

# THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND Newspaper

16.10.15  
£1.50  
No: 6301

AVAILABLE ON   NEWSSTAND



## J John: Man with a mission, p9

## Archbishop targets price comparison websites

AFTER LAUNCHING a campaign against payday lenders, the Archbishop of Canterbury this week turned his attention to price comparison websites.

Although they claim to save consumers money the Most Rev Justin Welby said it was time that they were 'genuinely fair'.

Concerns have grown because the deals offered on the sites are suspected of being influenced by the providers. The Archbishop said that if they were not being fair they should be named and shamed in Parliament.

The Communications Manager of Church Action on Poverty, Liam Purcell, told us: "If, as the Archbishop says, there is a problem with a lack of transparency on price comparison websites, we would certainly agree with his call for greater regulation."

"People need to have access to clear information and fair prices, particularly if they are on low incomes."

The charity's director, Niall Cooper, has spoken out on 'predatory lending practices', and told *The Church of England Newspaper* that they have seen many examples of the high-cost credit industry exploiting its vulnerable customers for profit.

The issue came to the fore with an interview with the Archbishop by the Campaign For Fair Finance as it launched Fairmoney.com, a price comparison website freely listing unions and not-for-profit lenders.

He said that his earlier campaign against payday lenders was aimed at 'competing' them out of existence. "You can't legislate bad practice out of existence in the financial market," it just 'shape shifts', said the Archbishop.

"What's trying to be done here is the

creation of a new market sector. If you legislate, you can't get around effective competition."

The Archbishop said his Wonga comment was influential, not because of his background in financial acumen, 'but an accidental comment that pushed the right button at the right moment'.

"It's had quite a big effect," he said.

The Archbishop referred to an interview he gave as the Bishop of Durham, where he criticised payday lending, pointing out that 2,500 per cent a year has been considered to be usury since the days of Moses. "This is an unacceptable form of business practice," he said.

The Archbishop said that there is a place for short-term, easily accessible loans, but on more reasonable terms.

"Regulation doesn't solve anything," he argued but said there is a case for fair business based on a 'carrot and stick' method.

"The carrot has to be that better culture and behaviour should lead to less onerous regulation and capital requirement, because if you're behaving better you should be considered lower risk."

"The stick is the reverse," he said.

Lenders who participate, increasing the risk profile of the business, should find themselves with higher capital

requirements and regulators breathing heavily down their neck. "This is much more selective, intelligent regulation, not just blanket regulation."

The Archbishop's active role in helping consumer finance culminates in the winding down of his local credit union finance task group, chaired by Sir Hector Sants this December.

The Archbishop describes local community as the biggest loss in the last half century, and hopes to instill 'a sense of Church' into finance. He wants to regroup local communities in the Church of England's drive for ethical, locally available financial support.

## Statue celebrates Christian unity



A UNIVERSITY that brought together Anglican and Roman Catholic colleges has unveiled a new statue symbolizing Christian unity.

The sculpture at Liverpool Hope University was commissioned by Centro Arts, who built the Focolare Church in Loppiano, Tuscany.

It is made up of two individual pieces that interweave to form a gateway. The act of walking underneath the sculpture every day is designed to be a living affirmation of the distinctive ecumenical foundation of Liverpool Hope University.

The institution is the only

ecumenical foundation university in Europe and brought together Christ and Notre Dame College and St Katherine's College.

Vice Chancellor and Rector of Liverpool Hope University Professor Gerald Pillay said: "This artwork will stand as a reminder that Liverpool Hope, and Liverpool as a whole, is a place of hospitality and warmth, where ecumenical unity has helped us to flourish."

Nunzia Bertali from the Italian Consulate added: "I can only be proud of this link between England and Italy. It is a fantastic idea and great opportunity to link the two countries."

DO SOMETHING  
AMAZING  
THIS ADVENT



Take the Advent Sleepout Challenge and help marginalised people all over England transform their lives and communities.

Get together with friends, have fun and make a real difference this Advent.

[www.sleepoutchallenge.org.uk](http://www.sleepoutchallenge.org.uk)  
#SleepoutChallenge

THE ADVENT  
SLEEPOUT  
CHALLENGE 2015

TACKLING POVERTY TOGETHER  
CHURCH URBAN FUND



[cen@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper.com)



[facebook.com/churchnewspaper](https://facebook.com/churchnewspaper)



[@churchnewspaper](https://twitter.com/churchnewspaper)







### Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham

Canon Precentor of the cathedral, the Rev Canon Jacqui Jones, greeted record numbers at the Minster's Animal Blessing Service last Sunday.

Both owners and pets came to reflect on the importance of creation.

"I have noticed throughout this year a growing number of dogs joining us for evensong in the side aisles with their chorister parent owners. They are a welcome addition to our congregation," said Jacqui.

### Diocese of Birmingham

Thousands of people turned out for Birmingham Cathedral's 'Something Good' exhibition last week.

Artists from all backgrounds came together to offer a contemporary view of the diverse neighbourhoods and population of contemporary Birmingham with images of its history over the 300 years of the cathedral's existence.

The Dean of Birmingham, the Very Rev Catherine Ogle, said the event 'perfectly fulfilled' the intention of creating great and inspirational art working with the people of Birmingham and its neighbourhoods, of all faiths and none. "This was a joyful celebration of the spirit of the people of Birmingham and what we can achieve together.

"The cathedral is proud to have shared its 300th birthday celebrations by collaborating with artists of different faith traditions and people across the city. It's been a joy to be creative, in this unique and imaginative way, and demonstrate how our city can be a place of wonder, surprise and inspiration."

### Diocese of Worcester

This weekend Worcester Cathedral is hosting 'The Big Bible Sunday', led by the Bishop, the Rt Rev Dr John Inge.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop for Birmingham, Bernard Longley and the Rev Alison Mackay, Heart of England Baptist Association Regional Minister, will also come together for the event, and lead people from across Worcestershire and Dudley in the study day.

Bible passages will be studied and reflected on in 'challenging ways', by the three ministers.

"Together we will demonstrate how studying the Bible involves us in listening and learning from one another, that we may discover new nuances about the Word of God and his Kingdom," said Cathedral Canon, the Rev Dr Alwyn Pettersen.

### Diocese of Guildford

On 20 October, Guildford Cathedral is hosting a free event to explore how individuals and parishes can best respond to the ongoing refugee crisis in Europe and the Middle East.

A panel of expert speakers has been confirmed, including Maurice Wren, CEO of the Refugee Council, Christine Elliott, Director of World Church Programmes, and Martin Kettle, Home Affairs Policy Adviser for the Church of England.

The Bishop of Guildford, the Rt Rev Andrew Watson, said: "This is not a new problem, nor is it one that can be quickly resolved, and so it is crucial that we can address the immediate humanitarian challenges, and also consider the longer-term cultural needs of those for whom the UK will soon be called home."

### Diocese of York

The Archbishop of York, the Most Rev John Sentamu, was joined by children from St Lawrence's Primary CofE School to lead Harvest celebrations at St Lawrence's church, York.

