

The Link Magazine

April 2015

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends

Some 99 days after celebrating the birth of Jesus, Christians will be remembering his crucifixion on Good Friday and then celebrating the resurrection on Easter day.

As I write this I have just come back from a writers' conference where we have been looking at producing material for churches from Easter to Trinity.

Wherever you find the same story in more than one gospel you will find the writer has told the story through their particular lens or with a particular slant for the group or community they are writing for. This is equally true for the resurrection stories, which we find in all four Gospels.

It is John's Easter Day story that I will comment on here briefly. It is Mary Magdalene alone who comes to the tomb on the Sunday morning and finds the stone rolled away and returns to tell the disciples. Peter and the one called 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' came back with Mary to discover this for themselves. Having got there they discovered that the stone was indeed rolled and then going into the tomb they saw the empty linen wrappings. John then tells us that they just returned to their home. No hanging about, they just dash in and dash out again. Whereas, Mary remains in the garden with her grief. And it is in this time of waiting and not rushing off, that Mary experiences resurrection. However, John tells us that Mary's encounter with Jesus is not just for her, but for her to go and help others to experience resurrection. It is also worth noting that John doesn't say that Mary experiences resurrection because of the empty tomb, but in her waiting, and even amidst her grief, she is open enough to an encounter.

This leads me to two questions? First, do we make the time to wait, even in times

of extreme stress and difficulty, to encounter the risen Jesus, or are we like the men too busy running back to our homes? And second, are we open enough to find resurrection in everyday life? And this leads me nicely on to two challenges. Remember, Mary's encounter with Jesus was not just for her, but for her to help others. If you encounter Jesus this Easter, how will you use that to help others? Finally make a concerted effort during this season of Easter to look for signs of resurrection in the every day, and if appropriate share this good news with others.

Till next time

Andrew

WORSHIP IN APRIL

April 5th Easter Day

	6.00 am	Sunrise service in Roundhay Park	
	10.30 am	Revd Andrew Atkins	Holy Communion
April 12th	10.30 am	Dr Karen Illingworth	
	6.30 pm	Revd. Andrew Atkins	Holy Communion
April 19th	10.30 am	Revd. Helen Banks	
	6.00 pm	United Service at Garforth	
April 26th	10.30 am	Ms Mary Patchett	
	6.30 pm	Revd. Andrew Atkins	Ecumenical Service

ROUNDHAY ARTS TRAIL– Sunday 26th April

Lidgett Park has been invited to participate in the Roundhay Arts Trail on Sunday 26th April and will play host to a project called '*Women Weaving Wisdom*' organised by Touchstone, the Methodist project in Bradford which does interfaith work.

It is headed up by Rev Barbara Glasson who used to have the "bread church" in Liverpool, and who has preached at Lidgett Park in the past. There is a very interesting article about Barbara and the project in the March edition of "Saga"

magazine. The Roundhay group will be contributing one of 25 small rugs to be displayed in the Touchstone pop-up yurt which will be erected in the chancel.

The first Roundhay Open Studios Trail took place last year with 17 artists being represented. The number this year has grown to 32 and trail leaflets are available from a number of outlets in Oakwood and Roundhay and from the Farmers' Market on 18th April. In addition to the open studios and the yurt at Lidgett Park, there will be displays in St. Andrew's and St. Edmund's churches, where refreshments will be available.

Help will be needed throughout the afternoon of 26th April to welcome visitors to Lidgett Park. Unfortunately this is also the date of the circuit safari lunch but if you are able to spare an hour, or even two, between 12 noon and 6pm that afternoon please sign the list on the noticeboard.

Thank you.

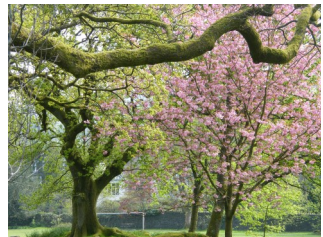
The Stewards

See also page 20 Ed.

PRAYER FOR CHANGE

Published simultaneously in the magazines of all three covenant churches in Roundhay (Lidgett Park, St Edmund's and St Andrew's).

Hidden away
Through dark days,
Yet very soon
Only green
Will be seen.
God's alive,
So grow and thrive.



