

Christward

The magazine of



September 1st–October 27th
2013

~ From the Minister's Desk ~

In the seemingly never-ending quest to sort out our house, we recently had some fairly significant work done to the front garden. Some of you will have seen the wall of trees at the front of our property, the ones which blot out the sun – it's what happens when someone plants fast-growing conifers as a hedge and then forgets to cut them back. Well, they are no more.

The process was a particularly brutal one from start to finish. Firstly big men wielding vicious chainsaws come and butcher the lower branches, and then when all safety measures have been attended to (or not) they fell them. The trees are then fed in to a 'chipper' which is a lovely name for a giant industrial mincer. Making the kind of noise that no-one should be forced to endure, this contraption reduces a once majestic form of nature into tiny wood chips. And then finally comes the stump grinder; a set of vicious rotating teeth on wheels which devours the remaining stumps and is then lowered in to the ground to finish off any remaining roots. What you are then left with is a mixture of bone-dry acidic soil and freshly chipped tree. We were advised that this hostile concoction needs to be completely dug out and replaced with fertiliser and fresh soil, and then left for at least a year before we would have a hope of growing anything in the same patch – not even weeds would trouble this unreceptive strip of ground where our giant conifers used to grow.

I was most surprised therefore when, shortly after the work was completed, I noticed several green shoots poking through the pile of chippings (that we hadn't yet had a chance to do anything with). Dandelions I assumed, or some other weed which can defy natural law by taking root where it has no right.

Well it turns that they were sunflowers. In fact they are turning out to be some of the most robust sunflowers that I can remember seeing. About a dozen of them, right next to where I park the car. They make me smile every time I see them.

I have been wondering recently about what profound spiritual observation I might draw from this episode; there are so many possibilities. I finally have one of those genuine (by which I mean not made up or plagiarised) illustrations, a parable even, from which I should be able to offer enlightening truth and wisdom.

Then I stop myself, because anything I might write seems trite and contrived. I could manipulate this story in to anything I liked, and it might be meaningful to you, but the chances are it wouldn't be. Some of this is because although I have described my observations to you in reasonable detail, you were not there. You did not experience the noises and smells and passages of time that makes my experience real and significant. But mostly I am reticent to draw conclusions from this story because this is a one-sided conversation.

It is easy to forget that the stories and parables and observations attributed to Jesus were often formed as a response to other people, often to a specific spoken question. They arose out of a very particular context, and were the best way to respond to the enquirer(s) in that place and moment. That was the amazing gift possessed by Jesus. However smart and inspirational my story might be, if it doesn't answer a question or address a need, then it might well be nonsense. So rather than refine and perfect my wonderful parable, I would be better off listening to the needs of those I know, drawing alongside them and attempting to find wisdom together. Let's ensure that the smartness of our answers never diminishes our sensitivity in discerning people's real questions.

As it is, I have no idea what questions you, as the reader of this article, are coming with, and therefore what meaning (if any) it would be right for you to draw from my magnificent sunflowers. I can only tell you my little story because it has been significant to me, and then I leave you to draw your own meaning, to discern if it might be a story in which God is speaking, or not.

Have you done it yet? No rush, just don't read on until you have exhausted your thinking.

Right. Good. Then let me tell you what occurred to me, safe in the knowledge that your conclusions were far more profound. I was reflecting on why they make me smile every time I see them. After all, I have seen plenty of sunflowers. Perhaps it is the mystery of where they came from. Did the process unearth a squirrel's carefully placed secret stash, or was it birds, or a discarded bag of healthy snacks by a passer by? Maybe. But mostly I think it is because I didn't plant them. I didn't buy the seed, plan the location, or prepare the spot – it just happened. I can enjoy their growth without worrying that they might be eaten by slugs, blown over, or unearthed by mischievous children. I do not own them; they are not the fruit of my labour. I have almost nothing to lose from this spontaneous and organic event, and only enjoyment to gain.

