

intouch



I have FOUGHT the good fight

I have FINISHED the race

I have KEPT the faith

“legendary” “loving” “prayer-warrior” “stalwart”
“children” “hospitality”
“loyalty”
“generous” “encourager”
“taught” “lovely” “inspiration”
“welcomed” “energy” “adored” “cake” “rock”
“loved” “amazing” “catering” “commitment” “cooking”

2 Timothy 4:7

Remembering Aunty Joan

Tributes to Joan Spivey, page 13

As the church continues looking at four key areas as part of our vision for this year, there's plenty to **Pray** for in this month's magazine, with opportunities in the Mission Communities for new **Adventures** to get involved with to help you and the church **Grow**. There are **Encouraging** words from Amelie Addison (page 26) who helped many people when she shared her personal story at a recent Headingley morning service. In advance of his moving to Leeds in the summer, Peter Morden encourages us with words on his Favourite Psalm (page 32). As you read the magazine I hope you'll be more informed about what's going on in the church, be inspired to pray and become more involved in the work of the Kingdom.

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Matthew Newman Editor

Informed, Involved, Inspired... Intouch!

Contributions to: magazine@spbc.org.uk or to the church office

Deadline for contributions: 21 July 2017

Next edition published: 6 August 2017

From the Ministry Team

Home Sweet Home

On Sunday 14 May, Tottenham Hotspur played their last ever match at White Hart Lane. Less than twenty-four hours later, the ground was being ripped up in preparation for the new stadium which will be built on the same site. Whilst discussing the redevelopment, a pundit on BBC Radio 5 Live was asked, “Where is your spiritual home?”

How would you answer that question? Perhaps you can recite the postcode of the church

where you first decided to follow Jesus. Maybe you would call to mind another significant place from your journey of faith. For some of you it might not be a physical place at all but you would identify a group of people where you feel you belong.

Home
Sweet
Home

At the Baptist Assembly, Dianne Tidball took office as President of the Baptist Union for 2017/18. The President’s main role is as a communicator of

our Union’s vision and mission. The theme for Dianne’s Presidency is the phrase from the Lord’s Prayer “as in heaven”.

Moments after instigating the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus developed the idea of a heavenly focus further when he said,

“Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves



Jesus encouraged people to invest in their heavenly rather than earthly homes. Paul urged the early church to be citizens of heaven!

break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also.” – Matthew 6.19-21

Jesus encouraged those who were listening to invest in their heavenly rather than earthly homes. The apostle Paul picked up this theme too as he urged the early church to be citizens of heaven!

Ultimately, where and who we belong to should affect every area of our lives, including where we live, what we do with our free time, who we build relationships with and even how we vote.

As we prepare to vote on Thursday 8 June, we should think carefully about the different promises and priorities of the political parties and whether they help or hinder building God’s kingdom on earth.

Whatever the result of the general election, we need to remind one another that heaven is our home. We should continue to pray for those in positions of authority and ask God what is required of us as citizens of heaven residing on earth.

Nathan

Lord we thank you that your Kingdom is your reign: of peace, all that is good, faithfulness and love. We pray that our lives and communities might bring heaven to earth by being people who bring peace and all that is good into the lives of others. We acknowledge our failure, at times, to bring heaven to earth by our words and deeds. Fill us with your presence that we might be channels of your presence and your Kingdom in all we do. In the name of Christ our Lord, Amen.

Dianne Tidball

from her blog at
www.baptist.org.uk/president



Around the Church

Headingley News

Activities relating to Easter have played a significant role in the last couple of months.

The outburst service on Palm Sunday was enjoyable and thought provoking. The “table talk” sheets challenged us to discuss people we admire and why we admire them. Responses included politicians, musicians, and generally people with courage to be whistleblowers. The quiz invoked friendly competition and a little bit of head scratching. The accompanying photograph shows an example of our expressions of what Jesus means to us, in one or two words written on our “palms”.

The Headingley Churches Together walk of witness was as evocative as ever, with the dramatic element at the Arc giving voice to characters who were at the cross of Jesus. Some were well known from the gospel narratives and some were

semi-fictional. I had recently watched the film *Risen*, starring Joseph Fiennes, so the images of his fictional character at the factual crucifixion were still etched in my mind. I can strongly recommend the film for viewing at any time of year, although Easter seems particularly fitting.



Palm Sunday Palms at Headingley



The Good Friday service with Churches Together in Headingley

More recently, the annual Leeds' half marathon coincided with the Compassion Sunday service on 14 May. The usual raft of road closures impacted the number of attendees on that morning, which is a real shame. Two representatives from Compassion International contributed to the service. Steve Bowring, who works for the charity to raise awareness by speaking at churches and other organisations, preached.

The other contributor was a person from Kenya who had benefited from being a sponsored

child, released from a life of poverty and crime to a fulfilling career in the British army for 5 years and now is able to speak in front of audiences in support of the work of the charity. A video was also shown of another young man who was sponsored as a child, describing the descent into poverty suffered by his family after the murder of his father. Compassion International were able to step in to provide the support

needed for him to return to education and improved living conditions, resulting in a fulfilling life. He accepted

Jesus as his Lord and Saviour and is



now training other young people to become ministers. For more information visit the website www.compassionuk.org

Richard Sykes

Headingley Morning Mission Community Leadership Team

Sent

Sent has continued to explore the church's vision for 2017 on a Sunday evening by starting a new series exploring the adventure of the Judges, which has already proven to be challenging and encouraging. It has also been exciting to be a part of South Parade Together, once a month, exploring some of the big questions of faith – including “How are we good news to the poor?”

It has also been a privilege to engage with the local community through hosting an evening exploring the stories behind the art on the Virgin Media boxes in the neighbourhood (see Nathan's report on page 10). Please pray for the people who attended and for opportunities to continue to engage with the local community and share Jesus in a relevant way.

Meeting with Sam and Katie in May was a good opportunity to get to know the family better and to hear more about their passion for serving God overseas. Hosting an

afternoon tea on the Saturday provided an informal venue for members from across the church to meet the them and ask their questions.

*Pray with us as we seek
to engage our local
community and develop
opportunities to invite
our friends and neighbours
to explore faith*

We're looking forward to the autumn term, with plans for a comedy night with Christian comedian Andy Kind. Please be praying with us as we seek to engage more with our local community and develop more opportunities to invite our friends and neighbours to explore faith.

