



CHRIST CHURCH DOUGLAS-IN-PARBOLD

SEPTEMBER 2017

PRAYER NEWSLETTER

Look Ahead

Listen! I am standing at the door knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in. (Revelation 3v20).

Harvest time is here and the wheat, barley and oats are been gathered in the surrounding fields. Yet I am not ready for autumn as I am still looking for summer. Talking of summer, I was privileged recently, to be asked by Martin Ashcroft to take his marriage service in our church next summer. It promises to be a great time of fellowship, a packed church with great worship provided by church members we were cordially invited to attend by Joanna (his mum) at his engagement party.



Weddings require a lot of planning by the happy couple. I have been privileged to marry three couples this year – Angela and Tim, Katie and Bob (at Appley Bridge) and Nicola and Steve. Each service has been so special and so different and carries the risk of getting it wrong for them and the experience of the sheer joy of getting it just right. It is when Jesus comes into the midst of the service that for me it becomes so personal and special and turns out just right.

Jesus never seemed to look back in his earthly life. He had a plan and stuck to it through thick and thin. He said, "Enter by the narrow door but few take the trouble to find it." The benefit of a narrow door is that it restricts choice and you cannot bring your clutter with you, there is just room for you." The Holy Spirit once said to me, "John your trouble is that you are fond of revolving doors where you come in for a moment but your life is turning so quickly that you have gone out of the door and back into the world.

Looking ahead along the narrow way it seems to take me along a route of prayer and pastoral care. Prayer has always been special for me and I really enjoyed our prayer walk in August. Sue has asked if I would produce a mini prayer series for the autumn and it will culminate with the house groups meeting in church in November for an evening of prayer. Pastoral care, however, seems to have become a personal thing between caring individuals and house groups within the church. Few people require home communions.

Something that Bishop Julian said to me a couple of years ago and something that Sue suggested about holding a Service of Light for lost loved ones triggered an idea which we are going to bring to fruition on 5th November (seemed a good day to light a great number of candles). It is planned that there will be a "Thanks giving and Remembrance service" at 3pm for 45 minutes for those who have lost loved ones recently and for those who still even years afterwards may benefit. A poster will also be going up in the churchyard for those who visit family graves who may also be interested in attending. The pastoral team, it is hoped will be sides people and over tea and coffee afterwards we may be led to people who may in the future benefit from pastoral assistance. I believe this sort of service will give people the strength they need to continue to look ahead.

It will be Bonfire Night before I know it because there is much to organize and then if you're not careful you start to wish time away!

God Bless.

John

PLEASED TO MEET YOU..... Tracey our new Children's and Family Worker.

Hello, my name is Tracey Fitzsimmons and I am delighted to be the new Children's and Family Worker at Christ Church, starting in October.

I have been asked to share a bit about myself - I am married to David and we have two teenage daughters, Emma and Rachael, and have lived in Appley Bridge for the past six years.

As a family, we are looking forward to my new role and in being part of the Christ Church community; to making new friends - and spending time with friends we already have at the Church.



I love music, reading, all things 'Strictly', and family days out - especially as the girls still enjoy coming along with us. (They are growing up too fast!)

For the last five years I have been working for the Methodist Circuit in Wigan, as their Schools and Family Worker, and also at Standish Methodist Church as their Family Worker (part time at each). I will be continuing to work at Standish Methodist Church, running Messy Church, the monthly parade service, schools work and community events. I am also the Regional Messy Church Co-ordination for Wigan.

I am passionate about family ministry, and recognise that the children we work with in church are all part of a family unit. We need to look at how we connect children, families and the church together - both for existing families and those who are yet to come along.

I am looking forward to getting to know everybody, and to working as part of a team; to sharing my story with you, and listening to your stories too. It is exciting to be part of Vision 2026; being a healthy church that is transforming the community.

Prayers would be greatly appreciated, as I start this new role, and as we transition as a family - thank you!

