

The Link

Between you and Hockley & Hawkwell Methodist Church



Editor's Note

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue of The Link.

The deadline for the December/January issue is

Monday 14th November, I look forward to producing a bumper Christmas issue.

Please either post items to me, Ron Chidwick, or send by email to:
thelink@hockleyhawkwellmethodist.org.uk

***Remember to put your clocks back one hour on Sunday
30th October***



Here is a QR Code link to our Church Web Site.



The views expressed in this magazine are those of the various authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy of the Church Trustees

Message from the Manse

Introduction

The Gospel reading for 18th September was one of those difficult ones, one of those readings that LPs and Ministers avoid when it comes around in the lectionary. One of those readings when we find ourselves asking – what on earth is this about? So having laboured to write a sermon on this for Rochford, I thought Rayleigh and Hockley may like to read this.

So before you read the reading, here are a few suggestions as to what it could be about, make your own mind up.

Is it about:-

- Slackening of rules – anything goes?
- Removing ridiculous rules, made by mankind about religion, rules that God did not intend?
- Usury – interest? Loan sharks.
- Becoming as wise as serpents?
- Tax?

One other note, that we need to think about before a reading of this text, is a reminder that the reference to the “people who belong to the light” is about Israel, the chosen people. Chosen, not because they were God’s favourites, but chosen to have a light shone on them, as they were to be an example to the world, a model of good practice.

Reading - Luke 16:1-13 - The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

Then Jesus said to the disciples, ‘There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, “What is this that I hear about you? Give me an account of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.” Then the manager said to himself, “What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.” So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, “How much do you owe my master?” He answered, “A hundred jugs of olive oil.” He said to him, “Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.” Then he asked another, “And how much do you owe?” He replied, “A hundred containers of wheat.” He said to him, “Take your bill and make it eighty.” And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had

acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

‘Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.’

Sermon

Tax has been on my mind in the last few weeks. It started after an email from my Tax consultant, advising that if I did not have my tax submitted by a certain date, I would have to pay extra to ensure my tax return was completed in time.

Ministers of religion have an extra page for tax submissions, because we receive payments for some funerals and weddings. Every year, I promise myself I will be better at collecting together the receipts for the things that I purchase that I am allowed to offset against tax, every year I fail, and find myself scrabbling around for some receipts.

We also had a shock (most Methodist ministers), in receiving a letter from HMRC stating that they had noticed our increase in pay, and informing us that we would probably have an additional tax bill of around £2000 at the end of the year. (It’s normally about £150!). Some found themselves in the 40% tax bracket, and had a shock when they received reduced pension payments from previous employment. After a statement from the Methodist Church denying any responsibility, and blaming a single minister in the Conway and Prestatyn Circuit, and insisting that we all ring HMRC individually to sort it out, we were eventually told (with no apology), that the new payroll company had sent erroneous data to the HMRC. So this being heavy in my mind, may affect what I say.

So what is this reading all about? Jesus would have been surrounded by the poor as he was out and about teaching and preaching; he’s trying to teach the disciples how they are required to behave. Many in the crowd would have experience of being oppressed by the rich, especially by rich absentee landlords, and would be dealing with the Landlord’s agent, called in this case the manager, or in some other English versions the steward.

For this particular steward, a crisis occurs; he is threatened with the sack. We don't know why, perhaps he was not making enough money for the landlord – that detail is not important, this is a parable, not an allegorical story, it's not really the content of the story that matters, it's the meaning, or the truths that we can learn from it that is important at the end of the day. Let's not get too bogged down by the content or details of the story (otherwise we'll have to start doing maths to see if the interest on olive oil is higher than the interest on wheat).

Yesterday, some of us were at Synod in Biggleswade. Yes, Biggleswade is in our district, and yes it was miles away. One of the interesting comments made by one of the speakers, when we were talking about Mission in Britain and the Joint Public Issues Team, was the difference between the poor now and the poor when Mission in Britain was first set up. The poor used to be those unfortunates that did not have a job or could not work. In 2016, the poor are likely to be in work, but not receiving a living wage.

Imagine you are an olive farmer in the 1st century on the hills surrounding Bethlehem. In 31AD, the weather had been so bad, olive production was at a record low. To add to that Mariam has had yet another baby, that's 6 mouths to feed, and your sister's husband has died, and she's moved back into the farm. You've eked out the money from last year's harvest, but now it has run out. It's time for little David, Samuel and Benjamin to go back to school, and these codex, that the Romans have introduced instead of scrolls cost a fortune, and the twins Samuel and Benjamin have outgrown their sandals again, and typical, the local outlet store does not have any in their size.

Just to make things worse, this morning as you inspected the olive grove, you suspect there is a blight on some of the leaves. How are you going to make ends meet, how are you going to feed the family, buy the codex and the sandals for school, especially as the rent is due tomorrow? All your family and friends are also Olive growers, they are in the same situation, they can't help, and since Moses outlawed the charging of interest on loans, Wonga has gone out of business. What are you going to do? Take a moment to have a think. One more small clarification – banks and credit cards haven't been invented yet.

