

Dear Friends

THE NATURAL HARVEST - Last month we celebrated Harvest, which is always a marvellous opportunity to remember the basic truth that all that we have comes from God. God provides for our physical needs through the produce of the natural world and we should be amazed at the regular cycle of the seasons, on which we are so dependent for our food. Just as Americans celebrate an annual “Independence Day”, Harvest for all Christians is truly “Dependence Day”. And it is a truth that we need to keep before us the rest of the year as well.

THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST - I find it intriguing that the Bible has so much to say about “harvest”, particularly the way the harvest theme is applied to the Christian life. For example, Paul writes, **“Do not be deceived. God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap”** (Gal.6.7). This statement makes perfect sense as we look around us at a world that reaps a “harvest” of war, crime, greed, and much else. We thank God for his grace to a fallen world, in that there is still much that is beautiful, lovely and decent. We thank him too for his grace shown to us in sending his Son to be our Saviour; for the offer of forgiveness of sins to all who trust the Lord Jesus; for the gift of his Spirit, who produces in Christian believers the “fruit” of love, joy, peace, patience, holiness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal.5.22-23).

THE FUTURE HARVEST - Many of Jesus’ parables remind us of the fact that one day the “harvest” of judgment will come, when God will separate the wheat from the weeds (e.g. Mt.13.24-30). Which are we? Those who trust in Jesus now have nothing to fear on that future day. Just as, in the first few weeks of September, we were looking forward to a Harvest Thanksgiving at St James’ (and next year will do the same), may we also look forward with joy and confidence to that future harvest.

**“Even so, Lord, quickly come –
bring your final harvest home!
Gather all your people in
free from sorrow, free from sin.”**

With warm Christian greetings,

Yours,

Robert Bashford

FROM THE CHURCH REGISTERS

We welcome into the church family:

BAPTISMS: 19th July Joshua James Tiley
 “ Isabelle Morgan Tiley
 20th September Vincent Elwood David Donnelly

WEDDINGS: 25th July Louise Owen and Nicholas
 Keenleyside
 31st July Emily Syred and Ryan Anderson
 8th August Kim Carberry and Riki Cuckney
 “ Claire Pears and Ryan Sackett
 22nd August Natalie Davies and Simon Williams
 19th September Julie Kelly and Stephen Thompson

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the relatives and friends of those committed to God’s care:

FUNERALS: 17th July Don Newton, aged 78 years
 7th August Hazel Carless, aged 95 years

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER SERMON CDs

All CDs of the sermons preached on Sunday mornings and evenings in August and September 2009 are available on request from Elizabeth and Nigel Hadley (Tel: 831067) as usual. If you have requested a CD please collect from the back of Church the following Sunday. CDs £1 each.

SERMONS IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2009

Sunday 4th Oct. 8.00am “Jesus calms a storm” (Mt.8.23-27)
 10.30am “What’s in a name?” (Ex.20.7)
 6.30pm “Hezekiah, pt.1 – a reformer” (2 Chron.29-30)

Sunday 11th Oct. 8.00am “Jesus heals two demon-possessed men”
 (Mt.8.28-34)
 10.30am “The indispensable day” (Ex.20.8-11)
 6.30pm “Hezekiah, pt.2 – a man of faith”
 (2 Chron.31-32)

Sunday 18 th Oct.	8.00am	“Jesus heals a paralysed man” (Mt.9.1-8)
	10.30am	“Focus on the family” (Ex.20.12) (FAMILY SERVICE)
	6.30pm	“Manasseh – evil, but penitent” (2 Chron.33)
Sunday 25 th Oct.	8.00am	To be announced
	10.30am	“What price life?” (Ex.20.13)
	6.30pm	“Josiah – another man of faith” (2 Chron.34)
Sunday 1 st Nov.	8.00am	“Jesus calls Matthew” (Mt.9.9-13)
	10.30am	“Right with God” (Rom.4)
	6.30pm	“Into captivity” (2 Chron.36)
Sunday 8 th Nov.	8.00am	“A question about fasting” (Mt.9.14-17)
	10.30am	“Fight the good fight” (REMEMBRANCE FAMILY SERVICE)
	6.30pm	BEREAVEMENT SERVICE
Sunday 15 th Nov.	8.00am	“A girl restored to life and a woman healed” (Mt.9.18-24)
	10.30am	“The sleeping giant” (Ex.20.14)
	6.30pm	“The Light of the world” (Jn.8.12-20)
Sunday 22 nd Nov.	8.00am	“Jesus heals two blind men and a man unable to speak” (Mt.9.27-34)
	10.30am	“Hands off!” (Ex.20.15)
	6.30pm	“The Judge” (Jn.8.21-30)
Sunday 29 th Nov.	8.00am	“The need for workers for a plentiful harvest” (Mt.9.35 – 10.4)
	10.30am	“Straight talking” (Ex.20.16)
	6.30pm	“The Liberator” (Jn.8.31-38)

