

WIDER HORIZONS

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2017

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ROB'S BLOG

Dear Friends,

It's time to vote again. In case you haven't heard, there's to be a General Election on June 8th!

It's hard to find Biblical inspiration in thinking about an election, because in the cultures in which the Bible arose, there was no such thing as democracy really, certainly not in the way we know it. To most Biblical cultures, government and power was imposed by those with military might: in the New Testament it was the Romans, or oppressed forces who tried to do a deal with that power in their own interests (the Jewish rulers). Our culture is just so different. This is not helped by St Paul's understanding that all authority comes from God and Christians are to submit to it without question.

In our culture, we hold democracy for all as a cherished free right that all adults have (Some of us might want to question how old an adult is, and who therefore at what age we should give the vote). And that's our starting point.

Next we have to look at the way Jesus wielded power, the way he spoke to those with authority and power. We do need to reflect again on what St Paul says about power and authority. Jesus wasn't afraid to question those in power, because, like St Paul, he believed that God was the ultimate power, to whom all were responsible. Jesus was most critical of those who wielded or welcomed power through corrupt means, especially those who sided with the Romans for their own ends rather than God's purposes in Israel. For Jesus, the great big sin was when power was used to oppress people who God loved, and wanted to welcome. Jesus liberated the guilty, spoke about loving one's neighbour, and caring for the needy. Jesus also spoke of personal responsibility and the need for everyone to admit their own sins, repent, and enter the Kingdom of God. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, let prisoners free, and included the one's that those with power held - whether demons, or Pharisees.

So, as we approach an election, what do we think?

If we have responsibility we should bear it - which I suggest means we must vote. Please get out and vote, or make your postal vote.

When it comes to who to vote for, I would suggest we have to think, if it's not too banal a question, who would Jesus vote for? I'm not sure we can answer that question. What we can be sure of is the vision Jesus had of humanity, the vision he had for what community life could be, and



the vision he had what national life, ultimately under the authority and reign of God, was.

So, in appealing to you to vote, please bear in mind the visions of humanity, community, and society each of the political parties hold, and cast your vote responsibly for the one that you think is closest to the vision God has for his world expressed through Jesus.

Happy Voting!

God bless,

Rob.

Comings and Goings.

We are sad to record the deaths of Donald Grimshaw, Frank McBurney and Mary Pinkney. Our love and prayers go to the various members of their families at this time.

Please continue to pray for people in special circumstances and let the Pastoral Team know of any new concerns.

Please keep your directory up to date by noting down the comings and goings.

Thank you from the Pastoral Team.



COMINGS &
GOINGS

It's all happening at Christchurch On August Bank Holiday Saturday!

Some Music
Some History
Some Flowers
Some Refreshments
And lots more!



It's a major fundraiser, so bring all your old pound coins!

Offer your help to either Margo Atkinson
or Jenny Freeman



Sunday Morning Worship

Since the decision was made at the Congregational Meeting about Sunday Morning Worship there has been lots of activity! People have met and plans are being made to commence on 11 June with our 'new look'!



WORSHIP

Those on both the Steering Groups for On-Line@9 and the 10:30am service have met together and made the first steps of an exciting journey. It is also challenging as we set about sorting out exactly what we need to do, how to do it and how to resource it. Please pray for us all as we move forward in the decision making and put into place our new act of worship.

Here is what we have decided so far:

- The starting time will be 10:00am.
- Teams are being established under six headings with initial leaders: The Word - Michael Noble and Rita Armitage; Prayer - Jeannie Buckroyd; Music - Chris Mannall; Technical - Chris Mannall; Children and Young people - Kate Mitchell; Hospitality and Housekeeping - Margaret Cook.
- The Coordinators / Worship leaders will be responsible overall.
- The majority choice for a name at this time is 'Together at Ten: Worship for all ages'.
- The theme of our first service together will be "Isaiah's commission"

Planning meetings are on-going as we get ready for our new venture

We know that this is a period where we will need to review and change as we go along. It is also a time when we need everyone to be ready to go on this journey with us - supporting us in prayer and in practical ways. Please volunteer to the named people if you feel you can help in any of the areas mentioned. We will all be looking for people to join the teams and it is such an exciting opportunity to do so!

'They met constantly to hear the apostles teach and to share the common life. To break bread and to pray' Acts 2:42

Margaret Cook



RECTOR, I WANT YOU TO KNOW I'M 100% IN FAVOR OF YOUR PLANS FOR CHURCH GROWTH



JUST AS LONG AS NONE OF THESE NEW PEOPLE SIT IN MY PEW.

