

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends

I was rebellious this week.
I brought a Cadbury's Creme Egg!

Apparently, according to all the Cadbury's marketing people, Cream Eggs are only available during 'Creme Egg Season'. From what I can work out this season runs from the week after Christmas until Easter Day.

Now, I'm not sure if anyone has actually pointed out how silly this is! Surely it would make so much more sense to start Creme Egg sales on Easter Day and sell them for the whole of the Easter season?

Contrast that attitude with that of the hotel on Rhodes where one of my friends is currently staying. Today (4th May) he received a parcel of red Easter eggs and cinnamon bread left in his room.

I do wish we could make more of celebrating the whole season of Easter, of really concentrating on how Christ's resurrection changes who we are.

So as we reach the end of Easter this year, ask yourself what has changed for you over the last 6 weeks? Where have you been more aware of Christ's risen power in your life?

It was a really nice Creme Egg!

God Bless
Graeme

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*I was ribbing our son Andy about his job and he came up with this definition – based on the words of American humourist (or humorist) **Finlay Peter Dunne**.*

“My business is to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted”.

This seems to me to be a good definition of the job of a Christian.

Ed the editor

WORSHIP IN JUNE

02	10.30 Rev. Phil Chilvers 6.30 Chapel Allerton	Holy Communion
09	10.30 Mrs. Florence Doku 6.00 Cross Gates	Joint Circuits Service
16	10.30 Rev. Andrew Atkins 6.30 Rev. Andrew Atkins	Baptism Holy Communion
23	10.30 Rev. George Lovell 6.30 Rev. Andrew Atkins	Ecumenical Service
30	10.30 Rev. Graeme Dutton 6.30 Moor Allerton Care Centre	

LADIES GROUP

The Ladies Group meet fortnightly on Thursdays at 7.45 p.m. in the Youth Hall.

13 June.	David Wilks and Friends	Open Meeting – all welcome
27 June	Lunch/Dinner	

THANK YOU

Once again I would like to thank members of the church for their concern when I was taken ill at the morning service on Sunday 21 April. I would like to particularly thank Barbara Dodman for her care and concern and thank Val Faint for taking over the running of the church lunch when I was not able to do so. I would like to thank the church for sending me the flowers and Audrey Gabbitas for bringing them to me.

Finally I would like to thank all those who have sent cards or phoned to enquire about me. It is comforting to know that when we are not well friends are thinking of us.

Many thanks and God bless

Andrew Walker.

GET WELL SOON

All our good wishes go to Howard Clinkard who has suffered a bad break to his arm requiring surgical reconstruction. We hope you will soon be back with us, fit and well, Howard.

WELL DONE

Hearty congratulations to Liz and Stan Pearson who recently celebrated their Ruby wedding.

DAVID'S RECITAL

St Andrew's, one of the churches in our ecumenical grouping, invited David Wilks to give an organ recital on the 20th April, as a celebration of the restoration of their Abbott and Smith church organ. As you know, David has been the organist at Lidgett Park since 1957, and I was a privileged to be part of his audience on that evening. At St Andrew's we were able to see the 'organist at work' as the whole recital was relayed to the big screen by video camera, adding a sense of theatre to the event. My, he works hard, and was assisted by his wife Margaret, who introduced herself solemnly as page turner. Did she work by telepathy, signal, or merely by reading the score? Perhaps a combination of all three, anyway she briefly appeared on the screen as a shoulder obscuring the console keyboards from time to time. David introduced each work in his programme with comments about the composer, the work itself and it's place in musical history, setting the scene for the music to follow. He played a range of music from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries with works composed by Handel; Bach; Mendelsshohn; Tchaikovsky; Easthope Martin; Gaston Belier; J. Arthur Meale and Eric Thiman. David concluded his recital with an arrangement for organ of the Knightsbridge March by Eric Coates, that brought back memories of 'In Town Tonight' for the 'oldies' in the audience. Between the halves of David's recital we were able to watch a video demonstration of the features of the organ, given by J.M.Spink who was responsible for the instrument's restoration. We learned of flue pipes and reed pipes, valves, stops, trackers and sliders, in fact a beginners guide to organ building! Mr Spink, then gave a short recital of works by himself, Enrico Pasini and Hugo Nicolson. The two organists had demonstrated both the mechanics, the range and flexibility and the musicality of the instrument.

