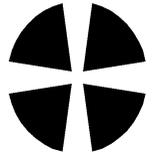




**The Methodist Church / The United Reformed
Church**

**THE GROVE, ILKLEY
Telephone: 01943 603209
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January 2010

**WIDER
HORIZONS**

January 2010

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year!

One of the things that has impressed me about Christchurch is the high profile of the Bible in the church's life. The availability of Bibles in worship, the strong desire for Biblical study within House-groups and Online groups, and sheer knowledge and faithfulness to scripture found in many church members. I am impressed!

However, the Bible is not an easy book to read, many find it confusing and contradictory, and to many people, the Old Testament remains confusing and difficult. Many Christians have strong convictions about the Bible as the word of God, others read it with equal conviction, but regard it as scripture in different ways. I am very conscious myself that as a Christian it is both a love and a duty to encounter the Bible and be growing in my knowledge of it, my understanding of it, and my encounter with the living God I find witnessed to in it.

So I hope in a few ways that 2010 may be a year in which we continue to encounter the Bible:

In some of the evening services I lead we shall spend rather less time in 'traditional' worship, and rather more time thinking about ways to read the Bible, with particular (though not exclusive) reference to the Old Testament; some teaching, some provocation of thought, and some time to respond and share. (*These will be on the evenings of 3rd and 17th January, and 7th February*).

I am also hoping we can organise a Walk Thru The Bible seminar in the autumn, which is a brilliant day spent putting the whole of the (hopefully) Old Testament into perspective, and joining up all the bits we know into an easily remembered whole.

Meanwhile -

My top tips for reading the Bible:

1. Read it in big chunks, don't always worry about detail.
It's a book full of stories to remember.
2. Don't start at the beginning and try to get to the end!
If you've never read it before, start with the gospel of Mark.

May it be a good and Biblical year for us all,

God bless,

Your Minister and Friend,

Rob

PS

At the request of the Pastoral Committee I have made myself available in Vestry Hours for the last two months—one hour a week at varying times. No-one has taken me up on these times, so I think I won't offer any more for now.

However, I am always available by phone, and am more than willing to meet you at church, in your own home, or by another arrangement. If you make an arrangement with me on Sunday please make sure I write it down, and beware, e-mails aren't answered as quickly as phone messages!

A cheque for £163.51 was sent to **Manorlands Hospice** as the result of a collection taken at the recent Thanksgiving and Remembrance Service at Christchurch on 8th November. Sue Ryder Care has acknowledged our donation: "It will help our healthcare teams to continue to provide care for people with complex illnesses and their families."

Website Updates

1. A screenshot of our church website will be appearing in adverts in Christianity magazine (and some others) in January in an advert for Church Edit, the company who host the site. Fame at last!!
2. Our website now has a new "search" facility. Do visit and try it out.
3. By Christmas we hope to have the new photographs, taken by Alison Frost, up on the website - I'll alert you via the Weekly Notices.



steve amos (for the Web Team)

THE MATUGGA CHALLENGE

How amazing! In little over three months we have raised more than the target of £8,000 in response to ***The Mutugga Challenge***. The new boys' dormitory at the Revival Christian Centre in Matugga, Uganda, is almost finished. The boys will be occupying it at the beginning of their new term, thanks to the efforts of so many members of Christchurch.

News of the final amount collected will be published in next month's Wider Horizons, but at this stage, on behalf of members of the World Mission and Society Committee, I offer a heartfelt thank you for the individual donations and the fund raising efforts which so many of you have supported.

Rita Armitage

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

The most direct way to others is always through prayer.
Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)

If you would like to suggest a quote (*topical, classical, theological, literary, amusing*) please submit it to the Editors for their consideration and supply a source or acknowledgement for the quote.

A BIG THANK YOU

to all those who ordered from the Christmas catalogue.



The total value of orders placed reached £1278 . Terrific!

Please note that there will be no Fairtrade Stall in January but it will be business as usual on the first Sunday of each month from February onwards.

We do make a small profit on what we sell at our stall. This amount accumulates over the year and is then donated to a nominated charity. Towards the end of last year we received Church Council approval to donate £300 to MySmallHelp, a charity run locally by Leander Hollings. MySmallHelp was originally established to provide education for children at the Marybert Orphanage in Nepal but has widened its scope to support the construction of playgrounds for children in Africa and is now also working with FairMail in Peru.

