeremy Reynolds

Have Coffee With Frank Peretti

Renowned Christian fiction author Frank Peretti will be online for an exclusive one-hour chat with Charisma readers beginning at 9 p.m. EST on March 15. Peretti will discuss his new book, *The Wounded Spirit*, and will answer questions from his fans and critics. Logon and join the chat at www.charisma.com.

Muslims In Central Asia Turn to Jesus

A Muslim leader literally turned off the lights on an evangelism event held by Brent Regis in Kyrgyzstan, in central

Asia. But doing so, he unwittingly made true the statement—the darker the darkness, the brighter the Light.

During the service, which was led by Regis and others from his Virginia-based Gospel to All Nations ministry, the Muslim man stood up and shouted, “Deception, deception, deception!” After being escorted from the service the man pulled out all the wiring for electricity, leaving the meeting’s attendees in the dark.

The people weren’t fazed—they sat in the dark as Regis continued to preach the gospel. Amazingly, members of the Muslim leader’s same fundamentalist group sat in most of Regis’ meetings to hear the gospel. And Muslims asked Regis to preach in their mosque about Jesus and His healing power.

Regis’ central Asia campaign lasted several months, and hundreds of Muslims were led to the Lord. Many also were baptized after accepting Jesus as Savior. A November event had to be moved from an indoor facility to an outdoor stadium to accommodate all those who tried to attend. The crowds doubled after the move—despite cold, rain and snow.

“Are we crazy preaching to Muslims?” Regis posed. “Some may think so. We are on a road that few others are presently taking. But one thing is sure—we are compelled by the love of God.”

—Billy Bruce

American Bible Society Aims to Reach 25 Million

Tragedy has often visited his home. He lost his sight six years ago, four of his seven children died of measles, and a snakebite claimed the life of his wife. Yet, the man radiates with the joy of the Lord, and one of the greatest miracles in his life was the day the American Bible Society (ABS) gave him a Braille Bible and arranged for someone to teach him to use it.

When the ABS was founded, James Madison was president, and the printed Word of God was a precious and somewhat rare treasure. The year was 1816.

Since 1816, more than 6 billion Bibles have been distributed. As specialized needs arose, the ABS has responded with thousands of language translations, Braille Bibles, Bibles on tape, special selections for servicemen, battered women, and teen-agers, as well as literacy projects.

This year, ABS—headquartered on Broadway in New York City—has a new world-impacting strategy. The Crusade of Light 2001 is an aggressive campaign to reach 25 million people with the gospel. The project, which costs \$20 million, will help ABS reach its goal to give everyone access to the Bible in their own language.

Tinkamayire's story is just one example of how one Bible can transform a life. To learn more about the Crusade of Light, e-mail CRUSADE-OF-LIGHT@ or call toll-free (866) 89-LIGHT. —Mary Hutchinson

Christmas Miracle In Bethlehem?

Christmas 2000 was supposed to have set new records for crowds in the holy city of Bethlehem, where thousands of visitors from around the world were expected to take part in the millennial anniversary of Jesus Christ's birth.

But several months of violence in the Palestinian town in Israel's West Bank just south of Jerusalem drove away visitors, and the only record set was for the lowest number of celebrants ever in Manger Square on Christmas Day.

From looking at the photograph above, however, which was taken on Christmas Eve 2000, it appears that God was making sure the world knew He had not forsaken the town of the Savior's birth.

A rainbow appeared over Jerusalem and the wilderness of Judea, and was photographed from the vantage point of the road in Bethlehem that leads to the Church of the Nativity, just before visitors turn south to Manger Square.

The rainbow appears to bring the reminder that despite what we see transpiring on earth, God has promised that in the end there will be peace on earth and goodwill toward all men.
—Billy Bruce

THE MARCH LIST

1. No. 1 Christian hardback: The Prayer of Jabez, Bruce Wilkinson (Multnomah)
2. No. 1 paperback: The Power of a Praying Wife, Stormie Omartian

(Harvest House)

3. No. 1 fiction book: Left Behind, Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins
(Tyndale)

4. No. 1 CD: WoW 2001, various artists (Sparrow)