

Journey



The continuing story
of
The Church at Carrs Lane
June 2015

Minister's Letter

Dear friends,

An article which appeared in the May/June issue of The Economist caught my eye...and has vexed me ever since I first read it! The title? 'What in today's world will appal our grandchildren?' Eight writers offered brief reflections on this...and many of their concerns did not surprise or challenge me especially; one particular contribution did engage me particularly, however, and continues to do so. 'The way our lives end'. Henry Marsh was the author, and I quote relatively briefly from his words:

'It is estimated that in developed countries about 75% of an individual's lifetime medical costs are spent in the last six months of life. This is clearly money wasted... We are wired by evolution to fear death, to cling to life, and yet in the modern world, where most of us will live into our 80s or beyond, extra life is often brought at the cost of gruesome treatment, such as chemotherapy, or prolonged incarceration in miserable hospitals...

I hope that the doctors of the future will be able to provide patients with better and more realistic predictions of what treatment will achieve, and that they will be more honest. All over the world, health-care costs are escalating beyond the rate of inflation, which is not sustainable. Much of this is based on folly, greed and denial of the inevitability of death. I hope my grandchildren will understand that the problem facing us is not how to live a long life, but how to live a good life, and how to end it with a good death'.

Like me, there are probably things here with which you disagree profoundly, other observations towards which you warm – and challenges which have you scrabbling around to discern what a truly 'Christian' position on some matters might be.

As Christians, we value life as a gift from God, but we also acknowledge the responsibilities of good stewardship, particularly when resources are scarce. As Christians, we believe that we are well placed to facilitate honest, positive discussions on death and beyond, yet we frequently fail to do so. As Christians, we believe that freedom of choice is a precious gift and responsibility which comes from God...but, on balance, we believe that many decisions relating to the beginning of life and the ending of physical life are not ours to take. Society consistently fails to face up to the responsibilities of caring for a growing elderly population, but we do always give sufficient time and energy to addressing the questions to which this reality gives rise. So – food for thought and challenges a-plenty.

With love in Christ,

Your friend and pastor,



Sunday Worship during June 2015

Sunday 7 June

10.30am Morning worship, including the Lord's Supper, led by Neil Johnson and Neil Riches – to include the baptism of Idris Makanjuola and the reception into church membership of Anna and Taiwo Makanjuola
Worship followed by First Sunday Lunch – all welcome
4.00pm Street Banquet – hospitality and fellowship for the vulnerable members of Birmingham's communities, inspired by Jesus' story of the Great Feast



Sunday 14 June

10.30am Morning worship led by Neil Riches - Key passage: Mark 4.26 – 34
It is anticipated that morning worship will be followed by an opportunity to share in the production of a piece of 'community' artwork for the URC's Multicultural Day in September – all welcome, irrespective of perceived abilities!
2.45pm for 3.00pm Children's Church – continuing the series 'On Fire'

Sunday 21 June

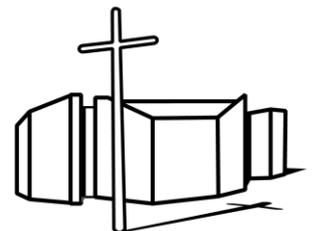
10.30am Morning worship led by Chris Dowd
Please take this opportunity to share with Chris and to wish him well as he prepares to move to Hull for the commencement of new ministry (actually, the physical move is later on the same day!)

Sunday 28 June

10.30am Morning worship led by Neil Johnson
6.00pm Radical worship – continuing the series on seeing the world through the eyes of the world church

Heritage Boards

In preparing to produce the Heritage Boards to go on the boards in Dale Gardens I am looking for any recollection or information about the preparation and building of this church. Any help would be much appreciated. Please see Julie Grove.



Notices

Music at Carrs Lane – Concerts
Sundays 1.30pm **7 June** Bacanu String Quartet. **14 June** Piano Trio

Carrs Lane Lived Community Film Club
7pm **Thur 25 June** 12 Years a Slave.
Sat 20 June: End of year celebration.
Last prayer before summer **Tues 7 July**
- no prayers for the rest of July/August.
Prayers reopen **Mon 7 Sept** 7.30am.

June 9 Sacred Space Meal 7.00pm
at St Luke's Church - talk by Maraf
Shahab from New Hope Interfaith
Project, Washwood Heath. £8.

Barnes Close Reflection Days, 10am-
4pm on **Thursdays 11 June, 9 July**,
£15. Community for Reconciliation,
Barnes Close, Bromsgrove
cfrenquiry@aol.com Tel: 01562 710231

Friday 12 and Saturday 13 June
7.30pm The Drama Group at Castle
Bromwich Methodist Church - two one
act plays, Easy Stages and Split Ends.
Tickets £4.50 Adults, £3.50
Concessions, call on 0121 730 1463.

Saturday 13 June 7.30pm at Northfield
Methodist Church Concert of songs
from the shows by Arrow Vale Singers.
Tickets £6 from Malcolm James Tel:
476 9026 Free admission for children.

Saturday 13 June 2.00pm Induction of
Diana Bosman as President of
Methodist Women in Britain
Birmingham District at Four Oaks
Methodist Church Sutton Coldfield

Saturday 20 June 5.00pm Festival of
Voices celebrating Birmingham
Cathedral's Tercentenary, at
Birmingham Town Hall. Tickets £15 –
box office 0121 345 0603.

