

The Messenger

Christ Church Barnstaple

Methodist & United Reformed Church

"I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ."

Philemon 6

May 2021



Easter Morning Sunrise—Bloreng Mountain in South Wales *(Taken by Jennifer Allen's son)*



Celebrating Easter & Meeting Family

Back Cover



Young Peoples Activities

Page 8



Vegetable Tagine Recipe

Page 17



Congratulations & Celebrations

Page 13

Calendar

April 2021

All activities are cancelled or postponed until further notice.

As the church magazine is printed once a month you may find more up to date information on the church website. I strongly recommend that, if you are able to, you have a look there for updates.

Our family matters

Christ Church Family News

While we are not meeting together please look out for each other and let our Church Friends coordinator know of any concerns.



The following information has been sent to us. Although there is a date suggested we have, in the past, often transferred to a different Sunday because of other commitments.

MHA Sunday is on 13th June. We have been asked to share details about free information webinars on Monday 19th April from 7-8pm or Friday 23rd April from 2-3pm ; here is the link to sign up: https://www.mha.org.uk/news/latest-news/news_archive/mha-sunday-2021-free-webinars/

Please pass this on to any other people or churches as you see fit. I don't have any more information as yet but, hopefully, the webinars will be informative.

MHA Sunday

The theme for MHA Sunday 2021 is '**relieving isolation and bringing hope**', inspired by the book of Mark 5:1-20, which is also the theme of Bible Month.

MHA Sunday information webinars will be taking place this month.

Join Crispian, Lucy (Head of fundraising) and Digital communities to hear more about the theme for this year and learn more about MHA Sunday. You can sign up at www.mha.org.uk/sunday.

Word list for the word-search on page 9.
Pentecost, Holy Spirit, Disciple, Love, Church, Prayer, Heaven, Wind, God, Rejoice, Fire,
Speak, Language, Flame, Sound, Hear.

Message

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting."
Acts 2: 1-2

Dear friends,

I wonder if, after over a year of spending so much time shut up at home, these words read at Pentecost strike a chord for you. They certainly do for me.

Here were the disciples, on the resurrection side of Easter but still shut up in a house together having just added Matthias to replace Judas as the twelfth member of their 'bubble'... but their bubble was about to be burst and they were about to be set free in the most dramatic way possible.

First there was a noise, like a violent wind filling the house then (if we keep on reading) tongues of what looked like fire over each of their heads, and they were filled by the Holy Spirit and started speaking in different languages. And they were set free, went out into Jerusalem and spoke to people from all over the known world, each in their own language.

How we have prayed to be set free, to be free to go out beyond the bubble of our own homes, to be together whenever and wherever we like with others, with family, friends, neighbours, and even strangers. To be free to travel where we like when we like, to stay away from home for more than just a few hours.

As I write this we are less than a third of the way through April, we've just celebrated Easter (as best we can) and are beginning the wait for Pentecost and the hope of new life, a new start empowered and inspired by the presence of the Holy Spirit with us and in us.

Soon, very soon I pray, we truly will be set free to join together in worshipping the God of love who has never left us but waited patiently with us. Waiting until the time comes when once again the doors can be burst wide open as we can both enter the church building and go out, out into God's world to love all God's children in languages and ways that speak to them most eloquently of God's love for them.

Almighty Father, thank you for your love for us;
Loving Lord, thank you for showing us how to love;
Holy Spirit, inspire us to love with the perfect love of Christ.

Every blessing,



Prayers for May

2nd May

Creator God, in you we are all we need to be;
through you we grow into all that we long to be;
with you we bear fruits that can be used and shared and multiplied;
because of you our lives are rich and blessed and fruitful:
so we praise you today and every day. Amen.

9th May

God of relationships, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, together and as one, you draw us into friendship with you that we may draw others.
You command us to love as you have loved, that we might inspire others. You fill our hearts with the passion of your heart, that we might serve others. You are the truest of friends, the most faithful friend, the most enduring – and we praise you for all you are and more. Amen.

16th May

Gracious God, we thank you for the enduring prayer of Jesus for his disciples which reaches and reassures us today as we walk in their footsteps, reminding us that we are not alone but protected, empowered, forgiven, and surrounded by your grace every step of the way. Amen.

23rd May

We praise you, God of all time, for speaking to us through the tongues of Pentecost, for stirring our longings with the excitement of Pentecost, for uniting our communities with the inclusiveness of Pentecost.
Fill our lives, we pray, with the enormity of Pentecost, until they overflow with compassion and commitment to care for and celebrate all creation to the glory of your name. Amen.

