

CHRIST CHURCH WARE

Issue 62

Christ Church Ware Magazine Spring 2019



The Great Escape



Christ Church Ware
Jesus led, Spirit empowered, Grace based.

www.christchurchware.co.uk

John's Journal



from
Rev. John Hookway

Welcome to the spring magazine. You've probably already spotted that the magazine looks a little different. As you read through it, I am hoping that you will notice that we are filling it full of stories of God's goodness and of God's people serving Him and our community. Simply put, we want the magazine to be an encouragement to you and something that inspires faith. Let us know if it does – and get involved!

Spring Dreams

There feels a freshness around church life. That's partly because of the new environment we all find ourselves in. Something to do with some lovely early spring weather and also a sense of enthusiasm and optimism as we watch the facilities being developed. We can almost 'see' a new era emerging. I'm observing more and more examples of people feeling creative and having pictures, words and images inspired by God. I encourage everyone to keep dreaming and to share anything you feel God is saying to you. Please do fill in the cards on Sundays.

Outward Looking

In my experience, when churches go through development projects like ours, it's tempting to be very inward looking. Deadlines and practical challenges can dominate our thinking.



Above: Tearfund began working in Rwanda in 1970. In the villages especially, there is a huge number of vulnerable people – those injured during the genocide, and others who fled the country during the violence and returned with nothing. The districts are susceptible to natural disasters and the effects of climate change, such as drought, flash flooding and landslides.

Thankfully, we have lots of examples where we continue to look beyond 'the four walls' of the church. The upcoming trip to Rwanda, with Tearfund, is a great example where in July several of us are travelling to see another type of development. Christ Church already supports the work there as well as communities locally and internationally.

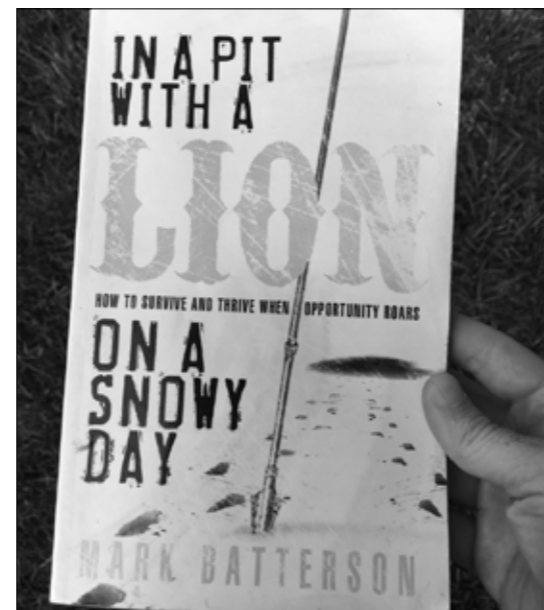
From the very establishment of Christ Church all those years ago, the focus has been on taking Jesus to others. We have a history of sending and supporting other churches and organisations. We have such an abundance in every sense and it's right that we share it. You can read more about that on page 15 where we explain how we are tithing on the funds raised on our own Development Project.

New Wine Leadership Conference

Heather and I recently attended this conference in London where 550 leaders gathered together. I oversaw this event in my role as New Wine Director for London and the East of England. That role echoes a big part of my own calling to support, coach and release people into leadership. It is a privilege that Christ Church has such a great history supporting other church leaders for over 160 years. It is a real blessing that I can do it.

Prayer is always first

I have been reading a great book with an interesting title. It's called "In a pit with a lion on a snowy day" and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone interested.



It's a book about wrestling and pursuing things, and also shows the place of prayer. Prayer transforms. It transforms us, our circumstances, history – it blows situation wide open. We have always placed prayer centrally at Christ Church and always will.

Thankfulness

We have an amazing congregation. It is not always possible to thank people individually but this new season that we are in has demonstrated once again how much people contribute. One of the revelations to me is that things that previously might have been done 'in secret' are now out in the open. For

example, setting up church or the sound balance for the music – over the years we perhaps do not see this work being done and so we do not always give thanks for it.

Right now, we are all part of a temporary period where the practical changes are extremely obvious. We help each other with car parking, with chairs, with communion. I think we are learning to appreciate each other in a fresh way and that appreciation starts with me saying a massive thank you for the way we are operating as a whole team.



Of course, no sooner are we embracing what's new before thoughts are already turning to the upcoming 'new' of returning to the main building. The aim is to take the best of the past, marry it with what we are learning today and turn it into a wonderful future.

Easter Focus

You hardly need me to tell you the importance of Easter. It is an amazing time to celebrate and communicate our faith in so many ways. There are a range of services of course, but independent of that, I'd encourage you to think about Easter and the hope and new life that it offers. For some, that is a new concept; for most of us at church it is a familiar idea. Let's remember Jesus together.

Easter Services at Christ Church

PALM SUNDAY - 14th April
9.15am & 7.00pm Services (Church Centre)
11.00am Service (Christ Church School)

HOLY WEEK PRAYER
Monday 15th April 8-9.00pm and
Tuesday 16th April 12.30pm (Church Centre)

MAUNDY THURSDAY - 18th April
8.00pm Communion Service (Christ Church School)

GOOD FRIDAY - 19th April
9.30am Walk of Witness from Kibes Lane
10.30am Family Service with crafts and hot cross buns (Christ Church School)

EASTER SUNDAY - 1st April
9.15am Traditional Communion Service (Church Centre)
11.00am Family Communion Service (Christ Church School)

Your Magazine

We want every page to be an encouragement and you'll notice a number of themed articles throughout designed to do just that; sharing stories of faith and thanksgiving to God.

We have created a new way to contact the Editorial team – magazine@christchurchware.co.uk – and we would love to hear your reaction to the refreshed approach and welcome your ideas. We would love more and more people to share their stories, so get involved!

One way is to contribute to "Ware in the World" just like Emma Dipper did when visiting the United Nations in New York recently. Get your picture taken whilst holding the Christ Church Ware Magazine – and be as imaginative as you can.



It could be the location that is outstanding, it might be a special event or you might bump into a celebrity! The only rule is to have you in the picture holding up the front cover... what about when you go bungee jumping or when you watch Spurs lift the Champions League trophy?

If that requires too great a leap of faith then read on and discover the exploits and dreams of your fellow church members.

Next Magazine deadline is mid-June, but the earlier we receive your input the better!
Publication Date: Sunday 30th June.

Postcards from...



from
Jessie Dipper

Hello wonderful Christ Church people!
This album is a massive part of what I've been working very hard on in the past few months. Since July 2018 I ended up travelling to Dubai, Australia and New Zealand. I've had some incredible experiences - God was good, He rocked in fact. I'm now based in Birmingham and this album is all about the journey and



full of pilgrims songs, with most being written during my time serving at Christ Church. It takes you on a journey from awe to lament and loss to wonder, and I would love to invite you all to have a listen!

What I do is a ministry led from a broken heart for God's people and His wonder in my own life, and is specifically directed towards the following I have within the mainstream music industry. Having said that, I believe there's something in this collection of 'Psalms' for everyone.

Thank you so much! Chur bro (Kiwis say) and be blessed! (As Jesus says).

Jessie :)

PS: It'll be available on download and streaming on all platforms (Spotify/iTunes etc.) plus looking into distribution of physical copies at New Wine in St Andrew's Bookstore. Otherwise will be available from me on request or chat to my parents - although they probably won't be much help but they're nice people!

