

An article on the Baptist Union website reminds us that in a few short weeks “we are facing one of the most unpredictable General Elections in history. This is also an election in which Christian opinion and engagement is being recognised as increasingly significant”. In this month’s *Intouch* you’ll find articles and information encouraging you to think about the issues involved and links to websites where there are further resources that you can use to inform your prayers. There’s also details of events in Headingley and Horsforth where you can meet your local candidates and get involved further.

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Matthew Newman Editor

Informed, Involved, Inspired... Intouch!

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From the Ministry Team

Endless is the Victory

Christian faith is understood and experienced as a very personal matter. Me and God. Private, internalised and shaped to fit individual personality and experience. Take any gathering of believers and you'll find multiple versions of what following Jesus looks like. As someone once said, "God's fingerprints are all different as he touches each of us according to our need."

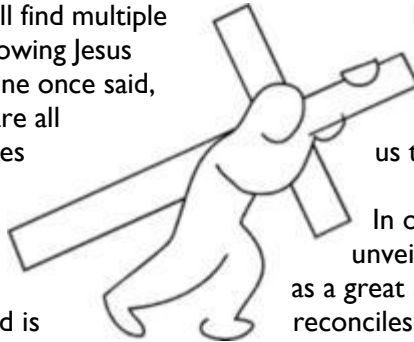
Having a personal relationship with God is essential. When Jesus died on the cross he did it for me and you individually, and his call to follow him comes personally addressed. The resurrection of Jesus is also to be experienced personally. Because he lives I will live also. Paul the apostle added this: "The life I live in the body I live by faith in the Son of God". Elsewhere he said "the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead... will give life to your mortal body".

Faith is also a shared journey. The death of Jesus was a harrowing,

fracturing affair. His body was broken, his followers scattered and individual lives left in disarray and even God himself entered the deep and dreadful mystery of

forsakenness. But as Jesus the

Bread of Life was broken for us, so a great healing began as God reconciled us to himself.



In one of his letters Paul unveils what he describes as a great secret that as God reconciles us to himself at the cross so also he removes the need for divisions between peoples. We are to be "all one in Christ Jesus". Those who say that faith is just a matter of "Jesus and me" miss this powerful dimension of being the Body of Christ.

Building Community in Christ is about knowing the risen Christ standing in our midst and sending us out into the world energised by his life

So, we might want to describe the church as a community of the resurrection, entering into a rich experience of being together in the life of Christ. South Parade's strap-line is "Building Community in Christ", but this is not just about getting on together, good though that is. It's about knowing the risen Christ standing in our midst and sending us out into the world energised by his life. It's about living out a mission to reverse the trends of selfish individualism that cause our society to be broken and divided.

But the church is not where the boundary of God's resurrection purposes is finally drawn. When Jesus came back from the dead this was the defining moment when all the dark

clouds of decay and decline which haunt creation were challenged. Death is not the last word! Evil does not triumph!

All that God celebrated as very good at the dawn of creation is re-affirmed and redeemed as the vision of shalom (the deep peace and wholeness of God's Kingdom) breaks out throughout the universe.

At Easter individual Christians renew their confidence in Christ. The Church sings its songs of gladness. The whole of heaven and earth and all creation leaps for joy: Jesus reigns!

Happy Easter

Brian

*The strife is o'er, the battle done,
the victory of life is won;
the song of triumph has begun.
Alleluia!*

*He closed the yawning gates of hell,
the bars from heaven's high portals fell;
let hymns of praise his triumphs tell!
Alleluia!*

**Symphonia Sirenum Selectarum, 1695
trans. Francis Pott**

Around the Church

Growing in Faith: Connect

We continue to be encouraged with what is happening at Connect. Our regular Bramley locals are growing in faith and commitment and we get the occasional “walk-in” who has heard about us one way or another. New visitors are often those who have been invited by our regulars and it is great to see some of those returning at times.

Our greatest recent encouragement has been the baptism of Joshua Perry which was on 15 February at Bramley Baptist Church. Brian led the service and we chose to keep this wonderful event “local” for the convenience of our Bramley friends and it was great to see several people from other SP Mission Communities supporting Josh on his special day. Josh’s testimony included these wonderful expressions of his faith, “I have come to believe that God is my creator Father in Heaven, and His Son Jesus died for my sins and rose

We have a strong conviction that we are doing what the Lord wants us to do

again... After I started believing in Jesus, I found he was there to guide me through things and help me to live properly.” Hallelujah!

On Mothering Sunday we provided treats for the women in the form of bacon/sausage buns and they were also treated to “pampering” – pedicures and manicures. We were delighted to see a number of women that we hadn’t seen for a while and also the partner of one regular who hadn’t been before. It was a very full and busy morning which we all enjoyed.

Our engagement with CAP initiatives is also beginning to bear fruit. After a hesitant start, the Job Club has gone well and another cycle is under way. Andrew Bedingham and the CAP Centre has

had a number of requests for help from Bramley residents and we continue to see this as an amazing way to make connections with the community.

So, much is positive and we have a strong conviction that we are doing what the Lord wants us to do. However, our regular “South Paraders” are so few in number that this has left us very exposed at times as it only requires one or two couples to be away on a Sunday for the rest of us to be swamped. Add to that the ordinary pressures that many Connecters have – young families (in some cases, very young) and it is easy to see how “burn-out” has been all too real a threat. Having said that, we continue see great answers to prayer as the number of people from other Mission Communities who started coming on a regular basis has grown which has particularly helped us to spread the load on the children’s

work and to be able to think about expanding our outreach.

Our focus for 2015 is best expressed through our text for the year, “We must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. He leads us and makes our faith complete.” Hebrews 12.2. Please pray that this becomes a reality for those we seek to serve in the Bramley area. Please also prayerfully consider whether you too could commit to helping us from time-to-time to keep that vision alive.