URC Elders' Day – 'All day, everyday church in our community?'

Jeannie Buckroyd, Helen Singleton and I attended the sixth annual conference for elders in Yorkshire. As ever it was challenging, a chance to learn, reflect, share ideas and experiences. The content had been decided in response to the feedback from the conference. So we welcomed Linda Rayner the URC Fresh Expressions Co-ordinator and Jamie Kissack, one of the Team Sheffield ministers, to lead the day.

In the aftermath of our Year of Listening it was interesting that the day was intended to help us see how can we listen for God's voice and join God's mission when, in many churches, we can't see the wood for the trees . . . worrying about furniture and flower rotas! It was a challenge to think about how we can be church for people who don't want to know about church? It was an opportunity to hear what God is doing in other churches and to share some of the exciting things happening at Christchurch through our new services, Dan's Den and the Café.

In the first session we were asked 'What is mission? What is church? What's happening?' We each attended two workshops which covered

- Messy Church
- Reaching people on the margins
- Listening for mission
- Chaplaincy and engagement with local institutions
- Street Pastors
- Designing through prayer.

The day concluded by praying in small groups, with those from each church thinking about what this understanding of mission to the communities around us means.

Christchurch Calendar 2018

How alarming! Thoughts have already turned to 2018 in the form of the Christchurch Calendar.

But it will be different. No photographs will feature this time. Instead we have turned to our artists, several of whom offered wonderful examples of their work for sale during the Jigfest. They have been approached to offer work for consideration. But we know there are other artists, both children and adults, whose work we'd like to see.

We will consider work (maximum size A3) in any medium which illustrate Ilkley beauty spots and features. Remember: there are 12 months and four seasons to cover! All artwork will be returned in due course.

To allow time for adjudication and printing, the deadline for submitting pictures (to either Margo Atkinson or Gerald Woollin) is 01 September 2017.

Margo Atkinson

What's Bitesize Worship?

Bitesize Worship is a 30 minute monthly service. It is aimed firstly at pre-school and primary school children and their families but there will be activities for adults and older children too.

The Sunday afternoon slot aims to be attractive to those who may have commitments on a Sunday morning or for whom getting a young family out early on a Sunday is not at all easy!

It also seeks to provide an accessible, highly informal opportunity for worship which is a reasonable length of time for children (especially young ones) to commit to. A monthly slot may be a more realistic commitment for some families, who may be put off by thinking they are expected to come to a weekly event.

As this is a 'blank slate' there is a fantastic possibility to explore doing worship differently. The service will be dynamic, active and will aim to meet people where they are in life.

What can I expect?

A short service with a few songs, a story, creative and fun activities relating to a theme, and prayer time.

When will it be held?

On the third Sunday of each month, 4:00pm – 4:30pm.

Who is responsible for this service?

For the 6 month trial period (to December 2017) Joanne Wales-Smith and Kate Mitchell will be running this, with some willing volunteers!

How does it fit in with Connect?

It can hopefully dovetail, Those attending Bitesize can come through to Connect for a coffee and a play if they wish (just like after service coffee on a Sunday morning).

What resources are needed?

The usual! Stewards, technicians and people who are willing to turn up and supervise a ten minute activity. Please let Kate or Joanne know if you might be able to offer any help on one or more of the trial services running until December.

For more information please contact Kate or Joanne.



Kate's Craft of the Month: Hole Punching

This morning at Toddler Group we had fun with paper, glue sticks and a hole puncher. This is a fairly open-ended activity that children can enjoy in lots of different ways.

First I cut strips about 25mm (an inch) thick from lots of different colours of paper. I set these out on the table along with A4 card, glue sticks and a hole puncher.

My daughter Iri (nearly two) enjoyed helping me click the hole puncher down to make holes along the edge of the paper. She also enjoyed smearing glue, although she wasn't really bothered about the result. For many young children, art and craft activities are really all about the process. They enjoy exploring the materials without worrying about what it will look like at the end.

Some of the older children were able to name the colours of the paper and enjoyed laying a strip with holes on top of another one to see the different coloured dots. Some of us made stripy pictures by laying lots of overlapping colours across the paper. For many of the children, discovering the stickiness of the glue was the most absorbing part of the activity.

