

# **Journey**



**The continuing story**

of

**The Church at Carrs Lane**

**May 2015**

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## Minister's Letter

Dear friends,

I shared in the induction service for the new minister of the Unitarian New Meeting at Five Ways recently...a simple statement which might raise concerns on the part of some of those who read this letter! Some 'Churches Together' groups are reluctant to offer full 'fellowship' to the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches; in Hall Green, however, we welcome – and genuinely appreciate – the presence of The Society of Friends, the Quakers, and if we are comfortable with the Quakers, then, equally, we must be comfortable with the Unitarians! Both traditions represent those who search after truth, with integrity, within the Judaeo- Christian tradition and who espouse the radical social agenda contained within the teaching of Jesus. They are clearly 'for' Jesus...and we recall Jesus' own words on those who are 'for' him. We may not agree on all matters of doctrine, but they are friends – allies – supporters when it comes to the work of the Kingdom. We are not in the business of shutting doors or claiming a monopoly of truth.

Equally, if folk in Hall Green share readily with the Quakers (the Good Friday Procession commences at Friends' Meeting House!), then, so too, folk at Carrs Lane need to remember that in the nineteenth century, some of R.W. Dale's staunchest supporters and closest friends were members at Unitarian Church in Broad Street, the predecessor to the New Meeting; the Chamberlains were prominent Unitarians – though it has always struck me as somewhat odd that their church was called, 'The Church of the Messiah' This is a strangely un-Unitarian name!

I always share in the worship of other traditions with a degree of keen interest...a willingness to learn. So, for the induction service, I sat next to two representatives of the local Muslim community; for the New Meeting, it was perfectly natural to invite them – and they were glad to be there. They asked me – with far greater interest and discernment than some Christians – to summarise the defining characteristics of the United Reformed Church: I wish that I had to respond to this challenge more often. Given the nature of the occasion, great care was taken to ensure that the refreshments afterwards were genuinely 'inclusive'.

Hymnody is important...and much that we sang at the service was new to me; the words of hymns matter greatly to me, since I like to sing enthusiastically, but with honesty. So: I came away with much to ponder at leisure. The only hymn that I knew was the Kate Compston hymn, 'I dream of a church...'; I took the words of the final verse away with me:

*God, make us a church that joins in with your living,  
As you cherish and challenge, rein in and release,  
A church that is winsome, impassioned, inspiring;  
Lioness of your justice and lamb of your peace.*

Good words. So, too, the words of, 'Wake now my senses'; the fourth verse read:

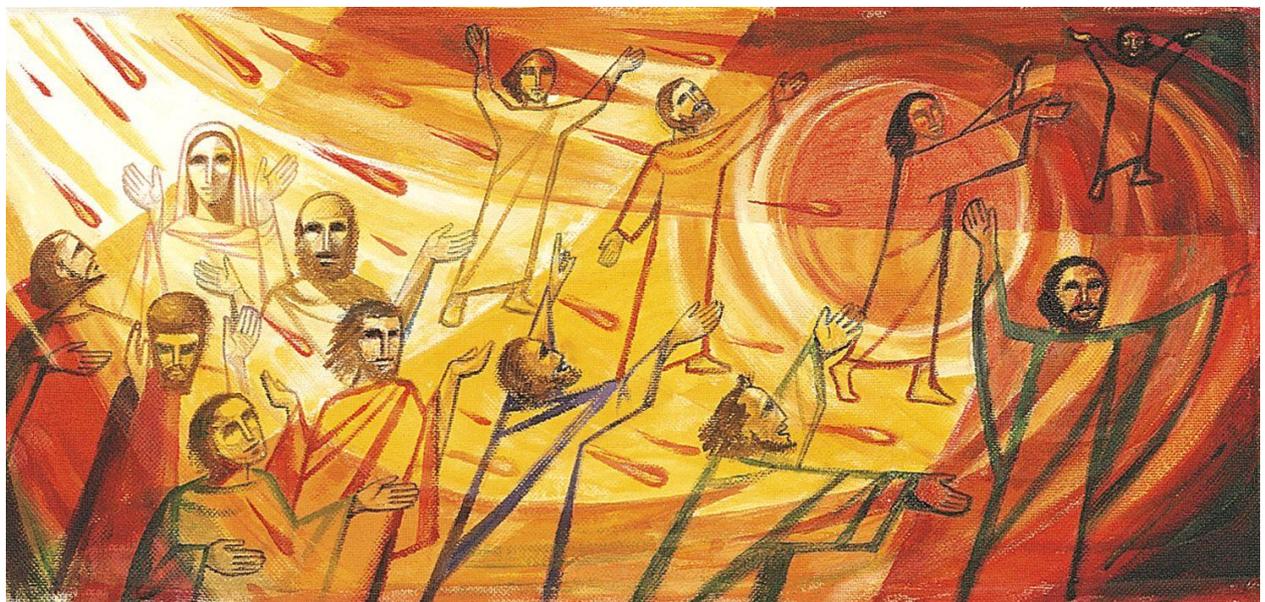
*Wake now, my conscience, with justice they guide;  
Join with all people whose rights are denied;  
Take not for granted a privileged place;  
God's love embraces the whole human race.*

Lest I indulged too much in wistful spirituality and reflection on words, however... well, I allowed myself a wry smile when I heard the following announcement: 'The AGM will follow morning worship next Sunday. Members are expected to be there, and friends are welcome'. I have never dared to put it quite as directly as this!

I came away feeling that I had learned a great deal, not least about the motivation of the faith community there and what makes them tick. How often are folk able to say this after sharing in one of our services?

With love in Christ,

Your friend and pastor,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

## Sunday Worship during May

### Sunday 3 May

10.30am Morning worship, including the Lord's Supper, led by Revd Elaine Russell  
*Worship will be followed by First Sunday Lunch (all welcome) and a concert*

### Sunday 10 May

10.30am Morning worship led by Revd Neil Johnson  
2.45pm for 3.00pm Children's Church – continuing the series, 'On Fire'

### Sunday 17 May

*The congregation – along with both 'Neils' – will be sharing in the Circuit Service at the ICC – full details elsewhere in the magazine; this service will mark the launch of the major initiative 'Holy Habits'*

### Sunday 24 May

10.30am Morning worship led by N. Palmer  
6.00pm Radical worship, continuing the series, 'Through the eyes of the World Church'  
*A good number of folk will be sharing in worship with our friends in Ernstweiler in Germany; Neil Riches will be preaching (albeit with the help of a translator!)*

### Sunday 31 May

10.30am Morning worship led by Peter Woodall



## Notices

**Sunday 3 May** Music at The Church  
@ Carrs Lane 1.30pm: Bacanu String  
Quartet – Cristi Bacanu

**Carrs Lane Lived Community Events -**  
Film Club: Prayer 7pm followed by a  
film. **Thurs 28 May** The Golden Dream;  
**Thursday 25 June** 12 Years a Slave.  
**Tuesday 12 May:** In commemoration  
of the 100th Anniversary of Br Roger's  
birth, Taize Prayer at 7pm followed by  
a bring and share meal and an action  
of solidarity. More details to follow.  
**Saturday 20 June:** End of year  
celebration (and Melissa's leaving  
party) Drop in for tea and cake 3 - 5pm,  
or stay into the evening for bring and  
share meal, games and conversation.  
Let us know if you are coming  
info@carrslanelivedcommunity.org.uk

**May 9-10 and 16-17.** Paradise Lane  
Plant Sale, Hall Green. Thousands of  
plants for sale, also cakes and drinks.  
Details birmingham@christian-aid.org.