As part of his sermon, Archbishop Sentamu threw sweets to the school children and the other people in the congregation. The people at the front got lots of sweets, and the people at the back got none.

"Whether you have enough to eat depends on where you are sitting, and that isn't right! There is enough food to go round us all, but it depends on us sharing with others. May those of us who have plenty to eat be aware of those who don't, and in a world that isn't fair, may we be committed to the fair distribution of food," said Archbishop Sentamu.

### Diocese of West Yorkshire & The Dales

St John's Church in Cleckheaton hosted a Bake Off to raise funds for refugees fleeing to Europe on behalf of the community group Cleckheaton Refugee Crisis Appeal. This follows their successful 'drop-in' event, where local residents donated bags of useful items.

The Rev Brunel James, Vicar of the Cleckheaton churches, said: "We are raising cash for the Save the Children Refugee Appeal, and collecting useful items which will go straight to refugees arriving in places like Calais and the Greek islands.

### Diocese of Leicester

On Saturday, 31 October, St Martin's House, Leicester, will host GodTalk4, 'Freedom and Justice: God's gift to Humanity'.

This year's conference is taking place in the 800th anniversary year of the sealing of Magna Carta at Runnymede in 1215 and will address the issues of freedom and justice.

Canon David Jennings, who has organised the event, said: "This is a very important conference within a special year of celebrations of the history of our freedoms and liberties. It is important that contemporary issues are addressed, not least by the Church with its roots in the freedom and justice of God."

Speakers include Rt Hon Dominic Grieve, QC, Geraldine Finucane, and the Rev Canon Dr Giles Fraser.

## THE DIARY

Send your events to  
cen@churchnewspaper.com  
or Tweet @churchnewspaper

### 16 October

6.30pm Persian Evening, OCMS, St Philip & St James Church, Woodstock Road, Oxford. £20

### 17 October

7.30pm The Edith Cavell Centenary Concert in Peterborough Cathedral, with Peterborough Cathedral Choir, Youth Choir and Festival Chorus. £15, concessions available.

### 18 October

3.30pm: Choral Evensong for St Luke's Day at Peterborough Cathedral

4.30pm Come and Sing Faure's Requiem, St Mary's, Fratton, Portsmouth. £5. Performance at 6.30pm.

### 20 October

6.15pm Book launch of *The PCC member's essential guide* by the Rev Canon Mark Tanner, St John's College, Durham.

### 21 October

1pm Lunchtime organ recital at Bradford Cathedral. Dr Jason Roberts (New York).

### 23 October

7.30pm 'Baked Alaska' in partnership with Christian Aid, Operation Noah and the Diocese of Lichfield aims to raise a compassionate voice in the run up to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris this December. Lichfield Cathedral, £12, conc: £9.

### 24 October

2.30pm 'Great War Fashion', a talk by Lucy Adlington of History Wardrobe in Peterborough Cathedral, £10.

### 26 October

2.30pm Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester, introduced to the House of Lords, first woman bishop to sit in Upper House.

### 27 October

6.15pm Book launch of 'Igniting the heart: preaching and imagination' by the Rev Dr Kate Bruce, St John's College, Durham.



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper





## NEWS IN BRIEF

### James Catford moves on

After 14 years at the helm of Bible Society James Catford is to stand down from his role as Group Chief Executive at the end of the year.

Speaking about his departure, James said: "After 14 years, it seems an appropriate, even biblical, time to go. It is very hard to leave the people and mission that I love so much."

He said that he had been thinking of the move from earlier in the year and intends to study theology.

In addition to establishing national advocacy programmes in the arts, education, the media and politics, and embarking on city-wide campaigns, Bible Society has set up Bible Society Resources Ltd, Theos, the King James Bible Trust, Lyfe, and Mary Jones World, a new visitor and education centre in North Wales. Under James' leadership, the organisation has also acquired Christian Resources Exhibitions, the Christian Booksellers' Convention and Christian Research.

### Myfanwy Giddings dies

Myfanwy, a teacher of Classics, and the wife of Dr Philip Giddings, former chair of the House of Laity of General Synod and of the Mission and Public Affairs Council, and founder convenor of Anglican Mainstream, died suddenly and unexpectedly of a heart attack on Wednesday 7 October. She had no previous history of heart problems.

The funeral will be at Greyfriars Church, Reading on Monday 19 October at 12.45.

### Iran's treasures revealed



A copy of the first book ever printed in Iran, the Book of Psalms that was printed there in 1638, is to be included in a new exhibition at the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

The exhibition will focus on Armenia, the earliest Christian nation and includes many beautiful illustrated gospels, lectionaries and psalm books which have never been on public display before.

Among the items on display will be a brightly coloured gospel manuscript featuring a 'hidden demon' that has been rubbed out over the centuries by pious readers. Using hyperspectral imaging tools, conservators at the Bodleian have revealed the hidden demon and will display the newly-discovered image alongside the original manuscript.

The exhibition opens on 23 October and runs until next February.

# Prime Minister warned: 'Don't label Christians as extremists'

THE PRIME Minister's speech at the Conservative Party Conference has sparked criticism from the Evangelical Alliance, who said Christians should not be 'labelled extremists.'

Speaking on extremism last week, Prime Minister David Cameron spoke out against segregation and institutions helping 'to incubate these divisions.'

Speaking about Britain's 'passive intolerance' towards bad faith practise for fear of causing offence, Cameron pledged to enforce Conservative plans to regulate religious teaching.

"If an institution is teaching children intensively, then whatever its religion, we will, like any other school, make it register so it can be inspected."

But the director of advocacy at the Evangelical Alliance, David Landrum, said that while it is right that we take stringent measures to eradicate extrem-

ist ideology, he said it was "vital that committed Christians are not labelled as extremists by those who may disagree with aspects of their faith."

"Any bill to tackle extremism must not undermine the very democracy that it seeks to protect. We would urge the Prime Minister to consult with all faith groups to ensure that historic freedoms of religion and belief are secured in the implementation of this bill."

The Accord Coalition responded to the speech saying there are 'inconsistencies' in Government policy on education and faith schools.

Chair of the Accord Coalition for Inclusive Education, Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain, said: "There is a large mismatch between the Prime Minister's analysis and Government faith schools policy."

"If we are serious about boosting inte-

gration and the growth of mutual understanding in Britain then we should be ensuring that all state-funded schools, including faith schools, teach about the range of religious and non-religious beliefs in society, and that faith schools are no longer able to purposely segregate children by religion and ethnicity through operating religiously discriminatory admission policies."

Rabbi Romain backed the Prime Minister's call to stress the importance of making Britain less discriminatory and more cohesive, and to express his determination to achieve these ends.

"However, the Government can and should make a major contribution in this area by implementing a consistent approach in schools policy."

"Discrimination should not be a part of school life, and nor should schools be able to narrow pupils' horizons," he said.

## Campaigns kick off ahead of EU referendum

FORMER M&S chairman Lord Rose has launched a campaign this week for Britain to remain part of the EU.

