

Christward

The magazine of



Sept 3rd–Oct 29th
2017

~ Autumn 2017 - Worship Services ~

We hope everyone has had a good summer and come back refreshed and ready for a busy Autumn. Although in liturgical terms we are still in the long period between Pentecost (or Whitsuntide as GHR still prefers to call it) and Advent, September always feels like the start of a new year. We had some feedback from the church weekend that the topic of discipleship might be a useful one to explore. And so we decided that during the Autumn term, Union Chapel people leading services would take as their subject, 'what it meant for them as individuals to be a disciple or follower of Jesus' or to put it another way 'What does the Lord require of them'.

There will be a number of services where individuals reflect on their own experience of following Jesus and what this has meant for them in the ways they have lived and the situations they have experienced, with comment on any spiritual practices or disciplines they have found helpful. Each person leading will choose their own bible passages and we will try not to duplicate.

We hope that everyone will feel moved to contribute their personal thoughts as the weeks progress and that this will allow us, as a congregation, to think about our own discipleship, and perhaps to try new things or think in new ways. The worship group would welcome your feedback after these sessions.

Worship leaders will be styling the services in the way which best suits them, so the alternating of "traditional" and "quieter" formats may not apply. Visiting worship leaders will, of course, be free to take services however they feel led to do so.

Gwyneth & Jane

~ Some Thoughts from our Interim Minister ~

“Together with a culture of work, there must be a culture of leisure as gratification. To put it another way: people who work must take the time to relax, to be with their families, to enjoy themselves, read, listen to music, play a sport.”

Pope Francis

Rest and relaxation are as important as work. Burnout happens because we ignore this. From a Judaeo-Christian perspective, our heritage affirms one day of rest a week when we do nothing ... and enjoy it! So much of the time we try, as Christians, to be different from the secular world in so many things, and so many times we fail. Sadly, just like people in secular life, so many Christians become workaholics and burn out to the point where they can no longer function, damaging themselves, their livelihood and their families. Yes, we must work hard, but we must also recognise that our bodies, our minds and our souls need time to recuperate.

I have recently returned from a wonderful holiday with my family. We were busy, in that we saw and did a lot, but that's the kind of people we are, and in amongst that busyness was time spent chatting and laughing over meals, reading, admiring views, soaking in warm weather and the scents of the sea and the countryside. It was a holiday to refresh our bodies, our minds and our souls. And I am grateful that I am privileged to experience that. And although this year was a very special holiday where we travelled extensively in a foreign country, most years our summer holiday has been spent camping in Wales and this was just as much refreshment for body, mind and soul.

I have learned over the years that 'holidaying' is a mind-set, not a place. It is the ability to put aside the burdens of work and routine, and to laugh and to breathe and to play and to rest; to find the things that most give us joy, and do them. And although a 'holiday'

may only happen once a year, as the Bible teaches us – it's important to seek rest for our body, mind and soul every single week.

So whenever you take a holiday, I hope and pray that you will be rested and refreshed, and that at least some time every week, you will take a mini-holiday, and do something just for yourself, something that you enjoy that feeds your body, mind and soul, that allows you to rest and to play.

Jane Henderson

~ The Gifts of the Spirit - 2 1st Edition ~

Following their pre-wedding Ceilidh at Union Chapel, which was greatly enjoyed by all who were there, Owen Jones and Anna Goodhart were married in Cambridge on 26th August and are now embarking on a new and exciting phase of their lives away from Manchester. We will miss them greatly, not least because we have only just found out that they are talented service leaders who have managed to stay under the radar of the Worship Group for too long.

None of us believes that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit ceased in the fourth century AD when the Bible as we know it was compiled, but too often we devote large amounts of time to looking in the Bible for small clues to validate what seems to us to be right and moral, such as equal status for women and men, when the simple fact is that the Bible reflects the society of its day when this equality did not exist.

