

Christward

The magazine of



November 2nd–December 28th
2014

~ From the Minister's Desk ~

It's an over-used metaphor, but I can't help noticing that chapters are beginning and ending. On a personal note, the completion of my MA was a welcome end of a chapter that began some five years ago. Assuming I don't crack in the next few weeks, it seems likely that I will complete my Newly Accredited Minister period which began when I came to Union Chapel, and commence a new chapter as a 'proper' minister. Frightening stuff. Having said that, I don't think that anything much will change; the transition between life's chapters is not always obvious – unless you write about it in a magazine! What it does tend to do however is make you wonder; what next?

As a church it feels like we are enjoying a relatively stable period. The Foodbank is up and running, O&A has transitioned well into its new charitable status, groups are meeting, the administrative cogs are turning, relationships are developing – life is good. Not easy, but good. Perhaps it is also a good time for us to be wondering; what next? Not in the sense of what else can we be *doing* (don't worry, I think we are at capacity), but are there new questions that we can begin to consider together? If there are few pressing current concerns, can we take the opportunity to cast our imaginations a bit further and wider?

I have always felt that Union Chapel has things that it might contribute to the wider Christian world, and as I have talked with people over the last couple of months I detect an inclination that we might be ready to think about how. Having been through a chapter of differentiating ourselves from all we feel is unhelpful about our faith, the time might be right to begin work on a way of communicating what we are positive (and even passionate) about. Sometimes it is necessary to deconstruct, to employ our liberal scepticism and theological critique, and to work hard at shedding unhelpful baggage. But there must also come a time to rebuild, to employ our optimistic faithfulness and radical creativity, and to work out what it is that we have to be evangelistic about.

I have been challenged lately by perhaps the most basic, but most fundamental question: 'Why be a Christian?' It is not a new query,

but I wonder if it has been too long since we formulated an appropriate response. An appropriate response needs to work on two fronts. Firstly it needs to address the reasons people might ask. We must be cautious in assuming that we still know what these are, but I think we have enough experience and empathy between us to work them out. Secondly it needs to encapsulate what we feel about being a Christian. I hope we can come up with more than historic loyalty and comfortable familiarity; otherwise it all ends with our generation! So, assuming we are not masochists, why do we do it?

The consequences of wrestling with this question might be far-reaching. It might lead to changes in the way we communicate our faith. It might then impact how we 'worship' together, how we see our role as gathered community, and what we spend our time doing. It might produce some interesting creative works; ideas for how we teach our children, and adults – our own Alpha Course perhaps?! And it might even begin interesting processes which impact on other churches searching for alternative ways to express themselves.

I hope that we can ask 'What next?' without devaluing the present. It can raise unhelpful associations: the consumer who is bored with the current offering, the restless soul half-living in the future, the never-ending quest for more and better. But it is also the question of the proactive seeker, those keen to fulfil potential and lay foundations for the future, the dreamers and the visionaries. We ask in the spirit of the latter, and even if the answer is 'we don't know' or 'more of the same' – it is still worth asking. We will be creating time for all of us to talk about these things soon.

We also take a moment to name those amongst us who are starting new chapters in various ways. Our children, some in new schools and all in new years (including Nursery) – keep asking them how it's going. Alan Dobbins and Hilda as they continue to get used to new surroundings – pop in on them if you get the chance. Many others of us in numerous and nameless ways – listen out for them as we share with one another.

Ian Geere

~ How Old? ~

How old is old? It depends. Old is old relatively, and as with most things, old can mean what you want it to mean.

In the context of antique clocks, sometime people say “It’s really old, you know, it must be worth something”. Or they may say, “It was my grandmother’s wedding present”.

There are clocks which have survived from the early 1500s. So when someone has a clock which was made in the reign of Queen Victoria (crowned 1837 died 1901), it is relatively modern.

Some of the clocks made in the 18th century and earlier had features which have not generally been incorporated in clocks for a long time.

Entertainment is not a feature one thinks of with clocks, but there were a lot of musical clocks made, and these would play the tunes of their time. I can just picture a family with some guests dancing to a clock playing a dance tune which had become popular not too long before, and having nothing else to spend around £70,000 of today’s money on, decided they would have something which was a novelty to surpass most novelties.