Saturday 20 June 12 - 4pm at Lyndon
Methodist Church, Solihull. Fun for
Families at the Summer Extravaganza
including a cake baking challenge
(application form from 0121 743 5608
lyndonmethodist@btconnect.com).
coconut shy, stocks, face painting,
stalls etc. Free entry.

Holy Habits If you would be interested
in joining a group to plan a service on
the Holy Habits theme of '*Making
Disciples*' for Sunday 27 September
there will be a short meeting at Carrs
Lane after morning worship on **Sunday
21 June** to set dates, or please get in
touch with Helen Woodall on 0121 478
3841 or hwoodall152@btinternet.com

Saturday 11 July 2.00pm Retirement
and farewell service for Revd Roy
and Mrs Avril Lowes at Sutton Coldfield
URC with tea afterwards.

11 July Chris Dowds' induction in Hull
There are 12 places available on the
coach organised by The Cotteridge
Church - cost £10 per person. Contact
Pat Davies if interested.

Sunday 12 July The Birmingham
Circuit Family Day featuring Tropical
Inc: - an amazing presentation of weird
and wonderful creatures. 2-5pm at
Earlwood Methodist Church with
games, prayers, and bring n share Tea.

**Dates for your diary - September 5 Neil
Riches' induction at his new church in
Swansea** – if there are enough of us
wanting to travel to Swansea to share
the occasion we may be able to travel
together by coach. More details nearer
the time. **July 26** This will be Neil's last
service at Carrs Lane – there will be a
lunch after worship – all welcome.

Fresh angles on Pentecost....

I have almost reached the stage when I struggle to remember when I last shared in Sunday worship celebrated in English alone! I was on holiday on 10th May; opportunities for worship were strictly limited, and so I attended Roman Catholic Mass in the local church, celebrated in Spanish. Copies of the readings were made available in English – for which I was grateful, and ‘Spanish’ actually meant Latin and Spanish, which meant that wording familiar from childhood singing returned to me fairly quickly. Many of the canticles – with congregational singing led by a couple of guitars – were very easy to pick up, the ‘peace’ and the Lord’s Prayer were self-explanatory; the whole service felt familiar and helpful – indeed, the strangest thing was the ten or so dogs left tied up outside the church whilst their owners went inside. So far as I could tell, they got on together as well as members of the congregation!

The following Sunday morning (two consecutive Sundays when I had to queue to enter the place of worship!), I joined with other Carrs Lane folk in the congregation which met for the launch of the ‘Holy Habits’ programme in the ICC. The story of this service can better be told by somebody else...but, again, we sang in Spanish as well as English for the familiar Peruvian setting of the Gloria. Evening worship at Carrs Lane was led by the Birmingham Taizé Group... singing in English, Latin and German. Practice in singing in German was probably a good thing, since as I write this, I prepare to share in worship in Germany on the Feast of Pentecost (proposed rail strikes et al. permitting!); Carrs Lane will join with friends from Ernstweiler in Germany, with music chosen by folk from both sides of the Channel – and a sermon preached both in English and German, paragraph by paragraph. To my shame, I have to say that all the work of translation here is being done by Reinhard, my colleague in Germany.

All of this somehow seems fitting, given a focus on Acts 2 on Pentecost by the Universal Church. Of course, it matters that worship is accessible, comprehensible, intellectually and spiritually challenging...but it is also something in which we should allow ourselves to be immersed, discerning the familiar that transcends mere human language. We learn by sharing in those things which cannot immediately be reduced to known words and I have been grateful for the opportunities of May 2015.

Neil



Snap shot of Ernstweiler visit

Thursday 21st May - 9.30 am rendezvous at New Street station
sad news as Richard Silk unwell and so he and Gill cannot come
where are the tickets? – 4 trains to catch today
six hours later we're in TGV at 200 mph across France
hugs and welcomes at Homburg station
it feels like coming home - supper, wine and bed!
Friday visit to Pirmasens to visit Bernt Rapp's church
Wonderful organ, but church 90% destroyed in war
lunch in restaurant followed by relaxing afternoon in Ingrid's garden - more cake!
choir practice in church followed by wine and beer
would this work at Carrs Lane?
Saturday visit to a wonderful castle carved out of the rock
beautiful views across wooded hill sides
picnic lunch at a vineyard, followed by a visit to a huge cactus nursery -
not to everyone's taste but all enjoyed a drink sitting in the sunshine
Party in a car showroom – as no room in the community hall – it really was a good
venue!
more food and wine followed by sketches, singing and much laughter
Sunday service in German and English
still hard to get used to 'sit for hymns', 'stand for prayers'
good singing by both choirs and a double baptism to boot
Various visits after lunch - for some the famous rose garden
and then a farewell party at church with more food, wine and singing
and an invitation to our German friends – please come to Birmingham in 2017
all too soon we are at the station,
back packs loaded with enough food for several days
hugs, kisses and tears - say it all.
Thanks to Donald for all the travel arrangements and Andrew Leo for getting train
strike cancelled!
Now we have 2 years to plan the return visit!!