THANK YOU

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers and good wishes during my incapacity with severe back trouble. Thank you for the flowers, cards, telephone calls and visits. As you will know, I ended up in hospital having an operation on my back and I thank the Lord that it was a success. I am up and about now and hoping to be soon fully recovered and back to normal. **Anne Clark**

ANY QUESTIONS?

“What place, if any, do the books of the Apocrypha have within the canon of the Old Testament?”

This is really a follow-on from the “Any Questions?” item last time, when it was explained that the books, both of the Old and New Testament, made their way into the body of accepted Scripture – largely on the basis of the impact they made upon believers across the ages, and because of their consistent testimony to Jesus Christ, God’s final “Word” to the human race.

But what of the *Apocrypha*? The *Apocrypha* (the word means literally “hidden things”) is a collection of Jewish books that, over the centuries, has not gained general recognition as being on a level with the books of either the Old or New Testaments. It includes such books as *The Wisdom of Solomon*, *Ecclesiasticus*, *3 Esdras*, *Baruch* and *1 and 2 Maccabees*.

While the Roman Catholic Church did come to consider certain apocryphal books as being part of inspired Scripture, it only finally came to this tendentious and somewhat authoritarian ruling as late as 1546.

Thus, across the vast bulk of Judaeo-Christian history, the apocryphal books have stayed outside the canon of Scripture. This is not to decry their many worthy utterances. Nevertheless, at the close of the first century AD the Jewish synod of Jamnia took place. Then it was clearly recognised that – while the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon and Esther rightly remained as accepted Scripture – there were others that were definitely on a lower level and should not be classed with the canonical books.

The Christian church has taken the same view. Although Jerome’s great *Vulgate* translation of the Bible (referred to in the “Any Questions?” article for June-July this year) included the Apocrypha, Jerome classed these documents in a separate category of their own (*libri ecclesiastici*). To his mind they were useful for edification, but not for the definitive and inspired truth of God. They were different from what he called the *libri canonici* – the canonical books.

A final word concerns the books of what is generally called “The Apocryphal New Testament”. These take the form of a random assortment

of books that, through imaginary reconstruction, attempted for the most part to fill in the gaps – for example in Jesus’ infancy years, or in the Pilate story. “Gospels” are attributed to Peter, Thomas, Paul and Andrew. It is an indication of the high esteem in which Christ’s apostles were held, that any number of fanciful documents were attributed to them.

There is a principle to learn from these apocryphal documents, many of which were characterised by various heretical overtones. As Tertullian, at the turn of the second century, put it, **Truth precedes forgery.**

From an article by Richard Bewes

FRIENDS OF KENT CHURCHES SPONSORED WALK AND RIDE

Thank you to all who supported St James’ Church for this event either by participating or sponsoring some of our members.

Special thanks to Mercia Beach, Don and Yvonne Horn, Barbara Bennett, Beryl Bing and Ian Cayley for sitting in the church and welcoming a total of 28 visitors.

Many thanks to those who braved the wind and cycled – Jonathan, Helen, Ella and Angus Floyd; Vic, Jacob, Sarah and Abigail Spanner and Peter and Sarah Jaquiss. I’m sure readers will look forward to reading about your adventures in the next magazine.

José Gibbs

DEADLINE DATE: Please may all articles for the December/January magazine be with the Editor by Sunday 22nd November 2009. Thank you.

