

# CHRIST CHURCH WARE

Issue 71

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Inside the **FUTURE**hope  
mobile youth centre  
page 12



Christ Church Ware  
Jesus led, Spirit empowered, Grace based.

[www.christchurchware.co.uk](http://www.christchurchware.co.uk)

# John's Journal



from  
**Rev. John Hookway**

*It is from  
that place of  
rest that we  
then get to  
abound and  
grow*

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13)*

Hope is one of the most amazing qualities for Christians. It is hope that keeps us going when things seem tough, it is hope that helps us believe in a better day.

When we are coming to the season of summer, we have been through the winter, we have seen the promises of spring and hope is starting to be realised around us. There will be some warmer days, there will be some relaxing days, there will be some exciting days, and there will be moments of celebration and of joy. Whether it is the Queen's Jubilee or just being able to be back together and being able to breathe well once again.

There has been amazing moments of hope with the church – an amazing celebration at Easter, the baptism outside and new families coming to faith, CAP among so many other moments of hope. The Lord gives hope in each and every situation. The season of Easter that we have just been through reminds us of the way that God brings good out of evil and life out of death; and how He restores us from places of ashes. The Lord always renewing.

In the verse above, there is something of an overflowing abundance of hope. It is that place where the stream just bubbles along and where the trees are full of fruit and harvest. There is an overflowing no matter what else is going on around us, hope is always present.

That hope for something more, for something better. What fuels that hope? The verse is so clear, it is “by the power of the Holy Spirit”. It is here at Christ Church that we are dependent upon the power of the Holy Spirit in all that we are doing but we can never do them in our own strength. It is under the leading and guiding of the Lord, listening to His voice, responding and allowing Him to give us His strength.

One of the things we can do

in the summer is to pause on a long evening, when we sit and maybe have a drink with friends, we can pause and be thankful. Thankful for the good things God gives us, thankful for the opportunities, thankful for bringing us through this pandemic season, thankful for the new building, thankful for His peace and for knowing His presence. We must never forget that the summer gives us these moments for rest – these moments of stopping and pausing. One of the things of the last few years is when everything is stripped away and limited, sometimes it is right just to stop and breathe.

Amidst many parts of life restarting up, the long summer days give us those moments of holidays, of holy days, of times to pause, rest and recover. It is from that place of rest that we then get to abound and grow. It is from that place of the fullness of the Spirit that overflowing of hope that makes the biggest difference. In looking at the Mission Shaped Living Course, it helps us to explore how we live out our faith. Fruit comes by abiding and resting in Jesus. It is the vines that is on each and every one of the doors as you come into Christ Church. So, this summer, why don't you take opportunities of being able to abide, being able to rest, being able to be thankful and being able to be a people of hope; and in this Pentecost season, allowing yourselves to be overfilled by the power and presence of God. As you receive His blessing together, we may be a blessing to our community and beyond.



# Away Day@Home

After four years of absence, Christ Church's annual Away Day returned with much enthusiasm and celebration. It was a day where the church family enjoyed a time of worshipping, encountering, learning, listening and even resting.



Previously held at Presdales or All Nations, the Away Day this time was held 'at home' in our beautifully refurbished church building which was completed in November 2019. Due to the pandemic, the church family were not able to fully utilise the building and enjoy its new facilities. So, the Away Day was another perfect time for us to do so.

We were blessed to have the Reverend Nicola Moy, vicar of Christ Church W4 in Chiswick as our guest speaker and she spoke on 'How God can Work Through You' from the book of Ruth. One of her amazing challenges was how God leaves a lasting faith legacy through you and us as a community. She also brought along her colleagues, Stephen and Fiona Crowther, who led some awesome worship before the start of each session which allowed us to really experience God's tangible presence.

While the adults enjoyed the day's teachings by Nicola with some fun and laughter, there was also a hive of activity coming from the church centre for the children and youth led by Jess Cole and Alex Kanold with help from Sophie Hallett and a team from All Nations.

A huge thank you to all who made the day a huge success.

For those who have missed the day, you can catch up on YouTube on these links:

- Session 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMQQsEn3coM>
- Session 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mk4KYGqgh0>
- Session 3: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9X\\_GHQ02rGk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9X_GHQ02rGk)

*"Nicola's talk gave me something to think about. I used to think that I had to do something big to leave my mark but her talk made me realise how God can use me in my everyday life to make a difference to those around me."*

*"I really enjoyed the worship sessions where I could sing songs and focus on God. I felt His presence the most during those times and it was such a comfort for me as I was struggling with some issues in my life."*

*"I loved how we could worship together as a family before the children went on to their own activities and we, as parents, could enjoy the talk knowing that our children were in a safe place."*

# Our Legacy Project

## Blessing Others as We have been Blessed

*The people of Christ Church have always embraced opportunities to use our resources to reach out to others. The recent redevelopment of the office (in 2017) and the church building (in 2019) was purposed to underpin this vision for a generation to come.*

*Continuing on this theme, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) has recommitted to complete the original objectives of the redevelopment project, and to raise the last of the funds needed to enable the church to be “debt free”. Included as a key objective of the project is that 10% of all personal gifting for the redevelopment should be used to create lasting legacy projects which bless others.*

*For the first time in my life, I was able to find true love and not condemnation. For once, I felt my life actually mattered...*

### “I feel so loved”

*One of the beneficiaries from The Legacy Project is the Kira Farm Development Centre in Uganda, a project by Amigos that helps young people who have experienced violence, trauma, and unimaginable suffering to heal and believe in themselves during their one year there. They also learn practical skills to transform their own lives and the lives of their families and broader communities. Here is Alimocan’s story...*

My name ‘Alimocan’, means there was domestic violence between my parents when I was in the womb, and to this day, I have never met my father, known his clan or where he lives. My mother was never comfortable telling me about my father. All she would say was, “I regret ever having a child with the worst human being I have ever met.”

My mother remarried when I was five years old and left me in the hands of my grandmother and step grandfather as my mum’s new husband did not want anything to do with me.

*The many relationships that Christ Church already enjoys will form the core of our focus to become recipients of our legacy funding – and projects that enable others to learn of God’s word and to grow in faith are our mission.*

*A huge thank you to all who have been giving at this time. So, please do pray for our church’s lasting legacy, and look out for updates on the website. Amigos is an example of a previous project we have supported*

My grandparents never appreciated anything I did. I would collect water and firewood, dig and cultivate crops in the garden, clean; and help with the cooking before and after school. When I started to receive attention from boys at school, it made me feel really good and that perhaps my life did matter to somebody. I met one particular boy who I fell in love with. Unfortunately, he told me that if he was to continue loving me, I had to sleep with him. So reluctantly, I did and ended up pregnant with a son who I named Julian. When my boyfriend found out that I was pregnant, he denied all responsibility and before I knew it, he had left the village. I have never heard from him to this day. I was heartbroken and felt more unloved and useless than ever.