So you see

BUYING FAIRTRADE AT CHRISTCHURCH MAKES A DOUBLE DIFFERENCE TO LIVES

enhancing the lives of producers and their families
and supporting other charities with a similar ethos.

Please continue to support our stall in the Coffee Centre on the first Sunday of each month. We are always set up by 9.50 am and would be pleased to see you either between the morning services or after the 10.30 service.

Fairtrade fortnight in 2010 is from 22 February to 7 March. To raise awareness, our stall will be set up in the foyer on two Saturday mornings, 27 February and 6 March. Do you remember recording your banana-eating habits last year? Well, this year the emphasis is on "The Big Swap", encouraging people to swap their usual purchases for Fairtrade items (groceries, fruit, clothes, flowers, etc) with a particular emphasis on tea. Ilkley Fairtrade Group will again be organising a special event – more information next month.

John and Judith Bray

Living in the Shadows

Like many of you, I went to see the play *Shadowlands* at the Ilkley Playhouse. It is a poignant, intensely emotional piece - splendidly acted and directed, and it left the audience in a state of tearful appreciation. The play, written by William Nicholson, details an episode in the life of the academic and writer C. S. Lewis. Lewis is known to millions as the author of the Narnia books, and to a far smaller audience as a Christian theologian and author of books like *The Screwtape Letters* and *Mere Christianity*. In 1940 Lewis published what is perhaps his most controversial book, *The Problem of Pain*, and it is pain and suffering that are at the core of *Shadowlands*.

The play opens with Lewis, in lecturer mode, addressing the audience on the crucial question; 'If God loves us, why does he allow us to suffer so much?' Nicholson gives Lewis these words to speak; 'I think that God doesn't necessarily want us to be happy. I think he wants us to be lovable. Worthy of love. Able to be loved by him. We don't start off by being all that lovable, if we're honest. What makes someone hard to love? Isn't it what is commonly called selfishness? Selfish people are hard to love because so little love comes out of them.

God creates us free, free to be selfish, but he adds a mechanism that will penetrate our selfishness and wakes us up to the presence of others in the world, and that mechanism is called "suffering". To put it another way, pain is God's megaphone to rouse a deaf world. Why must it be pain? Why can't he wake us more gently, with violins or laughter? Because the dream from which we must all be awakened is the dream that all is well.

The most dangerous illusion of them all is the illusion that all is well. Self-sufficiency is the enemy of salvation. If you are self-sufficient, you have no need of God. If you have no need of God, you will not seek Him. If you do not seek Him, you will not find Him.

God loves us, so He makes us the gift of suffering. Through suffering, we release our hold on the toys of this world, and know that our true good lies in another world.

We're like blocks of stone, out of which the sculptor carves the forms of men. The blows of His chisel, which hurt us so much, are what make us perfect. The suffering of the world is not the failure of God's love for us; it is that love in action.

For believe me, this world that seems to us so substantial, is no more than the shadowlands. Real life has not begun yet.'

Living in the Shadows (cont.)

Can you agree with Lewis / Nicholson? How else do we explain why pain and suffering are integral parts of God's creation?

Thanks to William Nicholson and The Agency (London) Ltd for permission to publish the extract from *Shadowlands*, and to Dick Gillgrass for the loan of the script.

Mike Dixon

AFRICA MISSION ALLIANCE

As UK representative of Africa Mission Alliance I would like to thank Christchurch for their generous donation towards our work in Rwanda. In 2007 two new schools were opened and the one in Butare is now completely self funding. The one in a slum area of Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, is still in need of support. The Government of Rwanda funds the school for 70 pupils per teacher, with pay at the bottom of the pay scale. Africa Mission Alliance employs one teacher per 40-45 pupils at a higher salary, to obtain the services of better quality teachers. They also provide the teachers with a free house on site. The difference between what they receive from the Government and what it costs per child is around £25 per year per pupil. Your contribution means that 40 children who have not yet found a personal sponsor can begin attending school next year starting in January.

Heartwarming news! Amon relinquished his position as President of the charity which he co-founded in 2002 in order that he and Erica might start a family. They both obtained full-time positions working for other employees in June 2009. After four months in his job Amon was head hunted by another firm, who offered him double the salary if he went to work for them. The day after he started his new job Erica was told she was eight weeks pregnant. God has blessed their union and ensured that Amon can support his new family. 'Let us rejoice and be glad in it!'

The new Rwandan President is William Ngabo, who co-founded Africa Mission Alliance with Amon in 2002. He was working full time for 'World Vision' but has returned to the charity where his heart has always been, Africa Mission Alliance, and wishes to visit Yorkshire next year to update all our friends about the work in Rwanda..

