

**The North Cumbria Pastorate
of United Reformed Churches
Bewcastle - Brampton - Carlisle**

BRIDGE

May 2019



Carlisle Passion Play - Saturday 13th April

Contacts and Sunday Service Pattern

THE MINISTER

The Revd Nick Mark
156 Lowry Hill Road

CARLISLE

CA3 0ER

Telephone: 01228 526162

Email: nmark@keme.co.uk

THE KNOWE CHURCH

BEWCASTLE

Services: 1.45pm on the first Sunday in the month

Contact: Mrs Doreen Telford

Telephone: 016977 48248

BRAMPTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

13 MAIN STREET

BRAMPTON

Services: 9.30am on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month

Contact: Mrs Barbara Laird

Telephone: 016977 2376

ST. GEORGE'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

WEST WALLS

CARLISLE

CA3 8UF

www.urccarlisle.org

Services: 11.00am every Sunday

Contact: Mrs Rosalind Fearon

Telephone: 016973 44892

Email: rosrayfearon@talktalk.net

When there is a fifth Sunday in the month

the Service is for the whole Pastorate

Usually at 11.00am at St George's

(Check the North Cumbria Pastorate Services list)

From the Minister

Dear Friends,

I write this after a really uplifting Palm Sunday joint service at Carlisle Cathedral and it was a real joy not just to see so many folk there but to feel the Holy Spirit at work among us all. This followed a very moving Passion Play the day before which had an amazing effect on all who witnessed it. My thanks go to all of our congregations who facilitated an excellent joint effort by a number of churches. It was good to see how the venture crossed so many boundaries with folk from the Brampton area taking part as well as some of the newer churches. For those who wonder what all the fuss is about trying to work ecumenically such events demonstrate what co-operation can achieve which no church working alone could hope to bring about.

Our services in May focus on the theme of unity. Our Gospel passage covering the first 19 verses of John 21 enables us to reflect on how Jesus can and does turn lives around. On the 12th of May we will see what the resurrection can mean with the story in Acts 9 verses 36-43 of the raising of Tabitha. It emphasises something which our churches take great pride in and that is how we implement Christ's teaching that we should care for others. On the 19th of May in looking at Acts 11 verses 1-18 and the story of Peter and Cornelius we can clearly see how the Holy Spirit strives to show us how to overcome human divisions. Finally on the 26th of May Acts 16 verses 9-15 ask us to reflect on how visions are one of the signs of divine initiative. Here Paul found on his mission to Macedonia that the groundwork had already been done by folk like the Gentile Lydia. We need also to bear in mind that the 12th of May sees the start of Christian Aid week which I often describe as the practical outreach of the Christian faith.

The Lent courses offered in March and April together with the various services and events already mentioned have given us a good base on which to build up joint outreach. There are many

challenges to resolve. Brampton Churches Together are looking for a Secretary as is Carlisle Churches Together (see the CTIC report later in this issue). If anyone feels a burning call to take up either of these key posts please have a word with me.

April of course saw two of our Pastorate churches holding their Annual Church Meetings. It is always good to give thanks for the past year and to pray for the coming year. Our publication date prevents me writing about Brampton's meeting but I can helpfully comment on St George's Annual Meeting. It was good that we could show appreciation for George Murrin's 50 years service as an Elder as he stood down as a serving Elder. It was good to rejoice in the fact that Will Lindsay has agreed to become a serving elder. One important post remains vacant and that is for Area and Synod Representative. If anyone is interested in taking up this key post in a time of great change do have a word with either Rosalind or myself. I highlight this because it is important that the congregation has someone to speak for them as we move into a new relationship with the other URC Churches in Cumbria in the form of a Missional Partnership.

With every Blessing
Nick Mark

Churches Together in Carlisle

The Annual General Meeting of Churches Together in Carlisle was held at St George's URC on Thursday 28th March 2019 at 7.30pm and Tony and myself hosted the event. Our President Stuart Wilkinson opened the meeting and our opening devotions were led By Deacon Sarah on the theme of Ephesians 3 verse 14.

Sadly the meeting was sparsely attended with only representatives of the Border Kirk, Methodist Church, Roman Catholic Church and ourselves present although we were joined by one lay Anglican later. Not unusual I suppose for an AGM!

