

# ASPIRE



PROVERBS 27:9

October 2020

Christ Church Haydock URC

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

## A word from the Editors

As Autumn draws upon us, the leaves on the trees turn golden brown, the nights draw in and, as a Church, we would normally be frantically planning for the Christmas Fayre next month. Unfortunately, this is not the case for November 2020 as the church building remains closed and our community is still under local COVID-19 lockdown rules.

However, our Church is still thriving. Services are being posted to the church website and Facebook each week, our church congregation are still supporting each other and praying for each other and many of our church congregation are 'thinking outside the box' of ways to raise money for our Church in the absence of the Christmas Fayre.

As you will see, you can still buy grave pots, winter baskets, raffle tickets, toiletries, cakes, handmade dolls and teddies, Christmas cards, chocolates and 'Mothers' Pantry Pickles'. All the contact details are included this month.

The theme of this October edition of *Aspire* is *friendship* and I think we can all agree that the outbreak of COVID-19 has really strengthened and developed our friendships. We are constantly contacting our family and friends, checking that they are OK, making time to speak to our neighbours and work-colleagues and generally being more friendly to one another.

Malcolm explores this theme further in his article from the Ministers Vestry this month and to complement this, there is an interesting article discussing the five marks of true Christian friendship.

*"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."* **John 15:13**

What a friend we have in Jesus.

God bless, take care and stay safe.

Brian, Mike and Jo xxx

## **NOTICES**

### **FLOWER MINISTRY**

These were the people who received flowers from the church over the last few months:

Lesley Chadwick and Becky Taylor

### **CLOTHING COLLECTION**

If you have any old or unwanted clothes that you no longer use, please consider donating them to the church's clothing collection. All money raised will go towards Church funds. If you would like any picking up, please call Neil Fairhurst on 01744 635163.

### **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](http://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.

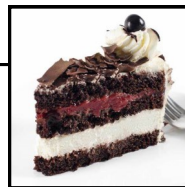
### **A HUGE THANK YOU!**

After many years of pure dedication and hard work, Mary and Stuart had decided to step down in their role as Operation Christmas Child and Shoebox Appeal Coordinators. We can not thank them enough for everything they have done for the church, and more importantly those children who have been blessed because of the work they have done. It does mean though that those roles need filling, so if there is anyone who fancies taking over this role, please contact Sandra (01744 736108).

Unfortunately, due to the current COVID situation, there will also be no shoe box or Barnardo's service this year.

# THE VITUAL CHRISTMAS FAYRE

See what's available below.



## CAKES

Feast your eyes (and your belly) on these delicious treats ...

Victoria Sponge slices	Flapjacks	
Ginger cake slices	Swiss rolls	
Millionaire's shortbread	Marmalade	Scones (plain or fruit)
Small cake selections	Apple Pies	Chocolate cake slices
Fruit loaf (sliced or whole)	Mince Pies	Lemon cake slices
Pretty bags of 8 biscuits	Treacle toffee	German apple cake slices
Pear and apple chutney	Lemon loaf	Lemon drizzle

Please ring either Sandra Fairhurst (01744 635163) or Margaret Leivesley (01744 734568) to order what you require. Please contact Doreen (01744 736108) for any chutney orders. Please make your orders between 1st and 10th October. They will then be delivered on 16th October.

## GRAVE POTS

Grave Pots will be being made on 30th November and being delivered the following weeks. If you are interested , please order before 23rd October by ringing Doreen (01744 736108).

## CHRISTIAN CHRISTMAS CARDS

Handmade Christian Christmas cards will be available to buy. They are available in packs of 8, size 5x7", assorted fronts but the same verse inside and will cost £5.00 per pack. Please order before October 31st by calling Lesley (01744 451890 or 07814 186621). They will delivered out in the beginning of December.

## CHOCOLATE AND SWEETS

Girls Brigade will be a running virtual chocolate and sweet shop. If would like anything in particular, please contact Becky (07979 947719) to discuss orders. Please place your orders before 15th November and deliveries will be made at the beginning of December. Becky will create a more specific stock list for next month's magazine.

### WINTER FLOWER BASKETS

Winter flowering baskets with a selection of flowers and bulbs will be available for a cost of £10.00. Please contact Neil (01744 635163) to order. He will collect your basket and redeliver them once they are complete.

### RAFFLE

There will be a Christmas raffle available. The raffle will be drawn between the 1st and 3rd December. Please feel free to buy or sell raffle tickets. Contact Sandra for raffle tickets (01744 635163).

