

St James Church Magazine



June - August 2015 Edition

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Living with God through...

A recent series of sermons and homegroup notes have probably been challenging for all of us. In the real world how does God make himself known? What difference does it make to be a Christian? How should we regard and care for one another when life is hard in various ways?

We have looked at issues such as divorce, loneliness, old age, family tensions... and there are so many others which daily confront us such as constant busyness, caring for family members old and young, special needs, illnesses, rejection, abuse... the list is very long.

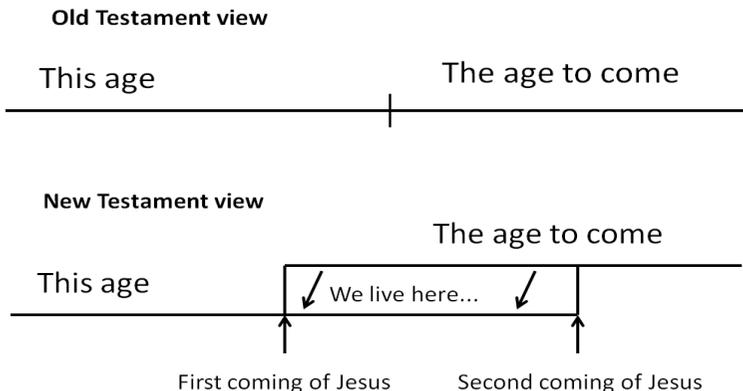
Sometimes things are the result of people's own choices; sometimes they are the result of other people's choices; sometimes they just happen. I am reminded of some lines in an old hymn where the writer (Lewis Hensley) asks:

'Where is thy reign of peace, and purity and love? When shall all hatred cease as in the realms above?'

'Men scorn thy sacred name and wolves devour thy fold. By many deeds of shame we learn that love grows cold'

Echoing thoughts in the psalms as well as Our Lord's own words the hymn writer prays *'Thy kingdom come, O God'*.

I came across these pictures in the Alpha Course recently. They help us to understand how God relates to the real world in which we currently live:



We inhabit the uncomfortable place where 'this age' is still very much a reality, with all its fallenness and imperfections, human disobedience and the consequences of evil. However 'the age to come' has begun, so God is in the process of breaking through and urging us on. We (the Christian church) are his only agents in his mission of bringing 'the age to come' fully into being. We need to keep in mind this bigger picture of history when we are thinking about living with all the issues which 'this age' throws up.

Sin – separation from God – is always a struggle for us and we need constantly to turn back and rely on Christ's saving work on the cross. Doing so, we are then (as St Paul urges) to set our eyes on the things that are above, and get on with living real life in the light of God's presence. How would Jesus treat those who are suffering? Or divorced... offenders... infirm... outcast... lonely... too busy... rejected...?

It was messy for him, and it will be messy for us too. But it is God's only plan for the world, and we are hugely privileged to be living as his agents. We need each other in the task!

God bless,
Tim



Thinking differently about poverty

As I look forward with great anticipation to my first trip to Zambia as Bishop of Bath and Wells, I am aware that I am doing so with a touch more insight than I had when this visit was first put in my diary. A week 'Living Below the Line' for Bath-based charity 'Send a Cow' and 'Sharing the load' for Christian Aid Week can never replicate the challenges faced by those living in poverty in Zambia or other parts of the developing world but it can bring understanding.

It was certainly more than a publicity stunt or 'playing at being poor' which were just some of the criticisms levied at those taking part. Of course, I was not struggling around Wells with my bundle of firewood worried about being attacked by hyenas – just injuring innocent shoppers – and I knew my five days of hunger living on £1 a day would come to an end, but they were still a challenge.

They made me think differently about what living in extreme poverty really means and to question the choices we make every day. I hope I managed to share that message to others and encouraged everyone to play their part in addressing this global issue.

As we continue to strengthen ties of companionship and celebrate the richness and diversity of our global faith with the vital Christian community in Zambia this summer, I will be doing so in the knowledge that it is a country in which the vast majority live in increasing poverty. It is also, however, a country that is rich in terms of its people and we have much to learn from each other. The Zambian people choose to face the country's challenges with vitality, patience and tolerance and with only a limited number of priests the lay population chooses to take on a major role in the church that is much valued.