As we notice signs of Spring, we give thanks for new life all around us. After the dark days of Winter, when Nature sleeps, suddenly there are green shoots, then leaves, then flowers. Then we may say with the poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins

“Nothing is so beautiful as Spring.”



A further contribution to the topic of changing beliefs in Britain. Ed.

IT ALL DEPENDS ON

You will need to be ‘getting on a bit’ to remember Professor C E M Joad (1891-1953). He was a popular philosopher, writer and broadcasting personality, best known to many for his regular participation in the radio discussion programme ‘The Brains Trust’ in the early 1940’s. He was particularly renowned for requiring clarity of expression, frequently responding to questions or statements with “It all depends what you mean by”. Cyril Joad often comes to my mind when hearing talks or discussions on the radio and on other occasions. Not long ago there was much discussion about whether we lived in a Christian country and I didn’t happen to hear anyone really get to grips with saying what they meant by Christian. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury only got as far as saying the country was established on ‘Christian values’. What does or can this mean? Chambers Dictionary defines a Christian as “a believer in the religion based on the teachings of Christ, or one so classified; a follower of Christ; often a vague term of approbation – a decent, respectable, kindly, charitably-minded person” Even the first part of this seems unsatisfactory: there is often a big difference between believing and practising.

Similarly when people use the term God it all depends on what their understanding of the nature of God is. In 2012 the Institute of Education at University College London carried out a survey (with a 1970 Cohort i.e. then aged 42) on religious beliefs and life after death. One of the sections was as shown below.

Which of these statements below comes closest to expressing what you believe about God? Cross one box

a .I don’t believe in God

b .I don’t know whether there is a God and I don’t believe there is any way to find out

c .I don’t believe in a personal God, but I do believe in a Higher Power of some kind

d .I find myself believing in God some of the time but not at others

e .While I have doubts, I feel that I do believe in God

f .I know God really exists and I have no doubts about it

Again I wondered what Prof. Joad would have made of this. If any stranger asked me “Do you believe in God?” or “Does God exist?” I would be unable to give an unqualified Yes or No answer because I would not know what I was being asked. It would all depend on the questioner’s concept of God. That could be an all-powerful, controlling and intervening being as some hymn writers seem to have believed or it may be more of a spiritual presence (*headline in Times last October ‘God may be just in our heads, say clergy’*). I raised this point with one of the Institute staff who put it to the Survey Director. The answer came that no definitions were provided and respondents would have interpreted the meaning of God according to their own beliefs.

Despite what Professor Joad might have said and other recognised problems in researching matters of religion the UCL survey yielded much interesting material. As a cohort study trends by the same people at different ages could be checked where the same or similar questions were asked, for instance in this case religious commitment. With the 2012 survey opinions about life after death could be correlated with religious identities. A Times summary of the report on January 21st was headed “Women more likely to believe in God”. Our readers may find it interesting to see how the responses to the questions shown above were analysed according to religious affiliations so here is a table with percentage responses. If anyone would like to see the full report I could help.

Fred Langley



Explanatory notes (Ed)

In the table on the next page the questions are shown by their letter a–f.

God = God as understood by individual respondents

Main line = Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, URC

Evangelical includes Baptist.

LIDGETT PARK LADIES' GROUP

Meetings held on alternate Thursdays in the Youth Hall at 7.45pm. Refreshments provided. All ladies very welcome so come and join us.

A reminder that there will be **no Meeting on the 2nd April** as it is Maundy Thursday.

9th April Anne Gilyead will be coming to talk to us about "Anne of Green Gables". I think most of us will remember the book from our childhood (although I know some of us are far too young!). Anne will be giving us an insight into what makes the story so fascinating for her personally.

23rd April Sheila Fisher "Walking the Wall" - obviously, it is The Great Wall of China that she will be talking about, and her experiences when she did a charitable trek along it. This will be video presentation, so bring along your specs if you need them.

A brief reminder that our Coffee Evening (Open Meeting) will be held on **7th May**, and Margaret Summerwill who is, hopefully, volunteering to run the Plant Stall again (no pressure, Margaret!) would be very grateful if you would bear in mind that she will need plants with which to stock it. Thank you.

Lynne Pullein

THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN OUR CHURCH

Continuing on the theme of activities that happen in the life of our church we have the Sunday dinners every few weeks for those who live alone or simply want the companionship of others. The last occasion offered a starter of pate, a splendid casserole and three traditional tasty puddings. As they say 'A good time was had by all'.



