

Witney Congregational Church

Issue 8

December 2009
& January 2010

R CROSS A D S

*Witney Congregational Church is a crossroads where we:
meet God in worship
meet one another in friendship
meet our community and world with the love of Jesus*



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WHAT'S ON GUIDE

Witney Congregational Church offer a whole range of activities through which we seek to Worship, Work and Witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in this community today.

Further information can be obtained from the Church Administrator, Minister, Church Secretary or the leaders of the particular activities who are listed at the back of this magazine.

WORSHIP

Daily Worship	9.30 am	Mon-Fri	Short time of Prayer and Reading
Noah's Ark Service	2.00 pm	Tuesday	For under 5's parents and carers
Saturday Praise	11.00am	1 st Saturday of the month	
Sunday Services	10.30 am		
	6.00 pm		There is a crèche facility at both services

Communion is normally held twice during the month at the first Sunday evening and third Sunday morning services

PRAYER

The Church is open each morning for Prayer; also in the Garden Room on Sunday morning and evening prior to, and after, Worship - All welcome

STUDY & FELLOWSHIP

Friday 10.00 am Church

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Sunday	10.30 am	Crèche, Noah's Ark & The K.I.C.K. on Sundays
Monday	10.00 am	Noah's Ark - Infant Group for babies and pre-school children
Friday	7.00pm	Y4J - 1 st & 3 rd Friday of the month

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Tuesday	Monthly	Deacon's Meeting
	Bi-Monthly	Church Meeting
Thursday	10.00 am	Rest & Chat (Coffee/Tea available)
Saturday	10.30 am	Coffee Morning

SUNDAY LINK

Weekly bulletin for all Christians providing stimulating thought along with news and notices concerning our Church

WITNEY ECUMENICAL YOUTH TRUST (BASE 33)

4 Welch Way (Entrance - High Street) ☎ 01993 200682 (Office)
☎ 01993 777870 (Office - Methodist)

St ANDREW'S BOOKSHOP

☎ 01993 709429
Opening Hours: Monday - Saturday 09.00 am - 5.00 pm



As stated last month the shops already have their goods on offer, and I expect most of us are trying to plan this festive period. For some the decision has to be made as to whom we are going to spend Christmas with this year. Even in this current economic crisis, we are all subjected to the increased commercial hype putting pressure on us to decide what ultimately we ought to buy (see poem on page 22). *Amongst all this activity, and commercial hype, let us focus on Advent and the birth of Christ.*

So, turning now to the contents, here is just a glimpse of some of the articles that have been submitted; There is a sermon recently given by Rev Jason Boyd at Bunyan meeting; Theo Howell gives us a poem; Leah Cotton gives a testimony; Peter Gamston gives us the discussion group topic and as we will be having a Christingle service in December, there is an article which tells us what this is all about, to name but a few.

As always, many thanks to those who have contributed to this edition, but would also encourage anyone to consider submitting articles for the next edition by either:

- Floppy Disk/CD
- E-mail:
 - terrypowlesland@hotmail.com
 - jacquipowlesland@uwclub.net
- Just plainly written on paper, which can be typed up.

ESSENTIAL NOTE: All contributions should be submitted ***NO LATER THAN the WEDNESDAY*** of the week in which the magazine will be published.

I now have a short break, as the next edition of the magazine is due out on **Sunday 31st January 2010**, so may I take this opportunity of wishing you, the reader, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Remember: God is for Eternal Life, not just for Christmas

Your Editor

❖ **Carol**

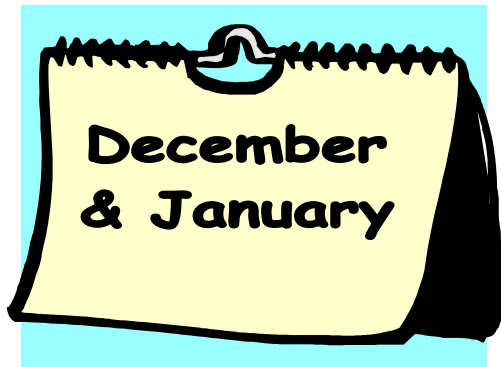
What carol is heard in the dessert?
Camel ye faithful!

❖ **Sheep**

How do sheep greet each other at Christmas?
A merry Christmas to ewe!

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Daily Prayer Time:

Mon-Fri 9.30 am

Services

10.30 am & 6.00pm and will normally be led by Rev Jason Boyd unless advised below

The following events are given for your particular attention:

Dec

- | | | |
|------------------|---|-------------------|
| 6 th | Sunday Diners Christmas Dinner | |
| 7 th | Noah's Ark Christmas Party | 10.30am |
| 10 th | Rest & Chat Christmas Special | 10.00am - 12 noon |
| | Fellowship Group - 9 Pensclose | 2.30pm |
| 11 th | Y4J Christmas Party | |
| 12 th | Prayer Chain meeting | 9.15am |
| | REMEMBERING CHRISTmas - Witney Inter-church Singers | 7.30pm |
| 13 th | REMEMBERING CHRISTmas - Witney Inter-church Singers | 6.30pm |
| 15 th | Springfield School Christmas Service | 11.00am |
| 31 st | New Year's Eve Open House - 67 Pensclose | from 6.00pm |

Jan

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 9 th | Prayer Chain meeting | 9.15am |
| 12 th | Deacons Meeting | |
| 14 th | Fellowship Group | |
| 17 th -22 nd | Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (see Rotas page for details) | |
| 28 th | Women's World Day of Prayer - St Mary's Church Green | 10.00am - 12 noon |
| | Winchester Room for time of meditation, prayer & slides shown of Cameroon | |

NOTE: The church will be closed 28th December 2009 - 3rd January 2010

- | | | |
|------------|----|---|
| Dec | 04 | Charlotte Hayes |
| | 06 | Sue Birdseye |
| | 12 | David Pearson |
| | 27 | Florence Smith |
| Jan | 02 | Margaret, Benjamin & Joseph Esapa
Gwen Mee |
| | 04 | Tori St Clair |
| | 07 | Brian Bennett |
| | 10 | Cheryl Birdseye |
| | 12 | Iris Lindsay |
| | 18 | Kay Nicoll |



Minister's Letter

Exquisite music filled the air. It was a choir concert like none other the world has ever known. The venue: a field. The audience: shepherds. The choir master: an angel of the Lord. The choir members: the Choir of the Royal Academy of Heavenly Hosts. Unfortunately, it was an impromptu concert and the music score was lost. It's thought that a goat amongst the sheep gobbled it up! Thankfully one of the shepherds had a particularly sharp memory and later recalled the words of the chorus: *Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours.*

At first the strains of music were drowned out by the bleating of startled sheep and the shouts of terror-stricken shepherds. This was not the kind of thing that normally happened in their line of work. Sure, there were some shepherds with a musical gift who strummed a tune on a harp late at night around the campfire. Some companies of shepherds actually became well known for the quality of their singing. The monotony of herding their flocks was broken by the rehearsals. As a matter of fact, the group of shepherds who applauded the Choir of the Royal Academy of Heavenly Hosts (often referred to by the acronym, CRAHH) were part of the Bethlehem Male Voice Singers (also known as BMVS and some rather rudely referred to them as the Bleaters!). They had an ear for music and were blown away not only by the high standard of performance but by the clarity of the words! One of the faults in a lot of chorale performance is poor enunciation which muddies words. But

every member of CRAHH moved their lips as a perfectly choreographed one, declaring together an amazing message.