- A number of matters of interest to us came up in Matters Arising:
- a) The project Rosalind has been working on with Louise Dias has taken a step forward. **That is to develop our contact with local care homes.** The CTIC have, it was said, a dismal record on this with only 8 Care homes having a regular act of worship provided by a local church. Fortunately we are one of the eight with our monthly service at Croftfield. That is in addition to the Ecumenical Service Rosalind runs with Elizabeth at St Georges for Dementia sufferers and their carers. Each church is to have ten names to contact by telephone or visit to assess need and then we need to talk to all the Churches to see who if any are prepared to conduct services in homes and on what frequency. The suggestion was festival services to begin with
 - b) **John Street Hostel:** Regular visits are still taking place and are very much welcomed.
 - c) **Water Street Hostel:** It was discovered as a result of visits to the John Street Hostel that some of the men who visit that hostel also have children in the Water street hostel. Hopefully visits by CTIC could be arranged to Water Street when we have enough volunteers. In the meanwhile it was agreed to spend £50 on Easter eggs for the children at Water Street.
 - d) **Interfaith:** The meal had gone well and it was felt we should participate in the Unity Day by providing a Chaplaincy stall setting out the forms of Chaplaincy offered by CTIC Churches
 - e) **Future Events:**
 - 1) *Passion Play.* This was looking to be a superb piece of outreach and all churches had been sent lists for folk to sign up as volunteers in different aspects.
 - 2) The *November Interfaith Meal* was welcomed again but Deacon Melanie wanted more presence of Church members! The Juggler to be booked £70 and hire of Centre £53 was agreed.

- 3) *Question Time*. It is hoped to hold this event in October and Richard Corrie is willing to chair the grill the leaders event!
 - 4) *Christian Aid Concert* St John's London Road 7pm on 20th June 2019.
 - 5) From the Heart of the City Mission Community planning team had come the concept of *Coffee Church* at the Costa by the Station from 6.30pm to 7.30pm on 2nd May 2019. A further evening is being planned for June on the theme of Climate Change.
 - 6) David Pitkeathly's wife Sarah a Community worker with Stanwix Parish Church spoke about the big concert at the Border Kirk in aid of *Compassion*. Tickets are available at £10 per head from Sarah on 07428153807 or email sarahpitkeathly@outlook.com She asked Churches to really give this event a plug because of the singer as well as the charity.
- f) *Emergency Accommodation Fund*. An interesting debate took place about CTIC setting this up for when the regular hostels were full and the idea of churches paying for such folk to stay at the roadhouse Band B in London road was floated and claiming the money back on production of a receipt. The idea of churches running a night shelter was discussed. No firm decision made.

Finance: The Annual accounts were approved. The balance at the end of the year was £2031. It was agreed to ring fence the £150 from Fischy Music for future events for young people. Since then the Christmas market had taken £1145 with expenses of £745.

The demand for **Annual Subs** had not gone out till we fix the amount. It was decided to leave it at £50 for a church of 50 plus members and for those below a donation would be requested remembering out of the subs we pay Churches Together in Cumbria £15 per head per member Church.

President's Report: Stuart picked out various highlights. The Interfaith Meal. The recent memorial/solidarity service in the Market Square for the Christchurch victims and families. John Street hostel, and challenged the Churches to do more. The Christmas Artisan Market was a new idea and a real opportunity to offer witness. More new volunteers had come forward. We need to think about how we can build upon this. Fischy Music was a success. Stuart thanked the Exec and asked for new members. He felt honoured to lead the prayers at Remembrance 100 years on from 1918 and was thrilled to present the Bible to the New Mayor who is using it! He looks forward to his second Year.

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS:

Vice President: Superintendent David Newlove

Treasurer: David Robinson agreed to continue in this role

Secretary: This post remains vacant and Member churches were urged to try and find a candidate. Deacon Mel had done the job for 4 years and agreed to remain in post until June 2019 to give time for a successor to be found.

REPORTS: The only report came from the Street Pastors who although gaining some new recruits really need more to maintain the operation. Kathy Howe is prepared to come and give talks to Church groups on their work.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: There was only one item and that was that Deacon Sarah wanted all the knitters in our churches to start knitting Christmas Angels again. They will not go to the City Centre this year but other options are being explored such as The Hospice or hospital among other venues.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING 12th June 2019, St George's, 7.30pm

DATE OF FOLLOWING MEETING 26th September Venue to be agreed (Probably The Convent)

Nick Mark

Sunday 31st March 2019

A Reflection On The 2019 Church Leaders Lent Walk

In the North of Cumbria we were allocated Bishop James and, because I serve in 4 proposed Mission Communities, there were opportunities for most of our congregations to meet with the Bishop.

What though was the real purpose of this countywide tour? It was certainly a gruelling schedule for all the Church Leaders involved and was far from being a quiet stroll.

Quite often Leaders of any organisation are accused of being aloof from the rank and file and remote from what is really happening. Here then was a real opportunity for Church leaders to see some of the exciting things happening both in churches and in the community.

It was also a good opportunity for Church Leaders to meet not just ministers, but of greater importance, members of congregations. It gave folk like Lay preachers, Elders and Pulpit Supply Secretaries a chance to air their joys and problems and worries about the future with the folk that guide the future of the traditional Church in our County. The walk began in Brampton at Brampton URC on the 13th of April at 8.30am and finished in Brampton at the Methodist Church on Wednesday the 10th April in the evening.

