



ST CHRISTOPHER'S 'CATCH UP CHURCH' NEWSLETTER

Sunday 27th June 2021

NEWS UPDATE



Church Roof - It is finished!



Thank you all once again for your generous support. Given the considerable issues we have had with the roof over many years, this is a significant moment! Let's hope that this marks the end of our problems with the roof for some time to come.



Beehive

Through a contact at Christ Church Fulwood, we will be receiving the queen bee and starter swarm within the next one to two weeks – free of charge! It usually costs £100 for a starter swarm, but thanks to an old friend we have been generously blessed.



Church Magazine Questionnaire

THIS IS THE LAST OF OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS. We hope you have enjoyed them, and have been enriched by them through what has been a strange and difficult sixteen months.

We expect the church magazine to provide our main communication going forward. To this end we have created a questionnaire, so that we can understand what to include within the magazine, how often to publish it, how to distribute it, etc. It would be helpful if lots of people would complete the questionnaire. If you complete a paper copy and would like someone to come and collect it from you, let Hilary Holderness know and we will arrange for someone to call round. (01772 724384).

Looking Ahead



Dates are in the diary to run an Alpha Course at the Lea Club in the autumn. It will be on Tuesday evenings starting on 14th September. More information to follow.

We have also scheduled a confirmation service with Bishop Jill Duff on Sunday 28th November. To be precise, we have arranged two confirmation services on the same evening (4.00pm and 6.00pm), because we anticipate a lot of candidates this time. If you or a member of your family would like to be confirmed, then let Peter know. Confirmation is open to adults and young people of secondary school age (year 7+).



BIBLE READING – Romans 10: 11-17

The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.



THIS WEEK’S MESSAGE – by Mike

Sharing our Faith – Theme 3 ‘Proclamation’



We continue our series about sharing our faith, and we follow on from Peter’s message last week on Persuasion to this week’s theme of Proclamation.

In the passage Paul makes what may well seem a really obvious point – how can anyone hear the Good News about Jesus if no-one ever tells them in the first place? This Gospel needs to be told, to be

communicated, so that those who hear it can then respond to the call to follow Christ, as the Holy Spirit moves in us and reveals Jesus to us by grace. And before any of that can happen, there needs to be a messenger, someone who tells the story of Jesus.

I remember a long time ago when I was a student and catching the train back from Bristol to my home in Orrell, Wigan, and happened to be sitting next to an older gentleman, in his late 60's, something like that. We started chatting and I can't quite remember how it came out but it became clear that we were both Christians. I had not long made a commitment to follow Christ during a mission week at University and when the invitation had been given at the end of one of the evening meetings, for anyone who wished to dedicate their life to Jesus to come forward and be prayed for, I had gone forward and done just that (rather hesitantly though it must be said!).

However his response threw me a bit, his particular denomination did not agree with that sort of evangelism at all. It wasn't that he disliked that way of telling people about the Christian faith, instead maybe preferring a more "modest" approach (dare I say it, a more "British" way of evangelism as compared to some brashy "American style TV evangelist"). No, he simply didn't think people should be told at all(!). His view was that God chooses who to save, so there was no need for us to assist God in this, no need for anyone to tell

someone else about Jesus, they would just somehow find out through some kind of divine intervention without anyone else "making the first move" in terms of actually telling them the Gospel story.



I was puzzled and more than a bit confused and was at a loss to answer this very knowledgeable Christian who knew his bible a lot better than I did. I'd only been reading it properly for a few months at that time, whereas he could quote chapter and verse - and did so - frequently!

And then it dawned on me, and I remember turning to him and saying, "What about me?" I had given my life to Christ only after hearing a simple Gospel message that the speaker had preached on. I'd attended most of the mission meetings because friends on my course had asked me if I wanted to come along. Although I had heard about Jesus before - the cross, his death and resurrection, his blood shed for me for the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and that anyone who is in Christ becomes a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come - for me it was a "lightbulb" moment in that it all came together and made sense.



I can still see him now – for the very first time he was lost for words. After a good few seconds he said something but I could tell that he was just filling with words what would otherwise have been an embarrassing silence.

"And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard...?" (v.14)

And who can be a messenger of the Good News about Jesus, who can? Well, the answer is that anyone can be a messenger, even if you don't know chapter and verse of the bible, anyone can be a messenger. You don't have to know all the answers, just point them to Jesus, point them to Christ and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15)

You see, all who follow Jesus are messengers of that hope that is within us.

Prayers

Lord God, we thank you for the completion of the roof repairs at St Christopher's,
and for all who given generously.

We thank you more deeply for those who have been generous
in the way that they shared the Christian message with us.

Help us to recognise how we came to understand the Gospel,
and make us ready to tell others the good news of Your love in Jesus Christ.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all the ways in which we have been able to give and receive support
and encouragement through this pandemic. As these weekly newsletters come to an end,
may we continue to find ways of building each other up in faith and love.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our nation, and its ambitious vaccination programme.

We pray that by administering more vaccines the impact and prevalence of the covid-19 virus would be
much reduced, so that people can once again live in freedom, without illness or fear.

Lord in your mercy; **hear our prayer.**

**Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses,
to grow leaders and inspire children and young people.**

**Give us eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit
and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son,
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