**Justice for Asylum-Seekers** A vigil was  
held in St Philip's Cathedral precinct on  
Monday 2 March 17.00 - 18.00, to be  
repeated fortnightly until the General  
Election, showing support for asylum-  
seekers and informing the public about  
the very low levels of support they are  
given, and about the current UK policy  
of indefinite detention. The event is  
organised under the auspices of the  
Central England Quaker Asylum  
Group, in cooperation with Restore,  
Freedom From Torture, Refugee  
Action, the Catholic National Justice  
and Peace Network and the  
Progressive Synagogue. The final  
meeting will be **Monday 11 May**.

You are invited to a multi-cultural  
celebration on **Monday 11 May, 7-  
8.30pm** at **The Queen's Foundation**,  
(Somerset Road, Birmingham, B15  
2QH). Hospitality and Sanctuary for all  
is a valuable, innovative and practical  
resource for Bible study, worship and  
prayer for Churches and individuals,  
led by the Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal.  
Event includes light refreshments,  
music and creative spaces for  
reflection. For more information call  
Marlene on 07799 442091 RSVP for  
catering purposes by 20 April:  
deborahcaulk@gmail.com.

**Christian Aid Week 10 – 16 May**  
**Celebrating 70 years anniversary.**  
Christian Aid Week is nearly upon us  
once again. The need around the world  
does not diminish. The Cathedral  
Collection around the Square will run  
again from **Monday 11 to Saturday 16**  
**May**. If you can spare an hour (or  
more) on one day (or more) to shake a  
bucket it would be really good to hear  
from you. The "regulars" I know about  
and I look forward to seeing you again  
this year. If you have not done it before  
but are happy to try please email  
enquiries@birminghamcathedral.com  
with "Christian Aid Collection" in the  
subject line and telling us days and  
times you can manage, I'll get back to  
you with further details. *With many,  
many thanks. John Craig.*

**Saturday 9 May 7.30pm Christian Aid**  
**Quizaid** Selly Oak Methodist Church.  
Refreshments available. Entrance fee  
£1 per person, max 6 per team. If you  
are interested in joining a team from  
TC@CL please speak to Pat Davies.  
*See also article on page 16.*

Barnes Close Reflection Day, an opportunity to open the Bible, be still and let God speak to you 10am to 4pm on **Thursday 14 May, Thursday 11 June, Thursday 9 July**, cost £15. Community for Reconciliation, Barnes Close, Bromsgrove B61 0RA  
Email: cfrenquiry@aol.com Tel: 01562 710231 www.cfrbarnesclose.co.uk

**16 May** Quinborne Choir Concert 7.30pm at St Hilda's Church, Warley Woods. Tickets £10 from Pat Davies or Peter Searle.

**Creche for Holy Habits service.** An additional adult with a childcare qualification or QTS (teaching qualification any age group) and a current DBS is sought for the Crèche team, for babies and toddlers, at the Holy Habits launch service on **Sunday 17 May** to fulfil ICC requirements. The time could be shared between two or three people. Additional volunteers are also needed to be part of the Crèche, which will be open from 10am to 1pm and volunteers are asked to take a half hour slot each. If you can help contact Fiona Barker barker@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk or 07896 656126 asap. We also urgently need volunteers to assist in the distribution of the love feast (this will take place at the beginning of the service) and to help with pushing wheelchairs. You will need to be there by 9.30am the latest. If you can help please contact Beverley Francis 0121 616 1800 or bfrancis@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk

**17 May Taize** Prayer 6.00pm at Carrs Lane. Info from 0121 478 3841 or phpaw2@btinternet.com

**May 31 to June 6** - Volunteers Week

**Wednesday 20 May** The Birmingham Conversations Symposium 9.15am - 1.00pm at the Saffron Centre, Moseley Road, B12 OBS. Hear and discuss the findings from the Birmingham Conversations, to discuss the topic of 'What does lived faith look like in a 21st Century City'. Free event but to book email ebbieb@cofebirmingham.com. *See article on page 12*

**June 9** Sacred Space Meal 7.00pm at St Luke's Church. Speaker – New Hope Interfaith Youth Project. £8. Details from Pat Davies.

### Dates for your diary

**September 5** Neil Riches' induction at his new church in Swansea will be on Saturday September 5<sup>th</sup> – please put this date in your diary. Full details will follow nearer the time – if there are enough of us wanting to travel to Swansea to share the occasion we may be able to travel together by coach. Watch the notice board for details nearer the time

**July 26** This will be Neil's last service here – there will be a lunch after worship – so please keep the date free to enable you to share in the day

New (used twice) Magbility Medline wheelchair available free - folds away easily, has foot supports and seat belt, both hand and wheel brakes. If interested please contact Joan Pulley on 01564 205121.

Little used electric reclining chair for sale, £100 for a quick sale (cost £399). Sorry we cannot deliver. If you are interested contact Colin & Shirley Hale - shirleyphale@yahoo.co.uk

## Birmingham Methodist Circuit HOLY HABITS Programme

**T**he HOLYHABITS Programme is a 2 year programme inspired by the 10 Holy Habits from Acts 2 which we will be using to challenge the culture of our Circuit and give everyone an opportunity to grow in their relationship with God. At the end of Acts Chapter 2; vs 42 – 47, we see a passage entitled “The Fellowship of Believers” which talks about the early church and the way it went about living out its ministry. This has been summarised by some as the 10 Holy Habits - Biblical teaching; Fellowship; Breaking of bread; Prayer; Sharing of resources & giving; Service to the poor & marginalised; Eating together; Gladness & generosity; Worship and Making more disciples

In 2014 following a review of the current life of our Circuit and all of the churches which make it up, we wanted to put together something which would create an opportunity for everyone within our Circuit to grow in their relationship with God. We created a new tagline for the Circuit, ‘Going for Growth’. The churches that make up our Circuit had said that their strength was Hospitality and that their biggest desire was to grow in Discipleship, so starting with that as a basis we looked at putting together something to engage all of us within the Circuit’s Churches. Thus was born, the 10 Holy Habits programme.

