

GoodNEWS **MAGAZINE**

FREE MONTHLY

From Lindfield United Reformed Church

May 2014

COME, HOLY SPIRIT



Ascension

Why do you stand here
looking into the sky?

Pentecost

Traditions remembered
and falling afresh

Charles & Jenny

Update from North Essex

Bible verse of the month

"It's what we trust in but don't yet see that keeps us going. Do you suppose a few ruts in the road or rocks in the path are going to stop us?"

**2 Corinthians 5:7
The Message**

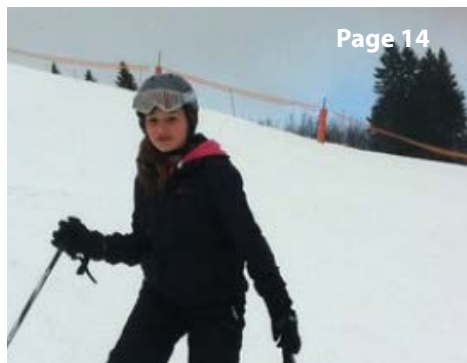
**This month verse chosen
by Hannah Thomas
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**If you have a verse or article
you would like to share in
GoodNEWS email:**

goodnews@lindfieldurc.org.uk



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Editorial

Anne has had to pass on the editorial role this month as she has had an operation on her knees. We pray for her and David particularly at this time.

This edition is full of the usual contributions, providing you with information and updates on events and situations.

We have two events in the 'churches calendar'; the Ascension and Pentecost. Robert Bushby has written on the Ascension and why it is good to spend time considering this. Fo Tingley has written on Pentecost and the significance of that event in the growth of the church.

There is also an update on how Charles and Jenny Martin are doing in retirement.

I don't know how many times you have heard a sermon and thought that was good I need to respond to that and then you get home and forget all about what was said. So every so often we will ask one of our preachers to summarise their sermons and we will put it in the magazine. David Jones is first up to do this.

So once again there is a lot to read and digest



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Sunday May 11th

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*Please include your contact
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*Produced for
Lindfield United Reformed
Church,
50 High Street, Lindfield, West
Sussex, RH16 2HL
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Dear friends

As I sit and start to write this the sun is shining and the sky is blue. What a wonderful sight after what seems an age of dark skies, rain and strong winds. As I look out of the window the gardens are full of spring flowers, bigger and more plentiful than last year, even after the horrific weather we have endured. God is good in all he gives us. The reservoirs are full and the underground stocks are at their limit, we have a lot to give thanks for.

We now eagerly await God's decision on who our new minister is going to be. He already knows, of course, but we have to be patient and have faith that, when the time is right, God will give us the person that he has already chosen for us. God works in his time not ours (Philippians 4:6)

If you have any concerns or worries while we are without a minister, please speak to your elder whom I am sure would love to chat and pray with you. If you are not yet a member, please speak to any elder, we are here for you. (Ephesians 4:32 1Corinthians 13:13)

I have purposely just put Bible references and not written those in full, while you are looking the verses up why not read a little more; reading the Bible really does bring you closer to God.

I thought you might like to see the following in which I found in a church magazine while in Kent:

*Never give up trying
and you will never fail.
Never give up hoping though dark
clouds prevail.
Never give up smiling,
wear a cheerful grin.
Never give up struggling,
have the will to win.
Never give up helping lame dogs
over stiles.
Never give up plodding life's long
weary miles.
Never give up loving all that's best
and true.
Never give up praying,
God will see you through.*

May God bless each one of you.

Your Friend and Elder,

Terry Ward

Terry Ward - Elder

Family News

Marriage

Many of our Church Family will remember Marjorie Mulligan's daughter, Pam, who worshipped with us from time to time. Pam was married at Shoreham Free Church on April 12th to Anthony Cripps. It was a lovely service, a very happy occasion and Pam looked beautiful. Marjorie would have been so thrilled!

Fo Tingley

Engine Room

Please note due to the European Parliament Elections being held on our premises on the Fourth Thursday the Engine Room, Prayer meeting, will be on Thursday 29th.

Carol Walters

ROC on Saturday

This has got off to a great start with the lounge packed. Please continue to pray for this outreach event from the three churches under the banner of Redeeming Our Communities. The dates in May are 10th & 24th. If you are able call in for tea and cake.

David Walters

Vacancy

We understand there is interest in our pastorate profile and we need to continue to pray that the right person will respond. Please continue to pray for all aspects of the church during this time. It was good to have a visit from the Southern Synod Moderator, Revd Nicola Furley-Smith a few Sundays ago. She was able to get the feel of our fellowship which will help her in seeking out suitable candidates.

David Walters

The Fellowship

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 28th May at 2.30pm.

This will take the form of another 'Miscellany', which will include a short quiz presented by Dorothy Brown.

There will be the usual Bring and Buy Stall, together with a cup of tea after the entertainment.

All who come may be sure of a warm welcome

Pat Phillips

Spring along to our

PLANT & CAKE SALE

Saturday 10th May

**10am-12noon in the beautiful gardens of
Lindfield Christian Care Home
Compton Road, Lindfield**

- ❖ **Bedding Plants**
- ❖ **Vegetables & Herbs**
- ❖ **Hardy Herbaceous Perennials**

... all at very competitive prices

plus...

FREE Admission

FREE Gardening Advice & Leaflets

Refreshments & Cakes for Sale

If wet, we have plenty of cover!

*Proceeds split equally between Compton House,
Tearfund and The Overseas Missionary Fellowship*



We look forward to seeing you, whatever the weather

In Touch

Our February meeting involved a "visit" to the Holy Land by Lesley, Fo, and Janets D and W.

We travelled there last year and enjoyed a unique holiday in that special country where Jesus was born, lived and died. We spent the first few days based in Jerusalem and then moved north and stayed by the shores of Lake Galilee.