[Ponder]

What has probably been going on as background to this reading was that the rich man, via his manager, has been loaning money, or letting them off their rent, and building up a charge sheet in jugs/barrels of oil and bushels of wheat. The interest rate on oil seems to have been higher than wheat, perhaps there was a threat of a poor harvest, and so the rich man had to make sure by charging a higher effective interest rate that he got some returns. Now the rich man knows he's not supposed to do this, but he gets away with these fiddles, as it seems to

suit everyone, and anyway, no money is changing hands so how can he be charging interest.

Of course we know what happens to people who can't pay their debts in the first century Bethlehem, we know, because the same things happen still in other places in the world, they are sold into slavery or bonded labour. The stakes are high.

The manager has been threatened with the sack, so he thinks to himself, I need to make some friends quick, I'll need a job, here comes Philip the farmer, he always looks after his workers, and shares food with them, even when he really has none to spare. What does he really owe, I know, I'll wipe off the illegal interest my boss the rich man has put on his bill, then perhaps he'll take me in, he'll give me a job and put a roof over my head. So he says to Philip, here's your bill, it's for 100 Barrels of oil. Take it and write 50!

If you were Philip, if you were that farmer worrying about the bills, the sandals and books for the kids, and the possible blight on the olive trees, if you were thinking you may only get 75 barrels this year, and you already owed 100, how would you feel towards Bartholomew the shrewd manager – would you offer him a job, a roof and a meal? – Of course you would, he's just saved you and your family, and your household from slavery and bonded labour.

As for Bartholomew, as he faces the landlord, the hated absentee landlord, living it up in Jerusalem or Tiberius. There's not much he can do, he can't take Bartholomew to court can he, the judge would find out that he's been charging interest!

So what is going on here, we've got a bit of an understanding now of the situation, but what is Jesus recommending? Is he encouraging mal practice and deviousness? – Well no, because the shrewd manager did not actually do anything wrong, he was putting right what his boss the rich man was doing wrong – he was like a first century whistle blower.

We are being encouraged to put things right, to make friends in this world by the way we use our money, and to prepare ourselves a home in the world, or the kingdom that is to come.

So is this about tax?

One of the things that I regret was when I was working as a consultant, between being made redundant, and starting in the ministry. I had a little business PJW Consultants Ltd. A limited company, part of one of those umbrella schemes. The company paid a lot of tax, but during those few years, I didn't pay much personal

tax. As a director I received a retainer and dividends, and hence somehow only paid a small amount of tax. This didn't seem right, but every time I asked questions about it, I was assured that it was above board, and legal. I came to realise, that whereas it was legal, it was not very ethical, and I was probably not paying my fair amount of tax. Fortunately for me, as I was beginning to realise this, my short spell of being a consultant was coming to an end and I was moving into the ministry. As I was only working as a consultant part time, and doing my ministerial training part time, we weren't raking it in, and by the time I started here in September 2012, with the costs of the move, and the costs of setting up Theresa in our house, we were cash neutral, and had run out of money completely just before my first stipend payment went into the bank!

We are just beginning to understand that the huge financial mess in Greece, which some would like us to blame on Europe, is actually because the Greeks have a very poor record of paying their taxes. Austerity in this country is down to low tax revenue, and not our welfare bill which governments would like us to believe. Our poor are getting poorer, and our rich are getting richer, and our corporate giants seem to be getting away without paying their taxes.

The Methodist Tax Justice Network would like us to contact our MPs and to complain about corporate tax avoidance. Why should we do this? Because the billions that the transnational companies are not paying are needed in this country to help us out of austerity, to pay fair pensions, to keep our libraries open, to stop welfare sanctions, to open youth clubs, to put police back on the streets and to pay the poor care visitors living wages and travel time between their appointments.

Even Cadbury now, are not paying any tax. The Cadbury family were Quakers, and were inspirational in building a village for their workers, providing health care and decent schools.

And what about us? Last summer my father in law arranged for some decorating to be done in our house in Bristol. One of his friends from the rugby club. I thought he was a professional decorator, he certainly did a good job. It was only when I came to pay him, did I realise that this was a cash in hand job, no receipt, no record, probably no tax paid. Each time we do this, the potential tax revenue goes down and we edge closer to austerity and Greece.

We are called to do the right thing, not to serve 2 masters; we can either love money, or love God. There is a different understanding to this reading if the person coming to the shrewd manager was the Financial Director of Google or Starbucks or Apple, and the shrewd manager says, yes here is your tax bill, it says £6billion – make it £1 million – nudge, nudge, wink wink - "a nod is as good as a wink to a blind bat".

We need to think about being shrewd managers and how we use our money, talents, gifts and resources to help the poor, and build for ourselves a home in heaven.

There is another reading of this parable, linked to the "people of the light". There was a crisis coming, the people of the light had again been drifting away from God. The destruction of the temple is coming in 70AD, Jesus had warned and warned them to turn from their plans of violence and conflict against the might of the Roman Empire, he had spoken to them of forgiveness, turn the other cheek, walk an extra mile, love your enemy all to no avail. He had tried to get the people to turn from their ways, to repent and turn back to God.