For those who could just afford a clock which was a little more complicated than just a timekeeper, they could have a variety of other features. One of the simplest features was a calendar to display the date. This is a relatively simple mechanism, although a French clockmaker invented a means of displaying not just the date, but the month and the year and the leap year, and automatically advanced the date display at the end of those months which require it, including different dates in February to take account of the leap year. Such calendars are known as perpetual calendars.

A clock which makes a noise of some sort could include striking. Striking is familiar to us all, and we broadcast the chimes of Big Ben and the hour striking all over the world. Chiming is the musical announcement of the approaching strike. So Big Ben chimes just before hour, and then strikes the hour. But supposing you had dozed off in your chair, and you awoke to hear your clock striking, and it was dark? You can’t see without a light, and the servants

have not replaced the burnt candle before they went to bed, and the candle that was lit has burned right down and extinguished itself. How do you know what the time is? If your clock has a repeat mechanism, you can press the lever and it will strike again. If you have a more expensive clock, it will strike the quarters on a bell which has a higher note than the strike bell. One strike for quarter past, two for half past and three for quarter to the hour. So instead of knowing the time is somewhere after the hour just repeated, but before the next hour, you now know it is within 15 minutes. There has yet to be devised a mechanism to accommodate daylight savings time, so the chances are we will turn up late, or early, for church twice a year.

Geoff Walker

~ Lily Alone ~

My favourite author is Jacqueline Wilson. I enjoy reading her books because they are all about children and their problems. They usually have a happy ending but sometimes they do not and often her stories make me cry.

The most recent book I have read is called "Lily Alone." This book is about a mother who leaves her four children at home, while she goes on holiday with her boyfriend. Lily the eldest girl is left to take care of her younger brother and sisters. Lily's teacher becomes worried that the children are not going to school but Lily and the children lie about where their mother is, so their mother does not get into trouble. To avoid another visit from the school, Lily takes the children to live in a tree in the park. The children have to steal food to survive, and get into all sorts of trouble. In the end one of the children, Bliss, has an accident and is taken into hospital.

Lily is taken into care, and the other children are fostered and her mother gets into trouble with the police for neglecting her children. At the end Lily draws a picture of her family all together again but the reader does not know if this is what happens. I hope Lily and her family *do* end up together again.

Isobel Earnshaw

~ New Things About Year 4 ~

I'm Nathan and I'm going to be talking about the differences between Year 3 and Year 4.

The first difference that I noticed was the new classroom and the new teacher. The classroom is further down the corridor, nearer the toilets, and it feels a bit bigger. My teacher is generous but a bit more strict when people are nasty.

Last year's Golden Time meant that I could chose what activity I did, but this year you mainly write a reflection in your learning journal. I am pleased that we have more sports at lunchtime now. It used to just be football, but now there are things like tennis, cricket and hockey. This is much better because I play a variety of sports every day.

Homework and lessons are a bit harder and there are things called Park Points. You need 15 Park Points to go to the park for 15 minutes. You can earn them by getting in line quickly, walking sensibly with no talking, and good listening.

Most of my friends are still the same, but I'm starting to try and have more.

Overall, I think Year 4 is really good, and I am happy in the class.

Nathan Geere

~ The differences between primary school and secondary school ~

Hi I'm Anna, and in this paragraph I'm going to explain the main differences between primary school and secondary school.

First of all secondary schools are much bigger as they need to house all of the students (in my case all 1,300 students,), also they have much more amazing facilities. Here are some more differences:

You have a lot more homework to do - I get approximately 7 pieces of homework each week. I don't mind doing it mostly, but sometimes it is annoying.

You get a greater choice of after school activities, I don't do any because I'm too busy doing my usual taekwondo, boxercise, swimming and Guides. As you can see I'm quite active and appreciate my new PE teachers being better.

You have more teachers than at primary - At the beginning of the year I had 4 English teachers but fortunately I only have 3 now.

It's been quite hard work getting to know all my new teachers and the different classrooms. Overall I like the differences and enjoy my secondary school, plus I get to make loads more friends.