We visited so many places which, up till then, had been familiar names in the Bible but which then became "alive" and real to us because we were able to walk around, explore, and see them personally. We wrote about the trip in a previous Good News but our 'In Touch' account was obviously more personal and detailed and we were able to illustrate it with our slides which Henderson had very kindly helped us put together.

In March Janet Wade talked about "Gardens in the Bible" and this time Richard kindly helped set up the equipment to illustrate the pictures and diagrams. This made me think that it is about time we learned to do it ourselves, but, meanwhile, we are very grateful for all the help which is so willingly given.

The talk looked at the great contrast between the two gardens mentioned by name in the Bible : Eden and Gethsemane, and the significance each played in the history of mankind. We then studied a number of references in the Bible where the word "Garden" is mentioned and some of the interesting stories associated with them. We also looked at a few of the plants and shrubs which were grown in Biblical times and their uses in everyday life. We ended up considering that we are all individually like gardens, needing to be watered, pruned and fed regularly. The answer to who should do that for us is found in John 15 v 1 when Jesus says" I am the real vine and my Father is the Gardener".

It was great to see some new faces at our last meeting and we do warmly welcome everyone to all our meetings. The next one is on 27th May When Naomi McBain will be our speaker. Some of you will remember Naomi when she spoke at the Womens' World day of Prayer in March.

Janet Wade

Plant and Cake Sale

As you can see from the facing publicity, the annual Sale is taking place at Compton House. If you are splitting perennials please give any spares for the sale. Cakes would also be appreciated, we would be grateful if you could bring them along at 10.00am.

We look forward to your support.

Stuart Marsh

Pentecost

Pentecost, White Sunday or Whitsun – well, it is all a celebration of the same event, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the first Apostles. But first a little nostalgic reflection on Whitsun in the past.

Perhaps, before I knew the real reason for Whitsun, what comes to mind from my childhood and youth (yes, I know, a very long time ago!) was that it was an exciting occasion on which to wear my new summer dress to Church, (rather like at Easter you hoped to have a new outfit and hat! Yes, I really am that old!)



The choir would have prepared that well-known anthem "Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire"! It was always around that time that Churches used to hold their Anniversary. This was a special service held, usually on a Saturday afternoon, and often with a visiting Speaker. Afterwards there would be a sumptuous tea in the Church Hall, lovingly prepared by the ladies, (nothing new there!) One might even be invited to another local Church on a different date to go through the whole event all over again! So why that time of year for those anniversary services? Well, simply because the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was regarded as the 'Birthday' of the Christian Church.

However, let's go back to the Bible and unpack the real reason of Pentecost. In Old Testament times the people of Israel celebrated the Feast of Weeks to commemorate the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. (This feast is still kept in Judaism today and known as 'Shavuot'.) The Christian Festival, though, is very different.

After Jesus' resurrection and appearances to his followers and before He ascended into Heaven, He was sharing a meal with His Disciples when He gave them instructions to remain in Jerusalem until the gift of the Holy Spirit, which the Father had promised, came upon them. (See Acts 1: 4 – 8) In Acts chapter 2 we read of the amazing way in which this happened; a violent wind which filled the whole house and then what appeared to be flames of fire resting on each of them.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and from that moment on were given the power to preach and teach and to perform miracles in Jesus' name. What a mind-blowing experience for those Apostles! Not to mention a shock for all those who gathered around them on that day – they were dumb-founded and in awe at what had happened. The Apostles' preaching was so powerful that many came to believe the Gospel, hence the 'Birthday of the Church'.

For me the reality of Pentecost came alive back in the late '70s when this Church put on a production of the Christian musical, "Spirit". (Apologies to those of you who are tired of hearing about what happened when we did "Spirit"!)

Through the music and lyrics many of us came to experience for ourselves what it meant to be filled with God's Holy Spirit. It was an extremely moving time to know a tremendous joy in our faith, a spring in our step and a power within that we couldn't otherwise explain. But receiving the Holy Spirit isn't just a one-off experience. All Christians have the Holy Spirit, but we need to keep asking God to fill us again, day after day, if we are to be the effective disciples He wants us to be.

So let us pray that the Spirit will fall afresh on LURC this Pentecost, and that we, God's children, will be ready to receive it and allow Him to use us and bless us as a result.

Fo Tingley

Bible Verse

“It’s what we trust in but don’t yet see that keeps us going. Do you suppose a few ruts in the road or rocks in the path are going to stop us?”

2 Corinthians 5:7- The Message

This verse has been very applicable to both Josh and I over the past few months. It has seemed like a rollercoaster with lots of things tripping us up, and things happening which have made me worry and become very stressed. My job this year has been a difficult environment to work in due to a variety of reasons, and at times I have wanted to give up completely and avoid all the stresses it brings. We had the worry of suddenly having to move house and most of all, Josh’s application for ministry was coming to a decision, and this was a real test of patience to both of us.

However, all of these things have and are working themselves out. These past few months have demonstrated to me that God has been watching over me this whole time. When I have been worried it has been hard to keep trusting in God, but looking back I can see that God has been guiding both of us, and this test has taught us well! I have learnt to trust and believe that when I feel at my lowest that God is still there and if I wait, God will bless me. I can see how he is working in our lives and now that we know that we will be moving to Cambridge, this is really evident.

The selection process has been a long one,

but I truly believe that God has called us to be there. I am so grateful for everything that God has provided us with and I know that we wouldn’t be in the situation we are in now without him. We are so pleased that Josh has been accepted to serve God through ministry and I know that this is all part of God’s plan.

These past few months have also reminded me of The Footprints In The Sand poem, and I know that God has been carrying us through this time, and I know he will continue to do so. I have no doubt that there will be ruts in the road and rocks in the path in the next few years. We will be surviving on a very small amount of money, I don’t know what job God has lined up for me, and we will be further away from everything and everyone we know. But, these ruts and rocks won’t stop us, we will carry on with whatever is thrown at us because we both know that God is there looking out for us and carrying us through the tough times. I will always be thankful for what I have and I know that times will get better and that God has got good things in store for us. Sometimes we just have to wait and work on God’s timing, not our own. There will always be a reason for this, even though it may not seem like it at the time, and God always loves us no matter what.