Andrew Veitch



Ernstweiler 24 May Pentecost Acts 2.1 – 21

Neil shared the following with the congregation in Ernstweiler at Pentecost; it was translated – paragraph by paragraph – into German, by Reinhard, the pastor of the church (who received the text a couple of weeks beforehand!).

The story of Pentecost is a good reading for today. Here, Christians from at least two different countries meet ‘all together in one place’. We speak a variety of languages, but the experience of sharing in worship draws us close. What we are doing – and the spoken and unspoken messages that we proclaim – are important as we reflect on lessons learned 70 years after the end of a conflict in which we shared. We have sustained many years of growing friendships; this is a Pentecostal gathering in the presence of the Creator-God of humankind.

We know that it is not only language that divides people. Gender, race, nationality, class, age and other differences have the capacity to separate. At Pentecost, the Spirit transcends – overcomes – all barriers, fulfilling the words of the prophet Joel. God is available to all – children, women, men, slaves, free, and those of all nations and races. This is not uniformity: each one heard in their own language, remaining diverse, even as they were united in their experience. Our experience is of the God who brings together – the God of a love which will not take ‘No’ for an answer.

We need still to work hard at identifying divisions in our communities. Who is it who feels isolated or excluded? What is good news for these people? How might – the church, the People of God – meet them?

People will not always understand why we do what we do. At Pentecost, some were bewildered by events – puzzled; others sneered – these people have been drinking, even though it is early in the day. As we continue to proclaim the prophetic, potentially life-changing message of love, not everybody will grasp what is going on. ‘These folk have travelled all the way from another country, and what are they doing on a Sunday morning? They are in church! What a waste of time’. It is not a waste of time: the gospel message that we celebrate offers an antidote to the self-seeking of the world. We proclaim a love which can penetrate even the most troubled areas. We demonstrate an open friendship which challenges those who live life in private boxes, afraid that others will make inroads on their time. Our singing and praying together underlines the central place of worship; our eating together points to the biblical principle of hospitality; our travelling and exploring and laughing together reminds us that we belong to a global family, in times when many seek to exclude in dangerous and damaging ways.

This is also a reading about expectation – anticipation. As people of faith, we are not left empty-handed. We still receive power that enables us to live as Christians in challenging times. God’s gifts have not dried up. The Spirit comes still, often to unlikely people, who find that they can offer powerful words and more to the world.

In Acts 2, God's gifts were dramatic: they came in the form of raging wind and tongues of fire, an experience so real that it could not be denied or diminished in the retelling. So even today, we are moved as we read these words. Yes, something was needed to transform the disciples from gibbering wrecks to towers of strength, courage and determination, but this was not simply a spiritual top-up which lasted a decisive moment. Power was needed to sustain the Christian movement as it started to spread and to grow.

We worship and serve and challenge the world in this continuing tradition. In both our nations, the churches struggle to find confidence as numbers shrink; it doesn't always feel as though we stand in the tradition of Peter and his friends...but we do, and the need for powerful proclamation, clear demonstration of unity, a sense of the urgency of the truly prophetic voice...well, these things continue undiminished.

Neil

Visit to Ernstweiler

A group of us have just returned from a tiring but very enjoyable trip to see our friends in Ernstweiler, Germany. The visit continues the series of regular exchanges with the choir from Christuskirche which have been regularly taking place since the late 1970s (so I'm told). Previous visits have seen a packed schedule, overwhelming hospitality and generosity from our hosts and, of course, a more than healthy provision of food.

This time was no different, although my experience was that the schedule was a bit less packed than previously, with more time available for relaxing with our hosts or just having some free time to explore on our own.

An organ recital, a visit to a haunted castle which had seemingly been hacked from a single piece of sandstone, a garden centre specialising in cactuses and an evening of entertainment in a car show room, featuring a performance from some questionably authentic Morris Dancers and some German folk music, were all part of the programme.

The joint church service on Sunday morning featured music from both English and German choirs, as well as pieces sung jointly. In a joint sermon with the German Minister Reinhard, Neil reminded us of the importance of the continuing friendship between our two congregations in the context of the recent commemoration of the Great War and wider upheavals taking place in Europe around migration in particular.

All in all, a great time was had, as well as an important statement made about how the Christian community continues to reach across international boundaries. We look forward to welcoming our friends from Ernstweiler to Birmingham in two years' time!

Andrew Leo

Recall of URC General Assembly

It has now been confirmed that General Assembly will be recalled for a special one-day meeting...at The Church at Carrs Lane on Saturday 27 June. The purpose of the day will be to move forward with the discussions on same-sex marriage which commenced at General Assembly in Cardiff in July last year.

Thanks to the Conference Centre staff – and regular meetings with the General Assembly Arrangements Committee – I feel that we are in a fairly strong position to provide the support and hospitality and warm welcome which such an occasion requires. We are being afforded a rare privilege in being asked to ‘host’ this day. There will be opportunities for volunteering, however, as has been indicated previously: please respond to requests promptly when the details are known. Equally my sense is that it would be a shame for folk to miss out on such a significant opportunity to share in the wider life of the church: whilst the downstairs area of the Church Room will be reserved for those who are attending as voting members, the gallery will be set aside for the general public (unless Assembly moves into ‘closed’ session). The heart of the day will be from 10.30am/11am until 4pm (at the time of writing this, the programme has yet to be finalised). I commend the day to you – and for your prayers.