The Pharisees, scribes and legal experts were making it more and more difficult especially for the poor and the working classes to access the temple and any hope of atonement or righteousness. Remember, if you were classed as "unclean" you could not enter the temple - whole professions were automatically unclean, and there was a cost to the mikvah baths, money changing, temple taxes and sacrifices.

There is a sense in this parable as the steward writes off a portion of the debt, of Jesus, who said, "for my yoke is easy and my burden is light", the Pharisees, Scribes and legal experts had made so many rules and conditions for righteousness – Jesus says "come follow me" – simple. No pre-conditions.

So is the message for us from this Parable about Jesus and his love for us, Is Jesus saying to us, you've made all this temple/Church stuff too difficult for people? Make it easier. Write off people's debts, make them more manageable.

What rules have we written for our understanding of faith, what conditions have we made, what standards have we set before we will accept someone as a Christian?

What do we need to write off, what rules do we need to set aside so that we can be the shrewd managers, and build up our welcome in for our eternal home?

Let's be shrewd managers, let's think about what we need to do to build up our welcome in our eternal home, and let's not try to serve 2 masters, only Jesus.

Amen.

Phil Warrey (Rev)

Circuit Meeting

All 17 churches in the Southend and Leigh Circuit were represented at September's Circuit Meeting. Among other things the meeting:

* welcomed a new minister to the circuit, Rev Chris Sandy, who currently has care of churches at Benfleet, Thundersley and Canvey Island;

* heard that Rev Julia Monaghan (Belfairs, Highlands and Wesley) has been offered a one year extension to July 2018;

* was advised that an experienced minister was being sought for Hockley and Rayleigh to replace Rev Phil Warrey and a probationer for the churches at Thundersley and Chalkwell Park;

* approved a grant to the Rochford Church towards the redevelopment of church premises (estimated total cost £69,000) and the provision of a new sign 'Rochford Community Hub' to mark its new role in association with the Rochford Community Church which now shares those premises; the meeting welcomed the opportunities provided by this new partnership and endorsed the proposal to appoint an 'Authorised Minister' for Rochford and one other church;

* approved the sale of the Wesley Manse in Elm Road, Leigh in anticipation that it would raise enough money to buy another manse and also pay for one additional minister;

* noted that the Night Shelter would be operating at Whittingham Avenue from 1 December to the end of March;

* heard that the Wesley Church Redevelopment Scheme was nearing completion, with an opening service scheduled for 3pm on 28 January 2017;

* listened to an appeal from Ruth Lowden (Circuit Administrator) for contributions to the Circuit Newsletter.

Michael Deedman

The Leadership Team

As discussed at the Annual General Church Meeting on 19th March, a leadership team has been established with the aim of spreading the load and responsibilities of the many and varied jobs that take place within our church to ensure that we fulfil our mission statement of: "Proclaiming the love of God available to all as revealed in Jesus Christ by worship, providing a Christian presence and perspective in the local community and by contributing to the work of the church worldwide."

The team leaders meet twice yearly to plan for areas of focus and activity for the whole church. They then lead their teams in carrying them out. The teams each have a specific role as follows:

Worship Team

Margaret Byford
Gill Cross
Chris Holloway
Anne Sains
Carolyn Sturgess

Principal role: to make sure church and vestry are ready for any services that are happening including marriages, christening, funerals etc.

To liaise with preacher and all others involved to make sure that readers, media, organist, door stewards, communion stewards have all the resources that they need for that particular service.

- Put hymn numbers on board
- Prepare bible, marking relevant readings
- Greet preacher and help them prepare including vestry prayer
- Introduce preacher, welcome and notices
- Light peace candle and say peace prayer
- Assist with communion if required
- Count and log collection with the vestry assistant
- Attend meetings once per quarter to discuss special service arrangements

Children's Steward

Anne Sains
Linda Williams
Chris Holloway
Sally Ann Elkington
June Parkhurst
Sandra Allison
Gill Cross
(also including Kay Deedman, John Morrison and Ray Williams)

The aims are to:-

- Arrange monthly Messy Church
- Ensure emails are sent out as reminders
- Advertise via Facebook fliers
- To arrange Holiday clubs in the school holidays
- To ensure that there are activities available for children at Sunday worship
- To support Linda and Brightstars
- To support Gill with the cradle roll families

Friday Club - Meets each week during term time from 6pm – 7.30pm

Wendy Bennett
Paul Hayman
Sally-Ann Elkington
Katherine Harriman

Occasional helpers:
Ruth Tilleray
Tanya Ekiyoyo

Friday Club + - Meets each week during term time from 6.45pm to 8.15pm.