The Rev., David Pickering introduced the evening with a short history of the organ and it's disaster to triumph in 1908 and he acted as 'continuity man' throughout. The evening closed with a splendid supper in the Church Hall.

Michael Bowers

GIFT AID

At this time of year we become aware of the fresh demands of the tax authorities through new coding notices etc. and we are urged to review our use of the facilities afforded for tax efficiency in our finances.

On the other side of the coin there are those who may find that they have dropped below the new taxable thresholds for one reason or another.

I have now taken on the role of Gift Aid secretary from Fred Langley and shall be grateful to hear from any current Gift Aid members if they feel that that may have fallen below the taxable threshold. This is important to avoid possible problems should we claim tax on gifts made by non tax-payers. Conversely, I shall be glad to hear also from anyone who may wish to consider Gift Aiding their contributions to the church whether for flowers, church funds or church projects, all of which are eligible for inclusion in our claims: these make a great difference to our finances.

Many folk also like to review their charitable giving at this time including that for church finances and as always any increase in giving, however modest, is always appreciated by both the church and other charities. It is never an easy equation to work out for many but I know that people at Lidgett Park are always ready and more than willing to consider reviewing their giving prayerfully in the light of their circumstances no matter in which direction that may be.

Garth White

CHURCH LUNCH



Here's a picture of the merry (and well fed) diners at the recent lunch held after Sunday morning service. This is a popular and regular event. So if you fancy convivial company and a tasty meal make sure you put your name down for it.

(Stan isn't actually stealing someone's lunch here. He was one of the friendly and efficient waiters).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

After reading Joyce Wood's letter in the May issue of The Link, in which she seems to identify being a Christian in terms of accepting a series of mid -18th century statements of belief, I feel compelled to offer an alternative view.

Do I believe in the theistic concept of God promulgated by most churches? – No. Do I believe in Jesus Christ as my personal saviour and redeemer? – No. Do I believe in the Trinity as formulated in the liturgies of the church? – No. Do I believe in the virgin birth? – No. Do I believe in the physical resurrection of the body of Jesus? – No. Do I consider myself to be a Christian? – Yes. Since, for many people, my answer to the last question may not seem to follow from my answers to the previous ones, let me very briefly try and explain.

When I study the brief descriptions of the teachings and actions of Jesus as recorded in the three synoptic gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke, I reach the conclusion that Jesus' main emphasis was not on believing, but on doing. Jesus appears to be primarily concerned with the inequalities prevalent in Society where the poor, ill and underprivileged (probably about 95% of the population) were exploited and dominated by the privileged spiritual and political aristocracy (the few). Although prayer and meditation played an important part in his life, and this should not be minimized or forgotten, his main focus was to try and effect a change of heart in those having power over the many. In other words, he challenged them to follow a different path. He had a vision of Society that was more compassionate, more equitable, more loving. My understanding of what Jesus stood for can be summarised in three key words – Love, Compassion and Justice. For me being a Christian means following these principles highlighted by Jesus in his teachings and actions.

At the beginning of her inspirational book “ With or Without God “, the Canadian pastor Rev Gretta Vosper summarises what for her (and also for me) is the essence of Christian living, together with her broad vision for the church of the future. I cannot do better than to conclude with her words – “ *What the world needs in order to survive and thrive is the radical simplicity that lies at the core of Christianity and so many other faiths and systems of thought – an abiding trust in the way of love as expressed in just and compassionate living.*

This core message carries its own authority. It needs no doctrine to validate it. Love is quite demanding enough as a foundation, sufficiently complex and challenging without the requirements of additional beliefs, unbelievable to many. The church that the future needs is one of people gathering to share and recommit themselves to loving relationships with themselves, their families, the wider community and the planet. Such a church, grown out of values that transcend personal security, could play a role in the future that is not only viable, but transformative, and desperately needed.

