

The Minister Rev Dr. Jane Craske

Editor: Ed Dodman

Tel: 266 2066

Tel: 2619152
ed.dodman@btinternet.com

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

There is one persistent image for me of all that has to be done in the next 5 months. It is....the filing cabinet! Actually, it's two and a half filing cabinets – and what to do with a considerable proportion of the papers in them.

I'm quite reasonable at filing, so that I know where (or roughly where) to find what I stored in case I needed to retrieve it. But I'm not nearly so good at clearing out the files, either regularly or as the end of an appointment draws closer. (There's a persistent rumour among ministers that August is for doing things like that – but it never seems to work out in reality.) John and I are used to moving house, and quite like it in many ways. We've had practice! But it's the practicalities of clearing out that will soon loom large. What should I keep and what must be passed on to other people? In the case of this move, it will be complicated by deciding what has to stay in the manse and what has to be given to other ministers taking over various aspects of my role – Superintendency, or matters at Lidgett. And is now the time to go through old sermons again and clear most of them out?!

One thing's for sure: there will be lots of shredded paper. That's the classic sign for me of de-cluttering.

Lent is a good time to think about whether there are things in our lives, in our homes, in our minds and hearts, that need to be cleared out. There is probably a lot of 'de-cluttering' that we could all do – not just in the loft or the garage. Simplifying our lives often seems attractive, till we start making the difficult decisions as to what has to go. But trying to recognise what's most important and what God is calling us to focus on is a good thing to do during Lent. It involves taking time and space to consider our lives and look again at what drives the daily routine and the decisions we make.

Are there other things to consider: the customs and practices we've hung on to long after they have any usefulness for us? Are there beliefs that don't fit our experiences now, but which we tuck away from closer examination? Are there memories, even grudges held, which we need to let go?

As we move through Lent this year, I invite you to use that image of clearing out, or de-cluttering, in prayer and reflection and see what God may say to you through it.

Yours in Christ,
Jane

WORSHIP IN MARCH

04	8.00	Rev. Andrew Atkins	Holy Communion
	10.30	Rev. David Paton-Williams	Holy Communion
	6.30	Rev. Jane Craske	
11	8.00	Rev. Jane Craske	Holy Communion
	10.30	Dr. Stanley Pearson	
	6.30	Chapel Allerton	United/Circuit Service
18		Mothering Sunday	
	8.00	Rev. Jane Craske	Holy Communion
	10.30	Rev. Andrew Atkins	
	6.30	Rev. John McNeill	Holy Communion
25		Passion Sunday	
	8.00	Rev. George Lovell	Holy Communion
	10.30	Rev. Jane Craske	Parade Service
	6.30	St Andrew's	Ecumenical Service

LADIES GROUP

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

1 st March	Open Evening	“St Cuthbert’s Way”
	“The Pearsons” and	Mrs.Val Faint
15th March	Mr Robert Bolton	Update on Sierra Leone and more about diamonds.
29 th March	Mrs Jenny Stacey	“A Whale of a Tale”

THANK YOU

Many thanks for all the support, cards, and good wishes I received from friends at Lidgett after my recent operation.

John has adapted well to his role of ' carer ' although he is still in training.

Margaret Wells

CHURCH PROJECT

Very many thanks to you all for your generous support over the past few months. So far we have raised over £4,500 for the Sylvia Wright Trust to help provide a new bus for the school for deaf children in Tiruvannamalai (South India).

We have some exciting events planned so put the dates in your diary now.

Quiz Night

The new date is Friday 23 March at 7.00 p.m. in the Church Community Hall. Cost £4, including light refreshments. Unfortunately the original quiz had to be postponed due to the heavy snow. Please support us on this new date; Dave and Margaret Farrar put a lot of work into this quiz and it is always great fun. Get a team together or just turn up on the night.

Project Supper with Sylvia

This is on Saturday 14th March at 7.00 p.m. at Church. Sylvia Wright will be our guest speaker. Come and meet her as she celebrates 30 years in India. This is one of the highlights of the project year and a wonderful opportunity to meet Sylvia.