Phil Warrey
Merle Kebell
Anthony Cross

Fundraising Team

Linda Williams - leader
Sandra Allison
Vivien Allmey
Gill Cross
June Parkhurst
Carolyn Sturgess

Brightstars Team

Linda Williams - leader
Ray Williams
Eunice Burge
John Morrison
June Parkhurst
Jean Pitt
Carolyn Sturgess

Reserves to be called upon when necessary:

Colin Allison
Sandra Allison
Gill Cross
Kay Deedman

My leader's responsibilities at Brightstars are as follows:

- Ensuring all visitors are welcomed to group
- Risk assessment includes checking all electric sockets are covered and first aid box is fully maintained.
- Entrance/exit door is marshalled by one of our team at all times.
- All equipment to be clean for use.
- Nappy changing area and toilets cleaned before and after session.
- Hall, church, coffee room and kitchen to be clean before and after session.
- On arrival parents/carers to sign in our attendance register and to sign out if leaving before end of session.
- Hygienically prepare food for children, being particularly careful of any allergies.
- To tidy up after session ends and clearing away all equipment.

Ecumenical - Kay Deedman

I see my role as Ecumenical Steward as building better links and communication among the three Hockley churches. To that end the Parish Church of St. Peter & St Paul has shared our Harvest meal in recent years and this year we are invited to share their supper in October. Each of the three churches provided details of their Christmas services in 2015 for inclusion in the crib I displayed in Hockley Library so we could say "All Hockley Churches welcome you". I also deliver The Link and Connexion magazine to Rev Ken Havey. Later this year it is hoped to arrange an exchange of pulpits between him and Phil Warrey. These are all small steps which I hope will grow.

Communications Team

Mike Pregnall
Billy Mawhinney
Ron Chidwick
David Clarke
Anne Sains
Muriel Pregnall
Holly Byford

Responsibilities - Communication, IT, Presence and Design – specifically:

- The Notices
- The Link
- Publicity – posters & leaflets, websites, press (?)
- Multimedia
- Website
- Email
- Facebook
- Photo Board
- Notice Boards?

Finance & Property Committee

Phil Warrey – Chairman
Stan Rae – Leader and Church Treasurer
Anne Sains – Minutes Secretary
Carolyn Sturgess – Lettings Officer
Dave Jacobs – Property Steward
Ray Williams – i/c Heating
June Parkhurst – i/c Kitchen
Linda Williams – i/c Medical Supplies, Kitchen/Cleaning Equipment (probably liaising with June)
Michael Deedman – always available for advice and assistance

It is the responsibility of the Finance and Property Committee to ensure that the financial situation of the church is sound and to monitor every aspect of the church property, including its contents and grounds, taking care to maintain the property in a condition worthy of a place of worship. The committee has delegated powers to carry out work deemed necessary, the cost of which does not exceed £1000, but needs Church Council approval for any project costing more than this.

One Day Song

We heard (and tried to sing!) this song at the Youth Service on 4th September. It comes from this year's Green Belt festival.

One day, one day

Perhaps it will be Sunday

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us

One day wolves will live in the same field as little lambs, and the wolves will look after the lambs and the lambs will teach the wolves how to sing,

One day young goats will lie down to sleep snuggled-up next to big scary leopards;

One day tasty calves and hungry young lions will share the same feeding trough,
One day cats will offer to take dogs out for walkies and dogs will learn to scratch cats behind the ears.

One day, one day,

Perhaps it will be Saturday

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us.

One day Tom will make friends with Jerry and Sylvester will stop chasing TweetyPie.

One day He-Man will shake hands with Skeletor, and Batman and the Joker will join forces to clean up will join forces to clean up Gotham City.

One day the Montagues will invite the Capulets over for tea and say how nice it will be to be one big happy it will be to be one big happy family.

One day the Beales and the Mitchells will sit down for Christmas Dinner together in Albert Square and nobody will in Albert Square and nobody will throw anything or call anyone else a Muppet.

One day, one day,

Perhaps it will be Friday

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us.

One day the fans of Manchester United and Manchester City, Chelsea and Arsenal, Liverpool and Everton will sit side by side on the same terrace and cheer when each other's teams score.

One day the biggest bully in the school will walk home hand in hand with the smallest kid and the smallest kid will help the bully do their homework.

One day brothers and sisters will share their toys, and not argue over who has to go to bed first or what they to go to bed first or what they want to watch on TV.

One day kids will laugh at their dads' jokes - without even trying.

**One day, one day,
Perhaps it will be Thursday**

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us.

One day women will be able to walk home at night, and if they hear footsteps behind them it will only make them feel safer.

One day men and women, gay and straight will share everything from changing rooms to churches.

One day no-one will be interested in what kind of school you went to, or whether you went to university, or what your father did for a living.

One day prison doors will be flung open, and prisoners and the people they have hurt will throw their arms around each other.

**One day, one day,
Perhaps it will be Wednesday**

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us.

One day politicians from every party will sit around in a circle and work together to bring about justice.

One day the people of America will embrace the people of Russia, the people of Britain will swap recipe tips with the people of Europe and the children of Syria will work together to rebuild their country.

One day Protestants and Catholics will worship side by side in a language they don't even understand, and no-one in the church will feel the need to talk about gender and sexuality any more.

One day there will be a black James Bond - or even Jamelia Bond for that matter.

**One day, one day,
Perhaps it will be Tuesday**

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us.

One day Democrats and Republicans will listen to each other to choose a leader they can all respect and trust.

One day all the passport booths at ports and airports will be replaced by welcome desks where someone with a smiley face tells you how glad they are that you're here.

