



Bunyan Meeting

News Letter/11

SUNDAY 28 JUNE 2020

You will be receiving a [Response Form](#) attached to your Service Sheet this week - either posted/delivered or emailed. Please do complete and return these: if as a printed form return it to the Church Office (by post or 'Bunyan Postie'); if emailed it can be completed on-line and emailed back to the Church Office. Your thoughts will be very helpful to all who are generating our weekly worship services.

Dear friends

We do wonder what the future holds for us? The Covid crisis has affected not just our church activities, but almost every area of our lives. Some say that life will never be the same again, and many are fearful about the future.

It is good to remember that those things which we fear may often never come to pass. As somebody once said, fear 'is the idiot of the intellect, gibbering in the attic after nightfall. It is a coward spreading cowardice with false alarms. It is a liar and a libeller; life is a thousand times kinder than fear would have us paint it'.

Our fears are sometimes realised, but when this is so, we generally find that we need not have feared that particular thing in quite the way that we did. A misfortune is seldom as bad in retrospect, and whether it is better or worse than we imagined largely depends upon our own attitude towards it.

That which would crush one person may spur another to greater endeavour. The difference between a positive or a negative attitude towards life often springs from the way in which we face life itself. It is far better for us to act, to take hold of life and make of it what we will, rather than allow life to take us where it will.

A Minister once wrote, 'Life is like a mettlesome horse. Handle it firmly and it will carry you whither you will. Touch it timidly and it will throw you in the dust'.

Please do continue to send material for the News Letter. All items 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

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41 v 10



Coffee via Zoom

Our first coffee via zoom attracted between fifteen and twenty participants. It was good to see each other chat together. We will have coffee via zoom again on the third Sunday of July.

Janice Griffiths writes:

Well fourteen weeks without our wonderful church. If you'd told us this at the beginning we might have given up, however with the wonderful ministry team's endeavours, services on the radio and TV we have managed well and been greatly blessed, but we still miss the fellowship of friends. It is now a little better with the family, seeing them distanced in the garden and often having a distanced walk with the



two elder grand daughters. Still managing to find plenty to do, gardening always ongoing though a pain with monthly green bins - they are always well packed down. TV had gone to the dogs with so many repeats so we have been watching some of our many home videos, now on DVD, of the family growing, special occasions, wedding anniversaries, etc. and holiday videos a laugh and sometimes a shock as we look at how we have aged. We recently watched Evans 60th birthday party where myself and the daughters and one friend did a take on the Spice Girls with a song written especially for Evan by me (not a pretty sight but it amused everyone). Its a little sobering noting that so many in the films have passed away, in fact one DVD we have of Evan's mother's 80th birthday, when we did a tea party for her with four friends and five brothers and sisters around the table, alas, all are now gone. It was twenty two years ago however, but we are reminded that we have been blessed over the years with family and friends and many many happy memories and experiences and we know that God is good! We can sit and bemoan our fate at this time or we can look at the positives and that is what we must do. God bless you all.

Janice

Deja vu

On the 19th March, the government announced that because of Covid-19, only a maximum of 5 persons could attend a wedding. This brought back memories for Pearl and myself.

We need to turn the clock back to 1967/68. We had decided to get married and had set the date for the 1st of January 1968. All arrangements had been made for a traditional wedding, with the ceremony taking place in the tiny village of Trentagh, Co Donegal in the Irish Republic. I had been stationed at RAF Tangmere in West Sussex from October 1967, since completion of a three year tour of Cyprus; Pearl had returned from Cyprus in the December. As there were no Women serving at RAF Tangmere, Pearl was to be discharged from the Airforce on marriage (as was the case in those days).

Things didn't quite go to plan and an unsuspected spanner was thrown into the works. These unforeseen circumstances were to change things dramatically. Our wedding now had to be either postponed or the venue changed. When you are serving in the forces, it can be quite difficult to arrange things to suit oneself, and operational requirements always take priority. After much deliberation and with the help of the Padre; we decided to get married at Tangmere, with a new date set for the 15th January 1968. It was to take place at St Andrews, a very small Anglican church in the village. Among other things, it was the final resting place for both Allied and German pilots killed in the battle of Britain. The person who married us, was not only the Chaplain of the RAF Station, but he was also the Vicar of Tangmere and the Rector of the neighbouring village of Boxgrove. So it was, that on the 15th



St Andrew's Church
Tangmere,
West Sussex

January 1968 we were to tie the knot. Now here's the RUB; there were just 5 people, including the vicar, gathered for the occasion. The same person was my best man, gave Pearl away and was a witness. The reason for these drastic measure was; and here is another RUB; a virus, in the form of foot and mouth disease. Pearl's home place, which was also the family farm, with livestock, were in QUARANTINE: sound a bit familiar? There was a travel ban for anyone from an infected area going to Ireland, so you could say we were in lockdown. In general, no one was allowed to visit any farm in either the UK or Ireland. For those of you who like a happy conclusion; the wedding dress that Pearl had made for our big day, was worn by Pearl's younger sister on her wedding day, some four years later (nothing new about recycling).