Hannah Thomas

Charles & Jenny

Update from North Essex

It was with a light heart that Charles drove the car down the road with the last lot of rubbish for the corporation rubbish tip. Moving house seems to generate rubbish in much the same way that washing baskets spawn dirty clothes. The rubbish likes to linger too, witness the fact that this journey took place in March and we moved in August.

Halstead, where we have our retirement home, is a small market town with most of the amenities that make life possible within easy reach. The house is now just about how we would like it and the garden is waiting for an additional terrace to be put in place because the poor old soul,[me] who does the gardening finds it well nigh impossible to weed on a slope. I don't think that the old chap who cuts the grass will find it very easy when he adds a few more years to his total either!

We are in process of joining the local URC which has made us very welcome. We tramped around a bit visiting other churches and encountered everything from friendly welcomes to being greeted with intense suspicion. I wasn't aware that we looked quite so shady but we are obviously more threatening than we thought. It was a very interesting exercise however, and made us grateful that our nearest church was so welcoming.

Retirement takes some getting used to. For a long time we felt like a couple of orphans who had been exiled to rural Essex. When everything stops there is a deafening silence for a while but we are now creating a new life for ourselves. We are both preaching again, Charles is prison visiting and singing in a choir and I have volunteered as a room guide at Melford Hall for the National Trust. If you hear that there has been a mass breakout at High Point Prison you will know that he has inadvertently left his keys in the wrong place. Actually he was told that if he took them home by mistake and that evidence could be found that they had been copied, all the keys in the prison would have to be changed at a cost of upwards of a million pounds! Scary stuff.

The National Trust is far more relaxed and the worst offence would probably be telling a naughty visitor to go away until they learn how to behave properly!

We miss you all very much. We also miss the Co-op as it is half a mile to the nearest shop! If any of you are travelling by car on the A12 to Norfolk, Halstead is about 15 minutes off the A12 when it gets to the outskirts of Colchester so pop in for a coffee or a snack. It would be great to see you.

Our telephone number is 01787 474688. Our warmest good wishes to you all.

Your friends Jenny and Charles

CAP Update



Following my original article in 'Good News' in the winter of 2012, I have been asked to give a brief update on my work at CAP (Christians Against Poverty), and also how the work of CAP is having a positive impact on the lives of thousands of families throughout the UK.

CAP was started by John Kirkby in 1997 as a result of his own personal experience when he and his family experienced the misery associated with spiralling debt and brokenness.

18 years later CAP has grown beyond anything John could have imagined with 252 church-based centres and 500 workers in the UK helping over 20,000 individuals each year.

I attended Lindfield URC for a number of years in my teens, and became a Christian in 1987. Although moving away to go to University, I have regularly returned to visit my brother David and his family, and the church in Lindfield has remained close to my heart.

I have always been moved by God's heart for the poor, and believe the response of the church to the vulnerable and needy is at the heart of the message of the gospel.

I had first become involved with CAP after training to run the CAP money course in my church. CAP Money is a money management course being run in over 1,000 churches throughout the UK. The focus is on budgeting skills and more than 10,000 people attended the course in 2013.

After being impressed by the professionalism and effectiveness of the course, I sought to become more involved in the work and after much prayer, in 2010 my wife Stella and I took a leap of faith and I accepted a job offer to work at CAP's head office in Bradford. This culminated in moving with the family from Nottinghamshire to Brighouse in West Yorkshire in January 2011.

CAP exists to lift people out of debt and poverty, through professional debt counselling, money management training and more recently job clubs, empowering people to return to work.



In the UK today there are hundreds of thousands of people, from all backgrounds, who live in fear due to their financial situation. Debt causes isolation, fear of answering the door, sleepless nights, hiding from family and friends, shame, brokenness.

In Matthew 25, Jesus says 'Truly I tell you whatever you did for one of the least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

CAP is a 21st century expression of God's heart for the lost and broken, working through the local church bringing hope and support and helping people to rebuild their lives.

Before working with CAP, 67% of clients missed meals, 1 in 4 doing so regularly, 74% visited their GP due to debt-related stress with 44% prescribed medication and 1 in 3 either considered or attempted suicide before seeking help.

CAP receives no government funding and is supported largely by the regular giving of individuals and churches. Over 20,000 people have signed up to become lifechangers, by giving a small amount to CAP each month. However, the demand for the work we do is ever increasing, and our vision is to expand to 500 debt centres nationally so that the whole of the UK is covered by the service.

I work in CAP's head office in Bradford as a caseworker, the team I work in has specific responsibility for cases where there is no clear route out of debt; many of our clients are homeowners with significant debt which may mean their home is at risk. Typically the debts have arisen as the result of illness, bereavement, redundancy or family breakdown. In situations like this we are able to stand in the gap between families and their creditors, helping to relieve the pressure and stress of being chased to repay debts and struggling to make ends meet.

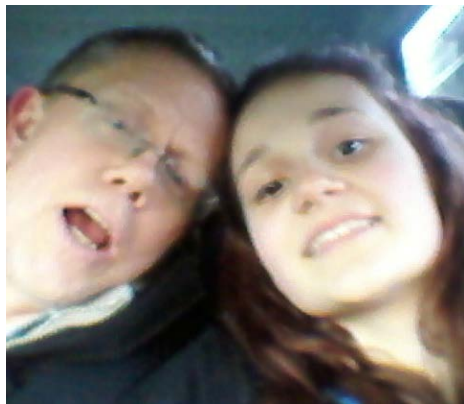
My role involves regular contact with clients, advising them and helping them to manage their budgets, as well as negotiating with mortgage companies and other creditors to develop a sustainable plan for repaying their debts.