Neil



June 8th-14th
Building a Carer Friendly Community
Fun & Informative Events for Everyone... Coming Soon!



Calling all Carers

Thursday 11 June 10am to 2pm we're celebrating the amazing contribution family carers make to our communities with a brilliant free event. It's National Carers Week 8-14 June so come and find out about all the help, support and training on offer, get face to face advice about your new rights under the Care Act, meet other carers, and take advantage of a free health MOT check. Enjoy live music and some much needed me-time. There will be refreshments, a wellbeing zone with free yoga and relaxation sessions, plus a chill-out area for anyone with additional needs. You'll also be able to register with the Carers Hub, and apply for a free £150 wellbeing voucher - redeem against all sorts of activities from pamper days to trips away. You're our City's unsung heroes, so come and join us at the Symphony Hall Foyer, Birmingham - no need to book. www.birminghamcarershub.org.uk

Turning the Tables on Trident

"We are called to live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion for all wars. Do you faithfully maintain our testimony that war and the preparation for war are inconsistent with the spirit of Christ? Search out whatever in your own life may contain the seeds of war. Stand firm in our testimony, even when others commit, or prepare to commit acts of violence, yet always remember they too are children of God"

Quaker Advices and Queries, 31.

I marked the entry into Holy Week somewhat differently this year. It turned out to be an incredibly powerful experience which I am keen to reflect on and also share more widely.

On Palm Sunday, a group of us gathered at the gates of Aldermaston Nuclear base. We braved the wind and rain to share food together, celebrate a short liturgy and then set off to walk around the perimeter of the base, pausing at fourteen Stations of the Cross, to remember the events of Jesus' passion and pray for those involved in or suffering as a result of the nuclear weapons industry. It took around three hours to circle the base, a reminder of just how vast the operation is. At each stop we left a fabric cross tied to the fence, ragged ends flapping in the wind: fragile symbols of hope in a place of death.

This is the place of the cross
Where the suffering servant suffers still
Hidden behind barbed wire and state secrets
Veiled in hatred and fear
But this place too
This is still Holy Ground

The following day took a group of us to Burghfield, the other nuclear facility nearby, to blockade one of the gates. There was a strange contradiction between the beauty and peace as the sun rose above us, and the weapons of death being built behind us.

This was a new experience for me and took me well outside my comfort zone. While I was not personally making myself liable for arrest, I was certainly supporting those who were. Until relatively recently, I would not have considered such a thing. A safe, well-organised march was more my style. And yet, this felt exactly the right place to be. To be putting our bodies, physically, in a place to prevent something from taking place which I see as inherently wrong and contrary to the gospel.

What feels right is not the same as what feels easy. Jesus promised huge consolation for those who follow his way, but also offers significant challenge. Opening ourselves to the love of God means sometimes finding ourselves called into difficult places.

The liturgical significance was unmistakable and the whole two days felt like a fitting commemoration. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was hugely symbolic. He travelled towards the centre of religious, political and military power, to confront the authorities and offer an alternative way forward. The next day (according to the synoptic gospels) he turned over the tables in the temple: challenging corrupt economic systems and the culture of defining ourselves by who is in and who is out.

Just as Jesus did in his day; so are we, as Christians called to continue to challenge systemic injustice and violence in the societies where we live. The industrial-military complex is one of, if not the most, significant of those systems in the midst of which I feel we are called to bear witness to the hope of other possibilities.

The timing had a dual significance this year: with this moment in the liturgical calendar coinciding with parliament being dissolved in preparation for the general election. It will be in the hands of the next parliament to make a final decision on trident renewal. It is not too late to seek the way of peace.

The whole experience was powerful in many ways, not all of which I feel I have been able to process or would be able to explain.

From a loosely connected network of people, we built, in twenty-four hours, a close-knit, supportive, loving community of people we had to dare to trust.

Too often peace is seen as the passive alternative of "just letting things happen" or of "keeping ourselves to ourselves", and it was inspiring to share with others an understanding that peace is an active, committed, alternative voice.

Whatever the future holds for the UK nuclear weapons industry, it was important to be present, at this time and in this place; to put our time, our energy, our efforts into saying no, not in my name.

One by one, those on the ground were cut out of their arm tubes and moved to the grass verges. Some three hours after our dawn arrival, the gateway was clear, apart from the police vans which still kept it very effectively closed. We gathered to pray and sing together, before sharing the peace, with each other and with the police and going on our way. An experience which was both meaningful and transformative was over, almost, in time for breakfast!

If anyone is interested in further discussions on the subject of either the nuclear industry, or non-violent direct action (although I wouldn't claim to be an expert in either!), I would be very happy to have those conversations.

Steph Neville

Commitment for Life

(from Moving Stories 182)

SUSIYA : Ecumenical Accompanier, Theresa, recently visited the Palestinian village of Susiya. This account gives an insight into the ongoing fight for survival facing the residents of this small South Hebron Hills community.

