

Messenger

February – March 2008



New Beginnings on the Horizon

Easter is a key times in the church calendar but often means nothing more to those in our community than a break from school or work and a time to eat a lot of chocolate. The Big HOPE is all about making Easter more accessible to those outside church and exploring both sides of the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. There is time over Easter to focus on the sorrow of Jesus' suffering on the cross, a theme that allows us to reach out to those around us who are in pain themselves. It also provides us with a wonderful opportunity to gather the church and the community together to celebrate Jesus' resurrection and the new life we find in him. Easter gives us time to bless and serve our communities and to get across the important message of the cross in fresh and interesting ways.

By Roy Crowne (Youth for Christ)

Growing Old

they say that I am growing old,
I've heard them tell it times untold,
In language plain and bold -
but I'm NOT growing old.
This frail old shell in which I dwell
Is growing old, I know full well -
but I am not the shell.

What if my hair is turning grey?
Grey hairs are honourable they say.
What is my eyesights growing dim?
I can still see to follow Him
who sacrificed his life for me
upon the cross at Calvary.

What should I care if Times old plow
Has left it's furrows on my brow?
Another house, not made with hand,
Awaits me in the glory land.
What though I falter in my walk/
What though my tongue refuse to talk?
I still can tread the Narrow Way,

I still can watch, and praise and pray.

My hearing may not be as keen
as in the past it might have been.
Still, I can hear my saviour say
in whispers soft, "This is the way."
The outward man do what I can
to lengthen out this lifes short span.
Shall perish and return to dust,
as everything in nature must.

The inward man, the scriptures say,
is growing stronger every day.
Then how can I be growing old
when safe within my Saviours fold?
Ere long my soul should fly away,
and leave this tennement of clay.
This robe of flesh I'll drop and rise
to seize the "everlasting prize" -
I'll meet you on the streets of gold,
and prove that I'm NOT growing old.

ANON

The Present Age

Observing the legion of shoppers
at a desk set aside for "returns",
I found myself musing
on people refusing
Those gifts for which nobody yearns.

In former times a few would
have baulked at
a present in dubious taste;
while inwardly groaning
they'd shrink from
bemoaning
an oddity purchased
in haste.

Yet think of that scene

in the stable
where Mary was cradling
her child;
Had the offering
rendered,
Though lovingly tendered,
Not left her completely
beguiled,

Would she, with a hint
of annoyance,
And heedless of being
discreet,
have said to each giver
with lips all a quiver:
"I do hope you kept the receipt!"

Paul Weston, Brighton - Daily mail Jan 2008

BIBLE READING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Do books seem so last century? Are bible-reading notes a real turn-off? But you'd still like to get to know God better through his Word.

Well let me introduce you to a fantastic new free resource called **WordLive** (run by Scripture Union) – a website which allows you to step into a multi-media Bible reading experience and deepen your relationship with God.

WordLive offers a fantastic range of creative approaches you can follow to engage with God's Word. WordLive is designed to be intuitive and simple. Each day when you log on you will be prompted to pray and then read the Bible. The next step is up to you: you can watch a video, listen to the Bible passage, dig deeper into further Bible study, dip into creative prayer suggestions and explore other activities.

You even can sign up to receive a daily WordLive email or podcast. Or you may prefer to access WordLive through your mobile or pda. However you choose to use it, WordLive brings God's Word to you, wherever you go.

You can find WordLive, on the internet here:
<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/23837.id>



Hang before my eyes the tree of life

And frame by frame rewind to
Where along the line
It all went wrong.

Focus on the bit when I denied

That you were God and I was
Not, and pride and sin now
Spoil my every breath.

Now pan across to where, a man gasps for air.

The designer of the skies dies
To wash away the lies I
Told so easily

Zoom out to how on earth this film will sell

Unless you know some stuff I don't
Who can recognize this love: glory
Given up for pain.

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HOPE 08

More **FRESH HOPE** initiatives

February

Journeys - an exploration of spirituality. If you are new to church or want to explore more of the spiritual dimension of life, this six-session course could be for you:

Week 1 - Is there a spiritual side to me?

Week 2 - If God and Heaven exist what are they like?

Week 3 - Does this faith thing work in real life?

Week 4 - Does God have real power to change things?

Week 5 - Crossing the line – what's it like?

See David Osman (4227505) or Barry Unwin (4833910) for info



Let The HOPE Continue

It was a week which saw its fair share of disasters – in the United States people awoke to the news that once more one of the NASA shuttles had been lost with its crew, as Columbia broke up on re - entry. Closer to home – Dunn Street School was severely hit by arson, then Christ Church was to hit by arson.

February 10th 2008 – marks the **5th Anniversary** of the fire. A day that will bring back moving memories, but the fact that we are here five years later stands as a great testimony of the people of this church.

I can remember coming to the church the following Sunday, with the services in the hall. Afterwards I inspected the damage for myself. Dark soot stains covered the walls; the smell of charcoal filled the air, along with a steady haze of smoke and ash particles. Familiar objects lay burnt or melted. A sad sight – but it could have been worse.