One of the most rewarding parts of the job is to witness the change in people when the burden of debt is lifted from them and to be able to celebrate with them when they become debt free.

Jim Goodchild

If you want to find out more about the work of CAP or if you want to get involved, visit www.capuk.org, or feel free to contact me directly jimgoodchild@capuk.org

Ski Trip



Lydia, my daughter, and I have just returned from a ski trip with Oak Hall Christian Holidays. We went to Feldberg in the Black Forest in Germany. The last time I planned to go on a holiday with the same company was in 2004. I was single then, and ironically, planned to go walking in the Black Forest in the summer. I bought a rucksack in Scotland when I was visiting with my mother. I met Rosemary, my lovely wife now, in the Springtime that year, and cancelled my Black Forest trip. This skiing trip was a chance to take my rucksack where it belonged, and to recharge my batteries from a busy family life. My wife has always asked me why I cancelled the trip in the first place! My mother has now passed on into the loving arms of Jesus forever. How life changes and God holds us in his loving hands, to know the plans he has for us, and how we are ever going to get there.

I hadn't skied for more than ten years, so was a little apprehensive that the class I had registered with would find me more on my bottom than skis. Fortunately, skiing is a bit like falling off of a bike. After you've fallen off enough times you start to stand up. The mountains were beautiful, the skiing was breathtaking, and hot chocolates helped to lift tired legs and spirits during the day.

In the evenings, we had a church service where a speaker filled our hearts with stories and Christian anecdotes. He reminded me of my childhood, as he continually reinforced the message that our ultimate destiny is to accept Jesus as our own personal Saviour. That decision has to be personal, in acceptance that Jesus is the only way to eternal life. We also have to accept that our sin is personal too, and that accepting Jesus is the only way to salvation.

I am always amazed at the thrill of skiing, but I am amazed even more at the thrill and prospect of living with people who call themselves Christian. It is a blessing to live with a group of people who don't slander each other, who consider others' needs before their own, who endeavour to live life against the attitudes of a self-seeking society. Vive la différence.

Jesus said, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.'

The art of Christian living is proclaiming Christ, as He is, living through you, in what you do. The art of proclaiming the Gospel is fulfilled thereafter in what you say. I sat listening to one skier who having been a drug dealer went on to become the leader of a gang running drugs. He said that the only reason his life was now worth living was because of Jesus. He had a story of great tragedy to tell, transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ. The Bible from cover to cover is a book about God's relationship with man. It is the uniqueness of the Christian faith.

Christianity is the living miracle of transformed lives as seen in people like you and me. You don't have to be a reformed drug dealer to understand it, but sometimes it does help.

God Bless you

Harry McCleery

(Edited by my amazing wife)



Sunday Services

The **9.30am** service is an opportunity for all age groups to join in a relaxed informal time. Most weeks, children leave after 20 minutes for their own activities (including crèche). Lighthouse (Junior church) is for children and young people up to age 14. Holy Communion (1st Sunday)

Coffee is served between the morning services.

The **11:15am** service is a more traditional service than at 9:30. Holy Communion (4th Sunday)

At **6:30pm** Held in the lounge this is sometimes a celebration, sometimes a quieter ministry time and sometimes an open communion service or something quite different!

Holy Communion (2nd Sunday)

Personal prayer is available after every service. We can also offer personal prayer ministry at home or in hospital.

We do not take up an offering during the services, those wishing to give are invited to place a gift in one of the bowls at the doors before or after the service.

Recordings of services can be borrowed free from the church.

Prayer Meetings

Mon	9.30am	An Hour of Prayer
Wed	9.45am	Short Service of Intercession
Thur	8.00pm	Church Prayer Evening 'Engine Room' (4th Thursday)
Sat	8.45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting. <small>Venue rotates between the three churches</small>

Prayer requests and brief statements of praise for answered prayer can be put in the blue book on the concourse table.

Regular Activities

Mon	10.00am	Art Group
	6.00pm	Boy's Brigade - Anchor Boys (5-7 years)
	6.30pm	Boys' Brigade - Junior Section (8-11 years)
	7.30pm	Boys' Brigade - Company Section (11+ years)
Tue	10.00am	Stepping Stones (Parents and toddlers - term time)
	7.45pm	In Touch (4th Tues) for women of all ages
Wed	2.30pm	The Fellowship (4th Wed) for men and women of all ages
Thur	10.00am	Pop-In Coffee and a chat
	8.00pm	Church Meeting (2nd Thur)
Fri	4:30pm	P.U.L.S.E Junior (1st and 3rd week, term time)
	7.30pm	P.U.L.S.E (Years 6-9) games, craft, tuck and a bible message (term time)
Sun	7.30pm	P.U.L.S.E +

The church is open most mornings from 10.00am to 12.30pm

May Church diary

1st Thursday		House Groups	18th Sunday	9:30am	Family Worship
				11:15am	Morning worship Josh Thomas
3rd Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, Evan Free		6:30pm	Evening Worship Rev Brian Stone
4th Sunday	9:30am	Communion	21st Wednesday	2:30pm	Afternoon Fellowship
	11:15am	Morning worship Rev Graeme Allen Saltdean & Brighton URC			
	6:30pm	No Evening Service	22nd Thursday		European Parliament Elections - No 'Pop In'
8th Thursday	8:00pm	Church Meeting	24th Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, Evan Free
				3:00pm	ROC on Saturday
10th Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, Evan Free	25th Sunday	9:30am	Family Worship
	3:00pm	ROC on Saturday		11:15am	Communion Jeremy Heath Past member of BB Caterham
11th Sunday	9:30am	Family Worship		6:30pm	Evening Worship David Walters
	11:15am	Morning worship Dan McQuillin			
	6:30pm	Communion Rev Jon Hobbs Grace Church, HH	27th Tuesday	7:45pm	In Touch Group
14th Wednesday	12:30pm	Lunch Fellowship	28th Wednesday	7:45pm	Elders Meeting
15th Thursday		House Groups	29th Thursday	8:00pm	Engine Room Church Prayer Meeting
16th Friday	12:30pm	Lunch Fellowship			
17th Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, Evan Free	31st Saturday		Village Day

**Josh
Thomas
Writes...**



As many of you will now know, I have been accepted to go and train for full time ministry of word and sacraments at Westminster College in Cambridge. It has been a real rollercoaster of a journey that is only really just beginning and I wanted to share with you some of the process and how we are feeling about the future!