The performance was so deeply moving that it spurred the shepherds into action. They found a baby swathed in blankets lying in a feeding trough. They must have wondered how this bundle of joy, son of a carpenter and a teenage girl, could bring joy for people everywhere. How could this baby be the longed for Messiah? Yet the stirring chorus echoed in their hearts, reverberated in their memories, and stirred their affections to tell others about their discovery.

All who heard what they had to say were amazed. Were they amazed to think that the Messiah was a new born living on their street and within the boundaries of their town? Or were they amazed at the ramblings of these shepherds, thinking that too much time on their own with sheep had tipped them over the edge of sanity?

Mary took them seriously. All their descriptions and words filled her memory chest and she sifted the jewels, carefully lingering over everything that had happened. What did these events mean?

The shepherds went back to their fields and got on with the business of tending sheep. As they went they practiced their parts for the next concert of BMVS. We don't know what they sang on their way back but we know that they were giving it licks, songs of praise with a soaring melody line of glory and deep base notes of praise. It was not unlike the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah* long before he had written it.

Will God startle us with his coming this Christmastide? Will the

ordinary routine of our lives along with the rituals of preparing for the festivities be invaded by choirs of angels? Will we hear the message of God: God in the highest becoming lowest and thus bringing peace and grace into our lives? Will the discord of our relationships in families, communities and the world be rearranged according to the harmony of God's anthem of peace in Jesus?

From me to you I pray a blessed Christmas and the grace to receive Jesus anew into your heart and life. May God bless you as we enter 2010

Shalom
Jason

The following article, author unknown, has been extracted from Church News Service and is entitled:

12 Days of Christmas

When most people hear 'The 12 days of Christmas' they think of the song of the same name. It is believed by many that this song had its origins as a teaching tool to instruct young people in the meaning and content of the Christian faith. From 1558 to 1829 Roman Catholics in England were not able to practice their faith openly, so they had to find other ways to pass on their beliefs. The song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' is one example of how many people believe that they did it.

- ❖ "On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me..." The 'true love' represents God and the 'me' who receives these presents is the Christian
- ❖ The 'partridge in a pear tree' was Jesus Christ who died on a tree as a gift from God
- ❖ The 'two turtle doves' were the Old and New Testaments - another gift from God
- ❖ The 'three French hens' were faith, hope and love - the three gifts of the Spirit that abide (1Corinthians 13)
- ❖ The 'four calling birds' were the four Gospels, which sing the song of salvation through Jesus Christ
- ❖ The 'five golden rings' were the first five books of the Bible, also called the 'Book of Moses'
- ❖ The 'six geese a-laying' were the six days of creation
- ❖ The 'seven swans a swimming' were 'seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.' (1 Cor 12:9-11, Rom 12, Eph 4, 1 Peter 4:10-11.)
- ❖ The 'eight maids a milking' were the eight beatitudes
- ❖ The 'nine ladies dancing' were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
- ❖ The 'ten lords a-leaping' were the Ten Commandments
- ❖ The 'eleven pipers piping' were the eleven faithful disciples
- ❖ The 'twelve drummers drumming' were the twelve points of the Apostles' Creed.

So the next time you hear 'The 12 Days of Christmas' you can make up your own mind: Could this non-religious sounding song really have had its origins in the Christian Faith, or not?

The following is the sermon preached by Rev Jason Boyd at the Bunyan Meeting on 22 November, and is entitled:

Clash of Kingdoms

Text: John 18: 33-38a

Whoever scrambled to the pinnacle of the snow hill which had been created by my dad shouted down at those below, "I'm the king of the castle and you're the dirty rascal!" To stay on top you had to throw snowballs at those trying to oust you and if they got too close to the top you shoved them down. This game inevitably involved a lot of laughter and getting the cold stuff down the neck of our jackets and in gloves and sleeves. It was fun and yet the competitive spirit meant it could get pretty rough.

There are certain personalities that are aggressive. They want to be the leader. Being top dog...king pin...the centre of attention is that to which they aspire. Yet even those with a demure temperament may have had secret dreams of being treated like a VIP. The popularity of programs such as the X Factor or Britain's Got Talent capture popular interest through the idea of instant fame whilst Who Wants to be a Millionaire? appeals to the desire for instant fortune.

Power, wealth and popularity are the stuff of kings and queens. Our wish is everyone's command. Everything is done for us. The army and navy defend the realm, furthering our interests. Or perhaps we'd settle for being Prime Minister or President of the United States. Imagine how important you would feel posing for a portrait as one of the G8 leaders. Red carpets. Formal dress dinners. Champagne. Silver.

Crystal. Wouldn't it be brilliant?
Ahhh....

Kings and kingdoms. Presidents and Prime Ministers. Nation building. Mapping out the borders and policing them. Investing in military machinery to defend national interests. Maintaining and extending power. Growth of wealth. Exporting culture with its language and values and imposing these on others and defining the boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. The 'War on Terror' waged by the Coalition and Axis of Evil is an example of a new kind of conflict in our global world.

The nature of kings and kingdoms, of 'us' and 'them' is at stake when Pilate re-enters his headquarters. He has just gone out to meet 'them': the Jewish delegation sent by Caiaphas. 'They' did not want to enter a Gentile dwelling place because they did not want to be made unclean before the Passover. Their fastidious adherence to the Mosaic Law by keeping ritually pure is ironic against the background of their machinations to destroy the one the Law pointed towards: Jesus, bearer of grace and truth (1:17).

The ethnic, religious and political divisions are clear: Jew from Gentile; clean from the unclean. The religious elite who have no political power manage to make the holders of power (the governor and representative of Rome) come out to them on their terms. Their claim not to be able to execute the death penalty means that Jesus will face crucifixion, the death penalty reserved normally for non-Romans and a symbol of the ruthless power of Rome.