In order for such a church to arise, the foundation of the church will have to shift from where it has been to some place quite different... It must shift from its time-based biblical and doctrinal base to a broader base founded on

timeless, life-enhancing values such as love, justice, and compassion – a base that must include all peoples of the world... It is a broad vision, but a beautiful one. And maybe, just maybe, the church will again be important in the minds and hearts of an increasing number of people “.

Yours sincerely,
Gerry Leake

PANTO CAPTIONS – LAST VISIT



The “picture with the pudding” last month inspired a host of suggestions. They came flocking in from Lynne Pullein, Audrey Gabbitas and Colin Watson. And here they are –

"And the winner of The Great British Bake Off isunfortunately, not this Contestant!"

“I don’t think it will keep until the Pudding Evening”

“A misprint in Delia’s cookbook perhaps?”

“Greg Wallace can laugh – but Mary?”

“Mary probably not the most serious judge at the Great Lidgett Bake Off”.

And Ron Gelsthorpe has provided an alternative view of the picture we had of Pat in her deshabelle –

Pat is surely saying ; "Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?"

We can be fairly certain that if Romeo saw her in that get up he’d have been on the plane to Italy pretty sharpish.

PRAYER FOR CHANGE



This prayer appears in the magazines of Lidgett Park, St Andrew’s and St Edmund’s.

Father God, you charged us to be stewards of your planet.

In this month with Environment Week we pray those affected by our actions and pray for the will to limit our impact on people around the Earth.

Pray for the people of Kiribati and Bangladesh whose lands are being washed away.

Pray for politicians who decide the fate of millions by their indecision, way beyond their constituency and country boundary.

Pray for critics of climate change, may they see the harm imposed on the most vulnerable communities who live well within our planet's ability to regenerate itself.

Pray for us in our desire to be good stewards that we will look about us more actively to save polar bear and bee populations, puffin foodstocks and beached cetaceans.

No longer can we wait for others.

Lord, enable us to be the change for our own sake and future generations

Amen.

**PLANT AND GIFT FAIR in aid of Childline and the NSPCC
QUALITY PERENNIALS & BEDDING PLANTS AT GOOD PRICES**

Saturday 1st June 2013 10.00am – 1.00pm

St Edmund's Church Hall Lidgett Park Road Roundhay, LS8 1JN

Entrance: Adults £1.00 – Children FREE

GIFTS CARDS BOOKS CAFÉ CAKES NEW 2U TOYS
TOMBOLA BRIC a BRAC RAFFLE

THE FIG, THE VINE AND THE OLIVE: Episode 2 – The Vine

The Vine

In the Palestinian economy in biblical times the fig was an easy tree to grow and a useful one. The vine was more valuable and demanded much harder work, requiring much cultivation if it was to fruit successfully. It can grow in relatively poor, stony soil, but the soil must be tilled, watered and dunged. In March the first buds appear, followed by blossoms in April. The vines are pruned then, and the crop is harvested between July and October. Some of the fruit is dried and some is pressed for the juice that will be fermented into wine.

Isaiah (5:1-7) tells a parable which begins with ‘my beloved’ and his vineyard on a fertile hill and describes all the work he devoted to it, only to find it yielding wild grapes. In his anger and disappointment he breaks it down and destroys it. And ‘the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel... he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed.’ Like Jesus’s later parable of the fig tree, Isaiah’s parable is one of judgment, warning Israel of the consequences of unfruitfulness, and it established for Jews the idea that vines and vineyards are symbols for the Jewish people. (The symbol was not wholly new. Numbers 13 tells of how Moses sent spies into the land of



Canaan to find out its nature before planning an invasion, and they returned carrying an enormous branch of grapes as evidence of the land’s richness.)

Jesus picked up that ancient idea and developed it in two new ways that have become very powerful images for Christians over the centuries. In John 15 he says,

‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ... I am the vine, and you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.’

