

CHURCH NEWS

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OCTOBER 2020

Friends,

Understanding the Bible

As we acknowledge Bible Sunday this month, it's a good opportunity to ask the question: ***why should I read the Bible?***

The Bible is the world's best-selling book of all time. However, it isn't one book, but a library of 66 books, composed by some 44 writers, over a period of 1500 years and in a range of literary styles including history, poetry, prophecy, letters and apocalyptic (end times). Despite having a number of different writers, the Bible claims one author: God himself!

This is the basis of the unity of its message and authoritative claim to be the primary way by which God speaks to us: *'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work'* (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is inspired (*'the word of God in the words of men'*) and presents itself as a **manual for life**, equipping us to live for God in every aspect of our lives. We also have the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide us in applying the words to our lives: *'the Spirit will guide you into all truth'* (John 16:13).

However, the Bible could also be described as a **love letter** from God, as He uses it to deepen our relationship with him. As Jesus said: *'You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me'* (John 5:39,40). Christians follow a person not a book, and the Scriptures are intended to help us to know Jesus better.

At her coronation the Queen was given a Bible with the words ***'the most precious thing this world affords'***. Does this reflect our own attitude to the Bible?

Canon Paul Hardingham

Re-OPENING FOR SERVICES

By now you will have received the document containing all the details about 'Opening for Services'. Rev Peter Sharp and Robert Williams were both booked by Glyn last year to come and lead worship on 4 and 11 October respectively and we are very fortunate that they have both said that they are prepared to come to Swann Lane and lead worship on those Sundays. Margaret had also agreed to lead worship this month - she will not be able to be present at Church but has kindly agreed to prepare a service which will be distributed on paper.

The capacity of the church is significantly limited by the 'Covid Secure' rules (social distancing etc) and it would be embarrassing, if we were overwhelmed by more congregation than we can cope with. It's almost unthinkable to need to operate a booking system, but the alternative of refusal at the door is even worse.

I must stress that it will be necessary in these early days to ring Bernie or myself at home sometime during the week before **each** service **to book a place**. This will also be the easiest way of keeping a register in the event of any illness and Track & Trace having to be used, although the NHS Test and Protect **QR** code is displayed inside the Foyer and Corridor entrances to the Church premises.

I know that many of you are anxious to return to Church, because it has been so long time since we were together but we must always take account of the current Government guidelines and our own Personal Risk Assessment.

Looking forward to seeing you again.
Alison Stevens 01625 877 180

NEWS AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

Autumn is upon us and we have time to reflect on the summer of 2020. There have been good times and bad, but for some people things are not going to be particularly good. We must pray for those people who are confined to their homes because of illness, anxiety or depression and for others who have not got a home to shelter in when the autumn nights get chillier.

Comforting words to reflect on as we confront the situation the country faces at the present time:

Be Thou a bright flame before me.
Be Thou a guiding star above me.
Be Thou a smooth path below me.
Be Thou a kindly shepherd behind me
Today, tonight and for ever'

St Columbus

and for times to look forward to -

'Let every instrument be tuned for praise
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise
And may God give us faith to ring always'
F Pratt Green (R&S 414)

We send best wishes to Louise Frankish and Sandy Smith whom we know celebrate their birthdays in October. We are sure there must be others! If so, and it is yours, all the best for a happy day.

Thank you to those who have kindly donated to the costs of both postage and the Newsletter itself.

Carole's son, Robert McDonald has some of his artwork displayed at Wolfgang Webster Art Gallery on Gilbert Road. A lot of his work is of old Stockport. It's worth having a look.

The News Team

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sat 3 Oct - Macmillan Coffee Time

Sun 11 OCT - HARVEST FESTIVAL

MACMILLAN COFFEE TIME

We cannot meet at Church but we can talk together, either on the phone or by Zoom video. Details are below of our weekly meeting but they are always in the weekly letter which is posted or emailed to you.

Dial in by phone... **0203 901 7895**

meeting id: **880 4446 8056** password: **185236**

Please provide your own coffee, and cakes too.

If you would like to make a donation for the Macmillan nurses, this could be put through the letterbox at Church in an envelope addressed to the Treasurer or delivered to Sandy's home address. Rev Peter Sharp will be leading a short service at Swann Lane on Sunday 4 October.

Thank you, **Heather Frankish**

CHURCHES TOGETHER



The CTCH AGM will be on 6 October. We are asked to pray for...

4 Oct: Grove Lane Baptist Rev Ruth Gouldbourne and the fellowship at Grove Lane Baptist. Give thanks for the

contributions to 3Mins on the CTCH website and the different ways to keep in touch with people.