Anna Geere.

~ Cycling to Paris ~

Jess and Andy spent two weeks in the summer cycling from Swindon to Paris. Here are some extracts from a photo diary (thanks Margaret E. for facilitating the production of this so cleverly) which can be viewed on request. Cycling is a slower



and often wonderfully quirky way to experience the life of the countryside...

Do parallel lines ever meet? Here is a spooky tale from a hot, still afternoon, set on a long straight section of the Dinard to Dinan railway line, home now to cyclists and walkers. We sit for a while in the shade on a seat, drinking water and eating sweet chilli crisps with apple rings. A woman passenger in a red dress disappears in the hazy distance to our left. A few minutes later we see her walking away from us, but now to our right. It was the universe, closed and constrained to one stretch of old railway line. We could have stayed there forever.

A cat and two goats. We met a goat who was bleating at the side of the cycle path, near a line of washing. We had just crossed a country lane. In times past this was a level crossing. And the crossing keeper's house was still there. Anyway the people living there now kept two goats. The man living there told us, in French, that we could go and stroke them. So we did. Then he insisted that we meet his mum and his kitten. It was extremely cute as you see.

We rode into Alençon with a flat mobile and a soul full of the quiet of the Forêt d'Ecouvès. And hot chocolate from the lovely bar tabac in Cuissai. The office de tourisme was across the cathedral square and home to a lovely manager who charged the phone and gave us a free map. It was another night off the track before we reached a campsite, arriving in Nogent le Trou wet, smelly and happy.

Cycling to Paris was a very big experience for me. There was so much else: Mont St Michelle, the great canal after Dinan, the beautiful hilltop town of Domfront, sheltering from the rain in bus stops and churches, learning to love water. We cycled through thunderstorms to get to Chartres, and on through the rain to Epinon, There the only route became too dangerous with traffic

and so we took the train for the last 30 miles. We had made it! It was a fantastic experience and I will never forget it.



Jess and Andy Howes

~ Living under God's Blanket ~

Living under God's blanket, we call it mulch. However if you are promoting sustainable agriculture in rural Africa, this is one way of expressing it. There is a whole system called "Farming God's Way" which tells you, using religious language, how to manage your farm. However there is a solid core of science underneath it. The system comes from the perspective of caring for Creation. Perhaps it is best illustrated with a quotation:

Stalk Borer Remedies – by Brian Oldreive & Grant Dryden

*God's Blanket has so many benefits to agricultural practice & as we follow His ways we need also be on our guard to ensure that the small foxes¹ don't steal from us. In this case Stalk borer – *Busseola fusca*.*

Here are some stalk borer remedies for you to consider:

"Various preparations can be poured down the funnel of the maize plants at about knee-high. Pour wood ash into the funnels or use soil (top-soil not sand as the soil cakes and hinders the pupae and caterpillars) also Tephrosia and Tobacco have been effective (leaves are ground into a fine powder and dusted down the funnels)." It is best to repeat the treatments two or three times.

Chemically you can apply a small pinch of Dipterex 2.5% granules. Dipterex is (or was) green label and there is another cheaper granule with an amber label. I cannot remember the active ingredient. It is quite a widely used chemical and any agro-chem company will tell you if you ask for "stalk-borer granules".

The required amount per hectare is between 4-8 kg, depending on your population and the size of the pinch. It is a relatively cheap dressing.

By far the best remedy is in the prevention however. Preventative methods require one to understand the life cycle of the stalk borer.

I expect we find this all a bit alien, and would want to cut "straight to the science". However it is worth a look at some of the pages below, as it actually explains sustainable farming very well in terms of pest management, water retention and nutrient cycles etc..

How did I find out about this? Well, our link missionary is coming next month, so reading what BMS has links with....

Illustrations of the stalk borer life cycle and other ways of disrupting it follow.