Think of a great ancient vine, like the enormous one at Hampton Court, planted in 1769 and now the biggest in the world. Its base is 12 feet around, and its longest rod 120 feet. It yields 600 pounds of grapes a year. Every grape, every leaf, every branch derives its sustenance from the one stem and its roots. And you, and I, and all the other Christians in the world are the branches of the one vine who is Christ. The hidden link between us, the secret of our relationship with one another, is our root in Christ. When we think of the Church, we think firstly of the community we know in Lidgett Park, and of our friendships there, but we know that we are linked to others in the Leeds North East Circuit, the Leeds District, within the Methodist Church in Great Britain. And this in turn is just one small part of a vast vine with its bigger Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican branches. Moreover the

Church symbolised by this vine is not just now: it spans the past and the future. When we worship, then, we do so with a sense of our connection through Christ with countless millions of Christians in this world and the unseen world beyond.

This powerful and uplifting sense of being part of something greater, a sense of unity with a larger church, is most readily realised at the Holy Communion service, when we lift up our hearts ‘with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven’, and wine, the fruit of the vine, is offered in worship, blessed, and given to us to symbolise the blood of Christ, the life of Christ, given for us and to us to enrich our lives. This was the second way in which Jesus took up and developed the old Jewish image of the vine and its fruit. At the Last Supper Jesus linked bread and wine with his body and blood, and with the new covenant, leaving to Christians in every generation, including ourselves, symbols of extraordinary richness and power to keep on reminding us of how central he must be in our lives individually and as a community.

‘Apart from me you can do nothing.’ ‘Abide in me.’ If we are to be fruitful people, living useful lives of benefit to God, to other people and to ourselves, it is necessary and important that we do all we can to maintain our community, our fellowship with each other, and our life of worship together, because it is through these that we learn from Christ, follow Christ, grow into Christ and are spiritually nourished by him. How else can we be fruitful? So if the fig is a symbol of the judgement under which we live, the vine takes us beyond that and symbolises the fruitful life in Christ that we share together and the way of salvation.

John Summerwill

ROCO DRAMATIC SOCIETY

MYSTERY AT GREENFINGERS

A Comedy of Detection

by

J B PRIESTLEY

Produced by Catherine Henderson

4, 5, 6 July 2013 at 7.30pm

The Memorial Hall, St Andrew's Roundhay

United Reformed Church

Shaftesbury Avenue, Leeds LS8 1DS

Tickets £5 adult, £3 child

Box office 268 3402 opens 16 June

**To celebrate our 50th anniversary, we present the first play ever
performed by RoCo**

In the closed Greenfingers Palace Hotel part of the staff is enduring a violent snowstorm. They include the chef, the housekeeper, the secretary, the new social hostess, two maids, the assistant manager and the sleek bartender. Into this group comes Robert Crowther, the rather stupid house detective sent to investigate something secret. Then along comes Miss Tracey ...

UCB DAILY BIBLE GUIDE

Irene Rajah asks anyone who would like to receive a FREE copy of each issue of 'The Word for Today' to please call her (**2665687**) or to order directly from UCB.

David L 'Herroux', Managing Director of UCB writes 'Jesus gave His disciples this simple command "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'" We are privileged that God has put UCB in a position where we can change lives, one by one. In 'Loving one another', we can gradually spread God's love throughout our entire nation through publications, UCB Radio, UCB TV and many other powerful ministry tools!'

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Ed,

Re "Own up time" I can understand Helen Mirren's description of herself, however she must have some belief in the teachings of Jesus, to describe herself as a Christian. I suspect there are others who go along with her philosophy but then come the one obstacle that they cannot accept, the Resurrection, because to accept that, one must then own to a belief in God.

Myself had many such doubts in my younger days and often pondered did it all happen as a Fantastic Accident, or was it Created.

At this point I would like to switch to Gillian Clement's interesting article on Evolution and in particular to the question she asks at the end of the third paragraph of her article--- God??.

For me, my belief was reinforced, many years ago, via Jodrell Bank and Sir Bernard Lovell's magnificent book " The Centre of Immensities". In it, like Gillian stated, he tells us that the laws of physics can take us back to the Big Bang, he calls it the Expansion and denoted T as the time of the start of the Expansion. He then goes on to say that science cannot take us any further back because at T minus 1 the universe could have gone down the route of one of many hundreds of combinations of different elements. But ---it didn't, for at T minus 1 the universe started down the only possible combination route, hydrogen / carbon that would allow life, as we understand it, to develop!.