The master chefs



AND A BIG THANK YOU—SUNDAY LUNCHES

On behalf of all those who attend the Church Lunches, we would like to thank the cooks and their assistants for giving up their time on a Sunday to bring us such wonderful lunches. We want you to know that we are very grateful to you all. The food is always excellent and these lunches are enjoyed by everyone. Thank you from us all. Thank you also to Andrew for collecting the names and the money.

Susan Philo

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Carol and Ian Russell would like people to know that they now live at:

27, Chandos Avenue, LS8 1QU

Tel. 2698341

WOMENS WORLD DAY OF PRAYER.

Grateful thanks to all who joined in this year's WWDP service, especially the unsung heroines who ensure the sound system is working, who make the tea and clear up and generally prove invaluable.....as well, of course, as all those who participated. There were 75 people in the congregation and we had lots of appreciative comments. Thank you! **Pat Nolan**

100 NOT OUT!

I was overwhelmed with all the lovely cards, visits, kind thoughts and messages. I am so grateful to Valerie Faint and all her helpers for arranging such a beautiful party and a special cake. It was a delight to see so many friends. Thank you so much for giving me such a joyous time in my centenarian year.

Margaret Barroclough

You are a special person Margaret, almost as old as Lidgett Park Church! People were pleased to be able to help you celebrate in this way. Ed.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

Age is a question of mind over matter. If you don't mind it doesn't matter

Satchel Paige

Without friends no one would choose to live, though he had other goods.

Aristotle.

PANTOMIME.

The very word epitomises slapstick. The dedicated theatregoer usually gives them a wide berth, but for children, and others of a fun loving disposition, they are a feast of drama, suspense, humour, romance, and buckets of laughs.

Attending opening night at Lidgett Park Drama Group's latest production - 'Jack and the Beanstalk', meant you knew what you were going to get, 100% effort, fun and nostalgia. We were not disappointed. Never mind that the Carriage had great difficulty getting onto the stage; never mind that the catapult hurled its cannonball a dribbling three feet; never mind that the bag of money mysteriously went missing; never mind that the Beanstalk when started growing, never stopped until its roots were six feet above the ground instead of under it! What we got was a feast of improvisation, a rollicking good script and a giant of GIANT proportions.

We were also treated to a Hero and Heroine - a sublime romance. A comedy pairing of such quick repartee and timing that they had the audience rolling in their seats. A fantastic Fairy Queen and retinue, a "Ten from Len" dancing cow and, wrapping the whole performance in a cocoon of expertise and confidence, were the King and the Matriarch (Jack's Mother) . All these were exceedingly well supported by a very prim schoolteacher and the ever-ebullient Town Crier.

The person though who stole the show was SPINECHILL. His portrayal of such evil allied to a costume and demeanour of horrific proportions , ensured no sleep that night for the youngsters!!

A great night out for all.

Malcolm Speed.

A selection of Malcom's pictures follows Ed:



And some more (apologies to the children, but the magazine goes on the website which means we have to be careful) Ed. :



QUIZ (answers on page 26)

Name that fish. Find words that answer each of these clues, then delete one letter to produce the name of a fish. The number of letters for the fish are in brackets.

1. Money section of orchestra (4)
2. One presiding at a meeting can be sat on (4)
3. Chilly – unfriendly (3)
4. Dull – dismal (3)
5. 'shake a leg' – 'cut a rug' (4)
6. Scoundrel underfoot (3)
7. Agitate (4)
8. Oriental citrus fruit (7)
9. Pointed projection (4)
10. Broken piece of pottery standing high in London (4)

Fred Langley

THORNER BROADSHEET



Our next Coffee morning at Thorner will take place on Saturday May 9th, 10-12noon in the TMC Social centre. It is in aid of Martin House, Children's Hospice, so please support this event if you can. The usual bacon butties will be served. Thanks to all who supported our March coffee morning.

Our Lent Group meetings, which took place on Monday mornings throughout Lent at Thorner was very well attended this year. We had people from both the Methodist church, the Church of England, the Roman Catholic church and also a Quaker at every session. We've had around eight or more each week and all have thought this course to be worthwhile and thought provoking. Now the course has ended there are a few booklets available if anyone is interested. Please see me if you'd like a copy. The Lenten York course was entitled 'Praise Him~~Songs of Praise in the New Testament'.