While I am here giving you the above spiel, I need some help please. The church has invested in some new Christmas lanterns to replace those that are well past their sell by date. Is there anyone who could paint the arms that the lanterns will hang from? There are 8 of them and they are 4 feet in length. Materials will be supplied and they can either be painted at the church in the upstairs craft room, or at your home. Please contact me if you can help. Thank you.

Best wishes

Michael Thomas

A Jigsaw for Lockdown

Diana Palmer one of our museum stewards, has been keeping herself occupied with one of our jigsaws. Diana helps with the shop by ordering stock etc. and decided she should buy one of the jigsaws she was responsible for purchasing. It has obviously come in handy over the past few months!



Diana says: "I've just finished the stained glass window jigsaw that I bought from the museum shop when it first went on sale. Although only 400 pieces it was pretty challenging, but it's a lovely puzzle to work at and look at when done." She sent this picture of the completed puzzle:

Better you than me Diana. Well done and thank you for sending this reminder of the church.

The jigsaw stained glass windows - £16.99

If anyone would like one of these puzzles, let me know and when Nicola is back at the end of the month we will get one to you.

Cherry Protheroe

A Fishy Tale

There are times when the peace & tranquility of Parsons Barn Fishery together with fish that are not hungry is just too much and you have to surrender

Brian Cornish



From Revd Delia ...

"I should like to thank my 'church family' for all expressions of your love, care, prayers and support received over the last 14 weeks. The cards, phone calls/texts, notes, and flowers have all helped to lighten the long dark journey through radiotherapy during our national lockdown.

I am in the recovery period and now beginning to feel more human once again! This time seems unending because I have an infection which will not clear. Hopefully by the time I get the results of the radiotherapy at the end of July, all will be healed up.

Like everyone, I do miss going to church and seeing loved ones and friends. However, it is exciting and challenging to ponder what the 'new normal' might be for our church in the future. One thing is certain, whatever shape or form our church is in the future, it

will have prayer as a major activity. When at College over 30 years ago our Principal The Revd Dr Hamish Smith said: 'The church that prays together, stays together'.

Enfolding me in your prayers kept me close to the One who taught us to pray even Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

Thank you and every blessing

Delia xx 🐘 "

How did you to come to Bunyan Meeting?

Evan Griffiths writes:

In December 1987 on my own, I paid a visit to Bunyan Meeting one Sunday evening, sitting right at the back near the new kitchen area. As a family we were looking for a change of church. Janice came on a Sunday morning for a visit and so we decided that it may be what we were looking for and we came along as a family to see what the girls thought. As we parked in Castle Lane another family were on their way in. The lady, we now know as Joy Duthie, asked if the girls would like to go with her into, I think the then named Junior Church. Although they were not too sure they decided that they would go and enjoyed it so much they were happy for us to change churches. As they were involved in a Christmas party at our previous church we decided to wait until January of 1988 to make the move permanently, knowing the fact that we were made so welcome.



Easter that year, the Bunyan walk was to be the Bunyan Trail starting at the church and finishing at the old Harrowden site of the Bunyan cottage. Walking across what was known as the Igranic bridge, Elstow Road, Janice, walking with Janet Barratt was asked if she was a flower arranger, her answer being no, but that her husband had arranged the flowers in church for our wedding so dabbled a bit. O heck, Janet soon caught up with me and talked me into joining the Flower Club and to take part in the Flower Festival that year. This was to be based on The Pilgrim's Progress and I had to do a window upstairs of Apollyon fighting the devil. The Festival raised £3000 which was given to the Wishing Well Appeal for the Great Ormond Street Hospital. On leaving the church the Rev. Peter Protheroe approached us about being made members which I think again was in 1988. Having taken that step within two to three years I was elected to the Diaconate and served as a Deacon for I think 19 years. I also served as a Trustee for part of that time. When a committee was set up for the building of the new museum I was asked to join it which if my memory serves me correctly, lasted about ten years.



'The Pilgrim's Progress' Flower Festival

Some years later Janet said to me that she would like to retire from the leadership of the Flower Club and asked me to take over which I did. Having about sixteen members now, over the few years that I have been in charge we have arranged three festivals, one being on the theme of God's Time (a time to be born and a time to die etc.) This raised £2000 for Sue Ryder Moggerhanger. Chris and myself went over and presented them with a cheque.