Perhaps that resonates with how I see church, or aspects of it anyway. Of course smart strategy and meticulous planning have their place, but often the very best things seem to happen 'by accident' – a casual conversation, a crazy idea, an obscure coincidence. When new things are allowed to happen naturally, when they don't have to be forced or owned, perhaps then we can appreciate them the most. Not only might these occurrences bring a smile to our faces, they might also be the best possible way to address the real needs and questions of others. A shared ministry of sensitive listening and expectant fertile ground – sounds good to me.

Ian Geere

~ News from Middlesbrough ~

Carole and Geoff Walker are living in Middlesbrough for the moment. Below are two articles from the Middlesbrough front. Firstly Carole, after spending time in the North West at the Church Weekend, describes the equally beautiful North East. Then Geoff gives us an insight into what it is like to have a son getting married in Belarus.

We returned to Linthorpe last week with a church magazine and very happy memories of the weekend at Rydal Hall. Others have already done justice to it's success, so maybe I can write about something else. Suffice it to say, we enjoyed spending time in a beautiful place with people we want to be with.

The route to Rydal had been adventuresome, travelling along the Kirkstone Pass and, right at the top where the view is wonderful, we turned right and plunged into a narrow road where a sign read "The Struggles". We descended steeply and twisted and turned our way to the lake at the bottom. It was quite a relief to stop and climb down to the beach and stand in silence, watching the water.

Just now over here in the North-East, the sun's shining and, along with half the population, we're heading for the sea. There's a narrow peninsular between the end of Redcar Bay and the mouth of the River Tees. Not many people go this way. The road winds between an area of ponds surrounded by little grassy hillocks stretching away to the sea on our right, and the last remaining steel works on our left. I find this juxtaposition of nature and industry to be really exhilarating. If we're lucky, the red-hot molten steel will be streaming in a steaming arch into the small opening in the cylindrical container on the train waiting beneath.

Across the road, if we're lucky the heron will be standing alert in the reeds, waiting to pounce on its unfortunate prey. I don't know which way to look, it's all so fascinating. I don't know anywhere else quite like this. It's probably my favourite place. The road goes on, getting narrower, almost swallowed up by sand dunes on either side. Here, oddly enough the speed limit increases from 20mph to 30mph. How odd! A hidden footpath crosses just here at the road's narrowest section! How mad!

Then the view opens onto the narrow stretch of land between two waters. Just ahead on our left, a small harbour nestles along the edge of the river, then there's a lifeboat station, while to the right lies a collection of green fishermen's huts in a dip before the sand dunes. Smoke comes out of a couple of little tin chimney pots. A couple of ancient mariners struggle along sharing the weight of their day's catch of mackerel in an aluminium tub, and stop to gaze

discontentedly at the wind-farm recently erected at the edge of the bay. Twenty-seven offshore windmills turn majestically in the wind. Then we notice the white bridge of a ship passing the lighthouse at the end of the peninsular, and beginning its slow glide along into the harbour. Thirteen other ships wait out at sea, some not too far way and others little dots on the horizon. Slowly, slowly, the Aurora Venus glides into full view. Never before have I seen such an enormously long boat. It's huge! Three men stand peering over the edge of the deck. It's a coal-carrier, guided by three tugs, one at the front and two at the back, which carefully control its position until eventually it slides alongside the harbour beneath two enormous cranes. The cranes stand a long way apart and, when the time is right, begin their work, scooping up buckets of coal out of the ship's hold and swinging round to drop it somewhere behind them. I don't know how the coal travels to the furnace, we can't see so far, but certainly there's a mountainous ridge of coal all the way from the cranes at the river's edge all the way back to the steel works. Half a mile of coal.

Ah well, time for a picnic..... looking the other way, out across Redcar Bay. Those windmills really are big here! Somewhat intrusive. I suppose in time we won't notice them. Just a few families are playing on the beach, but no wind surfers are here today. Today we have the summer sun, with a gentle breeze. Time passes. Dogs chase about. Children jump up and down in the sea, pretending it's warm! A few sandcastles remain, left behind as folks go home for tea. Time for us to go too. One last look at the very tip of the land where birds rest on the shingle as it gradually disappears beneath the sea. One day I'll remember the binoculars. One day Geoff might remember his camera.

