

# Witney Congregational Church

## 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*



# 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
Saturday Praise	11.00 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month	
Sunday Services	10.30 am		
	6.00 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month	

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

## PRAYER

The Church is open each morning for Prayer

## STUDY & FELLOWSHIP

Thursday	2.30pm	Homes (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month)
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## 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	6.00pm	www. – Twice a month
	7.00 pm	Y4J – Twice a 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 774402  
01993 864853 (Office)

## St ANDREW'S BOOKSHOP

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

## CHURCH WEBSITE

For further information, please visit our website:

[www.witneycongregational.org.uk](http://www.witneycongregational.org.uk)



I am continuing the sequential production of the magazine introduced last year after 20 years, in that this is the 3-monthly summer edition covering June, July & August, which means that if you are on any of the Rotas you will need to make a note in your diary when you are on!!

As you read this the schools have just finished half-term which means that holiday time is nearly with us again, and, even though some cannot bear the heat, the increasing good weather has to be encouraging for most of us. Whatever your circumstances, hopefully it will be a chance for most people to take a break of some kind.

Turning now to those who have contributed to this edition; alongside the standard pages, Kathy Shaw writes about new beginnings & discipleship; There are articles on the Magna Carta, Christian sense & Creation to name but a few.

Over this last year the contributions have fallen off and the quantity produced has also reduced, which is good news for the Treasurer, as printing cost has also been reduced!! Many thanks for those who have contributed for this edition, but bearing in mind the above, would encourage anyone to consider submitting article(s) for the next edition by either:

E-mail:

terrypowlesland@uwclub.net

jacquipowlesland@uwclub.net

or, just plainly written on paper, which can be typed up.

The next 3-monthly **autumn** edition, covering September, October & November is due on Sunday **30<sup>th</sup> August**

Your Editor



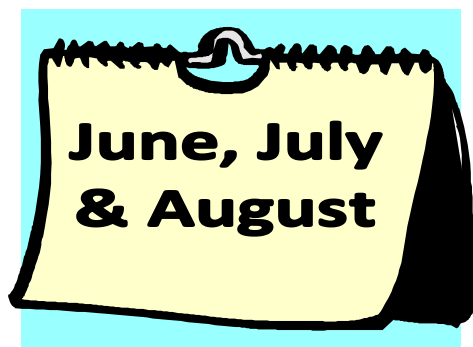
1. Whose 2 faces can you see?



2. Whose 2 faces can you see?

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### Daily Prayer Time:

Mon-Fri 9.30 am

### Services

10.30 am weekly & 6.00pm on first Sunday of the month and will normally be led by Rev Jason Boyd unless advised below

### June

6 <sup>th</sup>		Messy Church	10.00am
7 <sup>th</sup>	am	Café Church	
	pm	Evening Worship	Communion
14 <sup>th</sup>	am	Morning Worship	
21 <sup>st</sup>	am	Morning Worship	Communion
28 <sup>th</sup>	am	Rev Judi Holloway	

### July

4 <sup>th</sup>		Saturday praise	11.00am
5 <sup>th</sup>	am	Morning Worship	
	pm	Evening Worship	
12 <sup>th</sup>	am	Morning Worship	
	pm	Draycott Mission	3.00pm
19 <sup>th</sup>	am	Morning Worship	Communion
26 <sup>th</sup>	am	Karen Brusch	

### Aug

1 <sup>st</sup>		Saturday praise	11.00am
2 <sup>nd</sup>	am	Rev Judi Holloway	
	pm	Karen Brusch	
9 <sup>th</sup>	am	Morning Worship	
16 <sup>th</sup>	am	Morning Worship	Communion
23 <sup>rd</sup>	am	tba	
30 <sup>th</sup>	am	Morning Worship	
	pm	Madley Park Residential Home	

### Sept

5 <sup>th</sup>		Messy Church	10.00am
6 <sup>th</sup>	am	Café Church	Rev Nigel Lindsay
	pm	Evening Worship	Communion

The following events are given for your particular attention:

### June

2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lite Bite piece of the Word	12.00 for 12.15	
	Deacon's meeting	7.30pm	
4 <sup>th</sup>	Church Walk	7.00pm	
5 <sup>th</sup>	Y4J	6.00pm	
11 <sup>th</sup>	Fellowship Group	2.30pm	9 Pensclose
	Church Walk	7.00pm	
12 <sup>th</sup>	www.	6.00pm	
13 <sup>th</sup>	Prayer Chain meeting	9.15am	
	SWMA Executive at Cheltenham		
18 <sup>th</sup>	Church Walk	7.00pm	
19 <sup>th</sup>	www.	6.00pm	
	Y4J	7.00pm	

