

ASPIRE



June 2020

Christ Church Haydock URC

www.christchurchhaydock.co.uk

A word from the Editors

We hope you are all still safe and well during these continued challenging and uncertain times. Although recent government announcements, in relation to slightly relaxed lock-down restrictions, may have shed a glimmer of hope on the possibility of a return to some sort of normality; many of our congregation are high-risk individuals and must continue to self-isolate for a number of weeks. Please can you remember them in your thoughts and prayers.

Malcolm is still doing regular worship sessions on the Christ Church Facebook page and continues to post a message to the page each week. For those of you without access to Facebook, Neil and Brian will be bringing round hard copies of Malcolm's message each week. If you would like to request a copy, please just let a member of the Eldership team know.

Malcolm has also written an article for us this month from the Ministers Vestry, focusing on our homes and the importance of having a sense of 'place'.

Our Youth Pastor, Sandra, has also included an article this month, summarising what she has been up to during lockdown and explaining the opportunities that online services have provided for spreading the gospel to a wider audience. Something that, as a church, we feel should continue after the lock-down restrictions have come to an end.

Sandra has also included a very interesting and useful article on Domestic Violence, which is becoming more and more prevalent under the current pressurised lock-down conditions.

As always, if any of you need anything at all, please do not hesitate to contact us. Becky Taylor is heading up our support team and she can be contacted for help on the number below:

BECKY TAYLOR – MOBILE: 07788 279286

We pray that you will rely on your faith in God and put your confidence in Him during these difficult times.

God bless, take care and stay safe!

Brian, Mike and Jo

xxx

Watch our Church Services

For those of you who may not know, although our church building is not open, church still is! Malcolm and other members of the church have been working hard on putting together digital services each week. These include God's Word, worship songs, sermons, kids slots etc. Each of these are filmed separately and put together into a mini movie which can be viewed on either our Facebook page or our church website.

Facebook: Christ Church Haydock URC

or

www.christchurchhaydock.co.uk

For those of you who don't use the internet, the service is also available on dvd which will be delivered to your own front door. If you would like one of these dvds, please contact Brian on 01744 608826 or 07840 173990.



Mrs. ?????? got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

From the Ministers Vestry

Home has come to mean a lot more to us recently. Our homes have become the centre of our universe really as they have become all that we see day to day. They are even schoolrooms and treatment rooms and all other places too for us. I am overwhelmed with the artists on the internet who are bearing their souls and playing and singing live for our entertainment on YouTube. But home means a lot more to us.

"I've got a home in Glory Land that outshines the sun".

We used to sing this chorus at youth fellowship too many years ago. In those days, most choruses were sung with a *Country and Western* beat. We must have thought we were all little cowboys or something. Still, in the 50's and 60's the American West was holy ground. At any rate, we sang of a home *beyond the blue horizon*.

My Dad's most treasured 78 record was a spiritual called "Beyond the sunset." It speaks of a *"glad reunion, with our dear loved ones who've gone before. In that fair home-land we'll know no parting, Beyond the sunset forever more."* A heavenly home, a special place to make our home.

A sense of "place" is a very strong human emotion. We all know what it's like to sell a family home. It's a gut-wrenching experience which only serves to remind us of the power of place. It's a loss of *here I am* and is by no means easy to deal with. All of us reinforce our identity by our association with a place. We use our place, our country, to proclaim ourselves to others, and probably even to ourselves; it establishes identity and promotes self-image. Our home does this more than anything else.

Yet, there is more to a home than just display. There is the power of place. There is a sense where we root our being in the building and the earth. It is our nest and territory. It becomes part of us while becoming an expression of us. To see it destroyed is to see part of ourselves die; to leave it, is to abandon part of self. This is particularly so if we have raised children in it. So, place, home, country, is never quite an inanimate object.

In the end, we know, only too well, that our earthly home is not permanent; we are just passing through.

*"Beyond the sunset a hand will guide me
To God the Father, whom I adore;
His glorious presence, his word of welcome,
Will be my portion on that fair shore."*

I pray that you will be safe in this lockdown.

In Christ,

Malcolm

PLANTS FOR SALE

As you know by now we would have had a coffee morning, table top sale, Quiz, band concert evening, plus next month which we won't be able to hold another coffee morning and the auction, all of which would have raised funds for the church. At the table top and the two coffee mornings Neil would have been selling plants for the funds.

He has the plants ready for sale, if anyone is interested. All plant orders can be placed by ringing Neil and then he will deliver them.

EVERYTHING IS 2.50.