John Pelham

Elder for Connect

Sent Away

The past couple of months have seen lots of opportunities for SENT to develop as a mission community both building relationships with one another and deepening our relationship with God.



Josh Perry’s baptismal service at Connect with John Pelham and Brian Nicholls

The weekend away was a great time of fellowship as we studied about God's restorative plans for our lives

In February we spent a weekend away together at the Westwood Christian Centre near Huddersfield. It was a great time of fellowship as we explored a series of studies about God's restorative plan for our lives so that we might grow into the people he made us to be – both challenging and inspiring. Aside from the Bible studies and group discussions there was still plenty of time to relax, play games, enjoy some fantastic food and in spite of the fog we even managed to venture out for a walk! (See photo below)

SENT Lounge, the mission communities regular Friday evening event, continued in March looking at a Christian film miniseries

followed by an interesting discussion about some of the themes raised in the films. The next SENT lounge is 10 April, where we'll be seeking to engage with the upcoming general election through prayer, discussion and creatively through "craftivism"!

In March we had a fantastic opportunity to join with Vineyard church and bless the streets surrounding South Parade by prayer walking and litter picking. Please pray for outreach events coming up this year, with the Alternative Easter Service on Palm Sunday and further activities to bless the local community planned for later in the year.

Ruth Hughes

Elder for SENT

Week by Week, Northside Style

Northside is continuing to develop well, and at our Mission Community

SENT walking in the fog on their weekend away in February



meeting in February we voted to continue the new format of services.

On the first Sunday of each month we have Cafe Sunday where we meet at the ABC Coffee Shop at 10.30 for coffee and fellowship, followed by a service based on the theme for the day which finishes at 12 o'clock. We then rearrange the coffee shop in preparation for a meal which commences at 12.30. After a substantial meal, we continue thinking about the theme of the day, with a talk and discussion aiming to finish by 2.30.

On the second Sunday of each month we meet at Adel Primary School for a more traditional church service including communion.

“Outburst Sunday” is a very lively service!



On the third Sunday of each month, we welcome Heather McLeen and Nathan Shipley and a bunch of young people from Headingley. They lead our “Outburst Sunday” which is a very lively service, aimed at the young people and their parents who attend the monthly Outburst club which Heather runs.

Finally on the fourth Sunday of each month, we have our Teaching Sunday which is a traditional Sunday service.

Northside

This new format of services has proved to be a success. So

thank you for your prayers and please come and join us in worship when you are able!

Andrew Bedingham

Northside Leadership Team

Retired People's Lunch

This is a regular event that takes place at 12.30 on the second Friday of each month, in the Green House at Headingley. A delicious two-course hot lunch is prepared by Elsie Nicholls and Sue Ricketts, and the food is served by a team of helpers (including Moira, Claire, Margaret, Val, Brian and Christina).

Here are some of the items that have featured on the menu during

the last year: pork casserole, roast turkey, lasagne, beef casserole, cottage pie, rhubarb crumble, trifle, gateaux and fruit sponge. There is a selection of vegetables to accompany the first course, and custard or ice-cream with the pudding - which is followed by tea or coffee.

As well as the consumption of food there is a great deal of conversation as folk catch up on news and discuss topics of current interest. For several months now we have been collecting “knitted squares” to send to the charity KAS (Knit-a-Square). This organisation is based in South Africa and invites groups or individuals to knit and send squares (with sides of 20cm). These are sewn up into blankets by local volunteers (in South Africa) and are then distributed to some of the many children in southern Africa

who are orphaned (often as a result of AIDS). The pictures below show some of our knitters and some of the squares.

If you wish to attend the lunches or for more information please contact me.

To attend a lunch:

- You need to be a retired person (associated with any mission community, or a friend or neighbour)
- You need to sign up (to each lunch in turn) using the list on the foyer wall OR contact Sally (details above)
- We make a charge for each lunch (currently £3 but due to increase soon): you only pay for those lunches that you attend.

Sally Howe



Knitters and their knitting

Headingley Looks Forward

We have enjoyed gathering together on Sunday mornings for worship, a time to meet together as a community, to support and help each other (and I have particular personal reasons for being very grateful for such support) and hopefully to provide a welcome for those visiting or coming for the first time.

Where is God leading us over the coming months? This is a time for reflection, thanksgiving and looking ahead.

We have been very pleased to welcome new members and to share in baptisms. We are now a diverse gathering, with a wide range of ages (increasingly secret as the years go by) and from different countries and backgrounds. Many thanks to the instrumentalists, singers, sound desk coordinators, welcome team, all age speakers (who offer great moments for us all in the services), preachers, worship leaders, coffee makers, junior church leaders, everyone else who contributes, and all those who come faithfully to join in worship.

Student lunches have provided a

regular focus for students to meet together. Thanks also to the teams who cook all the delicious food. Our numbers vary from week to week, but the “full” weeks are now very full which is wonderful, but has prompted a question: what should we do if we get too full? Should we be considering something new, or supporting something other work, or another group within the church, and where is God leading us over the coming months? A time for reflection, and thanksgiving and looking ahead.

And as we look ahead, we are looking forward to Easter celebrations, to a lunch together on Palm Sunday, to providing opportunities for anyone in the church to join in prayer breakfasts (in June), and we are planning some summer walks and a picnic. Given the way the year flies by, we have booked Harvest already together with the popular Barn Dance.

On the evening of that day... Jesus came and stood among them and said “Peace be with you... Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe” John 20.19,29.

Barbara Crosse

Headingley Mission Community Leader

TLG Awards Dinner

Thursday 19 March was an exciting day for Sean, one of the children we mentor. Not only had he scored the two goals in a 2-1 win for the school football team, he was also one of the TLG Early Intervention Award Winners at the awards dinner.



Heather & Sean at the awards dinner

He had a great evening, from arriving at the Midland Hotel (“We thought it would be in a school hall.”) to getting his award. The presentation included a video of him talking about the progress he has made. Sean spoke about the help and advice which Heather has given him and how much it had helped him. It was so encouraging to see a child who had struggled to communicate, speaking so articulately and confidently.