Pat Stockdale

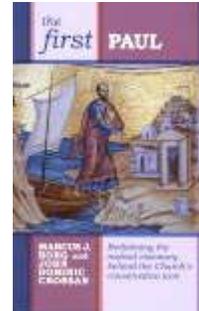
Book Review: The First Paul

Reclaiming the radical visionary behind the Church's conservative icon.

Marcus Borg & John Dominic Crossan

SPCK :: 978-0-281-06158-7 :: 2009 :: £8.99 :: 224 pages

Borg is Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University; Crossan is the retired Professor of Biblical Studies at DePaul University Chicago.



“Paul is second only to Jesus as the most important person for the birth of Christianity, and yet he continues to be controversial, even among Christians. Using the best biblical and historical scholarship, Borg and Crossan explain the reasons for Paul’s mixed reputation and reveal his original teachings. They demonstrate that Paul was an engaging man who, contrary to what his critics have claimed, remained remarkably faithful to the Gospel of Jesus. The First Paul overturns common preconceptions to uncover the apostle’s true message, which continues to be as vital and challenging as ever.”

So reads the blurb on the back - and it is spot on!

Based on modern scholarship that not all the books attributed to Paul were actually written by him, they propose three Pauls: the radical (Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, Philemon - agreed authorship), the reactionary (1&2 Timothy, Titus - not written by Paul) and the conservative (Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians - disputed authorship; they argue also not by Paul). I was particularly pleased to discover that the homophobic and sexist teachings in Timothy were not his.

As always with these two authors, the historical context is explored in detail, showing that Paul was true to Jesus’ message setting it against the prevailing Roman culture and theology, and then tackling key Pauline concepts: Jesus Christ is Lord; Christ crucified; justification by grace through faith; and in Christ.

I found it an easy read, and enjoyed it so much that I’m going to read it again as my Advent book. Highly recommended.

If anyone would like to borrow my copy, please feel free to ask.

steve amos

Origins and Lemons: Extracting the juice out of Genesis

Yorkshire Theatre Company, Riding Lights, brought Origins and Lemons to Christchurch on Wednesday 18th November. The production was a collection of songs, comedy, sketches and monologues exploring the first eleven chapters of the first book of the bible, Genesis. The four person cast took us from creation, to Adam and Eve, the tower of Babel and Noah and the flood, in a fast moving action packed performance.

They posed the big question – what are we to believe as we understand science and grapple with the bible stories? The big answer was that while science tells us how things happen, the bible reveals why things happen so we can understand our great creator God, even from a modern perspective.

The Adam and Eve story was portrayed in very earthy style, before the arrival of Eve, Adam asks God ‘and what exactly is this area for’, indicating his nether regions! A surprise guest, and particularly relevant to Ilkley at this time, was Charles Darwin. There were amusing discussions about ‘literal’ interpretations of the bible as well as some interesting questions about evolution. ‘If we evolved from apes, why do we still have apes?’ One of the highlights was a wonderful skit on the Eurovision Song Contest to explain the chaos caused by the introduction of lots of different languages following the failure of the building of the Tower of Babel. Look it up if you don’t know the story!

I came away encouraged to celebrate the wonderful developments of science in the context of an amazing, loving and caring God.

**For the next big theatre production at Christchurch,
book a place in your diary during Holy Week for the
Saltmine Theatre Company :
“Who moved the egg?”**

CHRISTCHURCH GUILD

Meetings are held on Wednesday afternoons at 2:30pm in the Lower Hall. There is always a warm welcome to both men and women.

Meetings in January

6th—Thoughts on Epiphany (Rita Armitage)

13th—Wharfedale Naturalists (Harry Jevons)

20th—Crufts winner Wendy Lacy with Lila

27th—The Fire Service Today (Fire Station Officer Alex Watson)

Women's World Day of Prayer

Quiet Day at The Briery
February 16th 2010
£11 (including lunch).
Contact: Irene Burns or Mary Robinson

Second Sunday Evening Worship

Worship is our heart's response to God. It is an attitude of thankfulness and praise that not only happens at church on Fridays and Sundays but also overflows into every part of our lives. It is a time to listen to God; to be influenced by what we hear; and to be changed by the Holy Spirit. These are the guiding values of the Second Sunday evening services.

