



Bunyan Meeting

News Letter/14

SUNDAY 19 JULY 2020

Dear friends

Thank you to everyone who has responded to the request last week to write something in for our News Letter. Please keep sending your articles in direct to me at chrisdamp@mac.com or by post to the church office for my attention.

Last Wednesday we held a Deacons' Meeting and discussed how we might reopen our buildings for services. We will be making preparations to reopen in the coming weeks, and may be able to open for services sometime in September, but this will depend upon the general situation with regard to the virus at the end of August. Our Mayor told a meeting of faith leaders during the week that people should still be staying at home unless absolutely necessary to go out, and the government guidelines on reopening places of worship states that those over seventy should still be staying at home! So it is difficult to know exactly what we should do, but we will have to open again at some stage, and when we do so, we will be careful to make the church as safe as we possibly can.



To help us with our planning, I wonder if you would be able to send an email to the church office, or perhaps telephone and leave a message, just to let us know if you would feel able to attend a face to face service if we opened the church whilst infection rates were much as they are at the present? It would help in our planning to know how many people may attend services when we first open.

Numbers at services will be limited and to enable us to safely accommodate those who want to attend we anticipate that there will have to be a booking system in place, which will help us to prepare appropriate seating for couples, families and individual worshippers.

Once we return to services at Mill Street, we will continue to produce the Service Sheet just as we currently do, and this will continue to be circulated to everyone. On a Sunday morning those who gather at Mill Street will share in this service together and we hope that we might also be able to live stream the service on the internet at the same time. More information will be shared as it becomes available in the next few weeks.

I hope that you are all keeping safe and well.

Your friend and Minister

Chris

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging."

Psalm 46 v 1 - 3



Chat, Coffee and Croissants - This Sunday, 19th July 10.15am

We will gather for a Zoom chat over coffee this **Sunday, 19th July at 10.15am**, the time when we would normally have coffee following our Christ, Coffee and Croissants service.



Our 'Zoom' Chat,
Coffee & Croissants
on the third Sunday
in June

Zoom is free to download and use and can be installed on desk computers, tablets and laptops
<https://zoom.us>

You just need to click on the link shown below*.

Zoom is secure due to passwords and waiting rooms so no one can enter the meeting without the host allowing them in. If you haven't used it

before and would like a trial run please contact Ann Davies:
ann davies bedford@gmail.com

To join the meeting please use:

*Join Zoom Meeting
[https://uso4web.zoom.us/j/76127273944?
pwd=QogwTk5DVUR5azdocjBJNER3Zk9Jdz09](https://uso4web.zoom.us/j/76127273944?pwd=QogwTk5DVUR5azdocjBJNER3Zk9Jdz09)

Meeting ID: **761 2727 3944**

Passcode: **9G8ah9**

Audrey Mehew writes:

Thank you once again for the News Letter and yesterday's service. The National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast held in June was so interesting and listening to the Bishop of Kensington.

All the work you do to produce the service is really appreciated and also thanks to the members of the congregation who take part. So much of life is different for us all at the moment. I would normally be in Teignmouth with Simon this week and next month with Sarah and family in Cromer but both have had to be cancelled due to the virus. On the bright side, I am home this week to water all my plants in their containers which are about to burst forth into flower. Those neglected four packets of seeds found in my garage have really flourished.

Audrey

The BMS Birthday Scheme

If you wish to support the BMS through their Birthday Scheme, please contact Margaret Ormerod. It's a great way to celebrate a birthday. Thank you for your support.

This coming week, **Audrey Mehew** celebrates her birthday.

Members of the Scheme can make donations online at bmsworldmission.org quoting our church reference number which is 7. Or you can send your donation to Margaret Ormerod at 32, Wheathouse Close, Bedford. MK41 8JX. Or simply wait until we are back at church and hand it to me there.

Many thanks, **Margaret**





Who is it?

Thank you to those who have submitted answers to the “Who is it?” item which appeared in the last News Letter two weeks ago. We have had eleven correct entries and two incorrect entries. The mystery individual is **Brian Cornish**.

Thank You

Anne and Brian Tolley would like to thank all at Bunyan for both the flowers they received from the church on their diamond wedding anniversary, and those they received when Brian was unwell.

Cath Gipson writes:

I would like to thank Bunyan Church for the lovely flowers I received, delivered by Ian and Ann.

They truly made me smile. I look forward so much to the Sunday Services delivered by our ‘postie’ Sue.