### CHRIST CHURCH'S VERSION OF THE BODY SHOP

A range of toiletries and beauty gift sets will be available to order and buy. Small gift hampers can be made up with a selection of different products customised to your requirements. Please ring Sue (01744 608826) for orders before 15th November. Deliveries will be made at the end of November.

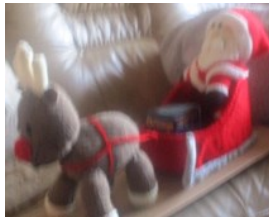


### MOTHER'S PANTRY PICKLES

Jars of pickled onions are now being made and orders being taken, to be delivered at the end of November. Please ring Doreen on 01744 736108 if you wish to purchase.

### HAND-MADE DOLLS AND TEDDIES

A range of handmade cuddly toys are available. They are all £8 each, except for the Santa sleigh with reindeer and chocolate which is £15. To order contact Sandra (01744 736108) or Mari (01744 607156).



## From The Minister's Vestry

Since the time that we have suffered the effects of the COVID-19 virus, there has been a notable change in the interactions of people. At the beginning of the lockdown it was certainly noticeable as to how people would pass the time of day and even take time to talk not always a simple hello. Friendship seems to be on the up because of this. I started to think about how we might be friends with God and on looking at the Bible there are many who would say that they were friends with God.

Do you remember the story of David and Bathsheba? David was the King of Israel at the time. One day, from his palace roof, he saw Bathsheba taking her bath, and from that moment on he wanted her, and what he wanted he took. Of course, the inevitable happened, she fell pregnant. To hide his adultery he brought her husband, Uriah, back from the battlefield so that the conception would be seen as his. The only trouble was that Uriah took a vow of abstinence while he was home on leave. David then took the next step and had Uriah placed in the frontline of battle. He even had the troops withdraw to leave him stranded. So, adultery had led to murder.

Some time later, Nathan the prophet exposed David. In the face of his sin David admitted his guilt and sought God's forgiveness. All those around him probably felt it smelt a bit, but in truth, David's standing in the sight of God remained secure, even though he was a murderer.

In the Bible, John the apostle writes, "*We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers.*" John's point seems to be that a friend of God is a friend of others.

The problem with this idea is that no one does what God wants them to do? David certainly didn't; he was anything but friendly. I tend not to do what God wants me to do and neither do you. Most of us literally break 8 of the Ten Commandments, some of us 9. David was a 10, but was still God's friend. Mind you, if we are an 8 we need to remember that we are murderers and adulterers in spirit - we all know about lust and hate. So in truth, we are all 10s.

What the Bible seems to be saying is that a person who is God's friend tends to be a friend of others. Total obedience, perfection, is not what God expects of his friends, but rather orientation; a friend of God tries to be friendly. If we have discovered God's mercy, forgiveness and love in Jesus then we tend to be merciful, forgiving and loving. If like David, our path in life is stained by selfish ambition, and like him we throw ourselves on the mercy of God found in Jesus Christ, not only are we forgiven, but slowly and surely we become forgiving.

In Christ,

Malcolm

### Youth Pastor

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well.

I have missed being around the staff and pupils in the schools, and also being involved with activities we would have been planning at church.

However, I did go into Haydock High on the Monday to support the pupils following the very tragic death of Cortney.

I know I don't have to ask this as I'm sure you will be doing it anyway, but could I ask you to lift up Cortney's family at this awful time.

Could you also pray for all the staff, pupils and families in our local schools as they all try to navigate all the COVID restrictions and concerns.

I hope to see you soon

Blessings,

# True Friends Are Hard to Find



True friends are hard to find. They stick closer than family, and often know you better. They pray bigger things for you than you pray for yourself. They believe with you when your faith is weak. They make space for you when life falls apart, and they rejoice with you when all is well. Most importantly, true friends remind you in every encounter who and what is most important.

## ***Five Marks of Christian Friendship***

How can we be a friend who preserves and strengthens the faith of others? Here are five distinct ways that true Christian friendships bolster our love for Christ through our love for one another.

### **1. True friends heighten our joy in God.**

Companionship always deepens joy. My favourite movie is good when watched alone, but it's better with a friend. Somehow a great meal is more satisfying when shared. We naturally drag our friends into what we enjoy: "You have to see this movie!" "You have to come to this restaurant with me!"