Ruth Hughes

Sent Elder

Youth Work Gathering

At the end of April, we had the seventh gathering of youth work volunteers from across South Parade. The get-togethers provide an opportunity for our volunteers to stop, collaborate and listen to God and one another.

This time round, we met in the

Upper Room at Cragg to reflect on the art of storytelling with Mark Roques from Reality Bites. Mark began by outlining the way Jesus used questions and stories to engage with people. He then shared some of the stories which he has used to share his faith, including tales of celebrities, drug lords and rat worship.

We finished our time together searching for suitable stories for our Mission Communities and praying for one another's ability to share them well. Please don't hesitate to ask if you would like more information.

Nathan Shipley

Associate Pastor, Youth and Young Adults
nathan@spbc.org.uk

Cragg

Well here at Cragg we are busy doing what we always do in only the way we do it (usually with much

laughter) and that is work it out together...

We have had many different services including a visit from a Sasra representative (ask if you have not a clue as to what they do) and a couple more contemplative and reflective services as we (like the rest of the church) try and look afresh at nurturing a culture of prayer, encouragement, adventure and growth.

We are still encouraged having watched (or been involved with) the Mark drama and are currently doing Alpha with Lister again at Costa and have guests (hurray!) We also have just had our latest community day (we have decided to do these on Sundays after our service) so we always eat a meal together (there were 45+) then spend time together doing something that we invite the local community to engage with us in.



This time it was a community car wash and relax and eat (we like that word at Cragg) cake and drink copious amounts of coffee and tea (Fairtrade of course) whilst giving some pennies to Sethani. We had a great time and a couple of our neighbours did pop in. It is great to



In April, our home group led an Easter service at Headingley Hall, a residential home we visit three times a year. We reflected on the Easter story through well-known Easter hymns, Bible readings and short talks addressing the question “Who is Jesus?”, illustrating the idea with speech bubbles as you can see in this picture. Please pray for us and the residents of Headingley Hall as we return later in the year.

Sabina Grahek

be able to facilitate something our young people benefit from so much (as well as us older ones).

We will be having a revisit of the Vision next month as an all-together and I hope as we continue to follow God’s lead we will see people coming to join us. So we will continue to keep on doing what we do, hoping we are aligned with His purposes and fulfilling His will.

Sam Newby-Wright
Cragg Leadership Team

Connect Bible Club

Apart from our monthly Outburst events at Hollybush School, the only other regular outreach activity is Connect’s weekly Bible Club. Club – because the sharing of our stories is an important prelude to the time when we look at a passage of scripture and then pray, and because we want to appeal to those who maybe aren’t confident readers.

Five of us used to meet at Munchies Café in Bramley shopping centre,

and very occasionally one or two folks would drop in to see us. But the windowless basement where we met gradually became less like a café and more like a storeroom for catering equipment so last September we moved over the road to Trinity Methodist church.



Bible Club has moved to a location which is more accessible to those people who belong to Connect

Like Headingley the building is fronted by a welcoming conservatory style entrance from which tea, coffee and biscuits are served by a friendly bunch of women – they even have their own Val! However, we only ever had one visit from those who come to Connect.

In January “Trinity Val” introduced us to the new Salvation Army minister who is based in the refurbished building at Mount Cross where Connect has its roots. Captain Caroline Heward happened to pop into the café that Friday morning and when Susan Walker and I met her we were excited to

learn that she had a particular interest in outreach church!

The result is that the Bible Club moved to the Copperbeech Hub, just up the road from Hollybush in April and already we have been

joined by four new people. We were so encouraged to meet Caroline, who has since visited us on Sunday and helped out at Outburst, and to be in a location which is accessible to those people who belong to Connect.

Gemma Eastwood

Connect

Street Art Stories

On Friday 12 May, Sent hosted Street Art Stories as part of Headingley Festival of Ideas.

The event showcased the art on Virgin Media communication boxes on the streets around South Parade. This street art was commissioned and organised by the Ash Road Area Residents Association (ARARA).

During the evening, two of the artists – Jazz Harbord and Marcio Kutabiala – shared about their journeys to Leeds and the journeys of their artwork.



Jazz Harbord (left) and Marcio Kutabiala's artwork on boxes around Headingley

The evening was attended by around 20 people, who all enjoyed the artists' stories. The majority of people were from the community and there was a good mix of ages and backgrounds too.

Nathan Shipley

Horsforth Farmers' Market

On the 24 April winners of the Farm Shop & Deli Awards 2017 were announced at a ceremony in Birmingham at the NEC. Winners of this year's coveted Market of the Year was Horsforth Farmers' Market. Shortlisted entrants were chosen before the judges hit the road to secret-shop and observe undercover the award hopefuls. The judges covered the length and breadth of the country to experience first-hand the enthusiasm, array of produce

and customer satisfaction on offer in each of the shortlisted businesses. Finally, after weeks of scrutiny and deliberation, the category and regional winners were selected.

Upon receiving their award Peter Gillions from Horsforth Farmers' Market commented: "This goes to show what can be achieved when local Churches work together on a joint scheme. As Market Manager Duncan has drawn together a team from across the Churches to run the market and it is that which has given the market an extra dimension with the welcome, children activities and



entertainment church team contribute. It is also a tribute to our many hard working stallholders who provide such excellent produce.”

The presence of the Churches Together stall is an important part of the church’s witness as being present and accessible to the community. Around 100 leaflets detailing church events are taken each month and a small team now meet to pray and plan activities which will strengthen the church’s witness at the market.

In July, the theme will be creativity and beauty. The hope is to encourage people to “Join the conversation” trusting some of those conversations will allow people to talk about their hopes, dreams and the place of God in their lives. Please get in touch with me if you are interested to know more.

Duncan Stow

Cragg Mission Community

Church Meeting Notes

At the church meeting on 25 May, members:

- Approved the 2016 Annual Report that was presented to the Annual General Meeting part of the evening.
- Voted in Katharine Widdowson as a Deacon, appointed her to the post of Treasurer, and then prayed for her in these responsibilities.
- Heard updates about the Knights and from Jane Waites about future mission opportunities.
- Discussed the ideas for the future of the ABC Coffee Shop in Holt Park, and made suggestions for how to deal with some issues the project is facing at the moment, including a need for more volunteers.
- Had an update from the Deacons on upcoming work at the Headingley buildings: a new boiler and heating system, and an upgraded AV system in the sanctuary.

MN

...informed...