Sir Bernard stops there and as a scientist does not enter into any conjecture why that particular route happened but for me there is only one possible answer to the glaring question and that is given in John's wonderful opening line "In The Beginning Was The Word And The Word Was with God-----"

Best wishes

Ron Gelsthorpe

BELIEF IN GOD by Gillian Clements

A few weeks ago I was discussing the existence or non-existence of God with a few people (mostly non-believers). One of the group told us of a married couple he knew who were both professed atheists. After many years of marriage they discovered that the God each of them didn't believe in was different!

I'm quite sure that my view of God is different from that held by many Christians, even though I believe in Christ. For instance, I don't believe in heaven, hell and judgement day as the God I believe in is not judgemental

but infinitely loving and patient and will never give up on his creation. So if I was asked if I believe in God in the context of heaven, hell etc, I would say not. Do I believe that something is behind the creation of the universe? Yes I do.

Perhaps, when someone says they do not believe in God, we should ask “Which God is it you do not believe in?”

A BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Are you looking for a good book to read? I recently read the book “I Shall Not Hate” by Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish. Izzeldin is a Palestinian doctor and gynaecologist who has dedicated his life to saving the lives of both Palestinians and Israeli people. He has every reason to hate. Three of his daughters were killed when an Israeli bomb demolished his house, shortly after losing his wife to leukaemia. However he refused to hate. He acknowledged that atrocities had occurred on both sides but so many people on both sides were seeking a peaceful way forward. He worked in Israeli hospitals treating patients from both divides, receiving help from Israeli colleagues and forging many friendships. The medical profession in England would be astounded at the treatment and frustration he had to endure just to cross the check points at the West Bank to attend his work at the hospital.

Dr Abuelaish has established a Foundation called ‘Daughters for Life’ to enable Palestinian girls access to a high school and university education and to give them a credible voice.

I feel deeply honoured to have read this book which educated me into the situation occurring in the Gaza Strip and elsewhere. A lesson for Christians on true forgiveness. I conclude with a quote from President Jimmy Carter. “In this book Dr Abuelaish has expressed a remarkable commitment to forgiveness and reconciliation that describes the foundation for the permanent peace in the Holy Land”.

Barbara Holmes

COFFEE MORNING

First Saturday of each month, 10 to 12. If you haven't been yet you are missing a treat. Andy and Gill Cooper will be glad to receive any books

THE METHODIST CHURCH Leeds District

On Sunday, 6th October 2013 the Leeds Methodist District and Methodist Connexion will be celebrating 200 years, to the very day, of the beginnings of Wesleyan Methodist missionary work in the Leeds area which, with other societies, later became the Methodist Missionary Society.

At 2 p.m., Inauguration of a blue plaque near the Leeds Playhouse, by the President-Designate of the Methodist Conference, the Revd. Ruth Gee.

At 3 p.m., a Celebration Service in Leeds Minster, with the address given by the Vice-President-Designate of the Conference, Dr Daleep Mukarji. Taking part will be people from the District, from the Methodist Connexion and visitors from the World Church.

There will also be a book launch of a World Church history written by the Revd. John Pritchard.

Tea, coffee and cakes will be served after the Service.

An exhibition will be held in the Oxford Place Methodist Mission leading up to, and after, this day.

Everyone is very welcome to attend these events.

If you would like to be a steward or to help in any other way, please contact **Mrs Pamela Turner, telephone 0113 232 0465.**

SCRIPTURE AND DOCTRINE by Pam Wilson

I hesitate to make another contribution to *The Link*, since the last time I did so it seemed to cause a minor earthquake in the circuit, but I have to second Gillian Clements' article about interpretation of scripture (and, one might add, traditional church doctrine).