Josh

The process starts with a visit to the Synod Moderator – our Moderator, Nicola Furley-Smith came to Lindfield a few weeks ago to preach so you may be familiar with her. This was a very informal first chat if you like, we talked about my calling and experience in ministry with the young people and it was Nicola's job to discern whether the application should go any further at this point. She seemed very happy and I was on to the next stage. We next met with David Walters and Jean Gardiner to discuss my calling as the Church needed to back up my application.

Both myself and Hannah found this a very positive and affirming experience and it was nice for Hannah to be able to talk with Jean about her experiences as a minister's wife and I know Hannah would like to thank Jean for this. This led me on to the next stage which was a short placement at Haywards Heath URC. During this time I worked alongside Revd Robert Bushby leading various aspects of worship and visiting various church activities including a coffee morning, an elders' meeting and a church meeting. I was also tasked with writing some recommendations to the church regarding how they use their High Street position to its full advantage with a very limited volunteer basis.

Some of the things they are now exploring include looking at getting local artists and charities to exhibit on their weekly coffee morning. This is easily sustained as the artist/charity will be there to staff their own exhibit leaving the usual volunteers to concentrate on serving coffee and having conversations with people. Whilst doing this placement I had a service I led assessed by local preachers, I felt God calling me to speak on prayer and after the service God's call was confirmed to me as someone came and told me they were exactly the words she needed to hear on that day, praise God! I found my time at Haywards Heath URC to be a really affirming and positive experience, with an ageing congregation it showed me that God had given me the skills I needed to minister to a different kind of congregation – I'm a work in progress but the Lord never gives up!

Back in January I had the first of the two final more daunting assessments which started with my Synod interview, this involved going up to the synod offices in East Croydon. I met with a panel of four people including Stuart Dew who currently looks after all of the candidates from Southern Synod. It was nice to have a friendly, familiar face on the panel however that didn't take away the nerves! I had a variety of questions, some more tricky than others and the whole interview took just over an hour.

It took a few hours for the result of the interview to come through, a few hours that seemed like an eternity but I feel the Lord has been teaching me to be more patient during the whole experience, I'll say more about that later! The phone call came and Stuart told me the news that I was through to the final stage – the national assessment conference which was to be held in Manchester at the end of March.

The time seemed to go far too quickly and I soon found myself on a very early train up to Manchester. When I arrived at Luther King House, which is the URC's training centre in Manchester, I was once again greeted by a familiar face. This time it was Graham Campling who has been chairing the national assessment panel over the past few years. All the candidates gathered on arrival and it was clear we had all come from different places and backgrounds but we were all very much united by Christ and have since all kept in contact sharing the various outcomes and praying for one another. We were all very nervous but the weekend wasn't as scary as I had thought it might be and there was a nice mix of worship and group activities scattered amongst the interviews and observations of the weekend. The weekend finished up with worship and we were all able to just lay the decision in God's hands, each knowing that it was his will and that it wasn't a definite door closing but another one opening whatever the outcome.

I really valued conversations with both candidates and the assessors over the weekend and the nerves soon died down – God never gives us more than we can handle!

I spoke earlier about God teaching me an important lesson in patience and after the conference each one of us had at least a week until we found out the outcome of the weekend. This was a difficult time and I convinced myself of several outcomes over the week but I appreciate so much the prayers of each of you over that time, I couldn't have done any of it in my own strength but I had to rely on strength from God, your prayers helped give me that strength!

Finally I travelled to East Croydon again for the result, I had heard from a few people who were on the weekend with me and there was a very mixed set of outcomes for people. I was glad that I didn't have to wait much longer and all I really remember from that day was hearing the words;

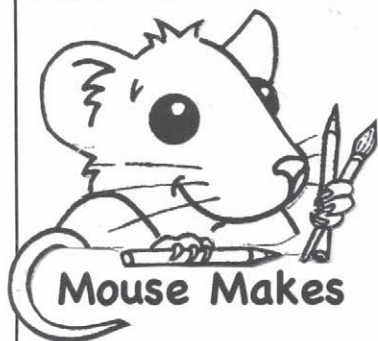
“Josh we are pleased to tell you that you have been accepted to train starting at Westminster College this September.”

I honestly couldn't tell you much else that was said during this meeting I was just so full of praise for God and wanted to give him the glory!

Before I start, I have to complete a short course on the history and ethos of the URC which will commence at the start of May and will climax in a weekend at Westminster College in July.

The college will help us to find somewhere to live in Cambridge and God willing we will move some point during August or September. I am excited but slightly apprehensive about the whole thing but God has shown me time and time again during the process that he is with me and giving me what I need to cope with things. I met the other day with someone just finishing their time at Westminster, (who coincidentally is going to minister at the church Charles and Jenny Martin are now worshipping at) and this was really useful and I'm a bit clearer on what is going to happen now but still there is a lot still to find out! I have mixed feelings about moving up there, I am going to miss Lindfield URC a huge amount, I feel I have grown so much as a person during my time here and so have all of the young people I have worked with. I will miss them a great deal. But I have to put my faith in God and trust where he is leading us and I am excited for this new chapter to begin. Please carry on praying for us, we really value your prayers for this exciting new beginning and I have no doubt we will be back in Lindfield over the next few years to see you all and keep you updated on how things are going.

Josh Thomas



THE ASCENSION

Forty days after his resurrection JESUS led his disciples out to Bethany and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. As he blessed them he was taken up into heaven.