THANKS

Thank you to all who sent in contributions to the newsletter. The next edition will be available on Sunday 5th November and the deadline for items to be included is Thursday 2nd November 2017. Please see Lin Milne or email stemilne@aol.com

DATES FOR THE DIARY

- **Monthly Midweek Communion – Thurs 21st September at 10:30am** followed by coffee & cakes. All welcome.
- **From Friday 22nd September 10am.** Decorating the church for the Harvest service. People don't need to be florists but can bring any decorations and come for a brew and a biscuit! We also welcome any ideas of what to do!
- **Harvest Service. Sunday 24th September 8am and 10am.** The collection from both services will be sent to the 4 charities we are supporting with our appeal this year (see item later in this newsletter). Special envelopes will be available.
- **The Meadows History: Sunday 24th September 12:30** (after the Harvest Festival Service). We will meet at All Saints car park for 1 hour ramble to the Meadows followed by refreshments to learn more of its history and plans for restoration.
- **Macmillan Afternoon at Lowes Farm Mon 25th September 2-4pm** at Lowes Farm, Newburgh. Come and enjoy a cup of coffee and a slice of cake in aid of Macmillan cancer support. All friends and family welcome.
- **Saturday 30th Sept at 10.30 am Rev. Wendy Williams** will be ordained as a C. of E. Priest at Liverpool Cathedral. Everyone welcome. No tickets required.
- **Saturday 30th Sept – Prayer Conference 10am to 4pm** at the University of Cumbria, Lancaster. Full details in the leaflet attached in an email or posters available at the back of church.
- **'Refresh' –Monday 2nd October at 10.45 Appley Bridge,.**
- **'Encounter' – Friday 13th October** at 8pm. Our monthly praise service led by the band and a special visit from Johan Johannesen of Operation Mobilisation
- **Sunday 15th October 10am Service.** Judith Townsley from The Message Trust will be speaking.
- **Thursday 28th October 7.30pm.** Andrew Fanstone from IRIS Fortaleza in Brazil will be speaking and updating us of the ongoing work among the slums in Brazil.



HARVEST APPEAL 2017

To celebrate our Harvest Thanksgiving Service this year, the Harvest Appeal is to give support and encouragement to four of the charities with which we have direct links in church. There will be special Gift Aid envelopes available but all the collection for the 24th will go direct to the appeal, except for any of the regular weekly envelopes. Here is some more information about each charity – two international and two national.

MERCY RESCUE TRUST

I was delighted when Barbara rang to say Mercy Rescue Trust was to be a beneficiary as part of your harvest appeal. She was asking if we have any particular project we would like help funding.

Having just spoken to Jedidah, she informs me that Dave Cummins our builder in Kitale has estimated that it will cost a final £4,000 to complete the staff and guest volunteers premises which we have started to build on the property. Our budget for this project has run out due to some unforeseen costs and to complete the build we would have to use money allocated for normal running costs of the baby rescue centre.

This building is important because it allows another member of staff (Eva and her family) to live on site so that Jedidah always has back up if she is called away.



According to the children's department, volunteers should not stay in the same building as the babies and children, so this would allow a safe environment for guests and volunteers. Thank you once again for your thoughts of us. Clare Jenkins (Chair of Trustees)

UCB

United Christian Broadcasters is a Christian media charity that exists to offer every person in every place at every moment of the day, the opportunity to hear, watch or read the Word of God in a relevant and engaging way. The Word for Today and the teenage version Word for You Today are free to everyone. We have copies of both these booklets at the back of the church. They are daily inspirational readings, produced 4 times a year. Please do take one. Also please visit www.ucb.co.uk for more information. Jean Berry can order more booklets if necessary. UCB also broadcasts on digital radio and supports many national initiatives to spread the Good News of the gospel far and wide.



Educaid.

The recent floods and mud landslide in Sierra Leone has directly affected the Lumley school at Educaid where children receive free education. Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world and recovery will be slow and hard. The harvest gift to Educaid will go towards their Flood Relief appeal. Here is some info from the latest update:



At the moment, Educaid has had 8 teachers who have lost everything in the floods, 3 students believed to have lost their lives, 1 student confirmed dead and almost 70 students displaced (we expect this number to grow as more of those unaccounted for are located as school begins). Thanks to your generosity, we were able to mobilise quickly to find accommodation, clothing, mattresses and replace necessary teaching materials for those staff affected. This has enabled our staff to begin the school year ready to serve our pupils. Additional funds have been used to account for and to monitor the health and safety of those students and staff staying in displaced persons camps around Freetown. Those students with nowhere else to go were brought to Lumley school where food, clothing, bedding, toiletries, medicines and school materials were provided. The funds raised will allow our school to continue to be a safe refuge and a home for our displaced students for the entire school year. Please see www.educaid.org.uk for our latest update

THE MESSAGE TRUST

Judith Townsley works for the Message Trust and will be speaking in church on Sunday 15th October.