### **2. True friends expose sin in us that keeps us from God.**

*Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy*  
(Proverbs 27:6)

Sin deceives us. It darkens our understanding and makes us fools. So much so that we may be walking in sin and convinced that we are obeying God. This is why we desperately need friends.

We need friends to lovingly show us our sin. We need friends to help us see our blind spots. We need friends to speak with brutal honesty (Matthew 18:15) and tender compassion (Galatians 6:1), telling us the truth about ourselves even when we don't want to hear it (Ephesians 4:15).

### **3. True friends encourage us to obey God.**

*Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.*  
(Hebrews 10:24)

While it is true we need friends to help us see any disobedience, we also need them to spur us on to obedience. Often, obedience to God takes more courage than we can muster alone. Without the faithful cheerleading of Christian friends, we easily shrink back into stagnant apathy, not wanting to wilfully disobey, but also too afraid to step out in faith.

### **4. True friends bring us to God in our weakness.**

*Behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.* (Luke 5:18–19)

Walking through life in a God-belittling world, with our sin-ridden flesh, against a hell-bent enemy, is too hard to be attempted alone. Alone, we easily believe the lies of Satan. Alone, we buckle under the weight of our sin. Alone, we grow discouraged and weary. Like the paralytic, we need the help of other believers to carry us to God.

### **5. True friends love us for the glory of God.**

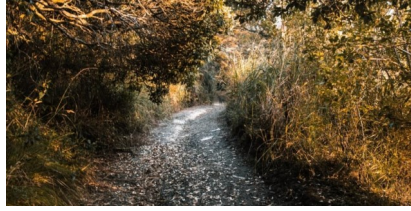
*Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* (1 Corinthians 10:31)

The world's idea of intimacy in friendship is making much of one another: "I can't live without you!" Compliments and pledges of devotion quickly give a brief and false adrenaline rush of importance and significance. We certainly need to encourage and affirm one another, but Christian friends should be far more focused on God's weight and significance — not their own or their friend's.

Like everything else, the end goal of our friendships should be God and his glory. Since our hearts are prone to wander away and worship other things, we need these constant reminders of his glory and his worth in our friendships.

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Prepared the Way**



For 400 years, Israel had been spiritually barren. They hadn't heard a word from the Lord during that time. Then along comes a man dressed in camel hair, eating locust, and preaching repentance. You would think the people would've run from him, but the opposite happened. They were so desperate to hear from God that they travelled great distances to hear him. John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus to come.

**Luke 3:16**

“John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Be Known for Your Love of Others**



What are you known for? Is it your intelligence? Maybe it is a skill you have honed over the years, and people seek you out when they are in need. As a Christian, you should be known for your love for others. Today we see such a person in Philemon. He had a thousand reasons to be known for something else, but Paul commends him on his love for the church.

**Philemon 1:5**

“Because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints.”

*Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020*  
The Lord Gives and He Takes Away



Fish stories always seem to reach epic proportions. The fisherman tells how he struggled to reel this massive fish, and just as he is about to bring it into the boat, it breaks free from the hook. You can watch videos on YouTube of people showing off their catch only to have a seal pop out of the water and snag it. Whenever I see these, I always think about the verse in Job, which says, “The Lord gives, and He takes away.”

**Job 1:21-22**

“He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.”  
Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.”

*Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2020*  
More Than a Good Citizen



Most Christians are model citizens wherever they live. They abide by the laws, pay their taxes, and subject themselves to the country’s leadership. That lines up with Scripture. We are to be more than a good citizen. As a disciple of Jesus Christ, we are to show His love to others.

**Titus 3:1-2**

“Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.”

## FINANCIAL REPORT— AUGUST 2020

### BUILDING ACCOUNT

#### **Income**

Building fund boxes £20.00

**Expenditure** Nil

**Balance as of 31/08/20** **£9612.88**

### GENERAL ACCOUNT

#### **Income**

Offertories £1961.50

Donations to church £90.00

Home Church Box £150.00

Government Grant for caretaker work (August) £313.07

Government Grant for youth pastor work (August) £761.02

Youth Pastor Envelopes £95.00

#### **Expenditure**

Only routine items

**Overall Income in August 2020** **£3422.04**

**Overall Expenditure in August 2020** **£4010.46**

**Balance as at 31/08/20** **£22576.71**

**(Includes £2849.09 for Youth Pastor & Youth Mission Work)**

### INFORMATION

National Savings Bond still £2000

Savings Account £12471.15

**Ray Clare**