In our modern, busy lives we are faced with a myriad of choices every day and it is not easy to take the time to look beyond our personal, parish or national boundaries. Being challenged to do so through my recent experiences was a sobering and humbling experience, and the benefits ripple close to home as well as in Africa.

Bishop Peter

The Open Door

Local churches have been supporting people without homes for over 20 years and in 1996 they set up a charity The Open Door project to provide 'food runs' in local church halls. In 2000 Open Door moved to a small terrace house where meals were provided for people who were sleeping on the streets.

Following a survey called 'in my wildest dreams...' the churches wanted a centre which offered laundry and shower facilities, signposting services for homeless people and individual support. This vision was achieved in 2008 when our present centre opened in Mount Street by 'Taunton Christians Together'.

Each day the centre welcomes a new guest and in a year over 300 people will have been supported by Open Door. The centre is run by a manager and a project worker and a large team of volunteers who provide meals, sort clothes stores, help with cleaning laundry and administrative tasks. They also provide individual support to people using the centre. 15-20 guests visit the centre on a typical day. People experience homelessness because of a variety of challenges they have faced in their lives. These problems can be exacerbated by family breakup, loss of employment, overuse of alcohol, taking substances or suffering from mental health problems. Usually there is more than one factor which has led to their present situation. Our clients are vulnerable to physical attacks when they are sleeping rough or in their tents, their health is often poor and the risks they face are reflected in the high mortality rate for rough sleepers. Sadly four people from the rough sleeping community have died in Taunton over the last year.

With the support of many volunteers from local churches we are able to help people find accommodation and, in some cases, employment. The guests at Open Door receive invaluable help from Rethink, Taunton Association for the homeless and Taunton Deane Council.



The centre is now running 'Do More' sessions where we help our guests move forward in their lives – such as joining a training course, managing their use of alcohol or substances, finding help for their mental health problems.

If you would like to visit our centre or become a volunteer please contact our manager Mark on 01823 271996. (www.tauntonopendoor.org.uk) Volunteers help with cooking, cleaning, client support, IT and stores.

Jonathan Sladden

2 years ago at The Open Door advertised in church newsletters for new trustees. Three of us from different churches in Taunton were appointed to the board. The retiring trustees wanted the charity to continue be run by practising Christians.

Homelessness has many faces. Thomas Ganter won the 2014 BP Portrait Award with 'Man with a Plaid Blanket'. It is a striking picture of a homeless car-windscreen cleaner which shows dignity and respect.

BEHIND THE SCENESInside the Crèche

One of the features that you notice on coming into St. James is the Crèche, with its bright posters, book box and on a Sunday morning lots of (quiet) toys and most importantly families able to be involved in our morning worship.

In order for this to happen there needs to be a team of willing helpers who welcome little ones and their families into the Crèche, ensure that the equipment is brought out from the porch cupboard, that there is plenty of activities and toys, that the area is a safe place and for the duration of the service keep their eyes open (and one in the back of their head) to ensure everyone is happy and catered for.



There are seven members of the team, which is organised by Margaret Jones; Sue Carpenter, Samantha Luke,(both pictured here) Marilyn Gibson, Hilary Bromley, Jane McCallum and Mary Bambridge.

It's not just on a Sunday that the Crèche area is used, The creche area is also used on a Wednesday morning for the Praise'N'Play Service. A weekly meeting for parents and carers and pre-school children. Singing, Bible stories, crafts and play are enjoyed by all. Details from Kate Taylor.

There are lots of behind the scenes things that the team have to be aware of, the toys have to be kept hygienic, the sofas, very popular with all, cleaned, books inspected and kept up to date and most importantly that families feel welcomed and part of our worship. All the crèche team are safely recruited and subject to DBS checks. Anyone interested in helping please see Kate or Margaret.



Sunday Club and Messy Church

“There are groups for children in the hall”. An announcement we hear in church on second, third and fourth Sundays. I wonder if you have ever asked “What happens in the hall?”

On the second and fourth Sunday the children meet in three age groups. On a third Sunday they meet together for Messy Church.

Before each term begins a planning meeting is held. The themes are chosen and the team of volunteers offer to plan and deliver the teaching materials.

The sessions are Bible based, fun, sometimes noisy, Messy, lively and creative.

Over recent months the number of children attending on a Sunday has increased. We have been blessed with new volunteers which has enabled the church to continue to meet the needs of children aged 3-12 years.