11 Oct: Cheadle Hulme Methodist Rev Philip Peacock and the fellowship at the Methodist church. For all the support workers in the different areas of ministry.

18 Oct: Emmanuel (Cof E) Rev Christopher Hobbs and the fellowship at Emmanuel Church.

25 Oct: St Ann's RC Church Sustain us Lord as we pass through the bitter valleys of suffering; shield us as dangers threaten. Let us rejoice in the springs of living water that refresh us on our way and keep us faithful until our journey's end. ...through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Training goes on apace, including Video Live Streaming of services, which I 'attended'. We also have a monthly (Zoomed) Partnership Service on a 2nd Sunday evening by our minister Rev Dr Marion Tugwood.

Incidentally, Marion has moved into the manse vacated by Alan - it's a Synod manse now.

The partnership has started a project called **SPACE at the TABLE**, where the partners distribute chilled meals across South Manchester, prepared at a facility in Salford.

Initially, 30 meals are delivered to us on a Wednesday for collection by 'LOAVES and FISHES', a Stockport Homeless charity.

Bernie

LECTIONARY FOR OCTOBER:

4 OCT: Isaiah 5.1-7; Psalm 80.7-15; Philippians 3.4b-14; Matthew 21.33-46

11 OCT: Isaiah 25.1-9; Psalm 23; Philippians 4.1-9; Matthew 22.1-14

18 OCT: Isaiah 45.1-7; Psalm 96.1-9,(10-13); 1 Thessalonians 1.1-10; Matthew 22.15-22

25 OCT: Leviticus 19.1-2,15-18; Psalm 1; Matthew 22.34-46; 1 Thessalonians 2.1-8

HARVEST ~ SUNDAY 11 OCT

If it is at all possible, taking into account the current restrictions, we would like to try and support both **Chelwood Foodbank** and **Lifeshare** with the usual choice of Harvest donations when Robert Williams will be leading worship.

We are therefore asking those who can to continue their generosity at this special time. Any of the following will be helpful. If you would prefer to make a monetary gift there will be a special 'marked' plate on the table by the EXIT from church or a cheque...



Tinned goods - meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, rice pudding. Baby nappies, cereals inc porridge, squash/fruit juices, pasta & sauces, sugar, tea & coffee, long Life UHT milk. Basically, foodstuffs that keep!

If you are able to donate food stuffs, we ask that you put all your donations into a plastic shopping bag. Rather like the arrangements in the Grove Lane and Methodist car parks for Chelwood donations, this will avoid us having to handle individual items.

Thank you,
Alison Stevens

WHO AUTHORISED THE BIBLE?

Question: If it was the Church that finally decided which books should be included in the Bible, then isn't the Church the top authority?

Answer: Actually, no; the Bible produced the Church, not the Church the Bible. This is the real issue: what caused a book to be accepted within the 'Canon' of Scripture? (Greek: *kanon*, 'standard' or 'rule').

As far as the Old Testament was concerned:

1. Books that were recognised by Jesus Christ as infallible 'Scripture' could not be broken (Matthew 5:18). In John 10:35 Jesus didn't have to explain what He meant by 'Scripture', though elsewhere He did refer to its different categories (law, prophets, psalms) as pointing to Himself (Luke 24:44; Matthew 24:37). All was to be believed and obeyed.

2. Books that were recognised by God's people because of their impact. God's people will always recognise His voice (John 10:27). Jesus clashed with the Pharisees for adding their traditions to the Scripture; yet all were agreed that the Old Testament Scriptures were God's word.

3. Books that were recognised by the New Testament. It is significant that the New Testament features hundreds of Old Testament allusions. Only two are from the body of books known as the Apocrypha (Jude 9, 14) – seemingly in similar style to Paul's quotation from a Greek poet (Acts 17:28). The Apocryphal books were perceived to be of lower merit.

Next, what determined inclusion in the New Testament Canon?

1. Books that are Christ-centred in their emphasis. It was inconceivable to the early Church that the Gospels, for example, which focused so much upon the life and death of Jesus, could have any lower place than that given to the Old Testament Scriptures.

2. Books that are apostolic in their teaching. It was to the apostles exclusively that Jesus promised guidance 'into all truth' through the Holy Spirit's inspiration (John 16:13). The result of this was the New Testament (1 Corinthians 2:12,13). Significantly, Peter brackets Paul's

writings with what he calls 'the other scriptures' (2 Peter 3:15,16).