Here's where people started to get really creative! Some of the children (or was it the parents?) decided to use the dots of punched-out paper like glitter, making shapes on paper with the glue stick and pouring the dots on top. Someone else decided to fold the A4 paper in half and make a card to take home for Daddy. I also noticed a 3D picture made by curling strips of paper around into a loop.

I didn't expect any of these things when I set up today's craft – and that's exactly why I enjoy running this kind of open-ended activity. Simply setting out a few materials without a particular end goal in mind allows children (and adults!) to use their imagination and explore the possibilities of everyday items in a new way.



I Am My Brother's Keeper – Article 2

a series of articles reflecting on poverty, homelessness and a Christian vision for our society in 2017

Last time (see WH March 2017) we introduced some of the problems in our increasingly unequal society and Jessica's life experience as a pregnant young woman with mental health issues that led to benefit cuts. This time we think about the importance of a home and the effect of living on the streets – because the number of people living this way has doubled since 2010.

Thinking first about the importance of a home: we often take our homes for granted, not pausing to fully appreciate the anchorage they provide in our lives beyond the money they are worth. People who have tenure as 'owner occupiers' benefit from stable relationships with neighbours and people they know in the surrounding area. By contrast, people who don't work and move house often have much weaker ties to a community. These social networks enrich our life; without them we would have less wellbeing and less informal neighbourly support when a crisis comes. For children, frequent changes of school also make life harder - as their friendships, self esteem and academic performance are all at risk. Humans flourish when they are rooted and secure. It's not only mental wellbeing that is affected by having a home but physical health too. Having either no home or a temporary place to stay (which isn't really a home) isn't good for you.

Looking at homelessness, rough sleeping on the streets represents the visible part of the homelessness iceberg. Officially figures say 3,569 slept rough on England's streets on one night in 2015, (DCLG 2016). Howard Sinclair, chief executive of St Mungo's homeless charity disputes this figure, claiming it counts people sleeping in shop doorways and misses the majority who are hidden in derelict buildings or other makeshift shelters. He estimates the real number is ten times higher; the issues are complex and 'the degree of need is much higher than it was even three years ago'. Howard explains the housing crisis, reduction in benefits – especially to younger people - and austerity cuts hitting local councils, charities and mental health services are creating a storm of human misery. It's not just about cash strapped local authorities, as the health service also lets the homeless down because '90% of rough sleepers are discharged from hospitals back onto the streets'.

Homelessness on the street is an extremely tough place. Crisis's research through a survey of 458 rough sleepers in 21 locations revealed:

- 75% had experience crime or anti-social behaviour in the last year
- 54% had experienced their possessions begin stolen
- 60% had been verbally abused or harassed

- 55% had been hit or kicked by a person they didn't know and half of those people didn't report it to the police.
- 9% had been urinated on
- 7% had been sexually abused

The survey included both street homeless men and street homeless women.

We end today with the story of Brian who lives in a St Mungo's hostel:

Five years ago, Brian's life changed completely when his mum died. Brian had been actively engaged in his local community in West London where he grew up - sitting on the committee at his local community centre and volunteering with a charity for the elderly. After his mother's death, Brian lodged with his stepfather but their relationship was strained, and the opportunities within his local community started to dry up. Brian said: "After mum died, I had nothing to do - everything stopped running". Due to his bereavement and the loss of many of his past community engagements, Brian's mental health deteriorated. He ended up in a coma following a suicide attempt.

After spending three months in hospital, Brian was discharged to a guesthouse, but says he didn't get the support he needed. He was still very weak at the time, and needed to walk with a stick, so he found it challenging even to travel from the hospital to the guesthouse on his own. Once there, Brian found it very difficult to get around, and everyday tasks - such as shopping, using the bathroom, and taking care of himself - were a big struggle.

Eventually Brian was assigned a social worker who helped him get a place in the St Mungo's hostel where he's now staying. Brian said: "Without the right support I would have ended up homeless [on the



street]...I couldn't cope by myself; I was very vulnerable at the time". Brian is now registered with a GP near the hostel, and also sees a psychiatrist. He said "This place has been a godsend". He's involved in some activities in the hostel and the local area, and appreciates having a key worker who works with him on identifying his needs and helping him achieve his aims.

Brian's hostel is an example of supported housing. Next time we will look more at the role of supported housing and the many varied groups it helps keep a home for, and other homelessness problems.

If you have any questions or comments please contact Chris Brunold or Malcolm Atkinson.