A Day in the Life

Christ Church is full of ordinary people serving an extraordinary God. We asked Emma to describe a typical day with God...

0545: Kettle on for first cup of hot water and lemon of the day, and then study the Bible and pray. Currently doing a study called Breaking Free by an American writer, Beth Moore.

0630: Solomon, our four-year-old, knocks on our door to tell us the sun on his clock is up. Gabriel starts shouting from his cot, "Sun up, Mummy. Sun up, Daddy. Daddy, sun up. Mummy, sun up!"! Then begins an hour and a quarter of cajoling, bribing and threatening two small boys (and a husband) through the bathroom, into clothes, to the breakfast table and finally into wellies and out of the door.



0800: Arrive at All Nations for work as their Finance Assistant. That came about through praying regularly with Carol Walker last year and God opened the way for me to get a role that I love. There's the 'numbers' element but I also get to talk and pray with students and help them with their own financial planning. God is so good!



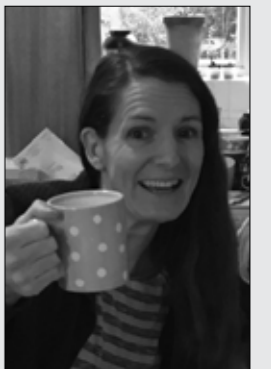
1800: Home to domestics. Bath and bed time for the boys where we sing The Lord is

My Shepherd every night and say thank you to Jesus (which for Gabriel generally means, "Thank you Jesus for trains and stars. Amen," though he did include thanking Jesus for snot this weekend as he had a runny nose!)

1900: Finally, Rob and I have some dinner, watch something on the television for half an hour or so before I sit down to study - more numbers (foundation cert in accountancy)! God has always had His hand on our family.

2130: Read for half an hour. Reading through C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia. Currently on The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, though still cannot get the image of Aslan roaring Narnia into existence from the first book out of my head!

2200: Out like a light!



from
Emma Davies



from
Keith Murphy

Greetings from Plymouth!

Time has flown since we arrived here two years ago. Isaac is 5¾ and doing well at school. He's the tallest in his year, loves football, swimming and is mad about music (most definitely a chip of the old block!)

Ministry-wise, it has been a challenging couple of years, particularly because the reality of our situation means our work feels much more like pioneering than heading up planting.



We have developed strong links with the local school where we are aiming to launch a worshipping community in September.

Keith has a weekly Sunday evening radio show on Hospital Radio Plymouth, providing opportunities to further connect with people.

We love life in Plymouth but we miss our family and friends dearly.

Please pray for us:



- A house to become available in the right area in the next couple of months, enabling us to live closer to people in the community;
- Relationships to continue to develop;
- Our new non-Christian friends to join us in building community and eventually come to saving faith;
- A strong team to develop around us;
- Annette as she concludes her Pilates teacher training and starts her new business in September.



Please pray for us: Rob and I really want to have a relationship with Jesus which makes Solomon and Gabriel excited to know Him and follow Him. On a purely earthly front, we would love to buy a house as close to Ware as possible so that we can keep coming to Christ Church and so that Solomon can go to Christ Church School in September! As a family, we are so thankful to God and just want to continue on that journey to complete freedom in Christ.

A Family Affair



from
Ruth & Rob Boulton

A few years ago, Sri Lanka was just another country in the Boulton's world view. Now it has a special place in their hearts. They have just returned from a second trip in two years to see the work their eldest daughter, Charlotte, is doing and the two children that they are sponsoring...

Sri Lanka is a country split by language - Sinhalese and Tamil - this was the main cause of the 26-year war by extremists, which ended in May 2009 and has left the country once the 'jewel' of the Indian Ocean in further poverty and debt. 10 years later, it is rebuilding itself and there is little sign of friction amongst its people.



The school (right) is located in two buildings, the children split roughly based on age. Currently 47 children are being educated in the Jaffna school.

In order to get an appreciation of Sri Lanka, its culture, people and various faiths, you need to travel around the island and that is just what we did. Starting on the South West coast in the capital, Colombo, where the weather was hot and humid, we visited Buddhist and Hindu temples and a mosque, and witnessed the start of the large scale investment flowing into the city by the Chinese. From here, we travelled deep into the hills (below) in the central belt to Nuwara Eliya (called little England) where tea plantations flourish and the climate



was slightly cooler. A fantastic train journey through the countryside and mountain ranges (where hanging out of the carriage for photo



opportunities is obligatory, above!) to the second city, Kandy, before heading onwards to Anuradhapura, the historic capital prior to British rule and the place of much history.

The holiday ended with three days in war torn Jaffna (the home region of The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)) and well off the beaten track for tourists in the extreme north of the country BUT where we were welcomed by locals and felt completely safe. It was here that we were able to see the work Charlotte had been involved with in the year since we last visited.



It is truly a miracle what God has provided in the last year - sponsorship of more of His children who attend the school (above), improvements to the school and church buildings and modest homes for many families in desperate need. Having the opportunity to meet the two sisters we sponsor (right) and their family, we hope that they have the understanding and confidence that someone, somewhere in the world knows they are valuable and precious, highlighting and acting



out God's love for them. A well costs just £500 and provides access to clean water for a family and often others in the community (above). A toilet costs around £800, providing privacy and dignity for the most basic human necessity.

For us it was, again, a humbling experience to see so many people with so little but so grateful, proud and genuinely happy and thankful to God for all that He has provided. Their faith and trust that God will provide for their needs when they have endured so much has been a good witness for us and those memories will continue to serve as reality checks helping us reflect on our own circumstances and where we are in our journey with Christ.



I first visited Sri Lanka in February 2016 with the charitable organisation, The Dust Project. It was an eye opening experience and the first time I had ever seen or encountered poverty, helplessness and a survival instinct within a community. Yet, the sense and feeling of being part of the family of this place was something I couldn't shake.

From February 2016, Sri Lanka had my heart. God did something on that trip; He ripped it apart, He broke my heart for what broke His and He placed a calling on me. It was clear - return to this nation and help build His kingdom.



So, here I am, living, volunteering and loving this forgotten nation. During my days, I work in a church school (far left), which provides an education to poor, rural children in Jaffna, in English to help improve their futures. An education in English can provide a future of prosperity and employment for children who have only ever been told they would amount to nothing.

This school not only focusses on educational development, but also on spiritual. We believe a child who is firmly rooted in Christ will bring change to the nation of Sri Lanka by being a light in the dark place; full of corruption and injustice.

After school, I spend time on The Dust Project; organising child sponsorship, following up on projects, reporting back and coordinating the monthly food run for some of the poorest families we support. In all this, there's also an opportunity for me to be 'Akka' (big sister) to many; letting children and families know there is time for them and that someone is thinking, praying and caring for them. The lovely lady in the photo above is Mani Amma - she looks after 21 girls in the hostel (mostly orphaned following the civil war).

My dream for this community and the nation is clear: to see the truth prevail; that each child, adult and teenager has worth, value and potential. The chains of poverty can be broken for each one, by knowing God has a plan for their life and the tools and facilities provided to them, by Him, will facilitate these changes.

To find out more about The Dust Project, please visit: www.thedustproject.com

Charlotte

Do we need a Minister of Loneliness?



from
Martin Dudley



Socialising with my buddies recently, we were putting the world to rights as usual. All of us were children of the 1980's - Maggie Thatcher's children and have seen society change dramatically; authority and community used to be central whereas today individualistic rights seem to dominate - achieving ambitions regardless of the effect on others.

