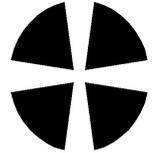




The Methodist Church / The United Reformed Church

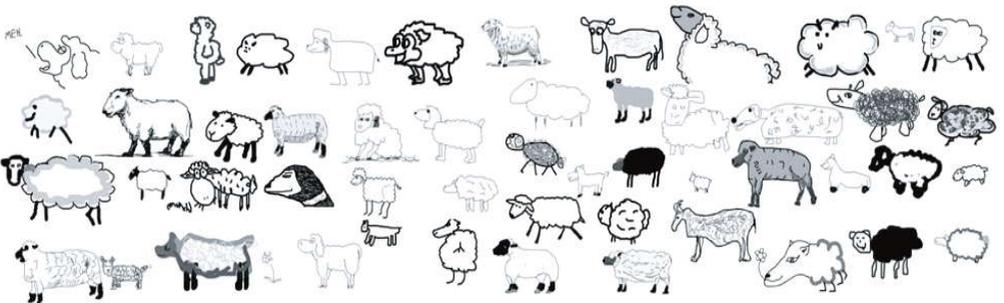


THE GROVE, ILKLEY
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WIDER HORIZONS

September 2009



September 2009

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

My first whole year with you, and how it's flown by. Initial first impressions were positive (well, from my point of view, I hope you felt the same!) and a warm welcome soon seemed to settle into a good working relationship. As ever, I am very conscious of names and faces not yet put together, and visits not made. I am conscious of piles of paper in the study, and an e-inbox still in need of attention. I am still getting used to Christchurch's wonderfully efficient ways of working. Thank you for the challenge and your patience.

Anyone with any element of management to their life knows the need to discern between what's urgent and what's important. We can so easily miss what's important because we attend to what's urgent all the time. That's why I like the Old Testament prophets, they often put to one side what was urgent, especially what the people thought was urgent, and attended to what was important, especially what they discerned from God was important. That's a good reason to study one of those prophets Daniel, in the housegroups this autumn. A man who had many worldly cares, his job, his vocation, his home and income, yet who maintained and developed his faith in a way that meant he could keep his integrity and yet continue his job, and fit in to what was for him, a very alien experience.

We are studying Daniel because he developed his faith through changing times. I believe we live through changing times in Britain, in many ways the nation we thought we knew seems to be subtly changing around us - many of us are asking the question 'Do we still live in a Christian society and nation?' There are many, many complex answers to that question, but as a church with a heart for mission we must wrestle it. This requires our faith, our intellect, our spirituality and, above all, it requires us to think in ways perhaps Christians have not thought for over a thousand years in Britain.

As I reflect on our first year together; learn about Christchurch's past and traditions and look to a coming year of study, prayer, and work together, I find one prayer brewing up within me - Lord send your Spirit!

Christchurch has many good people. We do much good work. We are well ahead in the processes of changes facing churches in Britain today. But we must not be complacent; neither must we only trust our own goodness and powers. We need the Lord's powerful wind to inflate all we do and drive our momentum. We need his grace and love to surround us in our failures and frailties, our mistakes and human vulnerabilities. We need his inspiration in our worship planning and acts of willing service.

Unusually for me, I'm well outside the church's year. Pentecost is next May, but will you join me as we embark on another year together in praying for God's Spirit to strengthen, fill, and anoint who we are and what we do together in Christ's name? Together with the Spirit, let us offer a deepening, developing, growing and powerful church to God and the world.

In Jesus' name,
Your minister and friend,

Rob Hilton



USED POSTAGE STAMPS AND POST CARDS

May I remind you to continue to save stamps and complete postcards which will benefit Christian Aid, Oxfam and the Church in Sudan appeal. Please leave a margin of paper around each stamp to preserve the perforation, and pop them into the box provided beside the pigeonholes in the foyer.

*Many thanks.
Avril Benson*

ONLINE BREAKFAST

On Sunday 25 October, British Summer Time comes to an end and the clocks change, falling back an hour. Now some of you may be thinking that this could mean an extra hour in bed before On-Line, but the On-Line Steering Group have a better idea: don't change your clocks until *after* On-Line, and come along at the "usual" body-clock time and you can **have breakfast at Church** before the On-Line service.

What do you think?

At this stage we are looking for any volunteers who would be willing to assist or, in fact, organise such a venture, so the On-Line congregation can have a bacon butty before the service.