Life became even more difficult with an extra mouth to feed. I could hardly take care of myself, let alone a tiny baby as well. I ended up moving from Gulu to Kampala to work as a housemaid, thinking I would be able to make some money to support us both, but the reality was far from my dreams. I ended up working from 4am to 11pm for 40p a day, seven days a week. I would sometimes have to work three months before getting paid, and even then, they would only pay half of what they owed me. When I complained and explained to my boss about the responsibilities I had at home, he just said that if I was willing to sleep with him, my wages would





be paid on time. When I refused, he not only delayed paying me but refused to give me food. I had no choice but to give up and return to my grandparents back in their village.

After a few months of being home, I met another man who wanted to marry me. I was so happy thinking I could finally settle down, raise my child and live a normal life, but this was far from the case. After having my second child, Daniela, he started beating me and demanded that if I wanted his respect, I needed to introduce him to my father, who should pay a dowry as a price for marrying me. As I had no idea who my father was, or what clan he belonged to, I had to leave the marriage as the beating became too much to bear.

I thought I would find love in church, but this was not the case. When I went to church, I was not allowed to take part as I was considered a sinner having two children without their fathers. I loved praising and worshipping, but I was never allowed to sing while I was in church, so I thank God that I was selected by Joshua to come to Kira Farm Development Centre.

I had the most amazing time at Kira Farm. For the first time in my life, I was able to find true love and not condemnation. For once, I felt my life actually mattered, and for the first time since being a child, I did not mind not knowing who my father was, because I developed the most wonderful relationship with my Heavenly Father through Kira's discipleship training. I learnt that God loved me no matter what, and I enjoyed singing at the top of my voice in worship and praise.

I am also so grateful for the vocational training I received; as a result I stopped worrying about how I was going to raise my two children or how the rest of my life was going to pan out. I left Kira with a spring in my step and tons of hope of having a blessed life.

Before I went to Kira, none of my half-brothers or sisters even wanted to speak to me let alone invite me to their homes. You can imagine my surprise when just a few weeks after my return to the village, I received a call from one of my half-brothers asking me to come and stay with him in Kampala.

I shared with him the amazing training I received at Kira Farm, and before I knew it, he was promising to help me open up my own tailoring workshop at a trading centre called Kawempe, just on the outskirts of Kampala. I'm now making around £70 a month so I am able to rent my own home and take good care of my children. As well as tailoring, I have started farming rabbits and I'm looking for supermarkets who I can supply with rabbit meat.

I feel so loved. I love myself and I am on fire sharing the gospel with every broken person I meet. My business has given me a great platform to be able to share the word of God in a really great way. Thanks a lot for taking me in, Amigos, at a time when I had lost all hope in life, and to Christ Church Ware for supporting me through the most wonderful and life changing year anyone could ever imagine.

*I shared with him the amazing training I received at Kira Farm, and before I knew it, he was promising to help me open up my own tailoring workshop*

# Wild Flower Project

“What is happening on the south side of Christ Church?”

*1. Allotments for us at Christ Church to be able to rent out, to cover the redevelopment costs.*

This has been the question some church members have been asking. The response to the question has been one of the following.

1. Allotments for us at Christ Church to be able to rent out, to cover the redevelopment costs.
2. Less grass to be mown on a Tuesday morning.
3. A memorial garden or place to inter ashes.
4. A wild flower meadow.

Marking out the south side church extension footings as proposed in earlier development plans, it had been suggested some time ago that we might have a more bio diverse area around the church as much as having a nice grassed area, which does look nice when it is mown. Since the builders left the site in 2019, it had not been looking very green due to the materials that were deposited on the ground during the redevelopment works and the grass had not grown back. The matter was taken up at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting and after discussion was given approval. The advice and requirements were agreed with a local garden designer and contractor, including the ordering of seeds which will see as long a flowering season as possible.

On one of our Tuesday morning gardening sessions, the area was marked out and taped off to prevent access due to the use of weed killer and also to facilitate the use of a rotovator. Seeds are on order, which will be sown in due course, then in about a year or two, we will have a flourishing flower and insect filled meadow.

*The Tuesday Gardeners  
Richard Clayden, Bob Barker, John Stockwell  
and Peter Wall*



# Join In with *Join In*

Jess and the children's team have now put on five Join In events and she hopes that the church will have many more to come. Here, she shares the mission for Join In and how you can be part of it?

During February half term, we hired a BIG bouncy castle to put in church and was enjoyed by about 100 children over the course of the day! There was a morning session that filled up fast and an afternoon session aimed at providing a quieter, accessible space for families with children with additional needs. Both sessions were lots of fun and with a focus on God's love which came across through the crafts, talk and songs as well as the way the team so beautifully served that day! The afternoon session felt particularly special. It was so well received by parents who were appreciative of something for them to be able to come to as a family that was a welcoming, non-judgemental safe space.

At Easter, we had a Join In Easter café and craft session which saw 53 children and their grown-ups come and enjoy fun Easter themed crafts, and chocolate of course! A relaxed and friendly atmosphere with both children and adults having fun.



## So what is Join In all about?

Behind these events is a heart to reach out to our community. It is great to be able to welcome so many into the church building. For some, just stepping inside is breaking down a huge barrier. We always have a wonderful friendly team who take the time to talk to the children and grown-ups. The love, welcome, fun and the way people felt when they were here with us is something they will remember and perhaps make them wonder more about God. Our actions live out the Christian message that we share at each event. The prayer for each event is that people will know more of God's presence and love.

## We have a mission field right here!

The hope is that with your support, we will be able to run these in the half terms throughout the year (except May) and school holidays, and then do something slightly different in the summer. If you would like to know more, be on team or be a part of planning the content of these events, then please do speak to me. The beauty of these events is that there is such a variety of things needed that there is bound to be a role perfect for you! Come and Join In!



from  
**Jess Cole**

Save the date – Summer holiday dates are Tuesday 2nd, 9th, 16th August.