We discussed the move toward isolation – interactions through a screen, affirmations via “likes” and worth measured in the number of followers we have.

It seems ludicrous that at a time when it is so easy to “be connected” we should need a Minister for Loneliness.

It reminded me of a BBC programme called ‘The Age of Loneliness’, highlighting the growing problem of loneliness in the UK. It featured a broad range of people experiencing loneliness. The causes were varied, from divorce and longer life expectancy, to relatives moving away and the internet’s effect on friendships and dating.

A recent Mental Health Foundation Survey discovered that one in ten of us often feels lonely and that Britain is the loneliness capital of Europe.

All but one person were uncomfortable in their seclusion. There were glimmers of hope with volunteering, internet dating, mums’ groups and writing providing relief. Practical solutions do help but everyone was finding life tough.

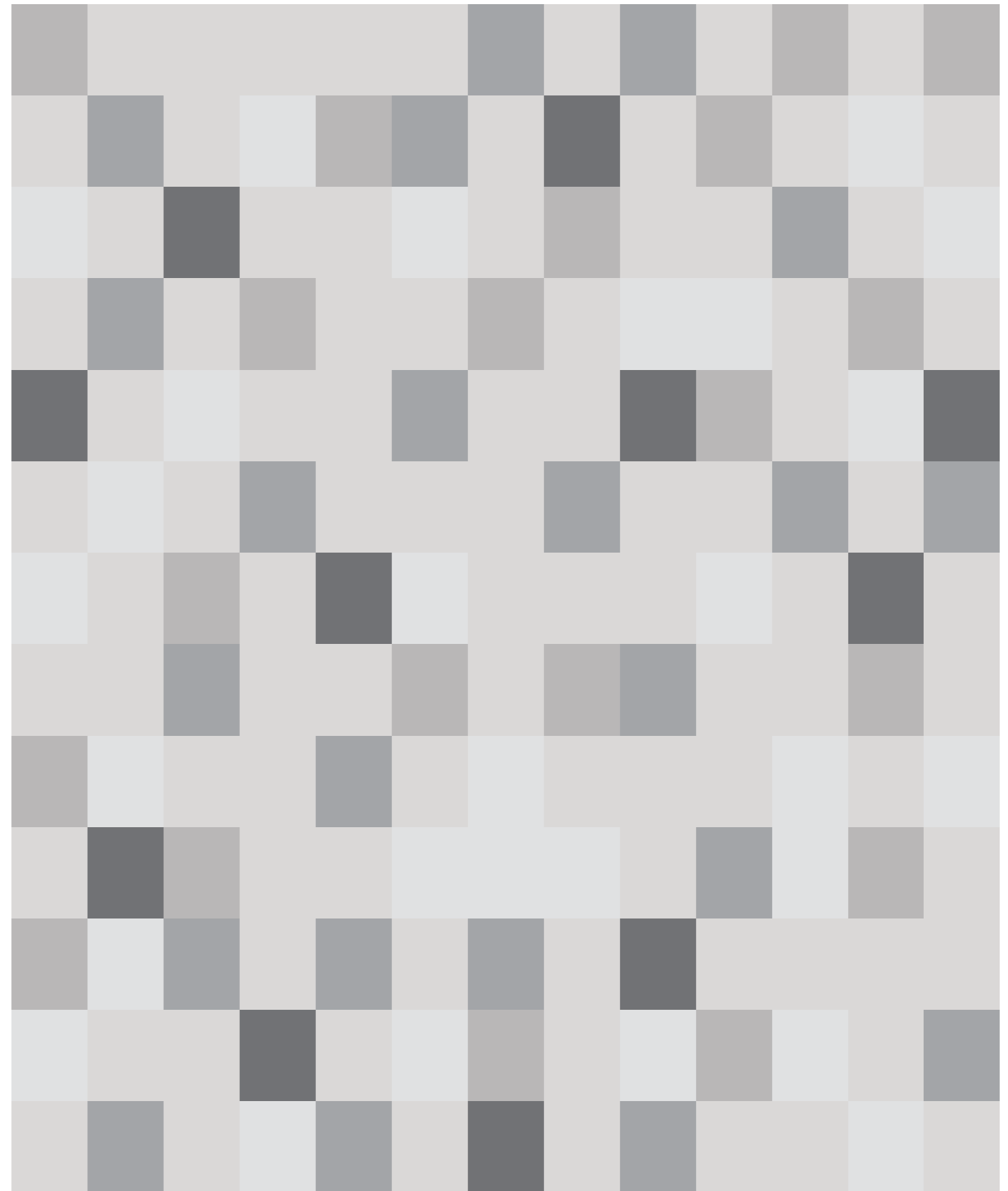
I often experience loneliness and isolation. I suggest many of us do. Loneliness is horrible and complex, no doubt affecting us all at

different stages of our lives. For me, I am trying to be more proactive fighting loneliness. Recently I called a close friend to share my feelings. He began by making a joke about Bath Rugby – he’s a Leicester fan – then listened before offering some advice. The chat did the world of good, joke included.

I’m also trying to invest more time in developing stronger relationships with those around me, as well as making visits to see friends. I’m also looking to be less: “I’m fine thank you”, with my family and church on those occasions when I’m not – stopping the charade.

It’s not easy when the only thing I feel like doing is withdrawing to my island but the key for me is quality over quantity in relationships. I understand that we can be surrounded by people and still feel acutely alone but take courage, there are good people near to confide in.

So for us all, let’s always be looking around at our church and community to see who may need a phone call, text, visit, an invitation to dinner or whatever it may be. We may just be surprised that amongst those who need it the most are those we would least expect.



How I was misled by Leonardo



from
Jan Elliott

To my surprise, this idea was completely overturned recently as I was reading Mark's account of the events.

Many of us enjoy visiting other churches and looking at artworks depicting Biblical events, but do they truly represent what the Bible actually says? In the male dominated society of 15th century Italy was the truth of the Bible being misrepresented by artists and their patrons? Here, Jan, herself a life-long art lover, reflects on perhaps one of the most famous of these depictions and poses the question "should we believe all that we see"?

"I get so much visual pleasure and insight into the human condition from viewing paintings that I frequently forget that they are not necessarily accurate representations of real historical events. When it comes to understanding and interpreting the Bible, I know I am unduly influenced by works of art. The more familiar they are to me, the more likely I am to assume that they are authentic records of the past. A perfect example of this is the most famous portrayal of *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci.

I have known this fresco from books and been fascinated by it since my school days. I finally went to see it in Milan about five years ago and I was blown away! However, impressed as I am by this picture, I believe it has misled me into thinking that Jesus and the 'Twelve' disciples were the only people present at this pivotal moment in the final 24 hours of Jesus' earthly life, even though the architecture and table linen should have alerted me to its constructed nature. To my surprise, this idea was completely overturned recently as I was reading Mark's account of the events (ch14). As is often the case when I am reading what I think is a very familiar passage, God suddenly showed me something new, something I had never noticed before.



On the first day of the festival Jesus' disciples ask him where they should prepare the Passover meal for him. He gives two of them precise instructions and they go off into the city to carry them out (v16). In the next verse Mark records Jesus arriving in the evening 'with the Twelve', clearly indicating that none of them had been sent ahead. It suddenly struck me that the disciples who were sent by Jesus were most likely female. We know he had many female followers and it would have been natural for them to take on this responsibility as they would ordinarily have done in their families. In a Jewish family, the women would get ready for the festival by thoroughly cleaning the home and removing all traces of leaven before preparing the various symbolic elements of the meal. Of course, they would also serve the food, bringing the appropriate things to the table and clearing away as each stage of the Passover story was retold.