Share news from Around the Church for the next edition of Intouch by sending reports, photos and updates from your Mission Community, home group, cell group, project or meeting to magazine@spbc.org.uk



I Have Kept the Faith

Remembering Joan Spivey

Three weeks after Joan Spivey's sudden death, the church gathered with her family and friends at Headingley on a Saturday afternoon to celebrate her life.

A small collection of photos stood at the front, showing Joan at each stage of her life, with friends, entertaining, with

her exuberant dog Rory. Former ministry team member John Gleghorn had made cake for everyone, and we sat in church with chocolate on our lips and laughed and cried as people shared their memories and stories of a remarkable sister in Christ, who has been such a key part of South Parade for more than sixty years.

She was a one-person catering machine and it seemed good to celebrate Joan's life with cake.

Joan wanted everyone who came to her house to have a place to sit. It didn't matter that the front room had more seating than the Cottage Road cinema. Or that the aesthetics were not as good as your house or my house. What mattered was that people were welcome. She loved entertaining people. Joan cared more about us and gave little thought to herself.

When it came to her catering she always wanted to make sure everyone had enough. Joan had a very generous spirit. If anyone was in need, Joan was always there. Joan was a friend whose virtues the Bible extols.

On the day God called her home, her daily devotions were open. It was a joy and a privilege for her to have a personal relationship with Jesus. Joan didn't just read the Bible, she didn't just teach it: Joan lived it. In the words of Paul: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

John Gleghorn



“As a family we all loved Aunt Joan - as she was sweetly known to the girls. She welcomed us over 24 years ago. During the past 11 years she was such a support for our work in Uganda - along with Margaret - baking cakes etc. Joan and Margaret also arranged the flowers for our 40th wedding anniversary. You will be so missed.” *Liz Crathern on the South Parade Facebook page*

“Our children adored Aunt Joan.”

“I’ve been profoundly struck by the loyalty and commitment of this Christian believer who when she said “I will follow Jesus” meant it for the rest of her life and for eternity.” *Brian Nicholls*

“Joan was so committed to the young children learning about Jesus and learning that Jesus was their friend.”

“Joan was one of the stalwarts for the Connect Family Fun Day. Joan was one of those people who when she said she was going to do something she did it. And she didn’t go the extra mile, she went the extra five miles. What an example she’s left us to follow.” *Sue Walker*

“What really struck us about Joan was her energy. She said “I have a gift of energy”. By the time we’d finished at the Tuesday café we’d be on our knees in more ways than one.” *Charles Fletcher*

“She loved everybody and she did everything with love.”

“She was always a great encourager and a prayer warrior.” *Jane Waites*

“I praise God that I was privileged to know her.”

“To us who knew Joan 60 years ago in this church, Joan was our rock, our encourager, our inspiration.”

“She taught me how to make white sauce and triple chocolate pudding. I spent so many happy hours with her and others cooking and washing up for Alpha and seeing her at the Green House cafe. She will be sorely missed.”



“I remember when she was “Spy V” at a church weekend away. A very lovely lady.”

“Joan was extremely loyal: loyal to her church, to her friends, to her family, to her faith. She also had very strong convictions about things, the things she believed in, she believed wholeheartedly.” *David Morris*



As we all know, Aunty Joan loved children. From doing the Easter Garden with the tots and faithfully presiding over the Cradle Roll at baby dedications, to teaching the little ones in the Beginners' room (with the Postman Pat wallpaper) for many years, Joan was committed to sharing her love of Jesus with the under 5s. Over the years generations of kids have been given a grounding in God's Word by Aunty Joan, some of whom still serve in our church today!

I also have fond memories of Joan singing at the front of church with the tots at Christmas and Easter time, her tasty Easter nests, and more latterly her involvement with the creche in the Greenhouse and supervising craft tables at Under 5s events. Even recently Joan helped out practically by bringing her steam cleaner along to toy cleaning to give the cushion covers a good once over.



Headingley flowers arranged by Joan a few days before she died

Joan was always very well prepared for whatever activity she was leading and her energy levels were legendary! She was so kind and selfless and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

An amazing lady with an amazing faith!

Kate Burkett

I remember Joan. I remember her very well.

I think out of all the people at South Parade, she was the one I struggled with the most in my early years. I was young and wanted to change the world. And the way to change the world was by changing structures, rituals and established behaviour. Let's throw everything in the air and just catch the good stuff! Joan wasn't keen on that. She was old you see. Stuck in the past. Part of the problem, no! Not part of the problem, she was the problem!

Until of course you sat down and talked to her.

I met and talked to her a lot in the first two years and we disagreed on many things. But we never exchanged a cross word. She taught me the Jesus way. I thought I had a vision but she had a bigger vision. Love. The Jesus way. Structures, ritual, organisation. Keep them, change them, makes no difference. Love is the thing that changes the world. She taught me that.

Do you remember Petra? An 18 year old German girl who worked for us for a year. Joan bore the brunt of the financial burden, made a bed into a home and loved unconditionally. I regularly asked Petra how things were, a young girl, in a strange country living with Joan, a much older lady. Her answer was always the same, "She is the best person I ever met".

If I were to list the biggest influences on my life outside of mum and dad I would offer the following people:

- Bert Myles. (You won't know him but he was a saint who fasted one day a week to pray for my ministry. He didn't mind phoning me at three in the morning to ask for prayer topics though.)
- David Morris
- John Nicholson
- Joan Spivey

Joan. You lived your life the Jesus way. You loved unconditionally. God bless you.

Steve Fellows

*O thou who camest from above the pure celestial fire to impart,
kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of my heart!*

Charles Wesley

Traidcraft Report

Recent campaign: Make or Break

Britain's exit from the EU is likely to cause big changes in international trade, and for millions of people who trade with us from poorer countries, this could be make or break. They could find themselves squeezed even harder by powerful international competition: or it could be the moment when the UK starts trading in a way that benefits them.

Traidcraft, along with the Fairtrade Foundation, is calling on the Government to put in place measures to safeguard people who trade with us from the poorest countries, to make sure that Brexit works for everyone.

You can see their full report at www.traidcraft.co.uk/campaigns, and look for the report published in March 2017, "Brexit – let's change trade for good".

If you get a chance to speak or

write to your MP, please ask about fair trade deals for people who trade with us from the world's poorest countries.

Myanmar (Burma) rice farmers on the brink of a Fair Trade First

Here's an update on the project we supported from last year's Fairtrade Breakfast.