They are a joy to read as so much hard work has gone into producing them.

Great team work has resulted in keeping us all in touch!

I look forward to the future when we will all be together again with Chris as our leader.

Kindest regards

Cath Gipson



Congratulations!

Andrew and Joy Duthie have announced the safe arrival of a new granddaughter, **Callie Rose**, to their daughter Hilary and David Kingsbury on 3rd July. Callie weighed in at 7lb 8oz and mother and daughter are both doing well. Hilary had a worrying pregnancy, but everything turned out well in the end. Her husband David also had to go down to University College Hospital in London for an operation to rectify a collapsed lung and was there for over a week. He is now back to full health and has been working from home. Joy and Andrew have been looking after Logan on a regular basis.

How did you come to Bunyan Meeting?

Allan Linger writes:

My journey to Bunyan began in the January of 1972 when sadly my father passed away having developed lung cancer. Later that year my mother, at the invitation of a friend, went with her to a meeting of the Ladies Fellowship held at Bunyan Church in Kempston and at once felt very much at home. Each year the Ladies Fellowship held an anniversary service and this happened not long after my mother joined them and she decided to attend. The leader of the Fellowship was a lady, who some of you will remember, called Lilian Smith who was shall we say quite a character. My mother again received a very warm welcome and from that Sunday onwards started to attend both the morning and evening services and so a pattern developed at home where on a Sunday morning my mother would put on her “Sunday Best” and go to church and I would put on my “Sunday Scruff” and go to clean my car. This went on for several

weeks but after a while, when cleaning my car, I began to have a recurring thought in my head which was saying “What are you doing cleaning your car on a Sunday morning?”. I tried my best to ignore this thought but as the weeks went by it grew stronger so one Sunday morning as usual my mother prepared herself for going to church and I, instead of donning my “Sunday Scruff” put on something a little more upmarket much to the surprise of my mother and she asked me what I was doing to which I replied “I am coming with you”.

On arrival at the church door the first person we met was the aforementioned Lilian Smith whose words of greeting to me was something along the lines “We shall have snow later”. As I said earlier my mother had felt very much at home both at the Ladies Fellowship and the Sunday services and I immediately felt the same and from then on washing the car on a Sunday became an event from the past and attending both services at Kempston Bunyan very much for then and the future. I soon became involved at Kempston becoming a member much to the delight of my mother who had previously taken that path and I also became a Deacon for the Kempston Branch, got involved in running a youth group on a Friday evening and was invited to become a Trustee. Lilian Smith was not only the leader of the Ladies Fellowship she was also in charge of the Sunday School and was Church Secretary and when she “retired” from the latter I took over.

When the decision was taken to close Kempston Bunyan some of the congregation decided to join Kempston West Methodist and others, including my mother and myself, started to attend Mill Street and that is how I became involved in Bunyan Meeting.

Allan

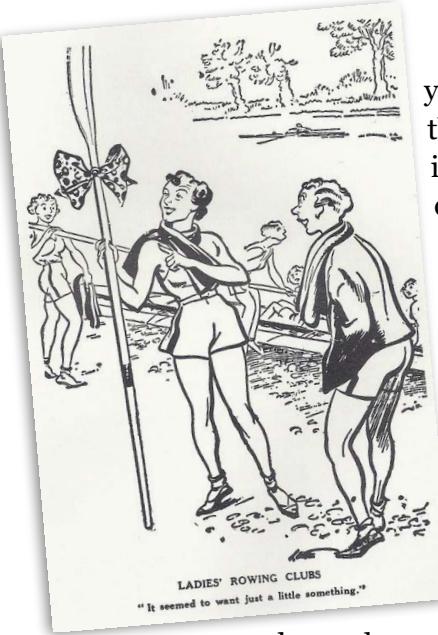
Cherry Protheroe writes:

My very first visit to Bunyan Meeting was in November 1971 to hear Handel’s Messiah. It struck me how dull, dark, and dingy it was, everything was brown with tall wooden boxed pews. I had no idea then, that there were family connections and friends I had known for some years.



It was a couple of years later that I eventually attended a morning service only to see yet again a rather foreboding interior, but to receive a very warm welcome from a Mr Harold Harper and noted a somewhat elderly congregation. I attended services on occasions (Revd D Glynn Evans was the Minister) and then was told that for some time the services would be held in the hall as the church was to be redeveloped. That interested me as I thought it was indeed in need of a “face lift” if I were to continue to attend services and consider becoming part of the fellowship (yes, I do believe the environment is an integral part of the act of congregational worship and sitting in a boxed pew did not allow any interaction with fellow worshippers). But I was impressed with the fact that people were very friendly and welcoming although it wasn’t very easy in the circumstances, with nowhere to mingle after the service.