25 <sup>th</sup>	Church Walk	7.00pm	
26 <sup>th</sup>	C Aid Concert – Iolanthe	7.30pm	
<b>July</b>			
5 <sup>th</sup>	Y4J	7.00pm	The Manse
7 <sup>th</sup>	Lite Bite piece of the Word	12.00 for 12.15	
	Deacon's meeting	7.30pm	
9 <sup>th</sup>	Fellowship Group	2.30pm	11 Hollies Close
10 <sup>th</sup>	www.	6.00pm	
11 <sup>th</sup>	Prayer Chain meeting	9.15am	
13 <sup>th</sup>	Church meeting	7.30pm	– Please note this is a change to a Monday
17 <sup>th</sup>	www. & Y4J BBQ	6.00pm	
18 <sup>th</sup>	<b>NO</b> Coffee Morning		
28 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup>	CTiW Holiday Club – Go Mad		
<b>Aug</b>			
8 <sup>th</sup>	Prayer Chain meeting	9.15am	
13 <sup>th</sup>	Fellowship Group	2.30pm	9 Pensclose

## ROTAS

### WELCOMING TEAM

<b>June</b>	07	Robert McBride & Lesley Barter
	14	Nanna Blackman & Theo Howells
	21	Joan Currie & Susan Wass
	28	Pat Smith & Claire Woodward
<b>July</b>	05	Viviane Boyd & Cecily Lau
	12	Mel Knapton & Irene St Clair
	19	Pip & Beryl Cartwright
	26	Robert McBride & Lesley Barter
<b>Aug</b>	02	Nanna Blackman & Theo Howells
	09	Joan Currie & Susan Wass
	16	Pat Smith & Claire Woodward
	23	Mel Knapton & Irene St Clair
	30	Viviane Boyd & Cecily Lau
<b>Sept</b>	06	Pip & Beryl Cartwright



### COMMUNION

<b>June</b>	07 pm	Lesley Barter	
		Preparation	Lesley Barter
	21 am	Judi Holloway & Susan Wass	
		Jacqui Powlesland & Beryl Cartwright	
<b>July</b>		Preparation	Pat Smith
	05 pm	Beryl Cartwright	
		Preparation	Beryl Cartwright
	19 am	Chris Esapa & Norline Martin	
<b>Aug</b>		Susan Wass & Lesley Barter	
		Preparation	Susan Wass
	02 pm	Jacqui Powlesland	
		Preparation	Jacqui Powlesland
<b>Sept</b>	16 am	Jacqui Powlesland & Judi Holloway	
		Beryl Cartwright & Chris Esapa	
		Preparation	Irene St Clair
	06 pm	Lesley Barter	
		Preparation	Lesley Barter



## FLOWERS

June	07	Val Obriain
	14	Beryl Cartwright
	21	Joan Currie
	28	Jacqui Powlesland
July	05	Sonya Boyd
	12	Beryl Cartwright
	19	Val Obriain
	26	Judi Holloway
Aug	02	Joan Currie
	09	Rita Hayes
	16	Jacqui Powlesland
	23	Sonya Boyd
Sept	30	Judi Holloway
	06	Beryl Cartwright



## COFFEE

June	07	Café Church
	14	Viviane Boyd & Hilary Pratley
	21	Susan Wass & Judith Bungey
	28	Sue Birdseye & Irene St Clair
July	05	Mel Knapton & Clare Woodward
	12	Viviane Boyd & Hilary Pratley
	19	Sue Birdseye & Irene St Clair
	26	Susan Wass & Judith Bungey
Aug	02	Mel Knapton & Clare Woodward
	09	Viviane Boyd & Hilary Pratley
	16	Sue Birdseye & Irene St Clair
	23	Susan Wass & Judith Bungey
Sept	30	Mel Knapton & Clare Woodward
	06	Café Church



## REST & CHAT

June	04	Beryl Cartwright
	11	Joan Currie & Iris Lindsay
	18	Pat Smith
	25	Jean Stanley, Marina Bowerman & Irene St Clair
July	02	Robert McBride
	09	Beryl Cartwright
	16	<b>NO</b> Rest & Chat
	23	Pat Smith
Aug	30	Jean Stanley, Marina Bowerman & Irene St Clair
	06	Robert McBride
	13	Beryl Cartwright
	20	Joan Currie & Iris Lindsay
Sept	27	Pat Smith
	03	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