JESUS SAID: ‘Again the High Priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” “I am,” said Jesus. “and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”’ (**Mark 14:61-62**)

UPDATE ON TEARFUND

Tearfund takes a comprehensive approach to releasing people from poverty and working for truly sustainable change. We work to inspire the church to transform communities. We mobilise the local church to work with poor communities to bring material and spiritual transformation; to speak out in advocacy, and to prepare and respond to disasters. Tearfund's current campaign is called 'Make Life Flow' and it aims to help the 2.5 billion people who have no access to basic sanitation and the 900 million who lack access to clean water. The campaign is focussing on Ethiopia working through the Ethiopian Full Gospel Believers Church and the Kale Heywet Church. The actor Tim Vine visited Ethiopia and has seen first-hand how having access to basic sanitation and clean water is transforming lives. **Thank God for Toilets!** Proverbs 25:25 says: *Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.*

The recommended prayer points are; for governments and world leaders to put the needs of the poor, who need fresh water and good toilets are the top of their agenda and ask God to stir the world to tackle this problem. Pray for communities who don't have access to toilets or clean water and pray for Tearfund partners and the local church with the aim of educating 6 million people through local church programmes to have hygiene education and 3 million people to have improved access to a toilet and safe water by 2015. Further information on the work of Tearfund can be found on the website: www.tearfund.org

A note for your diary: Tuesday 3rd November, 10am to 12noon, a Christmas Tearcraft sale in the Church Centre. Come and enjoy a coffee and choose your Christmas cards and gifts.

Ruth Flanders
Tearfund Representative

LOVE-IN-A-BOX 2009– Mustard Seed Relief Mission, Charity No: 1129396

Well, it will soon be Christmas and even though the children in the Ukraine celebrate Christmas on 6th January, we need to start our

boxes. So if you would like to take part, either on your own or with friends, please make up a shoebox with gifts as listed below:

Boy 2-5 yrs – toy cars, ball, jigsaw (not small pieces), picture book, chocolate or soft sweets, thick wax crayons/pencils, drawing paper, soft toy, soap, hairbrush/comb, flannel, toothbrush/paste, hat and gloves. **Girl 2-5 yrs** - toy dolly and as above.

Girl 6-11 yrs – toy dolly, skipping rope, jewellery, ball, playing cards, sweets, book, felt tip pens, pencils, pencil case, paper, soft toy, hat scarf, gloves, flannel, toothbrush/paste, soap. **Boy 6-11 yrs** – toy car, yo-yo, ball and as above.

Boy 12-15 yrs – marbles, travel games (draughts, ludo etc.) juggling balls, baseball cap, playing cards, geometry set, note book, gloves, scarf, pens, pencils, soft toy, sweets, soap, flannel, toothbrush/paste. **Girl 12-15 yrs** – hair accessories, jewellery, new make-up, perfume sticks, talc, deodorant, dolly, skipping rope and as above.

This year the cost of sending a box has gone up to £2.50 per box. Please ask for a label and envelope from Debbie, Emily or Marion.

Marion Myers

SATURDAY SHOP

The Saturday Shop takings for August amounted to £273.81 and for September £195.02.

The changes at Saturday Shop have gone quite successfully. Many thanks to those who help, those who come to buy and the all important ones who give so generously the items that we are able to sell.

After our summer sales of surplus stock we can now move in the back hall and ensure that the remaining stock can be brought out and displayed to its advantage.

In October, we will be beginning to sell our Christmas stock in a special Christmas room, and this will be continued in November as well as at the Christmas special the first week in December. So come early and buy for Christmas.

José Gibbs, who has worked on the card stall for some time has had to give up because of other commitments. If anyone would like to help Miriam on this stall please see Miriam or anyone else who helps at Saturday Shop for more details.

BOOK REVIEW

“Where is God in a messed up world?” by Roger Carswell

If God exists, and really is a God of love, then why doesn't he stop the suffering and problems in our world?

The subject of suffering – and, more specifically, why God doesn't stop wars, pain, death, tragedy – is without doubt the issue many people struggle with when it comes to Christianity.

Roger Carswell has spent much of his life sharing with others the truth about Jesus Christ, much of that time working amongst University students, and also in India and Nicaragua. His own experiences and other stories shared in this book make this a compassionate look at one of the toughest questions about the Christian faith.

The book is divided into 3 sections:-

- Searching for God in a messed up world.
- Finding God in a messed up world.
- Living with God in a messed up world.

You may be someone struggling with this question, or trying to find the right words to help someone else. You may be sceptical about God. You may think Christians are deluded. You may be carrying deep hurt and raw pain.