I can still remember vividly my reaction and that of others when we were first allowed into the sanctuary as we now know it after the redevelopment. There was a tear in many an eye but unbelievably, there were some who were not happy! So, as now, after services there was a space to meet in the foyer and get to know others and I discovered Wendy Cooper attended (she and I had played hockey together when of school age!) and my father had been part of the scout group with Ken Wells when they were both



young men; that Ron and Horace Gale knew my father and grandfather through business and later that my great grandfather had owned some land in Mill Street close to the church. Doreen Watson appeared (with her two children) and she and I had rowed in the same boat on the rivers Great Ouse, Thames, Stour etc as part of Bedford Ladies Rowing Club when we were teenagers! So I started to feel a part of the congregation. There were quite a lot of families who attended and children going out to Sunday School although it still appeared quite a "conservative" and older congregation. But, I felt comfortable and happy to be a part of that congregation and eventually made the decision to become a church member on confession of faith and was received into membership in February 1981.

As a member I attended the monthly church meetings and got to know and understand something of how the church was managed and run. I knew there were a group of "men in grey suits" called Trustees, but I had no idea what they did as it all seemed very secretive and that "a long line of deacons (all men) came out of the side door from the hall each Sunday morning" to walk to their places and we heard something of their work at church meetings! In 1983 we were informed that Glynn Evans was going to retire at the end of that year. It was the last church meeting in November 1983 as Glynn was retiring when I was poked in the back by Margaret Greenshields and Mary Coulson and asked if I would be a deacon. They had to ask the people sitting either side of me (Doreen Griffin and Dorothy Walding – yes, there were a lot of women in those days too, but not many in leadership roles) for my name so that they could nominate me! And so it was in February 1984 I was inducted by Revd James Alexander (a previous but then retired Minister of Bunyan Meeting) as a deacon. I have to say I was more than a little astounded when I was first asked to serve at communion, then to be told it was the wives of the deacons who washed up afterwards. I thought that would let me off, but no, I was told I could help too ...

I served as a Deacon for 21 years. I was made a Trustee in May 1994 and (soon after retiring from teaching), Chairperson of the Museum & Library Committee in February 2010 and still serve in both of these roles today. I am looking forward to my second retirement!!

Cherry

Wendy Richardson writes:

Greetings to all from Biddenham. Firstly I must add my thanks to all of you involved in producing both the excellent Services and the weekly News Letters. A mammoth task, beautifully executed. Every Friday I decide I must join in the News Letter, then by Wednesday I realise I have missed another deadline!



I have spent life in lockdown putting much needed order back into a rather neglected and overgrown garden. I have found it great to be outdoors particularly in the lovely weather in May and June. As many of you know my husband and I have a home in Florida and so 18 weeks without travelling has been rather different. We returned on 13th March just hours before flights from Sarasota locked down. The plan was to be back in time for our son's wedding on 4th May. Sadly there was no wedding, a Zoom party replaced the cancelled wedding. Now we are looking forward to 30th August when the wedding is going ahead at the Fitzrovia Chapel (*left*) with the planned reception in a London restaurant or a picnic in Regents Park!

Going back thirty years, I first became a member of Bunyan in February 1989. David and I had been living in America until 1987 but returned to the UK weeks before our son was born. We moved to Biddenham in July 1987 and I started attending St James and enjoyed meeting the other young families in the village. However having grown up as a non conformist I found the services not to my liking. I came upon Bunyan after some searching and loved it, and so I am still here! Over my years as Sunday School teacher, playgroup worker, deacon, scone and chilli maker, I have got to know so many of you. It was lovely when Mum moved to Bedford in 2003 and joined me at Bunyan, she found a warm welcome as I had all those years before.

I so look forward to sitting in the Church again and joining you all in worship, until then I hope I meet the deadline, best wishes to you all.

Wendy

Ken Wells writes:

In the 1930's my sister Olive (Pack) and myself, Ken Wells, along with our parents, attended the Bunyan branch church at Elstow. My father was a local preacher and I was 6 years old when he invited me to go with him when preaching at the Bunyan branch church at Stagsden. The Mill Street church arranged for us to be taken there by Mr Harper in his taxi and that was the first time in my life I had ever ridden in a motor car. I had in fact, when I was 5 years of age, traveled in an ambulance during the great scarlet fever epidemic when I was taken to spend thirteen weeks in the isolation hospital at Clapham. My parents used to cycle from Bedford to Clapham to see me every Sunday afternoon, just to wave to me through the window of the isolation ward.