3. Books that are faith-building in their effect, and thus, to be read in the congregations (John 20:30,31; 1 Thessalonians 5:27; Colossians 4:16; 1 Peter 2:2; Revelation 1:3). When the Christian scriptures take hold of the thinking of masses of people, they have the effect of 'stabilising society, without sterilising it' (historian T. R. Glover).

The books of the OT were becoming largely accepted by AD 70, curiously, just about the time when the NT was actually written! Those of the New Testament were accepted by the end of the second century. The drawing of a line around them discouraged forgers and religious peddlers.

So no one really 'put' the books into the Bible; they put themselves in, because of their innate quality. No council by itself could have conferred authority upon the books; this, they possessed already. It is an authority that is inherent, not imposed. If art lovers say of a Renoir painting, 'This is a genuine Renoir', their acclaim in no way invests the painting with authority; it was already authentic. It is the same with the Scriptures; we can only recognise them as such.... and live by them.

Parish Pump

NEVER-THE-LESS

Different religious groups include different books in their biblical canons, in varying orders, and sometimes divide or combine books.

Christian Bibles range from the 73 books of the Catholic canon, the 66 books or 80 books of the canon of some Protestant denominations, to the 81 books of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church canon!

The Jewish Tanakh (sometimes called the Hebrew Bible) contains 24 books, divided into three parts.

Wikipedia

and, NOTE that 25 October is...

Bible Sunday

SHOEBOXES

Thank you so much for the great effort, under difficult circumstances, of collecting so many gifts to send to the poorest areas of Eastern Europe.

During this month of OCTOBER I will be organising what we have into the shoeboxes. I plan to be at church on Wednesday mornings, so any last minute additions can be dropped off or I can nip round and collect.

Anyone wishing to contribute who is unable to buy any gifts please let me have a monetary gift, much needed for the transport costs of £2.50 per box.

Also, we're a bit short of actual shoeboxes! We've managed over 20 boxes for the last several years...

Bernie Stevens

HIGH DAYS & HOLY DAYS; 12 Oct

Edith Cavell was a nurse and so is a good saint for NHS workers this year: she cared for the sick despite the danger to her own safety.

Edith was a vicar's daughter from Swardeston in Norfolk, where she was born in 1865. She became a governess, but her heart was for nursing, so she went on to train at the London Hospital, before nursing in various hospitals such as St Pancras and Manchester.

When Edith was 42, she decided to go abroad, and was appointed matron of a large training centre for nurses in Brussels. She was still there seven years later, when the First World War broke out and German troops invaded Belgium on their way to Paris and the Channel Ports.

Edith's nursing school became a Red Cross hospital, and she turned down the opportunity to return to the safety of England. Instead, her nurses tended wounded soldiers from both German and Allied armies.

Sadly, in 1915, when the Germans began their occupation of Brussels, they took a dim view of Edith's work. But they would have been even more unhappy had they known she was helping to smuggle 200 British soldiers across the border into the Netherlands!

Finally, the Germans arrested Edith in August, and put her into solitary confinement. They

tricked her into confessing to a charge which carried the death penalty. But Edith refused to show either regret at what she had done, or any fear or bitterness towards her captors.

On 11 October, the night before her execution, Edith was visited by the Anglican chaplain to Brussels, the Rev Stirling Gahan. Together they said the words of *Abide with Me*, and Edith received her last Holy Communion.

She told Gahan: "I am thankful to have had these ten weeks of quiet to get ready. Now I have had them and have been kindly treated here. I expected my sentence and I believe it was just. Standing, as I do, in view of God and eternity, I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness to anyone."

Edith was shot by a firing squad next day, on 12th October 1915.

After the war her body was exhumed and buried in Norwich Cathedral. Her memorial service in Westminster Abbey attracted thousands. A commemorative statue of her stands near Trafalgar Square.

Parish Pump website



HEALING

Heavenly Father,
We bring to you all those struggling with their
mental health just now.

We pray:
For everyone who is smiling, when inside they're
in pain.
For everyone who is saying they're fine, when
inside they feel drained and empty.
For everyone struggling with fear and worry as
the easing of the lockdown brings new anxieties.

Be with them in their suffering, as so much of
their world has been stripped back and emptied.

When loved family and friends have been taken
by illness,
Or made distant by lockdown.
Pour your healing balm into their pain and
sadness.
May you walk with them besides still waters
May you speak to them in a still small voice.

May you heal them, and fill them, and bless
them with your abundant love and fullness of
life.

And may they know that they are loved by you
for the beautiful unique person that they are,
created in the image of their heavenly creator
and loving Lord.

