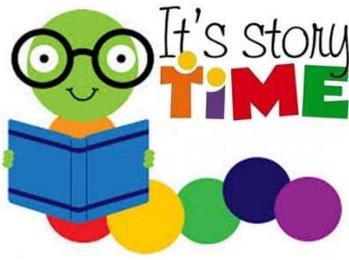


## Christ Church News (22)

by and for the Christ Church Family

2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020



Dear Friends,

In my previous churches, whenever I was called to write a piece for the Magazine or Newsletter, I would call them 'Musings from the Manse'. This implied that I had something interesting to tell you about or I had a story to share. There were, however, times when I just didn't know what to say, and so I would begin to pray fervently to God for some Divine inspiration!!

So as I sat down at my computer today to tell you of my 'musings', my mind was full of lots of things - none of which I would deem shareable at this moment in time! However, as often happens, I distracted myself by checking my emails, and came across one from LICC which I hadn't yet read. It talked about 'Stories' and how we all have a story to tell - both individually and as a church - and who doesn't love a good story!!

To this end the LICC have produced a couple of 'story' booklets for church and individual use, called 'The One About' (by Mark Greene), and there are two volumes to date - both of which can be ordered through their website - and I would highly recommend them.

To give you the blurb....

*'There is no such thing as an ordinary day for a Christian. With Christ, every day, every task, every situation, every relationship brims with divine possibility. God is always at work. But can we see it?*

*These stories help us open our eyes to see how God has been working in our lives, help us to read our experience through biblical lenses, and encourage us to tell other people about the wondrous things God has done in and through us. Read the stories by yourself, discuss them in a group, or use the guidelines to write your own.'*

So, what is your story? I have lots of stories to share, and so I look forward to a time when circumstances will allow us to share together as we get to know each other. Perhaps in my next edition of 'Musings from the Manse' I can tell you 'the one about' how I survived a trip to hospital for a new knee and how the power of prayer worked in that situation!!

Yours in Christ.

Helen <><

**Word for Today:** Isaiah 55:1-5 Matthew 14:13-21

Have you ever noticed that supermarkets are very good at putting often 'useless' but attractive things just as you enter the store or right beside the checkouts! Having worked for a well-known supermarket chain in my former life, I have some idea of why this is done. It's usually aimed at the very young or the very gullible - like me. You see, all the children - fed up with having to be dragged along to the store to do the weekly shop, or bored to distraction as the shopping trolley is loaded - want what is on display at a time when pressurised parents are most likely to give in!

To be fair, it's not just supermarkets that do this; our whole society is skilled at creating inviting displays of things we could well do without, which encourage us in all kinds of wrong directions. Whether it's being enticed into unnecessary spending or the temptation of oblivion or happiness or well-being through drugs or alcohol, what we are all after is instant gratification. And what is even more disturbing is that we are prepared to ignore the long-term consequences in order to achieve this.

In today's passage from Isaiah, the prophet speaks about God's longing for something better for his beloved people. All the shortcuts to satisfaction and fulfilment will only leave us unfed at the very deepest level of our humanity; dissatisfied and craving, but too disillusioned to try the only truly satisfying food for our souls - God himself.

The Gospel reading from Matthew describes the feeding of five thousand people – a familiar but clear picture for us of God’s delight in feeding all who have come to wait on him and to listen to him. Those in the crowd deliberately set out into the open country to find Jesus. Perhaps they sensed that he had things to say which they needed to hear. Perhaps they sensed that he cared about their welfare and their lasting happiness and peace of mind. Jesus had initially taken himself off because he was in need of refreshment and comfort after the tragic news of the death of John the Baptist; yet his compassion was such that he reached out to a crowd of people who knew their need of him.

As always, in every situation Jesus takes whatever is made available to him and uses it for good – providing far more than we ever expect. As always, he involves his followers in the work of preparation and distribution.

So, in this act of bodily feeding Jesus teaches the people in a living, three-dimensional parable about the real, satisfying feeding for the soul, which can be theirs and which God loves to provide. But, in order to receive, we have to know our need enough to go out of our way to seek God and listen to him.

### Let’s pray ...

Lord our God, creator and provider, you give us all we need and much more beside.

Thank you for opportunities we have to make a difference in our world,  
to share what we have and what we believe with those you have given us.

We can never have enough baskets to contain all you give us.

As we think today about the miracle of Jesus feeding so many people,  
we recall that baskets are full of holes:

Lord God, make us people through whom your blessings leak out.

And thank you that, as we share your word and your love, they will grow in us:

may we be people of the kingdom,

whose passion is to fill the kingdom with all those who will come to be fed.

Thank you for Jesus, who shared with us the gift of his life:

give us your Holy Spirit to enable us to share Jesus with others.

In His name and for His sake, we pray,

Amen.



### Message from Wendy Corney

I want to thank all those people who have contacted me since Pat’s death in June. Their kind and loving comments have been greatly appreciated and have helped during this difficult time. I have been lifted up by all the prayers that have been offered on my behalf. I believe that there is a slight misunderstanding about Pat’s death and the following is what actually happened – Whilst driving into Chichester, his aorta split and bled into his lungs. He was aware enough to realise that something was drastically wrong and managed to drive off the road - thus avoiding any other vehicles. Unfortunately, he finished up hitting a road sign but, according to the police and the coroner, he had died by this time. Thank you everybody.

Wendy