This is no accident of circumstances. The crucifixion of

Jesus is a fulfilment of his own words. Earlier in John's Gospel Jesus said, "And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14-15; 8:28). He then declared, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself" (8:32; 34). Jesus stands before Pilate, not a victim of some political misfortune, but as one who knows his destiny and who willingly gives his life on the cross.

The crime is not explicit until the moment when Pilate summons Jesus and begins his interrogation: "Are you the King of the Jews?" Charged with treason Jesus responds to the question with a question: "Is this your question or have others put it in your mouth?" Is Jesus trying to determine whether Pilate is simply going through the motions of justice or whether he genuinely perceives what kind of king that Jesus truly is.

Pilate seems exasperated at being caught between what seems to be an intra-Jewish conflict - an argument between different factions of Jewish society. "Am I Jewish? I don't belong to your culture. I know little of your laws and understand nothing of your religion. How on earth am I equipped to ask this question? It's your own compatriots along with the chief priests who've arrested you and handed you over to me. You tell me. What have you done?"

It's clear the Pilate does not understand that a clash of kingdoms is at work. Jesus says, "I do have a kingdom but it is not a kingdom of the world. It is not a political entity with borders and an army. If my kingdom

were like this then my followers would be mobilising even now. They would be mapping out their strategy to liberate me from the Jewish group who want to see my demise. The truth is that my kingdom is not of this order and kind."

Jesus does not say that his kingdom is not political in any sense. He is saying that his kingdom supersedes any economic-political entity. His kingdom is political in the truest sense in that his kingdom is for all. His kingdom is established with his lifting up on the cross. The cross is his throne. His rule is one of service: stripping down and washing the feet of those he loves. Belonging to his kingdom comes through belief in Jesus. Citizens of his kingdom love and serve one another following Jesus' way. His kingdom is life-giving, unending life. His kingdom does not operate on the principles of violence and war, or defending borders and protecting power bases.

"So you are a king?" Pilate asks. It is clear that Pilate does not understand the nature of Jesus being a king but he's not alone in his incomprehension. When Jesus told Nicodemus that entering the kingdom meant being born again, Nicodemus wondered how on earth he could re-enter his mother's womb. When Jesus told the woman at the well that he would give water that would quench her thirst forever, she thought he was talking about some special kind of water that would save her from ever having to draw water again. She did not understand that Jesus himself was the water that would quench her thirst. When Jesus fed the crowd with a boy's lunch of five loaves and two fishes they come to Jesus looking for an endless

supply of bread. They did not understand that he was offering himself as their nourishment. Pilate and the religious establishment who send Jesus to him are like the man born blind. The blind man is healed and perceives Jesus whilst the Pharisees who think they see God are actually blind to what God is doing and saying in Jesus.

Jesus replies, "You say that I am a king." Though he does not affirm or deny that he is a king it is inferred. "You say I am a king but you do not understand what kind of king I am. Why was I born? What is my purpose in life? It is to bear witness to the truth. I am the Word that spoke everything that is into being. I am the Word that is life and light. I am the Word that spoke by becoming bone and skin, with a heart beat and a brain wave, a network of nerves and arteries and veins, learning a language and culture. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to the Word that I have lived and spoken."

Pilate asks, "What is the truth?" We don't know why Jesus isn't given a chance to answer. Does Pilate impatiently turn his back and walk out? What is clear is that he's asked the wrong question. It is not, "What is the truth?" but "Who is the truth?" that is at stake. Jesus is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6). He is truth itself and Pilate doesn't recognise it. Whatever political and religious realities may have divided the Caiaphas delegation from Pilate, they are at one in this fact: they do not perceive the embodied truth before their very eyes.

The kind of king that Jesus is...the kind of kingdom he reigns over...is truth enfleshed...truth that

serves...truth that dies to rise...truth that breathes life into every human being. The kingdom of Jesus is the kingdom of truth. It is not an abstract concept. Truth is not doctrine or dogma. Truth is "In the beginning was the Word...and the Word became flesh and lived among us" (1:1;14). Truth is Way. Truth is Life. Truth is Freedom (8:31-32). Truth embraces particular languages and cultures: "He came to what was his own..." (1:11). Truth embraces the universal: "For God so loved the world..." (3:16).

Every day we are faced with the choice to see the world with different eyes: to ask not, "What is the truth?" but "Who is the truth?"; to see that Jesus the King is already in front of us and his kingdom of truth open for us to enter. It is the kind of perception that we find in the story of a husband who said to his wife, "You know, dear, I'm going to work hard, and some day we are going to be rich." His wife replied, "We are already rich, dear, for we have each other. Some day maybe we'll have money." [1]

Will we serve the kingdoms of this world with the values of emphasising difference, exercising dominating power, and de-humanising others? Or will we serve Jesus Christ loving one another as he loved us, embracing those who are different from us, using our power to serve though it cost our very lives, and valuing all human life (13:34)? The kingdoms of this world call us to demonise AlQuieda and all Muslims...to scaremonger over illegal immigrants and asylum seekers...to believe that violence creates peace. The kingdoms of this world excuse manipulation and abuse in personal and social relationships...justify

actions and words that bring personal gain at someone else's expense...and salve our consciences about our relative wealth by saying, "The poor will always be with us" (12:8). The kingdom of Jesus is the way of love...of us stooping to do things that the world says are below us...to love people who betray us or let us down...to choose non-violence...to accept those whom the world tells us we shouldn't be with or talk to because they're not one of us. The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world and yet it totally changes the way we live in it: our attitudes, relationships, the way we vote, what we think, how we shop and so on. Will we choose to see Jesus standing in front of us...to listen to his voice...to hear and live the truth that he lived and spoke? Ask not, "What is the truth?" but "Who is the truth?" and see him standing in front you.

Carol Singing



Saturday 12th December 10.00-12noon
Marriotts Walk

Churches Together in Witney
Carol Singing

Come & sing!

