

Weekly Newsletter (74)

by and for the Christ Church and Pagham URC (St. Ninians) families

8th August 2021

Musings from the Manse....

Dear Friends,

Monday was quite an important day for me; it heralded the start of Christ Church opening up for people to come and enjoy some refreshment and a chance to chat with friends old and new - all in the welcoming surroundings of the church lounge.

It was a wonderful opportunity to be 'present and available' at the church, to get know folks better and, whilst it has been a bit of a slow start, I'm sure things will pick up once word has got around!! There are still spaces on the rota to help out – see the inside of the kitchen hatch door!

Whilst I might not always manage to get to every '**Cuppa and Company**', due to other work commitments, I will be there when I can so that you can get to know me as well!

I do appreciate that not everyone is keen to '*mingle*' just yet; but it has been so lovely to properly talk to some of those with whom I only get a precious few moments at the end of the Sunday morning service – as well as putting names to faces, (without a mask), and faces to names!! I can't promise that I will remember every single one exactly, but I'll do my best!!

In September, the plan is for more groups and events to begin and so church life, in all its fullness, will have some semblance of normality once more.

Looking ahead to **October** and our **Harvest Celebrations**, there are plans afoot for both **Saturday 9th** and **Sunday 10th** – so keep watching out for details. However, to give you the heads-up, the theme of this weekend will be '**A Harvest of Talents**' and my hope is that many of the **talents and gifts** of the Christ Church and Pagham Church families will be **showcased in a display set out around the church and lounge** – so start thinking about what you might bring or do. Everyone has something they are good at, so let's make it a time of celebration - not just for the produce and people traditionally given thanks for at this time of year - but for all our God given gifts. Thank you.

Yours in Christ, Helen <><

Word for today John 6: 35, 41-51

Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, '*I am the bread that came down from heaven.*' They were saying, '*Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?*'

Meditation of one of the crowd listening to Jesus

What's he on about?

Has the guy taken leave of his senses?

He's an ordinary person, like you and me - living, breathing, flesh and blood; so, what's all this poppycock about coming down from heaven?

As for being living bread, that's not just plain daft but close to blasphemy, for it's plain what he's alluding to – how, centuries ago, God sent down manna from heaven – nourishment in the wilderness, sustenance in time of need.

You've spotted what he's suggesting, surely - that our lives are, somehow, a desert and only he can help us through. Well, I'm sorry, but we know different.

He's Joseph's son, not God's. We know his family, his home, his past, his present. And, unless the divine can also be human, the word become flesh, he simply hasn't a leg to stand on.

It's a shame really, for he's a decent chap – means well, talks a lot of sense and has truly '*done good*'; but, when he harps on about all that spiritual stuff - talking of true bread, his body, the gift of life - I just can't see where he's coming from.

Am I missing something?

'Cuppa and Company'



Prayer

Sovereign God,
thank you that you are not remote from us,
detached in splendid isolation,
but that, having shared our humanity in Christ,
you are with us now,
each moment of every day,
through your Spirit.

Thank you that we can know and see you in the everyday –
through the fellowship of your people,
the world around us and the circumstances and events of daily life.

Teach us, always, to look beneath the surface,
beyond what we think we know and understand,
and to glimpse your presence in the ordinary and familiar.

Remind us that, through Jesus, heaven has touched earth,
the divine been made human,
the gulf between us overcome.

Amen.

Word for today, Meditation and Prayer taken from 'A most amazing Man' by Nick Fawcett

Appeal for Volunteers!!

- ❖ The **Sound and Visuals Team** are a bit thin on the ground and could do with more 'bodies' to help out during worship. Also, if we are to keep recording the services, we need more volunteers to learn the skills to do this!

Please speak to Richard Spong if interested.

Thank you.

Success!! –

Our thanks must go to Hugh Hawker, who gallantly stepped up to do some weeding of the beds in front of church. He was joined by Lin Worsfold, who helped out as well! Whilst it is still a work in progress, well done!!



At the Manse...

The first of our open house afternoons took place on Sunday, 1st August.

Thank you to all who came and enjoyed the challenge of counting the number of mirrors in the garden – but to those who didn't make it
the next one will be on 5th September!!

Helen and Colin <><

Praise in the Park!

Don't forget... Sunday 12th September!

Once more we will be praying for good weather and for you good folks to come and support this.

There will be **no service at Christ Church (unless we are rained off!!)** and, whilst we know that there are some of our number who will be away, we do need those who are not to turn up – **bring a friend or two or three!!** I'd like it to be an interactive, full of fun, service of witness to the whole community – so let's make it a day to remember!!

Bring a picnic lunch
and stay and chat after the service is over – restriction free
and we can sing to our hearts' content,
mask free, as we'll be outside!!

Thankyou – Helen <><



Online Youth Mental Health First Aid – New Course Date for September 2021

Southern Synod are pleased to offer an opportunity to take part in *Online Youth Mental Health First Aid Training*. This is a fully funded course for participants connected to local URCs and LEPs within Southern Synod. The minimum age for taking part in this course is 16 years old.

Youth Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses are **for everyone who works with, lives with or supports young people aged 8 -18**. They will teach you the skills and confidence to spot the signs of mental health issues in a young person, offer first aid and guide them towards the support they need. In doing so, you can speed up a young person's recovery and stop a mental health issue from getting worse.

- Gain an in-depth understanding of mental health and factors that can affect wellbeing in the youth sector
- Develop practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues
- Feel confident to step in, reassure and support a young person in distress
- Enhance your interpersonal skills - such as non-judgemental listening - and learn to champion self-care

Course Dates:

Tuesday, 21st; Thursday, 23rd; Tuesday, 28th; Thursday, 30th September
Mornings: 9:30 am – 12:30 pm (participants must attend all 4 sessions)

Participants are also required to complete self-led learning activities in their own time before each of the live sessions. These activities take around 1 - 1.5 hrs for each of the sessions.

The course is licensed by *Mental Health First Aid England*. <https://mhfaengland.org/>

Participants will receive a certificate of attendance from MHFA England after completing the course.

You can view further details about the course, including an outline of the content covered, via this link - <https://mhfaengland.org/individuals/youth/online-youth-mental-health-first-aid/>

To book a space on this course please email cydo@urcsouthern.org.uk with your name and local church.

PLEASE NOTE:

From September, the Newsletter will be issued once a month,
rather than every week.

Whilst it has been lovely writing this during the past months,
with things beginning to start up again, my time is becoming limited
and I can't always promise to give it the attention it needs.

I will also be on leave from the 23rd to 30th August,
so there will be no issue that week either.

Thank you. Helen <><