

Christward

The magazine of



November 4th–December 30th
2018

~ Drought ~

Climate change is definitely having an effect on Christward.. Some months we bask in the abundance of a 24 page issue and then comes the 8 page issue of this month. What can you do to stop this seesaw before we reach a tipping point and Christward goes into an irreversible decline?

If you sit down at a table, take pen and paper, and switch off your television, smart phone etc for one hour each day you will have seven hours a week to write an article for Christward. Not only that you will have made a positive contribution to actual climate change.

Write your article now. Do not wait until the last moment. Contributions are welcome from all our readers whoever you are and wherever you are. Let the next issue, the first of the New Year, reflect your resolution to banish drought and produce a more stable Christward.

Editor

P.S. My thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue.

~ Snippets Of Hebrew: Beating around the Bush ~

The Hebrew word for bush, as in Moses and the burning bush, is Seenay. The mountain on which Moses received the law from God is called Sinai. There appears to be some sort of pun going on here. Answers on a postcard, please.

We non-native Hebrew speakers are left to guess what is meant. I suspect that the native Hebrew speakers of later generations might not know what was going on either. That is assuming the words were written at the time of the burning bush episode. If the words were written a long time after the event, as seems most likely, then of course the original participants would have had no idea anyway. Did the

Israelites have any idea that this particular mountain was called Sinai. They had wandered in the desert for some time and probably lost their bearings completely. Moses may have known the name of the mountain, because he spent time in the wilderness looking after his father in law's flocks. If he did know, did he tell the people?

The bush is thought to be a thorny bush, either blackberry or bramble. The mountain's name also means thorny, so we seem to have a definite connection. Although it is tempting to relate it to the crown of thorns placed on Jesus head by the Romans, I can resist such temptation. The author certainly had no idea that anyone of any significance was going to have a crown of thorns, much less be executed. That was never in the plan for their Messiah.

People called places according to their immediate significance, like Seven Wells, because in that area there were actually seven wells. So my idea, for what it is worth, is that the word for bush, and the word for the mountain's name, might have been just because such bushes grew on the mountain in abundance. Perhaps there is a more interesting answer, but like the intention of the author, it is forever lost.

Geoff Walker

~ Ghost survey ~

As people will know, we have had to call in experts to obtain and record details of any bats present on the site of Linton House prior to demolition, and also a report on the status and location of the trees on the site. People familiar with planning at Town Hall will appreciate that the response when submitting one survey is the request for another. Therefore the request for a Ghost Survey, according to BS666, should come as no surprise.

As vital as the need to conserve the natural urban environment, is the need to preserve the supernatural. The organisation, the British Buildings Trust, have recognised this heritage, and have conserved and protected these various manifestations for many years now.

This is where your help is needed. If you have had any sightings yourself, or heard of any, these need to be recorded and placed in the appropriate section of the Spooks Report. This report is, as well as being deposited with the local planning department, passed on to future architects. Where the natural habitat of ghosts is disturbed, steps need to be taken to provide appropriate alternatives. This needs particular sensitivity as the apparition may well have been caused in the first place by traumatic events. With expertise, the presence or manifestation can often be contained in out of the way places, such as photocopy rooms and meter cupboards, rather than in public concourses.

Like bats, ghosts have certain times of year that they are more likely to be visible. Such a time is coming up soon, on the evening of October 31st. Volunteers are welcome to join a sleep-over in Linton House*, and will be given a thermos and a standardised identification chart. We hope you will be part of this valuable conservation programme.

If anyone hears from organisations promising to “remove your ghost problem for you”, so called Ghost Buster services, please be aware that such operations are illegal under EU law. We may need to engage a registered exorcist if ghosts constitute “nuisance” under the definition of the Act, if conservation steps fail.

David Garner

**Pre-Booking is essential for this. Please contact David for details.*

~One Small Step - to where? ~

Last Sunday Jane introduced the Apollo moon landing of 1969 as a metaphor for following the vision. The cynical amongst us responded by pointing out it's easy when you have the resources of the largest economy in the world to play with (see also Solomon and his temple). Cynicism aside, its worth considering how the Kennedy “vision” actually played out.

