

Christ Church News (47)
by and for the Christ Church Family
24th January 2021

Musings from the Manse

This week, as I sit down to write the Newsletter, I find myself at a loss as to what ‘pearls of wisdom’ I can impart to you. In many ways, as the days drift by, it’s easy to fall into the trap of each day being the same, of there being nothing new experienced or learnt. It’s also very easy to become oblivious to the world outside – unless of course it’s your daily habit to read a newspaper, or religiously watch the morning news, or listen to the headlines on the radio. Even then, unless it impacts on us directly, we can feel still removed from it.



One thing I did do was to purchase a small device which enables me to convert Tape Cassettes into MP3 files. For those of you who heard, in Sunday’s service, my plight about having a tape containing my Baptism and nothing to play it on, I researched and found the item which, if I never fathom out how to actually do what is says on the box, allows me to listen to some precious moments in my home church and family home back in the late 50’s and early 60’s. On one tape, labelled ‘Memories of Dad’ I am able to hear my Dad’s voice regaling us with stories that his mother used to tell him and in turn he told to me and my siblings. The quality is not great, but boy did it take me back in time as I remembered such stories as ‘Grandma’s Stocking’ and the story of Sandy and Ruby. Maybe one day I’ll tell them to you!!

Next week I will be ‘on leave’, which, to be honest, during these times doesn’t mean an awful lot. There will be no packing of bags and setting off somewhere new – or going anywhere really, other than ‘there and back to see how far it is’ (as my mum used to say!! So what, you ask, am I going to do with myself?!

Well, it’s not something I’ve given a great deal of thought to at the moment other than just letting the time lead me on a voyage of self-discovery – which sounds very grand doesn’t it!!

Previously I’ve used this ‘non holiday leave’ to practise some mindfulness, or allow myself to get out the ‘Colouring Books for Grown-Ups’ which usually sit in the cupboard untouched, or start a new jigsaw – but the important thing is to take time to rest without the feeling that I should be doing something, and everyone needs time for this.

Some better weather might help, and maybe we will be fortunate enough to see the sunshine again next week. Be assured though, that whatever I am doing, you will not be far from my thoughts and prayers.

Yours in Christ,
Helen <><

Word for today John 2: 1-11

John 2: 9b, 10

The steward called the bridegroom and said to him,

*“Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk.
But you have kept the good wine until now.”*

Meditation of a servant at the wedding feast in Cana

We put water into those jars, no doubt about it. I should know because I helped fill them up and I’m telling you straight; there was nothing in them when we started and nothing else added as we went along – just pure, simple water. Yet, when we drew off a cupful and took it to the steward, you should have seen his face.

A connoisseur he was, and I’ve never seen anyone smack their lips with such delight! Next thing we knew he’d dashed across to the bridegroom and was slapping him on the back like an old friend - all smiles and congratulations for having saved the best till last.

We thought at first he was having us on but, when we tasted it ourselves, we realised what all the fuss was about. It was exquisite - the sort of wine you’d serve at the finest banquet - and we had gallons of the stuff to spare!

How did it happen? I haven’t the foggiest! We just followed instructions and Jesus did the rest, turning the ordinary into the special, the old into something wonderfully new. You’ll think that a miracle, no doubt, and I couldn’t agree more; but it’s nothing compared to what followed.

Since then he's changed not just water into wine, but human lives, the world itself - transforming life and death by his touch.

I'll never forget that wedding feast – the surprise, the joy, the wonder of it all – but, more important, I won't forget the one who made it possible: that amazing man, Jesus.

'Do whatever he tells you,' his mum had said, and it's the best advice I've ever had.

Follow that and, believe me, you won't go far wrong.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

thank you for your ability to change lives, to transform even the most unlikely of people, turning them upside down and inside out.

Thank you for having changed our lives, filling them with hope, joy, peace and purpose.

Continue to bring new beginnings to all.

Reach out to our world, and wherever there is pain, sorrow, evil and injustice accomplish real and lasting change.

Amen

adapted from 'A most amazing man' by Nick Fawcett.

Gathered for Prayer....

Gathered for prayer is taking a break next week as I will be on leave. It will return on Wednesday, 3rd February.

Message from the Rev'd Ian Suttie:

It has now been agreed that Dan Balsden's Testimony Service will be on Sunday, 7th February at 6 pm. Those taking part in the service will do so by Zoom and the Zoom service will be live streamed via Youtube to the 'congregation'. We will circulate the log in details when they are ready. It will be a District Service so David will be presiding and we hope that friends from around the District will be joining in to support Dan on this next stage of his journey to ordination.
(When the link comes out it will be emailed to you)

Dates for Meetings in 2021

To enable all you good folks to organise your diaries for the coming year, here are the dates of the Elders, Trustees, and Church Meetings that you need to know.

All meetings will commence at 7:30 pm and will be on Zoom
until such times as we can once again meet in person

Elders:

18th February
18th March
15th April
20th May
10th June
15th July
12th August
9th September
21st October
18th November

Trustees:

8th April
8th July
14th October

Church meetings:

25th February
27th May
19th August
25th November **(AGM)**

Thanks from **Save the Children**
for the **£400**
from Terry Timblich's
poetry book

Joe Biden's autobiography
"Promise Me, Dad" (2017)
has this key quote by Immanuel Kant:

"Rules for Happiness:
something to do,
someone to love,
something to hope for"

submitted by Terry Timblich

Christmas Collections

Thank you to everybody who contributed to our Christmas collections.

We are delighted to be able to donate:

£80 to the Family Centre in Portsmouth and £65 to Homestart.

We're sure both of these donations will be very much appreciated.

Graham Manson (Treasurer)