It was the turn of the Heart of the City Mission Community to look after Bishop James on that first day of the 13th in Carlisle in the afternoon and evening and your minister was most grateful to Tony Wiseman for turning out with his camera! St George's Elders are also most grateful to their counterparts at Penrith for releasing our minister from attending the Penrith Annual Church meeting which conflicted with the visit. In the evening Bishop James presented an award to a long serving member of the British Legion at a Civic function.

The result of the visits over the County have yet to be fully analysed at this stage but it was immediately obvious to see the following:

- a) Groups of Churches of different denominations working together to reach people outside the Church or on the fringes of the church
- b) Groups of Churches coming to terms well with the changes in stipendiary ministry resulting in congregations taking on more themselves and doing it well. This is not just finance driven but often driven by a genuine shortage of ministers
- c) A much greater involvement by the Church in its own local community and in contexts that were previously alien to the Church. The technical term for this is *fresh expressions*
- d) A much wider acceptance of the reality of the 21st Century namely that the church has to seek new blood not wait for new folk to walk through the door.
- e) To gain publicity for the God for All Strategy. This was achieved and the many conversations with people along the way have helped people engage more with their local church.
- f) To see how Mission Communities were interpreting their role in a wide variety of contexts.

Nick Mark

Saturday 13th April 2019

Safeguarding In Our Churches 2019

After all of the negative publicity many denominations have suffered, where safeguarding has not been given the priority it should have been, the URC have spent a great deal of time updating its Good Practice Guide and we are soon promised a new edition.

Why you might wonder? Well many folk are under the impression still that Safeguarding relates only to children. When the Care Act 2014 came into force those who needed to be safeguarded increased hugely in number because not only are children covered but also vulnerable adults.

There are a number of definitions of what a Vulnerable Adult is. One I found helpful was this: *A person who is 18 years of age or over, and who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.*

There are extremes of course of this we see in our own country with cases of modern slavery. Just recently our synod asked us to look out for cases of folk being exploited in car washes and nail bars. With prosecutions in both Carlisle and Penrith we cannot say this only happens in the big cities.

A number of us attended a Safeguarding Course held at Penrith URC on Tuesday 9th April run by our Synod safeguarding Officer Julie Rafferty, and this article tries to highlight some of the key things our churches need to do as soon as possible. Safeguarding includes the obvious like making sure you have done a risk assessment for any service or event you organise. A lot of safeguarding is commonsense and you should if you have doubts speak to the Safeguarding officer in your Church if you have any issues. We can't dodge this issue because our Church Insurers require us to implement policies otherwise if there is a claim we won't be covered.

What was news to many of us at the training was that the URC Mission Council have now issued guidance on who needs to be checked before they can lead worship, run events etc. The reason for this guidance is a tightening of the rules introduced by the Charity Commission. Up till now all ministers both active and retired who lead worship have had to be checked as have all Lay Preachers. Now the requirement is being broadened to include all Serving Elders and leaders of Church groups. Fortunately you don't have to be computer literate to organise these checks and simply have a word with your Safeguarding Officer in your Church as to how a check can be made. If you don't know who your Safeguarding officer is please speak to your Church secretary.

Also each Church needs to review its safeguarding policy every year to see if it still fits the needs of your church. There are implications for groups who hire your church buildings and you must be careful to use with all lettings the standard agreements provided by Synod.

All the URC Churches in Cumbria are making an effort to care for vulnerable adults. The best example is our aim to have a Dementia friend in everyone of our churches as soon as possible.

By its nature this article is only an introduction to what is a huge area but we have to get a grasp of this as our insurers are getting much tougher and more important because we want to protect the people we serve.

Nick Mark

Saturday 13th April 2019

Mission Community Update

The Closing date for copy for this edition of 'Bridge' prevents me commenting upon the Archdeacon's visit to our pastorate on the 28th of April when we have a Pastorate service.

The Carlisle Area Steering Group which was to meet on the 30th of April has been wound up for the very positive reason that plenty is now happening among all the Carlisle Churches to demonstrate that folk are working on forming meaningful Mission Communities.

The 17th of April saw the first meeting of the Ministers who will be involved in setting up the Bewcastle/Longtown Mission Community. This has been delayed simply because of a lack of Anglican clergy in the area which has been resolved with the appointments at Arthuret and Bewcastle. Please pray for this new venture.

Finally Archdeacon Lee Townend has launched a Deanery wide Mission Community meeting at which all leaders both lay and ordained are invited to share joys and problems.

The first meeting took place on the 26th March and it was fascinating to see how much variety of approach there is in each potential Mission Community. One key thing stuck in my mind and that was how important prayer is in the whole process. Archdeacon Lee reminded us all of Isaiah 30 verse 15: *In turning back and settling down you'll find deliverance; in calm and reliance will be your strength.*

Nick Mark

Sunday 14th April 2019

Data Protection and 'Bridge'

I write this as editor of 'Bridge' and newly appointed Data 'Lead' in connection with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). The concern here is the use of names of private individuals (not ministers or contact people for the churches in the pastorate) in 'Bridge'. We do not publish addresses etc anyway.

