

Keeping in Touch.....Pentecost

Thank you again to all those who have sent contributions, and also the very positive feedback we have received from so many. Please keep the articles coming about anything you wish—funny, sad, thoughtful, anything that helps us all feel closer together. Send anything to c.a.curtis@ntlworld.com by noon on a Wednesday. Chris

We start this week with two poems

Stillness prayer. - From Christine Macloed

In the stillness, may my soul rejoice in the Lord.
The sweet rhythm of birdsong, my anthem.
The busy humming bee working, while I bathe
in the warm sunlight of God's love.

On the lawn with buttercups,
with a countenance looking heavenward.
Drawing on God's gifting of light and renewal.
Accepting that salvation comes through Christ.

Past wrongs forgiven, reconciled at one with creation.
Singing God's word for today.
The distant hooting of an owl reminding us,
that in unsearchable wisdom God created us
to glorify the name of God forever.

God who knows and loves us by name,
who has counted each one of us.
God invited into our inner being.
Active in our outer world already.
In blessed communion,
we invite the Holy Spirit to be at work in us as we rest today.

Time-out In the gardens of Launde Abbey on a Church
retreat..

We Were Elder—from Sally Runham

Verdant, rampant, sometimes pervasive,
It may invade gardens and hedgerows.
Box-elder's luscious, fruitful, sparkling.
Cordially successful, it grows.

Ground elder quashes fragile beauty:
Challenges the vibrant, varied spread.
Shouts louder than the weaker chorus.
No harmony in this flower bed.

The gardener trims the selfish elder,
Prunes it back or grubs it from this ground.
Allowing seeds the chance to enter,
Settle in a more diverse surround!

Suckers for motion, but we're contained
In our homes. Nature now rules Earth's roost.
Eating less! Using few resources?
Reduced pollution's a measured boost.

If not elder, should we act younger?
Carefully test the right path to tread?
Reflect on our impact? Rein it in?
Ponder how to share the way ahead?

We were elder but, through selection,
We've now been given a further chance.
To focus on free things that matter.
Faith, hope and love will our lives enhance.

The World Rebooted - Tearfund—from Mary Cox

https://www.tearfund.org/about_you/action/the_world_rebooted

In the midst of the current coronavirus crisis, many are beginning to wonder what life might look like afterwards - might this even be a chance to create a new normal? For many years, Tearfund has walked alongside communities around the world as they respond to disasters, helping them to recover, and become more resilient in the future. We now each face a similar opportunity: how can we 'build back better', and what is the church's role?

We can join the conversation.

The coronavirus crisis has held up a mirror to our world, revealing brokenness and inequality that was previously hidden. Right now, the most vulnerable people are enduring cramped living conditions, increasing debt, lack of access to education, and days without food.

And as churches and communities adapt to find new ways to be a light in the darkness, many are beginning to wonder what life might look like afterwards. What change will come from all we're learning right now?

We've got a unique opportunity to build a better reality together. As the church, we can choose the part we will play – locally, nationally and internationally. It's time to ask big questions. Tearfund is suggesting a way congregations can share this conversation. Do have a look at the video "The World Rebooted" if you can and have a think about how we might join the conversation.

And a few more chuckles from Alex.....

This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday .

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM . Please use the back door.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM . The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

And this one just about sums them all up

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday:

'I Upped My Pledge - Now up yours!

"THE BEST LAID PLANS.....", My 90th celebration of the years comes up on Friday the 5th of June. Where have all the years gone! So much achieved in the Lord's service and life filled with ups and downs but always with so many blessings.. Hazel and I had made our various plans, plus some from the family, and then in a few weeks or so all has to be put on one side. Hazel and I were going up to stay at our daughter Carole's for a couple of days, to be joined by our son Stephen now living in Crich. Then Monday 1st June we had booked into a rather salubrious hotel in Scarborough where we had shared happy times many, many years ago. Then Thursday back to Carole's and then on the big day a family gathering in Beeston, Nottingham had been arranged. A time to meet up with distant cousins, nieces, nephews, plus my sister Betty and Anne, my best man's widow. In addition members of Hazel's "Giles" clan would have come along also. Then back to Carole's for a more intimate family celebration.

However, not to be. Other more remote planning is being drawn up, who know how, when, or what. My birthday will still be a joyous celebration of God's rich blessings.

The words of a favorite hymn by Joseph Parker come well to mind.

"God holds the key of all unknown, and I am glad

If other hands should hold the key, or if He trusted it to me, I might be sad, I might be sad.

What if tomorrows cares were here without it's rest?

I'd rather He unlocked the day'

and as the hours swing open ,say,

My will is best, My will is best.

May the Lord Bless you and keep you in His arms of Everlasting love. Derek.

How I landed up at the Free Church..... From Jackie Ballard (nee East)

I was born in St Ives. We lived at 2 Parkside. My father was in Egypt with the RAF until, at the end of WW2, my mother took me to St Ives Station to meet him. I was three years old and allegedly cried. I was Christened at All Saints Parish Church. We moved home often— at the end of my school days I had been to seven schools. Transport to and from one village school was in the back of an RAF lorry.

Our family regularly attended the Parish Church. A school friend, whose parents managed the Golden Lion, and I attended confirmation classes. I recall an uncontrollable giggle attack during one evening of instruction. Both of us were confirmed at the same service by the Bishop of Ely.

When I was sixteen years old my friend moved to Peterborough. Another friend, known well through Guides and school, ran a Sunday School class at the Free Church. She asked if I would be willing to help her. I readily agreed, not having any strength of opinion about demoninational differences. Both churches have spires!

