



Bunyan Meeting

News Letter/5

SUNDAY 17 MAY 2020

Dear friends

I do miss seeing people. Talking to somebody on the telephone is grand, but it is not the same as seeing somebody face to face. The other morning I attempted to contact one of our Deacons via Zoom. This was not altogether straight forward as I had never previously set up a Zoom meeting and the other person had never used Zoom before! We talked to each other over the phone as we tried to work out which things to press on the computer screen and then suddenly we could see each other! It was wonderful, for after weeks of chatting by phone, we could now actually see one another's faces again!

This adventure with Zoom had a purpose. It was a rehearsal for a full meeting of the Deacons on Wednesday afternoon. It was such a delight for me to see the Deacons as we worked our way through the agenda. Seeing each other and dealing with some of the business of the church made me feel that in the midst of our changed circumstances there was still a little bit of normality.

The work of the church continues, and we still have much to think about as we plan for the future. Life for Bunyan Meeting will probably not return to normal for a very long time. Even if we resume meeting for worship this year, some people may still be isolating at home, reducing numbers in church and many of us will still not see each other face to face, perhaps for a long time.



It is particularly hard not to see those we love, our family and our friends. But as the Queen reminded us in her address to the nation a few weeks ago: "We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return: we will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again."

Please do keep your own news and pictures coming for our news letter. Please consider writing something about what you have been doing, thinking and feeling during these days of confinement. All items for the News Letter should be sent direct to me at chrisdamp@mac.com or by post to the church office for my attention.

I hope that you are all keeping safe and well.

Your friend and Minister

Chris

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for people to dwell together in unity!

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Psalm 133

Audrey Mehew writes

Thank you once again for a very moving Service which is very much appreciated. My family know not to ring me on a Sunday morning. I really feel as if I am with our congregation, particularly hearing the prayers and Bible readings read by people we know. I join in the singing now with more confidence! When we finally can all meet up again at Bunyan we must have a special collection to help with the deficit in the Church's funds. All of us surely are not spending so much of our income.



I was seven when the war ended and so can remember the street party we had in Albert Street, Bedford and indeed had kept photographs and newspaper cuttings of us there so my son asked if he could show his friends! Their mothers are obviously younger than me! I looked quite grumpy as the only costume left at the hiring shop was a sailor suit. I was not well pleased when my friends had pretty dresses!

Audrey Mehew

Kay Munro has sent two cards to us

Dear Bunyan Family

Because of the kindness, yet again, of one of our members I was able to share in the Sunday service. It is good of members in this difficult time to find time to remember and care for those of us who are not able to play a part.

I have been so lucky and uplifted by earlier visits, phone calls and letters - bless you all.

I am afraid that my writing is so poor that I have to find a day when I can control it fairly well. I have waited so long to write this heartfelt thank you.

My love to you all, God bless you all.

Kay Munro

My dear friends at Bunyan

Once again I have been blessed with a copy of the Newsletter which makes me feel close to you all. It is so good to read news of individual friends as wells to have a copy of the Sunday service which I can share with everyone.

In a nursing home we feel even more distanced from 'real life' but hopefully we shall soon be able to enjoy visits once again.

My love to you all

Kay

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, **Margaret Marshall** celebrates her birthday.



Margaret Ormerod writes

Just to say how much we appreciate all the work that must be involved in putting the newsletter and services together and also making sure that people who have no access to tablets etc. can have it in print.

Peter had a lovely day for his birthday. Many thanks from Peter for the cards, telephone calls and the friends who popped round during the day keeping their distance in the garden. Altogether a most enjoyable day.



Church Flower Rota

Each week flowers are given for the communion table and after Sunday worship these are usually taken out to members of the church who are perhaps unwell or housebound.

One of our members who delivers flowers has taken flowers from her garden to members of the church when it was her turn for making a delivery. Other members have arranged for flowers to be taken out to members of the church when it was their Sunday to give the flowers.

If you are due to give the flowers for the communion table and you feel that you would like to instead perhaps send these to out to members of the church, please contact the minister to discuss how we might arrange for this to happen.



Cath Gipson writes

Dear Friends,

A big **Thank You**, to all the people in our community who contacted me when I was recently not well and for all the cards and well wishes, that gave me the strength to get better.