"Christ Jesus is the one who died for us and was raised to life again for us and is sitting in the place of highest honour next to God, pleading for us there in heaven" Romans 8:34

"For there is only one God and there is only one way that people can reach God. That way is through Christ Jesus"
1 Timothy 2:5



THE LORD HEARS YOUR PRAYERS



Write your prayers to GOD in the prayer hands above knowing that JESUS is in heaven at God's right hand speaking to God for us



Boys' Brigade

One Monday evening, the Church was invaded by a band of cut-throats and villains. Sporting bandanas, tricorn hats, and eye patches, and waving cutlasses and pistols, our Anchors turned out for our "pirates" evening. They walked the plank, and hunted for treasure (actually a bag of sweets 'buried' behind the photocopier!). Terry judged Gus to be the most fearsome looking pirate. A great time was had by all, and Janet and myself survived (just about!).

Juniors and Company Section have also had activity out of the ordinary: the Juniors participating in the Battalion Spring Competition at Portslade,

while the older lads competed in the Drill Competitions held at Southwick Methodist Church. We were proud of our Company Section squad and Colour Party, whose smartness and precision did them credit. No trophies were gained, but it was good to have a go.

Wesley and Tom have now qualified for their Queens Badges, the Brigade's highest award, and these should be presented at the Awards Evening on 19th May, to which all are invited. In June, we should be sharing a camp with Pulse members (some Boys are in both organisations).

Geoffrey Cocksedge



May/June Mission

This May and June the church will be supporting the work of Operation Mobilisation, an organisation of over 6,000 people working in more than 110 countries worldwide, whose goal is to share the good news of God to all people. The breadth of work that OM carry out globally is incredibly vast, with numerous projects across the world working through literature, the creative arts, friendship, Bible studies, videos and cassette tapes, correspondence courses, relief and development work, and much, much more.

Starting in the late 50s, George Verwer's work in Mexico rapidly spread to Europe and then farther afield as it became clear God was mobilising His church to reach the nations. OM was born out of the passion to tell others of how Jesus had changed their lives, and to give all people the opportunity to hear about God, especially in areas of the world where Christ is least known.

Last year we had the privilege of welcoming Youssef and his family who spoke to us about the work of House of Hope Algeria – one of a whole host of amazing projects run by OM to bring Christian teaching to North Africa.

One project that spans the entire globe is OM Ships. Since 1970, OM Ships have been visiting ports around the world bringing knowledge, help and hope.

The 'Logos Hope' is the current ship used by OM, and this year it will be touring around south-east Asia bringing with it 400 crew from 50 nations who will be working with local churches to bring the message of Christ to each community visited. The ship gives an excellent platform for many exciting initiatives including Christian literature and teaching as well as building projects and medical aid to name but a few.

OM is always encouraging people to get involved with their work, whether that is helping with projects here in the UK, going to serve abroad in the short or long term, or through giving or prayer. For those interested in finding out more about OM, there will be information and publications in the concourse display area but I highly recommend anyone with computer access takes a look at their extensive website which has detailed information about all the work they do.

Alex Hall



Reminder...

On July 13th 2014 Rev. Chris Vivian, a URC Minister working with Romans 1:11, will be coming to preach at the Morning Service which will be at 10.30am that Sunday. This will be followed by a mission lunch to which everyone is invited. More details to follow soon.

Ascension



In the Free Churches, Jesus' ascension into heaven has perhaps become a neglected aspect of our faith compared with His birth, death and resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. However, it was and is really important. In the Bible, there were many who focussed in on it. Jesus Himself foretold it, Luke described it, Paul celebrated it and the writer to the Hebrews applied it.

Jesus foretold His ascension in John 6:62: "What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where He was before!" and in John 14:2: "I am going there to prepare a place for you." None of Jesus' listeners could possibly have envisaged what it would be like to "see the Son of Man ascend to where He was before." Imagine being there and being told that by Jesus. I wonder what picture we would have in our minds. Pretty vague, I would have thought. For the disciples it was vague until they experienced it.

Luke described what happened briefly at the end of his gospel and in more detail at the beginning of Acts. The description includes the two men dressed in white who issue a challenge and give a promise. The disciples were gazing in awe and wonder at the sky where Jesus had just gone. "Why do you stand here looking into the sky?" They'd just seen an awesome sight and now the two men dressed in white brought them back to earth; there was work to be done, Jesus' work. The two men followed their question and challenge with a promise which would give hope and purpose for their lives: "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven." Meanwhile, and linked to Jesus' ascension, His going away, was His promise in John 16 that His going meant that the Holy Spirit would come to empower and guide them. The Counsellor or the Comforter would come to them, literally "called to one's side" or "to one's aid."

Paul celebrated in his letters the fact that Jesus is now seated in the highest place of authority. Ephesians 1; 19-23 says: "That power is like the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to

come. And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way." (See also Philippians 2:9-11).

Then the writer to the Hebrews applied the truth of the ascension in Chapter 9: 24-28. In these verses the writer says that Jesus appears on our behalf before God until He returns. Some have tried to fix the time of His return; others have shut themselves away from the world waiting. The early church expected Jesus to return in their lifetime, but this did not stop them spreading the good news. In fact the hope of His return spurred them on to love and sacrifice.

So the ascension of our Lord is important. He is in heaven interceding on our behalf and the Holy Spirit has been placed in believers to do His work in the world. While we wait for His coming again, we carry on loving, caring, forgiving, sharing, worshipping, praying and evangelising, and all with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Robert Bushby

Minister of; Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill URC.

He is also the Interim Moderator Lindfield URC, during the time of Pastoral Vacancy

Wider World

Rwanda

A Christ-centred network of microfinance institutions is helping to provide life-changing banking services in greatly impoverished communities in Rwanda so that people can find more security in life.

The Urwego Opportunity Bank (UOB) has set up the mHose Programme ('hose' means everywhere in Rwandan) which delivers financial services to people in under-served areas who don't have access to bricks-and-mortar banks. Today it serves more than 180,000 clients in all thirty districts of Rwanda through forty four business outlets.