*Behind these events is a heart to reach out to our community.*

# He is in Control

from *Colin and Deborah Mercer*

*In December 2020, Colin was suddenly admitted to hospital to what turned out to be a brain haemorrhage. Whilst in hospital, he also caught pneumonia and Covid. Here, Colin and Deborah tell us their story as they spoke of the loving presence of Jesus Christ.*

*I didn't have time to pack anything for him, and we didn't even get a chance to say goodbye. That was really like a door being shut and I was completely floored.*

One day, Colin was outside in the garden cutting some wood for the fire when he leant over and suddenly felt the back of his brain go 'bang' and an excruciating pain he had never experienced before. He immediately went indoors and collapsed on the sofa. While Deborah was on the phone to 111, he started vomiting, and she immediately phoned 999. He was then whisked away to Harlow hospital for a brain scan and Deborah was told that he would be going to Romford hospital for specialist treatment.

"Unfortunately, there was so much blood in my brain that the medical team couldn't get a clear picture of what was going on, and I was told that I would have to be monitored for ten days before they could do another scan. I felt rubbish!"

After a few days, he began to feel a little better, but after another couple of days, he felt really poorly again, and learnt that he contracted hospital acquired pneumonia. Things then got worse when he caught Covid too.

"My condition rapidly worsened and I felt as though I had a colossal weight on my chest. At this time, I had another scan and the doctors told me that it appeared that the haemorrhage had stopped, and that my brain was healing. No medical intervention would be necessary. I was given injections and drugs which made me hallucinate. It was terrifying. I felt as though I was going to die. I told myself that the only person who could stop me from dying was Jesus. I started praying to Him, asking that if I was going to live, could I know His peace, but if I was not going to live, would He help me out of this terrible situation."

All this happened in the early stages of the pandemic before any vaccinations, and the doctors couldn't put Colin into an induced coma because of his brain haemorrhage.

During this time, Deborah had no idea at all what was happening to Colin in hospital.

"I was told that he was OK, but in those early days, I wasn't able to phone or communicate with him because he was too ill. When he was taken to hospital, it all happened so quickly. I didn't have time to pack anything for him, and we didn't even get a chance to say goodbye. That was really like a door being shut and I was completely floored."

Reflecting on how important it was for her to have her boys at home some of the time during Colin's hospitalisation, Deborah said that

when Colin was feeling better, they went to the hospital to take him some grapes, his mobile phone and a card. But they could only hand them over to hospital staff to give to Colin.

"We were not allowed any direct communication and came away without seeing him. That was so very difficult. But during that time, I was able to, with the boys, lift him to God in prayer. It was such a testing time. I was really scared and asked Christ Church prayer chain to pray for Colin and for us."

Describing his experience and what he saw on the ward, Colin said he knew of people who had to have amputations because of Covid induced blood clots. There were people screaming in pain and staff were absolutely exhausted.

"It was like a war zone. People were dying."

Colin was in hospital for five and a half weeks but it felt more like five and a half months. Not being able to breathe without a huge amount of pain and effort seemed to go on forever.

"With the hallucinations, I felt as though there was a battle going on in my head between my consciousness and semi consciousness. But I prayed to Jesus and His calming effect was overwhelming. If I hadn't been able to pray to Jesus, I think I would have died and most certainly would have gone mad beforehand. I really felt the presence of Jesus with me during this time and having some words from the Bible that I remembered brought a huge sense of God's peace to me."

Deborah too had this sense of peace. "I knew lots of people were praying for Colin and the family, and that was profoundly reassuring. I felt really close to God during that time, and He assuaged my fears so that I stopped worrying. Even if Colin didn't make a full recovery, I knew that Jesus would be with us, holding us in His peace."

Then one day, Deborah received a surprise call from Colin telling her that he was coming home. When she asked when, he replied, "I'm in the ambulance now!"

"You can't come home now, we're not ready!" She exclaimed.

Deborah explained that apparently, some nurses arrived at Colin's bedside with a wheelchair, bundled his belongings together and he was on his way. The next thing she knew



# My Playlist

Sharon picks the tunes for the playlist of her life...



from  
**Sharon Hoyte**

was there was a knock at the door, and the paramedics helped a very frail looking Colin (who had lost four stones) indoors. They said that his last Covid test was positive before taking him upstairs to isolate.

“I was terrified! But within a few days, the GP confirmed that Colin was deemed to be free of infection. At last we could all have a cuddle!”

What laid ahead for Colin, Deborah and the family was a long recovery process. It has been over a year now and there are good and bad days. Colin still needs lots of rest time and doesn't have huge amounts of energy.

Although Colin is now slower than he had been before, he and Deborah just take life leisurely and enjoy their lives together with the family, and all that God has given them. They both feel incredibly blessed by God and know He is with them always. “We both trust God and know He is in control.”

**My First Song** In my house, we never missed Top of The Pops but my first memory of playing a song again and again whilst on my own is on my mother's Abba vinyl records and the song was *I have a Dream*. The words, “I believe in angels, something good in everything I see” seems incredibly apt now that I am getting to know God and Christ better, so I have always carried these words with me. I feel the song comes with a feeling of peace and knowing that if you can ground yourself, you can see all of the wonders to be grateful for.

**My special moment song** It may feel like a theme is beginning here with Abba. When I had my son, *Dancing Queen* was playing as I saw him for the first time so whenever I hear it, I am reminded of when he came into the world and what a blessing that was.

**My worship song** *Still* by Hillsong Worship. This was one of the first worship songs that really spoke to me. I love everything about it – a good key change, the melody is beautiful and you can really sing along to it, “Find rest my soul, in Christ alone”. I often hear John's voice in my head saying, “Bring your troubles and rest them at the cross”, and this one reminds me of that and to be grateful for those moments of quiet and peace when I can rest with Him and in Him and feel His presence. It is so easy to get caught up in the living of life and miss those moments.

**My last song** *The Old Rugged Cross* by Alan Jackson. I have finally started to appreciate the beauty of country music. As a child, my father listened to it quite a lot and I never really understood its rawness and honesty. This song is very special to me as it was sung at my father's funeral. “Then He'll call me some day to my home far away, where His glory forever I'll share”. I can't think of a better way to put it and yet the reminder of all that was endured on the cross is also present.



**Judith Greaves** MBACP  
Counsellor and Psychotherapist

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# A Day in the Life of...



from  
**David Pierce**

David explains his typical day in the IT department...

My name is David Pierce, and I am married to Jo Pierce, and we have two daughters – Jessica and Molly, and our dog, Paddington. I work for an organisation called Inchcape Shipping Services as their Vendor Governance and Performance Manager in their IT department.

My day normally starts around 7am when my alarm clock alerts me to the headlines on Radio 4, and if I am alert and ready for the day, I am up. However, more often than not, it is snoozed a couple of times and I eventually get up at 7.30am. It is then normal family household rushing involving breakfasting, getting lunch ready, finding items of clothing for children, and sending and taking my daughters to school. I will check some work emails while slurping my coffee (with oat milk) during the hustle, and my working day begins when I am back from school drop off.