30th May

Living God, you choose to save, not to judge,
to forgive, not to condemn, to turn towards, not away,
to show us your nature and not to hide.
You allow us to know you, to love you and to serve you –
and for all these things, and more, we are truly thankful. Amen.

CHRISTIAN AID CORNER

In Kenya, extreme weather is making it harder and harder to survive. For communities fighting the climate crisis, every last drop of water matters and every last one of us can help them thrive. The coronavirus pandemic has only increased the urgent need for families to access a reliable source of water.



The devastating climate crisis robs people of the water and food they need to live.

Rose walks for six hours to fetch water for her grandchildren. She tries hard to give them the

kind of life she remembers from when she was a girl: when the rivers flowed with water and the crops bore fruit.

Rose and her grandchildren shouldn't have to go hungry. A simple earth dam, built with the help of Christian Aid's partners and your donations, could

completely change her life. This Christian Aid Week, you can be one of the hundreds of thousands of our supporters who give, act and pray to stop this climate crisis driving people like Rose to hunger.

From envelope collections to walking 300,000 steps in May, Christian Aid Week brings people together as one community against global poverty and injustice.

This Christian Aid Week (10-16 May), please:

Give generously to help ensure people like Rose fight this climate crisis.

Act as we call on the UK Prime Minister to lead the world with ambitious climate action that will also address inequality.

Pray for a radical change of heart for politicians, and that as a global community we will care for our common home and for people living in poverty.

Together we **stop this climate crisis.**

Join us at **caweek.org**



With every gift, we help people like Rose and stop this climate crisis.

Donations can be made to the JustGiving page we have set up for Christ Church. The web address is

<https://www.justgiving.com/ChristChurchBarnstaple>

Cash donations are allowed but not encouraged due to the pandemic, but if this is how you wish to donate please contact either Carolyn or myself and we will do what we can to get an envelope to you. If you wish to put a cheque in your envelope, please make sure it is made payable to **Christian Aid**. You can also call Christian Aid direct on **020 7523 2492** to donate by telephone. Phone donations cannot be counted towards the total from Christ Church though.

Janet & Carolyn

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!!

We will be running a Christian Aid quiz on Saturday 15th May at 6.30pm as we can't hold our usual coffee morning. Eff Poole has kindly agreed to host the event on Zoom. There will be 40 questions which I will read out in 4 sections of 10 and you can write your answers on a piece of paper and tot up your scores as we go along. Please make sure you let us know your email address or mobile number if you would like to join us and have some fun and fellowship whilst raising funds! Donations in lieu of tickets can be made to

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Barnstaplequiz>

With many thanks,

Janet Marshall (Mob.) & Carolyn Provan (Mob.)

What's happening?

In response to that question and the sense of isolation that many people are feeling at the moment, there follows brief reports of the last two elders' meetings - held on Zoom of course!

It is still not possible to sing in church or to chat with friends before or after the service.

Places of worship play an important role in providing spiritual leadership for many individuals, and in bringing communities and generations together. However, their communal nature also makes them places that are particularly vulnerable to the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Notes from Elders' Meeting on 24th March 2021 by Zoom

- Don opened the meeting with Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and talked of the difficult journey Jesus faced. Later in the meeting, Don referred back to this, saying that we are on a difficult journey at present.
- Prayers were said for people of our fellowship who are ill, but GDPR prevents the mentioning of names
- An updated Safeguarding Report was provided by Maureen Thomas
- Community Links Project:
Stage 1 – Building Work: After many grant applications and many phone calls, progress is now being made in obtaining the required permissions for the work to go ahead. We are still waiting for 3 more boxes to be ticked! Please keep praying that we will soon be able to begin the work.
Stage 2 – Community Work: Further planning for this work will be needed.
- Finance: The latest 6 months summary shows a shortfall of about £300 a week. It is hoped we will be able to narrow the gap when we are allowed to begin lettings.
- Property: Routine maintenance is still ongoing.
- Young Families Worker: Flowers and chocolates were delivered to Jo on behalf of the church on her final day as YFW. Jo has expressed her thanks for these.
- Children and Young Families Work:
The Sunday Club and Café Church have met by Zoom in February and March. It has been very valuable for the parents and children to get together. The children have really enjoyed the sessions and given positive feedback. Packs have been sent or delivered to the children who have enjoyed doing the enclosed activities. Photos of some of the artwork and the mini daffodils grown from their bulbs were seen in previous Messengers.
Parents and Toddlers are also receiving Easter Packs. It is planned to do something outside when allowed.
- Eco Church: Reference was made to the Earth Hour as mentioned in the March Messenger and we were encouraged to take part.
- Circuit Churches: Some are planning to open at Easter but Christ Church is more complicated because of the numbers involved. We are guided to be advised by safety rather than a date. The Risk Assessment has been updated once more for further consideration.