The following poem, author unknown, has been submitted by Maureen Miles, and is entitled:

Christmas

I have a list of folks I know, all written
in a book
And every year when Christmas comes,
I go and take a look
That is when I realise that these names
are a part,
Not of the book, but they're written in
my heart
For each name stands for someone who
has crossed my path at some time
And in that meeting they've become the
rhythm in each rhyme
And while you may not be aware of any
special 'link'
Just meeting you has changed my life a
lot more than you think

For, once I've met somebody, the years
cannot erase
The memory of a pleasant word or a
friendly face
So never, never think, my Christmas
cards are just a mere routine
of names upon a Christmas list
forgotten in between

For when I send a Christmas card that
is addressed to you
it's because you are on the list of folks
I am indebted to
For I am but the total of the many folks
I've met
and you happen to be one of those I
prefer not to forget
And whether I have known you for many
years or few
in some way you have had a part in
shaping things I do

And every year when Christmas comes,
I realise anew
The best gifts life can offer is meeting
folks like you
And in the Spirit of Christmas, that
forever endures
share its richest blessings in the hearts
of you and yours

The following poem, written by Harold F Mohn, has been submitted by Joyce Kearsey, and is entitled:

The changing seasons

The air turns cool, the leaves turn
brown
A change is taking place
And everywhere the signs appear
Of fall's approaching face

The birds begin their southward flight
That takes them far away
And in their plaintive song and cry
A fond goodbye they say

A season dies, a new one's born
Like night gives way to day
Such is the wondrous work of God
In His own chosen way



News around the world

The following information has been taken from CWM Website dated 4th December, so is up to date at the editing of this month's magazine

Knowing God

A little over a year ago, CWM missionary Rami Fanai was seeking out God's purpose for her new life in American Samoa. Now three years into her teaching placement, she talks to Zoe Hussain about how things suddenly got much clearer....

I have received God's guidance so much in my work since we last spoke and I am thoroughly enjoying myself teaching and interacting with the kids. Now that I have been here for almost three years, I have a better understanding of the people and their culture. Things that used to embarrass or surprise me seem very normal now!

Let me tell you a little about what's been happening in our school: students used to walk in and out of the classroom as they please, sleep on the floor when they were tired. Well they don't do so much of that anymore. The overall discipline of our school has greatly improved in terms of students wearing their uniform, observing school rules and showing more respect to teachers.

We have a lot of new enrolments this year and with more than 230 students, we are now the biggest private school on the island. I still can't say for certain what God's purpose is for me here, but I think it must be to help my students to get to really know

God because I find myself doing more and more of this.

Faith and religion

Samoans are deeply religious people and most of my students are involved in church activities. I don't think it would be an exaggeration if I say that their lives revolve around the church. But a lot of them think that as long as they are doing what's required of them in the church they are ok. They don't know that they need to know God personally and some of them are not even aware that they could have an intimate and close relationship with God.

They consider their Sunday life and everyday life to be separate - which is the reason why it is so difficult for us teachers to deal with them in the school. So it is important to show them how to live a life guided by God in everyday activities. They need a role model who will show them how to live a God fearing life in terms of being loving and understanding and not tolerating dishonesty and so on.

Some of them have started to open up and come to us (me and my two friends who are also missionaries from the Presbyterian Church of India) to share their problems and to ask us to pray for them.<

After the tsunami, people's hearts seem to be more open to God and I'm happy to report that the attendance of our Christian Club meetings has also doubled.

As for the tsunami, it came so unexpectedly. The people of our island have been really fortunate in the past as they live right in the middle of the Pacific but have never been hit by a tsunami before. That's probably the reason why some of them didn't run to

the higher ground after the earthquake - they didn't think it would come, and they were killed as a result. It has been devastating to see the destruction

During the time, we were not able to open our school so we helped one of the non-profit organisations called VOAD (Voluntary Organisation Active in Disaster) with their relief work, distributing aid to the affected areas. But now that we are back to school, we can't continue with that anymore. Many victims are very traumatised and are having difficulty getting back to normal life. They really need us to pray for them so please remember them in your prayers.

God has been so good to us, he blessed us with many friends whom we can really relate with at a spiritual level, they became our prayer partners and they support us in our work here in American Samoa.

We get a lot of support from the local Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa that we attend here - Petesa Uta Church. They welcome us as their own members and express their appreciation of our teaching work at the high school every chance they get (each Sunday without fail the pastor mentions this from the Pulpit!) They are so kind to us, we feel blessed to worship with them.

Mission pilot project gets results

Pastors and lay leaders from three continents meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina last week shared stories of how they interpret mission in their context today. The meeting in the Argentinean capital was part of a two-

year study on "Mission Today" developed jointly by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Results of the study are to be presented to a global mission conference "Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today" scheduled to be held in Edinburgh, Scotland in June 2010. But their impact is already being felt in Argentina, Cameroon and the Netherlands.

Pastor Luis Macchi from Chaco, Argentina, reported that the invitation to form a pilot group with participants from different denominations provided new momentum in a context where the word "ecumenical" can be controversial: understood by some as "anti-Catholic", by others as "from the devil".

"The central question of how we, as an ecumenical group of local Christians, understand and practice our calling as followers of Jesus Christ today, helped us to look at each other and at mission with new eyes", Macchi said.

Local groups compared their witness today with that of their grandparents around 1910, whether that witness was acknowledged as "mission" in those days or not, said Jet den Hollander, executive secretary of the WARC Mission Project. "We heard amazing stories of how our ancestors shared their faith", den Hollander reported, "and can only conclude that today as in 1910 the Spirit moves in her own inimitable way."

Local discussions had included a Bible study on 2 Kings 5, which reports the salvation of an army general because of the intervention of a little girl.

"When we saw the suggested Bible passage we were suspicious", reported Julio López, president of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Argentina (FAIE) and coordinator of the four Argentine pilot groups. "Why this passage about invading armies and slave-girls for a study on mission? But as we identified with the different characters, the story became a window into our own calling", says López.

As a result of their discussions the Ngaoundéré group, which represented eight different denominations, planned the joint construction of a chapel in the general hospital. The chapel is designed to serve the spiritual needs of Christians, Muslims and other faith traditions alike.

Dutch study groups rejoiced in the fact that a wide spectrum of churches and organisations participated in the study. Besides Protestants and Roman Catholics - who have extensive experience of cooperation in recent decades - all three pilots included Evangelicals, Pentecostals and migrant churches.

Notwithstanding contextual differences, several common issues emerged in the Buenos Aires meeting. Unequal power relations and their detrimental effect on mission identity and prioritising, marginalization because of race and ethnicity, and the way migration shaped and shapes societies and mission were important items in all three countries. But as Wout van Laar, the Dutch coordinator noted, "In all our stories you can discern the Spirit's movement. People share their faith in countless ways and often outside of formal mission structures and intentions."



The following article has been extracted from Church News Service, and is entitled:

What Christingle is all about

The word Christingle means the Christ-light. And the tradition of Christingle goes back a very long way. It began way back in 1747, when a pastor of a church in Germany, a John de Watteville, wanted to help his congregation understand about God's love for the world. And so he came up with the Christingle. It became popular within Germany and soon other churches in other countries began to use it.

Today the Christingle has been adopted by The Children's Society as a way of reminding the churches in this country of their responsibility before God for the well-being of our nation's children.