I am aware my job title doesn't give a lot of clues about what I do, but in short, I am responsible for managing our outsourced IT supplier who provides a range of IT services including helpdesk, support for our business applications, and development to new and existing systems. They make sure that all IT stuff works as it should for our 3,500 staff from 240 offices across 60 countries. I ensure the supplier is meeting their contractual obligations, whilst supporting my colleagues with any contractual issues and looking for ways to improve service. My day is a lot of back-to-back meetings with individuals all over the world, which means a lot of time staring at a computer screen. My days are varied, and I do try and plan for things to happen, but a lot of what I do is react to the needs of my colleagues, and any immediate needs from the supplier. My morning to-do list often ends up much longer by the end of the day, with not as much crossed off as I would like!

For example, as I write this, today's meetings are looking at how we can record our department's individual capabilities to better prepare for gaps in knowledge, and where we need further support. A monthly review of operational targets with the supplier to understand what has gone well, what hasn't and where improvements can be made. A weekly meeting to understand how work is progressing on our recently implemented target operating model. A meeting with another supplier who provides us with our financial software to negotiate renewal costs; and a pre-leave catch up with my boss before I go on leave next week. This is a fairly



typical day for me, navigating meetings and dealing with anything which may come out of the woodwork.

I do try to get away from my desk by walking the dog, or just a walk down to the house. We are very lucky to have a summerhouse at the end of our garden where I work, which is invaluable, especially during these strange couple of years we've had, to have somewhere which can exclusively be for work. It is also where my drum kit is kept, so I can always de-stress by hitting things.

So, is there time for God in this? I think so. I hope so. I try. It is often a quick ask for help, or a gentle thank you. I am very fortunate to be part of a group with two other Christian men, and we communicate most days, which leads to various prayer requests or just praying for them. One thing I must do during the day is listen to music. This can be anything, depending on my mood, but often is some decent Christian music that reminds me of His goodness, His provision, the opportunity He gives me to do a job I love, and to work in an organisation where I can, and do, speak openly about my faith.

*I will check some work emails while slurping my coffee (with oat milk) during the hustle, and my working day begins when I am back from school drop off.*

# We're All Valued Equally

Meeting monthly in a small group on a Saturday morning, Rosie tells us how WAVE has been reaching out and sharing the love of God to adults with learning disabilities

Around about 2015, influenced by the pioneering vision of Prospects (now evolved into Livability) and visits to the inspirational original WAVE (We're All Valued Equally) in Muswell Hill, Caroline Tiffen and I approached John and the PCC to start our own WAVE in Christ Church. Our presentation was based on our desire to create a similar but only monthly space where adults with learning disabilities could access God's love and learn more about Him in ways appropriate to their needs – needs that most church services don't or can't meet. They are too long/formal/academic, word based, and rarely include signing, visuals, or the invitation to engage in a creative response to what people have learned.

So we began on a Sunday afternoon, once a month – our stated aims:

- To make friends
- To have fun
- To learn more about God

Over the years, the style of our gatherings has changed in tandem with the learning styles of those who come. A big change came after the death of dear Jo, the founding member of Christ Church WAVE and beloved daughter of Chris and Roger Evans who are part of our current team, and the birth of a son to another.

We moved to a Saturday morning cafe-church style, beginning with chatting over bacon butties and hot drinks. We probably sing and sign less, allowing more time for a creative response to the teaching, but still the word of God is central as is the sharing of each member's joys and concerns and the offering of these to God in prayer. Recently, we have been looking at a biblical take on some catch phrases, such as

'Mind the Gap', 'The Scenic Route' and 'Proof of Identity Required'.

We are rarely more than 12 but it seems that being small is something people like about the group: "We don't always feel comfortable in a crowd." Other recent comments show appreciation of the welcome and the bacon butties, the sense of safety and the way the creative response enables fresh thinking about God. Another writes: "Find it easy to cope with pace as no pressure as I have bad days sometimes."

So we are encouraged to continue to be blessed by God in this way. If you, or someone you know, find yourself, like us, on the fringes/'minding the gap', do come along and join us at 10am on the 2nd Saturday of each month in the church centre.



from  
**Rosie Watson**

An informal café-church to worship God

An inclusive space for those with learning disabilities and their carers

**Wave**  
in Ware we're all valued equally

10.00 - 11.30am  
2nd Saturday of the month in Christ Church Centre\*

Christ Church Centre, New Road, Ware, SG12 7BS 01920 487267  
Charity Number 1101563 \*except August & December

livability prospects





# MISSION NEWS

## FUTUREhope



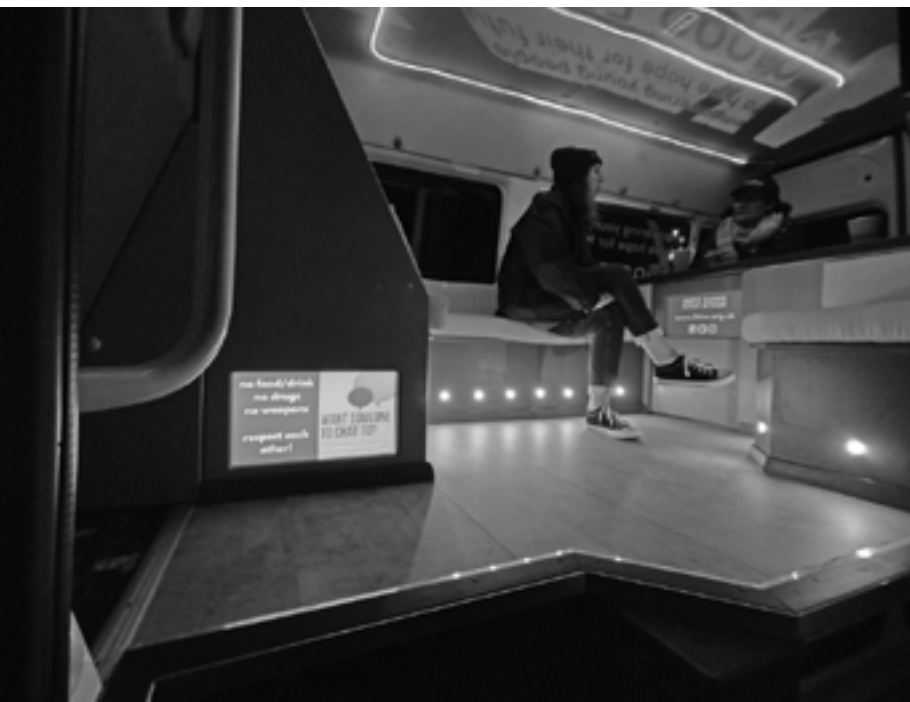
from  
**Tim Simmonds**

*Tim gives us an update on the Pioneer Hall, mobile youth centre and other FUTUREhope projects since we last heard from him.*

We look forward to welcoming you to Pioneer Hall! We would love to show you around – just get in touch! Speaking of Pioneer Hall, we are extremely grateful to the Men Around During the Day (MADD) team from Christ Church Ware who recently decorated our foyer and landing. It was very much needed and is looking super fresh! The process is still ongoing with taking ownership of Pioneer Hall but we have been told by solicitors the end is in sight! The new Fire Alarm System should be going in soon, lights and heaters are next on the list.