Spring is here at last, and we see the sign of new life all around us as we celebrate Easter and all it means to us as Christians. It never ceases to amaze me, when contemplating Christ's Passion, just what God did for us on the Cross on that First Good Friday. Our God came to earth, to live our life and to die our death so that we, who believe in Him, may live eternally. A promise that we can read for ourselves (John 3:16).

For those for whom this Easter is their first without a loved one, or for those for whom the pain of loss is still being felt deeply within their hearts, my prayer is that you will find comfort in these words for remember, after Good Friday came Easter Day and one day we'll all be reunited with our loved ones and our Lord ! This is our Faith let us never be afraid to declare it. Alleluia, He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed ! Alleluia ! A Happy and Blessed Easter to you all from everyone here at Thorner Methodist Church.!

Ann Johnson

Thorner Senior Church Steward Tel:- 2893532

BOOK REVIEW

***Black Diamonds* by Catherine Bailey**

Catherine Bailey read history at Oxford University and is a successful television producer and director, making a range of critically acclaimed documentary films inspired by her interest in twentieth century history. Her research involved in writing this book is extensive as the 451 pages reveal.

Black Diamond tells the story of Wentworth House, the home of the very wealthy Fitzwilliam family and is situated about 9 miles North East of Sheffield and South of Barnsley. Wentworth House was in 1902 and still is the largest privately owned house in England. The sweeping East Front of the house is almost twice the size of Buckingham Palace. Few have heard of it and it is known as England's forgotten palace. Now closed to the public, mostly shuttered and owned by an unknown recluse, the grounds however are open to the public with well marked routes for those interested ramblers in our midst.

The book is a history of the Fitzwilliam family, opening with the death of the 6th Earl Fitzwilliam in 1902. It deals mainly with the 7th Earl Fitzwilliam 1872-1943 known as Billy Fitzbilly to the locals.

It covers the history of the South Yorkshire coal mines and the book is littered with authentic photographs of the house, family and the mining communities.

Mine owners amassed great wealth from their mines, most having no regard for the human rights of their workers and families as is revealed. Billy however was highly thought of by his community.

He built clean, comfortable houses for his mining families and took special care for the safety regulations of his mines. He also opened the Parkland of Wentworth House to his employees and put on special celebrations.

Black Diamonds refers of course to the coal, the source of wealth to the few. but not the many. Why did it have such a catastrophic end?

A quote from Tatler , "Gripping social history. Bailey peels back the grand facade of Wentworth to reveal a family riven with feuds, mental illness and forbidden love. She has done a magnificent job of letting daylight in upon the magic and mystery."

I can really recommend this book.

Barbara Holmes

Ps The Methodist movement is depicted in a good light too!

WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY “JESUS SAVES”? - a personal reflection on Easter.

The climax of the Christian year lies in the events of Good Friday and Easter Sunday, for Christian teaching is that the basis for our salvation, both as individuals and as part of creation, is to be found here. However, exactly how this works has been a matter of debate among theologians from St Paul to the present time. Preoccupied as we are with issues such as the treatment of women in the Church and same-sex marriage, it will come as a surprise to many to learn that this is another current contentious issue which has given rise to much bitterness. A whole symposium was held in London in 2005 under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance which centered on the idea of ‘penal substitution’, the view that Jesus’ crucifixion was a sacrifice which appeased or ‘propitiated’ God’s wrath towards sin by paying the due ‘penalty’, which is suffering, death and condemnation.

A helpful book I read recently is one called *Metaphorical Theology* by Sallie McFague in which she draws attention to how much of the way in which we think about things, not just in religion but also in science and everyday life, depends on the use of metaphor. A metaphor uses one idea to throw light on something else, for example, describing a successful person as ‘the cat who got the cream’. However, because a metaphor is not the thing it is trying to explain, it can only ever be a partial explanation. There will be some aspects of the metaphor that are true, but others that don’t apply. The result is that we often need more than one metaphor (a network of overlapping metaphors) to explain something fully and, if we allow one metaphor to dominate, then we distort our understanding. Metaphors can be unhelpful and destructive as well as helpful and illuminating.