UOB is in partnership with the Christ-centred HOPE international in an effort to help the working poor who have no access to public services, little education, are malnourished and earn incomes below the poverty line. The mobile banking tool helps such people greatly by providing a way for more efficient money management which, in turn, helps those in poverty improve their businesses and provide for their families.

A growing number number of Rwandans, 90% of whom identify as Christians, have embraced this new technology. HOPE is also teaching Christian groups to text reports and messages to each other which frees many of them from long walks between villages and other communities,

thereby enabling them to have more time for their work and families.

North Korea

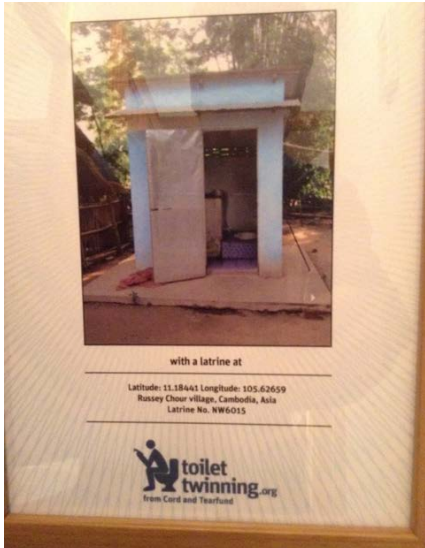
Christians all over the world are being urged by persecution watchdog group Open Doors to pray for the thirty-three people who are facing the death penalty in North Korea reportedly for their connection with a South Korean missionary.

"We need to bathe the country of North Korea in prayer", said Open Doors USA President/CEO David Curry. "North Korea has been the No.1 persecutor of Christians on the Open Doors World Watch List for twelve years in a row. Usually when persecution increases in a country, the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ is spreading."

South Korean newspapers recently reported that Kim Jong Un has ordered the deaths of thirty-three people found to have received money for building 500 churches from South Korean missionary Kim Jung Wook. Open Doors noted that it is unknown whether all the arrested people are converted Christians, but said that it serves as more evidence of the brutality of the North Korean regime.

Carol Marsh

Toilet Twinning



Twin your Toilet and Flush Away Poverty

A few months ago we had lunch with John and Heather Barling. Over their loo they had a framed photograph of a latrine along with its GPS coordinates. This proved an interesting after lunch discussion!

John and Heather told us that donations are used to help provide improved sanitation, clean water and hygiene education in poor communities. We thought that this was a great initiative and something we should do too. However, time slipped by and we didn't get round to making a donation until... there was a toilet twinning stand at Spring Harvest!

So, we had the opportunity to find out a bit more about this Tearfund and Cord initiative, and these are the some of the shocking facts:

- 2.5 billion people don't have a loo which is 40% of the world's population.
- Every minute, three children under the age of five die because of dirty water and poor sanitation.
- In Africa, half of young girls who drop out of school do so because they need to collect water.
- The lack of a loo makes women and girls particularly vulnerable as they walk to the edge of their community to go to the toilet in the open, late at night.

There are many calls on our time and money but please consider if this is an initiative you would like to support with a one-off donation. For every £1 spent on water and sanitation programmes, £8 is returned through reduced health costs and increased productivity.

The latrine which our loo is twinned with is in Cambodia and yes, we have a framed photo of it hanging on the wall!

Lydia Goodchild

www.toilettwinning.org
from Cord and Tearfund

David Watson

David Watson, under God, was involved in turning a small Anglican congregation into a thriving church of several thousand and a ministry both national and international, including developing an effective team ministry. From his experience he wrote an acclaimed book entitled discipleship.

He begins by quoting Dietrich Bonhoeffer a German Lutheran minister who stood against the Nazis in the Second World War which led to his martyrdom.

“When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die” said Bonhoeffer. In this startling statement we have the essence of the radical, uncompromising nature of true Christian discipleship, wrote Watson.

In Matthew 16:34 Jesus said to his disciples – if anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.

Watson recites a story of a young Christian asking what it means to be crucified with Christ. The older Christian thought for a moment then said

“To be crucified with Christ means three things. First the man who is crucified is facing in one direction; he is not looking back. Second, the man who is crucified has said goodbye to the world; he is not going back. Third, the man who is crucified has no further plans of his own. He is totally in God’s hands.”

We are looking at Romans 6, 1-14. In Chapters 1-5 Paul has been establishing that because of the sin of mankind, Judgment and Salvation were inevitable consequences because of God’s righteousness and love. God would send his beloved Son as an atoning sacrifice in place of

sinner. In Chapter 5 he has been contrasting our position in Adam and Christ and shows that whilst sin came through Adam grace and righteousness came through Jesus Christ and that “where sin increased grace increased all the more.”

Some then argued, as some do today, that if where sin increases grace increases all the more, shouldn’t we sin more so that grace increases more and God gets more glory. Sin is therefore no big deal but rather to be encouraged. Paul rejects this argument totally for at least two reasons, firstly God’s character and the cost of Salvation but secondly because of who we are.

So the challenge is, do we really understand who and what we are in Christ. Paul between v 1 and v 8 of Rom 6 makes the same claim 6 times in a variety of ways, suggesting that he thinks this is a vital truth namely that we as believers are dead to sin! The tense used is quite specific it relates to a past event with current implications – not dying but dead. Not just dead but buried – and in v 6 “for we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin should be made inoperable. Here Paul is not suggesting that our bodies are sinful, but as Philip Graham Ryken says “Sin has a way of gaining mastery over our bodies, using them to commit unrighteous deeds. The general principle here is that dead men cannot be slaves; their enslavement ceases at death. If we have died to sin therefore we can no longer live as if we are under its bondage.”

In America slaves still lived like slaves even after emancipation because they hadn't fully appreciated what had happened to them. Some didn't know, some didn't believe it, some were afraid; others didn't appreciate what they now had.