Seeing the children return to church after a session, keen ‘to show and tell’ their parent/carers is rewarding and joyous.

On 5th July All Age Worship will be led by our young people. It will be a celebration of themes covered this term. Each child will receive a book to remind them that they are part of our church family. Please remember the children, their families and the volunteers in your prayers.

With blessings,
Kate Taylor.

Alpha Course – Spring 2015

The result of much prayer brought 26 people to the Alpha course; this included those church members who brought along a friend and those involved in delivering the course. Praise God!

For the first time the course was held in the church (north aisle) which proved both practical and attractive as a venue, further enhanced by screening and soft lighting. The meals (an essential element in all outreach events!) were mouth-watering, being provided by a number of different church members, but all attendees were keen to hear the talk that followed.

The talks were delivered either verbally (normally by Tim) or via the Alpha videos, as always they were interesting and challenging covering many subjects such as “why did Jesus die?” and “what does the Holy Spirit do”. But the heart of Alpha is the discussions that follow the talks, where there is plenty of opportunity to question what the talk has highlighted or indeed any question that attendees want answered. Another first for St James was that the large number attending produced the need for two discussion groups, giving all a relatively intimate group with time to air any concerns or deep questions. Much prayer is needed to support the team answering often sensitive and challenging questions.

Alpha includes one full day together and this was held at Broomfield village hall, and the more complex subject of the Holy Spirit is discussed. It was a great day, well received by all. As always not everyone who started the course attended every session, and some chose not to complete. Absolutely essential is this openness on the course; whilst our hope is that all will attend every week, no-one is asked to do or say anything they do not feel comfortable doing. So most completed the course, all will have learnt. For some it was a “very useful refresher” and others it was a “first step”; our prayer for all is that they were advanced along their faith journey, be that the first of many steps or the reaffirming of our certain hope in the Lord Jesus.

God willing, we will be running another Alpha course in the autumn, on Tuesday evenings commencing with the introduction evening 8th September – put the date in your diary!

Roger Fenton

THE 52ND PARISH RAMBLE



A gloriously sunny Bank Holiday Monday saw 38 feet tramping out onto the Quantocks for the annual ramble – 30 human feet plus



those belonging to Bramble and Missie (who walked at least three time as far as everyone else).



It was so good to be able to enjoy God's creation together, not to mention the cream tea afterwards!

An Evening with George Carey

Its not often we have a former Archbishop coming to speak at St. James. This occasion promises to be a very interesting one. Lord Carey is an international figure of wide repute and in retirement continues to have a busy and active Christian ministry. His primary interests are in education, development and a continuing engagement in public life through writing, lectures and debate in the House of Lords. Together with his wife Eileen, he continues to serve churches and many charitable interests.



George Carey was born in 1935 in the East End of London, the son of a hospital porter. He left school at 15 and began working at the London Electricity Board as an office boy, and also served with the Royal Air Force in Iraq during the fifties.

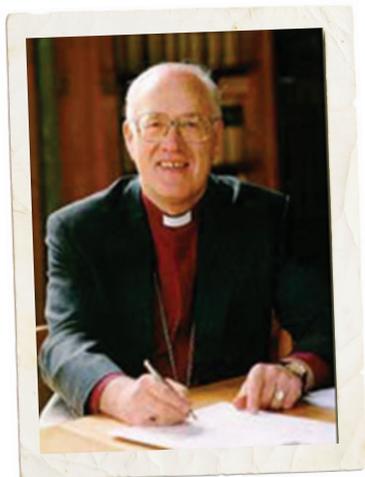
By the time he was twenty, he had decided he wanted to be ordained as a minister into the Church of England. He served as a curate in Islington, London and during this time studied and obtained further academic degrees including a doctorate. He then taught at two Colleges before becoming a parish priest at St. Nicholas' Durham. In 1982 he became Principal of Trinity Theological College in Bristol and five years later Bishop of Bath and Wells. In 1991 he was invited to take up the post of 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury to serve 80 million Anglicans around the world until his retirement in 2002.

On retiring he was made a life peer. He and Eileen are Vice Presidents of Tearfund, Patrons of The Foundation of Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East, which supports the work of Canon Andrew White. Lord Carey is also Chair and co-Founder with Jim Wolfensohn, former President of the World Bank, of the World Faiths Development Dialogue.