**June** 01 Marjorie Lee  
 07 Matthew Brusch  
 10 Finnguala Obriain  
 14 Norline Martin  
 16 Hayley St Clair  
 19 Jonathan Brusch  
 23 Peter Gamston  
 June Woodley  
 25 Gerald Hayes  
 Juliane Schunselaar  
 26 Viviane Boyd  
 Val Obriain  
 28 Maureen Miles  
 30 Jacqui Powlesland



**July** 04 Wout Schunselaar  
 05 Bob Blackman  
 06 Tom Hopwood  
 09 Sarah Hopwood  
 14 Lynne Thomas  
 26 Jennie Garrett  
 30 Alex Matthews  
 Irene St Clair  
 31 Jason Boyd

**Aug** 06 Declen Hathaway  
 13 Melissa Gundem

The KENNINGTON & DISTRICT  
 UNITED CHURCH CHOIRS  
*present* A Concert Version, in Costume, of  
*Gilbert & Sullivan's*  
**IOLANTHE**  
*- or The Peer and the Peri*



*on* **Friday**  
**26<sup>th</sup> June** 2015

*in* **The Congregational  
 Church, Witney**

*at* **7.30 p.m.** • Entrance is **FREE!**

Collection for Christian Aid

\* An Evening of Music, Sparkle & Fun for the whole family! \*

#### Walks around Witney and surrounding area

A series of walks is arranged for Thursday evenings in June starting from the Church car park

- When Thursday evenings at 7p.m.
- Where Countryside around Witney
- Who Anyone who can walk for approx 90 mins
- What wear flat strong shoes or boots
- Why to appreciate God's creation and enjoy Fellowship

Do come and join us, bring a friend

#### Faces answers:

1. Sir Michael Caine & Sir Sean Connery
2. PM David Cameron & Boris Johnson



## Pastor's Paper

It's all over: Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday. What's left to contemplate and celebrate? We move into a time in the Christian calendar referred to as Ordinary Time.

...Ordinary Time...

It doesn't sound appealing at all. It is a kind of no man's land...

an in-between period...

a nothing-much-happening  
time...

a time to slack  
off a little...

...Ordinary Time...

No Christmas tree...

no Lenten austerity...

no soup and footwashing  
meal times...

no solemn black  
Friday...

...Ordinary Time...

The shouts of Easter joy trail off...

the bitter sweet goodbye of  
Jesus leaving...

the windswept shaking and  
resting flaming  
tongues...

the mind boggling  
Trinity...  
finished.

...Ordinary Time...

Ordinary time is the vast majority of our lives. These are the moments that are routine. The everyday goes unnoticed - mostly. And yet if we keep our eyes open and on the look out, we may hear, see and feel things that are exquisite gifts and full of beauty.

The whole idea of ordinary time is filling my horizon. On the 2 July I will face two examiners and give an account of my thesis which represents six and a half years of my life with you as a congregation. Whatever the outcome, I will have to make a transition from being a post-graduate student to a new stage (hopefully post-doctoral). And then what? Where do I go from here with all of you?

The years of ministry in this congregation have been fulfilling. I have learned so much from you and I pray that we have grown together. Our ability to dialogue on questions of immense importance, to pray together and reach a consensus about what to do in response to the Holy Spirit has flourished. Yet if all that we have learned together through welcoming our Muslim friends, creating the Word Café, and exploring emerging ways of being church are to have enduring consequence, then we will have to commit to continue seeking the Holy Spirit in Ordinary Time.

In Acts 13:1-3, the church is gathered and "While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off." Those who were followers of The Way were increasing in numbers across an ever-widening geographical area. It was a movement driven by worship and prayer. It was not of the easy kind as their worship was marked by fasting. They had a common longing to hear what the Spirit was saying and through a listening stance they heard God's call to Barnabas and Saul. And having heard the Spirit speak they were moved into a further cycle of prayer and fasting as they laid hands on them and sent them off on their mission.

I would ask you to join me in prayer as we seek to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to us in Ordinary Time. How is the Spirit calling us to be renewed in our



Mission? What needs to be developed? What needs to be pruned away? What new things are we being called into?

There are a couple of areas I want to highlight as opportunities for growing together and seeking God for the future:

First, on the 2 June at 12:15 pm, we will be having the second of our ***Lite Bite and a Piece of the Word*** gatherings. This is a space for us to share fellowship, explore the Bible and pray together.