TRAIDCRAFT
Fighting poverty through trade

If all goes to plan, by the end of this year the first ever fair-trade product from Myanmar will be marketed by Traidcraft: rice.

Life for the rice farmers continues to be full of challenges, but the mood remains optimistic.

The project has helped to set up two landless groups of around 40 people who use a new rice storage facility to both buy the plants and to sell the rice at the best times. This



In March, Traidcraft, the Fairtrade Foundation and Global Citizen launched a petition to Trade Secretary Liam Fox. It called on the government to make sure Brexit works for farmers and workers in the poorest countries.

In April, the petition was handed in at the Department for International Trade. It will send a strong signal to the government that the public wants a Brexit that delivers fair and sustainable trade with developing countries.

development is part of a wider project to improve life for the whole community.

Life for the rice farmers in the isolated villages continues to be full of challenges – most recently the monsoon season hit them hard, with rainfall higher and more intense than expected. They had to replant their crop, a costly and time-consuming effort. But the

mood remains optimistic. Everyone is hopeful that they will soon be able to celebrate their first ever fair-trade product.

Pam Roe

Traidcraft rep

To find out more about Traidcraft and fair trade issues, speak to Pam at the regular Traidcraft stall at Headingley morning, or visit www.traidcraft.co.uk

Prayer Diary



June & July 2017

JUNE		
Sun	4	Pentecost witness events today
Mon	5	The Ministry Team
Tue	6	Our friend in North Africa
Wed	7	Your Mission Community Leadership Team
Thu	8	The General Election (<i>page 4</i>)
Fri	9	Anyone going through difficult situations at work
Sat	10	Kate Burkett
Sun	11	Preachers and worship leaders in all Mission Communities
Mon	12	Christians working in science
Tue	13	Your homegroup, small group or cell group leader
Wed	14	Your own place within South Parade
Thu	15	The church office
Fri	16	People suffering at this time (<i>page 28</i>)
Sat	17	The Joanna Project
Sun	18	South Parade Together

Pull out and use!

Mon	19	Geoff King
Tue	20	Local government councillors and leaders
Wed	21	Pam Roe and the work of Traidcraft (<i>page 17</i>)
Thu	22	Ann and David MacFarlane in Italy
Fri	23	The Deacons
Sat	24	Nathan Shipley
Sun	25	Junior Church leaders and helpers
Mon	26	The Arabic Christian Fellowship
Tue	27	The Elders
Wed	28	Colin & Jill Jones and their work with the church in Normandy
Thu	29	Teddy Praise and Play
Fri	30	The Church Weekend At Church at Headingley (<i>page 36</i>)
JULY		
Sat	1	Duncan Stow and Horsforth Farmers' Market (<i>page 11</i>)
Sun	2	Headingley Morning Mission Community
Mon	3	Sam and Katie
Tue	4	Hannah Preston and Kate Churchill
Wed	5	John and Ann Pelham and family
Thu	6	Young People meeting in Cell Groups
Fri	7	ABC Coffee Shop (<i>page 12</i>)
Sat	8	Heather McLeen
Sun	9	Connect Mission Community
Mon	10	Andrew Bedingham and the work of the CAP centre
Tue	11	Missionaries with BMS World Mission
Wed	12	TLG mentors working with children in schools

Thu	13	St George's Crypt
Fri	14	Work with children and young people across the church
Sat	15	Paul Rockley
Sun	16	South Parade Together
Mon	17	Those in hospital or waiting for treatment
Tue	18	Levi Booth in Japan
Wed	19	The Barnabas Bunch
Thu	20	Sent Mission Community
Fri	21	Drop-in @ Cragg
Sat	22	Brian and Elsie Nicholls
Sun	23	Your Mission Community
Mon	24	Someone you know who doesn't know Jesus
Tue	25	Katharine Widdowson, church treasurer
Wed	26	Chris Gnanakan
Thu	27	Charles Fletcher, church secretary
Fri	28	Students at the Leeds School of Theology
Sat	29	Pray for another local church
Sun	30	Cragg Mission Community
Mon	31	JustAct Middle East
AUGUST		
Tue	1	Rooted
Wed	2	Caring for Life
Thu	3	Transformations Leeds
Fri	4	Under 5s work across the church
Sat	5	Peter and Anne Morden as they move to Leeds

Prayer for Manchester

*God of endless love and unchanging truth,
Our hearts despair at the extent of human wickedness,
And break for those who have been so tragically and unjustly
hurt and harmed by this attack.*

*Yet we give you thanks that even in its midst,
We have caught so many glimpses of hope
In the human kindness and generosity that has prevailed.*

*Today and in these days that follow,
We pray for every life that has been damaged or lost;
For those whose mourning and despair we will struggle to
measure;*

*For those who have selflessly responded,
And will continue to provide care, support and healing.
We pray for our leaders
And all who face the difficult task of protecting our
communities,
And nurturing those values on which our well-being depends.*

*Help us to build a better world;
A world where difference is seen as an opportunity to
broaden our understanding;
Disagreement as the chance to learn and grow,
Where faith is reclaimed
As that which brings out the best in us,
And turns our hearts to all that is good and true.*

Amen

Rev Phil Jump

Regional Minister, North Western Baptist Association

Ford's Focus

John's Gospel Part 13: Seeing Jesus (2)

Steve Ford continues looking at the healing of the blind man in John chapter 9.

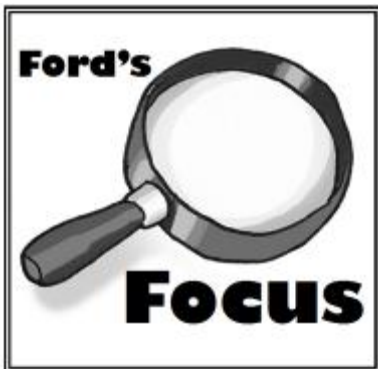
When asked how his eyes had been opened the man's reply was "A man called Jesus" and in response to the question "where is he?", the man's reply was "I don't know" (John 9.10-12).

What a tragedy we have here: that a man can be freed from his blindness and yet not know who it was that healed him - "A man", "I don't know". I would like to suggest that it is possible to be saved from a life of spiritual blindness and yet not know

the source of the miracle.

These people, this man's neighbours, those who were questioning him, decided to take him to the religious leaders. These men are so full of their own importance and are so blinded by religious rhetoric, that they write Jesus off by saying he can't be from God because he healed on the Sabbath (equating healing with working).