Once a month at 6.30pm, we invite you to join in our Second Sunday worship. The service aims to be distinctive, informal and inclusive. It will be firmly Bible-based and there will be times for participation and sharing; time for singing; and time for reflective prayer. You will be made very welcome. It is for everyone. Please join us in this new venture.

At present the Second Sunday team members are Judy Dixon, Mike Dixon, Georgie Head, Chris Mannall, Michael Noble, Brian Scott and Jo Wales-Smith. The team will be planning and leading the services, at least until the new format is established. Forthcoming services are:

January 10th - New Beginnings
February 14th - What is love?
March 14th - Love in Action
April 11th - Love revealed



Green Spot

Thank you to those of you who supported the CTI Ilkley Green Fair on the 7th November.

The organising committee felt the day had been a success. We thought there was an excellent range of stalls at the Green Fair and a steady number (of people) passing through, when we were there' visitor comment.

Did we make a difference? It is hard to tell. The CO2 calculator got a lot of people thinking. Several people heard about 10:10 for the first time. Do **you** know what it stands for?* We signed and sent a good number of action postcards. Several stall holders said they had signed up new members.

The committee hope to start a number of events to increase awareness, get more folk involved in environmentally friendly activities, and start taking action in their own homes, lifestyles and workplaces. We are considering a local food event and have several other ideas of what we might do. Watch this space!

Elisabeth Halsall

*10:10 was begun by the Guardian Newspaper and asks everyone to promise to save 10% of their carbon footprint in 2010.

Christchurch Comings and Goings

Welcome back to : Miss Joyce Jackson and to Mrs. Joan and Mr. Derek Williams

Welcome to Mrs. Joyce Brown

New address : Miss Margaret Brayshaw,

We are sad to record the deaths of Miss Betty Houlding and Mrs Freda Lindup.

Please continue to keep your directory up to date by noting the comings and goings. Thank you.

The Sudan Branch of SIL (which is where I used to work) has recently appointed a Scripture Use Coordinator, a very gifted Sudanese called Paul Otto. Paul is willing to take on the negotiations concerning the recording of the Mündü NT. This is a great answer to prayer. Alice and I have been trying to get this going by long distance email for a year or more. It really needs someone on the spot! Pray that the recording can go ahead, and that listening groups can be set up in Mündü villages in Sudan and DR Congo.

I'm just back from a week of checking in the South of England. We have checked most of 2 chapters of Zam Luke and no less than 4 chapters of Kab Romans. We are also hoping to perhaps have a small discourse workshop for Kab and Zam perhaps in late January.

What is a discourse workshop? Well, for one thing it will be a chance for me and the Zam & Kab teams to get together and work on the discourse grammar of these languages – e.g. when do you use a noun and when do you use a pronoun? (e.g. “John” vs “he” or “him”). This rule is NOT the same in all languages! There are lots of other discourse questions and it is important to get the answers right if the translations are to be clear and natural. Of course a good writer will make the right choices intuitively, without consciously knowing the rules. The trouble with translation is that it is all too easy to carry over the discourse rules of the source language (NT Greek) into the target language (Kab or Zam).

Dorothea Jeffrey

From the Bible Society Advent calendar:

“Rejoice as more than 6000 churches in Guatemala now have the audio Bible in their heart language.”

We are pleased to tell you the Psalm printed from our Harvest creative writing activity was written by Pam Harris.

The Beamsley Project is planning to replace the beds in the Centre and has launched a Sponsor a bed scheme. £200 (especially if Gift Aided) will purchase a new bed. Posters in the foyer and Coffee Centre have all the details.

FRIDAY FREE-AND-EASY

**at Christchurch
7.30 — 9.30 pm
every Friday
from 15th January**

**Never heard of it?
Not surprising—it's a new initiative !**

**It will be an opportunity for us
to get to know each other informally:**

- * No agenda**
- * No committee**
- * No minutes**
- * No pressure**

**Come on your own, in two's or three's....
We'll just put the kettle on and relax !**

Find out more from Margo Atkinson and Stan Loach

Michael, Sylvia and Ruth Baldwin wish to thank all members and friends at Christchurch for their support, cards and letters of sympathy after the sad loss of David. Special thanks also to Rev Rob Hilton and Judy Dixon for their help and support during this time and conducting the service at Menston Methodist Church. It was a great comfort to us that so many friends and colleagues attended the Thanksgiving service. We believe that David is now resting in peace with the Lord in heaven. Donations for St. Georges' Crypt at Leeds amounted to £310.