I too was delighted to hear Andrew's Easter sermon taking a brave stance on the fact that some of us find some of it very hard to swallow. Like Gillian I have massive problems with the ancient Jewish ideas of religion - particularly the notion of blood sacrifice - and see no reason why they should still dominate our approach to God today. To put it simply - the God that I think Jesus was talking about understands the fallibility of the humans who evolved from the creation process he (probably) set in motion and would like us to recognise that being nice to one another is a better plan than being nasty. Too naïve? Well it seems to me that underneath the layers of fanaticism, hypocrisy and ritual gobbledygook that has built up over the centuries, this is actually the message that most of the major world religions have been trying to get across since the dawn of time.

When I was about twelve I fell foul of the Junior Missionary collection organiser in the church I attended by refusing to have a collecting box (remember those globes?). I said, perhaps a little too bluntly, that in my opinion it was a waste of time and money trying to convert people in other countries to Christianity because if there was only one God it didn't matter how you chose to worship him. (You can imagine how well that went down with the JMA lady). Deep down, I don't think I've changed my opinion all that much. I do believe in God (well, in something, at any rate, so let's stick with 'God' for the time being) but I cannot accept the idea that Jesus of Nazareth needed to be executed in order for me to succeed to eternal life (whatever that turns out to be) and I'm quite certain that being a good neighbour is more important than reciting psalms or giving up scotch.

As for 'scriptural authority,' well, as I understand it (and I'm sure someone more learned than I will correct me if I'm wrong) the selection of material which was included in 'the Bible' resulted from the deliberations of a misogynistic bunch of fourth century clerics jockeying for position as the Roman empire began to disintegrate. Their main achievement was to split the growing band of 'Christ-followers' into two factions and take each of them further and further from the principles Jesus had set out. So no, on balance, I think I'd rather use the mind I've been given and try to establish for myself what I think it's all about. Perhaps I'm Helen Mirren in reverse? (Wish I had her agent though!)

THIS MONTH'S QUIZ

Each clue gives rise to two words which differ by one letter. The differing letters spell out a slippery customer.

1. The horse-drawn vehicle can easily carry this weight. (4,5)
 2. I ramble with a snipe. (6,5)
 3. The viceroy wore a thong! (6,5)
 4. It is rare. What a fright. (6,5)
 5. The keystone was one of five. (5,4)
 6. The rodents walk in a camp way! (4,5)
 7. Wear down but still smile. (5,4)
 8. Prison steps. (4,5)
-

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT CHAIR

Abiding Presence

The taxi driver was a little confused. He knew where the big church with the banner across it should be along this long road of many churches, but it had somehow disappeared since he last looked for it! We were being driven down Newtonards Rd in Belfast, looking for the East Belfast Mission. When we found it we fully understood the taxi driver's confusion. The multi-million pound newly built EBM does not look like a conventional church building. The new development has created a courtyard space, so that the building is set back a little way from the busy road. In addition to the worship area EBM comprises an employment centre, day centres, college classes, Tearfund offices, café and other facilities. They are all part of the *Skainos* project. The inspiration for the name of the redevelopment comes from a Greek word meaning the tent or dwelling pitched in the midst of the people: it hints at the notion of hospitality, whilst also having an alternative understanding of



human frailty. The *Skainos* project is a partnership of public agencies, private bodies, community groups and church, all harnessing their energies (and funds) for the benefit of the people of East Belfast. It is a place where people can gather, eat meals together, worship, and find help for health, employment, education, childcare, housing, and other

concerns. It is about providing shared space for people from all backgrounds and communities in East Belfast, an area of high unemployment. The members of the worshipping community there are mindful of their historic links back to the earliest Methodist Sunday School started in that community in 1802, and the chapels that have served successive generations. They also recognise that sustaining continuity of presence in a community can require a radical re-think about the form that presence takes - both in buildings and activities. In the worship area the communion table has the appearance of a carpenter's bench, and the lectern resembles an artist's easel: the cross echoes the shape of the flags flying from the city lamp posts, but this symbol of faith and place of prayer has the potential to draw people together rather than cause further divisions. The *Skainos* project is unique to East Belfast, but it can teach us all a great deal about partnership and abiding presence.