This miracle is more than just physical restoration: it's about spiritual awakening



What the Pharisees failed to recognise is that when dealing with the spiritual there are no boundaries of time or segments of days or weeks. When faced with the reality of a man born blind who can now see the Pharisees are divided, and rather than give God the glory, they continue to try to get answers for their own unbelieving hearts by reasoning away the miraculous work of

God now evident in this man. I hope that we are not so blind.

The truth is we can never know the spiritual dimensions of life unless we have had spiritual experiences. These religious leaders thought they were spiritual but in fact when faced with reality were floundering and trying to explain away the truth, the truth that “*this man Jesus*” was in fact a man sent from God and indeed was God in man.

When asked by the church leaders about his healing the healed man says “*he is a prophet*” (verse 17). In his mind it is becoming clear that this Jesus is no longer just “*a man*”, he is more than that and the next best description he can muster on the spot is “*he is a prophet*”. We see the start of a spiritual progression in this man’s thought process, a spiritual process that we all need to receive from the source of all spirituality. This miracle of sight to the blind is more than just physical restoration and is much more about Spiritual awakening within the life of a being created in the image and likeness of God.

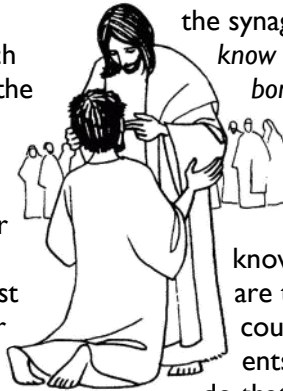
But still there is resistance from the “spiritual” law makers who call the parents of the man to verify he is

who he says he is and that he was actually born blind, they were just not prepared to believe the man’s testimony. What a sad situation it is when we do not give God the glory when he steps into the lives of men and women and changes their outlook.

The blind man’s parents weren’t prepared to give much support because they were so fearful of being thrown out of the synagogue, they just said “*we know he is our son and he was born blind, but for how he now sees, we don’t know, ask him, he is of age.*” (verses 20-22). When it comes to standing on the truth of knowing the risen Christ there are times when we will have to count the cost, this man’s parents were just not prepared to do that.

We read later on that the man himself was prepared to count the cost and rebukes the religious leaders for not knowing where Jesus is from. He concludes that they failed to see that unless Jesus was indeed God in man then there was no way he could have performed this miracle.

It is possible to encounter Jesus and yet not know him. In John 9.25 we find that, upon further questions,



the man clarifies that he does not know if the man who healed him is a sinner. He says *“one thing I know, I was blind and now I can see”*. Spiritually, of course, that is all we need to know: when we see through God’s eyes, through the indwelling life of the Holy Spirit, then everything else becomes insignificant compared to the freedom and ability we have in knowing Jesus.

The man becomes bolder in his response to the questions, he is able to give unequivocal answers about his healing. In exactly the same way we will be able to be bold and give unequivocal answers to those who try to demean or dissuade us that spirituality and belief in Jesus as God’s Son is futile. It may cost us as it cost this man when they threw him out of the synagogue and out of worship.

*What is our response
when Jesus opens
our eyes?*

The concluding part to this great chapter is that Jesus heard that the man had been *“cast out”* and in John 9:35 we read *“...and when He found him”*, he asked him if he believed in the Son of God. The man had enough about him to respond with the words *“who is he Lord that I might believe on him”* (this word

“on” in the original Greek is the Greek word “eis” which means into) so what he is saying is “that I might believe into Him”. Jesus responds in John 9:37 *“you have both seen him and it is he that talks with you now”*. The man’s only response is *“Lord I believe”* and he worshipped Jesus.

What is our response when Jesus opens our eyes? Is it one of thanks but no thanks or is it one of declaring the truth of Christ and standing on the promise of salvation in order that we may enter into all that God has for us, all that He purposed at the outset of creation.

It is time that we recognise that there is so much more to life in Christ and life lived by and in the Spirit. Let us not be like the Pharisees in this passage who, after experiencing the miracle of restored sight, ask the question *“are we blind also?”* and by inference they remained in ignorance of sin.

It is only by recognising our blindness and our need and by falling prostrate at the feet of Jesus and declaring *“Lord I believe”*, that we really become free and complete to live a life that makes a difference.

Steve Ford

Headingley Morning Mission Community

Step of Faith

Walking With Jesus

Amelie Addison writes: My walk of faith and my journey as a professional musician are closely intertwined. I became a Christian at music college: it changed everything to know that music is God's gift and He is the one who, through His Spirit, empowers me to play the cello for His glory and to bless others.

However, years of intensive practising, performing, teaching and travelling have caused chronic repetitive strain in my neck, shoulders, back, pelvis, arms and hands. At times I've

experienced constant pain and been unable to play at all; currently I can play, but still have to avoid taking on too much, and continue to manage symptoms daily.

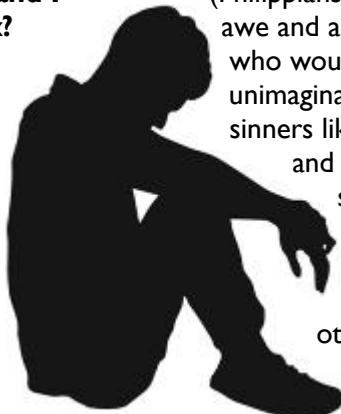
It has been traumatic and confusing to suffer this attack on my greatest source of blessing and usefulness to God. Chronic pain forces me to confront in my own body, daily, the tough question: why does a loving God allow suffering? And how, as Christians, should we respond – whether experiencing debilitating pain and illness ourselves, or trying to support others through these things?

I've realised that asking "why" – looking for someone else to blame, or condemning myself - doesn't help. There is no simple answer, though I do know my pain is not a punishment – Jesus has already borne, on the cross, the penalty for my sins (Romans 8.1). Better questions to ask start with "how", and their answers are found in God's word.



How can I live as a Christian, be wise, be godly, care for others, when my own pain seems overwhelming and I feel so alone and weak?

God designed and made me, watches over me, planned my life, knows my past and future (Psalm 139), so knows the causes of my pain and how He intends to use it for good (Jeremiah 29.11, Romans 8.28). I am not alone; God is with me and for me – He has promised never to leave me (Joshua 1.9, Matthew 28.20). All I have to do is allow Him to work in me. We are saved not by what we can do, but by what God has done for us (Ephesians 2.1-10), so His grace will always outweigh my weakness (2 Corinthians 12.7-10).



empathise with my suffering; remarkably, experiencing pain also helps me know Him better (Philippians 3.10), deepening my awe and adoration for a God who would willingly suffer unimaginable agony to make sinners like me His children, and who continues to suffer with them (Acts 9.5). I may feel incapable of bearing pain patiently, loving others sacrificially, choosing to praise instead of complain, but the Spirit of Jesus dwells in me (John 14.16-17) and He is able to do more than I ask or imagine (Ephesians 3.20).