'Bridge' in printed form is distributed to the membership of the three churches of the pastorate and to a handful of friends. Importantly, it is also published on St George's website and on the websites of Tithe Barn Methodists and Wigton Road Methodist Church, meaning that it can be viewed worldwide by anyone with internet access. This has implications:

1. For St George's: Members have been polled for permission to retain their full names, addresses and telephone numbers in church records and to publish them in our yearly report booklet. If anyone wants their permission NOT to extend to publication in 'Bridge' (name only) we need to be told. In the meantime Christian and surnames are published in our duty lists and reports as in the past.
2. For Bewcastle and Brampton: We are not aware that any such permission has been sought and recorded so, in accordance with received advice, surnames are excluded from duty lists and reports.

Peter Day

From the Churches

Brampton

Services at Brampton in May

Our service at 9.30am on Sunday 12th, the beginning of Christian Aid Week, will be led by our Minister the Revd Nick Mark and on 26th May the Revd Steve Collis will lead the service.

Report on Lent Lunch on Wednesday 27th March

Our minister was speaker on the theme 'Wilderness Stories'. Barbara Laird provided the soup. Helpers this morning were Barbara, Nanette, Vera, Margaret and Shirley. Many thanks to all involved.

Palm Sunday Service at Carlisle Cathedral

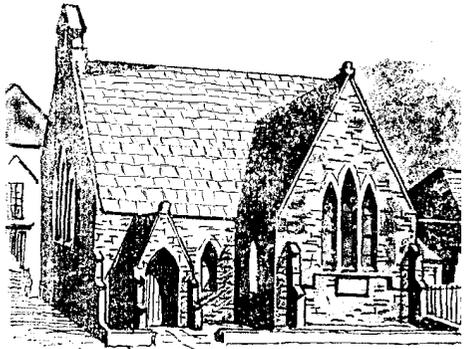
Barbara and Nanette attended this morning. Meeting up with folks at St George's and processing to St Cuthbert's for a short service before heading to the Cathedral for the lovely Palm Sunday Service.

Fundraising

Our Coffee Morning in Church on the 27th March with raffle, raised £125. Thanks to all who contributed in any way.

Christian Aid Week

12th - 18th May. This year the focus is maternal and child health in Sierra Leone.
"All mums should live".



On Friday 17th May there will be an Ecumenical Coffee Morning in the Moot Hall from 9.30am. Our church will be providing the raffle as we usually do. Could any donations kindly be brought to our service on 12th May or taken on the day.

Coffee Morning in Church on Wednesday 29th May

As always the proceeds of this coffee morning from 9.30am to 11.30am will go to Christian Aid.

News of the Fellowship

We congratulate Bill who celebrated his 87th birthday on the 19th of April.

Brampton Duty Rotas for May

Stewarding: Barbara & John

Flowers: Barbara

Dates in May for your Diary

17th 9.30am Ecumenical Coffee Morning in the Moot Hall for Christian Aid

29th 9.30am Coffee Morning in Church, for Christian Aid (Brampton URC)

Shirley

Carlisle

St George's Services

May 5th 11.00am Service organised by Worship Group

May 12th 11.00am (NM)

May 19th 11.00am Christian Aid Service (Daryll Hall)

May 26th 11.00am Communion (Revd Iain Mackenzie)

June 2nd 10.45am Join with Tithe Barn Methodists

Readers

May 5th Ian Moonie

May 12th Marjorie Lawson

May 19th Olive Cronie

May 26th Elizabeth Mackenzie

June 2nd At the Tithe Barn

Duty Rota

	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Steward</u>
May 5th	Tony Wiseman	Pamela Martin
May 12th	Trevor Irwin	Jessie Overs
May 19th	Moira Wales	Deborah Usher
May 26th	Olive Cronie	Kathleen Harris
June 2nd	Marjorie Lawson	Valerie Barlow

Communion Duty

Preparation

Serving

Flowers

May 5th	Margaret Graham
May 12th	Moira Wales
May 19th	Kathleen & George Murrin
May 26th	Jean Frizell & Deborah Usher
June 2nd	At the Tithe Barn

Saturday Coffee Morning

May 4th	Elizabeth & Iain Mackenzie
May 11th	Rosalind Fearon & Kathy Craig
May 18th	Valerie Barlow & Pamela Martin
May 25th	Jessie & Michael Overs
June 1st	Kathleen Harris & Moira Wales

June/July Edition Magazine Photocopying and Collation

Week commencing	Monday 20th May
	Pamela Martin & Jessie Overs

From St. George's Secretary

News of Members

We remember in our prayers all of those who are unwell or no longer able to come to church.

April has been a busy month with the Passion Play, Lent services and all the extra services associated with Holy Week. It was particularly good to share a simple service with some people who have dementia. We incorporated Bible readings and well-known hymns covering Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, and our guests knew every word of the hymns. Morrison's kindly donated chocolate eggs for everyone, so they went home with palm crosses and Easter eggs.