Susiya is a village of 450 people, of whom over half are children. Here we met Odi and his mother Sumeha from the Nawajah family. The family of ten makes a living from their livestock, farming and handicrafts, along with most of the other residents of Susiya. Although life is not easy there are opportunities to feed the family and make additional income for education, transport and special occasions. The surrounding views are far-reaching and in the spring the wild flowers are stunning. This all sounds idyllic until you realise the families living here do not know whether their village will still be there tomorrow. Back in 1986 the original village of Susiya was demolished and the families evicted from their own land after the Israeli government declared their village was on an archaeological site. Now on this site stands a visitor centre for Israeli settlers. This is despite the village having ownership papers for their land dating back to Ottoman times.

The village was re-built again on another section of the village's land. But all these buildings and structures have received demolition orders. And as if that isn't enough an Israeli settlement of the same name – Susiya – has been built on Palestinian Susiya's land on the other side of the valley. Settlements are illegal under international law but this Israeli settlement, which began in 1983, is connected to Israel via good quality roads and has amenities including electricity, water and community facilities. On March 29, 2015 a tent appeared on the land of Palestinian Susiya, just below the Israeli settlement of Susiya. For the villagers of Palestinian Susiya this is another sign that the settlement intends to expand further onto their land.

Families in Palestinian Susiya wish that the law would at the very least be applied evenly. "They have no plans and no permits for these tents and buildings and they don't have ownership papers for this land. "We do", says Nasser Nawajah. Read more information on the website of the Israeli peace organisation, B'Tselem. You can also sign a petition started by Nasser Nawajah to try and gather support to save his village.

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Update: On 4th May an Israel High Court settler-judge rejected the request of the people of Palestinian Susiya and their legal representatives – Rabbis for Human Rights, to issue a temporary decree to prevent demolitions in the village until a final decision is made by the High Court in their case. The decision encourages the implementation of the demolition orders.

World not Delivering on Gaza Reconstruction

The international community must urgently change its approach to Gaza and deliver on promises of reconstruction, 46 agencies said in a new report on the lack of progress since last year's conflict. Six months since donors pledged \$3.5 billion towards Gaza's recovery. Many people are worse off and not one of the 19,000 destroyed homes has been rebuilt. 100,000 people are still homeless and many are living in makeshift camps or schools.

The report, "Charting a New Course: Overcoming the stalemate in Gaza," warns that further conflict is inevitable - and with it the cycle of destruction and donor-funded reconstruction - unless world leaders implement a new approach that addresses the underlying causes of the conflict. Donors must insist on a permanent ceasefire, accountability of all parties for ongoing violations of international law, and an end to the Israeli blockade that seals 1.8 million Palestinians in Gaza, separated from the West Bank. Rather than challenging the blockade, most donors are accepting ways to work round it.

Only 26.8 percent of money pledged by donors has been released so far. Even when funded, many reconstruction projects have not yet begun due to restrictions on essential material under the blockade. Most of the health clinics and hospitals damaged still lack funds for reconstruction, but the few that have funds do not have the material needed to proceed.

Since the temporary ceasefire, violence against civilians has continued, with more than 400 incidents of Israeli fire into Gaza and four rockets fired from Gaza into Israel. The report calls on all parties to immediately resume long-term ceasefire negotiations. It calls on Israel to end its blockade and policy of separating Gaza from the West Bank, and for Palestinian political actors to reconcile and prioritise reconstruction. It also calls on Egypt to open its border to allow humanitarian relief. The report sets out specific recommendations to the international community to break the cycle of conflict and destruction, including ways to: speed up reconstruction, ensure all parties are held accountable for violations of international law, and seek compensation for destroyed aid projects; end the blockade and rehabilitate Gaza's shattered economy. The blockade has reduced Gaza to dependency on aid. Exports from Gaza are at less than two percent of pre-blockade levels with the movement of people and goods between Gaza and the West Bank practically non-existent; support the development of a unified Palestinian government. Leadership has at times been weak and uncoordinated and is further complicated due to Israeli restrictions on government officials' travel. Keeping Gaza separated from the West Bank has entrenched the problematic split between Fatah and Hamas, with negative impact on the delivery of aid and services in Gaza.

Take Action: Join thunderclap : The thunderclap campaign is organised by Christian Aid and other agencies that share a simple message: Lift the blockade and rebuild Gaza.

Contributed by Wendy Firmin

On This Day ...

From the Carrs Lane Journal June 1915

From the Chronicle of the London Missionary Society June 1915

The War and the Future – *an extract from what is described as the 'strong and searching manifesto' published by the Laymen's Missionary Movements of England, Scotland, and Ireland.*

We are living in months of strain and crisis pregnant with danger and with hope for our nation and for mankind. The crucial issues of danger and of hope will not be decided by the success of our arms alone. They lie beyond the scope of our army and our fleet, in the hearts of our people. For it is possible for a nation to gain the whole world and lose its own soul. In the light of eternal realities, it is of little avail that we win the war unless we emerge from it purged and dedicated to the purposes of God.

The sacred price which our country is paying for victory challenges us to ask ourselves: "How may we be worthy of it?" The war has brought to Europe the magnificent opportunity of a new beginning. It has broken the entail of the past. Modern history will date from 1914. We are making its traditions.

On the first clean pages of our new history there was written the wonderful response of our people to the nation's cause, the heroism of our men, sacrifices borne unselfishly in every class, the subordination of personal interest to the common good.