<http://www.farming-gods-way.org/Resources/Technical%20Documents/stalk%20borer%20remedies.pdf>

1 You should remember this or course from Song of Songs 2-15.

<http://www.farming-gods-way.org/trg.htm>

http://www.farming-gods-way.org/Resources/Technical%20Documents/Decomposition_and_Gods_Blanket.pdf

<http://www.bmsworldmission.org/news-blogs/blogs/whole-life-discipleship>

David Garner

~ Isis and grief ~

There is a sense in which a close bereavement brings new perspectives. How far does this carry? I have no idea, but when I sat in church this morning and thought about ISIS as a threat, I found myself feeling things in a way that I haven't done before. I close my eyes and think and feel with my whole body. I find myself imagining that I'm a woman - Rachel, weeping for her children - and try and soak in the sense of what it is to be in the world as a woman. It is so easy to characterise Isis as if it is one thing, when all our experience of human life and human relationships and human society suggests that there is no such thing. We watch as Isis is constructed in the media as totalitarian evil. I am sceptical. But whatever it is, I am distracted by the opportunity to pretend to make policy, when there are direct actions for me to take on my doorstep - literally. We don't know, and we don't get to know and we don't create institutions or opportunities within our institutions to get to know Muslims who are our neighbours. Of course they are not ISIS any more than I am. But the wake up call for me is not to bombing, but to connecting. The commitment I need to make is to my community, to this city, the people we live next to.

Andy Howes

~ Fallowfield and Withington Food Bank ~ News

The next Tesco collection takes place on 27,28, & 29 of November please let Colin know if you can help at Tesco Burnage on any of these dates.

On Sunday 30th November we will aim to date and sort the food from the Tesco collection. This will take place at Union Chapel from 12.30pm where light refreshments are an added

incentive for those who might be persuaded to volunteer to help.!

Our Foodbank will open as normal on Boxing Day which falls on a Friday. We will process vouchers as usual but on this occasion we will have a cold Buffett which is open to all from 12 noon until 2pm. We hope that anyone who is on their own will join us so please do spread the word.

~ What does that mean? ~

In the last edition of Christward we printed definitions of words and phrases and their meaning at Union Chapel. Readers were asked to add to the list. David Garner sent this one which was obviously heart felt.

Offering: Things that are deposited in the *offering areas* that ***you know*** the church will find useful. For example, old equipment in the kitchen, old furniture etc in the large hall, pallets and broken electrical equipment in the church garden, garden waste “useful for compost!”

~ News of the Family ~

We have received a note from **Hilda Linton** who was taken into hospital recently after suffering a stroke.

Hilda has dictated the following message.

‘I am now a resident at Longford 37 Edge Lane Chorlton, it's taking a great deal of getting used too but the staff are kind,

caring and fun. Being here means I'm still local which is the most important factor.

A huge thank you to the many church members who have visited me during the long 8 weeks on the stroke ward at MRI. Special thanks to Colin who was there during some very difficult moments and who ensures that I get to church as often as possible.'

Rose Bell has returned to Jamaica for the funeral of her brother Alvin. Please remember Rose in your prayers at this difficult time.

Congratulations to Ian **Geere** who has successfully completed his MA - onwards and upwards.

We were glad to hear that **Isobel Earnshaw's** operation went well and that she is now running around with the best of them.

Lorna Richardson is back with us after a short stay in Canada.

**~ Minutes of the Church Meeting
of Union Chapel Fallowfield (Baptist)
held on Sunday 21st September 2014
at 11.20am.~**

Present: Margaret Garner(chair), Ian Geere, Alan Redhouse, Margaret Redhouse, David Garner, Harry Fleming, Rachel Scott, Colin Marchbank-Smith, Nicola Hamilton, Rachel Adebago, Leonie Earnshaw, Geoff Walker, Carole Walker, Julie Bryce, Irene Roberts, Eileen Land, Ted Land

Apologies: Gwen Mattock, Gwyneth Heritage Roberts, Steve Roberts, Hilda Linton, Rose Bell, Sarah Geere, Enid Welford and Brenda Marston and Carmen Bowman (with children)

The Minutes of the July 2014 Meeting (in current magazine) were approved.