Metaphors have to be seen in the context of the religious and social circumstances in which they arise. Thus, we have the idea of Christ’s death as a sacrifice for sin arising in the context of Jewish temple worship, an idea which is still prominent in some of our communion liturgies; the idea of Christ’s death as a ransom paid using the idea of the purchase of a slave’s freedom; the idea of Christ as a substitute taking punishment that is rightfully ours arising in the context of the Roman judicial system; the idea of the death of Christ ‘satisfying’ the need to appease a God whose honour has been infringed arising in the context of medieval social structures; and the idea of Christ as an exemplar who by his life and death sets an example for us to follow and the idea that the work

of Christ is a victory over evil and death both of which ideas arise, in part, as a reaction to some of the others above. Many of these ideas are uncongenial to modern minds but they address some important truths, for example, the fact that forgiveness and reconciliation is a costly business; the idea that a God of Justice and Truth has to assert authority over evil; the idea that God as a God of Love is one who will go to the uttermost for the sake of saving creation.

I offer the following as an account that I find helpful and it takes together the events of the crucifixion and the resurrection (something which is, sadly, left out of some of the ideas we have been discussing). My understanding begins with the statement in Genesis 1:26 that human beings are created in the image of God. There has, of course, been much debate over the centuries as to what the image is, but one conclusion seems clear and that is that human beings are an imperfect reflection of it. Christian teaching is that in the person of Jesus and the life that he lived we have the perfection of this human image of God. Jesus was someone so filled with the spirit of God (see, for example, Mark 1:10) that we see in his face the knowledge of the glory of God (2 Cor.4:6) , the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15), the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's being (Heb. 1:3). We see, in other words, what God means in a human life. How does this help us?

One of the difficulties we have with our Scriptures is that they were written in an ancient language, which is capable of more than one translation into modern English. When we read, for example, in Gal. 2:16 or 2:20 that we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, the ancient Greek can be rendered also that we are saved by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. This, I find, is a useful way of looking at it. Thus, it is in the faithfulness of Christ, in the way he lived out and showed us the love and justice of God that our salvation rests. His willingness to live a life of love and justice antagonized the vested interests of the time and led to his execution on the Cross. It was not a sacrifice demanded by God, or a payment to the devil, but a choice that Jesus made in his faithfulness, a demonstration that true love will not stop short of anything. But this isn't the end of the story.

There is much that is mysterious about the resurrection events as they are described in the gospels, but one thing stands out and that is that a group of frightened, disillusioned men and women were transformed by experiences of the continuing presence of Jesus Christ after the crucifixion. They understood from this that the Jesus they had known had been raised from death by God; the

life of the earthly Jesus they had known had been taken back to become part of the life of God (Rom 1: 4); it was a sign that the love of God will always have the last word. The promise we are given is that just as Christ was raised so too shall we share in this new life with God. Whatever the nature of that life may be our identities will be preserved. Furthermore, we are promised the resources to imitate the life of Christ, however imperfectly, here and now through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The message of Easter has, however, an importance in our present world. It is important to recognize that this is not simply something that is for the future only, that we can sit back and simply wait for it to happen. Our hope for a better world as Christians should not make us resigned to the present world as something we cannot alter. It is not a matter of 'Pie in the Sky when we die'. On the contrary, it is because we believe in the possibilities for the future that we understand the present as something that is not yet what it can be and will be. Our faith enables us to see the world as something that can be moved in the direction of the promised future. It is this vision that makes our hope an active hope. It makes us unwilling to accept the present conditions in the world and is the source of new impulses for change. Our Christian hope and the promise it gives us for a better world means that we are impelled to try and bring this about. The Church and individual Christians have to be involved in showing people the love of God and the message of Jesus and the promise that this brings.

Stan Pearson

CHRISTMAS CONTINUES

Do you remember Neil (Richardson) preaching a sermon with this title some years ago? It seems an appropriate heading for this thank you note.

In the February Link I bemoaned the lack of carols in our services and Joyce Wood wrote in March "Why don't we find him a CD of carols so that then he can sing and listen to them all year". Well she had no sooner thought of it than she acted and she has given me a brand new recording of songs and carols. (I'm listening to it as I write this and it does put me in a Christmas mood – the best time of the year).

Thank you Joyce it was very kind of you.

Ed Dodman

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT FUTURE CHURCH PROJECTS.