So you *can* have a *little* extra time in bed (as you won't have to make breakfast), and you can come for some food, fellowship and fun before the faith!

It's a great idea!!

Do get in touch if you think you can help.

steve amos

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I am just doing the Lord's work.
I ain't got much style.
God don't want much style;
but he gives wisdom and sends you along."

William Edmondson (1874–1951)

Stonemason son of freed slaves in Tennessee, William developed his artistic skills moving from carving tombstones into creating all types of animals ("critters"). His gift of storytelling revealed

If you would like to suggest a quote (*topical, classical, theological, literary, amusing*) please submit it to the Editors for their consideration and supply a source or acknowledgement for the quote.

Advent is Coming!

It seems absurd writing this in July before I've gone on my summer holidays but planning is already underway for activities at Christchurch in the autumn culminating in the Advent season and Christmas. This year Church Council has agreed we should try a new initiative which Helen and I have been part of at previous churches, namely preparing and using an Advent devotional booklet for use during Advent for a daily quiet time.

The idea is to distribute different Bible texts to volunteers in the congregation who then each write a paragraph of reflections and a short prayer. These are then collated, one text per day for the period 29th November to 25th December, and printed as an A5 size booklet prior to the start of Advent. Members can then use the booklet for their personal devotions. Because the reflections are personal and the contributors known to most of us, they tend to be (even) more meaningful than the usual daily devotional booklets like Daily Bread. The act of contributing provides an opportunity to explore and share a bit of our own faith and to encourage each other. Our experience of doing this before showed that people have some great insights to share.

To undertake this project we need help from contributors who would be happy to prepare material. I have already selected some Bible verses for each day of Advent. If you feel willing to take part please do get in touch. Contributions can be either hand written or e-mailed. I would be happy to show you previous booklets if you would like to get a better idea of what might be involved.

It would also be good to hear from any talented illustrators who would be willing to contribute pen and ink sketches on a Christmas theme for inclusion.

Chris Mannall

THIS IS WHAT WE NEED

More doers, fewer talkers;
More to inspire others with confidence;
Fewer to throw cold water on any initiative;
More to point out what is right in the world;
Fewer to keep harping on what is wrong;
More to be interested in lighting candles;
Fewer in blowing them out.

*Repeated from "Chapter & Verse"
(predecessor of Wider Horizons) in 2000)*

Many thanks to everyone at Christchurch for all your love, support and prayers which uplifted and held me during these last few months. Progress is being made and we are so pleased to be back amongst you all.

With love,
Lynda and Philip (Smith)

Riding Lights Theatre Company - Origins and Lemons

The renowned theatre company, Riding Lights, will be visiting Christchurch on the evening of **18 November** to perform their new production on the book of Genesis and the creation story - Origins and Lemons.

Riding Lights has always played an important role in entertaining the Christian community with moving stories, stimulating discussion and focusing attention on significant current issues. In this way, the company has helped to articulate a christian voice within the wider community. Plays on science and faith, international debt, playground violence, fair trade, terrorism, living out the Gospel, parenting, the plight of the Palestinian church, clean water for all are just some of the subjects which have led to the 2009 production Origins & Lemons.

Tickets are likely to be much in demand so please put the date in your diary and keep an eye open for further details which will be in the weekly notices and advertised on the church noticeboards .

Book Review: The Historical Jesus **The Life Of A Mediterranean Jewish Peasant**

John Dominic Crossan HarperOne (Harper Collins Publishers)
978-0-06-061629-8 :: 1992 :: \$19.95 :: 505 pages

This was my book for Lent - but it's a monster and I didn't finish until Pentecost! It's a very thorough and scholarly treatise that uses extant texts (some now within the canon of the New Testament) to describe the culture, poverty, peasant life, slavery, banditry, anti-Roman uprisings, itinerant preachers and the understanding of prophesy, magicians and the messiah, to place Jesus into the context of his time.

The interplay between traditions around John the Baptist and Jesus, development of an apocalyptic Son of Man (as opposed to a son of man referring to a general everyman), notions of Kingdom, the role of food (in the development of Passover and then Eucharist) and understandings of resurrection are all explored.

Within all of this, the development of canonical texts is examined in every detail, with specific references to sayings attributed to Jesus and how the miracle stories became implanted symmetrically into some Gospels.

It's been fun coming across ancient non-canonical texts such as the Gospels of Thomas and Peter, the Sayings Gospel (Q), and the writings of Josephus and Didache among others.