The Christingle is an orange, which has a red ribbon around it. Also mounted in the orange are four cocktail sticks, each carrying some sweets. The orange represents the world, and the sweets remind us of all the good gifts that God has given us in Creation. We enjoy these gifts every day of our lives. Think of all things that you enjoy in this beautiful world of ours - God has given these things to us because He loves us.

On top of the Christingle there is a candle. This stands for Jesus, the Light of the World. God sent him into the world to light our way back to God.

So - we have the world, the gifts of creation, and the light of Christ to show us the truth. But there is one more thing to notice about the Christingle - the red ribbon.

It stands for the blood of Christ. He came into the world not just to visit us, but for a purpose: to die in order to take the pain and the sin of the world upon himself.

This means that when you do something wrong to someone, and you feel bad about it, you can go to God and know that you are forgiven.

So - the orange, the sweets, the candle and the red ribbon. A Christingle to remind us of what Jesus did in coming to earth over 2000 years ago.

The following poem, author unknown, has been submitted Theo Howells, and is entitled:

I was there

I was there with fish and bread
In the crowd when Jesus said:
All these people, see them fed

I was there and heard him say:
I am the truth, I am the way
Come follow me; keep watch and pray

Yes, I was there, left all alone
When all the crowd had gone back home
Then Jesus called to me, said: Come

Oh! Do not tremble, do not weep
In your own day your promise keep
Still feed my lambs, care for my sheep

Now here I stand with fish and bread
And I recall what Jesus said:
All these my people, see then fed

The following article has been submitted by Peter Gamston, and is series 2 of the Discussion Group, and is entitled:

Believing Without Belonging

Professor Grace Davie is with the Department of Sociology and Philosophy at the University of Exeter. She is one of the leading sociologists of religion in Europe. In her own words :- "the book called Religion in Britain since 1945 was published in 1994 -- an unremarkable title. But the subtitle contained this phrase, "**Believing Without Belonging**," which retrospectively, was an inspirational moment for me, because it is this phrase that everybody remembers and can associate with my work."

In 2000 Professor Davie published Religion in Modern Europe; the subtitle "**A Memory Mutates**" was chosen because the book understood religion as a form of collective memory and then asked questions about how that memory is or is not passed on. Within the book, however, is a key idea, which, retrospectively, she now thinks its most important contribution, and that is the notion of vicarious religion.

Finally just two years later, she turned the camera around the other way and looked at Europe from the outside. The book is called **Europe: The Exceptional Case**, in which she argues that the patterns of religion in Europe are not a global prototype. They are, in fact, an exceptional case. European self-understanding is premised on the idea that modernization implies secularisation. Europeans think that what Europe does today, everyone else will do tomorrow; they don't find it easy

to grasp that the European case is, perhaps, 'The Exceptional Case'. So it's the perspective of Europe from the outside that completes the picture. Davie was remiss in not furnishing a suitable pithy sub title for this final book, but in it she asks in particular about mutations that are happening in Europe, which she characterises as the change from a culture of "Obligation to Consumption" in terms of religious life.

The general plan for this series was to take each the themes of these three books in turn as a focus for our discussions for each of the first three weeks and in the final session to consider what it might mean to us in practical terms; What difference does it make? How should we react? Where do we go from here? We are now half way through the series, but others are still very welcome to join us. For anyone unable to do so but, perhaps interested in what we've been talking about here are the notes thus far.

Part 1 - Believing Without Belonging

What the concept of "believing without belonging" effectively says is that there's a disjunction between the two notions. It is in some senses misleading ... if you ask the question do you believe in God, and you're not terribly specific about the God in question, you'll get about 70 percent saying yes, depending where you are. If you say, do you believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God, you'll get a much lower number. In other words, if you turn your question into a creedal statement, the percentages go down. The looser your definition of belief, the higher the percentage of believers.

But exactly the same is true in terms of membership or belonging.

Those who attend church regularly each week are a falling percentage, probably below 10 percent in Britain. It would be higher or lower in different parts of Europe. But if you move to a much looser notion of membership -- for example, and I've never seen this in a poll, but it would be a very interesting question -- where do you expect your funeral to be held or who do you expect to conduct your funeral, not many would "contract out." And that's one of our keys. The historic churches are public utilities, and we expect public utilities to be there when you need them. (This is straying into the arena of session 3).

It is vital to remember that the disjunction of active and inactive, of dropping in or regular commitment, is as common in secular life as it is in religious life. If you look at political parties, trade unions, attendance at football matches, cinema-going, all the graphs go in the same direction. Interestingly, if you look at football and cinema, you find J-curves; they drop very sharply in the postwar period and they turn up from the late '80s, and '90s into the 21st century. Davie doesn't see why that is not possible for religion, but it hasn't happened yet.

But the point to grasp is that graphs that go down don't always go on going down; they can turn. If you look at the statistics for cinema-going and first division football matches in the post-war period, for example, no one would have thought they would turn up, but they did. Why did they turn? Through a lot of effort and careful marketing, not least by making the venues more comfortable. It can be done. But whether it will or won't be done in the churches is a completely different question, to which we will return in the

final session.

One reason church leaders have alighted on believing without belonging is that implies, superficially at least, that it's not quite so bad after all. But the point is that I don't think a half-believing society is in fact any easier or more difficult for church leaders to work in than a strictly secular society, but it is a significantly different thing. You engage in a different way with a society that half believes from one that is hostile or secular. And most 'un-churched' folk are not, for the most part, overtly secular or hostile toward religion.

In 1999-2000 two indicators started to rise among younger people. One was belief in a soul and the other was belief in a "God in me." In other words, a belief in an afterlife, but also in the notion of a personal God, my God, as opposed to a transcendent God -- the notion of immanence. The rise occurred right across Europe, but is most marked in those parts of Europe where the institutional churches are at their weakest. In other words, it happens in the UK, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and France. It doesn't happen in Poland, Ireland or Italy, where the church is still strong and seen as a disciplinary force and is therefore rejected by young people.

Where the church is no longer able to discipline belief or behaviour, which is the case across most of the continent, young people do not, it seems, turn to secular rationalism; they begin to experiment. Now, whether this will be of significance in a decade or whether it will be something that grows, is too soon to say. But nobody predicted the shift in the mid-1990s. Something is happening; something that that we

surely need to think about.

The underlying principle of "believing without belonging" (BWB) is that faith may change shape but does not fade away. Davie presents this thesis from a very sympathetic position. Another contributor to the field David Voas, Professor of Population Studies at the University of Manchester writes from a unsympathetic position.