The Conservative peer and former M&S boss, said at the campaign launch on Monday, that a 'retreat' to an 'inward looking' Britain is 'to misunderstand who we are as a nation.'

"I will not allow anyone to tell me I'm any less British because I believe in the strongest possible Britain for business, for our security and our society," he said.

'Britain Stronger in Europe', is set to rival 'Vote Leave', a Eurosceptic campaign launched last Friday. That campaign is said to be financially

backed by Peter Cruddas, former Conservative treasurer and UKIP treasurer, Stuart Wheeler.

Labour Party donor and JML founder, John Mills, who is also backing the campaign, said leaving the EU means Britain could have 'friendly co-operation' with Europe whilst trading freely.

A rival campaign for a Brexit, Leave.EU, also launched last week.

The chairman of 'Britain Stronger in Europe' has criticised the rival groups: "The



quitters have no idea whether we would be able to access Europe's free trade area, or what the price of admission would be," Lord Rose said.

His campaign is backed by former Prime Ministers Sir John Major, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

Co-Chairman of the European Strategy Forum, Peter Ludlow, wrote in a blog for 'Europe Reimagined', the

Church of England's EU discussion forum, saying a British decision to 'opt out' of Europe's still 'unknown' destination involves 'a leap of faith of even greater magnitude than the one which the Six made 65 years ago', when the Schuman Declaration was agreed.

Director of the Kirby Laing Institute for Christian Ethics, Jonathan Chaplin, offered a few pointers for Christians considering the EU question. They should firstly 'disavow any claim to public privilege in the EU'.

"A rejuvenation of the 'soul of Europe' cannot proceed by giving official constitutional pre-eminence to just one of its communities of memory."

he writes.

Continuing, Chaplin says that "Christians may assert, as Pope John Paul II did in an important 2003 intervention, that 'the Christian faith belongs, in a radical and decisive way, to the foundations of European culture,' but must also remember that modern Europe has now been 'refashioned' by Judaism, secular humanism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, among others. The EU now contains official channels whereby such engagement can take place," he writes.

Thirdly, Chaplin continues, Christians should use rich resources of public theology to engage in public debates about the 'good of the EU'.



## Us Lent study course 2016 Migration and movement

A five-week course exploring migration and the global movement of people, with stories from the Anglican Churches in Brazil, Malawi, Myanmar and Zimbabwe.

Topics covered include: economic migration, the plight of refugees, human trafficking, and the displacement of communities due to climate change.

**Pre-order FREE copies of our study booklet or download:**

[www.weareUs.org.uk/lent](http://www.weareUs.org.uk/lent)

020 7921 2200

[info@weareUs.org.uk](mailto:info@weareUs.org.uk)

**Us.** The new name for USPG

Registered charity number 234518



[cen@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper.com)



[facebook.com/churchnewspaper](https://facebook.com/churchnewspaper)



[@churchnewspaper](https://twitter.com/churchnewspaper)





# Lib Dems explore cannabis legalisation

THE LIBERAL Democrats have set up an independent panel of experts from drug policy, crime and public health, to research the practice of legalising cannabis in the UK.

However, a prominent Christian group questioned the party's claims.

The group is said to be turning to Uruguay, Washington State and Colorado for case studies on successful legalisation, according to Liberal Democrat Health Spokesman, Norman Lamb.

On Monday Parliament debated an e-petition calling for the legalisation of the drug after a petition to debate the motion scaled 221,019 signatures.

According to research cited by the Lib Dems, 59 per cent of the recreational cannabis market in Colorado has now been legalised, regulated and taxed, which represents a significant contraction in the untaxed criminal market.

The state has collected a cumulative revenue total of \$73.5m for the first seven months of 2015.

In Washington state, retail

marijuana sales have generated over \$80m in tax revenues and violent crime rates have declined.

The aim of the task group is to develop a workable model for the legal sale and taxation of cannabis.

The panel will be chaired by Senior Policy Analyst of Transform Drug Policy, Steve Rolles and is set to include Professor David Nutt, Founder of DrugScience and Tom Lloyd, a former Chief Constable in Cambridgeshire and Chair of the National Cannabis Coalition and Niamh Eastwood, Executive Director of Release.

Norman Lamb said he shared people's concern about the health impacts of cannabis, but said the industry can be better managed by taking the money that's currently spent on policing the illegal cannabis market and spending it on public health education and restrictions at the point of sale.

"With successful legal cannabis markets emerging in different parts of the world, the onus is now on the supporters of prohibition to

explain why we shouldn't do the same things here in the UK."

Liberal Democrat Home Affairs Spokesperson and former Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the London Metropolitan Police, Brian Paddick, is supporting the move, after leading a pilot scheme in Lambeth which effectively decriminalised possession of cannabis for personal use for a 12-month period.

According to the evidence cited by the Lib Dems, crime fell 'significantly' over the period and saved resources.

Nola Leach, CEO of Christian campaign group, CARE, told *The Church of England Newspaper* that legalising cannabis would send the wrong message.

"In countries where cannabis has been legalised the evidence seems to indicate the use of the drug has gone up, not down, contrary to the claims of those who support its legalisation.

"We would be very much against any moves to legalise cannabis here in the UK."

# IVP to merge with SPCK

THE CHRISTIAN publisher SPCK is merging with evangelical publishing group IVP.

SPCK Vice Chairman, Sam Richardson, told *The Church of England Newspaper* the move 'creates a perfect storm.'

He described the acquisition of IVP as a strategy to scale and cover a broader stretch of the Christian market. Despite the declining numbers of Christians, SPCK boasts a sales increase over the past three years, going from 'strength to strength', thanks to popular authors.

David Vardy, Chair of IVP, said the merger is a response to 'seismic' changes in the industry, 'which can only be overcome through consolidation and cooperation'.

"I look forward to working with the IVP team to ensure that IVP is reaffirmed as the first port of call for evangelical authors and readers in the UK and beyond," he said.

He admitted that IVP is no longer viable and hopes to resource SPCK's 'best-of-breed infrastructure' to refinance itself.

Richardson told us that each group would maintain their distinctive characteristics and 'work alongside each other.' Chair of SPCK, the Rt Rev John Pritchard, said SPCK had an 'IVP-shaped hole'.

"IVP's evangelical focus, which we are fully committed to retaining, is a good fit with our existing broad SPCK list."

Current IVP Trustee, Dr Andrew Fergusson, will chair the new board, made up of former IVP trustees with a new IVP Publishing Board.

Steve Apted, Interim General Manager of IVP, who will remain in place to oversee the transition, said: "It will be business as usual for bookshops in the run-up to Christmas."

# Shoppers offered slaves 'for sale' on Oxford Street



SHOPPERS on London's Oxford Street were offered a rather different purchase this week: the opportunity to buy their very own slave.

The stunt was staged by the Salvation Army to draw attention to the modern reality of human trafficking. Their drama unit created a market stall that appeared to sell people as commodities.