Jubilee Barbecue

This will be on Sunday 3 June in the Church garden after the morning service. Enjoy a barbecue and garden games. This is our contribution to the Big Lunch Celebration for the Queen's Jubilee.

I am also hoping to organise a series of open gardens over the summer months. You don't have to have a large or spectacular garden just somewhere for people to sit and chat and hopefully enjoy the sunshine. If you can help please contact me.

Barbara Dodman (2619152)

CARING FOR LIFE

Although we are well into our next project, many of us still maintain links with CfL, be it by visiting the Granary Cafe, buying eggs at our Saturday Coffee Mornings or volunteering in one of the projects.

You may be interested to know of a way of helping that does not involve a regular commitment but which is of great value and always appreciated.

You will all have seen – and probably bought – the delicious jams, marmalades, vinegars etc that are on sale in the Farm Shop. Have you ever thought about how all those hundreds of preserves are made – and by whom?

At various times during the year, CfL staff begin to process the fruit etc. that goes into the preserves. For this they need help!

Recently, five of us went to the Farm to help with the making of marmalade – two on one day, three another. We were needed to help scrub, halve and juice hundreds of Seville oranges as the first step towards making the marmalade. None of us had any experience of marmalade making, only I had volunteered in this capacity before. The others had little idea of what to expect, beyond the vagueness of what I had told them.

We were met by Esther, one of the Founders of CfL, whose warm welcome soon dispelled any qualms we may have had. Following her directions, we set off to start processing 30lbs of oranges. This took us just over two hours, but helped by a cup of tea to start and a coffee halfway through, the time went very quickly and our oranges were soon on their way to the jam pans!

The work is done in the residents centre, where groups come in for a coffee break at 11o'clock. This gives you a chance to meet some of the residents and have a chat – if they want to chat. Some prefer to keep to themselves and folk they know. But it is all very informal and the atmosphere is lovely.

You can also choose to volunteer for the whole day, in which case you will be offered lunch alongside the residents and other volunteers.

This type of volunteering does not involve CRB checks or the completion of forms but is very much needed for specific jobs.

I am the first point of contact by CfL when they need these “ ad-hoc “ volunteers. If you would like to know more, or be added to my list of people willing to help, do please get in touch. Thank you.

Margaret Farrar.

Tele : 2931867.

WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY “JESUS DIED FOR MY SINS”?

by Stan Pearson

I know from discussion with Christian friends that the idea that Jesus had to die in order that we might be saved from our sins is one that causes much disquiet. For many who are not Christians the ideas that are expressed in our Communion Service, when we talk about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, are both incomprehensible and to some repellent. It has to be said that over the centuries the Church has also wrestled with this and has tried to express in a variety of ways what it thought happened in the events of the crucifixion.

The conviction of the early Christians was that the death of Jesus, coupled with their resurrection experience of Jesus on Easter day and beyond, was telling them important things about the nature of God and God's relationship with us. In these events they believed was an expression of God's love for us and his forgiveness of our wrongdoing. Paul tries to explain it by using ideas derived from the society of his time based around images of temple sacrifice, ransom of slaves and the Roman law courts all of which have as the central element the idea that a sinless Jesus in his death did and achieved something on our behalf, which we couldn't do for ourselves.

However, a problem that arises is what kind of God it is that would demand such a set of conditions as a means of reconciliation? Why should the suffering of the innocent be necessary to expunge the guilt of the sinner? Where is the balance in this between justice and mercy? As the centuries went by other ideas took shape, such as those involving satisfying God's honour (equally problematical) or Christ as a moral exemplar, or Christ as King victorious over the powers of evil, but they all present difficulties.