The strong version of the BWB thesis is that with the exception of a handful of atheists, Europeans continue to believe in God and to have religious (or at least 'spiritual') sensibilities: the proportion of believers is high and has changed little in recent years. People look to the churches in times of personal or public need but usually take their existence for granted. At its most religiously optimistic, BWB can even be interpreted to mean that 'More and more people within British society are, it appears, wanting to believe but without putting this belief into practice' (Davie, 1990: 463), or again, 'The sacred does not disappear - indeed in many ways it is becoming more rather than less prevalent in contemporary society' (Davie, 1994: 43). The basic concept, in any event, is that belief in the supernatural is high and reasonably robust while religious practice is substantially lower and has declined more quickly.

Professor Voas disputes and contests this thesis. Voas asserts that the only form of BWB that is as pervasive as Davie suggests is a vague willingness to suppose that 'there's something out there', accompanied by an unsurprising disinclination to spend any time and effort worshipping whatever that might be. As soon as one focuses on belief in the teachings of the church,

one finds belonging to go with it. Few people fully believe and yet stay away in defiance of doctrine; such a disjunction would indeed be noteworthy. Between the extremes of full faith and noncommittal assent there is naturally a middle ground of more or less Christianized belief, but the passivity of so-called 'believers' is itself a sign of religious decline.

Where do we stand? Where do we think the church is heading? What should our response be to the debate? Can we ignore it; should we?

Part 2 - Vicarious Religion.

Davie concludes that it is more accurate to say that Europe has simply become 'differently religious'. This conclusion fits with the theme of her earlier work *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging* in which she analyzes the typically British way, not of hostility to religion but of wanting it to 'be there', its churches standing in for the rest of us, its ministers carrying on the show in our place - vicarious religion, believing without belonging.

In Davie's view, vicarious religion is a more accurate reflection of what is happening in Europe. Believing without belonging pulls apart belief and belonging. Vicarious religion draws them back together. The core of vicarious lies in the word vicar. That's the root, and it means doing something on behalf of someone else. Hence my definition: By vicarious, I mean the notion of religion performed by an active minority -- that's the believers -- but on behalf of a much larger number -- that's the wider population, who implicitly, not only understand but quite clearly approve of what the minority is doing. In other

words, there is a relationship between the nominal member and the active member.

Thus Davie introduces the concept of "*vicarious religion*," namely, "the notion of religion performed by an active minority but on behalf of a much larger number, who (implicitly at least) not only understand, but, quite clearly, approve of what the minority is doing." Practicing Christians perform rituals, believe, and embody moral codes for others. They also "offer space for the vicarious debate of unresolved issues in modern society."

Even in a secular society, nominal believers frequently desire a church service at the time of their death. At times, as with Princess Diana's funeral in 1997, the structure of the liturgy is combined with "extraneous elements" in a "mixed economy" funeral. The church, then, performs the ritual on behalf of the deceased. Likewise, there is concern in even relatively secularized Britain that clergymen "believe" for the public, and obvious discomfort when, for example, it is erroneously reported in the popular press that the Bishop of Durham has dismissed the Resurrection as a mere "conjuring trick with bones". Professor Davie notes that societal expectations for ministers and priests also remain, with evident disappointment arising in the public when they do not uphold expected behavioral standards.

Finally, Davie notices that the debate over homosexuality in the Church of England has attracted "intense media attention." Why is this? She wonders if the church has "offered space" for a thorny topic that simply could not be discussed elsewhere in society - if this presents "one way in

which society as a whole comes to terms with profound shifts in the moral climate."

Davie suggests that European religion is moving from "*a culture of obligation or duty to a culture of consumption or choice*." Confirmation in the Church of England has ceased to be a societal rite of passage, and is now an individual choice occurring often in adulthood as an "opportunity to make public what has often been an entirely private activity." (Theologically speaking, we might want to question the use of the word "choice" instead of, say, "response.") Something rather similar seems to be taking place in Catholic France. Even in Lutheran nations, where there are still more traditional patterns of Confirmation, young people, Davie tells us, increasingly choose the intense "experience" of a confirmation camp instead of a series of meetings.

This focus on spiritual experience in place of cultural obligation can be seen in the growth of conservative evangelicalism, "the success story of late twentieth-century churchgoing," and the popularity of cathedrals, which offer an "aesthetic experience" of traditional liturgy, well-performed music, and excellent sermons, without any real sense of congregational obligation.

Callum Brown, in *The Death of Christian Britain* (Brown, C. 2001 revised 2008), argues against Davie that 'persistence of the sacred' in our culture is not self-evident. Despite the interest in the idea of BWB, he maintains that it is now more misleading than helpful as a way of describing the contemporary situation. For Brown the question is not why passive assent should be more prevalent than regular

practice, but why anyone finds this situation unusual.

The reason, Brown argues, that some observers expect more religious activity is simple: Christian churches tell us that it matters to God and ipso facto to us. Religion is a social pursuit; even the most unsacramental Protestant sect holds that joining together to affirm shared beliefs and to hear the word preached is vital both as a demonstration of faith and as a means of strengthening it. If people choose not to belong it is a clear sign that they do not believe religious doctrine.

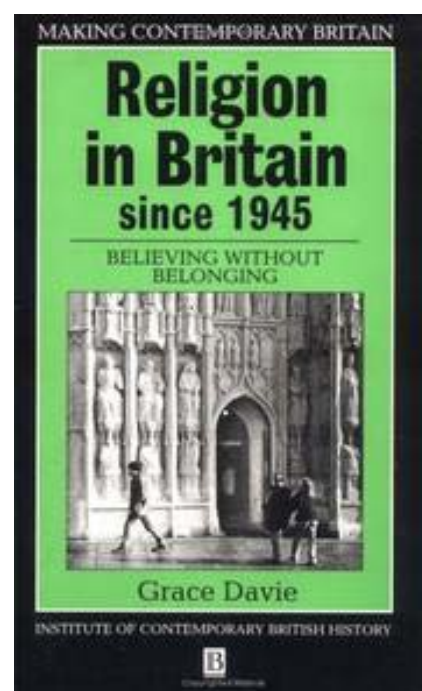
Whether or not they are confident that God exists, it is apparent at the very least that they doubt the Almighty much more than they spend Sunday in church or in the shops. Nor is it simply a matter of believing in a god who does not take attendance: they evidently do not believe in a god who is sufficiently important to merit collective celebration on any regular basis. Put simply, increasing numbers of people believe that belonging doesn't matter.