Mentoring, as always, is keeping us busy but we are really seeing the positive impact this work has on young people. Just in January, 56 mentoring sessions took place, 56 hours' investment in local young people. We are at the unfortunate stage of operating a waiting list. Therefore, we have a real need for more mentors to join our team. Mainly men but women too. If you would be willing to meet with a young person, for just one hour a week, please do get in touch. It will have such a big impact on that young person and I am sure they will get something out of it as well. We have young people who are ready and want to meet with a mentor – just not a mentor to give them.



The new bus for our mobile youth centre has been out every Friday in term time and since January we have had some really good quality nights. In Ware, we have a small group that comes on and stays for the whole duration of the session – this has been a really good opportunity to grow relationships with them and looking forward to seeing where that will take us. Hertford was a bit quieter until February, when we had 22 on! Lots of fun, chatting and we are excited for the future of this aspect of our work, especially as the nights get less cold!



We have been busy with schools too! We delivered our drug awareness session to every Year 10 student at Chauncy School through their tutor groups. We received a grant from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) to deliver sessions in the local schools as part of their Feeling Good Week 2022 – the same week as Child Mental Health Awareness Week. The theme this year was ‘Body Positivity’ so we chose to run sessions based on body image and the impact of social media/filters. We have/are delivering targeted group sessions. The session ended with young people taking a selfie with an instant print camera which went down very well! We hope that will be a great reminder for them about the session and what was discussed. This is yet another session we hope to offer to schools for years to come.



We held a Handling Anger in the Family course on Zoom in January and March. We are exploring new ways we can actively engage with and support parents of teenagers in the local area.

Thank you again for your continued support.

#### Our Mission Partners

Did you know that 10% of the money you give to Christ Church (as part of “general giving”) goes to support our mission partners? These remarkable people have to fundraise for all that they need to live and work, including supporting their families. You can find out more at [www.christchurchware.co.uk/missions](http://www.christchurchware.co.uk/missions)

## Rwanda – Rebuilding after Covid



**Rwanda, like the rest of the world, is learning to live with the Covid pandemic. Vaccination is proceeding but much more slowly than in the west.** During the early restrictions, Tearfund was able to deliver food parcels around Kigali as people could not go to work. Churches were closed which meant many people, especially the elderly, were isolated. There has since been a programme to educate on hygiene, and churches have now reopened. However, there have also been impacts due to climate change where severe drought in the south east, and heavy rains in the north west, have been destroying crops.

#### Digging for Hope Project

Christ Church continues to support Tearfund’s Digging for Hope project, one of many Church and Community Transformation (CCT) projects in Rwanda which aim to end poverty, support vulnerable people, and build resilience during times of crisis.

The closing of the churches during the Covid restrictions, for example, was a big shock, but those already in self-help groups, because of CCT projects, have fared considerably better because of the mutual support available. Now that churches have reopened, the Digging for Hope project work has resumed: 24 toilet blocks have been built, and cassava demonstration plots dug and utilised for training for over a 1000 households. Obtaining agricultural skills like these are key to coping with the impacts of climate change. In addition, a group of 120 vulnerable women, subject to gender-based violence, have been helped through this project to gain skills for employment and to be reconciled with their families.

#### Please pray

- Give thanks for the additional £600 raised for this project through the Inter-Church quiz in January.
- Pray for the successful completion of this project and a potential new initiative working with the East African Christian College in Kigali.
- Pray for all the churches in Rwanda standing up for help, hope and healing.



## MADD about Mission



from  
**Andrew du Boulay**

*Each trip, our accommodation has been different. This year, we stayed in an ex-vicarage in Smethwick*

**God has given each one of us different gifts. Not all of us can be missionaries but each of us can support missions in different ways, for example, through prayer, financially or by providing practical help. When we team together with God, these gifts become powerful tools that can be used to support God’s mission for our church.**

A working party from the Men Active During the Day (MADD) team has just returned from Birmingham, where we have been supporting our mission partners, James and Mel Lynch, who are building community relationships through Interserve and local churches.

### **Brandhall Community Hub**

James is currently the strategic coordinator for Sandwell Churches Link, which is committed to helping churches address issues of poverty. In their fifth visit to Birmingham, MADD were asked to help with the redevelopment work of a church-owned café in Brandhall into a food pantry and school uniform bank to serve the local community. Our main tasks were to entirely reconfigure a fitted kitchen, provide custom built shelves for the food pantry, re-plumb a bathroom to take a washing machine and tumble drier, and decorate an office ready for James and others to start working there. All this in 48 hours! A further challenge was that the place had to operate as a food bank as normal on the Friday morning while we were working there. The MADD team was Neil Pearce, Richard Clayden, Ron Porter and Andrew du Boulay and we welcomed back Mike Dawson and Andrew Wang.

Each trip, our accommodation has been different. This year, we stayed in an ex-vicarage in Smethwick. On Wednesday night, we went to (appropriately named) Mad O-Rourke’s pie factory in Tipton where Ron successfully completed the Desperate Dan Cow Pie Challenge. However, by Thursday night, all we could manage after a long day was take-away fish and chips. Exhausted but satisfied! It’s amazing what can be achieved with teamwork and God’s help. I’ll let the pictures tell the story.