Although it's not a book for the faint hearted, I feel closer to the "real" Jesus as a result of Crossan's patient work.

Crossan is professor of biblical studies at DePaul University, Chicago.

Book Review: Jesus - A Revolutionary Biography

John Dominic Crossan HarperOne (Harper Collins Publishers)
978-0-06-061662-5 :: 1994 :: \$14.95 :: 201 pages

This is a more accessible version of the previous book. There is much less cultural context, but picks up similar themes of Kingdom (Jesus and Rome), John the Baptist and Jesus, peasantry, food and commensality, and the development of texts as ideas concerning Jesus developed.

It must be stressed that Crossan does not start with canonical texts as God-given Holy Scripture, but as writings of Christians (to and for other Christians) which were edited and developed to emphasise and enhance ideas concerning Jesus within the culture and context of the time. He does not believe that the miracles recorded in the Gospels were historical, or that there was a physical resurrection - but none of this weakens his faith in the person of Jesus: instead it gives a more rational and contemporary understanding to what it means to live as a Christian today.

I had to have these books shipped from the USA, as I couldn't find them in England. If anyone would like to borrow them, please feel free to ask.

WEDNESDAY GROUP

At the Annual General Meeting, it was regretfully decided the time had come to stop meeting at Christchurch as we are so few in number. It was agreed we meet in people's homes once a fortnight. Each host will offer a theme so as not to develop the habit of meeting just for a chat.

Anyone who would like to come would be most welcome.

Ring Val Worrall for further information (601945)

Website Update - New Pages

Additions to the website in July included extra Events pages advertising upcoming activities, and for website members, the last three Church Council minutes and all the relevant reports. These make very interesting reading, and show the huge amount of work that goes on within our church organisations to keep everything moving forward. This information was hard to come by in the past, but is now fully available thanks to a decision at the special Church Council meeting in July.



Also, as a result of further decisions, the constitution is available in the public area (under About Us), and the Circuit pages have been relocated into the public area.

Church Council has also asked other committees to forward minutes for publication, so every aspect of the efforts made on our behalf can be prayerfully supported by us all.

Later in the Autumn we hope to obtain the services of a professional photographer, who will come and take photos of as many groups and activities as we are able to fit in.

On a wider front, a church in Bognor Regis has been in touch with us having seen our website, and we have helped them with some preparatory material for theirs.

Do have a look at the website (www.christchurchilkley.org.uk) - we're still getting in the region of 50 hits a day - and why not make it your home page?

steve amos

New Life Children's Ministry, N.E. India

Since 2005, when the first children were rescued by Pastor Gopal and Meena Hembrom from the streets and camps, the work has grown rapidly. At the moment they live in three areas.

Patna (Bihar State): 56 children live in two separate rented homes.

They have to travel through the city for schooling and medical treatment. - a very traumatic journey, as I have experienced!

Kathikund (Jharkland): 150 children in two rented buildings. It's a rural area where they grow vegetables and can breathe fresh air.

Assam: 9 older boys are cared for by a pastor and his wife. Their language is Assamese and, in spite of the local conflicts, they are doing well in school.

We give thanks

New Life Academy opened in Kathikund on 17th April, providing education for 34 fee-paying local children at the request of the villagers.

Bikes bought for the Assam boys to get to school.

A trained nurse employed.

Formation of a football team (Soaring Eagles).

Older children attended a Christian summer camp.

Two wells built at Kathikund.

Metal cases for each child's personal belongings, provided by friends from Christchurch.

Urgent prayer requests

The need to build a permanent home in Kathikund for all the children.

Land is available to buy but the government has now put electricity pylons there. Pray this will be resolved.

Reliable builders.

More staff and teachers.

Health and protection for staff and children.

We have seen the children grow physically, mentally and spiritually. It is a delight to spend time with them and very humbling. Their desires are simple – to do well at school so they can work, get out of poverty and help others. Many want to be doctors, teachers or evangelists.

Thank you Christchurch for your further generous gift of £1000 and thank you to many others who give money and clothing.

Please continue to pray for this ever growing corner of God's kingdom.

