

ROUNDA BOUT



THE COTTERIDGE CHURCH

Witnessing at the Heart of the Community

January 2014

From the Vestry



Dear Friends,

As I am sure many of you are already aware, I am now in my last year of ministry at Cotteridge and will conclude my time with you by leading worship on Sunday 13th July at the 10.30a.m. Service of Holy Communion. You may also have heard that Rev. Mary Shannahan will be serving as Methodist Minister from 1st September in addition to her ministry at Longbridge Methodist Church and Hay Green Methodist Church. I am sure that you will offer to Mary the same warmth, support and encouragement that I have experienced at the Cotteridge Church during my 7 years with you.

As I come to another “ending” in my journey of ministry, and anticipate a “new beginning” at Hall Green Methodist Church, I cannot help but reflect on the impermanent nature of life. The saying goes “all good things must come

to an end”. A more apt reflection is simply that “all things end”.

Our lives are a constant cycle of beginnings and endings. As I look back on the Cotteridge Church that I arrived at 7 years ago to share ministry with you, I recall those people who greeted me who are no longer with us. Some have moved away, some have moved on, and some now worship with the whole company of heaven. Equally, there are those who are with us now who were not with us then, and it has been my joy to see that God continues to raise up women and men to lives of worship and service.

I hope that over my seven years with you, I have communicated that I do not see ministry as the sole preserve of the Ordained. I believe passionately that every member of the Christian Church has been gifted by the Holy Spirit and that we are called to share in ministry together. As we begin another New Year, the Methodist tradition, and one adopted by our partnership at Cotteridge is that we remember the Covenant that God has made with us and respond by offering ourselves to God’s service. As we do so, it is appropriate that we should reflect on God’s call to each of us as his ministers, lay or ordained, and ponder the service to which he calls us.

There are many opportunities for service at the Cotteridge Church; only at our last Pastoral Consultation did we mention the need for more Pastoral Link people to help us care for one another in Christian love. If this is something that you feel called to, please speak to me or one of my colleagues.

Whatever this New Year holds and wherever it may lead you, I hope that it is filled with love, grace and the peace of God. Those gifts of God’s compassion that, though the things of this world will pass away, are eternal and everlasting.

Nick Jones

From the Editors' Desk



Welcome to Roundabout and a very Happy New Year! Our first issue of 2014 is a cornucopia of reading pleasure, with much food for thought.

We would love to read YOUR contributions, especially anything for our Family & Friends section. If you don't tell us, we may not know. If you are the second or third to tell us, that's better than not being told at all!

Please let us have your items no later than 26 February. You can put them in the 'W' pigeonhole in the Pennine Way or email them to marfleetwright@tiscali.co.uk.

Steve & Caroline

Family & Friends

Belated congratulations to Joyce Clark who was 90 on 14 November. Welcome to Caitlin Jean Hubschman, who was born on 11 November, - a new Great Granddaughter for Jean Dewey.

Christmas Message 2013

I always hear the words 'when Quirinius was governor of Syria' as if they are being spoken in an Irish accent. They are from Luke 2 verse 2 as you might remember. Part of the traditional Christmas readings. Why do I hear them in an Irish accent? Well they impacted on many of us in the congregation where I was minister in Kingston Upon Thames in the 1990's when one Christmas we heard them read by John Cole. John, the former Political Editor of the BBC, who died this November, was a faithful member and elder of that church for many decades.

Though seemingly quiet and unassuming, he had a passion and strong principles regarding the way society should be. John's concerns challenged me and, I think, challenge us all in the church for we often assume that we can do little about how the world is. We can be too acquiescent to subtle deterioration in the quality of our life through new initiatives - or the neglect of initiatives.

The tributes to John unequivocally emphasised his honesty, integrity and trustworthiness. Those whose political views he did not share yet came to trust him deeply in his role for the BBC. These qualities and his moral approach were grounded in his faith. In this letter I want to invite you to hear three strains of Christmas through his Irish accent.

1 John was, though a strictly impartial BBC editor, in fact a Labour man. Politically he was. And he cared about, for example, the ravages of unemployment. That made me reflect that we often talk of the birth of Jesus as if He was born in absolute poverty. I suspect that that is not so. He



was rather born into a family that was solid (as we might say) working class. His father was a tradesman. They had a home and Jesus was either born in it in Bethlehem (Matthew's gospel) or born in Bethlehem as they had had to leave their home in Nazareth because of the census (Luke's gospel). But either way he was not born into homeless circumstances – it was just that there was 'no room for them in the inn' (according to Luke). Whilst that does not detract from a gospel emphasis on the poor or the homeless it does underline something vital in the Christmas story - that God became human in a way which the vast majority of humans experience. Ordinary working circumstance. God knows what it is like and is in solidarity with humanity. You and me (though he loves the shining ones in the Dorchester Hotel too!!). So, given that our capitalist world is hooked on growth at all costs, what should our aspiration be when God has come to be where we are. To climb up the social ladder and look for growth or to live a life of sufficiency and good enoughness where we are as God was with us?