Perhaps we need to start by asking what we mean by sin. The Christian view of God is that God is a God of love and God's kingdom is a kingdom of love and justice. Our belief is that the destiny of humanity is that we are called to share in this life of goodness, truth and beauty, which is to share in God's own life. From this perspective, sin is what gets in the way of this; it is the way in which human beings obstruct and oppose the sharing in God's life of love and it is manifest in a breakdown in the relationships between people, between people and the rest of creation and between people and God. The results are fear and violence, distorted knowledge and misunderstanding. When Paul talks about the “Power of Sin” it is, I think, recognising the fact that much of this is beyond our control.

We are the way we are because we are shaped by the circumstances into which we are born. Our ability to do the right thing is often constrained by the world we live in and the institutions that govern our lives. This is not something we can remedy on our own account and hence the idea that it requires God's initiative.

The key question is how the life, death and resurrection of Jesus overcomes all this and enables us to experience the full life that we believe God intends us to have.

In an earlier article I referred to Tillich's idea that Jesus is essential or perfect man. That is, he represents what God intends human beings to be, which, going back to the ideas of Genesis 1:26, is that they should be the image of God. In the relationship of mutual love that existed between Jesus and God, Jesus lived a life that showed the world the love and justice of God and what this meant for human conduct. However, in a world of selfishness and greed such a life aroused opposition and hatred and the result was the execution of Jesus on the cross. He was deemed to be a threat to the established order and he reaped the consequences of that.

By choosing to live the life he did, Jesus chose the way of the cross. Here, I think we can get some help from the ideas of Jurgen Moltmann who, in his book, *The Crucified God*, introduces the thought that while we can see that in the crucifixion Jesus clearly suffered, so also did God the Father for whom allowing Jesus the freedom to chose his destiny in this way brought with it the suffering of grief. In this way, Moltmann argues, God enters into the suffering not only of Christ but also into that of the whole of humanity (and indeed creation) as it reaps the consequences of its choices. Certainly, this is a view of things that has been significant for those Christians trying to come to terms with exploitation, discrimination and suffering in various parts of the world, for example, Latin America, but I think it is helpful for all of us as we try and deal with things in our own lives.

On this view, the forgiveness of God is not something that only became possible because of the cross; rather the cross highlighted the love and forgiveness of God that was already in place and which was made manifest in the life and death of Jesus.

Stan Pearson

Churches Together in Roundhay
Following Christ on the Way:
Praying Together in Lent

Thursday March 1st at 7.30 p.m.

Compline with reflection at St Edmund's

Thursday March 8th at 7 p.m.

'Oasis' – music, words and silence at Lidgett Park
Methodist Church

Thursday March 15th at 7.30 p.m.

Reflective time at Friends' Meeting House

Thursday March 22nd at 7.30 p.m.

Meditation talk at Immaculate Heart of Mary

Tuesday March 27th at 7.30 p.m.

Bible Study at St Andrew's

and in Holy Week:

Tuesday 3rd April at 7 p.m.

'Bearing Witness': Passion Play at St Andrew's

Thursday 5th April at 7.30 p.m.

Holy Communion for Maundy at Lidgett Park
Methodist Church

Friday 6th April at 12 noon

Walk of Witness from Friends' Meeting House

on Street Lane to Roundhay Park

and on Easter Morning Sunday 8th April at 6 a.m.

Sunrise Service in Roundhay Park

IMPOSSIBLE GOD: THE PASSION PLAY

The death and resurrection of Jesus as experienced by those who were there. *Impossible God* will be performed on

19th May 2012, 7.00 pm

Leeds Methodist Mission

Oxford Place Methodist Church

Oxford Place, Leeds, LS1 3AX

Impossible God is a one-man passion play written by Frank Topping and performed by Mark Topping.

Impossible God recreates the world of those who witnessed the passion. Palestine AD32 is brought to life as numerous characters relive their experience of the events.

Impossible God is a powerful exploration of the historical events at the heart of the Christian faith. This inspiring one-man play challenges us to look again at Jesus of Nazareth and consider the meaning of his life, death and resurrection.