- Christian Aid: Janet Marshall has agreed to take on the post of CA treasurer following Ronnie Wilson's move from the area. Janet will work with Carolyn who is the organiser. House to house collections are not possible but we still wish to support CA. A quiz on Zoom is planned for 15th May. It was agreed that a "Justgiving" page be set up for Christian Aid donations. Eff agreed to collect cash, by arrangement, if people preferred this method.
- Date of next meeting fixed for Wednesday, 14th April, by Zoom.
- The meeting ended with all blessing each other with the Grace.

Eff Poole

Notes from Elders' Meeting on 14th April 2021 by Zoom

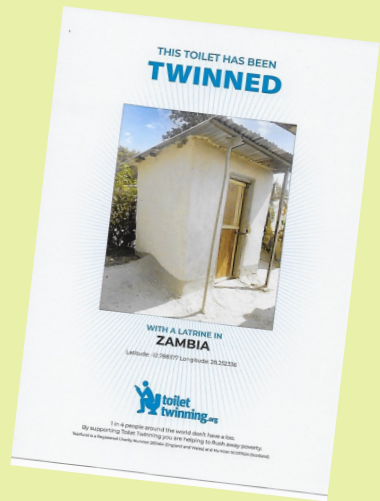
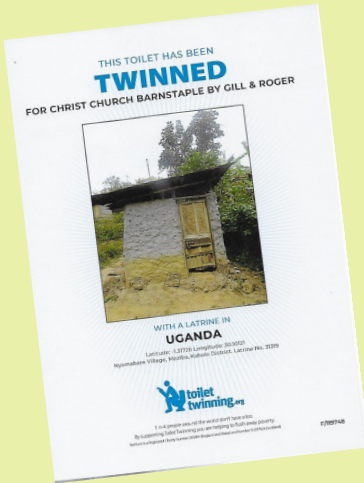
- Don opened the meeting with a reading from Exodus – keeping the Sabbath (from Daily Devotions). The Sabbath is made for us, not us for the Sabbath.
- Prayers were said for members of our fellowship who are ill.
- Safeguarding: A first draft risk assessment for children using the Alan Finch Room and additional safeguarding information was received from Maureen Thomas – Reflect and Respond and Supporting Survivors of Abuse. Maureen also reported that the defibrillator has undergone its 5 year maintenance. Our annual safeguarding policy review will follow the circuit review.
- The possibility of continuing Zoom services after the church has re-opened, was discussed and will be talked about further at a circuit meeting.
- Community Links Project:
 Stage 1 – Building work: All necessary permissions are now in place. We are waiting for a decision on one last grant application (Meeting to be held on April 28th so we should hear soon after that.) Contingency plans for a loan are in place, should we not receive the grant, so work is expected to start in June.
 Stage 2 – Community work: A date will be set for a planning meeting following the Young Families Work meeting on 29th April.
- Finance: The church has received £1500 from the estate of the late George Radley, for which we are very grateful. Otherwise no major change in church finances since last month.
- Property: Thank you to John for replacing the missing letters on the outside wall – probably done ages ago but only just noticed as we've not been there to see it!
- Children and Young Families Work: Café Church met again on Zoom for 'Breakfast on the Beach' and thanks to all who delivered the Easter packs with crafts and puzzles. More activities are planned.
- Christian Aid: See pages 4 & 5 for lots of news.
- Eco Church: Liz is looking at the possibility of a future 'beach clean' event for the whole church, when restrictions allow – not necessarily a beach, could be anywhere. See page 14 for other Eco Church information.
- Wider Church: meets on 20th April

BOGOF!

It's the latest twinned toilets!

Match funding for April enabled a 'buy one, get one free' (BOGOF) so the money sent by Gill twinned a toilet in Uganda and also provided a match funded one in Zambia.