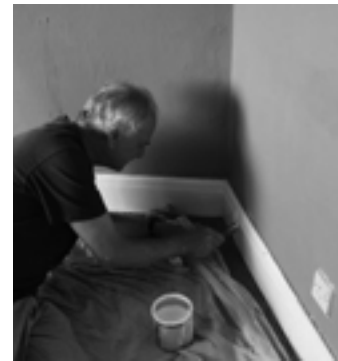
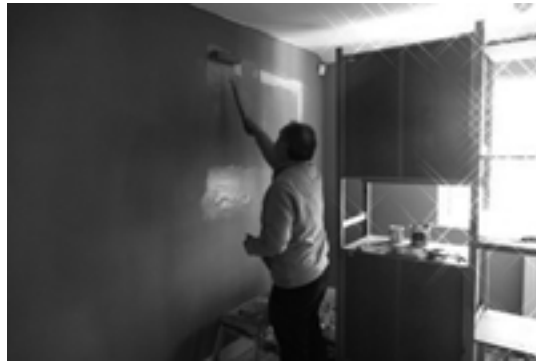
Transforming the Kitchen...



...and the bathroom



Getting the Office ready



Building the Shelves for the Food Pantry



Celebrating Success!



*...where Ron successfully completed the Desperate Dan Cow Pie Challenge.*

# Restoring Prisoners' Lives



from  
**Anne Chamberlain**

**Prison**  
FELLOWSHIP

*Theresa says,  
"What you may  
see as a small gift  
can sow seeds  
in someone's life  
to bring change  
and freedom to a  
whole family"*

*Standing alongside prisoners across England and Wales, Anne, who is one of thousands of Prison Fellowship's (PF) volunteers, tells us how she and other volunteers support prisoners on their journey of restoration.*

First, I would like to tell you a true story of a prisoner we helped through PF's Angel Tree project. I have quoted her own words where possible.

Theresa left home at the age of 15. She had stolen from her mother and stepdad and was creating havoc in the house. She went from hostel to hostel but by the age of 18, had managed to get into a shared house and steady out a bit. Then, she got pregnant. She tried to get her life back on track and hoped for change, but felt alone with her child with no idea what she was doing.

When Theresa's daughter was one year old, she started dating a new guy. They were drinking heavily and fighting. She put up a good front for a while but needed help. A baby boy followed and the situation did not improve. She decided she needed to move away and start again, but then she self-harmed badly and went into A&E. While she was there, social services took her children into care.

When Theresa got home from hospital, she found her children gone. She died inside. She felt that despite all her efforts, all the good had been taken from her life. She went on a

downward spiral of self-destruction into the depths of addiction. She remembers there were people coming and going and a lot of loud music. She heard a neighbour below her discussing her and her children. She went down to that neighbour and attacked her hitting her on the head, then collapsed on the floor crying and saying how sorry she was.

Theresa was arrested and remanded in custody where she heard about the Angel Tree project. She completed an application form and requested three gifts, one for each of her children for Christmas. PF made sure the children got the gifts and a note from their mother. They sent her a card telling her what had been given. Theresa says, "There was a spark of hope in the darkness."

For a long period in Theresa's life, she felt she was a "nothing" and a "nobody", and a failure as a mother, but people who did not even know her, saw a person. For Theresa, this was the turning point. PF did not see a crime or a conviction or a failure, they saw a person. She felt human again. Theresa says, "What you may see as a small gift can sow seeds in someone's life to bring change and freedom to a whole family".

## **So what is Prison Fellowship?**

PF's mission is to show Christ's love to people in prison by coming alongside them and supporting them. As well as Angel Tree, PF's projects include Sycamore Tree (a restitution course) Mother's Day, Letter Link and Prayerline (direct requests from prisoners for prayers), and also weekly bible study material. We also campaign for change, but most importantly, we PRAY. We pray for prisoners and chaplains and for long term change in a broken justice system.

I am blessed to belong to a PF group which meets and prays together once a month. I have a letter link penfriend, and have helped with Angel Tree which was a joy, except reading the loving messages from the parents to their children, which is heart breaking. I also distribute the Prayerline prayers from head office to my group.

*Left: Theresa, you can hear more of her story here  
<https://youtu.be/HFcLZcLSVJY>*





# Communicating

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be bilingual? Some of the mission partners spend years learning new languages and cultures just so they can come alongside others to share the love of Jesus.

Some missionary children (like the de Lima family) even come to be trilingual with parents being Italian and Brazilian, their home language English and their community and school language German now that they are at OM headquarters in Mosbach, Germany. How do they cope and how do their brains sort it all out?

When Debbie and I were learning the Nepali language in the late 1980s, life was full of stumbling blocks. The word for dog (kukur) and chicken (kukhura) are so similar that I inadvertently insisted that "I like dog curry." I was pretty embarrassed when I realised my mistake. Likewise, a British colleague in the mission hospital asked someone if they have pain in their umbrella (chatta) rather than their chest (chatti). The same friend went on home leave and was driving on holiday in France. When stopped randomly by police his *two second languages* – Nepali and school French – got mixed together, and the police breathalysed him thinking he was drunk. Does that remind you of the crowd at Pentecost when some people thought the disciples were under the influence of alcohol?

Last week, we came across a "useful" set of Nepali phrases for visitors to Nepal including when asking for the bill in a restaurant "check please" (as in American English!) The actual Nepali word used meant – "please examine me"... oops.

During the early Covid Pandemic, the auto-translate function in Facebook managed to create the following result from the original Nepali guidelines for treatment of Covid patients. This was the result:

*Did it become difficult to breathe from Covid? Immediately follow these ways.*

*Don't avoid temperature from thermometer. Normal temperature according to the person up to Fahrenheit. Eat Paracetamol if it reaches Paracetamol can be consumed in body pain and headache.*

*Don't measure oxygen levels with unreal pulse oximeter. If you go below, then sleep on your head. This is called a prone position. Put pillows in your stomach, a pillow on your head and a pillow on your feet and sleep on your stomach ball. This increases the capacity of the lungs. This is also called a natural ventilator.*

Don't get me wrong, current translation technology is now truly amazing and we may all soon have a need for using it to communicate with an influx of refugees from war-torn Ukraine.

The bible also has some things to say about language. Mankind was getting too arrogant and thought they were capable of anything – remember the tower of Babel in Genesis 11? "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves;" (Genesis 11:4) God's plan is for people to worship him, but these people created an object, a tower, to become famous. They worshipped themselves.

Nonetheless, God *does* want to communicate with us (as at Pentecost when God poured out His Spirit) and for us to communicate with Him and to share our needs and the needs of the world with Him. Prayer is an important part of that relationship. Sometimes we don't know what to pray and remember you are not alone. There is a small army of brothers and sisters at Christ Church ready to pray for you. Just email the need to [prayer@christchurchware.co.uk](mailto:prayer@christchurchware.co.uk) or phone the church office for prayer.



from  
**Gary Parkes**

The Tower of Babel

Pieter Bruegel the Elder  
(ca 1525-1569),  
The Tower of Babel,  
1563, oil on oak panel,  
114 x 155cm.