Middlesbrough doesn't have good press. News of the north east is generally glum. Unemployment, an outdated industrial backwater of a place. Nobody would think of coming here for their holidays. A lot of that's true. But it's not everything. It depends what you're looking for, I suppose. I've found the people to be friendly and accepting, the sky's usually blue (how novel!) and the area as a whole really interesting. For me, for now, it's lovely.

Carole Walker

One day last November, we saw an email from Jonathan, and he mentioned something about a girl!

Well to cut a long story short, they got married on the 30th March. As the plane climbed towards the clouds, Carole cautiously opened her eyes, and looked out of the window. This is it, we're on our way! Minsk airport arrival area is a little bleak in comparison to Manchester and Frankfurt airports. The passport control man looked somewhat severe. In fact most passport control staff do look severe, but this time he was dressed in military uniform, which added to the apparent severity. However, we were to discover the people of Belarus to be very friendly and warm.

We waited for Jonathan, and after ten minutes when the airport seemed to have been deserted, and we felt very lost, we received a text saying he had got lost. After about forty minutes, he and Alesia turned up. Someone in their church had loaned them a car. It took the best part of an hour to get to the flat which had been rented for us and some of Jon's friends to stay in for four days. The wedding day started with the borrowed car not starting! But a lady from Alesia's church had some jump leads, and it was soon running. This lady whose name I don't know, was just like Rosetta, very full of life. She was wonderful. "This is spring in Belarus!" she said, with three feet of snow everywhere.

First stop of the day was at Alesia's flat where Jonathan had to climb the stairs answering questions and paying compliments to his bride. Because Jonathan had to go in the same car as Alesia to the registry office, I ended up driving his borrowed car to the registry office. A very interesting experience, which happily ended without incident.

Next stop was the registry office, which is where the legal part had to be done. A young man gently played a grand piano in the corner after the ceremony, and then on the steps outside Jon and Alesia released two white doves into the air.

Then there were photographs in the park, where it was very cold! Not the sort of cold that penetrates your bones, but a drier sort of cold. A snow-plough came and cleared a wider path!

At the start of the wedding in the church we were told it was important that both sets of parents give their blessing to the marriage. So, would Carole and I start, and each pray for the couple. Then Alesia's parents were asked to do the same. During the service, a man from Gatley, South Manchester, who is training to be a minister, did the translation! Later I was asked to say grace for the food, and having done that, Alesia's father did the same. We began to realise that at a wedding the two families are considered to be joined as well as the happy couple.

Instead of the speeches we have at a wedding, they had everyone come up to the front in small groups during the reception and say how they knew the bride and groom, tell stories and congratulate the couple. All this was interspersed with games. By the end of the reception the emotional tension was quite high, as one may well imagine.

One of Jonathan's friends from Trinity High School was there, whose name is Yomi. He introduced himself and said when he first met Jonathan, he didn't even like him, he just wanted to sit next to Jonathan to copy his work! We have no idea how that was translated, because all the English people laughed a lot. But the locals remained silent. Something was lost in translation as the saying goes!

At a guess about 30% of the people in the church understood some English, and quite a few were able to make themselves understood, and understand basic everyday sort of things. Much better than my Russian!

The church was a modern building which was completely decorated in white inside, which I imagine had some significance. It was very bright. Pictures of it can be seen at www.iisus.by

Watch the 2 minute video on the home page. The above link will take you straight to it.

Geoff Walker

~ Good Care and Communication Take Time! ~

Some weeks ago an Independent Review commissioned by the Government recommended that the Liverpool Care Plan be phased out and replaced by personalised care plans for people nearing their death. An independent report by University of Nottingham researchers formed an important part of the evidence on which the Independent Review made its recommendations. Dr Ruth Parry (née Land) who conducted the research alongside Professor Jane Seymour and colleagues says that compassionate care comes at a cost. Below is an opinion piece written by Ruth.