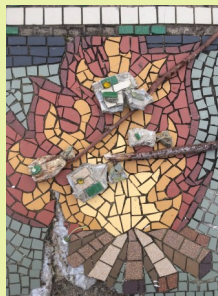
So we now have eleven!



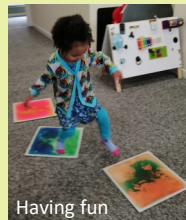
Young Peoples Activities



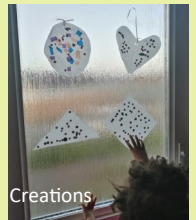
Learning to sew like Mum



Devlin's 'Stonehenge' made from sweets & a design for the Easter Story activities with the theme of 'Breakfast on the Beach.'



Having fun



Creations



Serena made this sheep from items in the Easter package and likes to take it to bed at night.

- Church re-opening for worship: We are ruled by legislation and Methodist & URC guidelines, all of which direct us towards opening no earlier than June 21st. If the government are able to follow the 4-step dates that were set out earlier this year then we hope to open up our building for Sunday worship after June 21st. A provisional date has been set for a first service on Sunday 27th June. Re-opening the church will require a decision from a church meeting; a provisional date for this is Wednesday 9th June. As the maximum number allowed to attend on that date will be 30, based on available space, details of alternative ways to vote will be available nearer the time. If everything goes to plan the restriction on numbers will be lifted on 21st June so no need to book in advance for Sunday 27th.

Kathy Jeacock

Summary of a few important dates – *These are provisional dates, dependent on things that we have no control over (covid-19, weather, nesting pigeons etc)*

Start of Community Links Project building work:-

Beginning of June – Church car park closed for at least three months.

Pedestrian access to building left clear.

End of May/Beginning of June – removal of existing scaffolding, (hopefully from the shop next door as well!) pigeon's nest permitting.

June 7th – erection of new scaffolding, higher and complete with hoarding, installation of equipment etc in the car park.

June 21st – stonemasons start work.

The time it takes will depend on what is found once there is access to higher up the building, but the expectation is a minimum of three months.

Re-opening the building for Sunday worship.

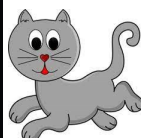
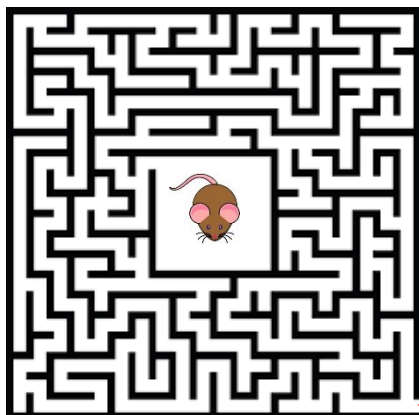
Church meeting – provisional date Wednesday 9th June

First Service – provisional date Sunday 27th June

More details next month.

Word-search : can you find 16 words with a connection to Pentecost?

See page 2 for list of words.



H	H	P	R	A	Y	E	R	M	C
O	E	E	C	H	U	R	C	H	O
L	A	N	G	U	A	G	E	T	R
Y	R	T	T	E	G	N	L	P	E
S	H	E	A	V	E	N	P	R	J
P	C	C	I	O	E	L	I	S	O
I	G	O	D	L	M	F	C	O	I
R	S	S	P	E	A	K	S	U	C
I	N	T	D	F	L	I	I	N	E
T	W	I	N	D	F	M	D	D	T

Gift Aid News from Janet

This is just to let you know that Judith Smith has decided it is time to step down as Gift Aid Secretary and I have offered to take over the role. We thank Judith for her sterling work over many years and I just hope I can fulfil the role half as well as she has done.

Please do get in touch with me if you need collection envelopes for this year as I have a supply ready and waiting. If you are not sure who I am please ask one of the elders to point me out!!

If you have not considered the Gift Aid scheme before and you are a UK taxpayer then please give it some thought or have a word with me. Under the scheme you authorise the church to claim back from the government the tax you have paid on your donations or weekly/monthly giving to Christ Church. This means that if you give £100, the church will receive an additional £25 from HMRC bringing the value of your gift to £125 at no additional cost to you. Donations can be made in many ways but are most commonly through weekly cash donations in the collection or by Standing Order into our bank account.

There is a simple form to complete, which I can give you, which authorises Christ Church to regard your donations/offering as Gift Aid donations and you can alter or cancel this at any time should circumstances change. You can also give me your consent verbally and I will complete the form for you and give you a copy.