One day the fact that you are black or white, Hutu or Tutsi, Sunni or Shia will be nothing more than an interesting topic of conversation.

One day the wall between Israel and Palestine will be torn down, and all the children of Abraham will live side by side in peace.

**One day, one day,
Perhaps it will be Monday**

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us.

**One day, one day,
Perhaps it will be Sunday ... Saturday ... Friday... Thursday... Wednesday...
Tuesday... Monday...**

One day we will live in peace and a little child will lead us.

Christmas 2016

Please put these dates in your diary leading up to Christmas

26th November: 10:00am Decorating church and trees. All welcome to come and help. Refreshments available.

4th December: 10:30 am Toy and Gift service which will be All age worship with uniformed organisations and we are hoping to have an appearance by the "Hand in Glove" puppet theatre and possibly the church band.

18th December: 3:00 pm. Candlelight Carol service followed by refreshments including mince pies

24th December: 4:00 pm. Christingle service, more details to follow

25th December: Christmas day service 10.00am, more details to follow

Margaret Byford
Worship Team Leader

Brightstars Parent and Toddler Group

Every week we welcome new families to the group. They come to meet up with their friends. Everyone is welcoming to new families which includes grandparents, parents and child minders.

Each week activities are available for babies in the church whilst in the hall there are resources that adults and children can do together. Every few months I like to introduce new activities for the children to experience. A few weeks ago I introduced a "storytime" for adults to share with their children. We use the stage as it is a quiet area giving us a lot more space.

The sessions always finish with singing and the celebration of any birthdays.

Brightstars would like you to join us for our Christmas celebration on Monday 12th December 2016. This will be our last session of the year for Brightstars and we resume in the New Year on Monday 9th January 2017.

Our celebration will include the eating of finger food and cake in the hall before going into the church to sing Christmas songs. If you would like to join us you will be very welcome. Please speak to me if any other details are needed.

Linda Williams

Pastoral Visitor

Would you care to be a Pastoral Visitor? The church requires one more visitor to help support the members of our church when they require assistance. It could be going shopping for them, taking them to hospital or just going round for a chat.

You would have five named people that you would support. So please, if you feel that you would like to help, contact me.

Carolyn Sturgess
Pastoral Secretary

Harvest Festival

Some of the flowers used to decorate the church at this year's Harvest Festival service on 9 October have been arranged by members of the U3A Flower Arranging Group and funded by a legacy from the late May Daimond which for many years now has paid an annual sum of £30 to church funds for this purpose. May was a faithful member here for many years. For those of you, who remember May; please think of her when you see the result of this year's contribution.

Kay Deedman

Something more exciting

All very good to have afternoon tea in a quiet hotel but my grandchildren thought that was too boring and decided we would have do something more exciting so it was arranged we would all have a day in London ending with a BIG WALK.

So at 7.45pm we arrived at the O2 for our walk over the roof of the building, but first there was a safety film to watch and a talk on what we were going to experience. Then we were given a gilet and special shoes to wear and fitted with a harness with a long chain which would attach us to the cable for the whole walk. Then we set off but it was quite a steep climb and at first I found it rather difficult to get my chain through each station, but gradually I found the knack and soon we were at the top and could step onto the viewing platform where we had a lovely view of the Thames and all the nearby buildings as they were gradually lighting up as dusk fell, and there was a lovely full moon.

Then it was time for the downhill walk which you do in three stages and when you get to the end of each one you feel as if you were going to go over the edge. But we all reached the bottom safely after a very thrilling experience and a lovely day. Am now wondering what my grandchildren will think up for next year. As long as it isn't a bungee jump!

Vivien Allmey

Thursday Social Club

Our members were spoilt for choice this year as we decided to have two summer outings instead of just one. On Wednesday 3rd August 2016 on a gloriously sunny day we drove to Tiptree and made a welcome stop at the Wilkins Tearoom and Museum. Arriving mid-morning it was not too busy and we called into the tearoom and made our orders before taking our seats on the outside balcony. Apart from the inviting cream teas available there was also an appetising alternative of the most scrumptious cakes. Service was exemplary and we did not have to wait long before the waitresses presented us with our eagerly awaited orders. Suitably refreshed we looked around the museum before wandering around their extensive and varied gift shop which stocked many items including all the varieties of jam imaginable. This was only part one of our outing as we got back into our cars for our onward journey to the Beth Chatto Gardens at Elmstead Market near Colchester.

Colchester had to be navigated and the inevitable road works near to the town centre. Being experienced drivers this did not prove to be much of an obstacle as we all met up in the car park of the Beth Chatto Gardens. A number of us had brought along our trusty lunch boxes and easy chairs, and assembled in the picnic area. The picnic area was close to the car park and had a number of trestle tables and benches and our party of twenty staked our claim for two tables. With a very good restaurant on site some of our members forsook lunch boxes and took their seats in the restaurant. We do like our food. Beth Chatto Gardens is a remarkable place to visit with lovely walks displaying wondrous plants situated in perfect settings. The gardens convey a natural calmness as we walked along the pathways around their central lake. If you do pay a visit there look out for its monkey puzzle tree as it is most impressive. Plants are available for sale and expert sales staff are there to answer your every question. Plants are arranged in their favourable positions. Full sun; Partial shade; Total shade; Damp soil; Dry soil; Heavy soil; or Light soil. You name it and they have it covered. With the sun continuing to shine some of us partook of their special ice creams before we said our goodbyes and took to our cars for the hour's drive home.