Congratulations must also go to Heather, and all the rest of the coaches who faithfully commit time each week to work with struggling children.

Hazel Randall

TLG Co-ordinator
Contact Hazel to find out more about TLG

Church Meeting

At the church meeting on 26 March members:

- Elected Sue Ricketts as Elder and Claire Hall as Deacon. (Nominations are still sought for other leadership positions.)
- Affirmed Geoff King as he seeks to become a locally accredited minister with the YBA
- Agreed to accept four new members of the church, two of whom will be baptised on Easter Day
- Heard that income for the first two months of the year is nearly £8,000 (12%) down on budgeted
- Prayed for members and friends of the church in particular need at this time.

Matthew Newman

...informed...

Share news from *Around the Church* from your Mission Community or homegroup by emailing magazine@spbc.org.uk.



Postcard from Japan

*Everyone at South Parade
c/o Intouch Magazine
South Parade Baptist Church
Kirkstall Lane
Headingley
Leeds LS6 3LF
UK*



AIRMAIL



As I write this I'm sat watching the Spring snow flutter past the window of my favourite cafe (good doughnuts and great espresso!). I come here about once a week to read, write, or just be here.

The last time I was here the girl next to me struck up a conversation, in Japanese at first but then she switched to trying out her English. Being "Englished" (as I call it) is a fairly standard part of my life here.

I guess it's a quirk of mission in Japan that whilst I am doing my best to grow in my Japanese language abilities, Japanese people are desperate to practise their English on me! But it does mean that I get chances to talk to people about why I'm here, which means I get chances to introduce them to Jesus, which happily

enough is the answer to their question.

It's not all random encounters though. Sometimes I arrange to hang out with folk!

So that's my life: struggling to understand the Japanese language and people, and striving to make the Saviour known through my words and my actions.

Loving words. Loving people. Loving Jesus. Loving Japan.

Love

Levi Booth

Election Matters

Praying about Truth

Love ... does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. (Corinthians 13:6) (NRSV)

Politicians of every shade are seeking to persuade us that theirs are the best policies, that they are the ones who are most able to lead and govern our country.

As Christians, we are likely to have a broad range of views about which are more deserving of our support, but one thing we can hold in common is the desire to see policies and decisions that are based on truth.

In 2013 Baptists, Methodists, the Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church published a report *The lies we tell ourselves*. It sought to highlight how at times particular policies and public opinion can be swayed by distortions and caricatures of particular people in our society; how statistics can often be selectively used to support a particular political agenda. We have also witnessed an alarming rise in



dishonesty and dubious practices which in turn have had catastrophic consequences for our economy and financial institutions.

In this election campaign we want to make sure that truth is placed at the heart of the agenda

When the prophets of the Old Testament reflected on the state of their society, one of their recurring laments was a widespread departure from truth and honesty – Isaiah the prophet declares:

Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands at a distance; for truth has stumbled in the public square, and uprightness cannot enter. Truth is lacking, and whoever turns from evil is despoiled.

This election campaign, whatever our political opinion, we want to make sure that truth is placed at the heart of the agenda. The prophet Isaiah recognised that when truth is eroded,

injustice quickly follows. By acting together and speaking with one voice, supported by national and regional initiatives we can seek to ensure that truth does not stumble or become lost in our political debates. This is one way we can follow Christ's call to love our neighbour by the way in which we use our right to vote.

Prayer

God of Truth,
help us to be a people of honesty
and integrity.
Give us wisdom to seek truth
and not be deceived by narratives
that serve only the interests of those
who convey them.

*Help us to speak truth and challenge others to do the same to protect those whose dignity is undermined
By unfair caricatures and misrepresentation.
Grant to all those who aspire to lead and influence the life of our nation the courage and integrity fully to embrace truth and honesty in all they do and say through Jesus Christ who is the way, the truth and the life.*

Amen.

Baptist Union

...involved...

Find out more at
www.baptist.org.uk/election
including a resource pack that
has been produced for use in
Sunday services or home groups. Details of the "Love Your Neighbour" report
are at www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/loveyourneighbour



...informed...

Churches Together in Headingley Election Hustings

Sunday 26 April 7.45pm
at St Chad's Parish Centre



Gnanakan News

He Has Risen = Mission Possible!

Chris Gnanakan (our Mission Partner working with churches and church leaders across Asia) is visiting South Parade again in July - watch out for details nearer the time. In advance of his visit he sent his reflections on the Easter story to challenge and encourage us all.

Christians have differences in areas of doctrine but one truth claim by Jesus is non-negotiable – his bodily resurrection. The early believers didn't merely share the fact that Jesus died, they preached his resurrection and proclaimed him, "Lord of life"! Good Friday was our human "NO" to Jesus; Easter is God's "YES" to him. The cross was the Son's

payment for our sins; the empty tomb is the Father's receipt stamped, "Paid-In-Full!" Because Jesus is alive, his followers will also live, forever (John 14.19). Now, that's good news – the Gospel with an impelling "Go" in it!

All religions have founders who are now dead. Christianity is the only faith with a risen Saviour, hence offers a "living hope!" It is a faith that creates life for a community called "church" with a purpose and a mission that is possible. The women who went that resurrection morning "looking for the living among the dead" (Matthew 28.1-10) became the first Gospel preachers! Let's join them to hear **four words of exhortation** that will mobilize mournful seekers to be fervent missionaries:

*1. Word of **Consolation**: "Don't be afraid" - God knows your need!*
The women hurried to Jesus' tomb before sunrise with deep concerns. As Jesus' loyal disciples they lingered near his cross, watched him die, noted his burial spot, now came to anoint his body for a decent burial. They had loved his



teaching, experienced his miracles, built their hope on him, but now... he was dead. Paying their last respects they wondered, "Who is going to roll the heavy tomb stone? How to get past the Roman guards?" The darkness outside swelled their inner despair, filling them with fear. They were looking for the right person, but in the wrong place! Their fears proved unfounded. God had intervened: sent an earthquake and an angel on a mission to roll and sit on the stone that stood between them and their living Lord.