Based on the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)¹ Brown argues that 'Far from being relatively strong and robust, religious belief is lower than passive belonging and is declining more rapidly than active belonging.' Regular attendance (i.e. active belonging) is relatively easy to analyse. If neither parent attends at least once a month, the chances of the child doing so are negligible: less than 3 percent. If both parents attend at least monthly, there

¹ a dataset that is both longitudinal and rich in family and household context. The study started in 1991 with 10,264 individuals in 5,538 households. These individuals have where possible been surveyed every year since

is a 46 percent chance that the child will do so. Where just one parent attends, the likelihood is halved to 23 percent. What these results suggest is that in Britain institutional religion now has a half-life of one generation, to borrow the terminology of radioactive decay. The generation now in middle age has produced children who are half as likely to attend church, and the trend does not depend on marriage patterns: the net effect was the same whether people married in or out.

Let us be clear. Religion is still much in evidence and highly worthwhile as a subject of study. Few forms of thought and action are as common, have the same life-shaping potential, or (at least at some times and places) are as important socially. Explaining why faith survives and sometimes thrives in an age of science deserves attention. Our point is simply that the crucial fact about religion in modern Europe is decline; the rest is commentary. 'Believing without belonging' was an interesting idea, but it is time for the slogan to enter honourable retirement.





PRAAYER LETTER No 138

Christmas Thoughts

The birth of Jesus, God's son, brought hope to the world. He still does. Jesus is the 'Light of the World', the Prince of Peace, the Servant King

The following hymn was sung at Witney Churches Together Service in October. The words are relevant for the meaning of Christmas and a challenge for Christians today.

Find time during Advent, and in the New Year, to read or sing this song and reflect on the words:

Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we turn to you
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts

Shine through our darkness

Christ be our light! Shine in your church gathered today

Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair
Your word alone has power to save us. Make us your living voice

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts

Shine through our darkness

Christ be our light! Shine in your church gathered today

Longing for food, many are hungry. Longing for water, many still thirst
Make us your bread, broken for others, shared until all are fed

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts

Shine through our darkness

Christ be our light! Shine in your church gathered today

Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth, many are cold
Make us your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts

Shine through our darkness

Christ be our light! Shine in your church gathered today

Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong
Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts

Shine through our darkness

Christ be our light! Shine in your church gathered today

Every Blessing
Beryl

Please note that for up-to-date prayer requests contact Beryl Cartwright (703717)

The following letter has been submitted by Leah Cotton, and is a reflection, and testimony, of her life over the last 3 years

I would just like to say thank you for all your support during my 3 years of illness, on and off

This is my testimony

Some of you may already know that in the summer of 2006 I was diagnosed with cancer (after nearly 18 months of back pain and weight loss). At first the outlook didn't look too good, but after surgery to remove a tumour from my back, I was given hope. After further tests it was discovered I had Hodgkins Lymphoma (aka Hodgkins disease)

That same year, I underwent chemotherapy for 7 months which made me lose my hair, and made me tired and sick but I was determine to get well. I prayed and meditated on the Lord a lot and I studied the Bible every day. Every time I went to hospital for scans, appointments, chemo etc I sent prayer requests via my mobile phone. These prayer requests went out not just to this church but to those in the Christian community. I have many friends who worship in Witney, and many prayer requests reached some Christians as far as Wales and abroad!

In February 2007, I was given the partial remission verdict and I went back to work in May of that year. However, I struggled with bouts of sickness which made me lose weight, but once this was controlled, I gained weight again (praise the Lord!)

In January 2009, I started to have pain in my right foot, which crept up to my right hip. After reporting this to my consultant and undergoing a PET

Scan, I was given the bad news that the Hodgkin's disease had returned. Time to fight back!

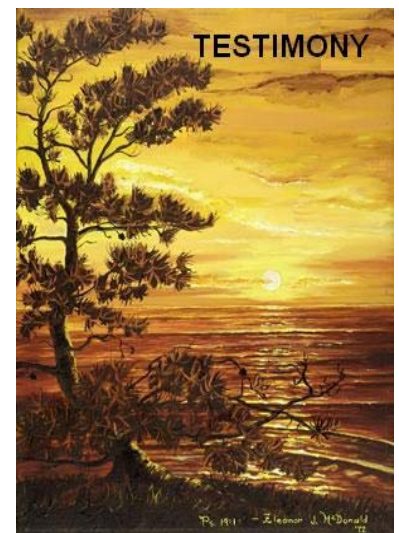
This time I underwent a stronger chemotherapy which included stem cell transplant. I spent more time in hospital but I was very grateful for the people who came to see me during this time. I also underwent radiotherapy to prevent the disease from returning.

During this time of treatment, I regained weight and I was not as sick as much as last time. Throughout this time, I could feel the presence of the Lord with me mostly when I pray.

As I write, I am in preparation for returning to work. I thank the Lord that he has heard me and healed me. The Lord is good, his mercy everlasting and his truth endures to all generations. His word is truth. I thank him also for getting me this far and for hearing the prayers of all those who prayed for me. I am so grateful, and I would like to finish with this scripture from Zephaniah:

*The Lord or God is with you
He is mighty to save
He will take great delight in you
He will quiet you with his love
He will rejoice over you with singing*

I'm happy to say that the Lord our God is with us, and he is definitely mighty to save!
Amen!



The following article, author unknown, has been submitted by Terry Powlesland, and is entitled:

On the first day

On the first day, God created the dog and said:

'Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years.'

The dog said: 'That's a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I'll give you back the other ten?'

So God agreed.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said:

'Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a twenty-year life span.'

The monkey said: 'Monkey tricks for twenty years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the Dog did?'

And God agreed.

On the third day, God created the cow and said:

'You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years.'

The cow said: 'That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years.. How about twenty and I'll give back the other forty?'

And God agreed again.

On the fourth day, God created humans

and said:

'Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you twenty years.'

But the human said: 'Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me my twenty, the forty the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back, and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?'

'Okay,' said God, 'You asked for it..'

So that is why:

- ❖ For our first twenty years we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves.
- ❖ For the next forty years we slave in the sun to support our family.
- ❖ For the next ten years we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren.
- ❖ And, for the last ten years we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

Life has now been explained to you

Thanks

Sue, Alan and Cheryl Birdseye would like to thank everyone for their prayers, friendship and support since their car accident. We were overwhelmed by the cards and love that people gave us not to mention lifts to places, meals being cooked for us and people calling at the house to see how we were and with offers of help.

We have really appreciated all you have done for us and hope that this short letter will let you know how much we are indebted to you all.

Thank you all again

The following article has been extracted from Church News Service, and is entitled:

New Year's Honours

We are all familiar with the Queen's New Year honours list, which celebrates peoples' significant contributions in life. But what would *God's* New Year honours list look like? Who are the people he chooses to honour?