2 John Cole disliked the Spitting Image characterisation of him. Not just (or even at all) because it made fun of him - but in principle. It was something to do with the fact that he believed there was a lot of prejudice around regional accents. The establishment, in terms of many politicians or the ex-public school boys and girls displaying their talents in running many of our satirical programmes, were overly inclined to lampoon the regional accents of ordinary people as somehow less than valid. And however you read the Christmas story, Jesus ends up a northern boy - in all probability with a northern accent. His disciples, who like him grew up as Galileans, were recognised on the night he was betrayed by their Galilean (northern) accents. Then here is Christ with us in our accents and the richness of what we have inherited in the particularity of our humanity. Our multi-cultural church with its intercultural habit is grounded in a Christ who was different and not of the elite. He challenges us to stand against all prejudice against difference!

3 Shortly after Jesus was born, according to Matthew, the ruler of the country (Herod) having heard of the birth of 'another King', being paranoid about his own security, wanting to hang on to power and worried about his vulnerability, had the children in the area slaughtered. What a way to run a country! John Cole cared deeply about how countries are run – how journalists conduct their trade, how moral people are. He actually despaired at the lottery not because he was necessarily against gambling - simply that he did not believe that using gambling as a tool to run a country and raise money was the fairest way to raise those funds. And he thought journalists should question politicians with thoughtful penetrating enquiry, not finger wagging distrustful accusations which simply encouraged the politicians to evade the questions. And he expected newspaper proprietors to act in moral ways and, at threat of his own career, was prepared to bear witness against them if they didn't. As this Christmas unfolds we remember a Christ child born into a world and society which had, like ours, its brilliance but also its brutal, corrupt and immoral aspects. So does not the incarnate God beside us challenge us to ask 'what a way to run a country, - or even a world' more often and do something about it?

I will never cease to hear the word Quirinius in an Irish accent and will always strive to hear the whole of Christmas through its lilting strains.....girding me and us all to actions that make our world more moral.

Rev Roy Lowes – URC Moderator West Midlands

Girlguiding International Adventures (2013)



Girlguiding provides numerous opportunities for its members young and old! The most memorable of these opportunities always follows after participation in a Guide International trip!

During this Summer of 2013, Kings Norton District was very proud to have 12 of its members: a leader plus 11 Guides/Senior Section members (aged 14-18 years) attend County International trips to Mexico, the Netherlands and a European 'Jailbreak' Challenge. Each selected to represent Girlguiding Birmingham whilst participating in their respective trips. The participants were from the Guide units who meet at Cotteridge Church (190th Guides), Hawkesley Church (141st Guides) and Saint Nicholas Place (247th Guides) and from the Ranger unit who meet at Cotteridge Church (1st Kings Norton District Rangers).

As part of their experience, the young members participating in trips were encouraged to fundraise to help fund their trips themselves rather than solely relying upon parental support. The girls organised numerous fundraising events - cake sales, quiz nights, a Burns Night Supper and these were supported by lots of people from the three local churches in Kings Norton; Cotteridge, Hawkesley and Saint Nicholas as well as receiving grants from Kings Norton United Charities. They were very grateful for everyone's support and it certainly helped towards the £16,400 that the 12 members needed to raise collectively.



So first to depart at the end of July were Tracey, Ellie and Natalie who took part in a European 'Jailbreak' Challenge, visiting 3 countries (France, Italy and Germany) over a week, and completing various challenges along the way...a very exciting venture despite getting stuck in a glass lift in Paris! Venice though was certainly the city they enjoyed the most! The next to depart were Ashleigh, Charlotte, Jess and Paige who attended the 'Marsna Jamborette' in Holland, a 2 week scout and guide international camp. This was a fabulous opportunity for the girls to make lots of new friends from different countries and participate in lots of activities. They also managed to squeeze in a quick sightseeing visit to Belgium on their journey home from the Netherlands.

Then in August, Bethan, Casey, Christine, Grace and Katie visited 'Our Cabana', our Guide World Centre in Mexico for 2 weeks. A highlight from their trip was organising a fun-day for the local children where Our Cabana is located in Mexico, a very deprived area which made the girls realise just how fortunate young people are in the UK. Another highlight was visiting 'Six Parks' providing the opportunity to swim with dolphins!

They have all returned with new-found friendships and the most wonderful memories to last a lifetime!

Claire Storrie - Kings Norton District
Commissioner



The Bible Journey imagines following in the footsteps of Jesus



"A new and exciting, thoroughly researched and theologically sound journey through the Bible... A must have reference / website for Church Leaders and Home group study, with excellent pictures, maps and Bible teaching... I thoroughly commend it." Canon Roger Turner, Coventry Diocese (UK).