God is still in the business of "Rolling Stones"!

The first word of God's messenger was, "Don't be afraid, I know..." What encouragement to know, God knows! This is God's comfort and perfect love that casts out all fear (1 John 4.18). What are our concerns, burdens and barriers that like stones cause anxiety and block us from knowing and experiencing our risen Lord? God is still in the business of "Rolling Stones"! Don't fear, God knows and he does care.

2. *Word of Declaration:* "He has risen!" - God keeps his word!
Note what the women had heard before coming and needed to be reminded. They knew the death

penalty for tampering with Caesar's seal, and heard rumours of grave robbers taking Jesus' body. Yet God makes a decree to solve any "mystery of the missing body" of the crucified Jesus: "He has risen" and adds a significant phrase, "just as he said". The resurrection was no afterthought or surprise but was according to God's sovereign plan and Christ's prediction (Matthew 16.21; 17.22; 20.19).

While his enemies remembered Jesus saying he will rise on the third day, his own disciples forgot his promise (27.63). Less wonder in that cemetery, their faith was also dead. Sceptics, atheists, anti-supernaturalists, secular humanists forget God's Word is true and stands! We must carefully hear and remember to remember his Word since this is how faith is generated (Romans 10.17) In spite of the Sanhedrin, stone, seal, soldiers... his mysterious shroud reveals our Saviour is alive. God is not dead, Christ has risen in deed, just as he said. God is with us and keeps his word!

3. *Word of Invitation:* "Come and see" - God calls us to himself!
This word is a warm invitation to examine the evidence. Whenever we write the date (AD = in the year of our Lord) we attest this historical

fact. The stone was rolled away, not to let Jesus out, but to let us in! The invite was not to see the place with the cocoon of linen clothes the way these women had wrapped Jesus, but to encounter Christ in person. On their way, Jesus meets and greets them. Now their faith gives way to sight and their hope is realized in their glorious Lord.



with the Lord, led to their witness or involvement in his world. These Jewish women whose report or testimony a court wouldn't accept are the first evangelists! Jesus sends (*missio*) them to those he had called to be fishers-of-men (4.19). He is not ashamed to address them as "brothers" since his resurrection has made his Father their Abba in heaven!

Jesus always made himself the central issue and called followers first and foremost to himself. His disciples now know him in a new and living way, as they fall at Jesus' feet to worship him. Where were his male disciples? Hiding in the upper room! These women had come, sought and found Jesus. Today our souls are unsatisfied and though entertained by substitutes they remain restless. Don't hide, seek and you will find! In his presence there is fullness of joy!

4. Word of **Commission**: "Go quickly and tell" - God sends us out, on mission!

This fourth word stands together with the third – "Come and See," with "Go quickly and Tell"! This time Jesus, not an angel, commissions them to "Go" with a sense of urgency and responsibility. Notice their worship or intimacy

The women's sorrow turns to joy because of Jesus' presence. His co-mission is our blessed assurance. "Lo," as they "Go" in obedience to Galilee, Jesus goes ahead of them. Meeting the risen Christ calls for a response - missions! Christian **mission is possible** because Jesus goes *with us* and is *for us*! As the Father sent Jesus, the risen Christ pours out his Spirit and sends us into the world. As his community, we have his authority and the great opportunity to "Go and Tell" all nations (28.19-20). God sends us to share his life of love. Christ arose, so his follower goes!

Chris Gnanakan

www.chrisgnanakan.com
outreachtoasianationals.org

Prayer Diary



April & May 2015

*“You, God, are my God,
earnestly I seek you.”*

Psalm 63.1 (NIV)

APRIL

APRIL		
Sun	5	Celebrate our Risen Saviour
Mon	6	Lindsey Orchard, Rachel Geinda and David Li after their
Tue	7	Maureen Spearing
Wed	8	Barbara Cook
Thu	9	Gladys Reed
Fri	10	SENT Lounge this evening
Sat	11	Hannah Preston
Sun	12	The Ministry Team
Mon	13	Adrian Howe, Church Treasurer, and the Finance Team
Tue	14	David and Ann MacFarlane in Italy
Wed	15	Edna Robinson
Thu	16	Headingley Morning Mission Community
Fri	17	Andrew Bedingham and the work of the CAP Centre
Sat	18	The city of Leeds

Pull out and use!

Sun	19	Delessa Gugsá
Mon	20	Church @ Little London
Tue	21	The work of Rooted
Wed	22	Northside Mission Community
Thu	23	Those who can't get to church on a Sunday any more
Fri	24	St George's Crypt
Sat	25	Christian politicians and leaders
Sun	26	Geoff King
Mon	27	Steve and Ismay Green
Tue	28	ABC Coffee Shop
Wed	29	Our friend working in palliative care in North Africa
Thu	30	The Elders
MAY		
Fri	1	Churches Together
Sat	2	Duncan Stow working in Horsforth
Sun	3	Nathan Shipley
Mon	4	Jane Waites in Albania
Tue	5	Home Group leaders
Wed	6	The Arabic Christian Fellowship
Thu	7	The government of our country on election day
Fri	8	The Retired People's lunch meeting
Sat	9	The Deacons
Sun	10	Outburst Sunday at Northside
Mon	11	Chris and Dorothy Gnanakan
Tue	12	People getting married this year
Wed	13	Jayne Godfrey in Slovakia