I will happily lend you this book. I can warmly recommend it. You too will want to pass it on to someone else!

Barbara Bashford

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
The Inquisitive Mind of a Child

Why are they selling poppies, mummy?
Selling poppies in town today

The poppies, child are flowers of love
For the men who marched away

But, why have they chosen poppies, mummy?
Why not a beautiful rose?

Because, my child, men fought and died
In the fields where the poppies grow

But why are poppies so red, mummy?
Why are poppies so red?

Red is the colour of blood, my child
The blood our soldiers shed

The heart of the poppy is black, mummy
Why does it have to be black?

Black my child, is the symbol of grief
For the men who never come back

But, why mummy, are you crying so?
Your tears are giving you pain

My tears are my fears to you my child

For the world is - Forgetting Again

From the Royal British Legion

Keswick Convention 2009

You may have seen the pictures of a swan swimming past a partly submerged tent as the lake flooded its banks at the nearby Keswick Rugby Club. This is the story of 5 intrepid people who camped and lived to tell the tale. Keswick coincided with the wettest three weeks, for the past fifty years, at the end of July beginning of August. But did this dampen our enthusiasm, well maybe a bit when you realised that the wet mac you took off the night before was still damp in the morning. But listen to Josh and Luke and it was the biggest adventure ever, endless puddles to jump in, mud to play in, friends to play with in the mud. The weather did improve towards the end of the week and we did manage a few picnic lunches down by the lake feeding the ducks. Perhaps I should add that we did stay on a campsite [farmer's field] operated by Action Partners just for the convention which had proper toilets, although at the top end of the field, hot showers and all meals provided, no cooking over a gas stove in the wet for us.

Apart from the weather, the ministry was good. We enjoyed Vaughan Roberts from St Ebbs, Oxford, doing the Bible Readings from Proverbs, as well as a variety of speakers in the evening tackling some of the people of faith in Hebrews 11 and 12. During the morning meetings the boys enjoyed their own clubs, Luke was a rocket and Josh a planet and they too tackled the characters mentioned in Hebrews 11 and 12. Over the three weeks there were events held for all ages from the nursery for the under 3s to late night events for the teenagers, events for the twenties, fellowship afternoons for signers, meetings just for adults with learning difficulties and 4 different seminars each weekday on issues that affect us. One of the joys of the Keswick convention is that you just go to what you want and several different things are on at different times of the day. We went to one, a production by Saltmine, again some of the heroes from the Bible one afternoon. The boys were worried about whether or not they would actually see real lions in Daniel and the lions den - no just someone with a big roar of a voice. We could have gone to a couple of music concerts or the book café, but obstacle golf, a trip on the launch around the lake, a walk to see the hills, all intervened.

If this has wetted your appetite, the convention next year will be held from 17th July to 6th August with Don Carson, Paul Mallard and Alistair Begg doing the Bible Reading. The convention's theme is 'Christ-centred renewal'.

If you would like to borrow the cds of the Bible Readings by Vaughan Roberts please see me.

Marion Clarke
Mike, Debby, Josh & Luke Hulmes

JESUS - THE GREAT 'I AM' - Jesus said 'I am the Way' (John 14:1-14)

A lesson learned

It was such a relief when our grandson eventually decided what he wanted to do with his life. With school and exams – not to mention his 18th birthday behind him – it was time to face the world. But to do what? Then the penny dropped. A light shone! Eventually, a life-changing opportunity presented itself, and an interview was arranged in the county town some 30 miles away.

The journey was fairly straight forward, but it was essential that he pick up the A28. Some hours *after the interview should have taken place* his mum received a call to explain that he was hopelessly lost – and was still 20 miles adrift from his destination. The explanation was simple. He had taken the A20 route instead of the A28 – and it made a world of difference! Only *one* digit (an 0 instead of an 8) but he missed his destination by a mile – well 20 actually!

The lesson was a tough one, and not likely to be quickly forgotten – that **not all roads lead to the destination we hope for, and only the right route will take us to the right destination!**

This is a lesson worth remembering in another, even more important, aspect of life.

False claims

It's just like that with our search for a personal, rock-solid, certainty that our ultimate destination is *heaven*, not hell. The world is crowded with religions

offering insights and conditions on which we may hope to reach an eternal paradise of one sort or another.