Kunsthistorisches  
Museum, Vienna.

©KHM-Museumsverband



# My Inaugural Youth Weekend Away



from  
**Alex Kanold**

As a relative “newbie”, it was with a mixture of excitement and trepidation that I packed for my first youth weekend away since joining the Christ Church team. I was assured that we were staying in the “good accommodation” this time, but I wasn’t sure how well that actually boded! I am delighted to say that once I arrived, I never gave the sleeping arrangements a second thought.

Truly, it is not where you are, but who you are with, and what an extraordinary group of people I found myself surrounded by!



Twenty two young people, five youth team leaders and four young leaders who have come through the youth group and now returning to be on the team. There were also a multitude of

supporters ranging from those who drove to Thriftwood Scout Camp in Brentwood to deliver, prepare and serve meals; to those who baked us sweet treats, and those whose prayers were with us throughout the weekend. Thank you all!

*“Sitting by the lake with the ducks was a peaceful place for reflecting on the talks.” - Evelyn*

Our theme for the weekend was “How to...?” with a focus on practical tools for bible reading, prayer and worship intended to help the young people make these fundamental interactions with God a part of their regular routines. Through a mixture of group talks, small group discussions and individual practice times, the young people had the opportunity to discover, explore and try out new methods to study God’s written word and have their own conversations with him.

We came together for regular worship, beautifully led by Talitha, who amazingly

*“I learnt how to overcome my fear by doing the Macarena at the top of a very high pole.” - Charlotte*

*“We got a tan whilst reading the bible.” - Holly and Esther*





organised it all, and even encouraged some of the young people to join her in leading a wonderful variety of musical worship!

We were fortunate enough to have the 'legend' that is Ed Wells as our surprise speaker for the Saturday evening talk on worship, after which he and his guitar were dragged down to join us for marshmallows and singing around the campfire.

*"Great worship." - Tommy*

The activities were also a huge success, with lots of football, Frisbee, volleyball, cata-splat (catapult meets paint ball), pedal car races and braving a (fully harnessed) 10-metre climb.

Needless to say, I thoroughly enjoyed my first weekend away with the Christ Church youth, and came home feeling reinvigorated to improve my own daily practices, let's hope the youth do too!



*"We went up the high ropes in order to get closer to God." - Jocelyn*

# Church Production Hero



**Congratulations** to Paul Davies who has been "internationally recognised" by *Church Production*, an American magazine which covers technical ministries, as being the runner-up in their monthly 'Production Hero' feature. Sam Woodward who had put in the nomination many months ago shared his appreciation for Paul and his willingness to serve.

He told the magazine, "When the church's technical-team lead suffered a stroke, Paul stepped up to ensure that live-streamed services continued uninterrupted, and organised the volunteer team involved to provide unbroken continuity. He variously took on the roles of both stream-operator, as well as visuals-operator and sound engineer. He is bubbling with ideas and innovation to further the way in which the technical ministry supports the church."



# Faith, Love and Action

*We hear from Emma, who grew up in the Christ Church family as she shares how the church family has helped her in building up her Christian faith and influenced her journey to her next calling.*

## **A brief introduction about yourself and what you're doing.**

My name is Emma Holland and I am a primary school teacher, living in Cheltenham. I have been in Cheltenham for six years now, after originally coming for the New Wine Discipleship Year at Trinity Church and then staying on for university. I teach in a small, village school in the Cotswolds (very idyllic!) and absolutely adore my job! However, from August, I will be packing up life in Cheltenham to head out to Kenya to work at a Christian Missionary school called Rift Valley Academy!



from  
**Emma Holland**

Right - Emma preaching at a Massai Church on a trip to Kenya with Trinity, Cheltenham.

Far right - Most recent trip to Kenya, Feb 2020.

*I will be packing up life in Cheltenham to head out to Kenya to work at a Christian Missionary school*



## **How were you connected with Christ Church?**

I grew up in Ware and Christ Church was the church I was raised at! I have very fond memories of my time at Christ Church, from all the camping fun at New Wine Summer conferences to getting involved with leading and preaching at the Seven Services.

## **How has Christ Church helped you in the growth of your faith?**

Christ Church was where I grew up and where my faith was really built. I am so thankful to have been brought up surrounded by individuals, couples and families who love Jesus and who would encourage and cheer me on! When I think about Christ Church and my own personal journey of faith, something that comes to mind straight away is the fantastic



way the church does 'love in action'. I look back and think about the Love Ware Live Ware events and see it as such a beautiful image of the church not just holding onto the good news but wanting to share it, and show the love of Jesus to those around us. This is something that I now see as a foundation to my faith, the fact that love looks like something! This has shaped my time in Cheltenham as I have been involved with lots of social justice work and community outreach with those who are vulnerable, and has also influenced the journey towards where I am now in following Jesus' call out to Kenya! We love because He first loved us, and I am thankful to Christ Church for showing me love in action so clearly in those early days of my faith.

## **Is there anyone while you were at Christ Church who encouraged/influenced/helped you in your faith journey?**

I am so thankful for many people at Christ Church who really encouraged me and spurred me on, especially in my Sixth Form years where I was really starting to grab hold of my faith as my own. Heather Hookway and Caroline Tiffin were always such a great encouragement, often praying with me or chatting with me as I journeyed faith. Kelly Barron was another person at Christ Church who was fantastic at walking alongside me, showing me what it really looks like to put love in action and how we should really be cheering each other on! I loved my time with the youth at Christ Church and have so many fond memories of times with Christian and Joscelyn Cole, heading off to Soul Survivor or just having a great laugh together. The whole family at Christ Church Ware will always be very special to me.

# Oasis – the relaunch!

Unable to meet during the pandemic, Oasis took a long break and is now back! Sue gives us an update...

Hebrews 10:24-25 has always been one of my favourite verses:-

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching”.*



*“I have missed Oasis. It’s the only place I come out to and feel safe.” – an Oasis mum*

*“I always go home tired but feeling it was all worthwhile. I’m really thankful to God to be part of Oasis” – an Oasis team member*

Not being able to meet together during the COVID pandemic was difficult for many of us.

We wondered how Oasis should look going forward, realising that a relaunch means you don’t have to do things the way they have always been done. We held a meeting for anyone interested and were amazed to find several families who have benefitted from Oasis in the past, now wanted to come back with their (now teenage) young people, to serve. This was a completely unexpected joy! We are also grateful to faithful members of the team who were willing to return and some new ones, and for our lovely revamped publicity.