For more information see <http://www.impossiblegod.co.uk/> or ring 0113 242 5254

CONCERT FOR ST GEMMA'S

A concert of contemporary and traditional music will be performed by local choirs in aid of St Gemma's Hospice.

St Edmund's Church on Friday March 9th at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets £5.00 including a drink.

COFFEE MORNING

Our coffee mornings on the first Saturday of each month are very popular. If you have any surplus books or jigsaws to donate please bring them with you next time you come.



presents

RolePlay
by Alan Ayckbourn

Produced by Pauline Pitman

22, 23, 24 March 2012

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

from 4 March

*Please note: this is an adult comedy and would not
be of interest to young children*

PROPOSAL FOR A HOUSE GROUP

I was wondering if people would be interested in starting another house group, which I would be prepared to lead.

There are a number of things about house groups that I think are important to recognise. First, I believe that they differ in their aims and character according to the needs of those attending, so there is no need for existing groups to feel threatened if another starts. Some groups concentrate on meditation and prayer, some on sharing spiritual experiences, some on wrestling with areas of faith, some on studying the Bible. Some groups have all these elements. Secondly, they have an optimum size, which allows for variety of input but also ensures that everybody feels they have a contribution to make. Thirdly, they should be “organic” in the sense that they have a natural life span. They don’t need to go on indefinitely, and they should evolve in response to people’s needs.

At Lidgett, we currently have a group that meets on Thursday evenings for meditation and worship in the form of Oasis and we have a group with members from several churches (which I attend) that meets on alternate Monday evenings to discuss areas of belief. We also have a group meeting on alternate Tuesday afternoons which follows a variety of themes and a long-standing group that meets on Monday afternoons. If I have overlooked other active groups then please accept my apologies.

I would like to start a group concentrating on Bible study (both Old and New Testaments) with the aim of seeing how our understanding of the Bible relates to our beliefs and our daily lives. The proposal is to run the group in conjunction with Shadwell Methodist Church as they currently do not have an active group. Barbara and Ken Massey have kindly offered the use of their house. If the numbers are more than we can accommodate there, then we have permission to use the premises at Shadwell Methodist Church. I think we should aim for an evening house group, since that would allow working people to attend if they wish (and it would probably be easier for me), but a daytime group would be possible if that is where there is a need.

I should be grateful if people could let me know if they would be interested.

Stan Pearson.

s.b.pearson@doctors.org.uk

LIDGETT LADIES AT CARING FOR LIFE



You heard earlier from Margaret Farrar about the great marmalade making at Caring for Life. Here is the photo of that event.

During my time as editor of The Link we have published many wonderful photos – but this has to be my favourite. Just looking at it makes me smile. Anne Millett who sent it in says I will “no doubt have a suitable comment to make”. But this time I am lost for words, the picture is perfect on its own. (But if you feel the need to send in captions for it feel free to do so!)

THE SUN IS SHINING

No prayer for change this month. So I've found a prayer of thanksgiving. As I edit this edition it's miserable and snowy. I've put this in hoping that by the time you read it the sun will be shining!

The sun is shining ...thank you Lord. I mean it is shining: the sky and everything is warm and smiling.

But not only that ... my heart is smiling. I know that I am loved ...and that I love too.

Thank you, Lord, the sun is shining.

Michael Hollings and Etta Gullick

CHRISTIANITY AND CAPITALISM by Colin Watson

I have to admit that I have come up with this title, not Colin. But I hope that it, and Colin's musings, will provoke interest and discussion.

A few thoughts on the Occupy London camp and its very specific location in front of St Paul's Cathedral (bandwagon jumping at Wakefield!). The locations of course were expertly chosen to ensure both maximum publicity and a soft touch by the more aggressive radical and "anti-everything that does not suit them brigade" in their actions.

The Advent period was an added bonus to the group as their spokespersons attempted to connect "no room at the inn" with homelessness so augmenting the already used Bible stories of "throwing out merchants and money changers from the temple" (all 4 Gospels) and the "rich young man" (Matthew, Mark and Luke) with their attack on capitalism.