With specially produced maps, original photos and information profiles, this new website, launched to coincide with the Channel 5 series The Bible, which finished at Christmas, helps us imagine following in the footsteps of Jesus, Paul, Peter, John and other

key figures of the New Testament.

Recently, the Lord has opened the way for The Bible Journey to go online as a worldwide free resource. How we (Jenifer and Chris Taylor) have come to be able to do this now is a miracle and an example of God's perfect timing!

In September 1993 we were invited by the pastor of a Baptist church in Medias, Romania, to teach a series of lectures on the Historical Geography of the Bible to his part time theological students. The pastor had set up a theological course to prepare some of the young men in the church to pastor local village churches because they couldn't afford to go to university. Tutors

went from the US and the UK every few months for 10 days of intensive teaching. In April 1994 my husband and I went to Romania under the auspices of Eurovangelism (now Transform Europe Now) to teach our courses.

Since then, we have carried out extensive research at most of the Biblical sites across the Eastern Mediterranean including many in Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Turkey, Greece and Italy. Most of the photographs in The Bible Journey were taken by Jenifer. The text has been adapted, revised and updated by Chris, who also re-drew all the maps and diagrams especially for this website. Our aim is that The Bible Journey will help people across the world gain a deeper understanding of the New Testament and will develop their personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our new Bible Journey website was officially launched on 1st December. Seven sections are already online at <http://www.thebiblejourney.org/>

You might also be interested to take a look at our first mention in the Christian media at

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/bible.journey.imagines.following.in.footsteps.of.jesus/34600.htm> . You can also and like us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/TheBibleJourney?ref=hl> .

We hope you'll enjoy using the website and that it'll help you to understand the geographical, historical and cultural world of the New Testament. Do encourage your friends and family to use it too.

Jenifer Taylor

Journeying on

I make no apology for returning to what I consider to be the greatest challenge facing the Christian faith today. I have said before that Christian teaching must constantly be brought up to date so as to reflect our greater understanding of our world, brought about by the progress of scientific knowledge, which has rendered many of the beliefs of the past untenable for many people today. This makes it impossible for me to stand and publicly proclaim acceptance of the ancient creeds in which I do not believe.

This is an extract from a letter that was published by the Methodist Recorder:

In a memorable phrase the Apostle Paul describes people of faith as carrying divine treasure in earthenware pots. We wonder whether it may equally apply to other biblical writers and hence to the bible itself. In other words that eternal truth in scripture is inevitably constrained by human limitations and by the ancient world view in which it is expressed. Albert Schweitzer in his incisive judgement blew the whistle again:

"Christianity will only remain the living truth for successive generations if belief in Jesus can be expressed in terms of contemporary understanding".

It seems we are not very good at this, preferring to cling to established views rather than engaging with the pilgrimage of faith. Discerning the treasure from the pot is altogether more demanding and proportionately rewarding than honouring the earthenware pots of yesteryear.

The advances of knowledge endlessly challenge us to offer our treasure more credibly.

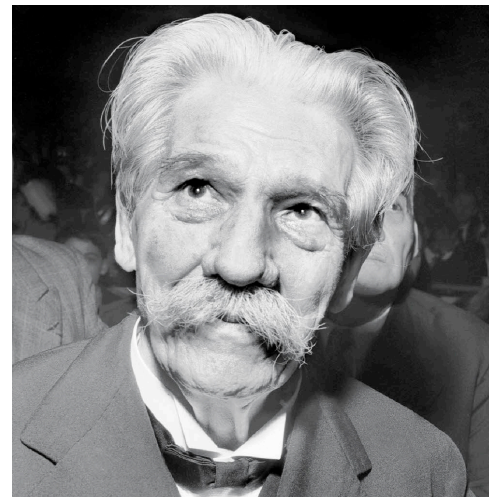
If life is a potential journey into the mystery of God we can never presume to have arrived.

Geoff Hulme

Albert Schweitzer 1875 - 1965

As he was quoted in the above letter I thought it would be good to remind ourselves of this great Christian who was an inspiration to many, including me.

He was a medical missionary, theologian, musician and philosopher. He was born in Kaysersberg Germany and studied at Strasbourg, Paris and Berlin. He became a curate in Strasbourg (1899), taught at the university (1902) and was appointed principal of the theological college (1903). True to his vow made in 1896 to serve mankind, when he was 30 years old he began to study medicine, qualifying in 1912. He set out with his new wife to set up a hospital to fight leprosy and sleeping sickness in French Equatorial Africa.



He remained there for the rest of his life. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1952.