Wednesday 17th August and it was back to yesteryear for our second outing of the summer as we looked forward to our trip on the Epping Ongar Railway. We must thank Kay and Michael who made a number of trial runs to check all arrangements for our members. Meeting at Hockley station we obtained our return train tickets to Shenfield before boarding the train just after 10 o'clock. The train journey to Shenfield took just under half an hour and we stepped outside the station and walked the thirty yards to the bus stop awaiting our red routemaster. Twenty minutes later a number 339 red routemaster came into view pulling into the bus stop. We were not the only party taking this trip as there were many more customers waving their Epping Ongar Railway information sheets. It took us back years as we clambered on board either upstairs or downstairs behind the bus driver. Our bus journey took us through Brentwood and onwards through

Ongar as we soon reached Ongar station. Ongar station has always been the end of the line and boasts a grand 1865 Grade II listed Great Eastern Station. A small gift shop was available and like both the bus and train this station is manned entirely by enthusiastic volunteers. To make visitors welcome there is also a snack bar and picnic and viewing areas.

We did not have to wait long before the train pulled into the station and we climbed on board the very busy carriages and found our seats. It was very relaxing as we chugged along the track to Epping station. There is no platform or public access here so we had to stay on the train. Leaving Epping station we then continued on our heritage journey to North Weald station which was to be our lunchtime stop. On reaching North Weald station we waited for the train to stop before we opened the carriage doors ourselves. No automatic doors in this day and age. Despite its many visitors North Weald was a very quiet place to stop for lunch where our lunch boxes again came into play.

Some of our more intrepid members decided to get a routemaster bus into Epping and had lunch there. Again there was an ample picnic area and chairs were available to use free of charge. A marquee area provided drinks and snacks and appeared to be well used. As an alternative there was a buffet coach which provided further drinks and snacks. With buses arriving at regular intervals there were many options for our members to take on what was once again a warm and sunny day. Late afternoon some of us got the train back to Ongar passing the now closed Blake Hall station en route. This station was built for the grand manor house and for local farms. It was famed as being the least used station on the London Underground network with just six passengers and was closed in 1981. Alighting at Ongar station we walked to the bus stop for our return to Shenfield station. Having half an hour to wait we purchased a few drinks to cool us down on this hot day. With the number 339 red routemaster arriving we stepped on board for our bus back to Shenfield. Perfect timing as the Hockley bound train soon pulled into the platform. A great day out that was enjoyed by all.

The Thursday Social Club AGM was held at the home of Vivien Allmey on Thursday 8th September 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

The most important point is normally the election of officers for the forthcoming year and with few names being put forward the committee will now be as follows: Ray Williams (Chairman), Chris Davis (Treasurer), Joyce Rae (Programme Secretary), Michael Deedman (Minutes Secretary) and supported by committee members Linda Williams, Vivien Allmey, Kay Deedman and Jean Saunders.

It was decided to keep the subscriptions at £15-00 per member and to make donations to both the church and the Day Centre.

Our Harvest service will incorporate the decoration of our windows with one of the windows allocated to the Thursday Social Club.

With the success of last year's holiday trip to Nottingham we might be going ahead with a similar holiday next year.

Following on from the AGM we were entertained by our Reverend Philip Warrey which I have called "Four Weddings and a Funeral." Looking after three churches means that he is busy enough but he still finds time to visit unwell church members both at home and in hospital. He helps run the Youth Club each Friday evening and at Messy Church each month on a Tuesday afternoon. It is a difficult task dealing with the many emails landing in his "in box." Weddings, funerals and christenings are a regular feature of his work as it is with most ministers but it is surprising how many meetings he has to also attend.

Weddings and christenings are always happy events and we look forward to more at our church. It was a very thought provoking talk and most entertaining too.

Club meetings to follow:

Sept 22nd Rayleigh Town Museum - £3-00 per person - to meet at museum at 7.00 p.m.

Oct 6th Faye & Steve Oakley - visit to their new clinic in Rochford Square - 7.30 p.m.

Oct 20th Astronomy Resource Centre - 7.30 p.m. at centre if fine - but if wet 8.15 p.m. at church

Nov 3rd "When We Were Young" - Photographs - at Joyce & Stan's at 7.30 p.m.

Nov 17th Rev. Peter Moorhouse (Circuit Superintendent) - at church 8.15 p.m.

Dec 1st Chris & Olive - "Canada Evening" - at church 8.15 p.m.

Dec 15th Christmas Celebration Evening - at church 8.15 p.m.