A spokesman said: "The Salvation Army's commitment to fight the scourge of slavery and human trafficking is as strong today as it was 150 years ago when our work started in the East End of London. We want to use the week running up to Anti-Slavery Day to help raise awareness amongst the large num-

bers of people who still don't realise that modern slavery - the appalling crime of human trafficking - is still taking place today and that they can have a role in stamping it out.

"Information was available to passers-by and online on how to spot the signs that someone is being trafficked and what they can do to help."

The Salvation Army was appointed in July 2011 by the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice to provide support services to adult victims of human trafficking in England and Wales. In four years The Salvation Army and its partners have supported nearly 3,000 victims of modern slavery.

## Bishop to debate future of multi-faith society

THE FUTURE of the multi-faith society will be debated by the Bishop of Birmingham and a range of interfaith leaders, including a former Conservative Party minister.

The Rt Rev David Urquhart will take part in the Birmingham City University event later this month.

Among the items on the agenda are the issues facing multi-faith communities in the UK, extremism and the promotion of peace and solidarity.

Joining the Bishop will be Baroness Warsi; Rabbi Dr Margaret Jacobi, Rabbi of the Birmingham Progressive Synagogue; Imran Awan, Deputy Director of the Centre for Applied Criminology, Birmingham City University; and Jon Yorke, Professor of Human Rights, Birmingham City University.

Prof Yorke, who will chair the event, said: "This City Talk engages key leaders in the multi-faith dialogue to discuss the complex issues of extremism and the appropriate human rights response."

"We will be discussing ways in which different religions can co-exist in a peaceful, tolerant society that refutes hate crimes and wider violence. The importance of human rights and the equal respect of human dignity for all people and all faiths, will be at the forefront of the discussions."

Imran Awan added: "In today's globalised world we are seeing a steady increase and rise in pressures to do with countering violent extremism. Within this environment, there is a need for communities and others to come together to tackle this threat without impacting on people's civil liberties."

"It's crucial that we promote those positive messages that all faith groups adhere to as we work together in a united front to combat extremism."

The event is free and open to the public. Tickets for the 21 October event can be booked through [bcucitytalks.eventbrite.co.uk](http://bcucitytalks.eventbrite.co.uk).

## Evangelists get their own Dragon's Den



A KIND OF Dragon's Den for evangelists is being launched by mission agency CMS.

They are bringing together aspiring evangelists and pioneers with mission experts for a summit in Oxford to discuss the context of mission for Britain in the 21st century.

The event, on 3 November, follows on from previous conferences, which have formed the basis of two books: *The Pioneer Gift* and *Pioneering Spirituality*.

Addressing the event at CMS's headquarters will be Eve Poole, author of *Capitalism's Toxic Assumptions*. With a background in theology and economics, she has previously written *Ethical Leadership* and *The Church and Capitalism*.

A spokesman said that CMS is committed to supporting and empowering mission pioneers. "Through its Pioneer Mission Leadership Training programme it caters for those looking for short term training opportunities as well as others preparing for ordination as a Pioneer Minister."

Topics being covered include High Streets and Salvation, From Victorian Entrepreneurs to Missional Entrepreneurs and the Gritty Reality of Starting From Nothing.

Contact: [pioneer.cms-uk.org](http://pioneer.cms-uk.org).



# Priest suspended in row over flags

A PRIEST in the Church of England has been stood down in a row over flags.

The Rev Kingsley Sutton disobeyed a directive not to remove Royal British Legion flags at St Patrick's and St Mary's Church in Newry, Northern Ireland.

In response the Bishop of Down and Dromore issued the order that he be stood down for contumacy.

Last Sunday a diocesan spokesman said Mr Sutton had "acted against the clear instruction of the bishop in removing" the RBL flags.

"In light of this he has been asked by the bishop to step back from ministry for a period of time as every attempt is made to find a resolution."

On 9 October the *Belfast Telegraph* reported that members of the congregation had written to the newspaper complaining of the conduct of their rector after the bishop, the Rt Rev Harold Miller, failed to act as they wanted.

Members of the congregation complained their rector was ignoring the will of the congregation by modernizing the parish.

Mr Sutton was charged with closing the church to the Orange Order and the Apprentice Boys — two traditional loyalist groups — and adopting a modernist folk liturgy. In his parish newsletter Mr Sutton said he was going to replace the RBL flags with white banners with a heart affixed in the centre.

"We must make a resolute break from the past, lest we be dragged back," he wrote. "I have taken down the Royal British Legion flags in both churches and have replaced them with a white flag that has a red heart at

its centre."

He explained he had "nothing against" the RBL, but had "intentionally removed these flags to declare a break from the past, and a shift into a new hope, a hope that is embodied in the two new flags."

In a statement released through the diocese, Mr Sutton denied barring the Orange Order from the church. A source in the Church of Ireland told *The Church of England Newspaper* the diocese had asked Mr Sutton to desist, and suspended him after he removed the RBL flags.



## Pace of decline quickens in USA

THE PACE of decline in the Episcopal Church of the USA has quickened, statistics released by the Church reported last week.

Attendance and membership statistics for 2014 show the domestic membership of the Episcopal Church fell 2.7 per cent from 1,866,758 members in 2013 to 1,817,004 in 2014, a loss of 49,794 persons. Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) — the 52-week average of people in the pews also fell from 623,691 in 2013 to 600,411 in 2014, a decline of 23,280 persons in the pews, or 3.7 per cent.

The pace of the church's decline under Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori had declined over the past few years, with the church reporting a 1.4 per cent membership decline and 2.6 per cent decline in ASA for 2013.

The number of parishes and missions fell from 6,622 in 2013 to 6,553 in 2014, while the number of children baptised fell 4.8 per cent from 25,822 to 24,594. Adult baptisms also declined in 2014 falling four per cent from 3,675 to 3,530.

Not all the news was bad, however, with the number of funerals rising from 28,960 to 29,011 in 2014, while the number of weddings rose from 9,933 in 2013 to 10,337. The gender of the couples united in marriage are not given in the Church's marriage statistics, however.

The Episcopal Church's decline from its high water mark of 3.6 million members in the mid 1960s has not been constant. While church membership has fallen by half during the period when the population of the United States has doubled, the 1970s and the period following the consecration of Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire has seen the largest exodus of members.

During the 1990s — between the controversies over women's ordination and prayer book reform, and the recent push to normalise homosexual relations, the Church's membership held steady, declining by 18,000 in a decade. Since 2003 ASA has declined by 25 per cent.

## Diocese backs ban on Jehovah's Witness student

THE DIOCESE of Jamaica has backed the decision by a church school to ban a Jehovah's Witness from serving as a student leader at a prestigious girls school.

The decision to remove Jade Clarke as head girl of St Hilda's High School, one of the top schools on the island, after she disclosed she was a Jehovah's Witness has prompted accusations of religious bigotry against the school.

In a statement published in *The Gleaner* on 9 October, the Bishop of Kingston, the Rt Rev Robert Thompson said he had met with the parents and the headmistress of St Hilda's and backed the school's decision.