Notification of AOB: Feedback on recent path job (in Capital Projects item)

Matters arising/updates/information: None

1. Dates for the Diary – IG ran through the following events coming up:

- [Now]: Students returning – everyone to be aware of visitors and invitations to lunch
- 11th Oct: Autumn Event – posters available
- Dec: Christmas
 - Early Dec: 2nd Session delivering Christmas Card
 - Wed 24th: Late quiet service
 - Thu 25th: Morning celebration
 - Sun 28th: Usual Sunday
- 25th Jan: Fiona Welsh visit
- 21st Feb: Ceilidh (provisional)

All the dates were accepted with no amendments proposed.
Agreed that we would arrange some food for Fiona's visit.

2. Capital Projects

HF fed back that the path job recently completed was to a minimum specification, reflected in the cheap price of the quote. He would not recommend using that contractor in the future.

DG confirmed that the job had been completed to the agreed specification on the quote received.

DG then presented the following list of possible projects for the next few years:

1. Replace carpet in Chapel
2. Replace or secondary glaze windows

3. Oil to gas conversion

- Put in gas
- Replace boiler in due course

4. Chapel lights

5. Access to Large Hall Green room (food bank store) outside

6. Replace chapel chairs

Some discussion on Large Hall access. Clarification given that this job could be at least part-funded through grants obtained by the Foodbank. It is fairly urgent as access is becoming a problem when other groups are using the Large Hall and food is needed. The issue of security was raised, and will be addressed by those responsible for the job.

A comment was made that glazing the windows is desirable in the shorter-term as it would begin to save money.

Query raised regarding the possibility of separating the two elements of oil to gas conversion item; some companies would want a commitment to buy gas after pipe installation. Further details to be obtained.

Apart from the comments above, the meeting had no strong feelings about the priority of the jobs and was happy for them to be commissioned in the order felt appropriate by the Fabric Committee. The next step is to seek volunteers to form groups who will oversee the jobs, as discussed at the July Church Meeting.

3. **Network Connections**

IG reminded the meeting of the three groups considered at a previous Second Session:

1. Anabaptist Network of Communities (ANC)
2. The Network of Baptists Affirming Lesbian & Gay Christians (Affirm)
3. Progressive Christianity Network (PCN)

Networking would not require any formal commitments at this stage, just an opportunity to link with organisations in the hope that people looking for a place like Union Chapel would know we are here.

A desire was expressed to invite representatives of these organisations to speak to us. There was also the feeling that linking with Affirm in particular might be important for students searching a welcoming church, and should therefore be done soon. The point was made that all three were national organisations with some history, and that we could always detached ourselves from any if things didn't work out.

The meeting agreed to establish links with all three groups immediately, and also issue invitations for representatives to come and talk with us.

The Meeting closed with The Grace at 12.09pm

~ Good Old Days - A Photo from the Archive ~

Union Chapel Youth Weekend 1984



~ Assist Neighbourhood Care Group ~

Assist is celebrating its 45th anniversary on Friday 7th November from 12 noon to 3pm at Withington Methodist Church. A buffet lunch will be served. Everyone is welcome but if you intend to come please contact Assist on 434 9216 to let them know.

~ 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.

Alan Redhouse

Christward Number 474. Published 26th October 2014
The magazine of Union Chapel Fallowfield(Baptist),
2b Wellington Road, Fallowfield Manchester, M14 6EQ

Web Site: www.unionchapelbaptist.org.uk

Editorial Group:

David Garner: e-mail: david.garner@mac.com

Steve Roberts: e-mail: steve.roberts@man.ac.uk

Alan Redhouse: ☎445-0020; e-mail: alan.redhouse@virgin.net

Minister: Revd Ian Geere. email: ian@unionchapelbaptist.org.uk
Mobile: Tel: 07552 788 733
Office ☎225-4226

Secretary: Gwyneth Heritage Roberts; ☎431 4446

Treasurer: Nicola Hamilton ☎270 0087

Users & Buildings Co-ordinator: Eileen Land. ☎445-7694

Deacons: Beryl Dykes, Leonie Earnshaw, David Garner, Nicola Hamilton, Gwyneth Heritage Roberts, Andy Howes, Eileen Land, Gwen Mattock, and Enid Welford.