Paul says for we know/knowing this – do we fully appreciate what happened to us at our conversions – freed from sin.

We are dead to sin but v 4 – 8 gloriously united with Christ in his resurrection – we have new life – born again – behold all things are now new. New creations. Again do we know this? Are we living in the good of this?

V 9 – 10 What happened to Christ? He was born into this world, into Satan's kingdom and for while suffered all the consequences of our sin, was tempted in all points as we were yet without sin. He died as a consequence of sin, not his own. Then he was raised to life back to the Father – out of Satan's kingdom and back into the Father's kingdom. Paul in v 11 says that this has happened to us – we are to count ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Jesus Christ. Our citizenship is now in heaven.

Ryken quotes John Stott. John Stott compares the Christian life, both old and new, to a two volume biography;

"Our biography is written in two volumes. Volume one is the story of the old man, the old self, of me before my conversion. Volume two is the story of the new man, the new self, of me after I was made a new creation in Christ. Volume one of my biography ended with the judicial death of

the old self. I was a sinner. I deserved to die. I did die. I received my deserts in my Substitute with whom I have become one. Volume two of my biography opened with my resurrection. My old life having finished, a new life to God has begun."

I guess the question is – is this true of me? My experience?

We need to know and believe what we are and what is now true of us and live in that reality.

Paul continues

V12. Don't let sin get the mastery

V13. Don't present your members – the parts of the body, physical, mental, emotional etc – to sin, but rather yourself to God, and your members for His glory.

V14. Demonstrate not sin but grace.

Rom 8, 12 – 13 Therefore brethren we are debtors – not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live.

Titus 2, 11 for the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, it teaches us to say No to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled upright and godly lives.

Easter is here – we are resurrection people – new creations called to demonstrate the life of Christ to the world,

David Jones

Books quoted from: Discipleship, David Watson. The message of Salvation, Philip Graham Ryken. Exposition of Romans 6, D Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

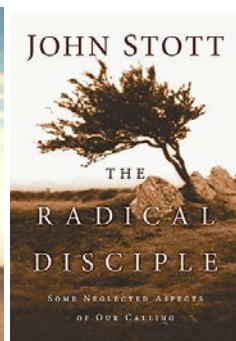
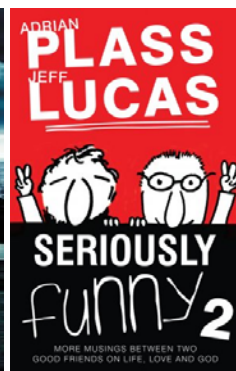
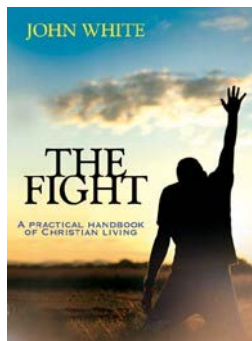
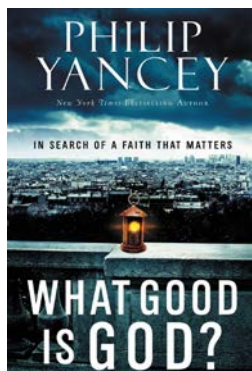
Book Stall

Just to let you know that we have been added some new books to the Book Stall.

There is another book by the ever readable Philip Yancey – What Good Is God? In this book he relates stories, meetings etc. from his travels around the world, particularly those areas where there is conflict, desperate poverty, or persecution of Christians. In all these situations he sees how faith works; 'a faith that matters should produce positive results to the question -What good is God?'

John Stott's The Radical Disciple is a study on eight characteristics of Christian discipleship often neglected; Non-conformity, Christlikeness, Maturity, Creation-care, Simplicity, Balance, Dependence and Death. John Stott looks at these eight areas as areas of discipleship which need to be taken seriously but are often ignored because they are costly. John Stott states that Jesus is Lord and we cannot pick and choose the areas which we will submit to his authority!

Another book which provides practical suggestions on how to live as a disciple of Jesus is John White's classic – The Fight. In this book White identifies the enemies and then works through areas in which it is a fight to be a disciple; prayer, Bible study, faith, temptation, relationships and holiness.



Adrian Plass and Jeff Lucas had combined again in a very entertaining read Seriously FunnyTwo. The book is about exactly what it says. It is a dialogue of letters between these two discussing very serious and profound issues such as doubt, but, in at times, a very entertaining way.

There are also some commentaries, in particular is the one on the Psalms by Michael Wilcox. This is a book to have on your book shelf. Michael goes through each Psalm, setting it in its context but then also showing how it is relevant for us today.

There are daily study notes should you want to try a different one and of course cards

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Josh Thomas 07598 779553

Lighthouse (Junior Church)

Co-ordinator

Dawn Walters 01444 441601

Flower Rota

Arranging

Distributing

May

4th Boy's Brigade

Sue Tester

11th Fiona Tingley

Barbara Shepherd

18th Janet Wade

Jo Bloxham

25th Carol Walters

Iris Bingham

June

1st Jean Baxter

Heather Swann

8th Audrey Saunders

Janet Sanderson

15th Brian Tuppen

Fo Tingley

22nd Mies Campling

Nick Bingham

29th Carol Marsh

Sue Tester

Around Lindfield

Saturday 3rd May

10.00am Horticultural Society in KEH: Coffee Morning and Plant Sale

Saturday 10th May

10.00am -12 noon Compton House Plant and Cake Sale

3.00pm ROC on Saturday - Lindfield URC

Wednesday 14th May

12.15pm Tiger Arts : Lunch in the Tiger

1.00pm Concert : Roger Hind Jazz Trio

8.00pm Horticultural Society in KEH :

Floral Art Demonstration by Robert Tunks

Saturday 24th May

3.00pm ROC on Saturday - Lindfield URC

Thursday 29th May

7.45pm Village Film Night in KEH :

"The Railway Man"