Second, throughout the month of June, our Lyfe Group will be taking weekly walks led by Beryl Cartwright. We will gather at the beginning of our walks and intentionally invite the Spirit to open our eyes to what is around us and between us. The desire is to worship as we walk and talk and drink in the beauty of what is around us.

Third, Judi Holloway is stepping down from her role in our children's work with www. For this work to continue we need another leader. We are also in need of new volunteers for our Sunday worship provision for children and young people. Please consider this and pray about it. If you feel prompted please talk to me.

Fourth, over the 18-20 September we will be having a Church Mission Weekend. The exact details have not been finalised but I do know that we have Revd. Dr. Richard Cleaves and Joy Howell from the South West Midlands Area joining us at various points over the weekend. It coincides with our Harvest Festival. My hope is that we will take this opportunity to fellowship and pray together and hear what the Spirit is saying to us.

Fifth, and certainly not least, our Church is facing a big change in September 2016. Jacqui Powlesland has served as Church Secretary since 1998 and will be stepping down from this position. As minister I have enjoyed working with Jacqui. She is an immensely supportive person who has kept me organised (insomuch as this is humanly possible) and provided me with a

listening ear and wise advice. Although I have not been the minister during her entire period of service, I have read the minutes of the Church Meeting and of the diaconate. These combined with my own experience over six and a half years leads me to confidently claim that she has demonstrated devotion to the Church and faithfulness in executing her duties. More than this, she has gone way beyond the call of duty. Many of you will wonder (along with me) where it is that she gets her energy. Jacqui is a lynchpin who has galvanised the Church particularly during the uncertain and difficult period from 2000-2004. It is hard to imagine what Church life will be like without Jacqui as Church Secretary.

Importantly, Jacqui will continue to exercise her wonderful ministry with Noah's Ark and Coffee Morning (to name a few). I'm sure she will continue to be a pastoral support to so many of us in the congregation. It will simply be that she won't be tied down by the specific tasks carried out by the Church Secretary.

In order to enable a smooth transition, I would ask you as a congregation to begin praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that we are able to discern who is being called to this important ministry in our Church. In an ideal situation (as I imagine it and perhaps not as the Spirit imagines it!), it would be good if the Church Meeting were able to call someone to be the Church Secretary at the Annual General Church Meeting. In this way, that person would be able to 'shadow' Jacqui during her final year. This is a matter for us to take into prayer.

It may be ordinary time but extraordinary things are certain to unfold as we follow the promptings of the Spirit.

Shalom  
Jason



## **PRAYER LETTER**

### **No 170**

### **Testing and Examination**

At this time of year after years of learning and studying, children, students and some adults are taking internal and external public examinations. The results of these will have some influence on the future pathways these folk will take. Many going to different schools, colleges, universities or workplaces will be leaving friends and making new ones. Some will keep in touch with their 'old friends'.

The pressures of not passing bring out denials, blaming different factors. Some are given another chance or several chances and succeed.

Jesus spent 3 years teaching his disciples by telling stories, parables and by example pointing people to God through repentance, forgiveness and by acceptance and love. Many tribes and especially the Jews learnt things through the 'oral tradition' which was passed on from generation to generation. Jesus not only warned his disciples that the Kingdom of Heaven was near he also prepared his disciples for the work He wanted them to continue, his teachings.

Jesus prophesied and knew that Peter would deny him 3 times. After the Resurrection at the 'Beach Breakfast' Jesus tested Peter's love and loyalty by asking him 3 times if he loved him. When Peter replied in the positive Jesus restored Peter giving him authority saying 'Feed my lambs, care for my sheep, feed my sheep' In other words tell others about me and God and give them spiritual nourishment.

The final words of Jesus to his disciples were 'to wait in Jerusalem for the gift my Father has promised. The testing time of waiting patiently for the power of the Holy Spirit must have been quite nerve racking as He had told them that they would be His witnesses in all Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. At Pentecost they were given the Power of the Holy Spirit and were able to preach the message of the Gospel.

The disciples had been a close knit group now they needed to separate and go to different places to preach the Good News. A different type of testing and examining accompanied their work in spreading the gospel. It brought persecution, imprisonment and death. Even today in many parts of the world believing in Jesus Christ still brings persecution, imprisonment and death.