The fact that Mark (and the other gospel writers) don't bother to record the role the women played should not come as a surprise – it would have been taken as read, unremarkable. For me though, it was a new and wonderful idea that this inaugural sacrament was witnessed and participated in by an inclusive group of Jesus' first disciples, men *and* women. At this point my imagination kicks in as I try to visualise what it would all have looked like; I expect at the start there was an air of celebration. The foot-washing performed prior to sitting at table would normally have been carried out by



the lowliest servant, probably therefore also a woman. Imagine Jesus taking the towel from her and performing this task himself! Picture her shock!

The brilliant design of Leonardo's picture was deliberately intended to make those viewing it feel part of the events taking place. It is painted on the end wall of the refectory of a convent (*above*) and the perspective is cleverly constructed to make the picture appear to be an extension of the room. The view through the windows behind Jesus is of the local Italian countryside and the table at which he sits with the Twelve is the same as the real tables that would have been in the real room. Every time the nuns sat down to eat they would have felt

The original fresco of *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci is in the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan. c1497 (left)

There is an early copy of it on canvas, believed to be by Leonardo and members of his studio, in the Abbey of Tongerlo in Belgium. c1507

There is another copy by one of Leonardo's followers, Giampietrino, in the Royal Academy of Art in London. 1520

There is a less well-known painting of the last supper by Tintoretto that includes women serving the meal and washing the dishes. c1592

that they too were eating at the last supper. Imagine that on your dining room wall!

In a further stroke of genius by Leonardo, he chose to portray the precise moment at which Jesus announces his coming betrayal and he has brilliantly captured the range of emotions on the faces of the Twelve: shock, bewilderment and disbelief. Mark tells us (v19) 'They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely you don't mean me?"' Jesus replied "It is one of the Twelve" suggesting again that others were present.

As we view the picture today and consider this moment in the story, we are also challenged to reflect on our own part in Jesus' journey to the cross. I continue to admire this amazing artwork but I long to return the invisible women to the scene so that I too can more easily identify with those experiencing the events portrayed."

The view through the windows behind Jesus is of the local Italian countryside



I will sing salvation songs

Hannah is part of our worship team. Here she shares a favourite song and what it means to her...

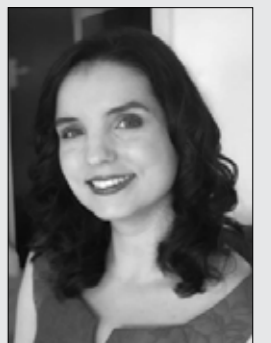
No longer a slave to fear

I believe that the number one thing that holds us back is fear. Fear of failure, fear of change, fear of losing control. Whatever form it takes, when fear flows through us, it becomes our navigator. It becomes the determining factor in our decisions. It becomes a central part of the way we are living our life. While it may make us feel safe for a while, it cannot protect us from the ever-changing nature of this world. The security it has appeared to provide is false, and in a split second can fade away, casting us adrift and leaving us feeling lost and alone.

I come back, time and time again to this song because it shows another way. A way that is offered to us through the love of Jesus Christ.

To surrender all to him, to cast our fears into his arms, and discover the freedom that comes with saying, 'I am no longer a slave to fear.' It reminds me that the battle has already been fought and won, that 'we've been liberated from our bondage.' This knowledge has the power to transform our lives, it encourages us to act deliberately and with conviction. There is no 'what if?' because our Lord and Saviour has taken care of it for us.

This song lays bare the simple truth. We do not need to live in fear. We are children of God. This is an unchanging and incredible thing, and when we embrace it and build our lives upon it, there is no end to what God can accomplish both through us and for us.



from
Hannah Juggins

Chocolate – no bar to fairness



from
Mary Salter

What would we do without chocolate? How would the supermarkets fill those shelves currently stocked with row upon row of Easter eggs? During Fairtrade Fortnight this year a record number of Fairtrade chocolate Easter eggs were sold to those most discerning of customers – members of Christ Church Ware! Why have we been promoting them for the last few years, as well as serving Fairtrade tea and coffee after our church services?



Here is why. Prepare to be shocked. Over 60% of the world's cocoa is grown in West Africa, specifically in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast).

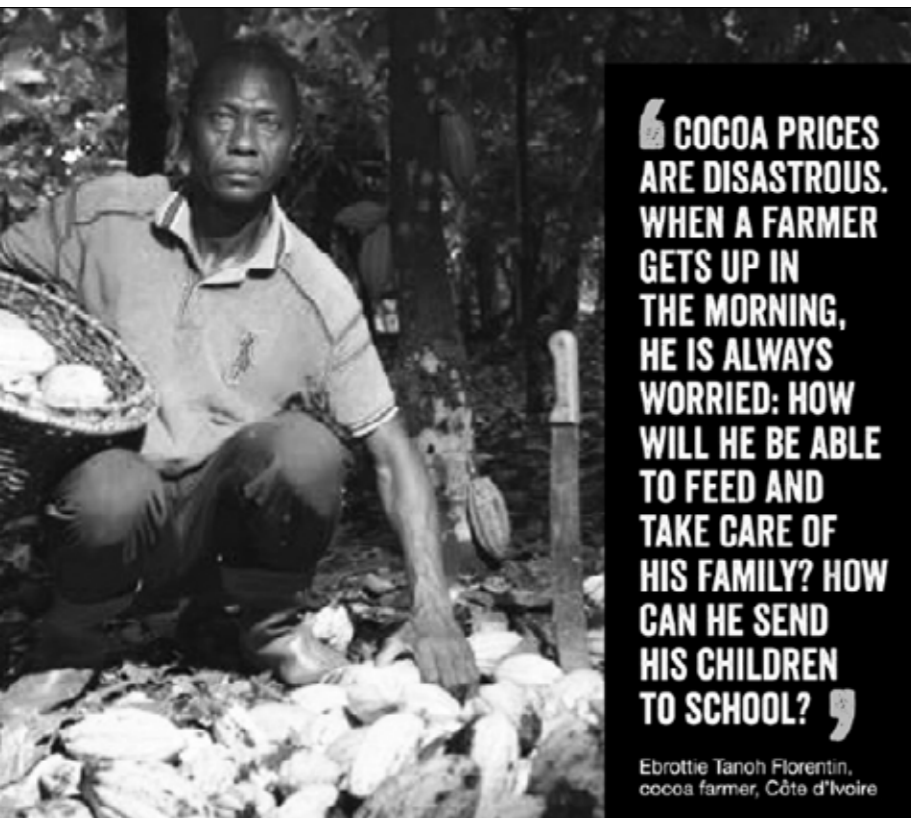
The current income of a typical cocoa farmer in Cote d'Ivoire is 74p a day. He actually needs £1.86 a day to provide him with a living income which pays for essentials such as clothing, medicine, food and clothing.

So what happens? He struggles to feed his family, or to send his children to school, or save for future needs. Almost all cocoa farmers in West Africa live in poverty, yet most of us chocolate lovers are unaware of the injustices in the cocoa supply chain. The price a farmer receives per kilo of cocoa produced is set by the government but follows from the world market price set in New York and London. The world market price for cocoa crashed in 2016, pushing many farmers deeper into poverty, as they are the ones who bear the brunt of cocoa price volatility.