Our annual refund from the government under the Gift Aid scheme is in the region of £8500 per year which forms an important part of Christ Church's income particularly at the moment where there are no weekly cash collections nor any income from lettings.

I have included my contact details below for you to get in touch.

With many thanks,

Janet Marshall

email - jcbmar18@btinternet.com



I would like to thank Judith, on behalf of all of us, for her work over eight years reclaiming tax from HMRC under the gift aid scheme. The church has benefitted by between £50000 and £60000 in this time.

Thank you, Kathy

News and update from Kira Farm and Amigos "Overhearing what they said, Jesus told them, "Don't be afraid; just believe." Mark 5:36

It has been a particular joy this month to receive the letter from Scovia. She is so positive, practical and forward thinking about her future. Above all, her letter is delightfully personal as well as moving. It so clearly makes us aware of what Kira Farm is achieving – and this is just one project in the wider scope of Amigos' life-changing work. It also makes us further aware of the privilege it is to be a part of a trainee's life and the value of sponsorship...

Phil Pugsley once highlighted this to me:

In the early days when we only had a handful of sponsors, Josh (the manager of Kira farm) noticed how the trainees with sponsors did much better than the ones who didn't. It was if they had something to aim for, someone to make them feel proud of what they were achieving. We never thought of the psychological effects of how a trainee saw sponsorship - love, recognition, and acceptance. Most Kira trainees have only experienced rejection, so to have someone they have never seen helping them financially and with encouragement is a great lesson to them of how they can 'pay it forward'.

And now for Scovia's letter...

The First Rains have come

*Dear Anthea and Tony and friends at Christ Church,
I am pleased to hear from you and that you were pleased to hear of the skirt and dresses that I made. Thank you so much for replying. Fortunately, now we have started making shorts and I have finished one and two more on the way. I am working very hard to change my life but also not to disappoint the love of God you have showed to me. My life wouldn't be the same this year. You have made a big difference.
About hairdressing, I had to change class for this year. I left hairdressing for building. I believe that the decision is right and I made it with confidence and, I have a dream of becoming an engineer in the future. I believe ladies also deserve a chance to work in sectors which are taken over by men because we can manage to do it.
On the side of farming, this month has been all about putting the theories into practice. When the rains came at the beginning of March, it was a sign to prove everything I have learned in the garden. I planted and I have had to keep my eyes on the crops. It is exciting to see how well they have come out of the ground. The rains are good as well.
I have learnt that in order to have good yields, taking care of the soil plays a big role, so we put organic manure into the soil and we do a lot of mulching, which is called God's blanket, this mulch with time will turn into manure but will help stop soil erosion. It is amazing to see the results. I have sent you a photo of me in the beans garden.
Everything is going well here. How was your Easter holiday and church on Zoom?
I am praying for you and every one of your family and friends. I may not know them all but I believe God sees each one of them.
Thank you so much, may God bless you and keep you.
Amen Scovia*

It is a real privilege to feel we are helping Scovia achieve her dreams. I have no doubt that she will do so as she is a very determined person - committed, competent and hard working - and very much growing in confidence. We look forward to hearing more as the year progresses.

Further news from Kira Farm with the headline...

Girls Deserve an Education. Period.

Some time ago we heard about a new programme that had been started with the trainees at Kira farm - the Menstrual Hygiene Management programme. It did of course have to cease during the lockdown but thankfully it has been restarted...

The Kira trainees are learning how to make washable sanitary pads which will be distributed to up to 5,000 girls in local villages. This was in response to the fact that 48% of girls in Uganda are missing valuable days at school due to menstruation, as there is no access to sanitary products. However, this new programme, which will give access to sanitary products, will enable the girls to stay in education each month. It aims 'to educate communities, promote gender equality, combat period poverty and shame, increase school attendance and reduce the risk of early marriage and pregnancy which often occurs as a result of school dropout'. In addition, it will create a sustainable source of income after the trainees leave as they will continue making and distributing the sanitary products.

NB Not only will affordable sanitary wear be provided to girls who need it most, community members will also be taught how to make a low-cost liquid soap to help with the washing, as well as personal hygiene.

Please pray for wisdom and guidance for those leading this project on the ground and for a receptive attitude from the communities who will be receiving them.

Please also remember Scovia in your prayers as she learns new skills so that she may finally attain her dream. And remember too all the other trainees and those who work on and for Kira Farm.