Thu	14	Christians Against Poverty
Fri	15	The volunteers in the church office
Sat	16	Becky North in Chad
Sun	17	Kate Burkett
Mon	18	Other local churches
Tue	19	Paul Rockley
Wed	20	Christians in Science meeting this evening
Thu	21	The church in North Korea
Fri	22	Drop-in at Cragg
Sat	23	Young People away at Redmire
Sun	24	Heather McLeen
Mon	25	Charles Fletcher, Church Secretary
Tue	26	Work with children and young people across the church
Wed	27	Cragg Mission Community
Thu	28	Levi Booth in Japan
Fri	29	TLG mentors working in local schools
Sat	30	Jill and Colin Jones and their work in Normandy
Sun	31	Brian Nicholls
JUNE		
Mon	1	SENT mission community
Tue	2	Those in hospital or waiting for treatment
Wed	3	Connect Mission Community
Thu	4	Lawrence Cockrill
Fri	5	Caroline Brown at Dewsbury Baptist Church
Sat	6	Yourself and your place in South Parade

Pray About Climate Change

*Lord Jesus, across the world, your sisters and brothers
are suffering the effects of climate change,
bearing the consequences of others' actions,
because we have not taken care of our planet.*

*Open our hearts, Lord Jesus,
never to be afraid of the power of those, who
sometimes include us, who are greedy and abusive
of the resources of your world and of others.*

*With your love in our hearts, all things are possible.
May your church be more courageous than cautious;
may your church not remain silent
when people are suffering;
may your church not pass by on the other side
when the wounded earth is waiting to be healed.*

*Stand with us, Lord, in the uncertain moments.
With your Holy Spirit raise us from our hopelessness,
wipe away our disbelief and strengthen
our faith.*

Stand with us, Lord Jesus.

Amen

www.christianaid.org.uk



BMS World News

Bangkok's red light district Freedom Bakery

The Freedom Bakery is helping women change their lives thanks to BMS World Mission.

Widowed and without money, Op* thought she had hit rock bottom. Seeking a way to support her son, Op left him with her mother and moved to Bangkok for factory work. She soon left that job because of the long hours and began working in the red light district of Nana Plaza in a beer bar. Op describes her experiences there as horrible and unhappy. Her hours were long and she spent her days with many strange men.

The opportunity to work with BMS partner NightLight has changed Op's life completely. Now she is part of the Freedom Bakery, run by BMS mission worker Sarah Brown. Op has been able to provide for her mother and

I can't believe that I am part of helping these women break free and have the freedom that God intends for them

her son – even managing to afford to send him to university!

Another one of the freedom bakers is Nam*. She was saddled with the responsibility of looking after her child, sick mother and all of her younger siblings. After struggling to find work, she moved to Bangkok with her child – hoping to make



enough money to send back to her family.

She ended up begging for money on the streets of Nana. “I would sit with my head hung low and keep my hand stretched out,” says Nam. It would have been easy for Nam to get sucked into working in the bars and brothels, but thankfully someone befriended her and told her about NightLight. Now she is learning to bake and has hope for herself, her child and her family.

Nam and Op would probably still be trapped in the cycle of poverty and prostitution today if it wasn't for the work of people like Sarah Brown. “There are many times when I can't believe that I am part of helping these women break free and have the freedom that God intends for them to have,” says Sarah.

* Names changed

You can find out more about the Freedom Bakery at bmsworldmission.org/freedombakery

Saving limbs and lives in Chad

BMS World Mission doctors in Chad saved a seven-year-old from an unnecessary amputation.



Sue White, a BMS nurse, was on duty when Idriss arrived at Guinebor II Hospital (G2) in severe pain because of an abscess that had left dead and dying tissue from his knee to his buttock. Two weeks before coming to G2, Idriss had received an injection in his leg at another clinic and unfortunately it became infected. Initially, his father took him to the general hospital in N'Djamena, but they only stayed a few days because the doctors there wanted to amputate Idriss' leg.

*It is easy to take things like
blood banks for granted.
The hospital is a beacon of
hope for the sick.*

Once admitted to G2, he was given pain killers, antibiotics and a blood transfusion before the dead tissue could be removed. “There is no blood bank here,” says Sue. “People

have to rely on relatives with the same blood type to come forward.” Meaning Idriss had to wait days because his family had to travel to the hospital. Mark Hotchkin, a BMS doctor, successfully performed the surgery and Idriss is recovering nicely.

It is easy to take things like blood banks for granted, since they are easily accessible in the West. In Chad, G2 and the skilled staff there are a beacon of hope for the sick.

www.bmsworldmission.org/worldnews

Europe or Death? Helping Vulnerable Refugees

In 2014, 100,000 people made the journey across the Mediterranean from Libya to Italy, searching for a better life. A BMS mission worker in Southern Italy, Ann MacFarlane, is trying to help them.



“We either stay [in Syria] and die,” a father of four told Ann, “or try to get away.”

This man paid \$20,000 to travel to Italy with his children and his pregnant wife. The boat was sinking when they were rescued by an Italian coastguard. They could have drowned.

Ann is trying to help refugees like these by providing warm clothing, bottled water and hot drinks. But the need is great.

“These people are coming with the hope of something better,” Ann says. “There is no work here, there is no social security... lots of people are showing sympathy for them, but there isn’t anything here to help.”



This article is taken from the Spring edition of the BMS magazine *Engage*. To read online or subscribe to receive a free copy four times a year visit www.bmsworldmission.org/engage

More than an Egg

Rewind to Easter at South Parade

Over the last few weeks, the Headingley building has been full of schoolchildren finding out what Easter means to Christians, as part of the Rewind programme. Children's worker Heather McLeen explains more.

So what is Rewind?

It's an opportunity to explain to year 5 children why Easter is so important to Christians. It's done by going through the Easter story using video clips, drama, storytelling and workbooks. It's a mixture of up front and small groups work, including quizzes and a bit of running about.

How many children took part?

This year we had 2 sessions of 60 and 107 children from local primary schools. Six schools were involved. What sort of response do we get? The local primary schools are eager to come along as it covers the national curriculum for Easter, and also encourages interactions with other primary schools.