The event of one friend moving away and the request of another landed me with my long and continuing association with the Free Church

Martin's father was Minister (a new word for me), his mother involved with Sunday School. I came to know the Ballard family and was often at the Manse (another new word). My parents accepted my change of path, perhaps because my mother and her sisters had been sent to the Free Church Sunday School from their Victoria Terrace home.

Martin ran the church table tennis team and the youth club and I became involved with the latter. My first "date" with Martin was to the St Ives cinema. He explained, as he was playing cricket, that I would have to go on my own until he was able to join me!

Sunsequently, together with the other young people, we would drive to village chapels to help with worship or in one instance to redecorate. We attended Easter Conference at Cheshunt College. The happy eventual outcome was That I was married into non-conformity at The Free Church on 25th May 1963. Our reception was held next door at the Golden Lion.

Another InSPIREation !

From our garden we can see
Our local church's spire.
And on our walks it has to be,
Our destination pyre.

We like to do a walk each day,
However much we tire.
Sometimes it's across our meadow way
And we can see the Free Church Spire.

The church's doors are firmly locked
Things cannot be the same.
So when we meet each other next
Please remind me of your name.

Life's not the same without the church,
But we remain in touch.
Knowing that others also search
For things that mean so much.

The high-tech team just have me lost,
But that's not hard to do,
Their really clever skills and texts,
By means I never knew.

We often meet (but not too near)
Some others on their walk,
We stand apart, and with some fear,
Share in a distance talk.

Some cyclists pass by our front door,
Oft with a smile –we love it.
Our joy of course is even more
when its David and Barbara Duffett.

A little chat (and perhaps more deep
concerns about our church !)
Our consultations we do keep
As to solidarity do we search!.

With others too ,we contacts keep
So church life's not forgotten.
And most things solved – no loss of sleep,
For with that it would be rotten.

On Sunday we watch the "telly" next
With our two favourite Balls
They then will introduce their text.
So we remain within our walls.

The changes that in life we see
So our style is more 'Al fresco'
But our neighbour helps us this to be
as she works herself at Tesco.

We're also lucky with our Kath,
who calls in every day.
And then supplies our Waitrose needs.
All we have to do is pay.

Another neighbour's helpful too..
Brings regular good cheer.
He checks up if we have too few!
If so he brings the beer!

On that note now I better end.
I've dealt with things quite lightly.
But I hope we'll soon be able to tend.
A whole world acting rightly.

MJB



This is a photo of the new Oakington garden centre! - courtesy of Char

When the big centre had to close I started putting plants out with a box asking for donations for the refugees on Lesvos, the first morning 30 tom plants and 20 parsley pots went .I realised that people were pleased to have found a supply so have been keeping the table topped up ,everything i put out goes ,a few other villagers bring plants and the marmalade is also popular,i even get phone calls asking what's on offer today.

Here the local music teacher makes her selection. The lovely big centre is open again but trade is still good in the High Street!



And a quiz!.....



Can you name the flower and the bird eggs?

More difficult, what type of rose and bee?

Answers on the last page.

HULLABALOO!

The world has gone mad
What a to do!
Do as I say,
Not as I do!
Keep at a distance
Mind - don't you stray,
Or get in your car
Drive far, far away.
Go to the seaside,
Go to the park
spreading the virus,
Oh! what a lark!
Never mind locals
Now frightened to roam,
Worried as crowds surge,
Their safety kept home.
One rule for us
And another for them,
Rules can be broken
By government men.

Yes, we know circumstance
Plays a big part,
Each story is different
Pulls strings on the heart,
But while we're all trying
To weather the pain,
It's fairness, equality
That must be the aim!

cc IRENE CARTER

Born in 1900

For a small amount of perspective at this moment, imagine you were born in 1900. When you are 14, World War I starts, and ends on your 18th birthday with 22 million people killed. Later in the year, a Spanish Flu epidemic hits the planet and runs until you are 20. Fifty million people die from it in those two years. Yes, 50 million.

When you're 29, the Great Depression begins. Unemployment hits 25%, global GDP drops 27%. That runs until you are 33. The country nearly collapses along with the world economy. When you turn 39, World War II starts. You aren't even over the hill yet.

When you're 41, the United States is fully pulled into WWII. Between your 39th and 45th birthday, 75 million people perish in the war and the Holocaust kills six million. At 52, the Korean War starts and five million perish.

At 64 the Vietnam War begins, and it doesn't end for many years. Four million people die in that conflict. Approaching your 62nd birthday you have the Cuban Missile Crisis, a tipping point in the Cold War. Life on our planet, as we know it, could well have ended. Great leaders prevented that from happening.

As you turn 75, the Vietnam War finally ends. Think of everyone on the planet born in 1900. How do you survive all of that? A kid in 1985 didn't think their 85 year old grandparent understood how hard school was. Yet those grandparents (and now great grandparents) survived through everything listed above.

Perspective is an amazing art. Let's try and keep things in perspective. Let's be smart, help each other out, and we will get through all of this. In the history of the world, there has never been a storm that lasted.

A note from Bab Moore—Freewill Offering Secretary

Financial Support for the Church

I just wanted to say thank you to those who normally give to the church on a Sunday morning and have approached me with donations or requests for standing order forms, much appreciated as we are now at 10 weeks of no Sunday Services. Those who pay normally straight into the bank have continued to do so and thank you for that.

Quiz answers

... morning glory, wood pigeon and
song thrush.
Rosaraie de la 'Hay,a rugosa ,and
garden bumblebee