How can I relate to and worship God from a place of pain?

The Bible clearly presents suffering as part of human experience, especially for those who serve and obey God (Job, David, the prophets, Jesus, Paul). There is a pattern to how they related to God in the midst of suffering, which we can follow in our own prayer and worship:

- when in distress, they pressed closer to God;
- they were real with Him about their feelings, however messy;
- they chose to lift their eyes

(Continued on page 29)

Jesus experienced the deepest possible human agony so is fully able to empathise with my suffering

At the cross, His Son Jesus experienced the deepest possible human agony (Isaiah 53) so is fully able to

Things to PRAY and DO if you are suffering, or supporting someone who is suffering:

- *PRAY FOR HEALING in all its forms. God has not miraculously reversed my muscle and nerve damage, but He has empowered physios to relieve my pain, and on several occasions He has temporarily removed it allowing me to accomplish a specific task. Often seeking healing from Him for my physical pain has resulted in healing for spiritual wounds.*
- *When in need ASK FOR HELP (people aren't mindreaders); when trying to help someone, ASK what they need (otherwise well-intentioned efforts can backfire).*
- *GET CREATIVE with personal devotions, church services and small group activities - pain, fatigue or disability make it difficult to read the Bible, stand to sing, or sit through prayers and sermons. Drawing or meditating on biblical images, and listening to readings, sermons, hymns and worship songs while resting or exercising, are ways to access spiritual nourishment and refreshment when pain limits my ability to concentrate or participate. One definition of prayer / worship is simply inclining the heart towards God – no physical limitation can prevent that. God hears even wordless groans and when we can't pray, we are always being prayed for (Romans 8.26-34).*
- *Being incapacitated is very frightening; the healing process can be slow, painful and time-consuming - PRAY AGAINST FEAR and FOR FAITH, PATIENCE, SELF-DISCIPLINE AND PERSEVERANCE; PRAY AGAINST TEMPTATIONS to give way to despair / selfishness / bitterness, or to seek comfort / distraction in unhealthy ways.*
- *If and when healing comes, KEEP PRAYING – readjusting to normal work and activities is also challenging.*
- *PRAY FOR GOOD to come out of suffering – for deeper intimacy with God, spiritual growth, perhaps in time a ministry to others who have suffered in similar ways (2 Corinthians 1.3-4).*

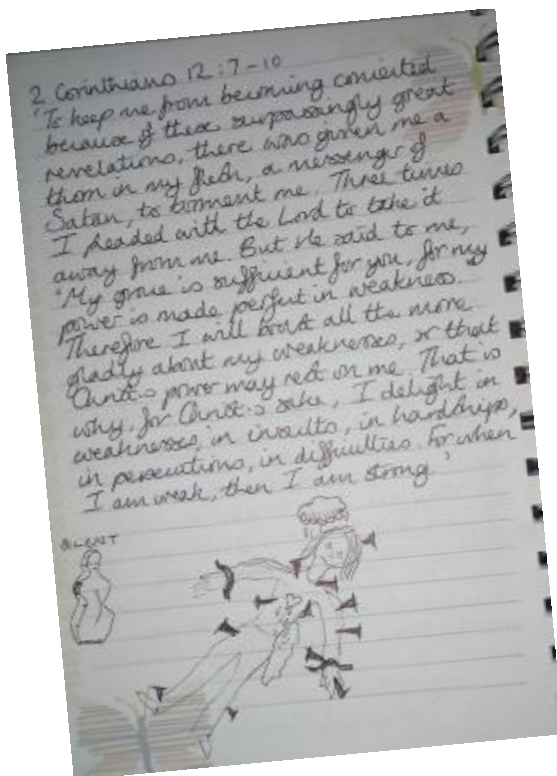
AA

from their circumstances and focus on truths about God.

The Psalmists didn't try to hide pain, anger, depression or guilt from God - we don't need to either. He is Abba (Romans 8.15-16), He tells us to come to Him as children (Mark 10.14-16) – and bringing my tears and helplessness to God makes me less likely to fall apart in situations where, for others' sake, I do need to be a grown up!

Yet almost all Psalms of lament turn into praise, remembering God's character, His history of rescuing His people, and His salvation promises. In Gethsemane, Jesus sweated blood and asked God to take the cup of wrath from Him (Luke 22.42) – yet He was able to endure the cross because he looked ahead to the joy of being reunited with His Father in heaven, having accomplished salvation for us (Hebrews 12.2).

Even in the midst of my worst pain He is right there with me



***From Amelie's notebook.
Seeking God through pain involves both encouraging yourself from His word and pouring out your true feelings to Him.***

Because Jesus died, rose again and ascended to heaven, I can look forward to sharing that joy with Him. Meanwhile, even in the midst of my worst pain He is right there with me, and there is no place I would rather be.

Amelie Addison

Sent Mission Community

For the Beauty of the Earth

Collective Global Climate Statement

Climate change is becoming an important topic on a global scale. Some years ago South Parade member John Lockwood was elected to a Fellowship of the Royal Meteorological Society for his contribution to climatology. He says it is important that Christian people make their views known. Before news broke that President Trump was withdrawing the USA from the Paris accord, John forwarded this statement which was produced by Meteorological Societies across the globe.

Scientific evidence

The scientific evidence is now overwhelming: our planet is warming, largely due to emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities. A recent report from the World Meteorological Organisation highlights that in 2016

a new record for global average temperature was set (approximately 1.1°C above the pre-industrial level), sea ice extent reached record lows, global sea level increased to a new record, and a wide range of extreme climatic events displaced hundreds of thousands of people



across the world. Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere have now also reached a record level with carbon dioxide surpassing 400 parts per million, about 44% higher than in the pre-industrial era.

The Paris Agreement needs to be implemented urgently

The social, environmental and economic impacts of climate change will continue to grow unless action is taken now. Meeting the challenge effectively and efficiently requires an immediate and collective global response that is fit for the scale and urgency of the threat, is supportive of the UN Sustainable Development

Goals, and is implemented through appropriate policies informed by evidence.