The Message Trust is a worldwide movement with a passion to share the good news of Jesus to the hardest to reach young people. Creative arts mission teams relevantly share the gospel to young people in schools, through music, dance and theatre, seeing thousands make decisions to live for Christ every year. With a sharp focus on the most deprived neighbourhoods across the U.K, Canada and South Africa, urban missionaries move in to estates to live sacrificially, share the gospel and build authentic communities. The Message Trust also helps young people to find Jesus in prison and assists with housing and jobs through the Message Enterprise Centre, breaking the spiral of youth reoffending.



PARISH TELEPHONE PRAYER CHAIN.

- a) Anyone who has a prayer need can phone his/her request to Brian and Frances McGucken (01257 462058) between 6pm and 6.30pm any day, or for urgent needs, at any time. A team of people is on hand to pray immediately for your need.
- b) If neither is available to take your call live - please do not use the answer phone for this purpose - but contact Lin Milne on 463523 or John Mountain on 463919.

Your prayer request will be treated as confidential – unless you state otherwise.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Please pray for Tracey and her family as she prepares to become our Children's and Family worker. Also that we as a fellowship offer her a warm welcome and every assistance in her work.
- At the start of this new school year please pray for our young people starting University, secondary and primary school. May they be inspired and enjoy learning new things.
- Please continue to pray for Clare Glynn and the family, May the Lord comfort them as they mourn Simon.
- Please pray for Val Hughes and the family, as Bill passed away peacefully on Wednesday night, that they may know the Lord's love and support. Details of the funeral to be announced.
- Pray for all those caught up in the recent natural disasters across the world – especially those made homeless in the Caribbean, Mexico and USA. And those in Sierra Leone still affected by the mud landslide where over 300 people were killed.
- Pray for Peter Massey and all those attending the new "Christianity Explored" meetings on Tuesday that questions will be answered and relationships deepened.

NEW WINE 2017

Despite the wet weather, New Wine 2017 was a wonderful time together with so many Christians just enjoying the praise and worship. The speakers were so knowledgeable and interesting. There are CDs available to borrow if you want to hear about – Practising the way of Jesus by John Mark Comer, Five Questions Jesus asked by Simon Ponsonby, and the evening celebration speakers -Peter Greig from 24/7 prayer and Cathy Madavan from Spring harvest. If you want to listen to any of them please see Lin Milne or email stemilne@aol.com

OUT OF THE MOUTHS.....

Little Philip was spending the weekend with his grandmother after a particularly trying week in infant school. His grandmother decided to take him to the park on Saturday morning. It had been snowing all night and everything was beautiful.



His grandmother commented, 'Doesn't it look like an artist painted this scenery? Did you know God painted this just for you?'
'Yes,' replied Philip, 'God did it and he did it left handed.'
This confused his grandmother so she asked him, 'What makes you say God did this with his left hand?' 'Well,' said Philip, 'we learned at Sunday School last week that Jesus sits on God's right hand.'

PAUSE TO PONDER - Kintsugi

While listening to the evening celebration talk by Cathy Madavan, I was amazed when she told us about the ancient Japanese art of Kintsugi.

The story of kintsugi may have begun in the late 15th century, when the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa sent a damaged Chinese tea bowl back to China to be fixed. It returned held together with ugly metal staples, launching Japanese craftsmen on a quest for a new form of repair that could make a broken piece look as good as new, or better. So they took the broken bowl and joined it together with a gold resin, making the repaired vase an object of great beauty and more precious than before.



Immediately, the thought came that God is often called a Potter in the Bible and that we are the clay.

So often in life, we can be broken, damaged or chipped in some way but God does not throw us away or give up on us. Instead, He picks up every piece carefully and joins it together again – not just with gold but we are healed by the precious Blood of His Son, Jesus. And just like the Kintsugi vases, the end result is more beautiful and precious than before. And can still be used to great purpose for others.

God uses every experience we have in life and, the older I get, the more I can look back and see God's hands at work restoring and rebuilding and can say, as in Romans chapter 8 verse 28, that "All things have worked together for good to those who are called according to His purpose." Well worth pondering.

Lin Milne

CHURCH SIGNS