Ray Williams



Here's the last programme for October in 2016

PLEASE PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY

These details are also on the Church Calendar at

<http://www.hockleyhawkwelldmethodist.org.uk/>

Saturday 22nd October - Pleshey - 5½ miles

Valley walk taking in Pleshey and its Norman Castle mound. Leave Church Car Park 10:30 am. Stop in Pleshey for a pub lunch

Please make sure you have sturdy walking shoes (not "fashionable" trainers) or boots, plus waterproofs and something warm to wear. Always bring something to drink. All these walks are fairly straightforward but any activity like rambling (even the inactive variety!) needs care so please watch what you're doing and keep an eye on any young people.

Contact Mike or Mu Pregnall on 01702 204748

or e-mail mumic@pregnall.freeserve.co.uk

If you want further details of this walk or need a lift.



Holiday 2017

The Thursday Social Club had this year some nine members who went together on a Warner's Hotel holiday via Kirby's coaches, (Chris & Olive Davis, Ian & Vivienne Mackenzie, John Morrison, Shirley James, Jean Parkhurst, Carolyn Sturgess & Jean Saunders).

In talking we all decided we would like to do the same next year, but to also open it up to our friends to join us.

We are currently looking at any of the hotels (not coastal villages) that Warner's have round the country and have not yet set a date. This year it was 5 days at Thoresby Hall in Nottingham at the end of April.

<http://www.warnerleisurehotels.co.uk/>

If you would be interested in joining us, and we are able to get say 20+ people for a holiday, we would be able to arrange for our own coach such that we would be able to choose a date and venue as well as the excursions to suit our group rather than those chosen by Kirby's. If our numbers are smaller we would probably need to join an existing Kirby's planned trip.

What we would like is for any of you reading this, who are interested in joining with us, to let us know including dates you would NOT be available for and any of Warner's venues that you would NOT be interested in visiting. Once we have a list of interested people we would then try to work out where and when the majority of people would like to go and contact Kirby's to see if they could put together a 'package' for us all to consider.

When we went this year we were told that each coach that Kirby's runs to Warner's is allowed 5 single rooms without any supplements. As 2 had already gone to the driver and a previous customer, we shared the saving of those 3 supplements between those single people who came with us. We would plan to do similar next year. If we are running a coach of our own we would obviously have the full 5 supplement free rooms to share.

We are looking at a 5 day break from Monday to Friday, so not effecting weekends. What we need now is a show of 'hands' for those interested. It would NOT commit you to going at this stage. So please give us your name(s), with any dates or venues you would NOT be interested in, as soon as possible.

Please join us for a fun few days with good food and company. You can also talk to Carolyn Sturgess or Jean Saunders who have confirmed to me that they will assist any of you with information. **Please note: Warner's is an Adult only hotel for those over 18.**



Christopher Davis
me@cjwdavis.co.uk

Future Events to look out for:

Saturday 12th November 2016 at church 7.00p.m. **Murder At The Big Top** - a murder mystery play by Ray Williams. Cost of tickets £10-00 per head. Admission includes a choice of hot meal plus desserts and teas and coffees. For tickets please contact Ray and Linda Williams on 01702 204309.

Saturday 3rd December 2016 at church 10.00a.m. to 1.00p.m. **Christmas Bazaar** Various children's activities provided including a bouncy castle; a number of stalls on display showing an assortment of cakes, games and gifts etc. Any donations of good quality items to sell would be most welcome.

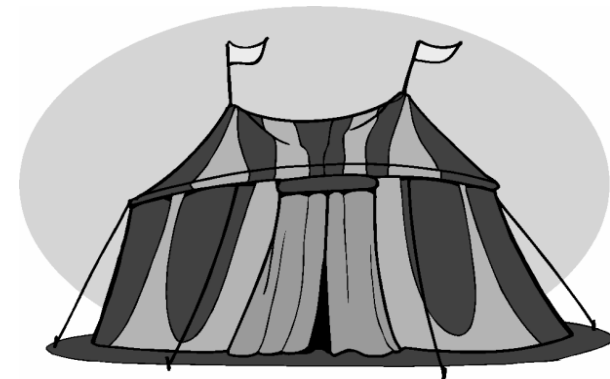
Please let either Linda Williams or Sandra Allison know if you can help.

Murder at the Big Top

Following the successes of our previous murder mystery plays: A Welcome Murder, Murder Afloat and School for Murder, we will now be performing our fourth play which takes place in the exciting world of Jimmy Ripperfield's Circus. For anyone new to our murder mystery plays let me explain the format.

The play begins at 7.00pm so please take your seats early. You will all be issued with a programme giving a brief description of each character in the play. This will help you, (perhaps), in identifying the murderer and eliminating other suspects.

A "WHODUNIT" form to be filled in when advised, later in the programme.



After the play has been acted out we will have a short interval and dinner will be served. This will give you a chance to discuss your suspicions with fellow dinner guests.

Following dinner, desserts and refreshments it is time for the audience to get involved. The surviving cast will be seated on the stage awaiting your questions. A number of preset questions will be addressed to the cast and they will individually answer the questions truthfully, with the exception of the murderer who could well tell the odd lie. The audience will then be invited to ask their own questions to the cast. On completion of "question time" it is time for deliberation and completion of your "WHODUNIT" form.

Please enter your name on the form; the name of the murderer (or murderers); how they did it; why they did it.