In the past we have tried hard to find projects that are individual, often with a personal link to Lidgett. However, this is not always easy and seems to have become more difficult of late. Perhaps we need to remember, when we come to consider the choice of next year's project, the many established national charities that do excellent work and need support. Just to give some examples:

The Methodist charity, Action for Children

Cancer Research UK (some of us have direct experience of the need for good cancer care)

The British Lung Foundation which supports research into lung disease

The British Heart Foundation

Diabetes UK

The Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund

The Alzheimer's Society

The work of our local hospices

There are many others we could consider. I have personal links with one or two of these, but there are lots of other possibilities and members will have their own suggestions. Come to the Annual Church Meeting prepared!

Editor

CHRISTIAN AID

This Christian Aid Week, you can help transform the lives of people less fortunate than we are. From 10-16 May, churches the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland will come together to pray, campaign and raise money to improve the lives of people struggling to provide for their families. Every year, 100,000 volunteers demonstrate God's love for the poor by taking part in house-to-house collections for Christian Aid. This fantastic witness is a chance to take the mission of the church into your community.

Find out how you can play your part at caweek.org

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/Christian-Aid-Week-2015-church-magazine-article.pdf>

FAITH IN DARK PLACES. Report of a conference.

This conference was organised by members of the churches in Roundhay and was held at St Edmund's Church. There follows an account written by a member of Lidgett Park who attended. Ed.

On Saturday February 21st an ecumenical conference was held at St Edmund's Church to hear presentations and attend discussion groups on the theme of ***Faith in Dark Places: myths and lies about poverty.*** About 140 people attended from many and varied church backgrounds in Leeds.

The day started with a warm welcome and coffee then a presentation by Ann Morisy, who lectures and writes on mission and social action.

The main speaker was Paul Morrison who is a policy adviser to the Methodist Church and the main author of a recent report on poverty. Unfortunately, he was too ill to attend but had sent his prepared text. His title was *'Truth and lies about poverty: a pocket guide'* and the presentation went through 6 statements :

They are lazy and don't want to work

They are addicted to drink and drugs

They are not really poor, they just mismanage their money

They 'are on the fiddle'

They have an easy life

They cause the deficit

For each statement he produced statistics from respected organisations refuting the bold statement and showing how they are produced with more of an eye to newspaper headlines and political spin than to actual fact.

Before breaking into various workshops with individual experts on the subjects, we heard from 3 people affected by the benefits system and its insensitivities. A common theme was that the system was inefficient and insensitive and penalised the people who were most likely to have the most difficulty completing the forms and understanding deadlines.

Workshops were held on the subjects of asylum seekers, inequality and child well-being, debt, foodbanks, homelessness in Leeds and the benefit system.

After lunch we had an impassioned talk by David Rhodes (of the One City Project)

using an onion-shaped 'pyramid' to illustrate the status and power of people in the time of Jesus, from the Roman Emperor, a small group of wealthy businessmen and government officials, a large bulge of poor workers and a large bottom layer of 'expendables' (where many women tended to be placed). He then took us through the Lord's Prayer stressing its revolutionary message especially to the rich.

This was a well-organised and informative day, especially relevant with the General Election pending; it was encouraging to see how many different churches in North Leeds were represented.

Elizabeth Pearson

Specially for this conference, David Rhodes wrote a number of prayers, one for each day of the week. He has given me permission to use them here. Ed.

Monday—Asylum Seekers

Lord, it's so easy to think of asylum seekers (when we think of them at all) as Other. As foreign. Different in colour and perhaps religion. We think of them as distant. We are tempted to think of them as coming to 'our' country. Yes, there's distance and a feeling of separation in the idea of asylum. But help us, Lord, to remember that, at the hour of our own death, we ourselves will be asylum seekers. Hoping and praying for sanctuary and a loving welcome with you in heaven. Let our own mortality help us to be one with those who seek asylum in Britain today. And let us offer them gladly the hospitality of love that is your gift to us all. Amen.

Tuesday—Debt

Why did we do it, Lord? Rewrite your prayer. You said cancel our debts, but we preferred forgive us our trespasses. Which sounds a lot more dignified. Moderate. Respectable. But you, it seems, said debts— and you said it to people experiencing crushing debt. Debt that brought dishonour, destitution, death. We prefer the calm of organised religion, but your focus was on organised greed and oppression. Debt is still with us today: in spades. Help us, Lord, to remember that debt and the struggle for justice are at the heart of our spirituality. And at the heart of Your Prayer. Amen.