The Dementia Tea service on 21st May is during Dementia Awareness Week. David Pitkeathly will be leading the service and he is planning to invite the Cumberland News along to generate some publicity. If you are able, please do come along to give added support.

Thank you to everyone who came to the final Wednesday Lent Service in the Cathedral at which Nick was the speaker. I am sure he appreciated our presence.

From the AGM

George Murrin was presented with a 50 year service certificate in recognition of his faithful and much appreciated contribution to the life of St George's as an elder. Thank you, George. George is now joining the ranks of non-serving elders, together with Jean Graham and Alan Burgess.

The church meeting voted unanimously to elect Will Lindsay as a serving elder. Will was ordained as an elder at Sanderstead URC and he has just transferred his membership to St George's. We welcome Will and Marian into our fellowship and thank them for their willingness to support St George's.

Hospice at Home was adopted as the Margaret Dowell Penny Jar charity for 2019.

Rosalind Fearon

St George's Notes

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all Members for their continued support of St George's, through financial contributions and fellowship, during the past twelve months. This generosity has been greatly appreciated.

We look forward to the important work of our Church progressing into the future, and send every blessing to you all in the coming year.

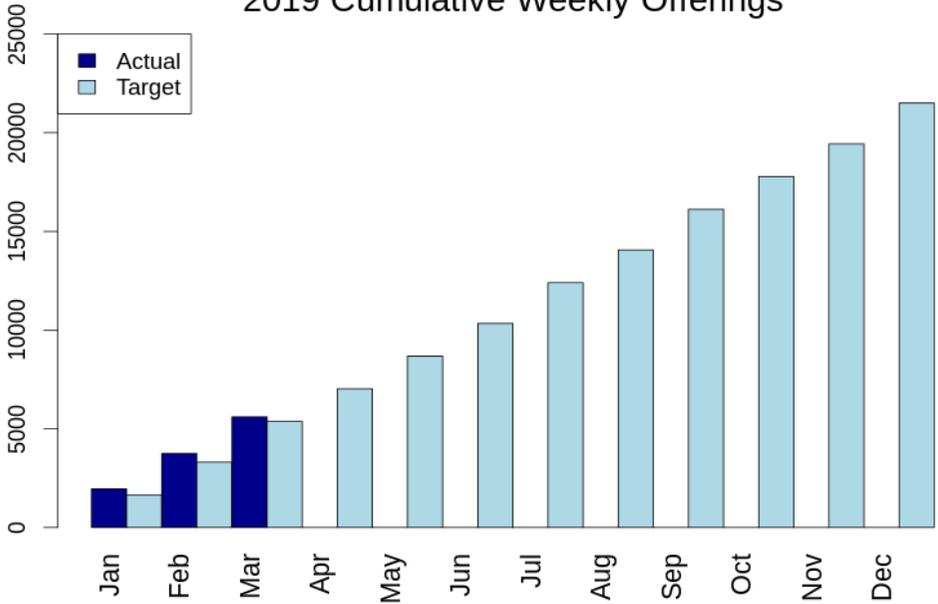
John Ware (*Treasurer*)

Michael Overs (*Chair, Finance & Property Committee*)

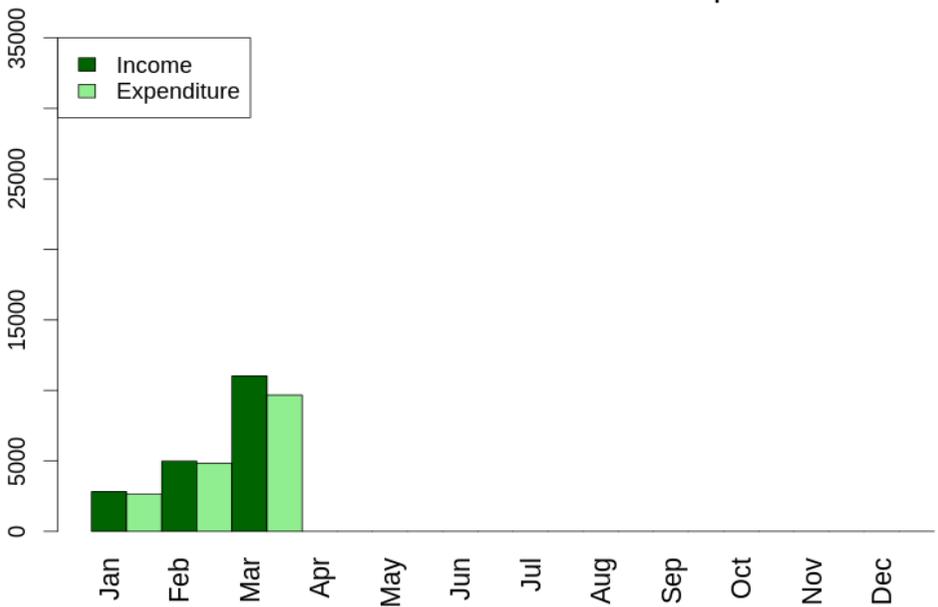
Our Spring Gift Day, held on Sunday 24th March, was a tremendous success, when the sum of £2,385.00 was raised. This is a wonderful result, and I would like to convey appreciation to all Members for their generous contributions in achieving this total.