Only one Way

No wonder so many people are confused. Jesus' claim to be the *one* and *only* **Way to God** came at a crucial time in his disciples' experience. Three years earlier he had turned their lives upside down when he called them by name and told them to leave what they were doing and follow him. Fishermen, tax collectors, political extremists, they experienced an irresistible magnetism they had never experienced before, even in a society which had long been in the grip of authority, both religious and military. Jesus set them free to *follow* him.

A time to trust

For three years they had travelled with him, sat at his feet and were taught by him, they were eye-witnesses to the most amazing miracles – even the raising of the dead. *Faith* was always at the heart of such amazing things.

Now it was time for the disciples to put *their* faith into practice.

At the least expected moment Jesus dropped a *bombshell* – they could hardly believe their ears. He told them that he was going to *leave* them – and they were not able to follow him where he was going! The news left them anxious and troubled- just like waves thrashing around in a fierce storm. Jesus said to them, '*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me ...*'

The Way ahead

For Jesus, the path ahead led to death on the cross, and only he could travel that road. But by his death he would open a door that had been closed since sin became a reality in human experience. This door led into God's holy presence and glorious eternal home. Later, he promised, he would return and take his disciples to be with him forever.

No-one else could ever make such a claim. Only **Jesus** lived the innocent life, acceptable to a holy God. Only **Jesus** could offer such a sacrifice, acceptable to a righteous God.

As the **Way to God**, we can trust Jesus to bring us into God's presence.
As the **Truth of God**, we can believe Jesus and trust his promises alone.

As the **Life of God**, Jesus is able to give eternal life to all who believe in him.

The one and only door into God's presence is wide open, inviting, welcoming to all who put their faith in Jesus.

Michael Toogood

Lord,
help us to
know thee
that we may truly
Love thee,
so to love Thee, that we may fully
Serve Thee,
whom to serve is
Perfect freedom;
through
Jesus Christ
Our Lord.
Amen
St Augustine.

Submitted by Thelma Franks

ALL WE WANT IS PEACE

Lord, please help us
Down here on this earth
Stand up and make a stance
Most of us need a second chance
Our way of finding justice
Doesn't work at all
The earth that you created
Is starting to crumble and fall
They shoot and they kill
Then they get a wicked thrill
Happy to see the people lay and die
The thought must go through their minds

WHY, WHY, WHY

We were not put here on earth
To do this to other people
All we want to do
Is live in peace and harmony
The rat bags of this world
They are cruel and not fair
Some people say we don't care
The best thing for this is prayer

By Robert Bradley

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

**“When you go home,
tell them of us and say
For your tomorrow
we gave our today.”**

This is the inscription on the memorial at the War Graves Cemetery at Thanbyuzayat in Burma.

We remember members of the British Armed Forces and Merchant Navy who have served and died in the following conflicts. They will not be forgotten.

1914-1918 World War I
1939-1945 World War II
1945-1949 India, Palestine, Malaysia
1950-1959 Korea, Suez Canal Zone, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden/Radfan, Malaya
1960-1969 Borneo, Northern Ireland, Oman/Dhofar, Aden/Radfan
1970-1979 Northern Ireland, Oman/Dhofar
1980-1989 Falklands, Northern Ireland
1990-1999 Gulf War, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo
2000-present Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Iraq

‘I THANK MY GOD EVERY TIME I REMEMBER YOU’

Philippians 1:3 NIV

There’s a true story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor explained she had the same disease that he’d recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance of recovery was a transfusion from someone who’d conquered it, so the boy was an ideal donor. ‘Would you give your blood to Mary?’ the doctor asked. Johnny hesitated, his lower lip trembled, and then he smiled and said, ‘Sure, for my sister.’ Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room – Mary, pale and thin’ Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke, but when their eyes met Johnny grinned. But as the nurse inserted the needle into his arm Johnny’s smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube. With the ordeal almost over Johnny’s voice, slightly shaky, broke the silence. ‘Doctor, when do I die?’ Only then did the doctor realise why little Johnny had hesitated, why his lips trembled when he agreed to donate his blood. He thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. In that brief moment he had made his great decision. Who would give their life for you? Those are the people you want to invest your life in. Those are the ones you need to show your appreciation for; now while you still can. They are irreplaceable! When they’re gone you’ll realise that. Some of the things you’re striving for now will seem empty then. Some of the things you’re upset over now will seem insignificant then. So squeeze the most out of every moment. Create memories you’ll treasure. Be wise; build your life around those who matter!