Pauline Mudge

Harvest of Wharfedale

Sunday 20th September
10am to 3pm

Celebrating
Harvest – with
a difference

Stay for
the day

Worship, Fellowship,
Food, Fun and Activities
for All Ages

Lunch
(no charge)
By ticket only. Available
from Church Office or
Stewards by 13 September

There will be no Online@9 or 10.30am services on this day

Matugga Update

The Challenge

You may recall the article in the August Wider Horizons: “News from the Revival Christian Life Centre Matugga, Uganda”

In that article Merle Collins described how an agricultural project is being set up and also mentioned the urgent need for a new boys' dormitory. She asked “What can we do?” and challenged us to raise the £8000 needed to build a new secure boys' dormitory to house 150 boys and young lads. In Africa £8000 goes a long way.



This challenge was discussed at length at the recent World Mission and Society Committee. The committee felt there was a considerable groundswell of support for the Matugga project following Pastor Ivan speaking to both Sunday morning congregations. Many ideas were discussed how this could be best achieved.

After wider discussion the committee felt that many Christchurch members would like to fully participate in the challenge.



The World Mission and Society Committee proposes that Christchurch undertakes to raise at least £8000 by members organising fund raising events (large and small, by young and not so young) and by individual donations.

It is hoped the fund raising events will not just raise money, but bring fun, fellowship and inform the members of Christchurch and the wider Ilkley community of the Matugga Project.

If more than £8,000 is raised the excess will contribute towards the agricultural initiative.

This challenge will be on the agenda for the forthcoming Church Meeting and Church Council. Meanwhile please start thinking about fund raising events.

If you would like to make a donation, would you please make a pledge for your donation prior to the Church Meeting on 7th September 2009.

Pledges and any suggestions or queries regarding the Challenge should be made to either
John Sayers, Merle Collins or Rita Armitage.

WHY MEDITATION?

How do we think of God? There are many people of conventional religions who imagine a BEING - who exists above and beyond the world. It seems that He expresses interest in it from time to time, but mostly seems uninvolved. Atheists cannot believe in Him.

This view is far removed from the Christian faith, and it is right to reject it. The Christian view is that of an involved God - a social God. The essential mark of a Christian is one who participates with humanity. Prayer is a social activity. The quest for union with God and for the unity of mankind is one quest.

In prayer we open ourselves to God and enter into a relationship with Him. It calls for a real change in us, a renewal of our minds (Romans 12:2). We need to know our true deepest self (see Hymns and Psalms 540) before rushing about and doing things.

This is what we are doing in our meditation group as we wait together in silence giving God our attention. It is not new to do this in the Christian Church. The early Christians could not have imagined life without it. It needs practice and is easier to do with others. If you would like to know more but can't manage Mondays at 9 am (or the steps going up to the Dales Room) please contact me.

Lynda East

MUSIC REQUEST

Have you any favourite hymns or music you would like included in the 10.30am service?

If so, please write them down and let Rob Hilton, Blanche Woollin or Mike Baldwin know.



WRITING AS EVANGELISM

From childhood Katherine Rundle (*Los Angeles*) has written plays, published a newspaper with friends, composed a Christmas poem or letter each season, and filled countless journals with prayers, reflections and poems as a way to connect with God:

“The only way I could keep the events of the past year from smothering me was to write about them. So I began a disciplined routine of writing and a curious thing happened: when I began to speak about my writing with various women in the neighborhood and shared with them about running into Jesus in the raw circumstances of my life, they began to share their hearts with me. Suddenly there was space for God between us.

A couple of months ago my writing took a different direction. During my quiet time with God children’s poetry began marching out of me, and towards the end of the academic year I found myself at Zoe’s school, delivering my poems and helping the students write one of their own. We had so much fun that we spent the last few weeks together, each student illustrating one of the twenty poems. It was a collaboration that delighted us both; I presented them with their very own copy of the collection on the last day of school, and with wonder and delight they flipped through the book to find themselves in print!

I have also recently written my first clapping rhyme. Do you remember those timeless rhythms girls chant and clap out on the playground? I wrote one about Jesus, about how his message is distinctly different from all those other “good moral codes” floating around. I’ve taught it to a few girls around our apartment, using it as a lively teaching tool. I want to write more and dream of child-led evangelism and discipleship through recess play.

I invite you to dream with me and pray for the JOY of Jesus to sweep over the asphalt patches where children play in our urban sprawl. Thank you for your prayers and your partnership.”



Churches Together in Ilkley are planning an
“ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR”
at Christchurch on 7th November.
If any readers have suggestions on what should be
included, please contact Elisabeth Halsall.

A donation of £165.20 was sent on behalf of her
friends to Yorkshire Cancer Research in memory of
Miss Laura Alice Stoll

A letter from Anthony

Hi Folks!