The programme is designed to take two years, approximately one Habit per 6-8 weeks, and the hope is that each church will engage with every habit. We will be providing each church with a booklet for each habit, so at the end of the programme the churches will have 10 booklets, one on each habit (and a folder to put them all in). Each booklet will come out shortly before the Habit starts. The booklets will be put together by people from around our Circuit, and so will be personal to us and represent us as a Circuit. In the booklet will be Introduction leaflet, Sunday worship ideas, Circuit and connexional events to attend, local community ideas, Bible study ideas and film/book suggestions, children’s and youth group ideas.

There is going to be a launch event on 17 May at 11am at the ICC, all of our churches will be closing to attend, as will members of The Church @ Carrs Lane. This is the start of something really big and exciting for us as a Circuit, we want to encourage everyone who is able to be there and to support.

The time-table outlining the start times of each of the Habits is – May 2015 – Eating Together (starting with our launch event); July 2015 – Prayer; December 2015 – Making more disciples; February 2016 – Gladness and Generosity; End of March 2016 – Breaking of Bread; May 2016 – Fellowship; July 2016 – Worship, December 2016 – Service; February 2017 – Biblical Teaching; April 2017 – Sharing of Resources

If you have any questions you can contact Beverley Francis at the central circuit office ([bfrancis@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk](mailto:bfrancis@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk) 0121-616 1800) and she will be able to point you in the direction of someone who can answer your questions.

## Holy Habits Launch Event Information

*Information in response to questions raised about the launch event on 17 May:*

**Coaches** - Coaches have been arranged and will arrive at the ICC around 10.00am. You will be informed of pick up times and locations by Thursday 7 May. After the event the coaches will depart at 1.30pm or 3.00pm as arranged with the Circuit office. Cut-off date for coach requests is **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May**.

**Parking** - 300 parking permits have been allocated to us. Please contact the Circuit office by **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May** indicating how many permits your church requires.

*Please be aware as of 10 May there will major road changes to the area around Paradise Circus. Updates will be posted at [www.birmingham.gov.uk/connected](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/connected).*

**Disabled Parking** - Due to an afternoon concert taking place at the Symphony Hall disabled parking spaces are no longer available to us. We are having conversations with the ICC about alternative arrangements. If you require further information about this please contact the Circuit office by **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May**.

**Wheelchair Access** - There are limited spaces for permanent wheelchair users within Hall 1, so we are requesting that you contact the Circuit office by **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May** to book a space. This may also include your carer if needed. For other wheelchair users who can occupy a seat there is a storage room available for your wheelchair, and a steward will assist you with this. Please contact the Circuit office if you need to store a wheelchair. The ICC do not provide wheelchairs but we have been able to secure some wheelchairs from the British Red Cross. We are asking members of the circuit team to please assist on the day.

**Children** - Activities packs will be available and a crèche will be provided for those 4 years and under and this will be located in the Media Suite (Level 4). Please indicate how many of your children are likely to use this crèche facility by **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May**.

**Offerings/Symbols from Each Church** - Easter Offering collection will be part of the service. In our previous letter to you about the launch event we requested that each church brings something which represents them. During the event because of space restriction on the stage area, we ask that one nominated person from each church bring the Easter Offering collection and symbols to the stage when directed. Please indicate the name of the nominated person by **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May**.

**Coats** - A fee of £1 will be charged for using the cloakroom at the ICC, but coats can be left on the coaches at your own risk.

**Contact** : Beverley Francis [bfrancis@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk](mailto:bfrancis@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk) 616 1800  
**Forward Planning** When your church is arranging the dates for Harvest celebrations this autumn, please consider how it relates to the Holy Habit theme of 'Making More Disciples' which will be our focus that that time of the year.

Thank you Rev Neil Johnson

## Carrs Lane Lived Community - Prayer

**A**s members of the Lived Community we spend a lot of our time in prayer. So I thought it would be worth trying to put into words some of the reasons why I have chosen to embrace this rhythm of life.

I believe that the most essential part of who we are as human beings is that we are loved. Each one of us is loved absolutely and unconditionally beyond any capability we have to understand. We are not loved because we have done anything deserving of love, God loves us simply because he loves us. If we can only glimpse a millionth of the breadth of this love this little bit is enough to transform us.

Prayer is nothing more complicated than sitting in the presence of God and allowing him to love us; allowing ourselves, weak as we are, to be conscious that we are loved. There is no need for us to use big words or to understand great ideas; all that is needed is that we simply allow ourselves to be in the presence of God.

We do not pray to make ourselves better people or to ask God to help us with our needs. These things can be secondary part of prayer but they are not what is most essential.

Each day when we gather to pray it is never really the case that one of us leads prayer. No, the role of the person who speaks is simply to frame a space in which each of us, individually and together, can encounter God.

St. Paul puts it well when he writes: “we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words” (Romans 8:26). It is significant that Paul writes “we” not “I” or “you” but “We”. None of us are experts at prayer and so by being together we help each other.

As a community our role is not to lead prayer, or to pray for, our role is simply to create a space in which there is an opportunity to encounter God and to allow ourselves to be loved.

These are some of my thoughts and feelings. I would be interested to hear or read how others pray and understand their prayer.

Matthew Neville

*Backpacks - Thank you to all who generously responded to the appeal for egg boxes to donate to St Chad's Sanctuary - they were greatly appreciated. They are now desperately in need of small backpacks and/or small suitcases on wheels for refugees who often have to walk two hours to get to the Sanctuary as they have no money for the bus fare ... if you have any lying around unused/unwanted, please give to Melissa, Matthew or Steph. Many thanks.*

## Carrs Lane Lived Community - A Year in Community

**A**n invitation to come and share in the rhythms of life in a residential Christian community in the heart of Birmingham City Centre, from September 2015 to June 2016.

Carrs Lane Lived Community is a small group of people attempting to live together as an Ecumenical Christian Community at the heart of a busy city. Our community life is built around a rhythm of daily prayer, a shared life together, and openness to others in hospitality and service to the city.

You can find out more about who we are and what we are trying to live on our website ([www.carrslanelivedcommunity.org.uk](http://www.carrslanelivedcommunity.org.uk)), where you will also find a copy of our community agreement, the document which forms the basis of what we are trying to live. Those joining the project would be expected to live by the spirit of this agreement; committing to the routine of prayer and the shared life of the community.

Beyond this, the participants would commit to working with voluntary projects in the city as well as some involvement with the Church at Carrs Lane and other city centre churches. Anyone over 18, of any Christian denomination, who feels drawn to a life built around a rhythm of prayer is welcome to apply. The Year in Community would require a full-time commitment. Living costs would be covered and participants would receive a small stipend for personal expenses.