Melting Pot Update

The last few Melting Pot sessions have been fascinating. In April, Jude Hamon prepared a paper on all the recent developments in research associated with children's learning. We wondered how a progressive Christian who reads the Bible metaphorically would talk to their children (or grandchildren) about Bible stories. We wanted to avoid the danger that as children grow up, Jesus is put in the same basket as Father Christmas and the Tooth Fairy. Jude gave us some insights from the research, some of which were really surprising (eg parental literalism has little impact on children's reality status decisions) and about the 'God Effect' which significantly impacts on reality decisions. We will have continued this discussion at our next meeting on 21 May: 'Truth and Reality: making sense of our faith'.

In March, Rod Hilton led a session on First and Second Temple theology and how the early church may have modelled their perceptions of Jesus on the former against the prevailing latter. Rob gave us some insight into possible parabolic interpretations of First Temple theology, but we will have to do some more work on this interesting topic, as we have only just scratched the surface.

February saw us tackle the very current topic of Immigration and the Bible. We learned that the Hebrew Bible uses two words for an immigrant (describing whether they have become integrated into the society or not) and that some modern translations confuse the meaning by using the words interchangeably. This is not helped by changes to modern meanings of words like 'alien' which have different meanings to that intended in the Hebrew. This really impacts on how you interpret the Biblical texts, and can lead to significant misunderstandings!

I have recently uploaded documents and notes from most meetings so that all but two sessions' papers can now be accessed on our church website. They are at:

<http://www.christchurchilkley.org.uk/big-questions/melting-pot/melting-pot-notes/> with a link from the homepage at the moment.

We meet monthly, usually on the third Sunday, at 7:30pm in the Christchurch Café. Our next meetings are on 21 May, 18 June and 17 September 2017. All are welcome.

Steve Amos



Melting Pot

Please pray:

- ✎ For Dan's Den:
- ✎ For the conversations Christine has with people, that she will effectively offer support and the chance to talk about faith where required
- ✎ For Chill (Wednesday) and Happy Hands (Thursday) and the LS29 session (Tuesday) and Connect (every half term)
- ✎ For ways to support and encourage families who have children with special needs, providing for both their practical and spiritual needs
- ✎ For ways to encourage people to explore and engage with faith
- ✎ That we will have families and individuals come to faith in Jesus as a result of the work of Dan's Den.



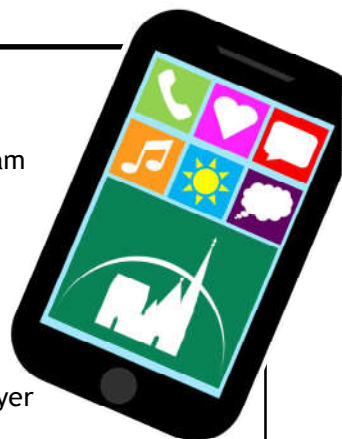
PRAYER
CALENDAR

Please pray also:

- ✎ For all those getting married this year, and for any weddings held in our church
- ✎ For those bringing babies to be Baptise
- ✎ For those choosing to be baptised
- ✎ For the countries of The Middle East
- ✎ For the Revival Centre, Mattuga,

Text your prayer concerns to the Christchurch Prayer Team
on:

07562 343622



Please contact the **Prayer Chain** for urgent or special prayer
needs:

Val Worrall (01943 831779)

WORSHIP AT CHRISTCHURCH

| | 4th | 11th | 18th | 25th |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 09:00am | On-line@9 | - | - | - |
| | 10:30am Rev Liz Smith / Lynda Duttine <i>Inc Holy</i> | 10:00am Rev Rob Hilton | 10:00am Rev Rob Hilton | 10:00am Rev Leslie Holmes |
| Evening 6:00pm | - | <i>Circuit Service</i> <i>at</i> | - | - |

Wednesday Fellowship Programme Meeting most Wednesdays at 2:00pm

| | |
|--|---|
| 7th June Speaker: Rev Rob Hilton | 14th June AGM and Strawberry Tea. |
|--|---|

Need a Room?

If you would like to book one of our rooms please contact Val Worrall our booking secretary. Val is in the Office on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings (01943 831779) or contactable via email on **office@christchurchilkley.org.uk**

The deadline for the July 2017 edition of Wider Horizons is the first Sunday in June.

Items (maximum 350 words) preferably by email, please, as an MS Word attachment to both:

Mike Fawcett (**office@christchurchilkley.org.uk**)

and Steve Amos.

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