To avoid the largest risks we urge governments to implement fully and urgently the commitments they made in Paris in 2015 to ensure the future global temperature increase is limited to well below 2°C above the pre-industrial levels, to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C and to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero in the second half of this century.

A global, evidence-based response is essential

A key element of the Paris Agreement is a commitment from governments to review collective progress periodically, as new science and the experiences of implementing the agreement accrue. Policies can only be informed by robust evidence if there is a sustained, global, collaborative commitment to maintaining and developing an appropriate scientific evidence base.

Tackling climate change presents the opportunity for improving the quality of people's lives in many different ways.

Development opportunities

Tackling climate change and addressing the Sustainable Development Goals together presents the opportunity for improving the quality of people's lives in many different ways. This includes protection of the natural environment and the services it provides, improvement to people's health and the development of new services and technologies bringing jobs and prosperity.

Prompt action is required now to build the foundations of our future success. That will require the widest possible co-operation and collaboration, between countries, business sectors, civil society and science, including education, research and innovation.

...inspired...

This is an edited version of the Global Climate Statement. An international coalition of 33 meteorological and climate societies and institutions released the Statement to coincide with Earth Day in April. The Statement was initiated and co-ordinated by the Royal Meteorological Society. Read the full text and find out more at www.rmets.org/global-climate-statement

My Favourite Psalm

Psalm 40: A Firm Place to Stand

As part of our continuing series on the Psalms, *Intouch* asked Peter Morden, South Parade’s “Senior-Minister-In-Waiting” for his thoughts on a Favourite Psalm.

I’m grateful for the invitation to write on my favourite Psalm. It’s not easy to choose one though! I’m currently revising a chapter on Psalm 88 for my book on discipleship. The chapter is entitled, “Discipleship in the Dark”. I nearly wrote something here about that powerful Psalm, which helps us give voice to feelings of despair and

shows we can be honest with God about where we’re at. But although I believe this is a very important Psalm, I still wouldn’t call it my favourite! So instead I’ll say something about the Psalm that – as far as I can recall – was one of the first I engaged with seriously as a young Christian. It’s also one that has remained vitally important to me in my journey of faith: Psalm 40.

Why is this Psalm so challenging and inspiring, so relevant to the Christian life?

It speaks of salvation, of being lifted out of a deep, “miry pit”, and set on a firm rock (verses 1-3), a place of safety. For Christians it speaks to us of what God has done for us in Jesus: the ultimate rock. It also shows a right response to this amazing rescue: a response of commitment (6-8) and proclamation (9-10).

It also includes a prayer for help in present difficulty (11-17). This is always helpful, because we often need to pray in this way. Psalms like



this one give us words to use and adapt when we are in distress and want to cry out to God. It also gives reassurance: he is a faithful and trustworthy God. He has heard us in the past. So we can be confident he will hear us in the present too. He is a prayer-answering God.

The call is to deepen our relationship with him, and then share him joyfully and passionately with others

But one further point has always impressed me about this wonderful Psalm: the way the Psalmist has taken the truths of God deeply into his experience. He doesn't just know about God, he knows God

personally. He hasn't just heard that God saves, he has experienced his salvation. Theology has become biography – it is part of his life. This is most exciting, and something for us to reflect on.

Sometimes we can study hard, but it's all a bit dry and dusty. Theology becomes data about God. This Psalm is an antidote to this. Yes, we need to know more about him and his ways, but the call is to deepen our relationship with him, and then share him joyfully and passionately with others, following Jesus and drawing help and strength from him. This Psalm shows us the way. If we follow it we will be truly "blessed".

Peter Morden

Acting Principal, Spurgeon's College

*I waited patiently for the Lord;
he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.*

Psalm 40.1-2 (NIV)

...inspired...

If you have a favourite Psalm or verse from one of the Psalms that has encouraged or inspired you, email magazine@spbc.org.uk to share it with others.

Challenge and Opportunity

Baptist Pension Scheme

At the Annual Church Meeting Katharine Widdowson briefly explained the latest situation with the Baptist Pension Scheme. She forwarded this article from Lynn Green, the General Secretary of the Baptist Union that explains more.

As you know only too well, our local churches, and indeed all parts of Baptists Together, are affected by the prolonged economic downturn which we have been experiencing in the UK since 2008. Investment returns are low, wages are stagnant and this is reflected in the income we have as Baptists Together. The most significant financial challenge for us, however, is the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme deficit. The continuing pressure on pension deficits driven by the prolonged period of ultra-low interest rates has meant that, despite the sacrificial support of so many of our churches, the pension deficit has continued to increase, from about £84m in 2013 to around



£124m in 2016. Thankfully, changes to the investment strategy during this period have protected the Scheme, which would otherwise have had an even higher deficit.

In response to this worsening situation it is clear that our current plan will no longer adequately deal with this issue and so we need to change our approach. We recognise the vision of our forebears, who created pension provision for ministers so that they would be honoured and adequately provided for in retirement.

Dealing with this deficit is going to be a huge challenge, but I believe that the Lord is giving us a huge opportunity too!

After much prayer, reflection and listening to the wisdom and expertise of our Pensions Employers Group, BUGB Trustees and all Team Leaders we believe we cannot leave this issue to be a burden

to another generation and let it threaten our worship and mission. Rather, we perceive that now is the time to do all that we can to deal with this Defined Benefit Pension deficit in the next 10 years, and 2017 will be the start of that.

How can we respond?

- The first and most important thing for all of us to do is to keep our focus on Jesus in worship and mission! Above all we need to make sure that "the main thing", remains "the main thing"! In faith, we must not let financial issues deflect us from God's call.
- Pray! As the nations are shaken we need to be continuing to pray for our world and the coming of God's Kingdom. We need to pray and remember that we worship an abundant and generous God and we can trust that as we turn to Him we will have the resources we need to fulfil the call He has given us.
- If you are an employer in the Defined Benefit Scheme (and 1,300 churches are [including South Parade]) you will be receiving a letter from the Pension Trustee giving more detail about the possible impact of the deficit on the scheme employers in 2017. You need to read this carefully and, as you get a clearer picture of your own re-

sponsibilities, think about how much you can deal with yourselves and where you might need the help and support of the wider Baptist family.

"Nothing is impossible with God."