This is where Fairtrade steps in. For those cocoa farmers who are part of a FT certified scheme, they are promised a mandatory minimum price for their cocoa which acts as a safety net when market prices fall while allowing them to benefit when prices rise. In addition, they are paid a premium, a bonus payment, which they can use to improve the life of their community such as digging new wells or boreholes to provide safe water; building classrooms; buying solar panels; getting training in how to increase cocoa production and grow other cash crops so that they are less dependent on cocoa for their living.

You will see other certification labels on chocolate brands but none offers the level of support and security to producers of cocoa (and tea, coffee, cotton, bananas and sugar) that is found in Fairtrade. Look for the distinctive FT mark on all these products, **please buy them**, and thus help to provide a just, fair and living income for those who work so hard to produce what we enjoy.

For more information go to www.fairtrade.org.uk



Ebrotte Tanoh Florentin,
cocoa farmer, Côte d'Ivoire

PRICE CRASH



Just One thing

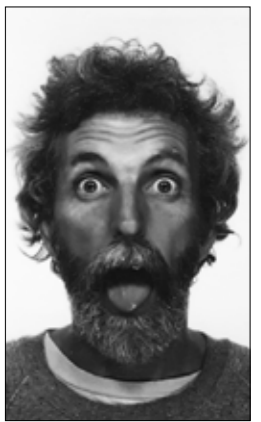


Charlotte is one of our most active members of the congregation and we sat her down for a five minute chat and asked a number of quick fire questions to learn a little more about her and the things that she cares about.

One thing... you like about Christ Church	I like the community feeling where I feel like I can talk to anyone and they would listen and understand me.
you do to relax	I read a book. I'm always reading.
you've learnt	To get good friends you have to be a good friend.
you're waiting for	I'm waiting for the Scout jamboree in the USA.
you choose from menu	Sausage, mash and gravy.
you'd do on your perfect day	Baking. I would probably then take the cakes to older people or homeless people and eat with them.
you'd like to experience again	There was a brilliant inflatable obstacle course in France that I loved.
you'd like to be better at	Looking to God in my everyday life.
that inspires your faith	I like the talks at the evening services at church.
you wish you'd known earlier	Even if I'm going through a hard time, God is with you. You just have to invite him.
that might surprise people to know about you	I really love singing and music. It lets my emotions run free. Esther and I have even written our own song.
church song you love	Reckless Love. The words are all true and we need to remember that.
you listen to	My parents!
in the Bible that you love	I am fearfully and wonderfully made. God made us really well and that helps me in my everyday life.
that makes you smile	Having someone smile at me.
that you appreciate	My best friend Charlotte.
you'd like prayer for	The jamboree. Pray I don't get homesick because we are away for over three weeks in the summer.
you'd like to say to everyone at Christ Church	Philippians 4 v13 is my message to everyone – you can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

My Playlist

Neil picks the tunes for the playlist of his life...



from
Neil Pearce

My first song - Listening to 'Three Wheels on my Wagon' on the radio takes me back to my childhood, especially the line 'I'm singing a happy song'. Ironically it was prophetic for me as later, not long after passing my test, I was driving my Morris Traveller and a wheel rolled past. In horror I realised that it was mine! Was I singing a happy song? "C'mon you Cherokees, sing along with me!!!"

Me having a mad moment when younger. Margaret carries this photo around in her purse and she chose it.

My special moment song - 'My Cherie

Amour' by Stevie Wonder was the song that was popular when Margaret and I first met on the beach in Brixham (actually the day after the first manned moon landing). So whenever we hear the song, it takes us back to 1969 (for younger readers - shortly after the Noah left the ark!).

My worship song - 'Faithful One' by Brian Doerkson. I have always loved this song and I especially like the line 'I call out to you again and again' as it reminds me of how needy I am for God's grace.

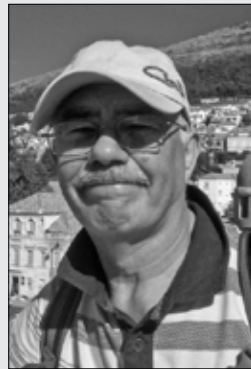
My dance floor song - 'I heard it through the grapevine' by Marvin Gaye takes me



back to those heady moments in the disco dancing alongside many of my workmates from the Royal Small Arms Factory where we were training to be engineers

My last song - I would like 'God of Grace' by Chris Bowater, based on Ephesians 2 verse 8 as it will remind those I have left behind that we cannot hide anything from God but, as the song says, 'And your grace covers me in righteousness and your mercy covers me in love..... I stand complete in you'.

Chapter & Verse



from
Richard Clayden

1 Peter 2:9 'But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness and into his wonderful light.'

We invite a church member to share a scripture that is special to them.

In my Christian life I have always had to hold in tension two opposing biblical views which I will paraphrase. Firstly, I am rubbish, not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs from under the table and secondly I am the best thing since sliced bread, Christ chooses to call me his friend.

In the last year or so 1 Peter 2:9 has become one of my favourite verses, as my life group will testify, I try to sneak it into meetings as often as I can. But of course, as I discovered, it is not solely a New Testament verse, it is a direct reference back to Exodus 19:5. The Israelites are camping at the bottom of Mount Sinai and Moses has gone mountaineering to meet with God and God has told Moses to tell the people, v5 *Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*

So I suppose in one sense the statements are conditional. Both in the OT and the NT, there needs to be obedience to God. There were then several things that struck me which I initially only applied to myself, I am chosen, I am special, I am holy and I am a priest. Wow, a priest, what a responsibility that is. On closer reading however, I see that it is **We** who are chosen, **We** who are special, **We** who are holy and **We** who are priests.

Chosen people – going to gloss over this one, not enough time or space to explain it. I thought it was me that made the commitment, I chose to become a Christian but apparently not. We are a chosen people.

Holy nation – specially recognised as or declared sacred or consecrated. Wow really! Me sacred, Us consecrated

Special possession – now I live in the affluent west so I have loads of possessions and a few of them are special and treasured. However, God owns the whole world, sorry no, the whole cosmos, sorry no, the whole cosmos and everything outside of it and of all the things he owns, I/we are special to him. Another WOW, what an honour.

Royal priesthood – I have never seen myself as a vicar or in any sort of full time ministry but it appears I've misunderstood that one as well. God tells me I am a royal priest. The OT picture of a priest is somebody who stands between the people and God. God speaks to the priest who relays the message to the people. This part I find the most challenging. Just as Israel as a nation was called to stand between God and his world so we are called to stand between God and those whose have yet to become chosen, special and holy.

What a great adventure we are on.

Enlightened times




from
Jess Cole

Jess reflects on her first six months with us at Christ Church...

I've not only survived, it's been so exciting settling into this role as children's worker. It is amazing to see how God has been working. The light party in November was a real highlight for me, not just because I love the idea of children coming together to celebrate the light that is Jesus but also because it was the first event I ran here and I was amazed at the offers of help and support I received. It shone through just how important children are to this church and how welcoming and friendly people here are! I've been especially thankful for the children's church team who are so committed. I enjoy leading assemblies in local schools and have also started going into Christ Church School two lunchtimes

a week to do a 1-1 drop in and a group lunch club. I love spending time with the children in the school as it is beginning to build connections with children who we don't (yet!) see at church.

- Prayer is so powerful and it would be great to continue to pray for all the children we have connected to this church, both regular Sunday attenders and also those we come into contact with through school. 
- Please also pray that God would continue to equip and inspire me and us as a team as to how best to serve our children.