LUPINS IN PINK FAIRY/ HARLEM LIGHTS/ PURPLE MASTERPIECE/ GALLERY PINK

ECHINACEA IN DREAMCOAT

HOLLYHOCK IN GOOD GOLLY MISS HOLLY

VERBENA IN BONARIENSIS

LOBELIA IN RED TUPA

PHLOX IN RED SCARLET

HERBS: SAGE,

ON SEED AT THE MOMENT:

POPPY IN BRILLIANT,

CEPHALOPHORA IN PINEAPPLES

Please note all these plants are perennials.

NEIL: 01744 635163

THANK YOU,

Dear Friends

I hope you are all keeping well and coping with these very strange times.

There is not much I can say about what I've been up to as the schools have been more or less closed. I have been involved with Grange Valley and Lansbury Bridge through Governor meetings.

Some of you might have heard that there was going to be activities in the Town Square for Pentecost but due to the situation it obviously had to be cancelled so United 2020 (Church groups from around St.Helens) decided to put the Christian message out on the Web! For the week leading up to Pentecost they organised video talks throughout each day for different age groups on different topics. I was delighted to be asked to do a 20-minute video presentation for 11 -18 age group on the top of Esther. Obviously, I focused on "we are here for such a time as this and we have our part to play"

I have recently come across some really encouraging facts about how people are being drawn to "Faith" during this difficult lockdown period. God's Spirit is certainly on the move! Amen!

This is information taken from May 2020 Premier Christianity Magazine.

Pete Greig founder of the 24/7 Prayer Movement wrote in an article in the magazine "Something spiritual is stirring in the UK"

Here are some of the facts from the article: -

The UK Blessing song was released in early May it is 2.9 million views to date and been shown on national TV several times.

Prayer surge - Tearfund has done research and this indicates over 3 million new people have turned to prayer during this period.

Tearfund also records the normal church attendance is 5 - 7%. Access to online services is recorded at about 24% that is 1 in 4 adults!

Even national media are reporting these facts - A headline in a major national newspaper read "British public turn to prayer as 1 in 4 tune into online religious service" it's also been acknowledged on national TV.

Demand for 24 / 7 prayer resources have gone through the roof!

And Eden Christian bookshop reports at 55% increase in the sale of Bibles in April.

This is a really encouraging article from Pete Greig. We can see things in our own community, how people are coming together and just being kinder and more considerate to each other.

I thank God for the opportunities He has given us and prayer as we move forward for open hearts and minds to see how God wants to shape His church and to have the Grace to worship and serve in what maybe new ways and with new people!!

Stay safe and take care of each other.

Blessings

Sandra

AGM Meeting and New Elder Voting

As you are all aware because of the lockdown we have not had AGM Meeting this year, we will pass it over now to next year but we will be printing the AGM ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS and delivering them when we have the last of the accounts. Those of you who do not attend the meetings but who would like to have a copy please contact Neil/Sandra. We will though be going ahead with the voting for the new Elder, the person who we will be voting for is Becky Taylor, if you wish to vote please contact Neil. He will then come round with a voting form and a small envelope for you to place the form into. Once all collected Neil and Malcolm will open them and count them, and inform everyone of the result. Thank You.

Staying Confident in God's Plan



Where does life find you today? What difficult times are you enduring? What situation seems to be unbearable?

Encouragement is on the way ... God's powerful promise in Jeremiah 29:11 leaves no phase or issue of life uncovered! It assures us that God's plans, for us and for His people, are for good, not evil.

God is our security for any and every situation we will encounter in life. This includes birth, death, marriage, singleness, widowhood, poverty, and persecution. Also, suffering the unknown of a move, epidemic or the permanence of being in an unpleasant place.