The road into a new and better world is plain, if it is hard. It lies in our return in penitence to God, whom we have neglected, to the first principles of Christ, which we had set aside. It lies in accepting the Lordship of Christ for ourselves as individuals, for society and commerce, and for national life.

We desire to pray for ourselves and for our fellow-laymen:-

That we may be given at this time a deeper sense of our need of God, a new vision of Christ as the Redeemer and Lord of human life.

That there may be such a strong and intelligent public opinion behind our Government as shall enable our representatives to bring Christian principles to bear upon the problems of the settlement after the war.

That in the strain of war our people may be kept from bitterness and hatred.

That after the war new and Christian standards for society, commerce, and politics may emerge.

That there may be given to the Christian Church the conviction that the extension of the dominion of Christ in every sphere of life and to every man and nation is her supreme duty and privilege.

NOTE: June 1915 was also the date of the record in the Carrs Lane Journal of "the death of Douglas Gosling, first of those upon our Roll of Honour to die in action, in heroic circumstances. He won the love and respect of his comrades in the hardest of schools, where men soon discover each other's worth, and empty compliments find no place. His death reveals a spirit which no life, however long, could surpass. In the inevitable sense of heavy loss we want to express our heartfelt, loving sympathy."

From the Carrs Lane Journal June 1965

Although it is now, thankfully, long gone, apartheid lasted for a long time after this was written, it surely it brings to mind analogous situations that are going on today.

From The British Christian and South Africa (by Dorothy Rumsby)

Mr. Noel Salter was well fitted to talk about conditions in South Africa, for he is now Secretary of the International Department of the British Council of Churches and was secretary to the working party set up to study the future of South Africa. Mr. Salter outlined the reasons why South Africa should receive so much attention when human rights are violated in many parts of the world. We are aware of the historic links and the responsibility which we feel for the future of all her races, that we show the same kind of failures in our own society, not only among races, but cultural groups, that we are involved particularly as Christians in the shared sinfulness, that our position on the Security Council of the United Nations necessitates that we try to understand the situation, that we are her major trading partner.

In our attempt to analyse the situation, we must appreciate fully the position of the oppressed races in all its hopelessness, whilst acknowledging that the attitude of the South African white is characterised not primarily by hate but by fear. The government policy of apartheid is a defence mechanism, developed by one group fearing it will be swamped by the overwhelming numbers of another group (of the 10 million inhabitants only 3 million are white). The whites, therefore, live with a sense of doom. There is, in fact, a need for compassion for the fate of all races. There is also a need for realism. How is apartheid, or separate development, being worked out in South Africa? – not, Mr. Salter emphasised, with Africans living in homelands, enjoying increasing independence, but as a voiceless urban proletariat, increasing in numbers as economic suction draws them from the reserves. The dilemma of the white South African is that his society depends on the integration of the Africans; its corollary, political and social integration, he will not accept.

Apartheid is a grievous hindrance to the Gospel in Africa, with white Christians more loyal to their colour than to the cross. Muslim missionaries claim that Islam is the faith really witnessing to the brotherhood of man. In this explosive situation, there are three courses for South Africa. Outright partition is not practicable. A non-racial state would be the ideal, but impossible at present with the consent of the white minority. Some more limited association, a federal system, contains the germ of a workable solution. But only those who have to live under the system can decide its form. The South African government must call a conference of representatives of all sections of the community. But this it will not do until it realises that an alternative to apartheid must be found. To this end Christians in Britain should bend their efforts within State and Church. The churches in South Africa could play a big role. If they followed a radical line, the effect would be startling. We can influence them from this country by bringing coloured ministers here, sending delegations there, collecting money through Christian Aid. We should also remember the value of intercession.

Contributed by Wendy Firmin

Power for Good

Co-operative Limited Community Share Offer 5 May - 5 August 2015

Your invitation to invest in Power for Good – a Community Benefit Society that works to install solar photovoltaic panels on places of worship and their associated buildings.

Power for Good (PfG) has been set up by people from different faith communities who share a common understanding of the need to live within our means, both as individuals and collectively. The website *One Planet Living* states: “If everyone in the world lived like an average European, we would need three planets to live on.” And one of its guiding principles is that: “Our climate is changing because of human-induced build-up of CO₂ in the atmosphere”

This principle is supported by the scientific evidence accumulated by The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), who commend renewable energy generation as having great potential for enabling us to continue to enjoy all the benefits that electricity gives to us, while bringing a halt to further greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, they describe other gains we might expect from renewable energy generation: “As well as having a large potential to mitigate climate change, renewable energy can provide wider benefits. Renewable energy may, if implemented properly, contribute to social and economic development, energy access, a secure energy supply, and reducing negative impacts on the environment and health”

We seek to create a sustainable, ethical business in which people of faith, and others, can invest to protect the environment and probably earn a modest return. The purpose of this Community Share Offer is to raise finance for Power for Good’s pilot project, involving the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on churches in the West Midlands. The two churches - St Richard’s in Kitts Green, Birmingham, and St Andrew’s in West Bromwich - have been selected because they are in regular daytime use for a wide range of community purposes, as well as offering suitable sites for the installation of solar PV.