The actual vision was achievable with enough money, no new science was required, but a lot of complex engineering, \$151 billion or so in today's money and preparedness to risk lives (3 astronauts lost their lives in the Apollo programme). And crucially a focus on the stated aim with no real thought as to where it was leading beyond that initial "first". Bragging rights. And after that the exploration just fizzled out. Technologically the Apollo programme was a dead end, it did the job but could go no further. No-one has been able to go back to the moon in the 50 years since.

There was no coherent scientific or exploratory strategy beyond get there and come back. No strategy to develop the technology beyond the minimum to do that job. It was a marvellous demonstration of what 1960's technology could do if you threw enough resources at it, but it remained 1960's technology. The Apollo programme itself was cut back and fizzled out having no purpose once the initial showpiece had been completed. Once that simple vision had been achieved the momentum dissipated and with no ideas as to what that vision was for or what to do now the goal had been met, manned space exploration ended. No one really knew why a man was sent to the moon, why that small step was taken.

A metaphor still?

Steve Roberts

~ Per ardua ad astra ~

In 2017 Stephen Hawking (1942 - 2018) said the following:

"It is time to explore other solar systems. Spreading out may be the only thing that saves us from ourselves. I am convinced that humans need to leave Earth. To stay, risks being annihilated....."

Spreading out into space will completely change the future of humanity. It may also determine whether we have any future at all."

Hawking was associated with the Breakthrough Starshot Project .If successful, the mission could send a probe to Alpha Centauri, the nearest star to the Sun, within the lifetime of people alive today. The project would see a tiny, fully functional probe attached to a vast,

lightweight light sail that is propelled at a fifth of the speed of light using an Earth-based laser array that hits the sail with tens of gigawatts of power. While major engineering challenges remain if the mission is to be realised, Hawking commented,

“These are engineering problems, and engineers’ challenges tend, eventually, to be solved.”

I can never resist the challenge of a metaphor

Editor

~ Cake Lounge ~

We met, we played games, some of us ran around, we ate some very good cake. Lounging on an assortment of odd chairs we talked, enjoying the opportunity of having no agenda, hidden or otherwise.

We played Perudo, and people struggled to convince the next player that there were 17 sixes on the dice concealed under cup on the table. Ah, the children of the Light....

If you would like to come along (and we *would* like *you* to come along), it is at 6pm to 8 pm on 11th November. A really good way to defeat pre-Monday blues. And this is just the first bite.

David Garner



The Cake Lounge is just waiting for you.

~ News of the Family ~

It was good to hear that **Gwen Mattock** is up and about after her recent knee operation.

Rose Bell is making very good progress after her knee operation and is back driving which was good news. Rose would like to thank all those who supported her and kept her in mind during the past months.

~ Food Bank ~

As I write this we have just finished the busiest ever Foodbank session at Fallowfield Library. Numbers rise each and every week across our distribution sessions.

Whilst numbers grow so does the unwavering support of our volunteers and our local community which continue to support us do very well. Today has seen Tesco Burnage supply breakfast cereal, St.Pauls School a huge harvest collection, the Co Op at Copson Street have supplied 2000 carrier bags, Platt Lane Dental Surgery toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Currently we need to build up our stocks of toiletries, toilet paper, washing up liquid and laundry pods. Many people who face a 12 week wait for Universal Credit lack many of the basics we take for granted. If you are able to donate all contributions are much appreciated.

I've always said if you need anything ask the wonderful Church Community at Union Chapel and there will be an answer, and so it was following a recent appeal at our Church Meeting. Geoff Walker very kindly offered to assist in removing some metal shelving from our new warehouse at Ladybarn Community Centre. Geoff will wield an angle grinder and complete the removal for us. Geoff you are simply a star and have relieved us of one big problem **THANK YOU**

Our move to Ladybarn Community Centre will take place in mid November just in time for the Tesco Collection on Friday Nov 30th Saturday December 1st and Sunday 3rd December. If you could spare a couple of hours to help please do let's us know.

Colin Marchbank-Smith

~ Christmas is Coming ~



Christmas Services at Union Chapel

Sunday 23rd Dec

Carol Service

led by Michael at

***10.00am followed by Mince Pies
and Carols***

Christmas Day

Christmas Celebration

***led by Revd Jane Henderson at
10.00am***

~ 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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