Interested? If you think this could be right for you, please email us for further information and an application form: [info@carrslanelivedcommunity.org.uk](mailto:info@carrslanelivedcommunity.org.uk). We encourage you to apply as early as possible, with a final deadline of 30th June, 2015. Prospective participants would be expected to visit the community for a few days to discern, together with community members, whether this would be the right place for you.

If you are not local and would find the cost of visiting the community prohibitive, please do get in touch because some assistance with travel costs might be available.

*Carrs Lane Lived Community*



## The Birmingham Conversations Symposium

The Birmingham Conversations Symposium is your chance to hear and discuss the findings from the Birmingham Conversations. This was a programme initiated by Rt Revd David Urquhart, Bishop of Birmingham, and supported by the Most Revd Justin Welby the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The conversations brought together a group of twenty four people from different faiths to discuss the topic of 'What does lived faith look like in a 21st Century City'. The group met for six three hour conversations over a period of six months to discuss a variety of issues that affect people of faith in Birmingham. The emphasis was always on how faith is lived rather than what is taught and to learn to live well together rather than necessarily reach consensus.

The group are now ready to share what they have learnt through this process and the outcomes of some of the conversations. During the morning a number of those involved in the conversations, including members of the organising team, academic observers and conversation participants will discuss their experiences and how the conversations relate to wider issues of interreligious relations. There will also be an opportunity for delegates to discuss some of the issues raised and to ask questions. The morning will include opportunities for networking.

The last year has been tough for Birmingham, we hope that the story of these conversations, the methods used and the results of the conversations will show that people in Birmingham can come together in adversity and rise to the challenge of dealing with difficult issues constructively.

The symposium will take place on Wednesday 20 May from 9.15am to 1.00pm at the Saffron Centre, 256 Moseley Road, Highgate, B12 OBS. The event is free but please email [debbieb@cofebirmingham.com](mailto:debbieb@cofebirmingham.com) to book your place.



## Tomorrow's Country

Major churches in the West Midlands have produced Tomorrow's Country - a churchgoers' manifesto for the 2015 General Election. The manifesto is based on regional research by Church leaders that highlights the key political issues for members of their congregations, and aims at better enabling churchgoers to question parliamentary candidates on the topics that matter most to them.

The West Midlands Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church surveyed hundreds of churchgoers in the West Midlands. The results revealed that over 95% wanted to see a society that is compassionate, caring, fair, just, honest, respectful and tolerant. When asked about the policies that would guarantee such a society, there was virtual agreement in many areas such as the need to protect the vulnerable, increase penalties for tax evasion, and guarantee more housing for first time buyers.

The Revd Roy Lowes, Moderator of the URC West Midlands Synod, said: "The research and the Manifesto leaflet produced by and for churchgoers outlines the issues that matter most to them in the run up to the General Election. Poverty, benefits and welfare are just some of the key topics the Manifesto focuses on and churchgoers want to know how political candidates are going to tackle these problems." The Revd John Howard, Methodist District Chair of Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury added: "There is a need for Christians to voice their concerns in the run up to the General Election in order to promote the common good in our society. We hope that the Manifesto will encourage churches and others to do just this by getting involved in the crucial debates, holding hustings, and questioning political candidates about the policies set out in 'Tomorrow's Country'."

The following policies were favoured among others –

### Benefits and Welfare

- Protect the vulnerable
- Meet basic needs
- Control pay day loans
- Abolish zero-hour contracts unless in workers' interests

### Climate Change

- Reduce pollution and carbon emissions
- Reduce food waste
- Increase funding for renewable energy
- Make combating climate change the top priority

### Economy

- End tax avoidance
- Increase exports and manufacturing
- Greater equality
- More regulation of banks

## Education

- Less targets and government interference
- More teaching about morals, religion and respect
- More support for teaching staff
- Equal opportunities

## Employment

- More openings for young people
- More support for small businesses
- More into-work schemes
- Incentives to pay the living wage

## Europe

- Remain in Europe

## Housing

- More housing for first time buyers
- More social housing
- More use of empty properties
- Abolish the under occupancy tax, better known as the bedroom tax

## Immigration

- Sensitivity towards immigrants
- Bridge building between communities
- Increase the minimum wage
- Promote stability in other countries

## NHS

- Promote healthy life-styles
- Improve patient care
- End regional inequalities
- Less government interference

## Overseas aid

- Maintain the AID budget
- Focus on the most needy
- Fund through non-governmental organisations
- Aim to make AID unnecessary

## Security

- End police and military cut-backs
- Maintain current levels of funding
- Use force only as last resort
- End arms exports

## Jubilee Debt Campaign

**S**uppose you have a terrible accident or disease and are too poor to pay for treatment. You need help but are given a loan. The result is a debt, which you may never be able to repay. It's like that with poor countries that have suffered disasters – flood, hurricane, drought or disease. All too often what they get from the World Bank or the UK Government is just more loans which simply add to their debt.

That's why Jubilee Debt Campaign is telling all election candidates about the new boom in irresponsible lending: loans to low income countries increased by 75 per cent between 2008 and 2012 and loans to sub Saharan African governments more than doubled over the same period of time. It sets a new debt trap for people in poverty around the world. Worst of all, the UK Aid budget is involved because it is increasingly giving aid in the form of loans rather than outright grants. Loans may be appropriate for projects that are intended to make a profit, such as farming or small scale businesses, but not in responding to disasters such as hurricanes or Ebola.

JDC would like to ask each Parliamentary Candidate to support the following policies, 1. Keep giving UK aid as grants not loans, and stop supporting irresponsible lending by the World Bank.

2. Support tax justice by curbing generous UK tax breaks that encourage big companies to avoid paying tax in the developing world. Ensure that every tax rule and treaty adopted by the UK government has an analysis to check that it won't harm developing countries, but actively help them in tackling tax avoidance and evasion.

3. Push for fair global rules on debt to control vulture funds and show banks they won't be bailed out for reckless lending.

JDC's full Manifesto may be seen on [www.jubileedebt.org.uk/election2015](http://www.jubileedebt.org.uk/election2015). We want to look at some positive examples of what can be done to have a fairer system of making loans and dealing with debt, and so we hope to have a meeting after the election on positive examples of ethical banking. Further details to be given later.

