



ROB'S BLOG

May 2013 – Moving Forward

Pentecost is the festival of May - used to remember the work of God's Spirit in creating the Church, giving gifts to people that develop, enrich and fulfill their lives, and growing fruit that is so often expected of Christians - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.

Over our Holy Week talks before Easter, there seemed what felt to me like a coming out, an honesty over the way some of us read the New Testament. This was a relief to some as they spoke openly about what was important to the integrity of their faith, and it came as a gift to others who had yearned for such honesty but never heard anyone express the desire of their hearts before. Others found it very difficult and stayed away from hearing. The talks were attended by perhaps 50 people altogether. Many have said what a good time of preparation for Easter they were.

The Dan's Den Team have formed and are looking to their task of implementing the vision for our Children's soft play area and cafe. A new venture of outreach and mission as well as provision of something sadly missing in the town.

The government's benefit reforms have taken place, people's lives will be affected, and much response is being made - the Chancellor has taken objection to the Churches having a vested interest in the poor, and many economists are despairing at calls for justice and equality. The two denominations of which Christchurch is a part have contributed to a major report busting the myths about poverty perpetuated by our government and media.

We live in very changing times in society and church. I firmly believe the Spirit of God can lead these reforms, as in the past God has inspired people to object to slavery, build churches (both fellowships of people and buildings), schools, hospitals, and other movements for social welfare and the common good, as well as reformations and tidal shifts in redefining the faith.

I also believe the Spirit oils the wheels of change by contributing peace, understanding, conversion and measure to change. The Christian way has to be evolution rather than revolution, even if that change happens very quickly sometimes! This is the belief I am coming to slowly as a passionate and fiery person who often jumps to conclusions and sometimes thinks only after speaking!

As we move forward as a church and as we live through changing times I hope and pray the Spirit of God is very active in both bringing justice and truth, as well as integrity and peace. God's Kingdom is radical, but encompasses both aspects of change.

Come Holy Spirit, Come!

Your (Presbyteral) Minister and Friend, *Rob Hilton.*