Pamela Martin (*Gift Aid Secretary*)

St. George's URC Carlisle 2019 Cumulative Weekly Offerings



2019 Cumulative Total Income / Expenditure



Jesus-shaped Church: Combating Survivalism

*NW Synod's Mission & Discipleship Team
Lawrence, Dave, Darren & Daleen*

Survivalism is killing the church of Jesus Christ *(March 2019)*

Dave Fraser writes:

Because we are desperate for the church not to falter on our watch, we can become obsessed with the survival of our church.

How many church meetings result in someone saying we need to do something to attract new people? Often our zeal to grow the church is less to do with enthusiasm for sharing the good news and more about ensuring the survival of the church. For reasons to do entirely with our psychology we are desperate for a successful church, which for many means a numerically growing one.

In that great little Scottish film, *Local Hero*, the big oil company informs the minister of the wee kirk on the beach that it wants to purchase it. With eyes gleaming, the vicar says, "You want to buy my church?" and the oil man replies, "Yes sir - but not as a going concern!"

In our hearts we suspect the church we have lived in is no longer a going concern. We suspect that its doomed, but unlike corporal jones we can't say it out loud but its whispered in our hearts and in our hearts we no longer expect to see the glory of the church. We suspect the church is dying but we would desperately like its demise to be after ours. And so we end making choices, decisions for our church that are less about the kingdom and more about palliative care.

"Let's keep hanging on" manifests its self in a reluctance to make changes or take risks, because what if our actions kills the patient? Best let nature take its course and with a bit of luck, it will limp on - a shadow of what it should be, but at least nobody can blame us for killing it.

And although we are desperate not to be blamed, we need it to be someone's fault. I suspect many of us may be angry with God that

God seems to have taken such poor care of his church. But of course, we are not comfortable in blaming God and being angry with him. And so we need to direct our bile and frustration at something else. So it's the minister's fault or the Synod's fault, or the community's fault or society's fault that our church is in the state it's in .

Our church in its striving to be Jesus-shaped can get out of shape. Sometimes our church can become more us-shaped than Jesus-shaped. Our need to see our church survive will kill the church of Jesus Christ.

Lawrence Moore writes:

“Our need to see our church survive will kill the church of Jesus Christ”. Dave’s conclusion is as shocking as it is sobering. It sounds counter-intuitive, doesn’t it? Surely the church’s survival is obviously a good thing? Could this really be true? And if so, how?

There are two reasons. The first is that “our church” is usually and largely our creation, rather than the Holy Spirit’s. We spend a great deal of time, energy and resources making sure that our church suits us. We - the local church - are the decision-makers. We arrange and decorate the building the way we like it, choose hymns that we enjoy singing, call ministers and invite preachers whose preaching we enjoy, and spend our money on the priorities that we identify.

The result is that we end up with a self-selecting membership of people who are happy to go along with our way of doing things. When people don’t flock to join us, it isn’t so much that they’re not interested in following Jesus - it’s that they simply don’t enjoy our way of “doing church”!

The second reason is more sinister: the church frequently looks nothing like Jesus! The tragic truth of history is that it has been possible to be the church and be responsible for the Inquisition, the slave trade, the persecution of the Jews, the oppression of women and children, the Holocaust and Apartheid. Far from being the sign of the new world of the Kingdom of God, the church has been the architect of a life that the Little People - the people whom Jesus put first - experience as hell on earth. In other words, it is possible to be the church and be part of

that from which the world desperately needs saving! Jesus is Good News: churches can be very Bad News indeed.

Jesus-shaped churches begins to emerge when we remember that the church is the one institution/society/club (call it what you want) that does not exist for the sake of its own members. We exist to make a Jesus-shaped difference in the world, and that begins when we put our communities and the poorest and most vulnerable people first. That isn't at all easy. It's something we only discover on our journey of discipleship.

Churches become recognisably like Jesus when we are prepared to look at ourselves in the mirror of people's experience of us and learn from what we see reflected there. That's when we begin to change from institutions that are obsessed with our own survival and become a sign of the Kingdom that Jesus proclaimed. That's when we will be genuinely the church of Jesus Christ - part of the Good News. People are hungry for those sorts of churches!

Daleen ten Cate writes:

During the past week I visited many churches in Lancashire who support Commitment for Life, alongside Revd Dr Kevin Snyman (Programme Officer: URC Global Justice and Partnerships). At one of these meetings we found a group of members just finishing their weekly quiet time, praying. I have to agree with Darren that I learnt afresh that a praying church is a growing church. Maybe not numerically, but spiritually. Prayer is the "engine room" of a Jesus shaped Church, it makes us grow in our being and doing.