My family and grandchildren have all been so supportive, shopping for me, cooking delicious meals and making sure I have everything I need. I am feeling so much better now.

I feel thankful that I have a beautiful garden full of birds, that keep me amused every day. Nature can be so joyful.

The Newsletter and Sunday Service are a great comfort and make me feel so close to you all. I am so pleased Chris is better and with us again.

I know that we will all be together again soon so until then, take care, stay safe and God bless.

Catherine Gipson

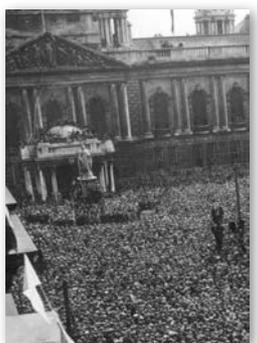


Memories of VE Day

For what it's worth, all I can remember about VE Day, was being outside City Hall in Belfast, with very many thousands of other young people (I was 16 yrs old at the time) singing, dancing and jumping up and down with complete strangers. I don't recall there being any drink or drunkenness. I don't remember how I got there: walked probably, we lived about one and a half miles from city centre, and I don't recall any trams running: too many happy people filling the streets!!

Best regards,

Bob Allen



Paul and Julie Smith write

Good to report we are doing ok.

I am fairly well occupied with doing bits around the house and working at home three days a week. We are just starting to consider new methods of working to allow us to do what is essential whilst C19 is around.

Julie has been furloughed from Bedford College so is not likely to get back to her job until at least September, but we have managed to get some bedding plants and compost via a contact free nursery at Cardington so that has lifted her spirits as she too loves the garden.

Rebecca has been working at Tesco since returning early from her travels and is very able to fill her time with Zoom sessions with her mates and she has also started organising online sessions for her Rainbows group so that they can keep going as well.

Julie is really missing working at the church coffee shop on a Friday.

I am sure it's some time away yet, but we are looking forward to getting back to a degree of normality. Despite all the conferencing facilities etc. there is no substitute for the proper human contact we enjoyed beforehand.

Take care & keep safe.

Paul & Julie

“Pulpits and Prison Doors” 2020

As the country went into lockdown on Monday 23rd March the last full day of our museum being open to the public was Saturday 21st March. In the week prior to that our visitor numbers had been quite low as people started to become fearful. However it did not deter some as prior to that, we had been very busy.

Our project with Full House Theatre “Pulpits and Prison Doors” (funded by Arts Council England) commenced on Monday 2nd March with a technical rehearsal, followed by a full dress rehearsal on the Tuesday (thanks to those of our congregation and volunteers who came along and participated).

Over the next eight days we worked with 439 children from 9 schools: Westfield, Roxton, Putnoe, Sheerhatch, Broadmead, Carlton, Sharnbrook, Castle Newnham, and Shortstown – all Primary Schools and years 3 - 6. It was, yet again, another incredible experience for us and especially the staff and children to see, hear and participate in learning about John Bunyan and his life and times. Below are some of the comments received:

Teacher – “This has been such an amazing day for pupils and staff with such a wide variety of activities. The actors are brilliant and we have been so well looked after. Thank you very much.”

Pupil to teacher – “Miss, who organised this trip? Because it has been the best thing we have done ever!”

Church member/volunteer – “I feel quite emotional, thinking back to how hard we worked to build the new museum nearly 30 years ago, then getting the museum gallery designed and installed and seeing how it has been used today by the actors really bringing the life and times of John Bunyan and his faith to life for school children. I





could never have imagined how the museum could be used in this way or that it would be possible in such a comparatively small space. It is incredible. Well done to all involved.”

Having spent 6 full days and 2 rehearsal days involved with this project I am still in awe of the actors and grateful to Nicola for planning this with the Full House team and securing the grant to enable it to happen. Thanks too, to our volunteers who played such a vital role assisting with the 90 children each day and the teachers, carers and parents who accompanied them.

Pulpits and Prison Doors is part of the Church/Basement/Museum Prisons Project which we hope in the not too distant future will be complete.

Cherry Protheroe

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.

For Your Prayers

Please remember Ruth Blake, Pam Jameson, Wendy Carter, Delia O’Halloran, and Linda and Bill Garner.



Bunyan Meeting

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