Sowing as we reap

Our congregation has been central to the success of the Development Fund. As you give, we also tithe on those donations. Prior to the March Gift Day we have prayerfully given £6,250 to the Bible Society of Egypt, £6,250 to Build Partners and £3500 to Amigos. Here is Ramez Atallah, General Director of the Egypt Bible Society...

Dear friends at Christ Church, thank you so much for partnering with us. We are using the funds to distribute free Bibles and supporting materials in locations in in Upper Egypt, out on the edge of the desert. This area is very remote and families are very poor. For most all



of the children, this was the first time to have their very own Bible. The leaders and people often feel abandoned, forgotten in their isolation, and do not receive the support of various ministries.

When the reps arrived, the people were so encouraged and heartened. They were also encouraged to share. They were told, "You have eleven wonderful items in your new backpack. You need to choose two of the best items, and give them to someone else who doesn't have any Scriptures." As students received their free Bible, they were instructed to gather their siblings and their families regularly and to read to them.

Fr Philemon, of a Coptic Church, also in a very remote area, said: "I had come to the point of despair in my ministry. Your visit, sharing these beautiful resources, encouraging us and showing us how to use them, has renewed my hope. Your visit is like drops of rain in the dry desert."

With warm greetings in Christ and our heartfelt thanks for your generosity.



from
Sam Rich
Development Project Managing Committee Finance Officer

Dinner is Served

The support for the Development Project comes in many guises. Members of the Youth played their part recently...

Our young people wanted to raise money for the church Development Project and I was a little horrified as their ideas snowballed into running a pop-up restaurant around Valentine's Day. They wanted to offer a meal in a romantic setting and provide babysitting, transport and a bar! The leaders helped - Neil even offered his best dinner service, the one he got as a wedding present! So it was that ten couples arrived for food and entertainment.

I was behind the scenes to encourage and guide our ten waiters. This included some anxious moments as one young person ran in and exclaimed "I don't know what to do, my couple are holding hands!" and in another tricky moment "I think we've run out of prawn cocktail, I gave mine to the wrong person and they are eating it!" but all the minor hiccups were overcome and everyone enjoyed the evening. The hundred or so fairy lights did their work, along with the team of chefs headed up by Caroline who prepared slow cooked lamb among other delights. Erin manned the

bar and it was all made possible by the twenty young people who set up the room, made cakes, waited tables, cooked, washed up and entertained.



Music was provided throughout the evening by Talitha, singing and playing keyboards and after the meal, Dillon had everyone laughing with his stand-up comedy, opening with a joke about Mark Hallett turning water into wine! Finally, Adam organised a quiz to round the evening off, with the winning table getting extra chocolate mints to go with the teas and coffees with over £500 raised for the building project.



from
Christian Cole

Extending the work

Christ Church and Christians Against Poverty have been working together for the last five years here in Ware, Hertford and the surrounding villages to deliver a free debt counselling service to our community. We have always felt that we can offer the best service here on our doorstep in Ware as it's easy to invite our wonderful clients to be a part of our church community when they are local and for them to make new friends through Sunday services or Toddlers or Oasis or WAVE or our weekly CAP Café.

We have always had quite a few clients in the Hertford area and so in order to both extend our service by being able to offer more appointments, but also to provide a local support network for Hertford based clients, we have now entered into a partnership with Hertford Baptist Church. This means we have a new addition to the team in the form of the lovely Debs Thompson (below) who joins me as a "Debt Coach" (the name for the person who is trained by CAP to do the finance stuff!)

Here she is to introduce herself:



"Hi, I'm Debs, married to Jon and we have two kids Ciara (13) and Zack (11). We've lived in Hertford since 2006 and attended Hertford Baptist Church since we moved here. I'm really excited to be a part of the CAP family and working alongside Sam, showing the

love of Jesus in our community in a practical way. It's very much been a journey over the last 18 months or so, testing the calling and learning to trust God at each step. Even when there wasn't an income in our house God has provided all that we have needed, even when it wasn't quite in the time frame that we would have liked! When I'm not hockey mum or taxiing kids I enjoy cooking and having folks over to ours, reading, long walks with our dog Molly and the occasional run (was enjoy the right word...?)"

We are already enjoying working together and we are really looking forward to seeing the CAP service grow more. Please pray for Hertford Baptist Church as they set up a team there – particularly for client supporters to go out on visits with Debs. The supporters are the life blood of this ministry as working your way out of debt can be a lonely road and having someone walk it with you to cheer you along can make all the difference! If you're interested in exploring that role for yourself, do get in touch with me (e:samantharich@capuk.org t:07725 607425). Thank you for your support in prayer and practical ways!

If you, or someone you know, would benefit from free debt counselling please call

0800 328 0006



from
Sam Rich

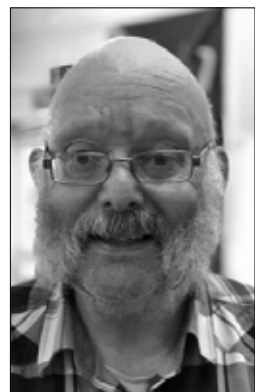
Porter's paraphrase

"Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46: 10)

"Oi, you, stop!" God encourages me and others to take time to spend quality time WITH HIM. Many of us are doing things FOR God, and he appreciates that, but there are times when He just wants us to take time out and spend it with Him, whether that be in prayer, studying His word, or in quiet reflection.

IF we don't take time to rest and replenish ourselves in Him and with Him we'll be like

worn-out batteries; we need to be recharged. By spending time with God, away from our day to day activities we can do this; He is the one who will strengthen us and help us to continue in the race until we reach the finishing line. Take time to stop and spend time with God; it's well worth it!



from
Ron Porter

Answering the age old question

Having taken a test for signs of ageing, Bill reflects on what it means to grow older...

Psalm 71:18 *Even when I am old and grey, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.*

For a number of years I have been very aware of the process of ageing. Just one sign is the fact that policemen seem like schoolboys to me now. Still, looking on the bright side of things, I do have my free bus pass and when I look at Harrison Ford (Indiana Jones) I don't feel quite so old. He's a year older than me. Also, how many grandads do you know, who are playing in a rock band at the age of seventy six? I am.

I remember to feel old when some polite person offers me their seat on a bus or train. My dress sense probably doesn't help much - M&S, Tescos and the Isobel Hospice Charity Shop are places I frequent nowadays, to peruse the latest fashions. Back in the sixties I was 'A Dedicated Follower of Fashion', as The Kinks once sang. I worked in Soho, not far from Carnaby Street, where the fashion designers displayed their latest creations. I walked around the West End of London in my tight Italian trousers, winkle picker shoes, mauve jacket with silver buttons and an olive green shirt with a white collar.



At least when you hit 70-plus you do not have to pretend anymore. I can be as eccentric as I like and it will only be what is expected of an ageing grandad. I may sometimes come over as a grumpy old man, but I am not really. Recently I took a test for signs of ageing. Here are the 16 signs that I am apparently showing:

I feel stiff; I groan when I bend down; I often say 'It wasn't like that when I was young'; I am losing my hair; I do not know any songs in the top ten; I'm getting hairy eyebrows and ears; I talk a lot about aching joints; I choose clothes for comfort, not fashion; I love an afternoon nap; I avoid lifting heavy objects due to back concerns; I prefer listening to Radio 2; I drive much slower than I used to; I have started taking my slippers to friend's houses; I enjoyed going on a 'no children' holiday; my ears seem to be getting bigger.