Soul Food Reading: Ex.10-12; Matt 2:13-23; Ps 10:12-18; Pr 1:17-19

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CANTERBURY FESTIVAL 17TH to 31ST OCTOBER

Even more important to be a friend in 2009

What do you remember about the Festival in 2008? You probably do not remember hearing Sandi Toksvig unless you are a Friend of Canterbury Festival. Her one-woman show proved to be the most popular event and sold out very quickly. There were other events that were filled well before the performance; The Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra at the Marlowe was another very popular event. If you are a Friend you will be able to buy these prized tickets in the Priority Booking period and when you select events that are less popular you still have the benefit of seats in much better positions than if you had to wait to book after public booking opens.

What I enjoy about the Festival is the high quality music events and the eclectic mix across all the arts. It is a fortnight when Comedy, Drama, Film, Literature and the ever-popular Walks make it such a busy two weeks. But in 2009 we will all be hungry for such entertainment. The Marlowe Theatre will have been closed for more than six months. Although we are promised replacement venues, I am sure we will be missing evenings out by the time the Festival approaches.

So **join now** as a **Friend of the Canterbury Festival** and ensure that you receive early information about what is on and the opportunity to book during the Priority Booking period (20th July to 10th August). Annual membership costs only £10 per student, £20 per single, £30 per couple or £35 per family. In line with other Festivals a Silver membership at £100 per year and a Gold membership at £300 per year have also recently been introduced with additional benefits. Details can be obtained from: Sylviane Martell – Tel: 01227 452853 or email: sylviane@canterburyfestival.do.uk
Nick Hunt, on behalf of the Friends Committee

A Prayer for those who live alone

I live alone, dear Lord,
Stay by my side,
In all my daily needs
Be Thou my guide.
Grant me good health,
For that indeed, I pray,
To carry on my work
From day to day.
Keep pure my mind,
My thoughts, my every deed,
Let me be kind, unselfish
In my neighbour's need,
Spare me from fire, from flood,
Malicious tongues,
From thieves, from fear,
And evil ones.
If sickness or an accident befall,
Then humbly, Lord, I pray,
Hear Thou my call,
And when I'm feeling low,
Or in despair
Lift up my heart
And help me in my prayer.
I live alone, dear Lord,
Yet have no fear,
Because I feel Your Presence
Ever near.

Amen.

IN THE NICK OF TIME

A prisoner on a life sentence, his life – not the sentence – about to be cut short, gets a last minute extension.

In August 2006, I was at peace. At last I'd made the decision I had wanted to make for over three years. I was going to take my own life. Yes, my situation was so hopeless I'd lost the will to live.

It was 8.45pm and I was in a cell in the segregation unit known to inmates as "The Chokey" or "Punishment Block". At around 9.00pm the day shift would change over to their night time colleagues. It would be then that I would put the noose I had made around my neck, fix it up at the window then let myself hang to death.

Just 15 minutes to wait, no more pain, no more shame. Relief from this awful situation I was in. I'm serving a life sentence for murder, the result of me "losing it" during a drunken argument. That I couldn't remember what had happened as I was in a blackout at the time only compounded the dreadful remorse I felt on a daily basis.

A quiet voice spoke to me, "just read that Bible". On the shelf was a New Testament & Psalms. Until then it had been a blue coloured object on the shelf in my cell. My mind answered immediately, "What good is that going to do me?" Again the voice replied, "Just read that Bible" and again my mind countered with "What is the point?"

But the inner quiet voice persisted, "Just read that Bible." I remembered thinking that it would pass the time until the night shift took over. But I also remember being resigned to the decision I had made to kill myself and did not have any real thought about why I was going to pick the Bible up. I opened the book at the beginning. It was a list of names, very unusual names mostly. Nothing inspirational there. I read on, "so and so the son of son and so." Blah, Blah, Blah! But something was stirring inside me. Something was happening. At verse 16 it says "and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

A massive realisation came over me. I remember exclaiming, "Wow, He is real!" From then on I could not stop reading through the

Gospel. At the beatitudes there were tears, but I still had no hope. God couldn't accept me. I was past being forgiven.