"The principal made the right decision and she has the full support of the board and the Diocese," Bishop Thompson said, adding: "The Jehovah's Witnesses, in terms of their own tenets and beliefs, would not be permitted to take on any civic leadership in the country.

"They see themselves as exclusive rather than being inclusive and, even though she was chosen because of her outstanding academic performance and fine qualities, the school pulled her file and it was confirmed that she was a Witness."

Vincent McNeil, a Jehovah's Witness elder in Kingston, supported the decision, noting: "There are certain things that, if she was a baptised Jehovah's Witness, she would conscientiously object to."

McNeil's daughter had been offered the position of head girl in the 60s but declined due to her faith, as Jehovah's Witnesses may not participate in joint devotions or civic ceremonies. However the National Parent-Teacher Association of Jamaica (NPTAJ) has urged the government to intervene, charging the Anglican school was engaged in religious discrimination.

The NPTAJ "believes that those duties which would conflict with her religious beliefs could be undertaken by one of her deputies or a senior prefect."

## Archbishop Tutu attends lecture

NOBEL Peace Prize laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu made his first public appearance last week following a health scare that hospitalised him for much of July and August.

On 7 October — his 84th birthday — Archbishop Tutu attended the fifth annual Desmond Tutu International Peace lecture in Cape Town.

Walking with the aid of a stick, Archbishop Tutu welcomed the guest speaker, Public Protector Thuli Madonsela, who gave a lecture entitled: "Democracy and Peace: What's the law got to do with it?" Two unrelated infections led to the former archbishop's hospitalisation, and have left him bowed and weakened, observers report.

## Bishop diagnosed with cancer



THE BISHOP of Western Sydney in Australia, the Rt Rev Ivan Yin Lee, has been diagnosed with a pancreatic tumour and is to undergo surgery on 26 October.

RELAX! WITH UP TO 4,000 USED CARS PRICE CHECKED DAILY, COMPREHENSIVELY CHECKED & GUARANTEED

YOU'RE SURE TO FIND YOUR PERFECT CAR!



60 REG  
FORD FIESTA 1.25  
EDGE 3DR SILVER 32K

NOW ONLY £5301



62 REG  
NISSAN NOTE 1.4  
VISIA 5DR BLUE 45K

NOW ONLY £5844



10 REG  
VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.7 CDTi  
ECOFLEX DESIGN (110) BLACK 37K

NOW ONLY £6991



12 REG  
CITROEN C4 GRAND PICASSO  
1.6 E-HDi AUTO 5DR RED 62K

NOW ONLY £9150



11 REG  
VOLKSWAGEN GOLF ESTATE 1.6  
TDi BLUEMOTION TECH SE BLUE

NOW ONLY £7500



BRAND NEW  
NISSAN QASHQAI  
1.5 DCI VISIA 5DR

NOW ONLY £2229.00 PER MONTH

AUTOSAVE... SERVING THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR OVER 35 YEARS

autosave

call 0845 122 6910

autosave.co.uk



\*Based on personal Contract Hire (PCH) payment profile 9+47. Finance subject to status, terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. We can introduce you to a limited number of carefully selected finance providers. We may receive a commission from them for the introduction.

PART  
EXCHANGE  
WELCOME

FULL  
HISTORY  
CHECK

FLEXIBLE  
FINANCE  
AVAILABLE

NATIONWIDE  
DELIVERY  
TO YOUR DOOR

BRAND NEW  
CARS AVAILABLE  
ALL MAKES



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper





# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## Shared Conversations

Sir, October began with the announcement, in *The Times*, of the engagement of Messrs Tom Daley, the well-known Olympic diver, and Dustin Lance Black, a US screenwriter and film director. The normality of this event, and the welcome it received in the media, perhaps provides an opportunity to revisit the endlessly interesting subject, for readers and contributors to *The Church of England Newspaper*, of the place in the Church of those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, or Bi-sexual, or Trans, or Questioning, or Fluid; and what recognition, if any, should be given to the loving, faithful, stable, monogamous and mutually supportive relationships which enrich their lives and enable them to flourish in society. The Church of England has been seeking to find a way forward through the "shared conversations".

There are two parties to these "shared conversations". On the one hand there are those for whom the "plain teaching" of the Bible is indisputable, and therefore those who are not heterosexual can only be in the Church if they trample down their sexuality, live lives of total celibacy, and never, ever, look to be in a relationship. Many in this camp see no need for conversations or regard them only as opportunities to reiterate their position.

On the other hand there are those who question whether the

Bible's teaching is indeed plain; and if, indeed it is, we should still follow it anymore than we do the "plain teaching of the Bible" on such subjects as genocide, slavery, usury, wearing clothes of mixed fabrics, eating shellfish or heterosexuals re-marrying after divorce.

Amongst this group there are those who see equal marriage as no more perturbing than allowing married women property rights or widowers to marry their deceased wives' sisters. Both of which caused great concern in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In a letter you published on 18 September, AB MacFarlane quoted Roy Clements agreeing with John Stott that "falling in love with someone of the same sex" (does not) "ipso facto provide a moral justification for gay relationships." Not everyone else agrees though.

The recognition, as the Irish novelist Colm Toibin put it, that gay people fall in love just like straight people is a solvent most effective against prejudice.

Which brings me to a third party. There are those who, both outside the Church and increasingly within it, see no more need for a debate with the opponents of equal marriage than they do with creation scientists or anyone who claimed the Sun orbits the Earth, "because the Bible says so". Or indeed anyone who claims that the earth isn't a sphere.

This does not just affect liberals, for example grandmothers of impeccable orthodoxy draw the line when one of their grandchildren is

## Tackling the refugee crisis

Sir, Reading Tommy Gee's letter headlined, 'Barriers to welcoming refugees must be removed', made me think again about the disconcerting and complex issues related to Syrian refugees and refugee camps, particularly concerning Syrian Christians.

I have little sympathy for many Syrian refugees, many of whom are probably professional and skilled people, leaving the camps for a new life in prosperous Europe. They are described as desperate, but in what way are they desperate? It seems to me that it is a desperation for the prosperity and comfort of European life as opposed to the hardships of life in a refugee camp.

They seem to me to be deserting their fellow Syrians; even endangering the lives of their children in the process. I strongly feel that Syrian Christians should stay in the camps to support all refugees in them, especially those who could be of significant value to their communities such as medics, teachers and engineers, and thereby witness for Christ.

Is it really the best thing to bring the vulnerable to this country, away from their families and culture? Would bringing the old to places away from their families lead to loneliness? What about children? Is it really a good thing to transpose them from their families' culture and expose them to a culture which has some very unpleasant and undesirable elements in it, such as selfish individualism, self-indulgence, materialism, a superficial popular culture, celebrity, so many areas of life permeated with sex, and sordid influences on young people?

Perhaps real compassion demands that some clergy, including bishops, go to the camps and live with the needful refugees in them.

Certainly, more financial assistance should be given to the running of these camps.