Each day we need to examine our lives whatever age we are to see where God is leading us. We should expect to be tested just as Jesus was tested in the Wilderness. The Holy Spirit as the Holy Counsellor and Comforter with His Power will help us through these times.

Reflect on this verse from Brian Foley's Hymn

Holy Spirit, come, console us,  
Come as Advocate to plead,  
Loving Spirit from the Father  
Grant in Christ the help we need.

Every Blessing  
Beryl

The following article, written by Tim Lenton, has been extracted from Parish Pump, and looks back to the Charter that shaped our history, and is entitled:

## The Magna Carta: 800 years on

This month, 15<sup>th</sup> June, marks the 800th anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta – one of the most famous documents in the world, and one of the most misunderstood.

Meaning ‘Great Charter’, it was signed at Runnymede, a water meadow probably designated for regular meetings, on the Thames between Windsor and Staines. Described sometimes as ‘a failed peace treaty’, it was agreed between the vastly unpopular Plantagenet King John (1199-1216) and a coalition of powerful barons who threatened his reign.

Although nearly a third of the text was deleted or substantially rewritten within ten years, and almost all the clauses have now been repealed, its 39<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> clauses gave all ‘free men’ the right to justice and a fair trial.

This and other Magna Carta core principles are echoed in the United States Bill of Rights (1791), described in 1946 by Eleanor Roosevelt as “a Magna Carta for all mankind”, and in many other constitutional documents around the world, as well as in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the European Convention on Human Rights (1950).

Magna Carta is 4,000 words long and is now usually divided into 63 clauses, and opinions of it vary. Sir Edward Coke in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and many others have seen it as enshrining the basic rights of an English subject, and this is how it is normally viewed.

More recently, though, it has been pointed out that Magna Carta’s more prominent clauses “offered special legal

protection for the Catholic Church and the aristocracy, advocated tax breaks for the wealthiest, freed the City of London from regulatory oversight, promised total freedom of immigration and placed the burden of infrastructure maintenance on local communities instead of government”.

In 1904, Edward Jenks published an article entitled “The Myth of Magna Carta”, which also undermined traditionally accepted views. In 1930 the document was parodied by Sellar and Yeatman in *1066 and All That*: “Magna Charter,” they concluded, “was therefore the chief cause of Democracy in England, and thus a Good Thing for everyone (except the Common People)”.

However, for most of us, Magna Carta remains a foundation of English national identity. Lord Denning, the most celebrated English judge of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, described it in 1956 as “the greatest constitutional document of all times – the foundation of the freedom of the individual against the arbitrary authority of the despot”.

Details of the anniversary can be found at <http://magnacarta800th.com>



## **Dramatic rise of persecution in sub-Saharan Africa**

On 14 April, 2014, Boko Haram kidnapped 275 girls from their local school in Chibok, Nigeria. It was the Islamic extremist group's largest abduction in a long campaign of kidnappings and it generated global headlines at the time.

Just over one year on and most of the girls – Open Doors sources say 232 – remain missing, government assurances have come to nothing, and Boko Haram's violence in the region has intensified. Sadly, whatever their eventual fate, some of the girls will never see their parents alive again: evidence suggests that up to 20 of the parents of the girls have died due to stress-related diseases during the last year.

Chibok is just one of many communities which Open Doors is supporting as it lives with the aftermath of extremist violence. Targeting Christians and other minority groups, Boko Haram has operated in the northern regions of Nigeria for over a decade. According to the 2015 Open Doors World Watch List (ranking the top 50 countries where persecution against Christians is most extreme), Nigeria is the tenth most dangerous place in the world to be a Christian. With growing associations with Islamic State (IS) and utilising the technological advancements of recent years, Boko Haram, and other indigenous violent groups, have become alarmingly effective at the systematic cleansing of 'inferior' minorities.

And the violence is not limited to Nigeria. The recent mass killing of 148 university students (of which the majority were Christian) by al-Shabaab in Garissa, Kenya, is the tip of the iceberg in what is a growing trend across Africa – the continent

that is home to one fifth of the global Christian family.

Researchers from Open Doors World Watch Unit highlighted that there were two hubs for Islamic terrorism in the world – the Middle East, and perhaps more surprisingly, sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, Kenya is the fastest rising country on the World Watch List– up from a ranking of 43 in 2014 to 19 in 2015. Since the data was gathered, three more attacks on Christians have occurred in Kenya on a scale not previously seen.