A review of research evidence produced by myself and a group of experts formed an influential part of the evidence examined by Baroness Neuberger and her panel in their Independent Review of the Liverpool Care Pathway entitled 'More Care, Less Pathway'. Another main source of evidence the panel considered comprised bereaved people's accounts of their experiences, often highly distressing. Unsurprisingly, this part of the panel's findings has been covered widely in the media. I'd like to take the time here to highlight some points that have received less publicity.

As 'More Care, Less Pathway' notes, there is just no strong evidence out there about either the potential benefits or potential adverse effects and risks of 'pathways' for the dying phase in end of life care. The ideas behind the pathway are reasonable and seem like a logical way to try to ensure best practice in patient care. But, as we note in our report, interventions designed from a logical, rational basis do not always live up to their promise when applied in the complicated social world of healthcare where people must work together in the face of distressing and complex human problems. The Independent Review found that there have been significant failures to apply the pathway guidance correctly in the real and often stretched circumstances of inpatient healthcare. For this reason, the review panel recommended abandoning the 'pathway' term, and ensuring individual care plans are drawn up for individual patients.

The panel points out that well below one percent of research funding is devoted to end of life care, and demands more research on people's experiences of end of life care. Noting that care for dying people and their loved ones requires staff to have excellent communication skills, the panel calls for systematic research about the communication practices needed for good end of life care, and for associated support and training for staff.

One important challenge for those wishing to commission and provide compassionate care and excellent communication with dying people and their families is the time that such compassion and communication take. I believe this matter has been under-emphasised in recent calls for compassionate care. Research finds, rather unsurprisingly, that when healthcare workers are exhausted and over stretched, levels of compassion and dignity fall. Healthcare staff need to feel cared for and they need to have enough time not only for training, but also for support - such as through 'rounds' which provide staff with the time and opportunity to explore and share some of the challenging emotional issues that arise in caring for patients and families. Other research findings, also rather unsurprisingly, indicate that healthcare conversations take longer when emotional and sensitive issues are discussed. In my view an informed public debate about end of life care, and compassionate care in general, requires recognition that ensuring dignified, compassionate healthcare and excellent communication means giving staff more time for both training and support - and this has implications for the public purse.

Ruth Parry

~ O&A Summer Programme ~

During July and August O&A run a summer programme of activities. There are lectures, films, workshops and trips out. Some of those attending the trips report on the experience below:

The Trip to Lichfield

We left Union Chapel on a lovely summer day for a coach trip to Lichfield in Staffordshire whose history goes back to Anglo Saxon times. On arrival there were so many interesting places to see that it was difficult to decide which one to go to first. Luckily most of the places are fairly near to each other.

We decided that the first place to see was the 800-year-old medieval Cathedral, the only one in the country with three spires. The Cathedral was under siege three times in the Civil War. It was restored under Charles 11 and extensively remodelled in the late 18th century. 100 years later it was completely restored to its medieval splendour by Sir George Gilbert Scott. The architecture of the cathedral is magnificent with beautiful carvings, paintings, sculpture and treasures on display.

In 2003 excavations in the Nave of the Cathedral uncovered the remains of a Saxon church and the stunning Lichfield Angel believed to be part of St Chad's shrine. The 8th century St Chad's Gospel in the Chapter House is older than the famous Book of Kells. Also on display is a small selection of the Staffordshire Hoard, the largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold ever found. The standard of workmanship of these artefacts, made of gold set with precious stones, is simply breathtaking.

Our next port of call was the Georgian home of Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather and inspiration of Charles Darwin. The elegant Grade 1 listed Georgian Town house is located in the heart of Lichfield. Erasmus was a leading physician, scientist, botanist and inventor and poet. The house includes displays and interactive features and models of his inventions. It also has a lovely 18th century walled herb garden.