I'm really sorry for not having got in touch sooner to explain my sudden disappearance. I just got burned out financially and travel wise with The Big Issue cos it was becoming increasingly unviable and not worth the bother. The only thing that kept me doing it the last few months was coming here and seeing the folks I'd befriended.

Anyhow, for a while things were still pretty rough but I got myself a nice wee bedsit and it's going OK. Nightmare neighbours, but you can't have everything eh?!!

Thanks so much for all your friendship and support while I was here. I'll see you again at some point soon.



CHRISTCHURCH GUILD

Meetings are held on Wednesday afternoons at 2:30pm in the Lower Hall. There is always a warm welcome to both men and women.

September Programme

The Guild re-opens on 2nd September (*Rev Rita Armitage*)

9th – Rev Rob Hilton

16th - “Viva L-Espana” (*Terry Pullan*)

23rd - The Bröntes of Haworth (*Isobel Stirk*)

30th - Desert Island Discs (*Angela Pearson*)

THE TOURIST'S PRAYER

Heavenly Father, look down on us your humble obedient tourist servants who are doomed to travel this earth taking photographs, mailing postcards, buying souvenirs and walking around in drip-dry underwear.

Give us this day divine guidance in the selection of our hotels, that we may find our reservations honoured, our rooms made up and hot water running from the taps.

We pray that the telephones work and the operators speak our tongue. Lead us, dear Lord, to good, inexpensive restaurants where the food is superb, the waiters friendly and the wine included in the price.

Give us wisdom to tip correctly in the currencies we do not understand. Forgive us for under-tipping out of ignorance and over-tipping out of fear.

Make the natives love us for what we are and not for what we can contribute to their worldly goods.

Grant us the strength to visit the museums, the cathedrals, the palaces and castles listed as "musts" in the guide books. And if we perchance skip a historic monument to take a nap after lunch, have mercy on us, for our flesh is weak.

(Repeated from "Chapter & Verse" - predecessor of Wider Horizons - in 2000)

CHRISTCHURCH PRAYER CALENDAR

You are invited to include the following suggestions of local and broader concern in your private prayer:



6th September

The Prayer Fellowship and those who support people in crisis through the Prayer Chain; the work of the Church Life Committee.

13th September *Racial Justice*

Those who listen to recordings of worship and receive communion at home; Touchstone, Christian outreach in central Bradford and others working for racial harmony.

20th September *Harvest Thanksgiving*

The Worship Committee in its focus on the development of worship at Christchurch; those supporting sustainable farming in Third World countries and those working on the land that they have good harvests.

27th September

The leaders, hosts and members of Christchurch housegroups; the local preachers and worship leaders and those in training.

**WORSHIP AT CHRISTCHURCH
September 2009**

	6th	13th	20th	27th
		Ilkley Churches Together exchanges:		
9:00am	On-Line@9	On-Line@9	10am—3pm	On-Line@9
10:30am	Rev Rita Armitage HC	Fr Philip Gray	Joint Harvest Services	Rev Rob Hilton
6:30pm	Michael Noble	Rev Peter Willox PPP	3rd Sunday @ all Saints	Taize
SHOPPERS' SERVICE EACH FRIDAY at 10:30am 4th—Rev Stuart Jenkins; 11th—Rev Peter Willox; 18th—Rev Rob Hilton; 25th—Rev Arnold Clay				



Eleven times National Champion Gold Medallists of the Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers, this fifty-strong renowned ladies' chorus from Leeds won the title of 2009 European Champions in March 2009.

**We are delighted they are visiting Christchurch
on Saturday 21st November.**

There is sure to be a great demand for tickets, so make sure you buy yours in good time— watch the weekly notices for an up-date on availability.

**The deadline for the October 2009 edition of Wider Horizons is
1st September.**

Items (maximum 300 words please)
preferably by email as a Word attachment
to both George McArthur (mcarthur59@blueyonder.co.uk)
and Christchurch Office (Office@christchurchilkley.org.uk)

“Harvest of Wharfedale”

**TICKETS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR
Saturday 19th September**

HARVEST SUPPER

with Pie and Peas (or veggie option) at 6pm
followed by dancing to

THE RHIDINGS CEILIDH BAND

Can't dance?

You can have fun watching and listening

Tickets : £3 (adult) / £1.50 (children)
from the Coffee Centre or Church Office