In the service on 13th August Anna and Owen challenged us to think what should be inserted in a new canon of inspirational and meaningful writings or artistic works which we would like to add to the Bible - not just what would be held generally to have merit but what speaks to each of us as individuals. Anna for example chose

a passage for her “Book of Anna” from a book by the physicist and theologian John Polkinghorne arguing against biblical literalism.

Here are a few other suggestions – first of all some which may find quite widespread approval:

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Martin Luther King’s “I have a dream” speech
- Handel’s Messiah (now considered standard theology as well as great music)
- Many hymns (pick your own favourites)

And from the “Book of the Heritage Roberts household” we suggest:

- Richard Dawkins’ passage on the evolution of the eye (the structure of the eye is not evidence for creationism)
- Any exposition that appreciation of nature or art or sport or anything which gives pleasure has an intrinsic value and is not to be assessed by its usefulness.

As mentioned in our service on 27th August, I would also like to see a much expanded view of the gifts of the Spirit. Many of us have at some point in our lives had to memorise the list in Paul’s letter to the Galatians – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. All these qualities are very good. But taken together, the list very much brings to mind a certain type of quiet unworldly person who is just maybe a bit disengaged from the world. I’m sure I remember a sermon once which included the sentence; “a doormat says Welcome”, but fortunately that’s all I remember about it! Can we add to the definition as gifts of the Spirit:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Assertiveness
- Magnanimity

- Moral Courage
- Rationality
- Openness to possibilities
- Respect for other
- Capacity for friendship
- A sense of fun
- Relaxation
- Creativity
- To be continued..... Over to you!

Gwyneth

Hilda Linton



21st February 1924 - 24th August 2017

As this edition of Christward is published Hilda's funeral has not yet taken place.

We will gather at Union Chapel on Thursday 21st September 2017 at 2pm to celebrate Hilda's long life and all that she meant to so many people.

Hilda was born in Moston in 1924. Having left school she worked for the City of Manchester's Treasurer's Office, where she often recalled making entries in huge leather bound ledgers. Just after the war she trained as a primary school teacher at Drake Hall Staffordshire, where much to my recent surprise her main subjects were art and woodwork!

In 1952 Hilda married Joseph Albert Linton from Jamaica. Tragically Joe died at the age of 47 in 1965. Never a day went by without Hilda recalling fond and happy memories of the man who was truly the light of her life. Hilda's great love of Jamaica knew no bounds and I along with Rose had the privilege of join her one last journey there in 2011.

Hilda's other passion was for her beloved Lancashire Cricket Club and the many Sunday afternoons she spent there. Much to Hilda's disgust she never converted me to the game.

Hilda was a fervent Labour Party Supporter and would regale me with stories, of campaigning, marching and canvassing.

It was at Samaritans that I met Hilda. She was a volunteer at Manchester and Salford Samaritans for almost 40 years retiring at the age of 84. Her listening skills were superb and I know how much clients valued her. Hilda was a great support to me during some very challenging periods of my life. A listening ear, a nonjudgemental friend and always there.

Volunteering was in Hilda's blood. She volunteered for Assist and her tales of working alongside Margret Redhouse were legendary. She was very passionate about adult education and her involvement with O & A was a huge part of her life at one time. Always ready to support a worthy cause Hilda was keen to contribute to the work of the Food Bank and, indeed, at the age of 90 she was marking tins and sorting food.

These last few years for Hilda have been a great struggle. Ill health and the need to move into residential care took its toll. This did not curtail her activities. Devoted to her sister Alice, Hilda and I were still able to visit her until Alice passed away at the age of 99. Even her love of the theatre continued.

Hilda received the very best of care first of all at Longford(Chorlton) and then for the last 16 months at the Dell in Gorton where the staff had a great affection for her.

In these last few weeks the staff of Ward 45 Manchester Royal Infirmary and the District nurses at Gorton Mount met her every need with compassion and dignity. Hilda was to comment that's just why the NHS was formed.