Who helps to run it?

Well we had a great mix of people

from students to retired people. There were 23 people representing every mission community on the team this year. It's great to have a mix in the team as it shows the children that church is for everyone young and older.

Sadly only a small percentage of children will visit a church or understand that Easter is about more than eggs

Why is it important for South Parade to run this activity?

Sadly only a small percentage of children will visit a church or hear the Easter story and understand that Easter is about more than eggs! It's also a great opportunity for the mission communities to work together on this activity, serving the primary schools where we are involved especially Hollybush and Adel.

A massive thank you to everyone who helped this year.

Heather McLeen

Children's Worker

Ford's Focus

John's Gospel Part Two: What Do You Seek?

John 1.35-50

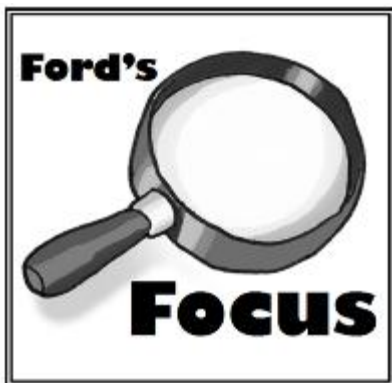
John the Baptist directs two of his disciples to look at Jesus (John 1.36). He doesn't want to keep this to himself: he points out Jesus. The two disciples are immediately captivated by this man. They had been waiting and expecting him as they had been taught and when John said "Behold the Lamb of God!" they immediately left John and followed Jesus. There wasn't a debate - shall we, shan't we - they just followed.

What we see and what we subsequently learn when we follow will compel us to share and to find others. God first wants the willing heart before he asks "what do you

seek?" (verse 38). We don't have to have the doctrine all sorted out just the willingness to follow.

These two did not just stop at following, they were not frightened off by Jesus turning around and asking "what do you seek?", they engaged him in conversation, they were intent on finding out more, intent on clarifying John's claim that this truly was the Lamb of God. We all need to enquire and engage in conversation with Jesus otherwise we will never progress from being a disciple of a man (may be a good man who may even be a prophet) to being a disciple of Jesus.

Andrew had recognised that Jesus was the Messiah not by being told but by engaging in conversation. We can only know that Jesus is the Messiah by revelation not hearsay. We, like these two disciples, need to ask "where are you staying?" We need to have a desire to spend time with this man to find out more. The very heart of God says "come and see". What an invitation - these two men were invited into the very place where Jesus was staying.



*The conversation with
Jesus changed their lives to
the point where they had
to tell somebody*

The passage tells us that it was the tenth hour (about two hours before sunset) and they remained with him that day (verse 39). It was in this time that they found out for themselves that what John had said and witnessed was actually true. John's story had become their story which was His (Jesus) story. The conversation changed their lives to the point that they had to tell somebody.

Andrew realised that he could not keep this new-found discovery to himself and so set out to find his brother Simon, and on finding him brings him to Jesus (verses 41-42). I wonder how much time Andrew had to spend with Simon to get him to meet Jesus? The fact is that Simon was persuaded by his brother to come and see for himself. We can't make Christians of people but we can persuade them to come and see and allow the Holy Spirit to do the rest. Jesus saw Simon and changed his name. An encounter with Jesus will do this,

the direction of our life will not be fishing to provide our maintenance but fishing for people for God's kingdom.

When asked the question "What do you seek?" do we ask "where are you staying?" and on hearing "come and see" are we willing to follow the invitation? Does what we see and subsequently hear compel us to go and find others and bring them to Jesus?

Come and see

This great theme that started with John the Baptist "Look the Lamb of God" spread to Andrew who in turn encouraged his brother to come and see and now we find that Jesus himself is demonstrating the same thing. The passage tells us that Jesus "wanted to go to Galilee" and in the going "he found Philip." (verse 43).

When Jesus found Philip he simply said "follow me".

We are not told that Philip stopped to consider the proposition or make some excuse about

needing to do something else, or maybe tomorrow I will follow. No, what Philip saw in Jesus made a deep impression in his spiritual part that this man was indeed the Christ.



Faith is not something we have in our head it is a deep sense of knowing in our heart. Something that gets hold of us that will not let us go and it compels us to follow Christ through thick and thin.

As we read this passage we find that Philip did not appear to waste any time in going to find Nathanael (verse 45). Now, Nathanael was a different kettle of fish, he was not convinced by Philip's new found enthusiasm and zeal. He doubted that anything good could come out of Nazareth, consistent with the view of Nazareth at the time which suggests that the Nazarenes were particularly hostile to the gospel.

Philip does not appear to proceed to convince Nathanael he just says the same words to him that Jesus said to Andrew, "come and see." In many ways we all have doubts and are sometimes sceptical about who Jesus is and what He is about so

sometimes the best answer is just "come and see." It would be good to note at this point that Philip did not say "well go and find out" he implied come with me, I will walk with you and we can find out together. Is that what we do when we present the gospel? Or do we bash and condemn people into God's kingdom?

Jesus said in John 14.6 "No one comes to the Father except through me". Our role is to bring people to Jesus: it is he who will show the way to God. Are we walking with our friends and encouraging them to find Jesus?

Let us be like John the Baptist and point Jesus out to our friends. We may be surprised by what our friends do when we release them, they may even go and find someone else.

Steve Ford

Headingley Morning Mission Community

Latest News

Don't forget that if you miss the weekly notice sheet you can download the latest one from the church website www.spbc.org.uk - click on the "resources" section



A New Age to Come

Pray About Climate Change

A recent poll suggested that only 27% of people ranked environmental issues as “very important”, making it the tenth in a list of concerns ahead of the general election. John Lockwood explains why we should all take climate change more seriously.

The human enterprise has grown so dramatically since the mid-20th century that the relatively stable, 11,700-year long Holocene epoch, the only state of the planet that we know for certain can support contemporary human societies, is now being destabilized. In fact, a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, has been proposed.