As a family we left the Elstow Bunyan in 1934 and attended the Mill Street Bunyan because my parents joined the choir at Mill St and Olive later joined the choir when she was 14 years of age. Just before this period our Aunt and Uncle, Fred and Hilda Wells, had moved into Howard House as the Bunyan Meeting Caretakers. Uncle Fred had previously lost his job when Short Brothers had closed the Airship works at Shortstown.



Our parents often took us to have tea with my Aunt and Uncle and as a young lad I remember being overawed by the sheer size of Howard House, one of the bedrooms was like a dormitory. Those were then days before a large slice had been taken off the Mill Street end of the house in order to widen the corner of the road. At the other end of the house stood a large annex which was knocked down in order to build the present museum, the lower floor being the servants quarters and the upper floor was a large recreation room which some years before had been the meeting place for the Bunyan Men's Club, and it had a large snooker table. In those years it obviously wasn't considered right for Bunyan females to be club-able so they had the choice of the Ladies Guild or the Women's Meeting.

So much for history - its hats off to the past and coats off to the future.

Ken

Post Pandemic

I hope that one thing that will come out of this terrible pandemic is how we evaluate people in the future. The NHS staff, doctors, nurses of course, but we now realise there are others who, when this time has passed will also have our respect.

There are the hospital cleaners also in the front line, the porters, the catering staff who feed the patients, outside there are the posties who are still bringing that birthday card or letter to brighten an isolation.

The street cleaner who stops the streets and town centres becoming a tip. The supermarket staff, and although most of us do abide by the rules, they have to face the irresponsible who feel they are immune to all of this.

There are the kind neighbours who have kept an eye on single households, the volunteers who answered the call to help their communities, and who now will not recognise that a barber is a skilled job. Of course there are the carers in the homes and at our own homes; will we dare to take them for granted again?

Perhaps we will assess things like the gig economy where so called self-employed can have a proper contract instead of being treated as casual, many finding themselves out of work and no access to benefits. Were you not shocked at the boss of one pub chain who immediately laid off his staff and told them to get a job at Tesco? Would you want to work loyally for him again?

What it tells me is that we are all important in our own way, and that we all play our part. Let us look to a new society where we can look at each other kindly and not too judgmental.

Ken Thomas (Ken is a museum steward and treasurer of the museum)

Handmade Cards for Charity



This year Janet, Ruth and Mary decided to carry on raising money for Keech Hospice Care through the sale of their cards and gifts in the Church Foyer.

Unfortunately the Covid 19 pandemic has meant that from March this could no longer happen. However we had already sold some of the cards and rather than wait until the end of the year, we thought it would be better to send the money already raised, now, so that the Hospice can benefit from it immediately. We have £127.50 and I will send that to Keech Hospice Care as soon as possible.

Gilly Millberry

Offerings

Thank you to everyone who has brought their offering envelopes and cheques to the church office in response to the note in last week's News Letter. Sue in our church office paid £2,615 into the bank this week.

Sue says that she would be very grateful if you did not fold notes and maybe just put them flat in a bigger envelope along with the empty offering envelopes. The new plastic style notes are very springy and won't lie flat very easily especially when folded.



Daily Hope - 0800 804 8044

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

COVID ISLAND DISCS

BUNYAN MEETING IN LOCKDOWN

FACTS AND FIGURES

Current at 13 July 2020

People stranded on Covid Island	21
Records, books and luxuries chosen	210
Number of times Covid Island web site was visited	2,542
Number of views of individual web pages	5,856
Average times each contributor's page was viewed	99

The most popular disc, chosen five times, was Simon & Garfunkel's Bridge Over Troubled Water

The most popular composer: JS Bach, with nine entries

Wackiest entry?
The All Blacks Haka

Breakdown of discs by genre

Genre	Percentage
Popular	45%
Orchestral	23%
Choral	17%
Instrumental	9%
Opera / Musicals	6%

www.covidisland.co.uk

THANKS
EVERYONE!

For Your Prayers

Please remember **Ruth Blake, Wendy Carter, Delia O'Halloran, Holly, Janet Barratt, Denise Browning** and the rest of her family, on the death of her mother, **Rita Long**.



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