The last word must be about her love for Union Chapel, its congregation and ministers. Great friendships were formed and spiritual nourishment sustained her during the many periods of ill health. Each day Hilda would talk about her strong faith and this carried her to the very end.

We give thanks for her long life and the huge contribution she has made to the lives of others.

Colin

~ Snippets of Hebrew ~

Puns are used frequently in Hebrew, and seem to be used as a literary device, to make a connection in the reader's mind. The Genesis story has a significant pun that no one can quite be sure about how it should be translated. When the snake tempted Eve, it was said to be crafty, and the Hebrew word used for crafty is pronounced ARUM. But when Adam and Eve had eaten of the fruit, they were said to be ARUMIM, the plural of ARUM. So it is difficult to know just how to translate these words, since there doesn't appear to be a connection between the adjective for the snake, and the description of what Adam and Eve had become after eating the fruit. Was the word used in the plural because there were two of them?

The assumption that Adam and Eve were naked and embarrassed is justified, since they covered themselves with fig leaves. But what might the connection be with a snake. The snake sheds its skin, but that doesn't appear to have any bearing on the tempting of the first pair. So perhaps something else was in the authors mind.

After Eve had tempted Adam to eat the fruit with her, and God had had words with them, it says "Therefore Adam called his wife Eve". In English, Eve is transliterated from Chava, which is a derivative of Life. One Rabbi observed, that after she had been tempted, and led Adam into yielding to temptation, that Adam would have said to her, "Your name is mud". But instead, Adam called her Eve, because she was the mother of all living. This seems to be completely without condemnation. How odd! It almost seems as if Eve had accomplished something.

Perhaps we are left to ponder the brevity of the story, and also the almost complete lack of detail, leaving the reader to wonder. We have seen such a lack of detail in the story of the binding of Isaac.

There also, is found a lack of detail, leading to more questions than answers. This of course could be interpreted as leaving us to work out what might be intended, rather than spelling everything out. Perhaps the point is that there are no answers.

Geoff Walker

~ Fallowfield & Withington Food Bank ~

The last few months have been extremely busy and we need to rebuild our stock of certain items. These include UHT & fruit juice, tinned custard, tinned fruit, chocolate treats, tinned rice pudding. We now have advance notice of the next Tesco Collection which will take place on Thursday 30th November 8.30am-10.00pm and Friday 1st December 8.30am-2.00pm. Please put the date in your diary if you are able to help us.

Over the summer months, we gave a presentation to The Heaton's WI and Levenshulme Methodist Church.



Afzal Khan MP for Gorton



and Jeff Smith MP for Withington



have both paid official visits to our foodbank sessions.

Colin Marchbank Smith

**~ Minutes of the Church Meeting
of Union Chapel Fallowfield (Baptist)
held on Sunday 16th July 2017
at 11.20am.~**

Apologies: Michael and Enid W; Margaret E, Colin MS; Nicola H with children.

Present: Margaret G (chair), David G, Lorna R, Eileen L, Ted L, Geoff W, Leonie E, Alan R, Margaret R, Gwen M, Jonathan R, Steve R, Owen R, Gwyneth HR, Carole W.

Minutes of previous meeting (printed in Christward) approved. No matters arising not on agenda

Notification of AOB – Manse

Ordination of Jane Henderson: We noted the ordination of Jane to the role of Transitional Minister in the NWBA. She continues to work with us 2 days a week and Newall Green one day a week as part of this role. Appreciation, congratulations and best wishes were expressed.

Linton House Insurance: Discussions took place concerning the cost of the Linton House insurance. The details of the discussion can be obtained from the Secretary on request.

Formation of a Pastoral Group: A proposal from the deacons that a small group be convened to oversee pastoral work was approved. Deacons will seek membership shortly – volunteers welcome, offers to Gwyneth please.