I looked through some Bible verses to find out what God says about growing old gracefully. Here are some I can recommend if you are going through the aging process like myself:

Proverbs 16:31 *Grey hair is a crown of splendour; it is attained in the way of righteousness.*

Isaiah 46:4 *Even to your old age and grey hairs I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.*

Job 12:12 *Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding?*

2 Timothy 4:7-8 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

Great biblical characters such as Abraham, Moses and Noah had some of their best moments when most of us might be thinking about retirement. So remember there is no age limit to the way that God works and His love never grows old.



from
Bill Foster

I walked around the West End of London in my tight Italian trousers, winkle picker shoes, mauve jacket with silver buttons and an olive green shirt with a white collar.

Journey of Faith



from
**Mrs Evelyn Taylor &
her daughter Julia**

There was a Sunday School in the afternoon and I used to cry because I did not really enjoy it.

Each of us has our own story about God's provision. We invited Mrs Evelyn Taylor and her daughter Julia to share theirs; journeys that have spread over many decades...

Q. Let's start at the beginning. How did you become a Christian?

ET: That happened over eighty years ago! As a child I went to a school in Broxbourne which was a church school. My mother was a committed Christian so God was a natural part of my life ever since I can remember

Q. And how did you come to join Christ Church church?

ET: I actually came into Ware for an 11+ exam at the Ware Central School, now known as Christ Church. I passed the exam spent my secondary school days there. A few years after getting married, we moved to Ware in 1953 because my husband, Herbert (*below*), found a job here. One of our neighbours, a lovely lady called Mona, simply knocked on the door to welcome us to the neighbourhood and also to invite us to church. I joined straight away and all these years later I am still attending – and living in the same house!

Q. Which brings us to Julia

ET: Yes I was pregnant with Julia when I first attended so you could say she has been going to the church as long as I have. Sadly, Herbert died when Julia was just six years old. He was a very active man but was diagnosed with inoperable cancer and passed away just two weeks later. Through this tragedy, my faith grew stronger. I had nothing else to hang on to; people at church were so kind and



supportive but there is a strength to carry on that only God provides. He has seen me through.

JT: Soon after Daddy died, I remember moving from Musley Infants School to the newly created Christ Church Primary School. I was there on the day it opened as a Primary School. That would have been around 1961.

Q. What are your early memories of six decades of fellowshipping in the same place?

ET: The church building was not much different then to how it was when we all left a few months ago. John Hookway is the sixth vicar in my time. The first was a Reverend Bennett.

JT: As a little girl, I can remember always sitting on the back row in the same place each week. Apparently, I was a bit of a fidget – one lady asked if I had a medical condition I recall.

ET: She was a very good girl actually, very well behaved!

JT: There was a Sunday School in the afternoon and I used to cry because I did not really enjoy it. However, they started Explorers, something for youngsters during the morning service and I was much happier with that. Pathfinders, Camps and House Groups followed and then I helped lead some groups.

We went to a meeting in London and there the words of the hymn "And Can It Be?" became very real to me. There was an Altar

call and as the song says "my chains fell off." I had lost my earthly father but am so grateful that I have a Heavenly one. In fact, to this day, my prayers always start with "Dear Heavenly Father."

Q. Coming back to the present day, what do you think about the current temporary arrangements?

JT: We absolutely love what is being planned for the church building and we also love the temporary arrangements. I think it's splendid, very friendly and intimate.

ET: We look forward to the future and all of us at the 9.15 service feel closer than ever. I'm glad people are thinking about how we can share the new facilities with the community.



Q. Are there any particular bible verses that have meant most to you?

ET: I read the scriptures every morning. Psalm 91 is a favourite of mine; the Lord promises to protect you under all circumstances. I hold on to the words that speak about how He will save those who love Him. I believe that.

JT: Psalm 139 talks about God knitting us together in our mother's womb. I actually love knitting and so that passage speaks to me. There are lots of verses that I love but I'd like to mention all the leaders and helpers of those



clubs and groups I attended. Their kindness and support is precious to me. I'd encourage anyone who serves today to remember that you are really helping people come to know God.

Q. Compared to you two, most of us are relatively new to the faith! What advice can you give us?

JT: God is faithful and no experience with Him is wasted. Mum and I have both had cancer and God sustained us through that and indeed many other challenges. Our experiences enable us to empathise, support and sustain other people.

ET: Pray. God is always right and always gives you what is best for you.

Q. And a message to your fellow Christians at church?

ET: People have been wonderful to us. We have felt loved, sometimes in surprising, practical ways.

JT: I'd encourage everyone to be real with God.



Our experiences enable us to empathise, support and sustain other people.



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Quantum of Malice

A Murder Mystery

Join us for an evening of serious fun and sleuthing!



Saturday 18th May 2019
7pm Christ Church School

Hosted by Neil & Judith Greaves

Further details to follow!

A fundraising event for the Development Project.

Ware Choral Society presents
SAMSON
G.F. Handel

7.30pm Saturday 8th June 2019

The Drill Hall, Amwell End, Ware. SG12 9HP

Tickets from Cannon Travel (49 High St),
Society members or on the door.

Or email pauline@warechoral.org.uk



Escape! A Festival of Hope

In September, we were part of a highly ambitious outreach event shared with a number of local churches. Six months later, we reflect on its impact and talk to some of those involved – and affected-by it.....



A Big Vision

As far back as 2016, several of us were having conversations about a big vision to share the gospel message with a large crowd of people. Love Ware Live Ware had been in place for a decade and we wanted to build on that momentum and relationships built through Emmanuel Shared Church, CAP, toddlers, and other ministries.

We dreamt of a culturally-relevant event with good food and music that would take place in the heart of the community that we serve. Whereas many of our activities aim to show the love of God through action, we wanted to be more direct about Jesus, to give a clear gospel message and the opportunity to receive Him.

Over the next few months this vision took shape and the name was inspired by conversations with local PCSOs, who recounted the feelings of people in the community as being "trapped" without hope.



One policeman remarked that "this event reminds me of why I wanted to be a police officer, working in the community".



Bill Griffiths:
I thoroughly enjoyed being involved. I've learnt that God uses all of our life skills for His purposes. Giving something back is a way for me to show my gratitude for all that God has done for me.



Over 600 people enjoyed Escape!

Making it Happen

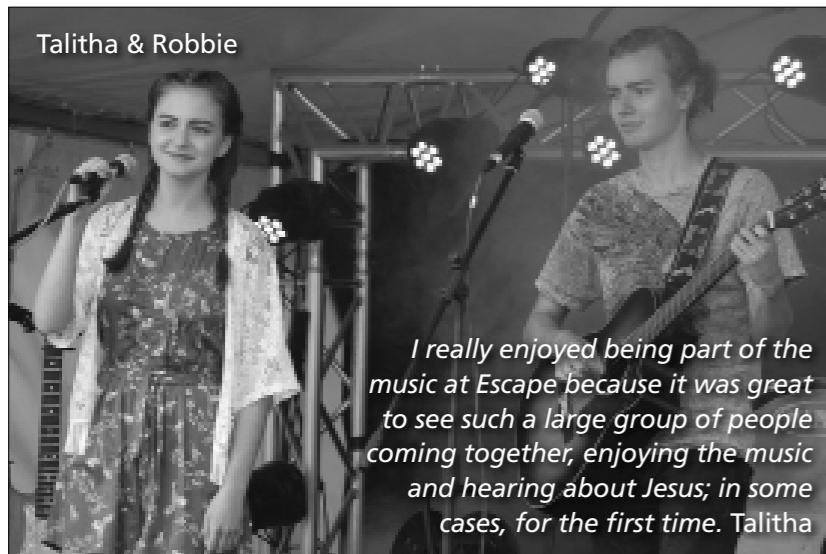
I was one of the team that was inspired by Caroline's vision and leadership. We needed the support of all Ware's ministers, along with the time and skills of many volunteers. We felt King George Field was the ideal location, large enough to host something of this scale, so the committee walked and prayed round the site, working out how a large crowd could be safely accommodated.