CEO of Open Doors UK & Ireland Lisa Pearce says, "In January this year, we warned of a dramatic rise in the persecution of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa. Not only are the attacks happening in Christian-majority countries, but both the pace at which these attacks are occurring, and the scale of them, is increasing. And, of course, it is not only Christians who are suffering – Muslim girls were taken from Chibok too. The international community *must* use its influence to support a coordinated response against extremism."

So, where are the Chibok girls? Some sources say they are still being held in a single group. Other sources say they have been moved to another country, possibly Niger. There are also worrying rumours that they may even have been executed. No one knows for sure.

Open Doors is involved with the Chibok community and many others like it. Thousands of Open Doors supporters from the UK and Ireland have written letters of encouragement to the families of the girls in an expression of solidarity – a small act perhaps, but a powerful way of letting those families know they are not forgotten.

For further information please contact Open Doors at [ginas@opendoorsuk.org](mailto:ginas@opendoorsuk.org)

(Extracted from Parish Pump)

The following article has been written & submitted by Kathy Shaw, and is entitled:

## **New Beginnings and Discipleship**

As I entered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year of the Congregational Federations Integrated Training Course I was so pleased to hear of the support of Jason and all at Witney in endorsing my study for the coming year, especially given that I was a relatively new church member. This year, on the course has been both challenging and rewarding, in equal measures. I feel that my discipleship has taken me in a direction that I hadn't really anticipated.

The academic year commenced and I realised that the amount of study required to successfully complete the assignments had stepped up a gear. In January I also started my practical placement based initially at Witney with some elements of the placement to be completed at Wheatley URC.

I began the placement with some trepidation – so many tasks and so little time to complete them in, given my split lifestyle between Witney and Manchester. The placement has consisted of 3 areas of ministry – Minister, Preacher and Outreach, each covering a variety of opportunities to 'grow my discipleship'. The first stage of the placement was to formally confirm Jason as my Mentor, and to assemble a designated group of people around me to help me – my Support Group (Jacqui, Judi, Beryl, Pip, Nanna, Chris). In addition I have had the support of my flatmate Julie, Elaine and David, and the interest and support of many church members. I have gained so much from them in both knowledge, support and encouragement and they have kept me admirably on track, which is no easy task.

Without these people I am certain my placement wouldn't have gone as smoothly or as positively as it has done. The placement has led me to get involved with areas of ministry that I probably wouldn't have naturally gravitated to. I have both developed and led prayers at both Witney and Wheatley, something that I had previously avoided where possible, feeling that I wasn't very good at it. During my placement I have also led a series of daily morning meditations during the week leading up to Easter, all of which I had never previously attempted before. This gave me insight into how the elements of worship come together and interlink as well as responding to the differing things that people take from prayer.

Pastoral and outreach elements of the placement are where I would probably naturally lean towards, so it has been no surprise to me to see that I have enjoyed the pastoral visits to church members alongside Jason, the Noah's Ark and Messy and Café Church, all of which demonstrated a Christian ethos as well as a social aspect of being Church. Moving forward into the future, when both this year's academic year and my 2<sup>nd</sup> year placement ends I am looking forward with anticipation to the challenges and opportunities that next year will bring. Thank you to everyone that has supported me in any way this year.

\*\*\*\*\*

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country.  
"Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.  
"Only the Ten Commandments."  
answered the lady.

The following article, written by Lester Amann, has been extracted from Parish Pump, and considers why Jesus chose the disciples, and is entitled:

## All Together

Why, do you think, did Jesus choose 12 men to be His disciples? What was the point, as Jesus was a miracle worker and a very eloquent speaker. He could walk on water; change water into wine; multiply food for thousands of people; heal the sick and forecast future events. So why did Jesus choose some fishermen, a tax collector and a few lesser known guys to be with Him everywhere?

Doesn't it appear odd that Jesus wanted disciples who, as time passed, were slow to learn; argumentative; frightened; amazed and puzzled? Right from the start of His ministry Jesus must have known He was bringing together a motley group of characters who would not understand Him; doubt Him; and let Him down. Surely, Jesus would have been better off going it alone without having the hassle and frustration!

Well, what is amazing, is that Jesus decided to limit Himself. He wanted the fellowship of close friends to share their good and bad times. He wanted to be involved with them no matter what happened. He enjoyed meal-times, discussions and, no doubt, a joke or two! Jesus came from Heaven to show that in God's Kingdom there is *togetherness*.

This world can get messy, troubled and nasty, and it is into this cauldron that Jesus came to be involved with its problems. He wanted to share His mission of love and compassion, participating with others, to change places of darkness into God's healing light.