Membership request: Brenda Marston, a long-standing member of the congregation has applied for membership. Carole and Beryl have visited and recommended Brenda to us, and we were unanimously delighted to accept her.

Autumn Social: New date 30th Sept. Michael W is arranging.

Arrangement for 12 Steps groups: As these groups have a rotating organiser structure, administration can be difficult. The meeting agreed that as these groups fulfil a valuable role, we should be willing to be flexible over the letting arrangements and Michael can make suitable ad-hoc arrangements if necessary.

Summer Break for Junior Church: Junior Church will not run over the summer holiday period, so other arrangements will need to be made for the children and young people. The usual JC leaders are exempt. It was agreed that this will be handled informally.

Autumn Away Day: It was agreed that we should hold an Awayday in the autumn to discuss future directions with less time pressure. Deacons to consult the congregation on dates and arrange location for a Saturday or Sunday. The possibility of some form of idea-sharing was raised, along with encouraging informal discussions in the second session summer recess.

AOB: Manse improvements are progressing thanks to Margaret E and others. Summer tasks include plumbing/bathroom. We will probably be changing letting agents in Sept.

DONM: 3rd Sunday in September

Meeting closed with the grace at 12:10.

~ News of the Family ~

We were sad to hear of the death, after a long illness, of **Hilda Linton**. Hilda was our oldest member and much loved. A Celebration of Hilda's long life will take place at Union chapel on Thursday 21st September at 2.00pm. An appreciation of her appears in this issue of Christward.

Margaret Redhouse and **Lorna Richardson** have both been in hospital for operations since our last issue. They have now returned home and are making good progress. We wish them both a speedy recovery to full health.

Congratulations to **Anna Goodhart** and **Owen Jones** who were married at St Benet's Church, Cambridge on 26th August.



~ Afterword ~

This issue of Christward began with a piece from Gwyneth and Jane on plans to carry through a theme in this Autumn's services. The services led by members of the Worship Group will take as their theme 'What does it mean for them as individuals to be a disciple or follower of Jesus?' In discussion at the Group meeting the theme was also stated as 'What does the Lord require of them?' Now although the two theme titles are similar they are not identical. The word 'require' in the second one seems to imply that there are a set of 'requirements' which need to be met before you are a disciple or follower. The first title seems much more open with 'to be a disciple or follower'. However the words 'disciple' and 'follower' are usually used in different contexts. The first indicating a pupil/teacher or even an acolyte/master relationship and the second a much looser arrangement perhaps just signifying admiration.

It is going to be very interesting to see how the members of the Worship Group interpret the theme and we can be assured that their reflections will be varied and stimulating. Nevertheless if the series is going to be productive then the rest of us need need to be prepared to contribute our thoughts, say in a second Session, at the away day, over coffee or, dare I hope, in an article for Christward.

Whatever views are expressed in our discussions we need to beware of becoming exclusive, believing that there is only one way to follow Jesus - our way. Keep in mind the poem 'Outwitted' by Edward Markham,

He drew a circle that shut me out -
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew circle that took him in!

which brings me nicely to a plug for the Book Group. The above quotation is also used by Adrian Alker in his book 'Is a Radical Church Possible? - reshaping its life for Jesus' sake.' We are basing the first meetings for the autumn term on this book. It is a good read and will, we hope, provide some stimulating discussion. Why not come along to the Book Group and join us. We will be meeting at Ted & Eileen's house (1 Gaddum Road) on Thursday 21st September at 7.30 pm. I'm pretty sure that somewhere along the line the topic of our Autumn service theme will crop up.

Alan Redhouse

~ Talking to Each Other ~

If you would like to comment on any of the articles in this magazine and so start a discussion or if you would care to write an article for us on a topic of your choosing such contributions would be welcome. Please send them by email to alan.redhouse@virgin.net or by post to The Editor, Christward, Union Chapel Fallowfield, 2b Wellington Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 6EQ.

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