Each of these three well known passages from the life of Jesus, I would suggest, do little for the Occupy London cause as they can be easily dismissed.

1) Jesus was never homeless (except maybe during the dubious flight into Egypt). Late getting proper inn accommodation maybe but home, and Joseph's business, was in Nazareth.

2) Jesus was not against the activities of the sellers and money changers – just extremely unhappy that it was happening inside the temple.

3) The law abiding rich young man was not admonished or criticised for being wealthy; the riches only became a problem for entry into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Occupy London protesters were very selective, as you would expect them to be, in drawing a modicum of their argument from Bible stories. If they had continued further, to Matthew 25, they would have read of a master who was intent on increasing his wealth through the efforts of others. Servants were rewarded in proportion to their success (early age bonuses and knighthoods perhaps?). The servant who did not even have the sense to put his money into the bank to earn interest (can you still remember those days?) was not very well treated. Of course this Parable may be open to other interpretations but I consider it strongly money orientated. As with most Parables what can be inferred, or is not recorded, can be quite interesting. A couple of points to ponder.

i) The good and faithful servants double their money – at who's expense? The master does not appear bothered so long as they have acquired an acceptable sum (target?).

ii) What would the master's reaction have been if the servant with one talent (1000 silver coins in the Good News Bible) have tried to the

utmost of his ability and lost his stake – he could have come up against some other of the master’s good servants in his dealings? Any room for honest failure?

In Luke’s account of an equivalent story (Chapter 19, verses 11-27) it is not clear whether the third servant comes to a more violent end!

I expect to be “put right” on my thoughts on the Parable of the Talents in later issues of The Link and probably get disagreement/comment on my views of the attempt by the Occupy London protesters to embroil Church authorities in their anti-capitalist campaign through spurious and very tenuous biblical connections.

Colin Watson

A New Extend Exercise Class

On Tuesdays

At Lidgett Park Methodist church

1.15—2.45

Exercise to music for the over 60’s

Mostly Seated exercise with a little standing

£2.50 including refreshments.

Increases your mobility and independence improves your strength, co-ordination and balance.

Ring 2165562 for more details.

YORKSHIRE QUIZ

Gillian has excelled herself this month. As well as our normal quiz she has produced a most ingenious one about somewhere dear to all our hearts – the centre of the universe, Yorkshire. So put your thinking caps on and have a crack at this.

Ed's difficulty rating: Moderate

Each clue gives rise to two words. The letters of these words can be rearranged to form a Yorkshire place name. (eg Hit the pig meat (3,3) = LAM, HAM = MALHAM). The first letters of the place names, read in the same order as the clues, give another Yorkshire place name.

1. I desire much. (4, 3)
2. The entry device is unwell? (3, 3)
3. A Turkish governor is hiding in the heather. (3, 4)
4. A monster lurks there. Put a cover over it. (4, 3)
5. A colourful musical note. (4, 1)
6. Yes, yes. (3, 3)

THIS MONTH'S QUIZ

Each clue gives two answers which vary by one letter. Rearrange the ten differing letters produced by the five clues to produce two five-letter words of objects found in church.

Ed's difficulty rating for this quiz is "Moderate"

1. Thank you officer. (6)
2. Hit the rhythm. (4)
3. Worship the stern. (6)
4. Do the pie. (5)
5. Cut the hole. (4)

February's Solution

1. This ass is wild! (6) ONAGER - ORANGE
2. The German is a definite article. (3) DER - RED
3. This classical guitarist could go well with chips. (5) BREAM - AMBER
4. A kind of film. (5) GENRE - GREEN
5. Inter in Greater Manchester. (4) BURY - RUBY
6. One of many in a hill. (3) ANT - TAN
7. _____er by the dozen. (5) CHEAP - PEACH
8. Bundles of hay. (5) BALES - SABLE

9. Few people can do this in 4 minutes. (4) MILE - LIME

10. One yellow fruit gives another yellow fruit. (5) MELON - LEMON

TROLL GRASP

TOWARDS THE GENERAL CHURCH MEETING

On April 22nd, there will be a shortened morning service at Lidgett, followed by the General Church Meeting which we usually hold at that time of year. It is a meeting to which everyone is invited, so that we might confer together about the life of the church.