**Mr SP Jackson,**  
Nottingham

confronted with a life without love. And they, not the people who write to *The Church of England Newspaper*, are the ones who should be worrying the ethically conservative.

**Colin Durham,**  
Sturminster Newton

## Canada

Sir, The Anglican Church of Canada made a theological breakthrough in 2004, when it affirmed 'the integrity and sanctity of committed same-sex relations', which many Christians still regard as 'intrinsically disordered' and as anathema. Whilst its recent, rigorous report 'This Holy Estate' concludes that same-sex marriage is theologically possible, it rightly leaves open the question of whether it is theologically desirable. This decision awaits the corporate discernment of its General Synod. St Paul recommended consideration of the weaker brethren and so timing, as Jayne Ozanne points out, is literally crucial.

It is, however, impossible to make an omelette without breaking eggs and, whether the Church validates change now, not yet or never, pain will inevitably be felt by different people and to different degrees.

Jesus preached the Kingdom of God, so Church unity is not the be all and end all, although highly desirable. The gay issue will not simply go away, as some correspondents would like. Their exasperation is like that felt by Lyndon Johnson, when Martin Luther King pressed for the immediate implementation of Civil Rights.

If one is to pursue a cause vigorously, one must feel a compulsion and, as Thomas Merton said, one has no absolute way of knowing that one is pleasing God, when one thinks that one is doing his will. One can only be certain that he is pleased by one's desire to please.

Mother Teresa wrote: 'Do to others as you would have them do to you... If they frustrate you and make you irate, love them more. And remember, at the end of the day, it's not worth worrying how the world sees you, but it is worth worrying about how God sees you. Live for him!'

**Serena Lancaster,**  
Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos.

## Help wanted

Sir, I work for an Anglican church organisation called Church's Ministry Amongst Jewish People (CMJ). Over the years the society's workers in the Middle East collected many local artefacts, costumes and 3D maps and models of significant Bible places. From 1897 to 2006 CMJ promoted a mobile exhibition which was used to illustrate Bible stories and Bible life. The exhibition was held in churches, village halls and city exhibition centres, and was known at different times as the "Palestine Exhibition", or the "Bible Come To Life Exhibition".

It was at its height in the early 1900s when several railway carriages were required to move the models, tableaux and costumes around the country. We have records showing that

in 1910 a London-based exhibition attracted over 300,000 people.

I am writing a history of the exhibition, which in its day was a significant cultural event, and would like to hear from anyone who has memories of attending the exhibition, acting as a steward, or who holds any exhibit which was loaned but never returned (there will be an amnesty for the guilty!)

Would anyone who wishes to share their memories please contact me via email bct11897@gmail.com or by post CMJ Eagle Lodge, Hexgreave Hall Business Park, Farnsfield, Notts. NG22 8LS.

**Paul Hames,**  
Nottingham



## Corbyn

Sir, Today (8 October) Jeremy Corbyn is not going to the palace to become a privy councillor. The

reason for this is simple. He's a republican. He is entitled to freedom of conscience like everyone else and the main interface for day-to-day business for the monarchy is actually the council of state. As a Stop the War coalition convenor he may wish to indicate that he holds the head of state accountable as well as the head of government. Additionally there is the idea that the church and state should be separate to prevent abuse of power (the old adage that absolute power corrupts absolutely). As such it is refreshing that the leader of the opposition is actually a man of principle and I shall be voting Labour in 2016 and 2020.

**James Ware**  
Via email

## Discrimination

Sir, The Prime Minister is absolutely right to highlight the need to remove discrimination in our society. However, it is interesting to note that during David Cameron's watch we have seen a dramatic increase in discrimination against the Christian church, which has provided the bedrock of the "British Values" that the government says it wants to protect. Individuals or schools who believe in Biblical teaching, such as about marriage, are seen as deviant or extreme by some government departments and employers, and have been targets for reprimands or dismissal. Many such individuals have had to resort to the courts to preserve their rights. To be believed, David Cameron must act to show he means what he says in this regard.

**J Longstaff,**  
Woodford Green

Write to The Church of England Newspaper, 14 Great College Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3RX.  
or you can send an E-mail to letters@churchnewspaper.com. Tweet at @churchnewspaper  
If you are sending letters by e-mail, please include a street address. NB: Letters may be edited



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper





# The Gospel is the real cure for the nations

Religious relativism is becoming popular on Anglican boards and committees, and indeed in the various tiers of leadership. All faiths are quietly assumed to be windows into God's revelation and salvation, with Jesus being one of these windows. This has been to a certain extent produced by the expansion of other faiths in the UK and the imperative not 'to offend' and therefore to accept all as equally valid and true.

This is really a politically driven pressure on church bureaucrats, but is also a shift to liberal theology as central rather than a gadfly on the edges. What is to be avoided at all costs is a call for other faiths to turn to Jesus in faith and trust, that would cause offence or rather, if we are being honest, to shut the preacher up. Christian evangelism of other faiths in the UK is unfashionable, or has a chill factor around it, a kind of religious Sharia compliance in effect.

And outside Europe evangelism is very out of fashion: the trendy doctrine is that God was already there in other cultures before Christian mission arrived, and so the religions in those other cultures was given by God and should be respected, not offended by the claims of the Gospel. At home Christianity must be hospitable not just to other peoples but to their faith systems, and abroad Christian mission must, well, keep quiet about matters of faith. At the same time other faiths at home and abroad are taken as quite within their rights to convert by all sorts of methods, and the apostasy laws remain in force even against those who wish to quit Islam and become secularists – apparently a growing number.

The effect of this liberal relativising of our faith is corrosive both at home and abroad. And theologically it makes no sense: if all faiths are the same porridge in many different bowls, why the need for Jesus Christ to die an agonising death for our salvation, was that not a very cruel idea of God if it was not necessary to atone for our sin, if any religion would be as good?

Collusion with such relativism also weakens the Gospel impact on our culture and society: we now hear that a huge number of teachers are dropping out of that key profession, alongside the disaster in nursing recruitment, retention and care, and also recruitment of young doctors. Altruism and vocation have almost died in the UK professions, after decades of shoving Christianity into the closet by the authorities. The costs of de-Christianisation grow by the month.

And abroad: is warfare going to cure the Middle East, or would the preaching of the Gospel be a much more likely way of inculcating peace in the hearts and minds of warring tribes? In fact the only real hope for overcoming the global religious bitterness, including that between Sunni and Shia, is surely the recognition that Jesus is the one Word of God himself, the one way of atonement for sin, the one source of love for one's enemy and one's neighbour.

The Church of England Newspaper  
with Celebrate magazine incorporating The Record and Christian Week  
Published by Political and Religious Intelligence Ltd.  
Company Number: 3176742  
Publisher: Keith Young MBE

Publishing Director & Editor:	CM BLAKELY	020 7222 8700
Chief Correspondent:	The Rev Canon GEORGE CONGER	00 1 0772 332 2604
Reporter:	JO MAY	020 7222 8700
Advertising:	CHRIS TURNER	020 7222 2018
Advertising & Editorial Assistant:	PENNY NAIR PRICE	020 7222 2018
Subscriptions & Finance:	DELIA ROBINSON	020 7222 2018
Graphic Designer:	PETER MAY	020 7222 8700

The acceptance of advertising does not necessarily indicate endorsement. Photographs and other material sent for publication are submitted at the owner's risk. The Church of England Newspaper does not accept responsibility for any material lost or damaged.