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the
Holy Spirit, Amen.

Rev Peter Crumpler

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BREAKFAST BEFORE

SOUP, SWEET and MEET

FILM NIGHT

...will each resume as soon as we dare.

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			5					
		8	7	4			5	
	4	9				6	1	
		1					8	
			4		5			
	7					3		
	1	3				8	6	
	6			7	8	4		
					6			

SUDOKU

Each row and each
column must contain
figures 1~9.

Answers later.

FOR THE LINGUISTS

Those who jump off a bridge in Paris end in Seine.
A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.
Dijon vu - the same mustard as before.
Shotgun wedding: A case of wife or death.
A hangover is the wrath of grapes.
Does the name Pavlov ring a bell?
Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.
When two egotists meet, it's an I for an I.
A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.

What's a will? (It's a dead giveaway)
Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
In democracy your vote counts. In feudalism, your count votes.
She was engaged to a boyfriend with a wooden leg, but broke it off.
A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
If you don't pay your exorcist, you get repossessed.
With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.

When a clock is hungry, does it go back four seconds?
The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.

You feel stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
Local Area Network in Australia - the LAN down under.
All calendar's days are numbered...
A lot of money is tainted - It taint yours and it taint mine.
A boiled egg in the morning is hard to beat.
Her photographic memory was never developed.
A midget fortune-teller who escapes from prison is a small medium at large.

Those who get too big for their britches will be exposed in the end.
Once you've seen one shopping centre, you've seen a mall.
Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.
Santa's little helpers are subordinate clauses.
Acupuncture is a jab well done.

The Internet

Date	4 OCT	11 OCT	18 OCT	25 OCT
Service	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Communion
Time	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am
Leaders	Rev Peter Sharp	Robert Williams	Margaret Dexter-Brown	
Reader				
Elder Duty	S Smith P Oliver	B Stevens	A Stevens	
Notes		HARVEST		BIBLE SUNDAY

Elders and Readers Duties

At the moment, we are working with an informal list using (mostly) Elders able to control the computers, and readers able to video conference. As normal services are gradually resumed, Alison and the Elders will try to establish a regular system.

NOTE OF WARNING

The car park has been re-surfaced with tar and loose chippings. Please take care not to trip, nor turn steering wheels too sharply.

CHURCH REGISTERS - NONE

THE 2020 ARK

In the year 2020, Noah was living in England (!) when the Lord came unto him and said, "Once again, the earth has become too wicked to continue. Build another Ark and save two of every living thing. You have six months before I will start the unending rain for 40 days and 40 nights."

Six months later, the Lord looked down and saw Noah weeping in his garden, but no Ark. "Noah", He roared, "I'm about to start the rain! Where is the Ark?" "Forgive me Lord", begged Noah "but things have been difficult. I needed Building Regulations approval because the Ark was over 30 square metres. I've been arguing with the Fire Brigade about the need for a sprinkler system. My neighbours claim that I should have obtained planning permission for building the Ark in my garden because it is a development of the site even though in my opinion it is a temporary structure, but the roof is too high.

"The Local Area Access Group complained that my ramp was going to be too steep and the inside of the Ark wasn't fully accessible. Getting the wood has been another problem. All the decent trees have Tree Preservation Orders on them and we live in a Site of Special Scientific Interest set up in order to preserve the Spotted Owl. I tried to convince them that I needed the wood to save the owls - but no go!

"When I started gathering the animals the RSPCA sued me for intending to confine wild animals without the proper paperwork. The County Council, the Environment Agency and the Rivers Authority have ruled that I can't build the Ark until they've conducted an Environmental Impact Study on your proposed flood. The Trade Unions insist that I can't use my sons to build the Ark; I can only employ members of the Shipbuilding and Allied Trades union. Finally, Customs and Excise have seized all my assets, claiming I am going to attempt to leave the country illegally with endangered species.

"So, forgive me Lord, but it will take me at least another ten years to finish this Ark." Suddenly the skies cleared, the sun began to shine, and a rainbow stretched across the sky. "No need for me to destroy the world after all," observed God. "The government has the matter already in hand."

Parish Pump

SUDOKU Answers

1	3	7	5	6	9	2	4	8
6	2	8	7	4	1	9	5	3
5	4	9	2	8	3	6	1	7
2	9	1	6	3	7	5	8	4
3	8	6	4	9	5	7	2	1
4	7	5	8	1	2	3	9	6
7	1	3	9	5	4	8	6	2
9	6	2	1	7	8	4	3	5
8	5	4	3	2	6	1	7	9

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