Our target is to raise £42,000 by 5 August 2015. This would allow us to proceed with the installations on both of the churches, well before the deadline of 11 November, a deadline we must meet in order to qualify for the rate of Feed-in tariff that we have pre-registered for. The latest date on which we can place the orders for the installations is 30 September, as sufficient time has to be allowed for the installations taking into account such contingencies as delivery times, delays due to poor weather, and time to put all the paperwork in place for registration with Ofgem for the Feed-in tariff

Application form from Power for Good Co-operative Limited, 3 Roxburgh Rd, Sutton Coldfield, B73 6LD or email info@pfg.coop

Where there's a will

Wills are a topic that can conjure up rather negative images, but there are much more positive aspects to consider as they are very important to family, friends, charities and your church. Recent statistics indicate that of the Christians who made a will, 22% leave a legacy to the church, 54% leave a legacy to a Christian charity, and 24% leave a legacy to other charities. It is often only the fact that church members were not asked to consider the possibility that leads to the matter being overlooked.

Carrs Lane has benefitted on many past occasions from the generosity of members who have remembered this church in their wills. Indeed, the amount that someone leaves to a church by this means can often be more than everything they have ever given previously; hence the significance of this reminder.

Whilst it is likely that the majority of you who read this will already have ensured that you have a will in place, it is also a fact that of the population in general over 65 years of age, only 41% have a will and 25% of those are out of date. If you do not have a will at all, or know that the existing one needs updating, it is well worth seriously considering attending to as soon as you are able.

Planning to make a will seems like something that can be put off; however life rarely runs to schedule and no-one knows their own future. Getting a professionally drawn-up will is a straight-forward process that will ensure that family and friends will know exactly what you want to happen to your possessions and assets. Furthermore if your estate will be subject to an inheritance tax liability, a solicitor will also be able to explain how any such liability can be mitigated to a lower tax rate payable or even eliminated completely by making careful and sufficient provision for charitable beneficiaries.

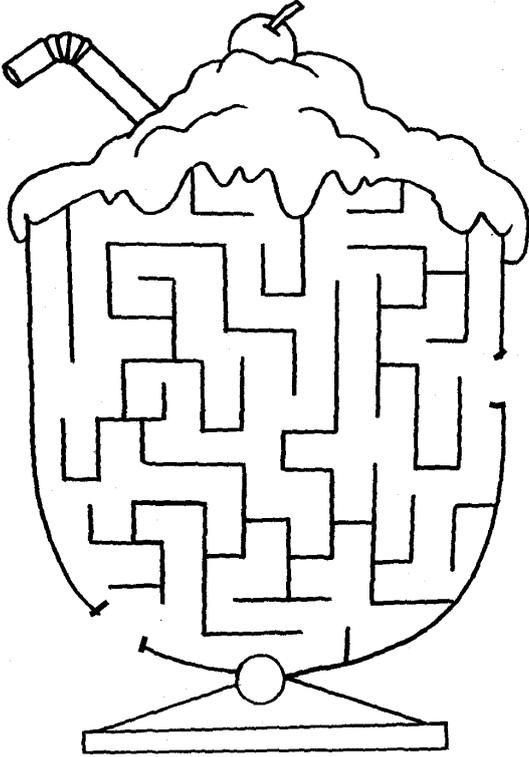
If you think you need to take some action in the light of the above but now is not the moment, don't forget that every November a range of solicitors participate in a scheme called Will Aid when, for a suggested charitable donation, relatively straight-forward wills can be produced or updated at much reduced costs. This scheme benefits both you and the charities to which legacies are given. And if you intend to remember this church in your will don't forget that we are 'The Church at Carrs Lane – Charity number 1153980'.

Thank you, Derek Duffield

Please send your contribution for next month's Journey to the Editor, Mrs. Pat Davies, Carrs Lane URC, Carrs Lane, Birmingham, B4 7SX or by email to office@carrslane.co.uk.

Kids Page

Ice cream maze, jokes, and a baptism picture to colour



Q: What do you call a fake noodle?

A: *An Impasta*

Q: What do you call an alligator in a vest?

A: *An Investigator*

Q: What is it called when a cat wins a dog show?

A: *A cat-has-trophy!*

Q: What do you get from a pampered cow?

A: *Spoiled milk.*

Q: What do lawyers wear to court?

A: *Lawsuits!*

Q: What did the pencil say to the other pencil?

A: *You're looking sharp.*

Q: How do you make a tissue dance?

A: *Put a little boogie in it!*

Q: Why did the picture go to jail?