He was until recently Chancellor of the University of Gloucestershire and President of the London School of Theology. In 2010 he stepped down from the Foundation Board of the World Economic Forum and from being Co-Chair of the Council of 100, which seeks to bridge the gulf between the West and Islamic worlds.

He is also President of the United Church Schools Trust and United Learning, a Group of 46 schools, both State and Independent.

(Information from Lord Carey's Official Website)



*An Evening
with...*

Archbishop George Carey

Former Archbishop of Canterbury

HOPE FOR PRESENT & FUTURE?

Thurs 18th June 2015
St James Church, Taunton

**Tickets 2
for £10**

**Commencing with
a Buffet Supper at 7pm**



**St James
Church**
TAUNTON

This is an opportunity for you to invite
someone to this very special evening.

"Come with me"



Letter from

AUSTRALIA

Catharine Newton writes
from Down Under

Dear Friends,

Finally I get to write for the church mag. I have had to move 10,000 miles to give me something worth writing about, but no sacrifice is too great. So where shall I start? Not with the chaos of the pack up, trying to keep apart what we needed for our first few months and stop it getting sucked into the container by the removers. Not with the tears of Jan 2nd as we said our farewells to close family, Sam and the dog. No, we shall start with the site of Adelaide spread out before us as we came into land - sea, hills and the Oval all displayed in glorious technicolour.



Adelaide is Australia's hidden gem. It won't be on many people's to do list for Oz but there are many reasons why it made it on to The Times top 50 overseas places to live this year. It is an elegant, well planned city - with large parkland areas surrounding a compact City Centre. The River Torrens meanders from the Hills down to the sea right

through the centre and the port and the beaches are just beyond. It was once billed as the City of Churches, but more recently the logo on the car number plates is 'Festival City'. During Mad March it's arts festival and fringe is second only to Edinburgh's in size. It has a Mediterranean climate and is supposed to be the driest city in the driest state in the driest continent in the world if you can make sense of that. In practical terms that means lots of 40+ temps in summer and no snow in winter. It is famed for it's winemaking - the Barossa and Clare Valleys are just to the north and McClaren Vale is just to the south. It has museums, art galleries, botanical gardens, fabulous restaurants and a wonderful central food market.



We live in a leafy suburb called Mitcham (yes named for the town in Surrey). The land here is just starting to rise up into the hills so we have good views from the school grounds over the city to the sea. There is a Mitcham historic trail that boasts proudly of its heritage and guides you round the buildings of note. By English standards they are simply upstarts but here they rank quite highly, 1850 is ancient history. Brown Hill Creek runs through the centre of the suburb. Our dog Frankie finds it a poor substitute for the Rivers Holford and Barle but does her best. At least it has water in now which is more than can be said for it when we arrived. From the house we can climb Brown Hill and see over the whole city. It is a similar height to the Quantock escarpment but with far less freedom to roam. Australians seem to love their private property signs.



We live in a typically Australian single story building with a large deck on the front. We are surrounded by trees which house large quantities of brightly coloured, screechy, exotic looking birds. An ornithologist's delight. The cockatoos are constantly bombarding us with bits of pine cone, the kookaburras provide a jungle soundtrack and the rosellas dazzle with their colour. There is lots of other wild life too. We don't get koalas in the garden but walk ten minutes and you will be sure to find one. We have had a dead possum in the carport, though. Rumour has it that there was a kangaroo on the school playing fields last year but we have yet to spot one in the wild. John and I did see two brown snakes on a recent walk. They are one of the most venomous snakes in the world. We gave them a wide birth. We haven't been troubled by the spiders yet, maybe that joy awaits.

So those are the surroundings - but what of life? Well, it is not so very different. Yes, a new school and new faces and new friends. But the same warm welcome, similar routines, same concerns among the locals (traffic - what traffic? - they have never had to get into Taunton town centre in the rush hour....). However, more haggis and bagpipes than I expected. The school is very keen on its Scottish heritage and has a full pipe band and serves up the Robbie Burns haggis ode on a regular basis. In two days time we are heading out to visit our Head girl and her parents near Broken Hill in the outback. They run a small sheep farm of just44,000 hectares....they travel around it by plane. It is 26 km from a tarmac road, so we shall be putting our new 4WD through it's paces. We shall camp out in their sheep shearer quarters and cook on the open fire. Not quite like the homes of our old Somerset pupils!