After a break for lunch we visited St John's Hospital, which for over 800 years has been a place of worship and shelter. In around 672 AD following the death of St Chad, Lichfield became an ecclesiastical shrine. Initially St John's housed pilgrims who came

to the shrine but now it provides sheltered housing for those in need.

St John's Hospital is one of the finest 15th century brick buildings in the country. The medieval Alms Houses are built round a quadrangle with beautiful gardens. The Chapel has a magnificent John Piper stained glass window representing "Christ in Majesty" and there is also a statue of "Noah and the Dove" by Simon Manby. We had a very interesting and informative conducted tour by a tenant who lives in one of the Alms Houses and who very kindly allowed us to see his home. At the end of the tour a very welcome cup of tea and biscuits were provided!

Due to lack of time we were unable to visit Samuel Johnson's House. However I hope to return to Lichfield at a later date to see the places I wasn't able to visit on the day trip!

The coach trip was organised by Judith Rack as part of O & A's Summer Programme and I would like to thank her for her hard work in organising a very informative and interesting day which we all thoroughly enjoyed.

Sue Jones.

Vincent d'Olier writes about two of Lichfield's famous sons:
Dr Samuel Johnson was a brilliant man of letters who eventually found fame and fortune in London after he compiled the first modern dictionary. His house overlooks the Market Square in Lichfield where there is still a thriving active and very welcoming street market.

Erasmus Darwin was a true polymath if ever there was one. Although a successful and prosperous medical doctor he was also at the centre of local scientific and cultural life mixing with the likes of Josiah Wedgwood and James Watt. These and other thinkers met on the evening of each full moon to discuss philosophical questions calling themselves the 'Lunatics'. Erasmus's fame stemmed from his poetry and inventions, notably the flush toilet, and remarkably from his ideas on the age and formation of the Earth's land masses. These ideas were formed from the discovery

of marine fossils in the spoil from the canal tunnels through the hills north of Lichfield posing the question 'How did sea creatures live on top of hills? and thus shedding serious doubt on the biblical explanation of the formation of the Earth. Such ideas were religious dynamite and Erasmus swore his fellow 'Lunatics' to silence for fear of upsetting the religious establishment, ironically leaving this task to his grandson, Charles, a century later.

The Trip to the Moravian Settlement

Few people would regard a day in Droylesden as a fulfilling experience but nestled among the ordinary lies a gem, a haven of peace and tranquillity but also a place of historical significance. The Fairfield Moravian Settlement was built in 1785 as an outpost of the Moravian Church, a Protestant sect almost wiped out following the Thirty Years war in Central Europe, Moravia being situated at the eastern end of what was until recently Czechoslovakia. The church managed to survive and spread to other parts of Europe including England, where it continued to emphasise the basic Christian virtue of fellowship.

The Settlement was originally a self-contained village community with a Church, separate Girls and Boys schools, a Theological College, an inn, bakehouse and Cemetery. Not all remain to day but the sense of community continues, the cottages, set on wide cobbled streets facing inwards towards the main Church buildings, are rented out to the wider population but the connections to the Worldwide Moravian Church remain.

Droylesden and Greater Manchester are fortunate to have this survival from the Reformation in their midst.

Vincent D'Olier

Trips to Manchester Art Galleries

Starting with coffee and cake at the Whitworth Art Gallery we then took a closer look than usual at the art works on show. The Gallery will close in September for work to continue on the new extension

which will connect the it directly with the park and the local communities. For some of us this could be the last visit for a while.

A speedy move through Rusholme brought us to the Manchester Costume Gallery in Platt Fields. The building is now home to collections of British fashion over six centuries but was originally a Georgian family house. The beautifully proportioned rooms have been carefully maintained but only one, the dining room, is still intact and has been fully restored to its original state - pale blue plastered walls and grey/white stucco work with gold leaf decoration. The soft afternoon sunlight brought it all to life.

We were here, primarily, to see the “Christian Dior: Designer in Focus” exhibition, featuring the 1947 iconic “New Look” a collection of sumptuous extravagant women’s clothes, that burst on us here in Britain after many years of austerity.