He chose ordinary people, with their weaknesses, anxieties, hang-ups and faults to fill them with His Spirit and

transform them into workers for God.

Today, Jesus works with *us*, despite our frailty and stubbornness. He patiently draws alongside us to change our attitudes and behaviour so that we show God's love wherever we are.

Jesus came to build His church: a community of believers who would work and serve together to change society for good. So let's be aware of the Holy Spirit's direction and be encouraged that we are all partners together.

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## Thank You

I would like to thank all the people who visited me when I was in Freeland Nursing Home. I did thank God for all those visits and it made such a difference in my life.

I am nearly settled into my new flat; I have a lovely view, so much green, beautiful trees, so many birds.

Now the warmer weather is almost upon us, and God willing, I'll be able to wander down to the church – only takes 20 minutes.

God has been so good to me

God bless – Joyce Kearsey

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There is the story of a pastor who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets."

The following article, author unknown, has been extracted from St Andrew's Church Association, Guenin, newsletter, and is entitled:

## Christian Sense

- Don't let your worries get the best of you; Remember, Moses started out as a basket case
- Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited ~ until you try to sit in "their" pews
- Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisers
- It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one
- The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes (and wasps) come close
- When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there
- People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church
- Opportunity may knock once, but temptation bangs on the front door forever
- Quit griping about your church; if it was perfect, you couldn't belong
- If a church wants a better pastor, it only needs to pray for the one it has
- We're called to be witnesses, not lawyers or judges. God Himself doesn't propose to judge a man until he is dead. So why should you?
- Some minds are like concrete thoroughly mixed up and permanently set
- Peace starts with a smile
- I don't know why some people change churches; what difference does it make which one you stay home from?
- Be ye fishers of men. You catch 'em - He'll clean 'em

- Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous
- Don't put a question mark where God put a full stop
- Don't wait for 6 strong men to take you to church
- Forbidden fruits create many jams
- God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called
- God loves everyone, but probably prefers 'fruits of the spirit' over 'religious nut
- God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage
- He who angers you, controls you!
- If God is your co-pilot, swap seats!

Prayer advice:

- Don't give God instructions, just report for duty!
- The task ahead of us is never as great as the power behind us
- The Will of God never takes you to where the Grace of God will not protect you
- We don't change the message, the message changes us
- The best mathematical equation I have ever seen: 1 cross + 3 nails = 4 given

If this blessed you in a profound way today, share it with a few friends to bless them, too! There is no greater treasure than a good friend!

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Somebody has said there are only two kinds of people in the world; There are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord," And there are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good Lord, it's morning."





## **MAF celebrates 70 years in the air**

MAF is 70 this year. As a spokesman for MAF explained, "When we started 70 years ago, we were a bunch of ex-Air Force officers who wanted to turn small planes into an instrument of peace and of help and hope for people in remote, inaccessible areas. In the early days, the work was quite traumatic, it wasn't easy at all."

Ruth Whitaker, Chief Executive at MAF UK said that nowadays "the need is greater than ever across the developing world, and MAF has a role to play in serving those in remote and isolated communities."

"We had the opportunity to fly the Archbishop of Canterbury in on of our light aircraft during a visit he made to South Sudan in 2014. He has therefore seen first-hand our work supporting people living in remote and isolated areas."

MAF supports the world's forgotten people in over 25 countries. Through its fleet of 140 light aircraft, MAF flies essential supplies to places made barely accessible through war, natural disaster or poor infrastructure. Rooted in the church and working with scores of aid organisations, MAF is overcoming these physical barriers in over 1,800 locations.

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The following article written by Canon David Williams, a chaplain with the Thames Gateway NHS Trust (latterly, in retirement, in a voluntary capacity), has been extracted from Church News Service, and finds the only basis for a new beginning in life, and is entitled:

## **Repentance - a hopeful word!**

Much churchy language we use in worship is hard to understand for those who are unfamiliar with it. What, someone may ask in the C of E, is a 'gradual hymn'? Why not 'the next hymn'? Or what is a 'collect'? Why not a 'prayer'? True, but there are some words we should explain rather than stop using.

Meaning is important and we should not dumb down a profound word with a trivial one, like using the word 'sorry' instead of the Bible's word 'repent'. Sorry is a weak word, best used to apologise for trivial transgressions, like stepping on someone's toes, or arriving late, or getting the wrong end of the stick. When we confess our sins we need a stronger word than sorry, which we can almost say without thinking.