If you are sitting in Christ Church now, reading this article – have a look around you. Out of the ashes, through hard work, dedication and great support from the public, we have a place where we can come together to give thanks and praise to God. As we take communion – remember we gather at the very spot where the fire started, an area still scared. Soot covered windows and stonework, the varnish melted on the stalls. But – it is also a place where we gather together to receive God's grace as we remember Chris's death in bread and wine. Times to remember that our own stained lives have been made clean by the power of the cross. Our Emmaus groups will be familiar with - *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!* (2 Corinthians v17 - NIV).

Prayer, trust in God and his power of his transformation were the core elements, which brought us from the darkness of devastation to the joy and celebration of the following August when we celebrated communion for the first time back in the church and the following Pentecost with the re – dedication service. These elements – should be in our hearts always as we live our lives as Christians. Whatever darkness we hide in ourselves, God has given us the power of transformation through Jesus and what he did on the cross – no matter who you are.

Michael

“The Light of Christ in their eyes”

Earlier this year, Andy Towner, a student I trained with at Oak Hill Theological College encountered mountain-moving faith among the Christian communities of Pakistan. He recently shared this article in the Oakhill Yearbook, and I thought it would be great to reproduce it as an encouragement to you all.

Andy writes:

“An hour north of Lahore, up the Great Trunk Road towards the Khyber Pass and Afghanistan, lies Gujranwala, a vibrant trading town and home to Gujranwala Theological Seminary. Sending out around 20 pastors a year; GTS provides three years of Pakistani-taught, mission agency-funded training to home-grown Pakistani pastors.

Recently GTS asked if anyone at Oak Hill was able to come out to teach, and it seemed an obvious opportunity: I'm single, so I have the time; I live in the West, so there's money about; God's given me four years at Oak Hill, so I have something to teach; why not do it?

So I volunteered, and came to spend part of January 2007 living and teaching at GTS. Did you know there are about 10,000 Christians in Lahore alone? I had no idea.

One of my favourite memories was the day I spent in Lahore, which boasts a huge fort, a great spire, brilliant artwork, and unbelievable bazaars. But the highlight was meeting a number of Muslim converts to Christianity. One lady in particular stands out in my mind: converted aged about 40, following the witness of a Christian bus-driver over a 15-year period, she was warned by her husband against converting.

Nevertheless, she explained about Jesus to her son and two daughters, and her mother too, who were all convinced.

Her husband threw them out - they had to move quickly as their lives were in danger. A local pastor cared for them, found them housing and visited them, even starting a church in their new house.

But the price they paid was horrendous. There is no work for that lady to do, her mother is elderly, needing care, and her son and daughters will almost certainly never marry, because no one born into the Christian community will trust their conversion.

Many Muslims seek to infiltrate the church, with men going back to Islam after marriage and forcing their wives to go with them.

So this family remains on the very fringes of the church, with few brothers and sisters to fellowship with, and very slight prospects for the future. Why is this the highlight of a day in Lahore? Because of the light of Christ in their eyes. Because of the way they speak with such joy about the Saviour.

Another highlight was my first day on a motorbike - but not for that reason. A local pastor took me on the back of his bike to visit some of his congregations, so I could preach for and pray with them. Their generosity and love were outstanding. I've rarely seen anyone give the widow's mite literally, but one lady offered me about 50p (a huge amount in those rural villages) with tears in her eyes. I knew she had no bank account, no family to provide for her, no food store, and only a leaking mud hut to live in. I spent the day praising God for such Christ-like and humble servants.

During the day, I also heard how the pastor oversees 19 congregations around Lahore, and has also planted nine more on the Afghan border in the last five years. His English is weak, but there was one phrase he had perfected through constant use. It filled his every sentence: `Thank God!'

A Packed Program of Events

Holy Week continues the themes of Hope 08 – bringing hope to our community

So far so good! We kicked off 2008 with **FRESH HOPE** and so far we have enjoyed fitness in mind and body: A bike ride round Boulmer on 5th January; a walk near Peterlee on 12th January; an Ethiopian report on 10th January and *Healthy backs and Bones* on 28th January. Meanwhile the Emmaus groups have started a short course on "**Six Steps to Sharing Jesus**". It's all been exciting stuff.

And there's more to come! Including a **Drumming Morning** on 9th February. So keep a look out

Holy Week. 16th – 23rd March

During Holy Week we have a team of seven students from Oak Hill Theological College, London. They will be involved in activities to help share our faith with our community. So far the following has been arranged

Sundays – Palm Sunday

- Preaching at St John's (morning & evening) and Christ Church



SUNRISE

**Sunrise is at
5:56am GMT
Sunrise Service
South Shields Cliff Top**

- 20s-30s Curry Night (Palm Sunday)

Monday

- 7.00pm Yell Youth Night Special

Tuesday

- Puppet Spectacular at St John's (pm)

Wednesday

- 12noon Lunchtime Special (12 Noon)
- Puppet Spectacular at Christ Church (pm)

Thursday – Maundy Thursday

- Holy Communion at St John's and Christ Church (7:30pm)