Dior’s couture included day, cocktail and evening wear designed, in Dior’s words, to promote a “voluptuous hourglass figure” and to radiate glamour - as shown by Royalty (Princess Margaret) and film stars of the day; Marlene Dietrich, Ava Gardner among them. A member of the group showed us a photograph of herself in a splendid green cocktail dress. Another, more senior member of the group, reminisced about a “New Look” full length coat bought for her by her father in 1947 which sadly failed to produce the magical transformation.

Irene Thomas

The O&A Summer programme had something for everyone and I realised what a lot of thought was put into it when it was planned. I visited Burnley, Clitheroe and Lichfield and toured the Moravian Settlement. Also I attended three lecture about ‘Isms’ - past an present including Fascism and Imperialism. All three were excellent. It was a brilliant Summer Programme - I could have done with much more!

Margaret Harrop

~ Goooooooooooooooooal! ~

Thanks to the Samaritans, and Colin in particular, the four Geere's got to visit Old Trafford for Rio Ferdinand's Testimonial match. This was particularly exciting for Nathan, who had never been to the ground of his favourite team. Unfortunately Manchester United lost the game, but not before a certain young man got to celebrate a home goal being scored, nearly flinging his sweets over fellow supporters as he did so! Nathan will tell anyone who asks that 'he had a great time'.



**~ Minutes of the Church Meeting
of Union Chapel Fallowfield (Baptist)
held on Sunday 21st July 2013
at 11.20am.~**

Present: Ian Geere (chair), Gwyneth Heritage Roberts, Leonie Earnshaw, Margaret Garner, Beryl Dykes, Irene Roberts, Ted Land, Eileen Land, Lorna Richardson, Steve Roberts, Michael Welford, Harry Fleming, Gwen Mattock, Hilda Linton, Colin Marchbank-Smith, Rachel Adebago, Alan Dobbins, Rachel Scott, Rosalind

Bell, Nicola Hamilton, Martin Hamilton, Anne Phillips, Carmen Bowman

Apologies: David Garner and Sarah Geere (with children), Alan and Margaret Redhouse, Enid Welford, Margaret Edmonds, Owen Jones

The Minutes of the March 2013 meeting (in May-June magazine) were approved.

Notification of AOB – Gwen M had a question to raise.

Matters arising/updates/information:

- (a) The Easter events and services went well.
- (b) The Awayday was enjoyed and appreciated by those who attended. Need to consider how to involve more people if we repeat this.
- (c) The Church Weekend at Rydal Hall was a big success. Thanks to the organisers in particular Nicola H & David G, and to Mark and Debbie Janes for leading.
- (d) Marriage Registrar – Michael W is presently the only registrar for the Chapel. Monica D has agreed to become one also. This is in hand but the forms required are not straightforward.
- (e) August Church Lunch – this will be on August 11th and people are invited to bring picnics.
- (f) The Harvest service will be on 22nd September
- (g) There will be a Saturday evening social event on 12th October with singing led by Hannah Jones (nee Kidd) and dancing led by Opanka. Will be a buffet supper. Further details in due course.
- (h) Food Bank proposal – there will be an open public meeting at Union Chapel on Thursday 8th August at 11am with a representative of the Trussell Trust with a view to setting up a formal steering group.
- (i) “Who does What” review –still pending. GHR & IG to progress. In the meantime anyone who is unhappy with

their present involvement (or lack of it) invited to make themselves known.

- (j) Annual Accounts – the auditor has approved the accounts with no queries.

Membership request –Margaret Edmonds has asked to become a member of the Church. Beryl D and Enid W have visited her and strongly recommend her to the Church. Request agreed unanimously.

BMS Birthday Scheme – Beryl D has taken this over from Connie W. Participants get a card on their birthday with a reminder to donate to BMS. Beryl will get some more forms so that new people can join the Scheme if they wish to.