Geoff Hulme



Our Work at the Crossroads Charity in Hong Kong



Before flying to Hong Kong, we spent a month in mainland China. The first two weeks were spent following the well-trodden tourist route through Tienanmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace and the Great Wall around Beijing; Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an; down the River Li from Guilin to Yangshou; and finally to Suzhou and Shanghai, where we met our daughter-in-law Kwai Yoke and grandchildren, Wesley and Vanessa who were visiting there to take their music exams and to accompany us back to their home in Hefei.

We travelled on the high speed 'bullet train' from Shanghai westward to Hefei at an impressive 300kph. The journey was so smooth that it hardly seemed to be moving and covered the previous 8 hour journey in just 3 hours. Hefei is alleged to be the fastest growing city in China, expanding by 1000% over the last 20 years, and is the home of the University of Science and Technology, where our son, Ian, is a Professor.

After 2 weeks living on the university campus we flew to Hong Kong to work at Crossroads

Global Charity, based in the old British Army barracks, in Kowloon. There are 4 streams to the work at Crossroads:-

1. Sending containers of supplies to charities in developing countries. During our stay 2 containers of supplies were dispatched to the typhoon hit area of the Philippines. (We first became aware of Crossroads when we accessed a container for St Margaret's Hospital in Papua New Guinea, and we have subsequently been facilitating submissions from Methodist hospitals in Kenya and Benin.)
2. Promoting the supply and sale of fair trade goods from developing countries.
3. The provision of simulation experiences to promote awareness of global poverty and oppression to the local wealthy population of Hong Kong. These include a) living with HIV/AIDS b) living in slums c) living in a war zone d) the struggle for survival of poor and marginalised people and e) a blind experience. 100,000 citizens, including schools and businesses, have participated in these activities, which we can say from personal experience, are very realistic and life changing.
4. Global Hand and its associated Global Equity Brokers connect charities in developing countries with the expertise and resources of businesses in more affluent countries. The intention is to find and meet charities involved in empowering the poor and to assist them to develop their own skills and resources to improve their lives (i.e. giving a hand-up not a hand-out). In particular, Global Equity Brokers is keen to find charities which work strategically to break the cycle of poverty and which have the capacity to partner with people in schools, health services and/or large multinational corporations wishing to make a difference in the world. This service is free of financial charge to the charities involved. A number of successful corporate partnerships are already underway between global banks, airlines, software and telecommunications companies and charities in India and Nepal.

We are now seeking to extend this work to Sub-Saharan Africa through collaboration with our colleague Eric Park, who provides expertise in corporate and business contacts which, combined with our extensive Sub-Saharan charity contacts, is already proving to be very productive.

Peter and Jean Rookes

Boys' Brigade



At the Battalion Junior Section Quiz Finals our team of Finlay, Oisin, Alex and Dennis finished in 4th place. Considering their ages, this was a really good performance.

Our BB week held in November raised £593. Thanks to all the Church members and parents for their generous donations.

The Mail 'Wish token' scheme finished at the end of November and we collected 10,016 tokens. A fantastic effort and again many thanks.

During January we are again collecting unwanted clothes for the BB shop at Erdington and third world countries. Black bags will be available on Sunday mornings and they should be returned on Friday 31st by 7-30pm when they will be

loaded into a van. You can also bring your bag on Sunday 26th when we will store them. Bedding, shoes, towels and belts are also required. Last year we collected ½ ton.

The session finished with the usual Christmas party and this was enjoyed by nearly 40 boys. Three lads, Alex Clayton, Joshua Vail and Adrian McGovern, have now qualified for their President's Badge and they will be presented at a Church Parade service.

Bob Hotchkiss

FAITHS FOR FUN EVENT

6th glorious year

For all youngsters aged 7½ to 12 years of different faiths
to have fun and learn together about other faiths

on

Sun 9th March, 1.30 - 5.30 p.m.

at

Hamstead Hall Community Learning Centre, Handsworth

This is the 6th great year of the Faiths for Fun Event

organised by Birmingham Scout Association in conjunction with Birmingham Council of Faiths

Faith Bases – Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Jewish

Refreshments Games in Spacious Sports Hall

Cost £1 per participant. Registration forms available from:-

Dr Peter & Mrs Jean Rookes Tel 477 2282, or e-mail pjrookes@gmail.com

Services

January 2014	5th	12th	19th	26th
9.00 a.m. H.C.	RC	JL-G	NJ	JE
10.30 a.m.	RC Parade/Baptism	JL-G HC	Mrs Primrose Garrow	JE HC
6.30 p.m.	NJ HC	Café Church	JL-G HC	Mrs Linda Gilson
February 2014	2nd	9th	16th	23rd
9.00 a.m. H.C.	JL-G	RC	NJ	NJ
10.30 a.m.	JL-G Parade/Baptism	RC HC	Miss Hazel Nash	NJ HC
6.30 p.m.	NJ HC	Café Church	JE HC	Mr John Cooper



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