I tried to put the book down, but could not. Something was urging me on. Then at Luke's Gospel it happened, chapter 15:11-32, the parable of the lost son. During this parable the tears started again – but with a difference. The hopelessness that had been always constant disappeared. The wretchedness I suffered went also. Most of all the idea I firmly believed that I was unworthy of forgiveness was taken from me.

The angry, frightened desperate person I had become ceased to exist there and then. At verse 32, when Jesus' words spoke of the brother who was "dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found", I was found indeed. I wept openly with joy. Suddenly I had hope. I couldn't have told you what for, I just knew I had hope. I wanted to live, there wasn't any difficulty I wasn't ready to face. My words do an injustice to the event happening in and around me.

I spent the rest of the evening reading Scripture. I was alive! Even in the darkness I lay on the bed in the small hours resting my eyes, yet expectant, excited, amazed, saved. I could pray! I was no longer alone. I was talking with Jesus, I couldn't see Him but He was there.

A few days later I was taken from the segregation unit and returned to one of the wings. The Chaplain came on the wing and I asked to see him. He was a bit wary of me as some weeks previously I had been a bit unpleasant. I told him what had happened. He asked if I would be going to church on Sunday and I said yes. Come Sunday, I went to the front and gave my life to Jesus at the altar.

Almost three years later my life is Christ is unrecognisable from the lost soul I was in that segregation cell. Not only has God transformed me, He has given me gifts, blessings that would fill a book. A life full of hope, love and peace. No longer useless but useful.

Today I owe my life to Jesus for I know He gently spoke to me that night. Without Him I have nothing, I am nothing. In all of this the Gideons supplied the Bible that had been placed in that cell in the

hope that lost souls would read the Word of the Lord and so too become found. Thank you Gideons, your work in prisons does make a difference. I'm proof.

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The Wooden Bowl

A frail old man went to live with his son, daughter-in-law, and four-year-old grandson. The old man's hands trembled, his eyesight was blurred, and his step faltered

The family ate together at the table. But the elderly grandfather's shaky hands and failing sight made eating difficult. Peas rolled off his spoon onto the floor. When he grasped the glass, milk spilled on the tablecloth.

The son and daughter-in-law became irritated with the mess. 'We must do something about father,' said the son. 'I've had enough of his spilled milk, noisy eating, and food on the floor.'

So the husband and wife set a small table in the corner. There, Grandfather ate alone while the rest of the family enjoyed dinner. Since Grandfather had broken a dish or two, his food was served in a wooden bowl.

When the family glanced in Grandfather's direction, sometimes he had a tear in his eye as he sat alone. Still, the only words the couple had for him were sharp admonitions when he dropped a fork or spilled food.

The four-year-old watched it all in silence.

One evening before supper, the father noticed his son playing with wood scraps on the floor. He asked the child sweetly, 'What are you making?' Just as sweetly, the boy responded, 'Oh, I am making a little bowl for you and Mama to eat your food in when I grow up.' The four-year-old smiled and went back to work.

The words so struck the parents so that they were speechless. Then

tears started to stream down their cheeks. Though no word was spoken, both knew what must be done.

That evening the husband took Grandfather's hand and gently led him back to the family table.

For the remainder of his days he ate every meal with the family.. And for some reason, Neither husband nor wife seemed to care any longer when a fork was dropped, milk spilled, or the tablecloth soiled.

On a positive note, I've learned that, no matter what happens, how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.

I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles four things: A rainy day, the elderly, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights. I've learned that making a 'living' is not the same thing as making a 'life...' I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance. I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands.

You need to be able to throw something back sometimes.

I've learned that if you pursue happiness, it will elude you but, if you focus on your family, your friends, the needs of others, your work and doing the very best you can, happiness will find you

I've learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision.

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

I've learned that every day, you should reach out and touch someone.

People love that human touch -- holding hands, a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.

I've learned that I still have a lot to learn.

AN OLD WOMAN'S LAMENT

By Mavis Clark

They've brought you up to date, Lord, down at Saint Cecilia's,
They've pensioned off the organ and they're praising with guitars.
They've done it for the young ones; we want to draw them in,
But I do wish they could worship without making such a din.
For I'm going rather deaf Lord, and when there's all that noise
It does get very hard, Lord, to hear your loving voice.