Council rules dictate that special licencing is required for attendance greater than 499 people, yet our vision was for a significantly larger crowd to hear the gospel message. Therefore we had to apply for a full "Premises Licence", akin to getting planning-permission! This was one of many examples of God's blessing. With the requirement of advertising the application, and notices having to be placed at the field entrances for a month, we expected opposition to a "religious festival". We posted, prayed, and waited. Not one single objection was received! A licence for an event for 1200 people was granted. Praise the Lord!

It was clear that the event would need to be constructed, run, and de-rigged in the space of a single day. No small challenge!



from
Sam Woodward and the Escape Team



Talitha & Robbie

I really enjoyed being part of the music at Escape because it was great to see such a large group of people coming together, enjoying the music and hearing about Jesus; in some cases, for the first time. Talitha

Sound and Vision

Providing the right mix of music and message would be important to keep festival guests engaged.



Weather Eye

We always knew that the festival would have to look and sound good; we wanted to ensure that a Christian event had high production values, as that is part of the witness and helps folks feel able to respond without cringe. An "altar-call" was planned to take place at sunset, followed by more live music to cover the response time. Therefore the stage needed to look as bright and colourful as any other music festival once daylight faded. Sound and lights were planned and, following conversations with the engineers at NewWine, we adopted the same noise-monitoring systems they use, to ensure that we'd be on the right side of the council-appointed noise-inspector.



The Trees

The stage itself was another prayer answered. In July a modular stage suddenly became available, meaning that we wouldn't need to expend budget on hiring one. Many thanks to Neil Pearce, Bill Griffiths and Eddie Saxton for taking on the challenge of assembling it so rapidly! Hay-bale seating and a hog-roast/BBQ completed the site, and whilst we had wet-weather contingencies, we were blessed with perfect weather all day.



Andy Connolly & band

Lucy: I was invited to Escape by Sam Rich who is my CAP supporter. Having gotten into a bad place in my life, the event did a lot for me and my children. It was such a lot of fun and I appreciated that speakers shared personal stories that have helped get me into a much more positive frame of mind. Since then I have been coming to church quite regularly and have felt really welcomed and accepted.



Sally Bannister of East Herts Police: *...what a super event. Everybody appeared to be having a lovely time and the event seemed to run very well.*



Steve Wade: *Well-before, during and after Escape, you've continued to go and tell friends, family & community. Because of your courage, many have started a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.*



The free hog-roast and BBQ: run by volunteers from St Mary's

Carl Beech: *You did an amazing job. It was a tremendous turn out and I would be delighted to be involved again.*



Teamwork

During the two years of planning the line-up of musicians changed several times, testing our faith that God would provide the right people. He did. Another early answer to prayer was that we were able to book evangelist Carl Beech as the headline speaker. Not only did his accessible style fit with the audience we were expecting, but he brought along Arf White, former power-lifting world-champion, whose testimony about being saved from a life of drugs, violence and attempted suicide was very powerful.



Carl Beech & Arf White

Steve Wade created training for counsellors, so that when the "altar-call" came after the gospel message everyone was appropriately looked after. Miracles continued to happen during that response, from linguists being available, to men reduced to tears by the recognition that the Good News was for them too. God blessed this event.

A huge thank you to the 120 volunteers, from all of Ware's Churches, who were involved in all aspects of Escape: from prayer to publicity, from catering to caring for responders, from stewards to stage-builders. The teamwork was fantastic.



Ed: *My family attended Escape. We were already committed Christians but we were so impressed by seeing how mission focussed Christ Church is that it gave us the idea to join!*



Jessie Dipper

Final thoughts

Looking back, Escape was incredible. It created its own community. A lot of people joined forces and it feels like God's plan was to sow seed. Perhaps some of us expected dozens of new people to start attending each and every church in town but something different has happened. It feels to me that the results of Escape are still ahead. People still talk to me often about the blessing that Escape provided which is wonderful.

The council immediately approached us about doing another one. I am sure that will happen in the future. It will need a new leader of course! Everyone involved felt that the huge effort was worthwhile because 698 people shared a communal experience.

In the meantime, in 2019 LoveWare:LiveWare will host three community fun-days on Bank-Holiday Saturdays. It's fun to be part of the volunteer team, and there are many different roles. So why not join the team as we continue our programme of outreach, sharing God's love in the community through accessible events.

11am - 4pm

loveWare:liveWare

Ware's Churches together serving the community for over 12 years

4th May
Community Fun Day at King George Field

25th May
Community Fun Day at Lower Bourne Gardens

24th August
Community Fun Day at King George Field

...and throughout the year a programme of mid-week care-home visiting.

More information, and volunteer sign-up at: www.lovetolive.org

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and it's all FREE!

The Last Word



from
Carol Walker

Each issue, we are handing over the back page of the magazine to someone to give the final word. This time it is Carol who has just left us for new adventures.

I woke up with a sense of excitement on Boxing Day. Planning for Christmas had been complicated, not least because I am single, my family and long-standing friendship base is Lincoln, and my established deep relationships from forty years in Christian ministry are scattered globally. Six years after moving to Ware to join the tutorial staff at All Nations Christian College, but now retired, I was planning to return to my home town. However, in late November my property purchase hit all kinds of snags raising the question of whether I should remain in Ware and with the Christ Church community. With the festive season came a time of uncertainty.



All Nations Tutor Group

Deputy Warden was a lovely way to encounter church family from both congregations. When I needed radiotherapy after surgery MADD made sure I had drivers for my daily journeys: opportunity for testifying what a live church is like amidst teasing about arriving with a different man every day! I have also been enriched through Midweek and Life Group fellowship, as in trusting relationships, people have dared to be vulnerable and open to the work of God's Spirit through the prayer of others. And it has been a particular privilege to attend some CAP visits: I have felt like an intern at the feet of giants!

The resolution? Unexpectedly at New Year I heard that a property I have twice tried to view was back on the market. It is lovely. I move in at the end of February!! I will miss you, but am sure that just as our faithful God has led and provided for me, the same remains true for Christ Church in this exciting period of change. We still share the journey enriched through all we have learned from one another. I thank Him for you.



Volleyball at All Nations

So I was at Christ Church for wonderful Christmas services, but spent Christmas Day with established friends an hour's drive away.

Then I woke with that bubble of excitement, wondering how God was going to resolve the conundrum of stay or go. I was happy with either. I have been enriched by gradually getting to know members of Christ Church (even with your Home Counties reserve). I have liked living in the parish and having little chats with others coming and going to church as I walked to the 11am service. Being

Christ Church, New Road, Ware, Hertfordshire. SG12 7BS

Vicar: Revd John Hookway (487267- ext 204) **Curate:** Revd Caroline Keightley (487267- ext 205)

Associate Minister: Revd Norman Richards (01763 289720)

Youth Pastor: Christian Cole (487267- ext 203) **Operations Manager:** Martin Dudley (487267- ext 200)
Church Wardens: Cheryl Bevan (01992 538257) & Bob Barker (01279 842821) **Treasurer:** Sam Rich (438437)

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