Anthea

Thank you to everyone who sent me cards on my 90th birthday, and for the visits I had. It made me feel as if I 'belong'. Thank you again, it was so kind of you, my 90th was not a washout after all.

Pat Penney.

PS I ran out of vases!

Muriel and Reg would like to **thank everyone** most sincerely for all the cards and good wishes on their 70th wedding anniversary.

Special thanks to Elaine and Brian for all their care over more than two months and for the surprise cream tea on Sunday afternoon. Not being able to see our family, it was lovely to have our friends around us.

Amigos News



Scovia's bean plants—looking healthy



Kira Farm's Menstrual Hygiene Workshop

Celebrations



Congratulations to Reg & Muriel who celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary
and to Pat Penny who celebrated her 90th birthday

Fossil Fuel Divestment and the Climate Emergency

There has been growing awareness and support within both the Methodist and United Reformed Churches - among many others - for divestment of their investments and funds from fossil fuels. Divestment is the movement of funds out of one investment into another; in this context it refers especially to pulling out of investment in fossil fuels and reinvesting elsewhere, preferably in renewable energy. The Methodist Council passed a resolution on divestment in October 2020, and the URC has unanimously approved a proposal to divest from fossil fuel companies. In May 2020, 42 faith organisations from around the world (including 21 in the UK) announced their commitment to divest from fossil fuels.

Some of us recently joined a Methodist webinar on the subject which was both fascinating and challenging. It was sponsored by Operation Noah, Christian Aid and the Methodist Zero Carbon Group; it looked at why divestment is such an important response to the climate crisis and what we, as individuals, as churches, and as denominations can and should be doing about it. The keynote speaker was Bill McKibben, author, environmentalist, Methodist and co-founder of 350.org - an international movement of ordinary people working to end the age of fossil fuels and accelerate the transition to a clean, just energy economy.

He said, *"30 years ago, God was speaking to us in a still, small voice about environmental devastation, now he's speaking much more loudly"* – referring to the increasing damage around the world caused by the effects of climate change.

"The law of climate change seems to be – the less you did to cause it, the sooner and harder you will be hit by it". He described how companies which produce fossil fuels have dropped in value significantly in recent years as renewable energy becomes cheaper to produce. The effect on fossil fuel investments is that their value is dropping, making them a poorer and riskier investment – but waiting for the effect of this economic change alone is too slow to save the planet. *"We can't be the people who are trying to profit off the wreckage of the planet; we've got to be the people who are saying 'No'. God gives all of us the sun and wind; we should be looking to the heavens for our energy, not digging in the opposite direction. This is the last crucial decade we've got. We have the privilege to choose to do the most important thing in the world, right now."*

Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and Chair of Christian Aid said:

"Divestment will send a positive and helpful message to the people of this country and to those in vulnerable communities across the globe who will be most immediately affected by climate-related disasters".

So what can we do?

As individuals we can ask our pension provider if funds are invested in fossil fuels and lobby for change if they are.

As individuals and as a Church we can: review our own investments; invest in and use green/renewable energy; lobby the local council, our MP and our PM.

We have a long history of being campaigners for social justice, we have a great opportunity to make a real difference by our actions – this really is a crisis.

You can watch the webinar at <https://youtu.be/pjeYtiz3tKQ>

You can find out about council funding of fossil fuels at divest.org.uk

For more information about how churches can divest, go to brightnow.org.uk - the Operation Noah divestment campaign

Liz Seymour

Book Review – ‘How NOT to start a Charity’ by Phil Pugsley

This amazing book is Phil Pugsley’s “scrupulously honest” account of how he came to set up the Amigos Worldwide charity, and subsequently Kira Farm. In it, he describes how his first trip to Africa inspired him to try to make a difference. The journey – both literally and spiritually – is awe-inspiring.