Local Birmingham JDC Group Chair: John Nightingale 0121 458 6182  
[johnnightingale@btinternet.com](mailto:johnnightingale@btinternet.com)



## Ebola – the crisis is not yet over

*Tomilola Ajayi, who was working for Christian Aid in Sierra Leone when the Ebola outbreak began, reports on the challenges that survivors and communities face in rebuilding their lives.*

**M**abinti Mansaray lives in Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital. She beat Ebola but lost her mother and two daughters to the disease. Now, like many other Ebola survivors, she faces stigma and discrimination from her community. Before the crisis hit, Mabinti was a street trader, selling food and other items. She is now unemployed. Widespread quarantines and movement restrictions have jeopardised many people's livelihoods in Sierra Leone.

As well as having no income, Mabinti has hardly any belongings: everything in her quarantined home – clothes, furniture, documents – was burnt as part of infection control measures. 'After my neighbours found out I had Ebola they abandoned me,' she says. 'They don't come near me anymore.' Fellow survivor Geraldine Lamin, 17, also lost everything she owned. Her mother, father, sister and uncle all died within a short space of time. 'The whole month was full of tears,' she says. 'Before, life was good – I had loving parents and I was going to school; there was peace and joy at home. Now my brother, sister and I live alone and have to support ourselves. People are still scared of us... the stigma is still there.'

These stories are echoed across Sierra Leone, where more than 3,300 people have been killed and over 8,500 infected since the outbreak began in May last year. Mabinti and Geraldine are among hundreds of vulnerable people who have received food and household items – including mattresses, utensils and hygiene items – from Christian Aid. Funded by our Ebola Crisis Appeal, which has so far raised just under £1m, these kits are helping survivors and quarantined families in badly affected communities. Our partners have also provided care for 100 orphans and trained 500 faith leaders to give trauma counselling and challenge the stigmatisation of survivors.

As the infection rate slows, we are also addressing the wider impacts of the outbreak. Jeanne Kamara, Sierra Leone country manager, says: 'The health crisis has caused enormous socio-economic challenges. That's why Christian Aid is helping Ebola survivors rebuild their livelihoods, focusing particularly on women and young people. 'We have to ensure that HIV work and maternal and child healthcare are all prioritised, alongside issues arising from the long-term closure of schools, such as the rise in teen pregnancy. Meanwhile, foreign companies operating in Sierra Leone must begin to pay their fair share of tax, so that our government can invest much-needed funds to improve our broken health system. 'The crisis is not yet over. We can't be complacent: we will continue to encourage communities to follow Ebola prevention measures, so that the virus can be eradicated once and for all.'

[christianaid.org.uk/ebola](http://christianaid.org.uk/ebola)

## Chaplaincy Fortnight

**C**hurches and Industry Group Birmingham and Solihull is facilitating a fortnight this summer on behalf of many types of Chaplaincy. Chaplaincy in its different forms will be celebrated in two weeks of meetings, prayer and discussion during Chaplaincy Fortnight (June 7-21).

Chaplaincy Fortnight offers an opportunity to church congregations to invite a chaplain to talk within their church community, and/or to use suggested prayers, readings etc on the theme of chaplaincy, during that period.

Chaplains can be found in all walks of life: construction sites, shopping malls, factories, emergency services, and waterways as well as the better-known hospitals and armed forces. Chaplains from healthcare, emergency services, retail, prison etc will make themselves available to come to churches to tell of what they have seen and heard, as well as to ask for prayer for chaplaincy. Chaplains have wisdom and experience from a frontline of mission.

Chaplaincy Fortnight offers an opportunity to find out more about chaplains and their work.

We hope that churches will:

- Invite a chaplain to speak at a service or meeting
- Discuss the role of chaplaincy for the Church
- Pray for Chaplains

CIGB continues to see growing numbers of people wanting to be involved in voluntary workplace chaplaincy: over 30 people from difference church denominations completed our training courses in 2014. Similarly new businesses are asking for Chaplaincy support.

If you are interested in getting involved in chaplaincy work, contact [peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk](mailto:peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk)



### Could this be your Calling?

Retail Chaplaincy is an exciting opportunity for the Church to leave the building. If you're looking for new ways of being church within the retail community and have a few hours to spare a week or fortnightly then Retail Chaplaincy might be your calling.

City centre Chaplaincy be.friend is seeking to recruit new volunteers to join the team. For more information please contact: Elaine Hutchinson be.friend Team Leader, email: [chaplain@carrslane.co.uk](mailto:chaplain@carrslane.co.uk), telephone: 0121 6436151

## Sufficient unto each day...

**S**unday 26<sup>th</sup> April was unusual in that it seemed to provide an opportunity to experience something of the extraordinary diversity that can be Christian ministry within the space of 12 short (long?) hours...

First stop, a bacon butty at Hall Green Baptist Church prepared by Trinity's BB Company as a part of their input into morning worship+ at the church; a quick cycle down a surprisingly quiet Stratford Road took me to morning worship at Carrs Lane – Jesus' pictures of sheep, shepherd and wolves provided food for thought; some significant conversations over coffee – mainly with relative newcomers – before church meeting; the focus for the meeting was preparation for the General Election using material produced by the JPIT, as well as discussion on recent and future mission opportunities; I only had chance to stick my nose into the concert which started at 1.30pm (Birmingham's key recorder ensemble had drawn an audience swelled by family members and friends), since preparation for Street Banquet started at 2pm. Our guests arrived at 4pm...fewer than has been the case recently: inevitable questions arose about communications, but there was a good atmosphere and, again, significant conversations took place. Thence to Radical Worship at 6pm: we sought to look at the world – and the World Church – through the eyes of Christians in Brazil.

This was a day in which direct engagement with wider society nestled alongside genuinely quiet times in worship; a day in which all ages featured; a day in which overtly Christian mission was pondered alongside contemporary takes on prophetic ministry; a day in which we looked to far horizons as well as our own doorsteps; a day when I was fed – physically – by people of faith from start to finish...bacon sandwich, chilli and rice, fruit salad, burritos and sweet potato chips; a day when I was jolly glad to be cycling, since this provided a little space between experiences.

It is good to be reminded that faith is not lived out in a vacuum-packed bubble, removed from the world...even if it is tiring on occasion!

Neil

## Pastures new...

**A** number of folk have asked me for a little more 'background' on the pastorate to which I am moving in August...so here goes! It is a new pastorate which brings together 3 congregations; shared worship and study are underway already, under the guidance and leadership of the interim moderator – this is not simply a marriage of convenience.