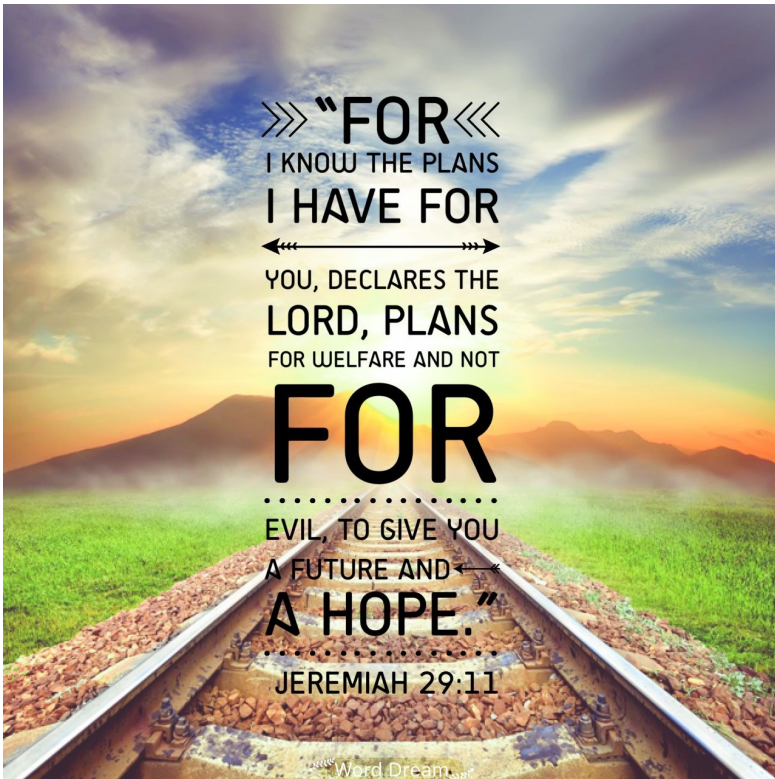
One morning a pastor's wife called to say that her husband was resigning from his church. These were the words she said:

"I've been reciting Jeremiah 29:11 all day long! God brought us here. He has taught us many lessons and used us in many ways. I also know God has a plan for us and that it's good. He knows where we are going!"

In the midst of all that she was feeling due to her life being turned upside down, she remained confident in the truths of Scripture.

She was dealing with fear and disappointment as she anticipated saying goodbye. She was struggling with worry and anger as she faced being uprooted from her home. She battled confusion and hurt about moving in an unknown direction to an unknown place.

The foundations of our daily lives may suddenly collapse, and the security of our income or health may slip away, but we can be confident in God, His goodness, and His promises.



Therefore we can enjoy victory as we focus on His plans for us—plans of peace and not evil, to give us a future and a hope.

Sunday 7th June 2020

The Struggle is Real



Ever feel like you are fighting an enemy you cannot see and don't understand? For every Christian, that is the reality. We are in a battle of heavenly proportions, and the struggle is real. Satan and his demons are out to discourage and distract through their deceptive ways and, if we are not in tune with that, it will leave us bewildered and distraught. You are fighting an invisible enemy.

Ephesians 6:12

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Sunday 14th June 2020

The Most Difficult Job



In my opinion, the greatest joy in life is being a parent. My wife and I have been blessed with two beautiful children. That does not mean it has been easy by any stretch of the imagination. Parenting is also the most difficult job anyone will ever have, and it is fraught with challenges that have long term implications.

Ephesians 6:4

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Sunday 21st June 2020
Free from the Diet Police



The United States have recently celebrated Memorial Day. It is a time to remember all of those who have fallen defending our freedom. There were ceremonies at veteran memorials. People also celebrated the unofficial start to summer by grilling in their backyards. While some will make an issue of what to eat, as believers, we are free from the diet police.

Matthew 15:11

“It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man.”

Sunday 28th June 2020
Words Do Hurt More than Sticks and Stones



Remember the childhood saying, “Stick and stone may break my bones, but words will never hurt me?” That was another lie we tried to tell ourselves growing up. The truth words do hurt more than sticks and stones. Some words cause permanent damage. Paul tells us to let no unwholesome talk proceed from your mouth. Instead, we should be using them to encourage and build up.

Ephesians 4:29

“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.”

FINANCIAL REPORT— APRIL 2020

BUILDING ACCOUNT

Income

Building Fund box £30.00

Expenditure

Byrom Clark Roberts Fee for steeple inspection £528.00

Balance as of 30/04/20 £8991.88

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Income

Offertories £1706.00

Government Grant for caretaker work (Mar 20th—Apr 30th) £424.44

Government Grant for youth pastor work (Mar 20th—Apr 30th) £1031.73

Gift Aid claim for Apr 2017—March 2018 £6940.65

Youth Pastor Envelopes £80.00

Expenditure

Only Routine Items

Overall Income in April 2020 £10184.77

Overall Expenditure in April 2020 £4513.22

Balance as at 30/04/20 £23025.86

(Includes £3175.77 for Youth Pastor & Youth Mission Work)

COMMUNITY CENTRE ACCOUNT

Income Nil

Expenditure

Sanitary Hygiene £55.10

Balance as at 30/04/20 £2742.45

Ray Clare & Wendy Conboy