Christian Weekly Newspapers Trustees: Robert Leach (020 8224 5696), Lord Carey of Clifton, The Rt Rev Michael Nazir-Ali, The Rt Rev Pete Broadbent, Dr Elaine Storkey, The Rev Cindy Kent

The Church of England Newspaper,  
Political and Religious Intelligence Ltd  
14 Great College Street, London, SW1P 3RX  
Editorial e-mail: [cen@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper.com)  
Advertising e-mail: [ads@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:ads@churchnewspaper.com)  
Subscriptions e-mail: [subs@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:subs@churchnewspaper.com)

Website: [www.churchnewspaper.com](http://www.churchnewspaper.com)



[cen@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper.com)



[facebook.com/churchnewspaper](https://facebook.com/churchnewspaper)



[@churchnewspaper](https://twitter.com/churchnewspaper)



# Politics in faith

ALAN STORKEY

Sometimes there is a discussion about putting a little bit of Christian faith in politics on one particular issue or another. These days it is often quite timid and piecemeal. We dip our toe in the water on marriage, debt, poverty or Sunday trading, but we do not really get wet. After all we are followers of Jesus, who must have had an off day when he threw the moneychangers out of the Temple and called the political leaders of his day, "Whited Sepulchres".

As he explained, they were "white on the outside, but inside full of dead men's bones", in case he was not understood. No. He did not have off days and we are not following Jesus.

Our position is not biblical, because God is sovereign over all rulers, the law of God was given to Moses, prophets spoke the word of the Lord to kings and people, empires and rulers were brought down from their thrones, Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords and Paul was quite happy to write a letter to Rome, the centre of supposedly the greatest Empire on earth saying so, and then go there to be imprisoned. Faith is deeply political.

We need, not a little bit of faith in politics, but a

quickened with Bismarck, then the Bolsheviks and the Fascist Parties taking over the churches, especially the established churches. Gradually Secularism suggested that Christianity should keep out of politics, and now the parties in many states espouse that position, and the churches in Britain largely go along with this state of affairs.

So, it is likely, if another Fascist Party grows up in Britain, that the churches would respond too late and be incapable of decisive democratic action.

More than that, we have been taught to think in profoundly unchristian terms. Many Secularists and Christians think in terms of "idealism" and "realism". Christianity has some nice ideals, but we have to live in the real world. Christian faith is the occasional perfume that keeps the body politik from smelling too much. But we have to live in the real world.

Ignore the evidence that more equal economies flourish more, that peace is a good way to live, that consumerism is destroying the planet, and still assert that "realism", the way of pollution, financial crashes, riches, poverty, war and refugees is best. We have acquiesced. We ignore the fact that Paul insisted on faith as having a hold on God's faithfulness and God's real blessing, as rock solid. We intone, but do not act.

We see the German Christian Democrats wel-



transformation of politics by faith so that we understand government in God's terms and learn again the great central Christian messages for politics – that rulers are to serve, that sin always lurks at the door, that power corrupts, that those who take the sword perish by it, that justice comes before affluence, that we can be law-abiding, that the last should come first, that politics centres on truth and that humility trumps national and state self-glorification.

These great lessons stand beside us, confirmed every day by events, but we Christians are too timid to put them in the arena, because one of the lions might bite off the end of our stick.

We Christians have become like this through our cultural weakness over centuries. The churches kow-towed to the established powers in exchange for an established church. More than that, they largely evacuated their political convictions and moved over to a ceremonial role, where bishops dressed up but were never going to stand against the political establishment, especially after one or two of their number had had accidents.

Then, beginning with Napoleon, pictured, aggressively secular states emerged. Their pace

come the stranger in, but do not think, "That is Christian politics." We hug and kiss peace in church, but exchange it for nuclear weapons and punching above our weight at the church door, because Christianity is an "ideal".

But we have not long. We tend to ignore the string of parables and warnings that Jesus gave before the crucifixion. They were surprisingly insistent. Don't go to sleep. Be ready for God. Have your oil and do not be foolish virgins. Weigh the times and see what is coming. But we do not.

We have one or two decades to address global warming. Jesus was addressing the sack of Jerusalem 40 years hence, but we are surprised when weapons produce refugees. Plans for another Cold War are already well advanced, but we do not see it. Secular people wonder what the churches are for. They cannot see, because what happens outside the private space is so similar to the rest of secular life.

Whole or holy Christian lives are being fragmented by the pressures of profit and sales.

We need Christian revival, not necessarily spectacular. Part of it is putting politics in the Christian faith.



# Reshaping the culture

By Stephen Mawditt,  
New Wine

For many of us there is a hunger to see the church reformed in such a way as to see revival unleashed across the land. But what sort of reformation is it that we need or long for? For the Puritans it was holiness; for the Moravians a church on its knees; for Luther it was the priesthood of all believers and the Bible accessible to all; for Wesley the need for repentance and sanctification; for Wimber the pursuit of evangelism in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reformation derives from the Latin 'reformare', which means 'to shape again'. When we think of 'church' we can all too easily think first of the institution, buildings, clergy or services. There is much that can distract us from our mission and call to reach the harassed and helpless with the good news of a Good Shepherd. There is much, especially in a rural context of multi-parish benefices, that needs to be re-imagined and re-structured.

But, reformation is not the language of church deconstruction. Rather more it suggests the picture of a sculptor or artist shaping a work of art that glorifies its creator. It requires patience, time and commitment. It speaks of forming culture, values and priorities. The

promise of Jesus is to build his church. He is the supreme artist at work. His church is to represent heaven on earth and we get to share in his creative work.

He builds his church on and through us. So, in what ways do we need to see the culture of the church reshaped to reflect heaven more?

We need to be a people shaped by the Word. Every reformation involves a rediscovery of the authority of Scripture. Nehemiah needed an Ezra; Josiah a Hilkiah and Shaphan; Pentecost a Peter to root the present in the context of the promises of Scripture. The authentic church of Jesus Christ is a prophetic voice into the culture. It is not just a presence of influence but an agent of transformation. We set the standards for the culture and the world in which we live - not vice versa.

That's the call: to be a holy nation and a royal priesthood. The promise is that we are a people belonging to God. A great privilege and a huge responsibility.

We need to be a people of the Spirit. Unashamedly given over to the promise of the gift. That simple prayer echoed down the ages: 'Come Holy Spirit'. As 19th century church leader EM Bounds wrote: "What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organisations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost

can use - men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men - men of prayer."

Nothing has changed except that we would add women and children too!