Like Dave said, it helps us to make good choices and decisions for our church that are more about the kingdom and less about survival or about palliative care. I found churches this week, that despite financial burdens, still have open and generous hearts for countries that are less fortunate than us in the UK. At one of the Elders meetings a church made a decision to offer their building without charge for Amnesty International's gathering for their annual regional meeting. At another church on Sunday I learnt that they host concerts of

community choirs and every single penny they raise goes to different charities that don't receive any funding from the government. Such as the local hospice, Guide Dogs for the Blind, a home that gives respite to parents whose children have cancer etc. I also walked alongside 35 members this week going through a Dementia Training Awareness course, so that they can support the people who are affected with Dementia in their churches and communities.

So yes, this week I was privileged to experience churches that are Jesus shaped, that would also like to make a Jesus-shaped difference. Churches that know that the Kingdom of God is the world turned upside down for the benefit of the very least, first. That following Jesus and being church is about a life lived on behalf of others, not for ourselves. These are clear signs of combating survivalism.

Darren Holland writes:

In his piece, Dave, helpfully identifies some of the emotions and feelings that drive us into a survivalist culture within our churches. The questions we are left with are how do we move out of that culture into something that is more 'Jesus-shaped' or perhaps even before that we might need to consider can we move out of the culture?

I believe the answer to the latter part of that is a definite yes! The Bible is full of situations of hopelessness where people discover their God given potential to use what they have and move from despair to hope - the widow who reluctantly shares with Elijah the last bit of food she and her son have to live on, the Samaritan woman who meets Jesus at the well, the jailer saved from taking his own life by Peter and John.

So if we can do it, then that leads us to how? Sunday worship is important but it is only one very small part of the week.

I believe the first port of call is for us to re-engage with prayer as a serious part of our discipleship not only individually in our personal times of devotion but corporately. Historically there has never been a significant movement of God's church that hasn't been founded and sustained by consistent prayer. The kind of prayer that reminds

us of Jesus we follow, of God who we worship, of Spirit whose power and presence enlarge our minds and disturb our hearts. This prayer laments, confesses, repents, convicts, celebrates, rejoices, remembers, exalts, praises, intercedes, thanks and doesn't get hung up on the order.

Alongside this we need to get nearer to Jesus. If we want to be shaped like Jesus, look like Jesus, smell like Jesus etc. then we need to be connected to Jesus. Jesus instructed, taught, guided, admonished - he disciplined his friends. They held themselves accountable to him and to each other. They didn't often get it right but they stayed close in the hope that one day they might. Church, we need to commit ourselves to the same - break bread together in your homes, deliberate over his words as best we have them. Reflect on the parables, the kingdom teachings, together and consider how they might help us understand our response to the issues we, and the communities we live in, face daily but aren't actually mentioned in the gospels. Learn together and grow together, bear with one another in love, support one another and ask God to see the value in one another even if you feel like you're from different worlds. There is no substitute for these opportunities - they are God-given and, when led well and handled sensitively, rise above the 'clique-y' label we like to band around and sometimes use as an excuse to protect ourselves.

I don't say these things because I believe the most important thing is to have a nice, happy, feel-good church rather because I believe wholeheartedly that when we intentionally give ourselves over to focused prayer and fellowship we both acknowledge our need for, and submit ourselves to, the way of discipleship that equips and resources us for everything that takes place beyond our church 'bubble'. It might sound all too simple and straightforward but if it were really that easy we'd already be doing it...

Just as Jesus prepared his friends, so we need to come and sit close-by seeking, exploring, praying, learning, growing - readying ourselves to go to, to go with and to go for.

A Busy Saturday

Saturday 13th April saw two major events competing for our attention. The first and more publicised one was of course the **Carlisle Passion Play** organised through local Carlisle churches. The production drew quite large audiences and seem to have been quite a source of inspiration to those who saw them.

Our photographer, Tony, took some photos at the performances and has kindly allowed me to play about with them for this newsletter. Provided they survive the photocopier, the covers of this issue should give some impression of how the play was staged and of the audience it drew. Two of our ladies are here seen helping with refreshments.



The **Roger Jones Worship Works** workshop was the second event competing for our attention. It was a whole day event held in the Applethwaite Centre in Windermere. Olive and I opted to go thinking, in my case at any rate, that it would look at a range of

aspects of worship, possibly dividing into groups to share ideas and experiences, and that we might return with some ideas that could be put into practice when we come to plan worship ourselves.

I have to say that we have not returned with any such ideas. The event proved to be solely concerned with music, neither traditional nor happy-clappy, but rather more in keeping with rehearsed performance, with an element of spontaneity directed by the worship leader by means of private gestures to the instrumentalist(s). This had the cognoscenti expressing ecstasy with their hands and gazing up at the rafters, but left ordinary folk like me scratching their heads.