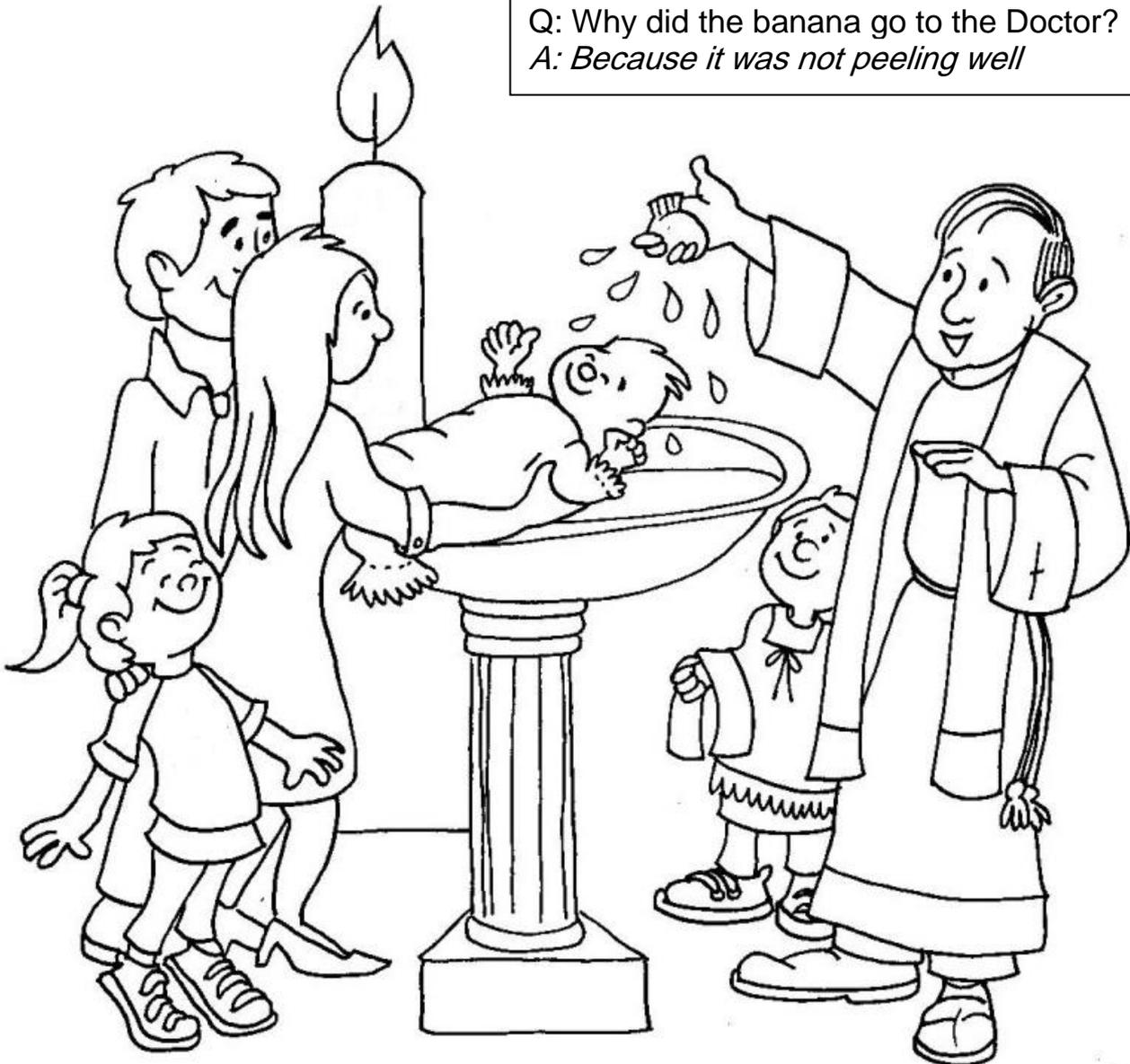
A: *Because it was framed.*

Q: Why did the computer go to the doctor?

A: *Because it had a virus!*

Q: Why did the banana go to the Doctor?

A: *Because it was not peeling well*



Room Hire at Carrs Lane

Carrs Lane Conference Centre Ltd is in Birmingham city centre and within a few minutes walk of New Street and Moor Street train stations and the National Express coach station. Public car parking and bus stops are also nearby.

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Full details and prices are available on our website, www.carrslane.co.uk, or you may call the conference team on 0121 643 6151 if you have any questions or email booking@carrslane.co.uk.



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0121 643 6151 fair-trade@carrslane.co.uk
www.carrslane.co.uk



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The Church at Carrs Lane Regular Activities

SUNDAYS

Morning Worship	Every Sunday at 10.30am with Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month
Children's Church	Second Sunday at 2.30pm
Radical Worship	Fourth Sunday at 6.00pm
First Sunday Lunch	First Sunday each month at 12.30pm
Church Meeting	Second Sunday at 12 noon
Singing Group	Third Sunday 9.45 – 10.15am

WEEK DAYS

Carrs Lane Lived Community meet for Prayers - Monday to Friday 7.30am and 7.00pm, all are welcome to join them	
Lunchtime Healing Service	Every Wednesday 1.15pm
Prayer Group	First Wednesday at 7.00 pm
Thinking Allowed	First Thursday at 10.15 am
Harborne House Group	Fourth Tuesdays 2.00pm (various locations)
Central House Group at Carrs Lane	Third Wednesdays at 6.30pm
Coffee Drop-in	Fridays from 10.30am-12.00pm
Carrs Lane Choir Practice	Fridays at 7.00pm
Carrs Lane Players (drama group)	Fridays at 7.45 pm
Charity Knitting Circle	First Tuesday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm
Carrs Lane Walking Group	usually meets monthly, see notice board
Fair Trade Shop	First and Third Sunday after morning worship and Tuesday - Saturday 10.30 am - 2.30 pm
Counselling Centre	Monday - Friday 11.00 am - 1.30 pm and Monday to Wednesday evenings 7.00 - 9.00 pm

Contact details for The Church at Carrs Lane
Carrs Lane, Birmingham, B4 7SX
Telephone 0121 643 6151
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www.carrslane.co.uk