Wednesday—Food Banks

OK, Lord, we've got it now. Money banks are bad: food banks are good. And, it has to be said, food banks certainly help people: lots of hungry people. They're a symbol of caring and compassion. So, why didn't you set up food banks, Lord? Or walk-in clinics, come to that? There were vast numbers of hungry and sick people in first century Palestine. It's only very gradually we realise your miracles were a sign not a solution. Your solution was an end to injustice and oppression. But that threatened the system: the system operated by the rich and powerful. Looking back on all that, it's clear that the Cross was inevitable. But no-one is likely to get crucified for running a food bank. Which should make us think. Maybe we need to go beyond the Good Samaritan, as you did. Amen.

Thursday—Homelessness

Lord, there's a children's game skimming flat pebbles across a lake: watching them bounce along its surface. Maybe you played the game as a child on the Sea of Galilee. The trouble is, Lord, we play that game with the Gospel. We skim over it. You said 'the son of man has nowhere to lay his head.' We read those familiar words, but we don't want to let them sink in. We don't really take in the fact that you were often homeless: no shelter, no bed, no toilet paper. You were alongside the homeless. And they, in turn, gave you loyalty and love. Today you meet us among the homeless. And in that encounter, we discover the depth of your love—for them and for us. Amen.

Friday—Welfare and Work

Lord, why do so many people snigger at the mention of health and safety? Isn't that exactly what we wish for our loved ones? We care about their well-being. Their welfare. That's what love means, isn't it? So how is it 'welfare' has become such a dirty word in the tabloids and in the mouths of so many politicians? An insult. A judgement. An expression of sneering contempt. But you were born into the world because of the Father's concern for our welfare. Our well-being. Our shalom. Lord, let us find useful, meaningful work as we can, but let us always seek the welfare, the health and safety, of our neighbour. Even of our politicians. Amen.

Saturday—Child Poverty

Lord, it's amazing that many centuries ago we started to cut and paste the Gospel. The bits we were uncomfortable with got deleted: at least in our minds. Like when you said you came to bring good news to the poor. But we deleted 'to the poor' and inserted the words: to us. Then there was the bit when you said the last shall be first. But a church controlled by men never asked who 'the last' actually were. They were the women and children: the ones without power. So when we pray for an end to child poverty, help us to remember, Lord, that in those words we come very close to your love—and to your anger at injustice. Amen.

LEEDS ARTISTS COMBINE TO REFLECT EASTER JOURNEY

Artists from Leeds' thriving art scene are joining with St Edmunds Church, Roundhay in April 2015 for a unique exhibition of reflections on the Easter journey.

The Stations of the Cross will feature work from fourteen Leeds-based artists, each focusing on a different stage of Jesus' path to the cross. The show will include sculpture, painting, video, installation and drawing, and hopes to open up some fresh insights on a familiar narrative.

The featured artists come from a range of Christian traditions, as well as those from other faiths or with no religious faith. Sculptor Jon Vogler, one of the featured artists, is a long time member of the St Edmund's congregation. He explains the significance of the Stations of the Cross:

'Art seeks to visualise the unimaginable. Since the Middle Ages, the Stations of the Cross have helped believers imagine how one man confronted agony, despair and the finality of death to redeem broken humanity. I am thrilled and fearful to follow great artists who have tackled this awesome subject.'

The Exhibition will run from **26th April to 20th May 2015** at St Edmunds Church, Lidgett Park Road, Roundhay LS8 1JN

It is curated by Si Smith, a Leeds-based artist and illustrator. He has previously exhibited work in St. Edmund's church and curated shows and events at the Left Bank venue in Burley and the Greenbelt festival.