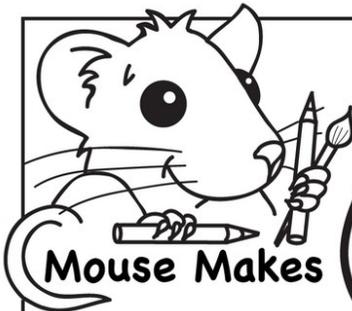


When in church we could be right back in the UK. We are actually in Westbourne Park Uniting church. First up is the music group leading us in a song or two, then the kids spot, then the sermon and the prayers and the notices. Sound familiar? The 9.15 start is a bit of a shocker but there are pluses when you are done and dusted by 10.30! We are keeping our heads down for the moment, although I notice that the pastor remembered my name last week - I'm trying not to make eye contact yet or that'll be me signed up for coffee rota or worse and don't anyone mention a panto.....

So 4 months down and we are all still smiling. The container finally arrived, so the pictures are up and the place suddenly feels like home. Maddy and

Will have made friends and started to get to grips with a very different school curriculum. John has made a few speeches and unearthed a heap of things to do but his colleagues seem happy to be swept along by his enthusiasm. Sam has come and gone over Easter and we have Ellie here for the moment fresh from her time as a chalet girl in the Alps. I am still a lady of leisure, for the moment, but keeping busy entertaining staff and pupils.

I think the next few years will be a grand adventure. We shall enjoy the weather, the beaches, travel to other parts of Australia and beyond and the easy parking. We shall miss the Quantocks and castles and thatch and pubs, not to mention family and friends. It goes without saying that if you are passing by, then there is a bed available. Put Adelaide on your Oz list to do - it will not disappoint!



Mouse Makes

What happened when the Holy Spirit came at PENTECOST?

READ Acts 2:1-41



HOLY SPIRIT is with us and in us
John 14:16-17

HOLY SPIRIT teaches us about God
John 14:26

There was a sound like a blowing of a violent wind... and what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each one of them.

HOLY SPIRIT helps us to pray
Romans 8:26-27

HOLY SPIRIT helps us to speak about God
Acts 1:8

BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

EPHESIANS 5:18

How many believers were baptised that day?

Colour the flames, cut out and tie together to make a Pentecost mobile.

Healing of the lame man

A Bible Sketchbook Bible Study to go with the May 2015 Bible Sketchbook: “In the name of Jesus Christ...WALK!!”

You'll need: a Bible, the May 2015 Bible Sketchbook, these notes...and some people!

Photocopies for group discussion can be made if wished. It can be a great help to start by giving thanks to God in prayer, reading a psalm or singing some worship songs.

- 1) Read Acts 3: 1-9: A man crippled from birth is healed. What did the man do and how did Peter respond?
- 2) What connection if any do you think this has with the events of Acts 2? Look especially at Acts 2: 4.
- 3) Read Acts 2:19: Is this promise just for New Testament times?
- 4) Read Luke 9: 1-2 Jesus sends out the 12 disciples. What does he give them?
- 5) Compare this with Luke 10: 1-2 and verse 9. Should we expect Jesus to send us out and equip us in the same way today?
- 6) Look at Matthew 28: 18-20. Discuss the things that Jesus authorises his followers to do. Look at verse 20: does this include the things mentioned in Luke 9: 1-2?
- 7) Turn back to Acts 3: 11-16. Discuss the response by the local people. Would people today respond like this?
- 8) Focus on Acts 3:16. Discuss what is so special about the name of Jesus and faith through him?
- 9) Read verse 19 and 20. Discuss in verse 19 what “repent” means to you today. What is promised in verse 20 if we do this?
- 10) Give time for prayer and a chance to receive any of the promises given in these verses.**

In the name
of Jesus
Christ.....

WALK!!