Proposal to form Use of the Buildings Committee – historically the running of the buildings has been left to two or three people. This has involved a huge amount of work, dealings with a lot of people and co-ordinating large numbers of variables. The proposal is to form a group to offer oversight and implement some new systems and organisation, including on it the people who presently take the responsibility. It is not proposed to involve people from outside the congregation at the outset but this may well be appropriate once the committee is up and running. The intention is that the membership will rotate. There was a majority in favour of forming the committee. Leonie E and Alan D offered to participate. Membership of the initial group to be proposed by the Deacons and ratified by the September Church Meeting.

Fabric Budget – Proposed that the Meeting should set a budget for the Fabric Committee who can then set about prioritising the jobs and getting quotes. The pointing is quite bad. The paths are bad and the flags need re-laying. Someone has fallen outside the front door and the path there has be patched on a temporary basis. The proposed figure is for a budget for capital projects of £10K per annum. This is on top of routine maintenance. This was approved after discussion. The Fabric Committee still needs to seek approval from the Church Meeting before incurring capital expenditure – this

is not a carte blanche approval to spending! Steve R made the point that having a budget does not get away from reactivity and it would be good to have a rolling 5 year plan.

Suggestion for new shared signage – The new church sign on the corner of Wellington Road and Waller Ave does not have any space for notices of other events or activities. There is a suggestion that we should have another signboard on the Wellington Road/Linton House corner to be shared by the church and O&A. The frame would cost £660 and it would hold fabricated banners which would cost approx £90 each. This has also been suggested for discussion at O&A. A number of reservations were expressed; that some of the users may not be able to use the space, that it would be expensive for temporary signage, that it could easily look a mess and that it would not be sufficiently visible on that side of the building. Further consideration of how to publicise what goes on needed.

Welcoming new people in the Autumn – this is the time of year when new students arrive and we should be ready & willing to provide food, conversation and hospitality. The suggestion is that from mid-September to mid-October a few people could bring some food to church every Sunday and be willing to spend time with new people. This was felt to be a good idea. Harry F is willing to be one of the welcomers.

The question was raised of how new students would find out about the church. The local Churches Together have put a leaflet together with service details which goes in the Freshers' Pack to Owens Park. We are also in the Directory of Churches maintained by the University Chaplaincy. Any prospective attender is likely to check our website – so we need to make sure it is up-to-date.

Notification of Deacons' Agenda:

Rotating topic for September– Christmas and New Year arrangements.

AOB:

- (a) Gwen M - Andrew Funnell is retiring as Regional Minister in September. He has been good to Union Chapel over the years. Contribution of £100 to his retirement gift (to be sent to NWBA) approved by the meeting.
- (b) Beryl D – thanks for the roller blinds now fixed over the Chapel windows on the Waller Avenue side.
- (c) Eileen L – request for people to supply old envelopes for reuse in the office.

The Meeting closed with the Grace at 12.15pm

~ News of the Family ~

We were delighted to welcome **Margaret Edmonds** into membership recently. (Margaret does so much at Union Chapel and is so much part of the family that many thought she was already a member!)

Brenda Marston, Ned Higgins and Matt have now moved back to Manchester - Welcome home!

Congratulations to **Rachel Garner and Matt** who have just announced their engagement. We send them our best wishes for a joyous future.

We are glad to report that **Michael Welford** is making good and steady progress after a recent illness. We send him our best wishes.

Anne Phillips has retired as Co-Principal of the Northern Baptist Learning Community and is expecting to move from Manchester towards the end of September. We wish her all the best for the future. (*More in our next issue*)

~ O&A News ~

O&A raised £310 for the MacMillan Cancer Support at the Opening Coffee Morning of their Summer Programme. They wish to thank all those who helped with this event.

The new brochure, which gives full details of all O&A classes for 2013-2014, is now available. Copies can be found in the Chapel foyer and online at their web site www.o-a.org.uk - The brochure also contains details of the many other users of Union Chapel including ourselves.

~ 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

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