The arrival and informal adoption of the word “anthropocene” to mean a new epoch of humanity is one consequence of observed climate change. The word came into common usage after Paul Crutzen, a Dutch chemist and Nobel Prize winner, used the term; Crutzen

argued that the current geological epoch should be awarded the new name to reflect the major and ongoing impact of human life on Earth. The official arrival of the Anthropocene would mark the end of the Holocene, the present geological time period. The Holocene marks the onset of warmer and wetter conditions at the end of the last ice age about 10,000 years ago, and the rise of civilization. Anthropocene is not yet an officially adopted geological term, but its existence stresses the great changes taking place on the Earth’s surface. For example, atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations are now at levels last reached over a million years ago.

Climate change has important implications for agriculture. The European heat wave of 2003 killed some 30,000 to 50,000 people. The average temperature that summer was only about 3.5°C above the average for the last century. The 20 to 36% decrease in the yields of grains and fruits that summer drew little attention. But if the climate scientists are

right, summers will be that hot on average by midcentury, and by 2090 much of the world will be experiencing summers hotter than the hottest summer now on record.

Rising temperatures could lead to widespread food shortages by the end of the century. Please pray about the climate change talks taking place this year.

The yields of our most important food, feed, and fibre crops decline precipitously at temperatures much above 30°C. Among other reasons, this is because photosynthesis has a temperature optimum in the range of 20° to 25°C for our major temperate crops, and plants develop faster

as temperature increases, leaving less time to accumulate the carbohydrates, fats, and proteins that constitute the bulk of fruits and grains.

Widespread adoption of more effective and sustainable agronomic practices can help buffer crops against warmer and drier environments, but it will be increasingly difficult to maintain, much less increase, yields of our current major crops as temperatures rise and drylands expand. This could lead to widespread food shortages by the end of the twenty-first century. Please pray about the ongoing climate change talks taking place this year. Also pray about the place climate change takes in the general election debate.

John Lockwood

Cragg Mission Community

...informed...

Elaine Storkey, former president of Tearfund will be speaking at the next Christians in Science meeting at South Parade on the evening of Wednesday 20 May. Details in the church noticesheet.



*The earth and everything on it belong to the Lord.
The world and its people belong to him.*

Psalm 24.1 (CEV)

Barabbas the Bandit

At the Easter service led by Steve Randall's home group at the Headingly Hall residential home, Steve scared some of the residents with a convincing performance as Barabbas...

My name's Barabbas. Barabbas-the-bandit, that's me. You might have heard of me. You might call me a bandit and a rebel, you might call me a murderer and a thief, you might call me a freedom-fighter against the Roman occupation. Whatever you call me, I'm not a very nice man – if you know what I mean. You might not want to meet me on a dark night, in a quiet place.



No, not very nice. But who of us IS nice underneath it all?

Also, whatever you might call me,

We'd stare at those three crosses wondering which one would be ours.

I'd been found-out and arrested. I'd been tried and convicted and condemned to death - and no pretty death either. These Romans know how to kill, I'll give them that. Crucifixion is an ugly business.

I'd been on death row for a couple of days. Me and two other guys - two thieves. One of them was angry and shouted at the guards. The other one was quiet and thoughtful - I think he was scared of dying. I guess we were all scared.

We could see our three crosses from the cell where we were held. Heavy wooden crosses. We'd have to carry them or drag them to Calvary, the hill where we

would be crucified. We'd stare at those three crosses wondering which one would be ours.

Thursday night, the night before our execution, I saw Jesus - but only briefly. He'd been flogged and was in a pretty bad way. He was clearly no criminal, but he seemed to be peacefully accepting his treatment. Man of sorrows – yes, he was. He seemed to be carrying a heavy burden that you couldn't see.

Just then one of the guards pulled me out. You could tell he wasn't happy, but he told me I was free! I could go! Some "pardon" from the governor. Jesus would be taking my place. Well, I was out of there like a shot.

I saw Jesus once again as I was leaving Jerusalem. There he was nailed to my cross. Dying where I should have been – leaving me free.

Steve Randall

Headingley Home Group NFG3

...informed...

Speak to Steve at the Headingley Morning Mission Community if you would like to join his home group or come along to future visits to Headingley Hall.

South Parade has a range of home groups that meet regularly across our five Mission Communities. If you would like to find out more about a group near you please get in touch with the Church Office.

*I sometimes think about the cross,
And shut my eyes, and try to see
The cruel nails and crown of thorns,
And Jesus crucified for me.*

*But even could I see Him die,
I could but see a little part
Of that great love, which, like a fire,
Is always burning in His heart.*



W W How

Questions

The Power and the Glory?

Cyril Snell attended the Christians in Science lecture by Prof David Wilkinson at South Parade in February and was encouraged to write on the need for validation of science from Christians. The speaker urged people to wonder at the works of the Maker of all things.

It was fun to be told that Kepler, the remarkable astronomer who deduced the highly improbable laws of planetary elliptic orbits, was a Methodist.

Through history, scientific enquiry has challenged traditional authoritarian views which are now agreed to have been not just wrong but irrelevant to Christian faith. The medieval church clung to ideas from Greek philosophy which were shown to be false by Copernicus five hundred years ago and by Galileo

a century later. Until the nineteenth century, scientists believed that they were discovering the process whereby God had caused all things to be.

There is a stream of history of fallible people's unique understanding of God's nature as the maker of all things

From Wycliffe onward, Christians in Britain fell into two separate parties – an official Church of England and a host of dissenters of widely differing forms. There was also a Catholic group accepting the authority of the Pope and Curia at Rome. None of these were able to recognise the problem caused by the work of geologists and biologists and the challenge it presented to the literal understanding of the Bible. Most scientists are convinced by the evidence that the earth is very old and the universe much older. In addition, the fossils show an evolving pattern with a sequence of mass extinctions caused by variations in planetary movements that created a succession of ice ages.