*“It’s a joy to see a couple of the families who have been with us a long time and their children are now grown but these mums wish to still be part of Oasis and help with the running of it. They felt they had been cared for and supported and now it was their turn to care for and support other single parents. What a joy it is to have them on our team”.*



from  
**Sue Illott**

We asked what people liked about Oasis and they told us:

- Being together
- Craft
- Games
- Seaside trip
- Barbecues and woodland walks
- Christmas dinner
- Chocolate Bingo
- Film nights

Guess what? Exactly the same things as we have always done! But that’s all right. We put together a programme for the year based on these things, starting with Christmas dinner with all the trimmings at the end of November.

You can find our programme at: –  
[www.christchurchware.co.uk/families](http://www.christchurchware.co.uk/families)

*“I like to think that the church family is home and home is that place of belonging and acceptance where Jesus meets with us”.*

## Solo Parenting?

*Come and join us!*

**4-7pm on the last Saturday of every month except December, at Christ Church, New Road, Ware.**



[www.facebook.com/groups/OasisCCW](http://www.facebook.com/groups/OasisCCW)  
[www.christchurchware.co.uk/families](http://www.christchurchware.co.uk/families)

For more information contact [oasis@christchurchware.co.uk](mailto:oasis@christchurchware.co.uk) or the Church Office on 01920 487267



LORD, our Lord, How majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens. – Psalm 8:1

# Living in Love and Faith

**A course for parishes to explore issues of changing societal attitudes to gender, sexuality and marriage.**

*“...enlightening, ...challenging, ...opened my eyes, ...widened my perspective, disturbing, ...stirring, ... helped me think about difference differently, ...the videos about other people were the most stimulating part”*

Built on our preparatory reading from the course booklet, each meeting introduced short videos, firstly, of a relevant bible study to think about how the scripture relates, and then were also of people speaking directly of how they have been received by society and by their experiences in church. These were delivered usually by someone or couple whose sexual orientation differed from our own. We were given the opportunity to discuss within the group our own attitudes and feelings and how they arose. This helped us as Christians explore what this means about being human, and about how we live in love and faith, and enabled us to become more aware of own prejudices. The Living in Love and Faith book also accompanies the course.

Our local course was organised for four sessions between St Mary’s Church and Christ Church for up to 20 people and was led by Mary Salter.

This Church of England course arose out of the deliberations amongst the bishops and General Synod on matters of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage, and their awareness that this topic provokes a variety of very different responses amongst Christians. The House of Bishops promoted the course to help the church at parish level become more informed about the issues we face with changing attitudes in our society. It was simply to help us all to become more informed about the breadth of different attitudes in society.

Overall, we were all positive that it had been a very worthwhile experience, and one from which others would also find beneficial. In the end, we were wanting more time for relating together and discussion since there were issues we could have explored and been equipped further.



from  
**Paul Watson**

## Chapter and Verse

**LORD, our Lord, How majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens. – Psalm 8:1**

When I was a young boy growing up in South Harrow, I remember looking up in wonder into the dark night sky to try and see the star constellations. Orion was quickly recognised by finding the three bright stars making up the hunter’s belt. The Plough, looking like a saucepan and Cassiopeia, a ‘W’ shape, were also easy to make out. The Moon, though very familiar, also captured my imagination as did the visible planets. I still look up on a clear night and marvel!

My mother was the first person who stood out in the garden with me looking at the stars all those years ago. Having retired, I now undertake voluntary work as part of a team looking after the countryside of Hertfordshire by managing habitat and accessibility. No task is the same and I love being able to appreciate God’s amazing creation in this way.

For me, Psalm 8:1 captures the enormity and beauty of the heavens, which when considered prompts the question, “What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?” The response turns out to be that we are made only a little lower than the angels and have the responsibility of being the rulers over the works of his hands. So God cares about us and for us and he has given us a job to do. That’s great! But how?

Well, as a closing thought, in Mark’s gospel we read that Jesus was asked this question: ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’

*‘The most important one, answered Jesus, is this: “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” The second is this: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.’ (Mark 12:28-31)*



from  
**Peter Chuchla**

# The Last Word



from  
**John Harrington**

We came to Ware in 1979. Betty was invited by Wendy Tucker to listen to Daniel Cousins, a missionary visiting Christ Church. Betty felt the need to go to church on the Sunday to listen to his sermon, so I went with her.

That was the first of many valued experiences with Christ Church. Betty was confirmed and I was accepted into the Anglican Church, although I had been brought up as a Catholic. We joined a House Group, which I then lead with Catherine McBride (who later became a vicar) and have belonged to K Group then Life Group over the years. This has been the rock of our Christian faith. I must stress the importance of belonging to our weekly group where we have made many strong friendships.

We have both been involved in church and community life, especially Children's Church, Holiday Club, Messy Church, Love Ware Live Ware, Away Days, MADD Men and fundraising for the church building project. We have loved living in Ware but Christ Church has been a significant blessing to our lives.

I worked in London, most of leisure time was spent developing interest within the Ware

Community. Betty, after looking after our children Nicholas and Julia for the first five years, started working at Ware College (now Hertford Regional College) with the Government Youth Training Program which offers job and college opportunities.

Christ Church has been the bedrock of our lives in Ware and we have made many friends over the years. For me, on retiring, meeting Bob and Ann Owen introduced me to roles at Compass Braille, Ware Museum, Scotts Grotto and attending Ware Society and with Ann arranging the church flowers and decorating the Christmas tables for AgeConcern. Happy times, thanks Bob and Ann.

We now start the next episode of our lives in Loddon, Norfolk where we have already attended St. John's Church (building used during winter) but will attend Holy Trinity during the summer months where David Owen,

the vicar, presides over both churches and has made us feel most welcomed. We are hoping to develop other interests within the community. We have joined the indoor short mat bowls club. Betty is meeting with Beccles Inner Wheel Club. By the time you read this, we would have visited an organised gardens function with the local Society, a concert in Norwich Cathedral and comedy nights at the local pub.

#### **Please pray:**

- That there will not be any delays to our new home which is due to be completed in June.
- That we will find opportunities with our new church to be involved.



**Christ Church, New Road, Ware, Hertfordshire. SG12 7BS**

**Vicar:** Revd John Hookway (01920 487267- ext 204)

**Associate Minister:** Revd Norman Richards (01920 487267)

**Operations Manager:** Martin Dudley (01920 487267- ext 200) **Treasurer:** Sam Rich (01920 487267)

**Church Wardens:** Lucy Davies & Bob Barker

**www.christchurchware.co.uk email:office@christchurchware.co.uk Parish Office:** Open Mon-Fri 9am-12:30pm (01920 487267)