Rarely has waking up in the morning been greeted with such joy in our household. Within minutes we are eagerly opening up the Advent Devotional Booklet that came with the last issue of Wider Horizons, searching for the day's reading and to learn more of God.



How wonderful to know the people that have written the words. How amazing that they should all be so different in style and yet so powerful in their message. Many thanks to all the contributors for lighting up our advent, and to Chris Mannall for having the idea and putting it all together.

Martin and Margaret Whitton

Beatitudes for Friends of the Aged

Blessed are they who understand my faltering steps and palsied hands.
Blessed are they who know today
my ears must strain to catch the thing they say.
Blessed are they who understand my eyes are dim and my wits are slow.
Blessed are they who looked away when coffee was spilled today.
Blessed are they with a cheery smile who stop and chat a while.
Blessed are they who never say, "You've told me that twice already today."
Blessed are they who know the ways to bring back memories of yesteryear.
Blessed are they who make it known I'm loved, respected, and not alone.
Blessed are they who ease the days of my journey home
in loving and caring ways.

Anonymous.

(Found on the bulletin board in a home for the aged.)

WORSHIP AT CHRISTCHURCH January 2010

	3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
9:00am	On-Line@9	On-Line@9	On-Line@9	On-Line@9	On-Line@9
10:30am	Rev Rob Hilton HC & Covenant	Brian Armitage	Richard Watson	Rev Rob Hilton	Rev Rob Hilton
6:30pm	Rev Rob Hilton	2nd Sunday	Rev Rob Hilton	CTI @ Christchurch	Taize

SHOPPERS' SERVICE EACH FRIDAY at 10:30am

8th—Rev Rob Hilton; 15th—Rev Stuart Jenkins;
22nd—Rev Arnold Clay; 29th—Rev Peter Willox



CHRISTCHURCH PRAYER CALENDAR

You are invited to include the following suggestions of local and broader concern in your private prayer:

3 January COVENANT SUNDAY
Those who worship at Christchurch as we re-dedicate ourselves for the year ahead; Touchstone—for its work in inner city Bradford and for the greater understanding of other faiths.

10 January
Our Minister, Rev Rob Hilton, his wife Ruth and their children Sam, Ned and Esther; the Revival Christian Life Centre in Matugga and their project to construct a new boys' dormitory.

17 January OCTAVE OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
The members and those in ordained ministry within Churches Together in Ilkley; the World Development Movement, especially in its work to change the structures of economic power to favour poor countries.

24 January
The Church stewards who seek to support the minister and serve the church family; Phakamisa, serving and uplifting impoverished communities in the Durban area of South Africa.

COPIES OF THE COMPLETE 2010 PRAYER CALENDAR ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE. HOWEVER, WEEKLY AND MONTHLY DETAILS WILL CONTINUE TO BE PRINTED IN THE NOTICES AND WIDER HORIZONS

Spring Harvest 2010

Why not make 2010 the year you do something different and go to Spring Harvest? Do you remember how annoyingly bouncy (even Spring-y) the Mannalls, the Joneses, the Amoses and John Sayers were last year when they returned from a week at Skegness? Well you too could become a bouncy annoying Christian by having a week at Spring Harvest.

We were so excited because we'd had a week of time out of Church meetings and normal life, and spent our time finding out how God wants us to walk with him, worshipping him in lots of different ways, arguing about what we'd learnt over pizza and praying and reflecting quietly on the beach or in our chalets. Yes - we'd been in a bubble and protected from reality. But that week had refreshed and equipped us to come back to you and work with you to proclaim Christ in the centre of Ilkley.

Your Spring Harvest experience will be different from mine. There are reflective quiet areas of meditation, prayer and counselling. There are nauseating fair rides which the kids (and Helen) seem to love. Spring Harvest is for people of all ages and church backgrounds and features inspirational Bible teaching, seminars, and spirit-filled worship. It's about one thing: deepening your walk with God, so you return home inspired to impact your community and your friends, for Jesus.

A silver standard apartment for 6 people (3 bedrooms) cost £942 but there are other types of accommodation available. Christchurch have booked to go to Skegness from Sunday 11 - Friday 16 April 2010. If you'd like to book your own apartment or caravan go to www.springharvest.org or phone 0845 070 4743.

Ruth Jones

**The deadline for the February 2010 edition of Wider Horizons is
1st January 2010**

Items (maximum 300 words please)
preferably by email as a Word attachment
to **both** George McArthur (mcarthur59@blueyonder.co.uk)
and Christchurch Office (Office@christchurchilkley.org.uk)