They've written brand new hymns, Lord, with tunes that I don't know,
So I hardly ever sing now, though I did love singing so.
They're very go ahead, Lord, they're doing series three,
But the words are not so beautiful as the others used to be.
They've modernised the Bible, and the Lord's Prayer, and the creed,
When the old ones were so perfect that they filled my every need.
My mind's not quite so agile as it was some years ago,
And I miss the age-old beauty of the words I used to know.

It's very clear to me, Lord, I've overstayed my time,
I don't take to change so kindly as I did when in my prime,
But it can't be very long now before I'm called above,
And I know I'll find you there, Lord, and glory in your love.
So till then I'll stick it out here, though it's not the same for me,
But while others call you "You", Lord, do you mind if I call you "Thee"?

KIDS IN CHURCH

A father was at the beach with his children when the four year old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore where a seagull lay dead in the sand. "Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked. "He died and went to heaven," the dad replied. The boy thought a moment and then said, "Did God throw him back down?"

THE THINGS KIDS SAY ABOUT THE BIBLE...

The people who followed the Lord were called the 12 decibels
The epistles were the wives of the apostles

OCTOBER 2009

Thurs 1 st	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Fri 2 nd	7.30 pm	Christianity Explored, Church Centre
Sunday 4th	8.00 am	Morning Service
	10.30 am	Morning Service with the Lord's Supper
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Tues 6 th)	
Wed 7 th)	Home Bible Study Groups (<i>whatever date and time</i>)
Thurs 8 th)	<i>have been arranged for your Group)</i>
Thurs 8 th	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
Fri 9 th	7.30 pm	Christianity Explored, Church Centre
Sat 10 th	10.00 am	Saturday Shop, Old School Hall
Sunday 11th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Tues 13 th	12.00 noon	Garlinge Lunch, Old School Hall
Wed 14 th	8.00 pm	Bible Study: "Bold I approach: the Why and How of Prayer" – pt.2: "The essence of prayer", Church Centre
Thurs 15 th	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Fri 16 th	7.30 pm	Christianity Explored, Church Centre
Sunday 18th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Family Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service with the Lord's Supper
Mon 19 th	10.00 am	Living Stones Bible Study Group, Church Centre
	2.30 pm	Friendship Club: "Libraries – what we have to offer" (Jane Bex, CSDL Kent Libraries), Church Centre
Wed 21 st	8.00 pm	Focus on Prayer, Church Centre
Thurs 22 nd	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
Fri 23 rd	7.30 pm	Christianity Explored, Church Centre
Sunday 25th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service

NOVEMBER 2009

Sunday 1st	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service with the Lord's Supper
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Tues 3 rd	10.00 am	Tear Craft Sale, Church Centre
Tues 3 rd)	
Wed 4 th)	Home Bible Study Groups (<i>whatever date and time</i>)
Thurs 5 th)	<i>have been arranged for your Group)</i>
Thurs 5 th	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Fri 6 th	7.30 pm	Christianity Explored, Church Centre
Sunday 8th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Remembrance Family Service
	6.30 pm	Bereavement Service
Tues 10 th	7.30 pm	PCC, Church Centre
Wed 11 th	8.00 pm	Bible Study: "Bold I approach: the Why and How of Prayer" – pt.3: "What use is talk?", Church Centre
Thurs 12 th	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
Fri 13 th	7.30 pm	Christianity Explored, Church Centre
Sat 14 th	10.00 am	Saturday Shop, Old School Hall
Sunday 15th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service with the Lord's Supper
Mon 16 th	2.30 pm	Friendship Club: "Mission Aviation Fellowship" (Nicky Biddall), Church Centre
Tues 17 th	12.00 noon	Garlinge Lunch, Old School Hall
Wed 18 th	8.00 pm	Focus on Prayer, Church Centre
Thurs 19 th	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Fri 20 th	7.30 pm	Christianity Explored, Church Centre
Sunday 22nd	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Wed 25 th	8.00 pm	God's Plan, Our Part (developing Gospel work in our church and lives, part 4), Church Centre
Thurs 26 th	10.15 am	Parents and Toddlers, Old School Hall
Sunday 29th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper

10.30 am Morning Service
6.30 pm Evening Service
Monday 30th 10.00 am Living Stones Bible Study Group,
Church Centre