Life at Bunyan has been interesting with its ups and downs. People come and people go but friendships still remain.

On retirement at 65, I joined the Wednesday Lunches team working with Eileen and others. When Eileen retired Jean McGall and myself took charge. I remember one week taking out of the freezer what I thought was an apple crumble only to find that when

cooked it was a cottage pie which had been left over from the Harvest Supper. This cottage pie went down so well that we decided to do a cooked meal each week alongside the salads, soup and baked potatoes. When Joy joined the team I felt it was time for me to step down as leader and Joy to take over.

God has been good to us over our years at Bunyan with good ministry and singing, with a thank you to Peter, Chris and Brian, not forgetting Delia and Ruth in the past, and all those who work faithfully week by week especially over this lockdown period. Thank you all.

Praying that we may all be together again soon in praise and worship.

Evan

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, **Julie Barker** 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**

Lockdown Heroes 2

This weekend, **A Secluded Place** (a prayer resource with a link from our website: <https://www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk/monthly-services>) is based on the hymn, 'Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee'. The focus is on using and developing the gifts God has given us, as Frances Ridley Havergal, who wrote that hymn, certainly did.

I would like to mention another set of Lockdown heroes, whose hard work has supported the life, worship and witness of the church during this time.

On the very day that lockdown was announced, **Ann Davies** emailed me to ask how we would be making the best use of our website and other electronic resources. **David Walker** and I were already working on the first of the service sheets, and **Sue Stewart** was compiling an email list of church folk. So we created a 'website team'.

The team has met by WhatsApp every Wednesday for half an hour or so since then, and we have tried to make sure that there is a constant supply of resources on the site. We have concentrated on Worship, Church Life, and Mission. Over the last three months, we have put a whole range of resources on the site:

The weekly service; weekly notices; resources for prayer and mental health; quizzes, jigsaws, and other activities from different places; special mission projects such as the Bible Society Prayer Tree, our own Howard Prayer Walk, our quarterly giving, Christian Aid Week; and lots, lots more.

We have had an excellent response, with lots of people taking part in the 'Christmas Quiz' and 'Covid Island Discs'! **Ian Rowlands** has offered a huge amount of expertise and help. And several people have sent in items, which we have tried to ensure are posted in a timely fashion: thank you to **Steve Sleight**, **Jocelyn Harper** and **Gwen Gribble**, among others: more heroes.

Alongside this, we have been helping people to record the readings and prayers that have been such a welcome part of the services. Many of our church folk had never recorded a video like this before, and had no idea what to do, but were ready to learn! **Lydia Saul** has been an absolute hero, working with nervous recruits and old hands, and receiving recordings in all kinds of formats. You have no idea, when you watch the flawless results, how much is involved in getting them to that stage. We thank all our readers and pray-ers: heroes, every one.



‘Take my life and let it be’ is the third hymn in our Sunday Service this week.

All of this is an effective form of outreach. We know that people from way beyond our own church fellowship have followed us on Facebook, and used our website with its range of resources. The pandemic has created a hunger for spiritual nourishment, and we have been able to reach out, world wide!

What has this to do with ‘Take my life and let it be’? Well, we were very much a scratch team at the beginning of this. We have all learned a huge amount. If any of us had been asked to produce a whole new set of web resources, and keep them updated week by week; and make sure there were recorded readings and prayers for every Sunday; plus all the rest – we would have said it couldn’t be done!

But instead we said: ‘take my moments and my days’, ‘take my hands’, take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose’: ‘Ever, only, all for thee’.

Hallelujah! **Janet Wootton**

Two men arrived at the Pearly Gates to be met by the Gatekeeper who told them that before he could allow them to enter he would have to enquire about their professions. One said he was a Scrap Iron Merchant the other said he was a Banker. The Gatekeeper said he could allow the Banker in but before the Scrap Iron Merchant could enter he would need to ask St Peter. After a few minutes, the Gatekeeper came back to tell the Scrap Iron Merchant he could enter, only to discover that he had gone and so had the Pearly Gates. - Submitted by **Ken Wells**

Audrey Mehew writes

Thank you - I have just enjoyed my own mid week service! My computer is quite old and was so slow, but last Sunday my son-in-law in the West Midlands and my son from Bromham got together via the internet at my house and completely revitalised my computer which took many hours! It was absolute double dutch to me, but now it is fast and I was able to click on to the service this morning and felt a member of Bunyan again. Little Freddie was a joy desperately trying to keep up with his sister but at least managed a loud Amen!

We are all having to readjust to a different life at the moment but as long as we keep to the rules, even if we do not agree with them, we ‘Will meet Again’.

God bless, **Audrey**

For Your Prayers

Please remember **Ruth Blake, Wendy Carter, Delia O’Halloran and Holly.**



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