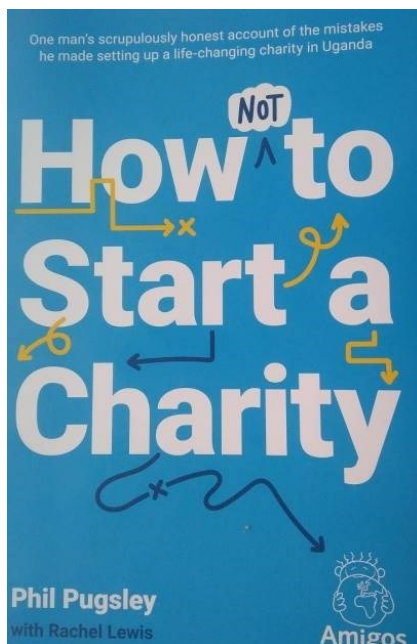
Our family has been involved with Amigos since Phil spoke at a harvest service when Hannah was at Pilton Bluecoat School (about 15 years ago!). We were so inspired we got involved in fund-raising for the charity’s dream of setting up a training centre for young people in Uganda – now the dream is the wonderful reality of Kira Farm. We have also sponsored several children over the years, so I thought I knew quite a lot about Amigos. How wrong can you be – this book was a real revelation; sometimes funny but also shocking and heartbreaking at times.

It is written in chapters numbered by the mistakes they made, hence the title. Phil says *“In writing this book I would love to inspire hope in those who think they can’t achieve anything. Disclaimer – it helps to be naïve, nuts and full of faith”*.

As we are so involved in supporting Amigos as a Church, I can thoroughly recommend this book. It’s not suitable for younger readers as the stories of some of the children’s past is quite horrific, but it is a story of overwhelming love, hope and faith.

It costs £6 and can be purchased from the Amigos office in Mermaid Walk (opposite Padfields) or from their website:

<https://www.amigos.org.uk/shop/how-not-to-start-a-charity>



Liz

There is a balm in Gilead

*There is a balm in Gilead
to make the wounded whole.
There is a balm in Gilead
to heal the sin-sick soul.*

*Sometimes I feel discouraged,
and think my work's in vain,
but then the Holy Sprit
revives my soul again.*

*Don't ever feel discouraged,
for Jesus is your friend,
who, if you ask for knowledge, will
never fail to lend.*

*If you cannot preach like Peter,
if you cannot pray like Paul,
you can tell the love of Jesus,
who died to save us all.*

I have long enjoyed this spiritual, liking the words and music equally. Whilst watching a recent Sunday service for Lent, this was sung by a wonderful group of singers. When the song was finished I asked Ian something that had puzzled me in the past 'where is Gilead' Ian did not know, so of course I 'googled' it to find out. What a surprise, Gilead can mean many things.

Geographically Gilead is the rocky region in Jordan and may mean 'hill of testimony', but is actually a reference to the concept of salvation through Jesus Christ. During the Exodus of the Jews out of Egypt Moses allotted the region of Gilead to the tribes of Gad and Reuben.

It is also an actual balm mentioned in the Old Testament of the Bible and named after the region of Gilead where the Gilead tree grows and from it is produced a healing balm. The expression 'Balm of Gilead' stems from William Tyndale's language in the King James Bible of 1611 and has come to mean, figuratively speaking, a universal cure.

After Joseph was thrown into the pit by his brothers, they noticed a caravan travelling from Gilead to Egypt. A little jar of balm was purchased by the brothers to present to the unknown ruler.

During the final years of the Kingdom of Judah Jeremiah asks, (*Jeremiah 8 v22*) 'Is there no balm in Gilead?' even then I think it was meant as spiritual balm to heal the wrong-doings of the people.

The root of the Gilead was considered very precious as it was rare and grew in so few places. Apparently its healing power was almost magical. The Kings of Judea were anointed with this balsam.

The first appearance of the spiritual can be found in 1854 from a hymn called 'The Sinner's Cure'.

Perhaps in these very difficult times, when so many are in need of physical and spiritual healing we may do well to ponder on the need for God's love and healing. Physical balms, whether medical, alternative or material are not the complete answer, if we go against the teaching of Jesus and our conscience we can become sin-sick and ready for the healing balm of Jesus.

VEGETABLE TAGINE

Although the list of ingredients for this dish is long, it is very simple to make and looks after itself in a slow cooker or in a low-heat oven. Equally good, if not better the next day so ideal if you are cooking for a gathering.

INGREDIENTS

Small aubergine, cut into chunks
4 ounces (110gms) peeled butternut squash
3 ounces (75gms) dried chopped apricots
a little olive oil
1 large or 2 small onions
2 minced cloves of garlic
1 tspn each of cumin, cinnamon, ground ginger
2 x 14 ounce tins tomatoes
1 x 14 ounce tin of chick peas
2 tsps harissa paste
cinnamon stick
strip of lemon peel
2 ounces (50gms) whole blanched almonds

METHOD

- 1 Heat the oil in a skillet or large saucepan, cook chopped onion for about 7 minutes
- 2 Add the garlic and spices and cook for another 2 minutes, stir then add the aubergine and cook until the aubergine is beginning to soften.
- 3 Next, stir in tomatoes, harissa paste, lemon peel, apricots, cinnamon stick and half a tsp of salt.
- 4 Stir in the butternut squash and bring the liquid back to the boil. Cook for another 15 - 20 minutes until just tender, or cook on very low setting in a slow-cooker. If you think the dish may need a little more liquid just add some vegetable stock.
- 5 Place in a serving dish and scatter with the toasted almonds.