We do two things that at that meeting which need to be thought about beforehand. One task which all Methodist churches (well – all churches with a membership of 50 or more!) do at that meeting is to appoint representatives of the congregation to the Church Council.

The Church Council is made up of three groups of people:

- those who are on Church Council by virtue of their office (ministers, church stewards, treasurer, secretary);
- those whom the Church Council has decided should be on to represent various areas of church life (from the various committees in Lidgett's case);
- additional people (up to 15) appointed by the General Church Meeting. Anyone who is a member of the church can be appointed and they can stand for that role for six consecutive years, if they choose to do so. This group of people can include those whose experience it would be good to retain on Church Council (e.g. retiring church stewards), or those who are fairly new in church membership and could contribute to decision-making in the church even as they find out what goes on. There are currently 9 people appointed by last year's Church Meeting who could stand again if they chose; but also space for others.

The members of Church Council have legal responsibility for managing the affairs of the church and making decisions on behalf of the whole congregation. Because Lidgett is a registered charity, all names of Church Council members have to be registered with the Charity Commission, but that is only a public recognition of what is true for all Methodist churches, even if they are not large enough to be separately registered charities.

If you want to be considered as a member of Church Council in that third group of people who make up the Council, look out for the list which will

appear on a notice-board in the foyer or lounge nearer the time. Those who are on Church Council at the moment and are eligible to be re-appointed (and want to be) will also need to put their names on that list. If there are more than 15 names on the list, there will need to be an election – possibly for the first time in living memory??

The second thing that happens at the General Church Meeting at Lidgett and needs some thought beforehand is the choice of a church project for the following year. You know that we are currently supporting the Sylvia Wright Trust's work with deaf children in India. Perhaps a Leeds-based charity, or a charity facing difficulties because of spending cuts, would be a good focus for concern, action and fund-raising in the year from September 2012? As usual, any suggestions need to be accompanied, in time, by a person or group of people willing to head up the efforts.

Please pray and talk about these two aspects of the General Church Meeting. In the case of a possible church project, it would be good for me or the church stewards to know if there are ideas emerging – before the meeting!

Many thanks,

Jane

REDEMPTION

Last month's Prayer for Change quoted this poem so I thought you might like to read the whole thing.

Having been tenant long to a rich Lord,
Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,
And make a suit unto him, to afford
A new small-rented lease, and cancel th'old.

In heaven at his manor I him sought;
They told me there, that he was lately gone
About some land, which he had dearly bought
Long since on earth, to take possession.

I straight return'd and, knowing his great birth,
Sought him accordingly in great resorts;
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts;
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth

Of thieves and murderers -there I him espied,
Who straight, 'Your suit is granted', said, and died.

George Herbert 1593 -1633

THE WASHING OF THE FEET

By Ghislaine Howard

We have finished with a spare page in this edition. I didn't think you'd want a page of ramblings from me so here is a reproduction of a painting from the Methodist Art Collection. It's worth going online to look at it in colour it's all in muted greens and blues apart from the flesh tones. Rather reminiscent of a Cezanne.



The accompanying commentary says

The importance of the event is conveyed by the classical and monumental style which echoes earlier interpretations of the theme. The dress is simple and workman-like; these two figure figures could be from any age and any country.

The simple, everyday of washing a guest's feet before offering hospitality becomes through the words and actions of Jesus a moment pregnant with significance.

HERE COMES THE SUN

Next edition will be April's and we hope that by then the heading will be accurate. I won't insult you by asking who wrote it – but is it his best ever? I reckon so. Take care of yourselves and have a good month.