Repentance includes being sorry, but goes deeper; it is not just about what we say but about what we do. The word literally means 'to turn around', to go in a new direction, to resolve to put things right. That is why in our liturgy we say, 'I repent of my sins' rather than 'I am sorry'. Our sincerity is proved not just by what we say we regret but our resolve to change it.

In years gone by it was common to see black-suited men with grim faces on street corners holding placards with a mortal warning to passers-by, 'Repent – Flee from the Wrath to come'. It was unhelpful to put such menace into the word 'repent'. Jesus certainly warned of the dire consequences of failing to repent,

but his attitude to repentance was far more positive than that. When Jesus was scolded for keeping company with sinners, he replied, in St. Luke's Gospel: 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'

Repentance opens us to the forgiving love of God. When we admit our sins, to God and to one another, we repent, we don't just say sorry. Repentance leads to reconciliation and a new beginning. That's why Jesus also said, '...there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who have no need to repent.'

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### **God's answer for you**

*For all the negative things we have to say to ourselves, God has a positive answer for it.*

- You say: It's impossible.  
God says: All things are possible. (Luke 18:27)
- You say: Nobody really loves me.  
God says: I love you. (John 3:16 & John 13:34)
- You say: I can't go on.  
God says: My grace is sufficient. (II Corinthians 12:9 & Psalm 91:15)
- You say: I can't figure things out.  
God says: I will direct your steps. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
- You say: I can't do it.  
God says: You can do all things. (Philippians 4:13)
- You say: I'm not able.  
God says: I am able. (II Corinthians 9:8)
- You say: It's not worth it.  
God says: It will be worth it. (Roman 8:28)

- You say: I can't forgive myself.  
God says: I FORGIVE YOU. (I John 1:9 & Romans 8:1)
- You say: I can't manage.  
God says: I will supply all your needs. (Philippians 4:19)
- You say: I'm afraid.  
God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear (II Timothy 1:7)
- You say: I'm always worried and frustrated.  
God says: Cast all your cares on ME. (I Peter 5:7)
- You say: I don't have enough faith.  
God says: I've given everyone a measure of faith. (Romans 12:3)
- You say: I'm not smart enough.  
God says: I give you wisdom. (I Corinthians 1:30)
- You say: I feel all alone.  
God says: I will never leave you or forsake you. (Hebrews 13:5)

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A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!" His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?" The son replied, "I do know!" "Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?" "That's easy, Daddy." the young boy replied excitedly, "It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'"

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People want the front of the bus, the back of the church, and the centre of attention

The following article, written by Rev Ron Wood, has been extracted from Parish Pump, and is entitled:

## Creation

In the beginning, God created the light, clear and white, filling all that was, dazzling and pure. And he said,  
*Dance and shimmer, sparkle or steadily shine- show me in all my ways.*

And from the white light God took the blue, and made the clear blue of the heavens and the deep blue of the oceans. And he said,  
*Give yourself to the eyes of men and the faces of flowers, that those who cannot see the sky or the sea may yet know me.*

And from the white light God took the green, of all growing things that cover the ground. And he said,  
*Aspire to the heavens, lowly moss and tallest tree, feed my creation, that all things may grow to me.*

And from the white light God took the orange, of sunrise and sunset, and said,  
*I am in all beginnings and all endings. Nothing is without me, and without me nothing shall cease to be.*

And from the white light God took the yellow, of ripeness, perfection and maturity, and said, *Only in me shall all things be complete.*

And from the white light God took the red, the life of all that breathes. And he said,  
*Let red run hidden in all living creatures, and be not spilt without respect and regret.*

And from the white light God took the purple, deep purple of the abyss, and of space, and he said,  
*In the deepest places, I am, and in the furthest places I am also.*

And from the white light, God took the indigo, neither blue nor purple, a sign of all that is between this world and the realm of heaven. And God said,  
*Not all that is shall be known. Below read, and beyond purple, and in my understanding alone.*

And the white light of God was complete in these, and God said,  
*All who turn to the light will see me, but in the colours also I may be seen by those who have eyes to search me out*

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One day, a man went to visit a church. He arrived early, parked his car, and got out. Another car pulled up near him, and the driver told him, "I always park there. You took my place!"

The visitor went inside for Sunday school, found an empty seat, and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing.

After Sunday school, the visitor went into the church sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit. You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing.

Later, as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, "I took your place"  
(Extracted from the Internet)