The day was quite interesting and enjoyable none the less as we were 'entertained' by a very talented musical group. Although we didn't find anything we can use out-of-the-box so to speak, I'm reminded as an engineer, that when you want to put a principle into practice it often helps to think backwards from what someone else has done with it. This may be why parables work as a way of teaching. Roger Jones' book which we have brought back may help us put this idea into practice when we plan Worship.

Peter Day

Commitment for Life

Prayer Partners

May



Almighty God,

Help us proclaim the good news of your love through our every thought and action.

Help us proclaim the good news of your peace through our prayer and worship.

Help us proclaim the good news of your grace through sharing of our fearfulness to stand up for what we know is right.

That your Kingdom may come here on earth.

Central America Update

Supporting young chocolatiers in rural Nicaragua

From coffee to chocolate

In the past decade, climate change has caused uncertainty to small coffee producers from the Jinotega region of Nicaragua. Being so remote, and with limited resources and infrastructure, they are particularly vulnerable. Christian Aid's partner Soppexcca has been promoting a switch to producing cocoa - it's a more resistant crop than coffee and requires less labour to harvest.

In 2010, Soppexcca founded a small chocolate factory, which provided an opportunity for the children of coffee co-operative members to start a new business. Since then, they have achieved more than they ever thought possible.

Youthful energy pays off

Haris Lopez, Evertz Altamirano and Heydi Espino were founding members of the business - all three are children of coffee co-operative members.

Haris explains: "In 2010, we were invited to a training course. Soppexcca asked us if we wanted to develop a business idea. Our idea was to build a chocolate factory. We had zero experience, but our dreams were big!"

"In the beginning, it was 10 of us, but not all of us had the same level of interest. Little by little, the group was reduced until finally, it was only three of us."

The group faced challenges making chocolate in Jinotega, where there was little local demand. However, they continued to develop more popular products and test the market. With help from Christian Aid, they developed a brand - 'Rustikao' - and spoke to international experts who helped the group refine their production processes.

An award-winning chocolate

In November 2017 Haris, Evertz and Heydi took their chocolate to the Regional Central American Competition of the International Chocolate Awards.

Evertz says: "We entered the competition as Rustikao, with samples of our orange-flavoured chocolate and our dark chocolate. There was an international jury, with experts from the United States, Guatemala and Argentina. Our two chocolates won bronze medals in each of their categories!"

It was a breakthrough for a factory that is about much more than making chocolate. The business is entirely local: from the crop to the processing, packaging and selling. The Rustikao brand represents their community on an international stage.

Haris says: “This project has helped us improve our quality of life, not only for ourselves, but also for our families. We have steady jobs, we receive support to study and get training.

“It has given us an opportunity to excel, and to overcome hardships, as we come from low-income families.

“The most important thing for me is that we are seen as role models for our communities, as we were part of a group of young people who received support to develop business ideas, and ours was the only one to get this far.”

Heydi agrees that it has made a huge difference to her life.

“When I began this journey I was only 16 years old; I was so young and I wasn’t sure if all of this was going to work. But

time has gone by and we have proven that we are capable, we have learned and we have moved forward. And we will keep working hard, and see where all of this will take us.”

Their business success, training and skills have created opportunities that would have been unimaginable when the project started. Thanks to the awards, chocolate making in Jinotega is on the map. We hope their business goes from strength to strength.



Diversifying into cocoa production makes this traditional coffee-growing region more resilient to climate change

Dates for your Diary

May

2nd	2.00pm	St George's Women's Guild. PC Diane Irving Dog Handler
5th	11.00am	Service at St George's led by Worship Group
12th		Christian Aid Week (12th - 18th)
17th	9.30am	Ecumenical Coffee Morning for Christian Aid (Moot Hall, Brampton)
17th	6.30pm	TV Quiz & Supper Night at St George's
21st	2.00pm	Dementia Tea Service at St George's
29th	9.30am	Coffee Morning for Christian Aid (Brampton URC)

Please note that the date of a service at Crofffield Care Home has yet to be arranged

North Cumbria Pastorate Services

The Knowe Church, Bewcastle

May	5th	1.45pm	(NM)
June	2nd	1.45pm	(NM)

Brampton URC, Main Street, Brampton

May	12th	10.30am	(NM)
May	26th	10.30am	(Revd Steve Collis)

St George's URC, West Walls, Carlisle

May	5th	11.00am	Service arranged by Worship Group
May	12th	11.00am	(NM)
May	19th	11.00am	Christian Aid Service (Daryll Hall)
May	26th	11.00am	Communion (Revd Iain Mackenzie)
June	2nd	10.45am	Join with Tithe Barn Methodists

Bridge

Please note that material for the two month June & July issue of Bridge should be in the hands of the editor by

Sunday 12th May

Articles may be emailed to deepray@btinternet.com