Sisters and Brothers, whether we are thinking globally or for Baptists Together, humanly speaking these things are beyond us. When it comes to pensions no one part of our Union has anywhere near the money we need to deal with this deficit, but with God and as Baptists *Together* this is not beyond us. It is going to be a huge challenge, but I believe that the Lord is giving us a huge opportunity, too! We are definitely at the end of ourselves on this one, but we know that this is precisely where we meet God. I have been through the shock, the denial, the anger and even the acceptance, and now I am actually feeling a sense of anticipation about what God is doing amongst us and wanting to see what He is going to do in and through us as we depend on Him. With time and prayer, I hope that you make that journey as well.

Lynn Green

General Secretary, Baptist Union of Great Britain. This is an edited extract of Lynn's advent message in December 2016. To find out more talk to Katharine or any of the deacons (see page 36).

Church Noticeboard

CWAC **(Church Weekend At Church)**

Headingley, Friday 30 June - Sunday 2 July

Building on our themes of Prayer, Adventure, Growth and Encouragement, the CWAC will focus primarily on adventure and encouragement. There will be opportunities to pray and bring along friends, but our main aims for this weekend are to build community, share fellowship and enjoy some of God's creation alongside one another. Please do sign up to the activities using the sign up sheets on the sanctuary walls or email Scott Halligan to indicate which activity you would like to take part in.



CWAC!

*... Friday Evening Worship ... Dad's Group ...
... Nails and Pampering ... BBQ/Picnic ...
... Bike Ride ... Football...
... Face Painting ... Fitness ...
... Tea & Bake Off ... Sunday Fair
Trade Breakfast.. Walk/Ramble/Run...*

Remember!

Peter Morden's
Induction will
be on
**Saturday 2
September**
at 2.30pm

South Parade's Deacons

- Neil Chambers
- Claire Hall
- Diane Hume
- James Ricketts
- Lauren Savage
- Mark Vipan
- Katharine Widdowson

Big Questions

South Parade Together

Have you ever come up against a question that seems reasonable but just makes you feel a little uncomfortable, or perhaps you just don't know how to begin to answer it? Recently at South Parade Together we have been tackling some of the big questions that often arise in our journey of faith.

In February, March and May we asked

- *Why does God not answer my prayers?*
- *How does Jesus relate to other religions? and*
- *How are we good news to the poor?*

If you missed these it's worth having a listen to them online at the church website.



South Parade Together is a wonderful opportunity for us to get together as a church family, to encourage one another and to continue to grow and learn together. Throughout the next few months we will continue this series. We hope that these questions will challenge us and lead us to deepen our relationship with Christ.

Coming up over the next couple of months:

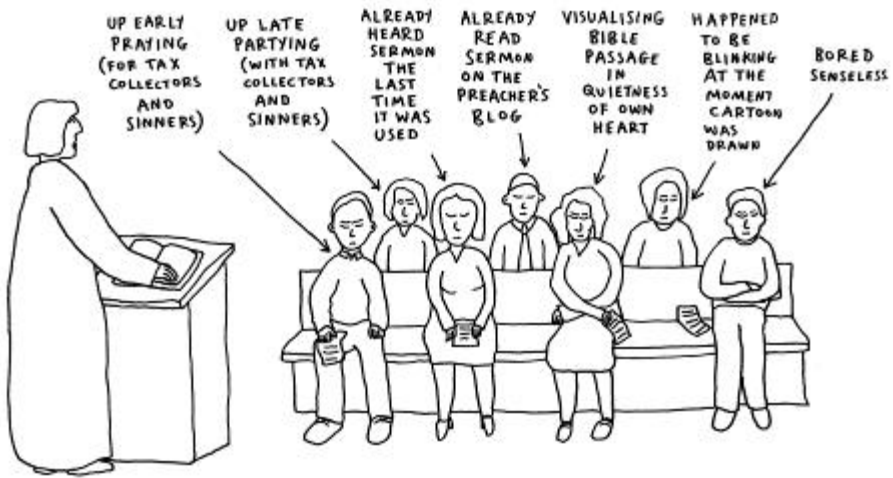
- 18 June: *How much money should I give to the church?*
- 16 July: *Free will vs predestination - you decide?*

If you have any burning questions that you want us to tackle together please contact anyone from the Sent leadership team or email suggestions@spbc.org.uk

Come and join the conversation!

THE SERMON

PEOPLE MAY HAVE THEIR EYES CLOSED FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS



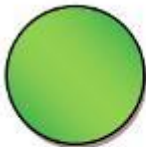
CartoonChurch.com

This CartoonChurch.com cartoon by Dave Walker originally appeared in the Church Times.

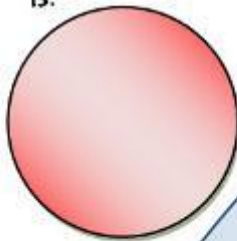
My God Is So Big

CHRISTIANITY EXPLODED

Usually:
how big I
think God
is:



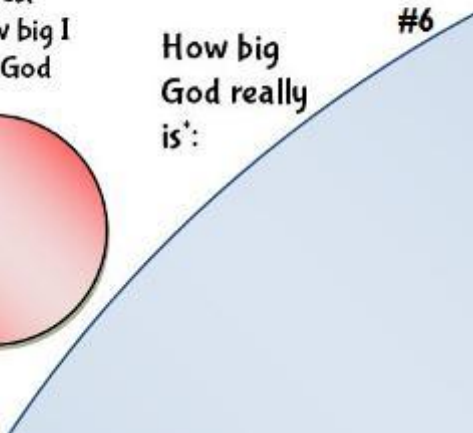
On my best
day: how big I
imagine God
is:



*still not to scale

How big
God really
is:

#6



christianityexploded.tumblr.com



South Parade meets as four distinctive Mission Communities across Leeds: in **Headingley** and **Cragg** on a Sunday Morning, and as **Sent** at Headingley on Sunday evenings. **Connect** meets in the community in Bramley. We're involved with Church@Little London, run a CAP Debt Centre and run the ABC Coffee Shop in Holt Park 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.

Minister

Paul Rockley

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

Nathan Shipley
Heather McLeen
Geoff King
Hannah Preston & Kate Churchill
Kate Burkett

Elders

Andrew Bedingham, Steve Burras,
Freeman Dumenu,
Charles Fletcher (Church Secretary),
Ruth Hughes, John Pelham,
Sue Ricketts

South Parade Baptist Church
Kirkstall Lane, Headingley
LEEDS LS6 3LF

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info@spbc.org.uk



“

*I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.*

”

2 Timothy 4.7 (NIV)

intouch

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