- Christ Well – at the heart of Swansea's oldest true suburb – has about 60 members and occupies purpose-built premises erected in 1998; before this, the congregation lived without a permanent 'home' for eight years – they determined to build only after they had listened carefully to what the surrounding community was saying. The result? Imaginative, attractive buildings which are extensively used by the local community for a wide variety of activities; interestingly for new-ish premises, the decision was made to create designated space for worship...so 'church' and 'prayer room' are used primarily for Christian worship
- Carmarthen Road URC, a mile or so down the road, gave away its chapel a few years ago – no money changed hands! – to a builder, who has refurbished the school room and other rooms for the congregation, at relatively little cost to the congregation. A resilient, diverse congregation of 25 – 30 which includes 3 or 4 young families and an energetic Junior Church. It is located in an area of urban deprivation, and the streets around the chapel are home to Swansea's Eritrean community. The buildings serve as a focus for work with refugees and asylum seekers
- The village chapel in Gowerton is located a few miles away; the chapel – built originally with the pennies collected from the steelworkers who lived in the village – burnt down the day before it was due to open; the congregation started all over again...and the current pretty (listed!) building is on the High Street. Yes, the congregation is small and elderly, but a significant piece of work is undertaken each week with a Thursday morning communion service/refreshments/chat+. This brings in a variety of local people and offers all manner of possibilities.

The manse is within easy walking distance of Christ Well and Carmarthen Road...and I have a colleague in the pastorate in Rosie, a URC Church Related Community Worker (or 'Community Minister' as she prefers to be known). There is a lot going on overall...and I will need to allow sufficient time truly to listen and learn in the early days!

Thanks for your prayers. Neil

## Commitment for Life

*from Moving Stories 181)*

### Broken Walls

The border police argued with my teammate about permission to walk the paved “settler path.” Sound bombs and tear gas were exploding at Salaymeh, a checkpoint nearby. According to the soldiers, we were OK, but the boys and girls with us could only walk through the adjacent rocky path. Border police uttered Hebrew words through his radio. My teammate engaged the soldier. The children looked afraid. I pulled out notebook and pen, got down on my knees, and started drawing.

“Pintemos un payaso,” I told them, knowing they would not understand. First the head, then the nose, eyes, ears, hair. I drew a clown. One of the girls smiled timidly and told me something in Arabic. “No te entiendo, pero pintemos otro payaso,” “I don’t understand, but let’s draw another clown.” I started again: head, nose, eyes, ears, hair. My drawings amused the girls. They giggled. The boys pretended not to be interested, but nibbed discreetly so they could still see my art. A flock of sheep paraded nearby. “Pintemos esas ovejas!” I said, and started drawing the sheep. The children laughed and warmed up to me saying different things at once. “No entiendo nada,” I said, “pero pintemos un pollo” and I tried to draw a rooster. I was kneeling on the pavement, giving my back to the soldier, and we were having fun.

“Your passport, please,” said the soldier to divert my attention. I pulled my passport out and gave it to him, still facing the children. “Where is the number!” said he. “What number? Why do you need my number?” I said with curiosity.

“I do not need your phone number, I need your passport number,” He affirmed. “And why would you need my passport number? I asked. “I need all the information.” “You have all the information. You have my passport. I will not tell you where to find the number because you already have it.”

One of the children pulled me down and pointed at the CPT logo on my vest. “Ah! Pintemos la paloma!” I said, “Let’s paint the dove!” I turned to a clean page and traced the CPT dove. Another girl set her finger over the dove again. “Te pinto una tambien.” I traced a sister CPT dove perched on the same branch.

“Tell me which of these is your passport number!” the man insisted. “I will tell you when you tell me why you need it.” I knew this could not continue much longer, or things would soon escalate. The officer asked my teammate for his document. I gave notebook and pen to one of the girls so she could draw something else. Then I stood up and faced the officer. The Border Police exchanged some words with my teammate, looked at me in dismay and returned both of our IDs. “Halas! Let’s go the other way,” said my teammate, and started heading up. In Al-Khalil, the sophisticated Israeli military ensures that small children know that their soft Palestinian feet can only walk on the broken path.

*Adriana Cabrera-Velasquez © Christian Peacemaking Team, Palestine.*

*And from Alwyn Knight*

Several times over the years I have invoked the world of Franz Kafka while describing life for Palestinians in what is now the 48th year of the occupation of Palestine by Israel. Kafka's stories depict a surreal world of what the dictionary calls 'senseless, disorienting, and often menacing complexity', and most Palestinians will have encountered that world in their everyday lives. Now it's our turn, as members of Christian Peacemaker Teams. Our 'apartment' - sounds rather grand, doesn't it - is in the Old City of Hebron. Routes out of the Old City to the north are relatively open; so, for example, we can normally reach Bethlehem without too much difficulty. To the south and east it is rather different. Here we encounter barriers of all kinds, with the way through and beyond controlled by checkpoints with armed Israeli soldiers in constant attendance - all, they say, for the security of the Israeli settler population, though, the soldiers will often add: 'for your (CPT) security, too'. We are not convinced. It looks and feels more like an opportunity for harassment and control; a way of showing who is 'boss'.

Our preferred way to several of the places where we monitor the progress of children on their way to and from school, and to one kindergarten where we actually walk with the children, is via two checkpoints near the Ibrahimi Mosque. They are about 200 yards apart, at either end of a straight road. Using this road and the checkpoints at each end, it takes about ten minutes to be in place. For the last month we have not been allowed to use these checkpoints, and no-one knows why. After twenty years in Hebron, we have been denied access to a public road, with the result that it now takes nearly half an hour to reach the places where we need to be, either via a road closed to Palestinians, or via some very steep hills. And responding to emergencies, such as the detention of Palestinian children, or house invasions by the Israeli military, is very difficult indeed.

The closure of that short stretch of road has changed our work immeasurably, though I can imagine some Palestinians saying, 'now you know how we feel when we are not allowed to use Shuhada Street, or access our homes by the front door, and have to resort to circuitous routes - including ladders - to enter our houses (all true - of several of our neighbours).

But we would still like to know why. When challenged, soldiers always say: 'we have our orders. CPT cannot use this road'. They are supposed to produce a written order to that effect, but never can. We had arranged a meeting with a senior Israeli commander to discuss the situation, but he didn't turn up.

We suspect that they are not very pleased with our reporting of the situation here, especially now that the so-called social media - Facebook, Twitter etc - enable news to carry far, wide, and quickly. The ghastly work of policing an occupation needs the cover of the darkness of secrecy, not the bright light of publicity. But there are still glimmers of hope and humanity.

Yesterday one such glimmer occurred a few yards from where we were standing at one of the checkpoints we regularly monitor at school times.

A young Palestinian - perhaps twenty years old - approached the checkpoint, using what in the UK we would call a Zimmer frame. His right foot looked as though it had been injured, and was held above the ground. He really needed crutches, but the frame was all he had. He looked exhausted. All the weight of his body was borne by his arms, and his progress was painfully slow. Near the checkpoint he sank to the ground, helped by a friend who was accompanying him.