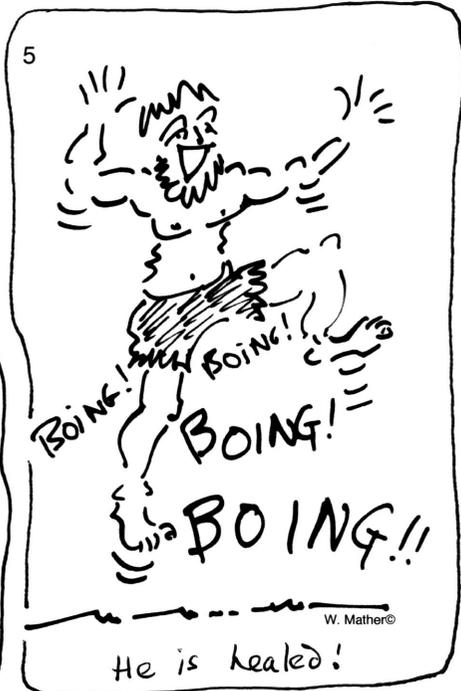


Do you ever think nobody cares? Well think about that man - crippled from birth - who every day was put by a gate in Jerusalem. All he could do was beg. He asked Peter and John for help. Peter said they didn't have any money, **"But what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."** He helped him up and at once the man was healed! He stood up and went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God - Boing! Boing! BOING!

People recognised him and were all filled with wonder and amazement.

This was the healing power of Jesus. So don't give up! Because in the power of the Holy Spirit and with all the marvels of modern medicine, Jesus still heals today.

Read more in Acts 3: 1-9



He is healed!

W. Mather©



GIDEON INTERNATIONAL

By Keith Bromley



GIDEON
INTERNATIONAL

WHO ARE THE GIDEONS?

Gideons are Christian and professional men. They are members of a local church and where possible work in partnership with their wives. They communicate their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ through personal testimony and by presenting or placing copies of God's word, the Bible.

WHAT DO THEY DO AND WHERE?

Gideons International *places* copies of God's word in many locations, such as hotels, prisons, hospitals, hospices, doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms and residential homes for the elderly. They also *present* copies to nurses, members of the police, fire and ambulance services, civic dignitaries, MPs, members of the Royal Family, and to most secondary school pupils. This ministry is carried out in 249 countries of the world. Gideons International is distributing the word of God in about seventy languages at the staggering rate of one million copies every 5 days, that's 2 every tick of the clock. The local Taunton & Bridgewater Gideon Branch places about 2,800 Scriptures each year.

WHY DISTRIBUTE GOD'S WORD?

The Bible deals with every experience in the life of men and women. It gives advice, help, instruction, warning, comfort, hope, correction, direction, predictions and promises. It is a book which is alive. Gideons believe its words are for now and that is why they distribute it.

HOW DID IT ALL START?

The ministry started in the USA in 1899 with just three men. One of them maintained a lifelong habit of reading the Bible every day and this was a vital factor in the establishment of the Association. The work in the British Isles commenced in 1949.

HOW IS THE WORK SUPPORTED?

The Gideons International is interdenominational. As an arm of the Church each congregation relies on the help of church congregations, fellowships and individual Christians in their area to support the work through prayer and giving.



WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

Gideons, their wives, the Christian community, Friends of the Gideons, the Living Memorial Bible Plan and legacies. *Every copy of God's word distributed by the Gideons is given without charge to the recipient.* Every penny, which is given to the Gideons, is used solely for the purchase and distribution of Scriptures. Thanks are due to all at St James who give generously with "mite phiats" and in other ways.



IS IT WORTH IT?

We believe so. Let the experiences of God's love through reading a Bible or New Testament presented by The Gideons speak for themselves.

- † *"After receiving a Gideon Testament (in prison), I realised that it was the Lord Jesus beginning to shape my life for me, and He had given me forgiveness of my sins. It has given me a completely different outlook on life, knowing that the Lord Jesus loves and cares for me."*
- † *"My brother was given a Gideon Testament at school almost twenty years ago and it was then put in a box and stored in the loft with other books that we no longer read. Ten years later we were cleaning out the loft and I found that New Testament which I started to read. I quickly realised that the things it said were relevant to me and will always be grateful to The Gideons for introducing me to Jesus...."*
- † *When I was on the police force, The Gideons came and gave out Testaments. I took one and began to read it. That book changed my life."*
- † *Prior to being sent to prison, I never had cause to read the Bible or even wonder about God's existence. However, after being given a Gideon Bible in prison, in a moment of boredom I picked it up and started to read it. I have now found a new experience in life and one which I find deeply moving and satisfying."*
- † *I noticed a Bible on the dressing table in the hotel. I was in such despair I looked in 'Where to Find Help and When.' To cut a long story short, I found help and now am a Christian."*



If you wish to support the work of The Gideons, please contact Keith Bromley at St James

Callington Community Gospel Choir

In May we were privileged to have a visit from the Callington Community Gospel choir who gave a memorial concert for Paul Pinfold, who died unexpectedly last year. The Concert was arranged by his wife Sandra, with donations going to Diabetes UK.