An independent panel will then decide who is closest to the correct answers based on all the submitted forms. A prize will be awarded to the top sleuth of the evening.

THANK YOU AND GOODNIGHT. HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE EVENING AND DON'T HAVE NIGHTMARES.

Ray Williams

Stop Funding Hate!

In a recent sermon, Phil referred to the "Stop Funding Hate" campaign, aimed at respectable companies such as Virgin Media who advertise in newspapers that peddle hatred, xenophobia and misrepresentation. e.g. The Sun was singled out by the UN as contributing to "decades of sustained and unrestrained anti-foreigner abuse, misinformation and distortion". If you want to help to take on the divisive hate campaigns of the Sun, Daily Mail and Daily Express by persuading advertisers like Virgin to withdraw their support look at this website and sign the petition: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/virgin-media-pull-your-sun-advertising>. There's a link to it on the Church Facebook page and website.

Mike Pregall

Puns for Educated Minds

- 1 The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
- 2 She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.
- 3 A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.
- 4 No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationary.
- 5 A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
- 6 A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
- 7 Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
- 8 Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
- 9 Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other: 'You stay here; I'll go on a head.'
- 10 I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.
- 11 The midget fortune-teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
- 12 The soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.
- 13 A backward poet writes inverse.
- 14 If you jumped off the bridge in Paris, you'd be in Seine .
- 15 Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says 'Dam!'
- 16 Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.
- 17 Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says, 'I've lost my electron.' The other says 'Are you sure?' The first replies, 'Yes, I'm positive.'
- 18 There was the person who sent ten puns to friends, with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.

David Clarke

REMEMBRANCE 1914 to....?

The call has come; they gather as one,
 From mill and factory, from farm and home
 Little they know of the years ahead,
 Many will sadly soon be dead.
 After the training the Channel is crossed,
 Foreign soil is where most are lost.
 The killing fields beckon; the enemy's there,
 Shells are dropping, noise everywhere.
 They dive for cover and hit the ground,
 Bullets fly, smoke all around.
 On the attack - the brave lads try,
 Many fall; so many die!
 Remember them – yes, but learn from our history,
 In countless conflicts, mad human misery.
 When will the blood no longer be spilled,
 When will the earth with peace be filled?
 Remember and honour them; we're their tomorrow.
 Remember their sacrifice, where many will follow.
 As we see it repeated more and more,
 Remember and honour them, stop the war!

Alan Edward



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

SUN	Morning Worship Children's activities every Sunday	10.30 am 10.20 am
MON	Brightstars Parent & Toddler Group <i>contact Linda 07964 864872</i> Ballroom Sequence Dancing: IN THE HALL <i>contact Fay 01268 780028</i> Triple H Junior Choir and Triple H Community Choir <i>contact Ashley 07581390448</i>	9.30 – 11.45 am 7.30 – 10.00 pm 4.30 – 6.00 pm 7.30 – 9.30 pm
TUE	Dru Yoga Class: <i>contact Ruth on 07818599183</i> Hockley Ladies Keep Fit Club: <i>contact Roselle 07709349695</i> Messy Church (3 rd Tuesday each month) <i>Contact Anne S 202010</i>	10.00–11.30 am & 7.30 – 9.00 pm 12.00 – 1.00 pm 4.00 – 5.30 pm
WED	50+ Keep Fit: <i>contact Julie 07912622483</i> 50+ Stretch & Tone: <i>contact Julie 07912622483</i> Bible Study and Communion 2 nd Wed. each month <i>contact Anne S 202010</i> 2nd Hockley Brownie Pack: <i>contact Vivienne S 204550</i> Badminton Club: <i>contact Wendy S 200484</i> Gospel Rocks Choir (in Church) <i>Contact: Hannah Conacher gospelrocksc@gmail.com</i>	10.30–11.30 am 11.45–12.30 pm 3.00 – 4.00 pm 5.30 – 7.00 pm 7.30 – 9.30 pm 8.00 – 10.00 pm
THU	PIYO Pilates & Yoga <i>contact Rachel Yates 07990513413</i> U3A Floral Art Group, 4 th Thursday in the month <i>contact Irene 202975.</i> 1st Hockley Beaver Colony: <i>contact Jane S 203739</i> 1st Hockley Cub Scout Pack <i>contact Dan, 07802 193936</i> or email Hockleycubs@yahoo.co.uk Thursday Social Club: <i>contact Joyce S 201635</i>	9.30 – 10.30 am 1.30 – 4.30 pm 5.15 – 6.15 pm 6.30 – 8.00 pm 7.30pm, alternate weeks 8.15pm if in the church
FRI	Pilates, <i>contact Tracy Bateman, contact 07916954966</i> Friday Club (years 3-7) <i>contact Wendy S 200484</i> Friday Club + (years 7 & upwards) <i>Contact Rev Phil Warrey 01268 770333</i>	9.30–10.30 am & 10.30–11.30 am 6.00 – 7.30 pm 6.45 – 8.15 pm

Minister: Revd. Phillip Warrey **Tel:** 01268 770333 **Mobile:** 07917077785
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Web: www.hockleyhawkwelldist.org.uk