Two soldiers left the checkpoint and approached. We couldn't hear the conversation, and wouldn't have understood it anyway, but their demeanour was friendly and clearly solicitous. Their actions spoke louder than any words. A few minutes later they opened the barrier that straddled the road, and allowed a Palestinian car - the first I have ever seen on this stretch of road in ten years - to back to where the young man lay on the pavement. Then they helped the Palestinian and his walking frame into the car.

Not quite a modern parable of a Good Samaritan, and a small enough gesture of human kindness, but very welcome on these mean streets. It's just sad that in Hebron this is newsworthy.  
In peace, Alwyn

*Contributed by Wendy Firmin*

## **Tax justice – from postcards to law**

**B**ack in late 2013, more than 20,000 of you took our action card. We called on the UK Government to introduce new laws that would make it clearer who owns different companies and give tax dodgers nowhere to hide.

We were delighted when the Government announced that it had heard our calls and would be introducing new laws. During recent months, this legislation has been making its way through Parliament and by the end of March was expected to become law. It's a great result for all your campaigning.

To keep up this momentum we have teamed up with other agencies, including ActionAid and Oxfam, to call on all political parties to support a Tax Dodging Bill. We are calling on all parties to pledge to introduce a Tax Dodging Bill to make tax fair and to raise funds both in the UK and in developing countries to fight poverty.

We believe that if we put enough pressure on politicians we can push them to support the bill and, crucially, to introduce it to Parliament within the first 100 days of the new government.

To learn more about the campaign and how you can get involved, visit [christianaid.org.uk/tax](http://christianaid.org.uk/tax)

On This Day ...

From the Carrs Lane Journal May 1915

**STRICT SOBRIETY**

**THIS IS A TEETOTAL WAR**

**EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON NAVAL AND  
MILITARY WORK**

**YOU ARE ASKED TO SIGN THE  
PLEDGE FOR YOUR COUNTRY'S SAKE**

**DUTY, OUR WATCHWORD!**

The fact that there was a strong temperance movement during the First World War will not come as much of a surprise. The Internet features quite a large number of illustrated posters, but I was struck by the stark simplicity of the advertisement with examples from the printer in Edmund Street reproduced in the 1915 Journal.

The campaign was supported by members of the House of Lords and the Church of England Temperance Society. The posters were evidently printed with commendable patriotism in blue and red ink on white paper, and made use of the facility to use different fonts in varying sizes so that more important headings stand out. They included references to physical fitness, scientific experiments and educating public opinion. Some of them had more text on them than might please our sound-bite prone generation, but this must have been felt to be appropriate for the time.

The hoped-for extent of spreading the message is perhaps indicated by quoting a price per 100 posters. The advert appeared again in the June issue of the Journal, and several times thereafter. A different advertisement from the same source featured in the December Journal. I feel there is an important piece of social history behind the rather dark ink image that still catches the attention after 100 years.

## From the Carrs Lane Journal May 1965

May 1965 was not the first time when the Journal discussed possible tensions between the older and younger members of church congregations. In this case the article, entitled "Twenty-five years are a century", was written by Mark Gibbs, a careers master and editor of the church magazine service Item. He therefore had experience of young people's ways of thinking and of many church-related issues.

Perhaps more problematic than serious open disagreements was the tendency to avoid confrontation, especially in a church situation, and hide behind what Mr. Gibbs terms 'superficial politeness'. This could lead to the further tendency for younger people to find themselves drifting away from the Church. If the Church is not to lose a great deal of its strength and much of its Christian identity these tensions must be talked over and understood as honestly as possible.

The author points out that the world is changing so fast that in his analogy a quarter of a century now sees more changes than did a whole century previously. One wonders what rate of alteration he would suggest if he were writing now. His estimate of the amount of adaptation needed to render the Church relevant for the people of 1990 (now, of course, for us a quarter of a century in the past) is 200years.

Two significant changes which are highlighted in the article are the increase in general longevity and the influence of World War 1. The people who were the older members of congregations in 1965 were those who could still remember the completely different world before the summer of 1914. Having adapted to the profound changes brought about by the war, they were the ones who kept the churches functioning through times of unrelenting change and uncertainty. Mr. Gibbs considered that there had been a lack of good quality church leadership between the wars, so that many of these survivors had served longer than they should have done. As we are probably all aware from our own experience, such a situation can lead to unwillingness to suggest or accept a replacement.

Another important point stressed is that neither old nor new should be considered to be exclusively approved by God. The necessary change must be handled effectively, perhaps by the use of parallel patterns of worship and teaching. There is a place for the whole church family being together at certain times (as, for instance, we at Carrs Lane are in our monthly all-age worship). The author believes that senior church members do deserve due consideration for long and devoted service, but they must recognise that insisting on 'doing as we have always done' may well drive away the leaders of the future. The article suggests that the younger adults may be more vulnerable than the children themselves. Possibly, as with our 'Kidz Aloud', there could be activities for children separate from the usual practice of worship but providing at least a link with the church. Mr. Gibbs finishes by suggesting that the willingness to change practices that have become very precious and deeply comforting may be considered a worthy sacrifice for the sake of the One whom we all seek to serve.

*Contributed by Wendy Firmin*

# Kids Page

## Pentecost - Hidden Message, Crossword.....

Follow the directions, then write the words that are left in the spaces below to see the wonderful thing that happened to the believers after Jesus went back to heaven.

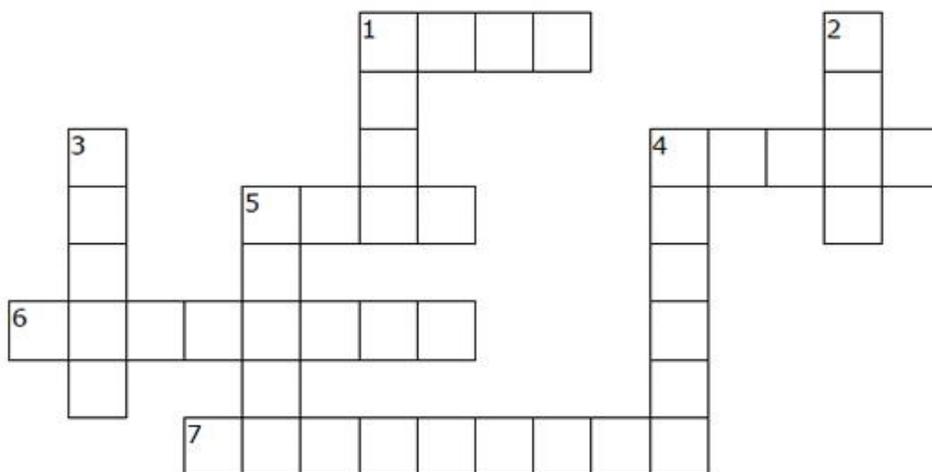
1. Cross off all the words that have an x in them
2. Cross off all the words that begin with the letter c
3. Cross off all the words that rhyme with dime
4. Cross off all the words that are names of books of the Bible
5. Cross off all the words that are animals
6. Cross off all the words that are colours
7. Cross off all the words that are numbers
8. Cross off all the words that end with the letter p