Psalm 1 gives us an answer to these questions. The person who is blessed by God is compared to a tree: *'he is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers'* (3). They are strong and well-nourished, able to cope with drought and storms, while being fruitful.

Will this be a true of us during 2010? By contrast, we can be more like bonsai trees, whose growth has been stunted. They are starved of nutrients to ensure that they are perfectly formed, but miniature in size. So often the church today resembles a bonsai nursery rather than a forest of mighty trees! Like the bonsai, we are starved of nutrition. Instead, consider the alternative: *'his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night'* (2).

Here is the challenge for us during this coming year: to push our roots deeply down into his Word, meditating on it day and night. As we read and reflect on God's word we are constantly reminding ourselves of God's promises, character and acts.

The psalm promises us that as we do this the Bible will become a real delight, rather than an experience of

learning multiplication tables! As we learn to do it, it will delight us more and more, because it is the voice of a friend speaking to us. Obviously the devil doesn't want us to experience this! He wants to keep our growth as stunted as possible. So we need to build ways (eg use some sort of Bible reading notes) of keeping our roots in the Bible. Don't forget that a recent survey found that one-third of people will have given up their New Year resolutions by the end of January, and only one in five will keep them to the end of the year.

There will be times when our Bible reading doesn't seem to delight us, when it feels like a real slog! At such times turn back to Psalm 1 and remind yourself what the goal is: to grow into maturity, deeply rooted, drought resistant and fruitful. We will never get there unless our roots are deep in God's word.

CHRISTIAN
VIEWPOINT 
COFFEE
MORNING Plus
for both Men and Ladies
10.30-11.30 (2nd THURSDAY)
at Welcome Evangelical Church
HIGH ST WITNEY

Thursday 10th December 2009

Mr. Gerald Forse

a TEARFUND update



Note: This is the last meeting

The following article has been extracted from Church News Service, and is entitled:

The Bible and your New Year's resolution

Why read the Bible this year? After all, few of us are short of things to do. For many of us reading the Bible is one of those 'oughts', or what my parents used to call things 'for the long winter nights' - a mythical time which never quite arrived when garages would be tidied, classic books read and photographs put in albums.

Generally though when there is something we say we would like to do, but never get round to it, there is a reason. Often people don't read the Bible because they think it will be too hard to understand, or because they think an old book won't give straight answers to the issues of their life, and aren't sure they would like it if it did!

All of that is to misunderstand the Bible. God has not given us a cryptic book of instructions, which if only we could decode would then give us an answer for every situation we face. The Bible's purpose is to allow us to meet God - the stories, the poetry, the letters, the prophecies are there not so much to give us instructions but to help us understand God better - to renew our minds so we think God's way.

Think about someone you admire and respect. Do you avoid listening to them because you think they will be too hard to understand or because they won't give straight answers to issues in your life? No. You listen knowing that you will only get to know them gradually, maybe some things will always elude us,

but over time we get to know them better. And of course they don't tell us what to do, but gradually we are able to 'think like them' in the situations we face.

That is what reading the Bible achieves for us. As we read it in all its glory, its confusing bits, the pieces we like and those we don't, we gradually understand God more, and our thinking becomes more attuned to his. Then as we make the thousands of small decisions which we all face day in day out, we can have confidence that we are walking God's way. As the long winter nights are here, give it a go. Don't worry about what you don't understand or finding answers - gradually knowing God better is the point.



Forgotten?

Gifts to buy and cards to send,
Shopping lists that never end,
Time's so short, so much to do,
There's no room for such as You.
Laden down with gifts galore
As we rush from store to store;
Who's the next one on the list?
Is there anyone we've missed?
In the corner, half forgotten,
Lies the Son of Man begotten.
Born into this world's dark night,
He offers us his gift of light.
If there's no room, will we reject him?
With hands so full, can we accept him?

ROTAS

WELCOMING TEAM

Dec	06	Jill & Robert McBride
	13	Nanna Blackman & Theo Howells
	20	Pip & Beryl Cartwright
	25/27	Jacqui Powlesland
Jan	03	Pat & Ben Smith
	10	Joan Currie & Iris Lindsay
	17	Irene St Clair & Susan Wass
	24	Nanna Blackman & Irene Jephcott
	31	Pat Smith & Val Obriain
Feb	07	Jill & Robert McBride



COMMUNION

Dec	06 pm	Nanna Blackman	
		Preparation	Iris Lindsay
	13 am	Jacqui Powlesland & Dave Wesson	Nanna Blackman & Pat Smith
Jan	03 pm	Pat Smith	
		Preparation	Iris Lindsay
	17 am	Elaine Gudem & Chris Esapa	Peter Gamston & Jacqui Powlesland
		Preparation	Susan Wass
		07 pm	Nanna Blackman
Feb		Preparation	Iris Lindsay



FLOWERS

Dec	13	Pat Smith
	20	Christmas Tree
	27	Christmas Tree
Jan	03	Christmas Tree
	10	Jacqui Powlesland
	17	Joan Currie
	24	Beryl Cartwright
	31	Rita Hayes
Feb	07	Val Obriain



COFFEE

Dec	06	Val Obriain & Sarah Hopwood
	13	Sue Birdseye & Linda McCormac
	20	Peter Gamston & Gwen Mee
	27	Susan Wass & Irene St Clair



Jan	03	Jill & Robert McBride
	10	Pat & Ben Smith
	17	Marjorie Lee, Iris Lindsay & Judith Bungey
	24	Sue Birdseye & Linda McCormac
	31	Peter Gamston & Gwen Mee
Feb	07	Susan Wass & Irene St Clair
	Note:	Reserve Irene St Clair



REST & CHAT

Dec	10	Jean Stanley, Marina Bowerman & Irene St Clair
	17	Marjorie Lee
	24	Pat Smith & Gwen Mee
	31	No Rest & Chat
Jan	07	Iris Lindsay & Joan Currie
	14	Jill & Robert McBride
	21	Pat Smith & Gwen Mee
	28	Marjorie Lee
Feb	04	Jean Stanley, Marina Bowerman & Irene St Clair



Every effort has been made on the rota list to meet individual circumstances. However, please change with someone else if the dates are not convenient for you - Thank You

Churches Together in Witney & District Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 17th - 22nd January 2010

Date	Time	Location
Sun 17 th	6.00pm	High St Methodist
Mon 18 th	7.30pm	Ceewood Hall Smith's Estate
Tues 19 th	7.30pm	St Mary's Church Green
Weds 20 th	7.30pm	St Mary's Cogges
Thurs 21 st	7.30pm	Congregational Church
Fri 22 nd	7.30pm	tba

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and