Liz Smith Chair of Leeds Methodist District

PROCRASTINATION NOT ALWAYS BAD by Colin Watson

Following the piece “Marriage and Methodists” in last month’s Link the editor implied in his comment that the Methodist Church deliberated at too great a length on issues which came before Conference. Whilst agreeing with Ed that certain issues may have had a resolution after protracted debate and consultation I consider that in this case there should be no rush to give a definitive response to the proposed Bill (on same sex marriage). Being the cynic that I am I would prefer Conference to hold off any decision on this issue until other denominations have ‘tested the water’. I envisage that, notwithstanding any “safeguards” that the Prime Minister can get incorporated into the Bill, that there will be legal challenges whichever way the churches jump.

Better to have a resolution of the issue based on precedent and case law than being the object of that judgement.

This issue has now been given a good airing in The Link and it's time to move on.

ANOTHER LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Ed,

I had to refer to my Oxford English Reference Dictionary when I saw the word "senescence". What a crafty way to say "grow old," I must emulate you! You ask "Is the church relevant today" and Gillian said "she had problems with the old testament" and accepting the authority of scripture.

1) Certainly the Bible based church must be relevant today.

2) The reason Jesus came is so clear in Ephesians saying the function of the Church is world unity through Jesus Christ. The Church being the Body of Christ. God's instrument is Jesus Christ so that through faith man is changed, all men then become new in the life of God revealed in Christ and committed totally to the mercy of God, controlled by love.

I personally love the Old Testament and the Bible stories from childhood about real people such as, David and Goliath, Daniel in the lion's den and the marvellous psalms of David and I wish that I had more knowledge and time to study the vast knowledge and information to understand bygone days and why things happened the way they did.

I feel that we are a privileged people to possess God's word the Bible and that the Old Testament and New Testament are intrinsically linked so that when we read the Bible God's Holy Spirit reveals the truth to our hearts and minds.

As a child I loved this Sunday School song by John Burton, a member of the Baptist Church (1773-1822).

Holy Bible, book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine;
Mine, to tell me whence I came;
Mine, to teach me what I am,

Joyce Wood

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S QUIZ

Each clue leads to one word. Add extra letter(s) to make the name of a garden plant. (Example – Clue: 24 hours (3 + 2) Solution: DAY + IS = DAISY)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Sister-consort of Zeus (4 + 4) | HERA – HEUCHERA |
| 2. Italian sparkling wine (4 + 3) | ASTI – ASTILBE |
| 3. Small metal fastener (3 + 2) | PIN – LUPIN |
| 4. Fish eggs (3 + 1) | ROE – ROSE |
| 5. ...on the cob (4 + 2) | CORN – CORNUS |
| 6. Many headed water monster (5 + 4) | HYDRA – HYDRANGEA |
| 7. Not verse (5 + 3) | PROSE – PRIMROSE |
| 8. French wine (3 + 2) | VIN – VINCA |
| 9. Where to find tents (4 + 5) | CAMP – CAMPANULA |
| 10. Christian festival (6 + 5) | EASTER – COTONEASTER |

EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

There's a shortage of piccies this month, but otherwise it's a pretty eclectic mix with enough variety of viewpoints to support my thesis that the Methodist Church is a very wide church with members and adherents holding views over the whole spectrum of belief.

Last month when I asked about the relevance of the Church today, with an anecdote about watching "Pointless", I got a lot of verbal interest from members of Lidgett. But they invariably wanted to talk about Pointless and not about the relevance of the Church!

We certainly can hope that Howard will soon be back singing as well as ever but I suspect that his serious accident means that it will be some time before we hear him playing the trombone again. A great pity given the high standard our band has been achieving. Anyone who can play an instrument well, I'm sure, be very welcome to join it. Mind you they never ask me to play; maybe there's a belief that Buddy Holly numbers aren't appropriate in worship. But they are a lot better than some of the awful new hymns that we have got in the new hymn book. We had one a couple of weeks ago that was surely worth only "null points".

I'll finish by repeating last month's final words; they have to come true sometime –KEEP SMILING – summer WILL come!