Ideal served with couscous, wholegrain rice or quinoa. Serve chopped preserved lemons separately.

Many dishes in Middle Eastern cooking are naturally vegan or vegetarian, but if you wish you could use minced lamb instead of chick peas.

Music to Listen to: Scherherazade by Rimsky-Korsakov
Shallow Brown arranged by Percy Grainger

Jennifer

Weekly Meetings

Monday	7.30pm	Friendship group	(2nd & 4th Mondays of each month) contact Rose de la Cour tel 830824
Tuesday	9.30am - 12.00 noon	Coffee morning	
	9.30am	Prayer meeting ...	except the last Tuesday of each month)
	10.30am	Holy Communion ...	(last Tuesday of each month)
	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Rainbows ...	
	5.30pm - 7.00pm	Brownies...	contact Nicola Wilkins
	7.00pm - 8.30pm	Guides	tel 07813620615 or 01271377154
Wednesday	1.30pm - 3.00pm	Parents & Toddlers	
Thursday	2.30pm	Ladies Fellowship ...	
	7.30pm	Bible Study...	contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Friday	10.00am - 12.00 noon	Hobnob coffee morning	
	10.30am	Bible Study...	contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Saturday	8.30am	2nd Saturday of each month - circuit event	
		Men's Breakfast	contact Chris Punt tel 343716 or Staveley Dawson tel 373213

All at Christ Church Barnstaple are committed to the following Safeguarding Principles:

- * the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults.
- * the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- * the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
(Methodist Safeguarding Guidelines, online: www.methodist.org.uk)

Sunday Offertory for 2021

		Cash	Envelopes
March	7th	£0.00	£0.00
	14th	£0.00	£0.00
	21st	£0.00	£0.00
	28th	£0.00	£0.00

An increasing number of people are donating money direct to the Church account by standing order. Currently this offertory is £1965.00 per month. While we are not meeting together for Sunday worship in Bear Street, some of you are also sending in donations by cheque. Over the twelve months to the end of February 2021 this has amounted to about £11000. Many thanks to all of you. If you have given me an envelope number your gift will be included in the offertory in the accounts, otherwise it has been recorded as a donation. *If you are a tax payer* and would like the church to claim back the tax on your giving or if you change your address or other details, please contact Janet Marshall or speak to a serving elder - Thank you.



*If you are visiting Christ Church today we extend a warm welcome.
Please take a Messenger home with our good wishes.*

Christ Church Minister
Rev Don Macalister

tel. 01271 345313
dasmacalister@icloud.com

Young families worker

Elders

Shirley Baxter	Kathy Jeacock (treas)	Jenny Newman
Alison Cairns	Chris Marshall	Eff Poole
Anthea Coates	Janet Marshall	Liz Seymour
Staveley Dawson	Jack Neville (sec)	Elaine Stevens

Telephone Directory (01271)

Church Secretary	
Church Treasurer	373555
Room Bookings	374085
Circuit Administrators	379116

Editors:

Bruce & Will Seymour

Kathy Jeacock

Website

373555

seymoub@gmail.com

kjeacock@hotmail.com

www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk

Celebrating Easter & Seeing Family and Friends Again



Easter tree



Decorated blown eggs



Hot cross buns



Home made palm leaf



Delivering activity packs



Christ Church flower cross by Pauline



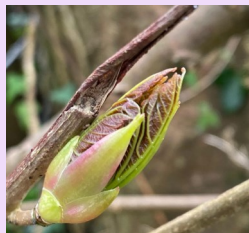
Seeing loved ones again



David & Ronnie's grandchildren: Ira & Reuben



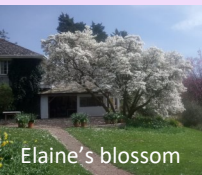
Fremington Quay walk



Bursting out



Easter Morning Service



Elaine's blossom



Together again—at last



Please, somebody give this man a haircut!