It was a very joyful evening, and the singing nearly raised the roof. About 150 people attended many of whom had known Paul as a valued friend, family member or colleague.

The choir was formed in 2005 by Steve Dawe, following the death of his father. It now has about 50 members who practice together weekly at St. Mary's Church, Callington, although not all are church members. The choir travel all over the South West and beyond and it is now one of the largest gospel choirs in the country. Their love of singing and the joyful exuberant music was very evident. Especially memorable was Kris singing with the choir as a tribute to his Dad, Paul. Thank you to the Choir and Sandra.

St James Church and School

Commemorate WW1

Despite it being half term thirteen pupils from St. James School came to take part in the concert to commemorate the centenary of World War One. The choir worked on songs from the World War as part of the musical repertoire of the concert and joined Chris Doyle and Laura Barnett to lead the audience in raising the roof. Grateful thanks go to Fiona O'Connor from the school and Rob Rawle for enabling this joint venture to take place.

The concert arose from the work of the Taunton St. James War Memorial Project Team, to remember the lives of the men from the parish who lost their lives in the war and those who returned having suffered the traumas of the battlefield. In



1919 the church proposed that the organ should be refurbished as part of the tribute to the men.



The Organ, built in the nineteenth century, and very recently re-tuned, was a central part of the concert which included pieces by Rawsthorn, Talben-Bell and Elgar. Solo performance by Chris Doyle and Laura Barnett demonstrated their superb voice range, giving voice to both the pathos and humour of the time.



Two family members of one of our men from the memorial, Sherrie and Sharon, read from family correspondence. Letters and poetry, one read by Summer, a pupil from St James School helped demonstrate the complexities of emotions and the importance of family, friends and sweethearts when faced with the harsh realities of war and death.

After the concert there was opportunity to view the exhibition and enjoy tea and cake, which disappeared rapidly.



Thanks are due to so many people for enabling this event to take place, this includes the choir from St. James School, the technical team, Members of the Hartnell family, the musicians and singers, the cake bakers, the Project Team and everyone who came to support the event. To date over £400 has been raised for the work of the Royal British Legion, towards their work of supporting servicemen and their families in the aftermath of conflicts.

PCC Round-up

Here's a summary of the main things the Parochial Church Council looked at in its March and May meetings, plus a much abbreviated account of proceedings at the Church Annual Meeting in April.

Annual Church Meeting, 13 April 2015

Ruth Stevens and Stan Wojcik were elected as churchwardens, and the following were elected to the PCC: Ruth Dunn, Jesse Eveleigh, Sheila Marlow, Michelle Owen, Bernice Stocks (all standing for the first time) and Jenny Wakefield (re-elected). At the short PCC meeting which followed, Richard Sainsbury was co-opted in his role as Treasurer, and Joyce Kirk in her role as Associate Warden. Thanks were expressed to Nigel Bright, Beccy Fox, Liz Sykes and Janet Tall who were standing down from PCC, and to Mandy Slade who had finished her time as a hard-working churchwarden.

Richard Sainsbury presented the accounts for 2014. There was a small surplus of £3,422 on normal activities, but we drew £37,034 from the Projects Fund to pay for the refurbishment of the hall. Stewardship income (including Gift Aid) was £9,560 up on 2013.

Tim Jones reviewed how much has been achieved in the last five years, using the "to do" list from his 2010 presentation. There have been many areas of growth and development, resulting in a gradual increase in numbers at the rate of about six (net) per year. We need to keep looking outwards. In 2010 we asked what it is like for someone new to church, and now we are also becoming aware of the potential barriers that put people off coming in the first place. This is part of the thinking that the PCC is developing.

St James Debt Advice

Graham Reid and his team continue to work through the mound of paperwork involved in converting SJDA to a separate town-wide charity and to register it with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The PCC monitors the situation, and has advised on the need to ensure that trustees are Christian, and that the recruitment procedure for people from other churches is robust regarding safeguarding. St James will continue to fund the service; it is too early to say how much financial support will come from other churches. Meanwhile, the team continues to support its clients.