Issued by Stations of the Cross. For more information, contact Si Smith
si@simonsmithillustrator.co.uk. 07833 308971

<http://stedmundsstations.blogspot.co.uk>

Question Time!
Hustings for Leeds North East Constituency
Prospective Parliamentary Candidates

**Come to meet, hear and
question your candidates on
key election issues**

Aqila Choudhry	Liberal Democrat
Celia Foote	Alliance of Green Socialist
Fabian Hamilton MP	Labour
Warren Hendon	UKIP
Simon Wilson	Conservative
Representative (Martin Hemingway)	Green Party

Venue: St Andrew's, Shaftesbury Avenue, LS8 1DS
Date: Thursday 23rd April 2015

Time: 7pm	Submit Questions
7:00-7:30pm	Meet the Candidates
7:30-9:15-pm	The Hustings

Info: info@standrews.cc
Arranged by Churches Together in Roundhay
Immaculate Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church;
Lidgett Park Methodist Church, St Andrew's Roundhay United Reformed Church
St Edmund's Parish Church and The Society of Friends

NUMBERS. *The election is all about numbers. However, I think on the issue of numbers in the Bible, the following has to be our last contribution Ed.*

Numbers are interesting in the Bible and yes Colin you are so right: the Bible is never dull!

What does it say?

Matthew 10v. 29-31:-"Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered, so don,t be afraid you are worth more than many sparrows.

V29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your father's care."

Stan's research is good, and yes although he says "nobody knows the answer"

God does! **Joyce Wood.**

SHRINES AND TEMPLES

When we sat in the Community Hall shivering through a recent service it struck me how peculiar it is that people find so many different ways to worship. We had just come back from a cruise to China and Japan. On this we had found our way into Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, Taoist temples, an Anglican cathedral and even a Methodist chapel.

We have been instructed into how to pray at a Buddhist temple and in a Shinto shrine so should be covered for most eventualities. Probably the most abiding impression is how colourful (and incense full) the temples and shrines are. In Japan Buddhism and Shintoism seem to rub along side by side and people seem to go between them depending on what their current needs are. You can buy lucky charms for most things; the most popular seem to be for success in exams, passing your driving test or a happy love life.

As most of the people we met were young these are probably more use to them than they would have been to us. Certainly the best description of the atmosphere at the big temple we visited in Kyoto (the cultural capital of Japan) is that it was like Blackpool golden mile on a bank holiday (and just as crowded).

However rather than a discussion on comparative religion though I thought you might like to see a few photos.

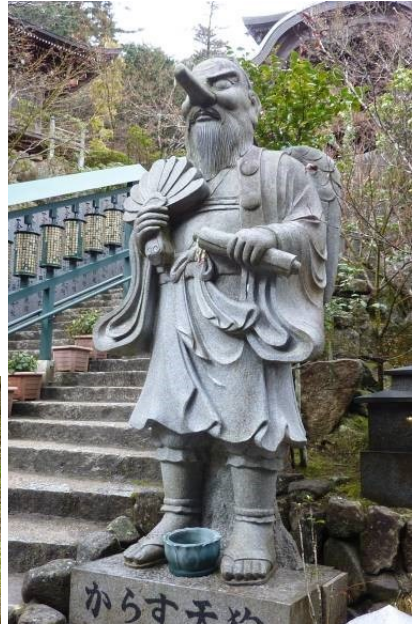


In lots of the temples you couldn't stay in long because the incense was so intense. These are long-burning coils hung from the ceiling. You could also buy individual sticks to use when you were praying.



These beautiful objects are casks of sake, the Japanese national drink. They are stored in shrines for the use of the Shinto priests. I can't see Conference authorising the provision of casks of whisky for our ministers.

Some of the deities were distinctly odd. This Shinto god has a nose bigger than Postman Pat's. He's a deity of the mountains.



And we don't know why but lots of the little Buddhas had crocheted "football supporter" hats.

Ed Dodman

Thank you Ed. It sounds like a fascinating holiday. I would welcome more accounts of interesting trips from people, especially if there is a religious angle as there is here. Editor.

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QUIZ ANSWERS

Name that fish.

Name that fish. Find words that answer each of these clues, then delete one letter to produce the name of a fish. The number of letters for the fish are in brackets.

1. Money section of orchestra (4) (Brass bass); **2.** One presiding at a meeting can be sat on (4) (Chair char); **3.** Chilly, unfriendly (3) (Cold cod); **4.** Dull, dismal (3) (Drab dab); **5.** 'Shake a leg', 'cut a rug' (4) (Dance dace); **6.** Scoundrel underfoot (3) (Heel eel); **7.** Agitate (4) (Shake hake); **8.** Oriental citrus fruit (7) (Shaddock haddock);

9. Pointed projection (4) (Spike pike); **10.** Broken piece of pottery standing high in London (4) (Shard shad)