Cent	Lime	Mark	They	Axe	Dog	Were	Time	Box	All
Filled	Blue	With	The	Two	Rap	Holy	Ezra	Spirit	mouse
Flap	And	Red	Four	Began	Lamb	To	Five	White	Speak
Comb	Ruth	Kings	In	Sip	Six	Other	Dip	Languages	Yellow

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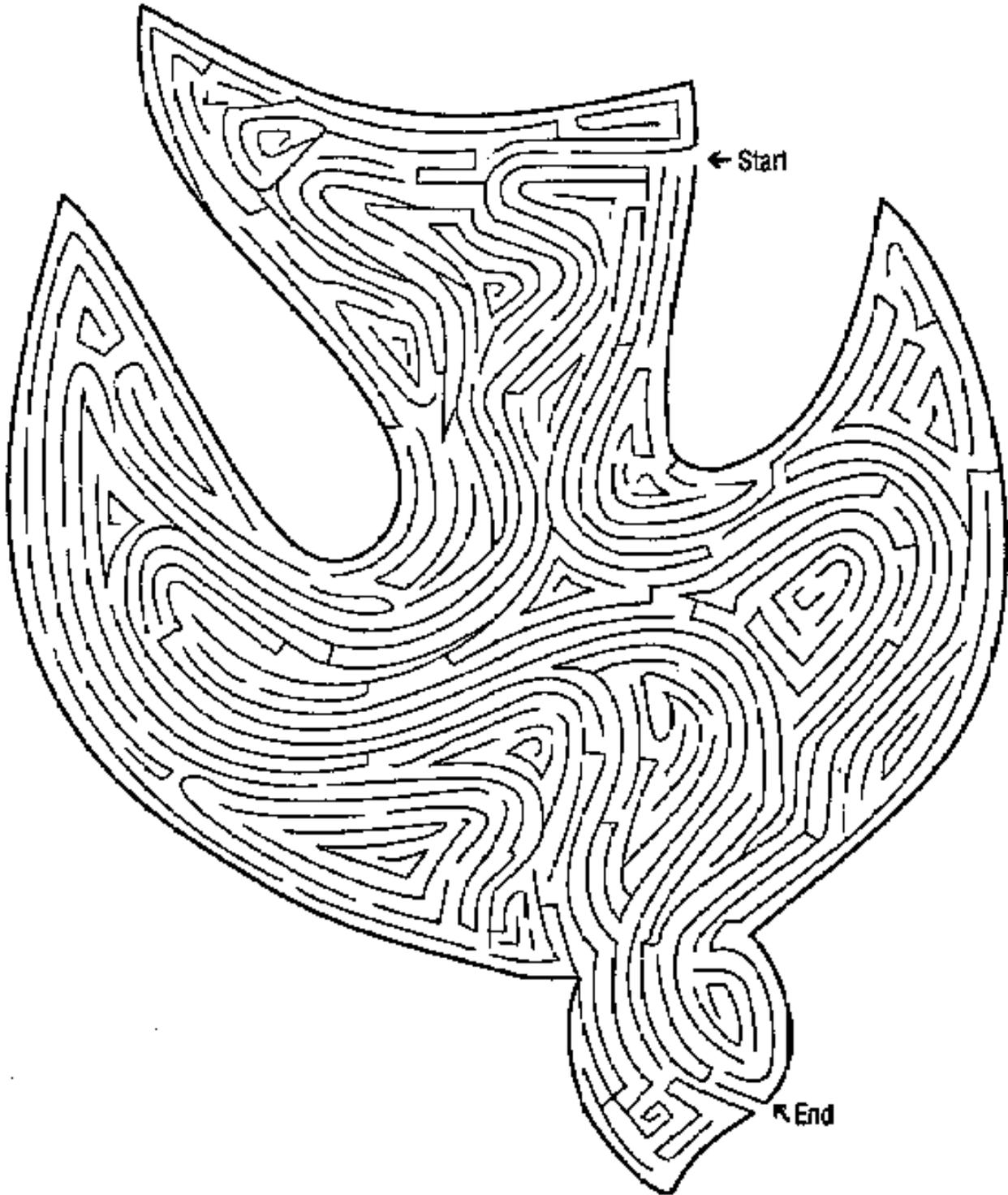
### ACROSS

1. A destructive burning
4. Something that can be heard
5. Something that is pure and good, such as God's Word
6. Means of communication used by the people of a particular country
7. The day the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles

### DOWN

1. Make something to be full
2. Blowing air, especially that which would move the leaves on a tree
3. To say words, to use the voice
4. A being that cannot be seen, like a ghost
5. A building which people live in

.....and Maze



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](mailto:office@carrslane.co.uk).

## 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.

The Conference Rooms on offer are of several sizes and situated on three floors. We can support most types of events. Rooms can accommodate from 6 up to 350 delegates. You will find that our prices are very competitive. Our staff will be pleased to discuss ideas for your event with you and advise on the suitability of our facilities.

Hot and cold drinks can be supplied in the meeting rooms as often as required. Buffet meals can be pre-ordered. These range from a simple sandwich menu to a full buffet

Full details and prices are available on our website, [www.carrslane.co.uk](http://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](mailto:booking@carrslane.co.uk).



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## The Church at Carrs Lane Regular Activities

### SUNDAYS

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

### WEEK DAYS

<b>Carrs Lane Lived Community meet for Prayers -</b> Monday to Friday 7.30am and 7.00pm, all are welcome to join them	
<b>Lunchtime Healing Service</b>	Every Wednesday 1.15pm
<b>Prayer Group</b>	First Wednesday at 7.00 pm
<b>Thinking Allowed</b>	First Thursday at 10.15 am
<b>Harborne House Group</b>	Fourth Tuesdays 2.00pm (various locations)
<b>Central House Group at Carrs Lane</b>	Third Wednesdays at 6.30pm
<b>Coffee Drop-in</b>	Fridays from 10.30am-12.00pm
<b>Carrs Lane Choir Practice</b>	Fridays at 7.00pm
<b>Carrs Lane Players (drama group)</b>	Fridays at 7.45 pm
<b>Charity Knitting Circle</b>	First Tuesday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm
<b>Carrs Lane Walking Group</b>	usually meets monthly, see notice board
<b>Fair Trade Shop</b>	First and Third Sunday after morning worship and Tuesday - Saturday 10.30 am - 2.30 pm
<b>Counselling Centre</b>	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  
Fax 0121 631 2118  
[www.carrslane.co.uk](http://www.carrslane.co.uk)