Projects

The appeal for the hall chairs has raised £4,000 (including Gift Aid). The PCC decided to purchase all 130 chairs now, and make a further final appeal when they arrive.

Permission has been granted by the diocese for the replacement of the servery. We are arranging a meeting with the contractor, after which we will have a better idea of when they can do the work.

The first part of the video distribution system is in place and working (with the existing screens), and we are now working on a technical issue regarding the screens for the pillars.

A portable keyboard is being purchased for the Music Team to enable them to provide greater consistency in morning services and to support outside events (such as the cricket club service).

Repairs, repairs

The PCC approved two day's work to rectify a number of issues with the organ which have accumulated over the years. A report will be produced on what further work (and costs) could be expected.

The initial feedback from the Quinquennial Inspection of the church building indicates that more work is needed to remove cement pointing from much of the tower.

A further inspection of the boilers has indicated that they need to be replaced this year. The first quotation indicates a cost of £22,000.

Barriers to Coming to Church

An important discussion has begun at PCC about identifying the barriers that people perceive as stopping them from joining a church. A group will look at the matter and identify things we can do practically. If you have views on this subject, please talk to the Outreach Coordinators, Roger Fenton and Jenny Wakefield.

Toilet Twinning

And finally, we are now participating in Tear Fund's "Toilet Twinning" scheme. Signs will appear shortly in each toilet to explain what twinning is about, and these should also provide a taking point when conversing with visitors to the church and halls.

The latest full PCC minutes are displayed near the coffee area. MW

NEWSLETTER CONTACTS LIST

Contacts for Pastoral Matters

Vicar: Rev. Tim Jones 01823 333194 e-mail: timjones@tesco.net

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Children and young People's Coordinator - Kate Taylor 01823 619739
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Magazine Editor - Andrew Slade 01823 259440 e-mail: 3waypersonalprint@gmail.com

Churchwardens - Stan Wojcik 01823 443287 / Ruth Stevens 01823 972838

HOME GROUPS

Tuesday

10:30 am 34 Dunkleys Way (Contact Jean Jarrett 288144)

7:30 pm 25 Whitmore Road (Contact Kathryn Clarke 283691)

Wednesday

2:30 pm 15 Barrington Close Fortnightly (Contact Ken Jamieson 289367)

7:30 pm 13 Gyffarde Street

(Contact Mark Stevens 972838; hosts Bethan and Tim Baigent 271655)

7:30 pm 28 Comeytrowe Lane

(Contact Steve Bradford 337690; hosts Wakefields 277318)

7:30 pm Killams Group (Contact Les Andrews 254344)

7:45 pm 42 Ashley Road (Contact Richard Sainsbury 284688)

8:00 pm Hesperia The Avenue (Contact Richard Carpenter 277916)

8:00 pm North Taunton (Contact Mark Johnson 07796525094)

Thursday

2:30 pm 27 Priorswood Road (Contact Kay Seed 271858; host Sue Collard 271858)

7:30 pm 69 Richmond Road Womens' Group (Contact Margaret Jones 333194)

7:30 pm Gable Cottage, West Lyng (Contact Geoff Treasure 490458)

7:30 pm 94 Sherford Road (Contact Andy Hall 274656)

8:00 pm 12 The Avenue (Contact Sue Doyle 271223; host Annie Reid 07812 130619)

OTHER GROUPS

- Mondays Parent and Toddlers Group 10am-11.30am in the Church Hall
Contact Kate Taylor (619739)
- Tuesdays Bell ringing (alternate weeks) Contact Marian Gentile (275278)
- Wednesdays Art Group in the Church Hall Contact Church Office (272931)
- Praise and Play in the Church 10am - 11am - for pre-school children
and their parents/ carers every Wednesday.
Contact Kate Taylor (619739)
- Thursdays Thursday Fellowship (first Thursday of the month)
in the Church Hall Contact Vicky Dykes (282507)



The St. James Art Group are planning to hold an auction of paintings at the end of June to raise funds for the St. James chair appeal.

There will be a variety of paintings and drawings ranging in size and style

If you would like to consider purchasing a painting there will be an opportunity to view the them via a power point that is being prepared by Joe Gentile and bids can be made.

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The Next Newsletter is due out on 1st September. All entries for this Newsletter must be submitted by 31st July. All entries are at the discretion of the Editorial team and the space available.