Good Friday

- Hebburn and Jarrow Processions of Witness – times to follow
- Meal at St John's (7:00pm)

Easter Saturday

- Brunch at St John's (9:30am)
- Café Chill-out at St John's (7:00pm)

As well as specific opportunities the team will be visiting our parishes and town with invitations to various events and perhaps giving out some hot cross buns! Plus there is an invitation for you to host a meal for friends and neighbours in your home when one of the team will give a short testimony. It's called a **Meal with a Message**

The above is provisional and individual tickets and publicity will be available for each. So come along and bring a friend. It will be part of our resolve at our churches for each one to "make a disciple" (Matthew 28:16ff)

[More Event Information](#)

Open Church – Open Door – Open For You

Christ Church – will be open *each Saturday, 9th February – 22nd March* from 10:00am to 1:00pm (a time for prayer, chat or visit)

Praise Night

Friday 15th February, 7:00pm at Christ Church, with Peter and friends – in support of World Vision

Jarrow Town Prayer Walk

Friday 29th February, meet at Christ Church for 10:00am. 4.5-mile walk around the centre of Jarrow

International Night

Hosted by YELL – Tobi's German Night Monday 10th March. German fayre and entertainment

A Reminder

This is just a taster to what lies ahead. To get involved you can do a number of things.

1. **Keep praying** for this coming year of opportunities.
2. **Be informed.** Watch for details. Come along to the church fellowship (every first Thursday) when Hope O8 will always be on the agenda. You can visit their website at www.hope08.com
3. **Invite** family and friends to the various events
4. **Get excited** about all the opportunities

Hope O8 Steering Group

A small group is meeting regularly to make sure things happen. Each has an area of responsibility:

- David Osman: convener
- Barry Unwin: youth
- Gillian Melvin: prayer/catering
- Steph Ford: prayer/catering
- Michael Bayles: publicity/prayer
- Justin Dummer: publicity
- John Coe: Stewarding
- Gavin O'Doherty: publicity
- Georgina Jackson: hospitality
- Jackie Sandford: secretary/minute

Please get in touch with a member of the group if you can think of any exciting possibilities to Share Hope with our communities

And with **HOSPITALITY** in mind we are looking for people to host a student for the week. It will mainly involve bed and breakfast and the occasional evening meal

Other Dates

- Prayer Walk 7.30am Saturday 9th February from St John's Hall
- Messy Church at Christ Church 3.45pm Monday 11th February
- Lent Meditation for Churches at Christ Church 12noon Wednesday 13th February
- 20s-30s Open House 8.00pm at 14 Buchanan Street Saturday 16th February
- Men's Breakfast at St John's Hall 7.30am Saturday 1st March

BIKE RIDE 08

Hull to Hebburn

We are off again on an epic trip. This time it will be even easier. Much of the ride will be on quiet roads and cycle tracks with some off-road option on the North Yorks Moors.

The route should be: Hull to York (Saturday)
York to Osmotherly (Sunday) Osmotherly to Hebburn (Monday)

The cost hopefully will be around £75 plus.

Deposits £10 to David Osman by 9th February

St John's Donations

General Fund

In remembrance of Mary Rutter; Sydney Pratt
In memory of Barbara Canham
Knights of St George, Royal Black Preceptory No.321

Total £125.00

Special Efforts

Knit and Natter for Youth and Community Fund
Total £293.00

World Vision Books
Vera and Stan Whitehead
Total £30

Fairtrade

Total 120.00

Leprosy Mission
Total £57.84

Church Flowers

For mum from Edith
Treasured memories of our dear father William McCormack – sadly missed by all the family
In remembrance of loved ones from Florence and Bill
Total £50.00

SERVICES & CONTACTS

Worship @ Christ Church - Jarrow

SUNDAY: 9:15am – Holy Communion,

TUESDAY: 9:15am – Morning Prayer

WEDNESDAY: 1:30pm – Holy Communion

Worship @ St John's - Hebburn

SUNDAY: 9:15am – Holy Communion,

10:30am – Holy Communion + The Hub

The HUB is activities for children and young people including: Crèche (0-3s),

Scramblers (3-5's), Climbers (5-7's), Explorers (7-11's), Pathfinders (11-14's)

6:00pm – Evening Worship [except 1st Sunday on the month]

THURSDAY: 10:00am – Holy Communion

Reverend David Osman

(Priest – in – Charge)

St John's Vicarage, 23 St John's Avenue,
Hebburn, NE31 2TZ
Tel: (0191) 422 7505

Reverend Barry Unwin

(Curate)

St Oswald's Vicarage, St Oswald's Road,
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Readers

Cyril Muddif, 53 St. John's Avenue, Hebburn Tel: 4832090

Ken Smith, 35 Coquet Street, Jarrow Tel: 4215269

Paul & Heather Stokes, 14 Carlton Terrace, Low Fell Tel: 4822454

Carol Unwin, St Oswald's Vicarage, Hebburn Tel: 4833910



ST JOHN'S - HEBBURN

*at the heart of the community sharing
the heart of Christ*



**CHRIST CHURCH
JARROW GRANGE**

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