For many Christians, this conflict is unimportant. Living in a covenant of Grace through Christ is what is important – and they are surely correct. But scientists cannot avoid the challenge. Scripture interpreted by the Holy Spirit is the record of God’s revelation of his Word to people over some eight thousand years.

There is a stream of verifiable history of fallible people’s unique understanding of God’s nature as the maker of all things. The concept that God’s power and authority are also revealed in the supreme ordering of nature is rejected by the Pope. It is also rejected by most evolutionary biologists. They consider that life in all its variety is a matter of chance and not caused by the forces given by God at the beginning. The early Church taught that the maker of all things was as though one plants a seed, a seed containing all that was necessary. There is a scientific imperative to seek for the cause of life by the given laws of quantum physics/chemistry and the ever increasing power of micro-biology.

Chance and the survival of the fittest rest on assertion without test or proof and are seen as evidence that there is no God. It is surprising that professional scientists have rejected causation in the development

of all living things and have preferred a doctrine of chance without considering the evidence of probability in the analysis of randomness. There is a refusal to consider evidence on the complete improbability of the simplest organic form known to exist arising from a random association of highly selective chemical elements.

This is accompanied by the claim that the sequence of ever increasing complexity in the ordering of all forms of life is produced by continuous random changes in the molecular ordering whereby the more highly complex variants are better able to survive and become dominant in the population. The evidence points elsewhere, but the tragedy of these views is that it destroys the recognition that we as well as the universe are “wondrously made”.

To validate science Christians have to see the Old Testament and particularly Genesis as God’s revelation of Himself to His people who were constrained by contemporary culture. For scientists with a firm belief in God the maker of all things, the scale and grandeur of his creation is excelled only by the love of God the father in Christ Jesus.

Cyril Snell

Headingley Morning Mission Community

Come Prepared

Preaching Themes and Readings

Easter time gives us the opportunity to visit familiar themes about the meaning of Jesus' resurrection, so for the first three weeks of April our morning meetings will explore Luke 24 as the disciples move from the tentative first dawning of faith that Jesus was alive through to hearing his clear challenge that they will be his witnesses when the Holy Spirit comes upon them.

In the evening services SENT will finish its series in Galatians:

- 5 April *Resurrection living*
Galatians 2.20
- 12 April *Standing firm*
Galatians 5.1-15
- 19 April *Fruit of the Spirit*
Galatians 5.16-26
- 26 April *The marks of Jesus*
Galatians 6



The familiar teachings of Jesus offer encouragement to us in our daily lives

From 26 April onwards the morning gatherings will head back into the heart of Luke's Gospel, beginning at chapter 7.36-50. The familiar teaching themes and miracles of Jesus not only offer encouragement to us in our daily lives, but also give us repeated insights into the one who is our mighty and utterly trustworthy Saviour and Lord.

SENT gatherings in the evening will use the Sundays in May to take a glimpse at some of the Minor Prophets as they express their longing for renewal – Haggai, Habakkuk, Micah and Joel cry out to God that he will pour out his Spirit and renew his deeds among the nations. On 31 May and on into June the focus will shift to Paul's letter to the Philippians while the morning congregations will continue to explore Luke's Gospel.

Brian Nicholls

Senior Minister

Church Noticeboard



You are invited to an

ELECTION HUSTINGS

Your chance to

question the candidates

standing for election in the Parliamentary Constituency
of Pudsey, West Yorkshire

Sunday 19th April 3-4.30pm

Doors open 2.30pm with refreshments

Venue : St Margaret's Church Hall

On Fink Hill, by Horsforth Hall Park

More info : inc how to ask a question before the event.

www.horsforthchurchestogether.btck.co.uk

Horsforth Churches Together

Together in our community.

*One day they led Him up Calvary's mountain,
One day they nailed Him to die on the tree;
Suffering anguish, despised and rejected:
Bearing our sins, my Redeemer is He!*



*One day the grave could conceal Him no longer,
One day the stone rolled away from the door;
Then He arose, over death He had conquered;
Now is ascended, my Lord evermore.*

***Living, He loved me; dying, He saved me;
Buried, He carried my sins far away;
Rising, He justified freely forever:
One day He's coming - O glorious day!***

J Wilbur Chapman



South Parade meets as five distinctive Mission Communities across Leeds: in **Headingley** and **Cragg** on a Sunday Morning, and as **SENT** at Headingley on Sunday evenings. **Connect** meets at different locations in the community in Bramley. **Northside** meets in Adel and at the ABC Coffee Shop in Holt Park. We're involved with Church@Little London, run a CAP Debt Centre and have a partnership with the Arabic Christian Fellowship. To find out more, visit the website or contact the church office.

Together, we have a shared vision to **build community in Christ**. We hope that all who meet us will be helped to **belong** to Christ and his people, will discover what it means to **believe** in him, and will **become** all that he invites them to be in character, lifestyle, witness and service.

Senior Minister
Minister

Brian Nicholls
Paul Rockley

Associate Pastor for
Youth and Young Adults
Children's Worker
Associate Pastor
Administration Manager
Associate Pastor
Under 5s Co-ordinator

Nathan Shipley
Heather McLeen
Geoff King
Hannah Preston
Lawrence Cockrill
Kate Burkett

Elders

Andrew Bedingham, Steve Burras,
Neil Cowling, Charles Fletcher
(Church Secretary), Adrian Howe
(Church Treasurer), Ruth Hughes,
John Pelham, Sue Ricketts

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LEEDS LS6 3LF

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hannah@spbc.org.uk



“

*Early on the first day of the week,
while it was still dark,
Mary Magdalene went to the
tomb and saw that the stone
had been removed from the entrance.*

”

John 20.1 (NIV)

intouch

**SOUTH PARADE
BAPTIST CHURCH**
Building Community in Christ