We need to be a people shaped by the mission imperative to make disciples who will in turn shape the culture of the world with the values and vision of the Kingdom of heaven. A group of unchurched young people recently attended a Christian event nearby. By the end of the weekend over half had committed their lives to Jesus and were hungry for the word of God - wanting to be connected to a church back home. When we partner a confidence in the gospel with a surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit we become agents of transformation.

We have recently returned from the New Wine National Gathering at Shepton Mallet. One of the things I love about New Wine is the understanding that the local church is the hope of the nation. A commitment that is now shared by organisations such as CAP, Tearfund and Westminster Theological Centre, who all value working in partnership with the local church.

The overwhelming success of the

SNP in the recent election spoke to me about the potential for a nation to be changed. I am not particularly qualified to comment on Scottish affairs but three aspects stand out to me. There was clear and strategic leadership, a political vacuum to be filled, a certain fervour for national identity that were all part of the swing factors.

I'm sure it's not as simple as this but it seems as if overnight a nation changed colour and allegiance. One result in particular caught my eye - a 39 per cent swing to the SNP. What would this nation, region, area look like if there was a 39 per cent swing to the person of Jesus Christ?

All we need are the swing factors. A spiritual vacuum in the land, strategic leadership and above all a fervour for the King and his Kingdom. Let's assume we have the first two: not unreasonable - there are signs of spiritual hunger and thirst in many and sundry places; and, certainly within the Church of England, a leadership with mission on its radar.

So, fervour for the Kingdom of God. It starts with the house of God.

*Stephen Mawditt leads the Fountain of Life Church, a missionary congregation of the Church of England in Norfolk, as well as the New Wine Network there*

## The Changing Age of Motherhood

By Peter Brierley

At what age do mothers have their first child? Half a dozen or so are born in the UK each year before a girl is 14, and the oldest mother, in Italy, recently celebrated having her first child at 66, but the average in 2015 in the UK is now 30. It was 28 in the 1940s and 1950s, fell to 26 in the 1970s and 1980s and has been steadily rising since.

The "Swinging Sixties" and the sexual revolution that resulted saw a huge increase in teenage sex and, although the pill was available from the mid-60s, many teenagers became pregnant - more than 10 per cent of all births were to those under 20 between 1965 and 1975. Since then the percentage of births to both teenagers and women aged 20 to 24 has declined steadily and in 2014 was just four per cent and 16 per cent respectively (against 37 per cent in 1970 for 20- to 24-year-olds).

The turbulence of the age of motherhood is reflected in the graph. The top line shows the total number of births, with the 1960s boom, and a fresh new boom, although much smaller, since 2005, due in part to the large number of immigrant children now being born here.

The graph shows the high peak of births to younger women between the mid-60s and mid-70s, when Britain had the

highest teenage pregnancy rate in Europe, and their subsequent reduction. Two-fifths of all births to women aged 20 to 24 in the 1960s has given place to less than a fifth in that age-group in the 21st century. The graph also shows that the numbers of babies born to mothers aged 25 to 29 have remained remarkably stable during this entire period, ranging from 28 per cent to 33 per cent of the total.

### Births to older women

In addition, the graph clearly shows the steady increase in the number of births to older women, from the mid-70s onwards, to women both in their early and late thirties, and to those 40 and over (four per cent of the total in 2014, more than to those under 20).

There are large changes reflected here, evidence that society can change quite rapidly in response to current trends - the falling rate of teenage

pregnancies, the huge rise of cohabitees (many of whom are now having families), and the larger numbers of births to older women (sometimes because of divorce and remarriage). What does it mean for the church? Just as the education system has to adjust to variable birth rates, churches need to be alert to any changes needed in the structure of their activities.

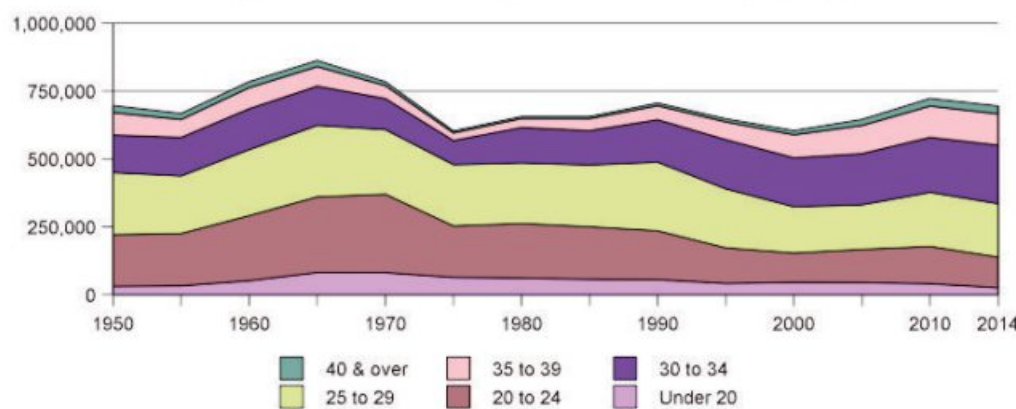
Women having babies in their 30s means they will be in their 50s when their children are in their 20s, and may then return to a career left behind to have a family. Volunteers may thus be fewer in churches, reflecting their need to have more paid staff - youth workers, secretaries, administrators, and so on.

Somewhere in the mix of all of this will be the Christian concept of "call" - should Christian women follow a career first or marry earlier? How far is Christian motherhood still seen as a "call" or "vocation"? Often financial considerations influence such decisions and even those who do marry in their 20s delay parenthood until financially stable.

The number of people cohabiting in the last 20 years has considerably increased, something not reflected in the majority of young couples in our churches, who marry instead. So it may be that, contrary to national trend, Christian marriages are taking place more when the couple are in their 20s rather than in their 30s. Having plenty of mums in their 30s and 40s usually means lots of energy and ideas for running Sunday school, play-groups and Holiday Clubs!

*Dr Peter Brierley may be contacted on [peter@brierleyres.com](mailto:peter@brierleyres.com).*

Number of children born in England and Wales by age of mother



[cen@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper.com)



[facebook.com/churchnewspaper](https://facebook.com/churchnewspaper)



[@churchnewspaper](https://twitter.com/churchnewspaper)







# J John: Man with a Mission

By Colin Blakely

**A**N AMBITIOUS evangelistic outreach in London has been unveiled by popular evangelist J John. His plan is to hire Arsenal's Emirates Stadium in July 2017 for a day of outreach, an event that could be the start of a series of stadium missions across the UK.

The vision for the Just One Emirates event was explained to a group of 500 church leaders in the stadium last week, and could see up to 50,000 people hear the British-born, globe-trotting evangelist sharing the Gospel message.

J John, who was born just a mile from the north London stadium, said that he had been nursing this vision for the last five years, and believed that it was not just a good idea, it was a 'God idea'. The initial response has been positive, and Hillsong and Matt Redman will play key roles, involving the creation of a 1,000-voice choir. And Noel Tredinnick from All Souls, Langham Place, is also planning to put together a 1,000-voice youth choir.

There has also been support from the new Bishop of Islington, the Rt Rev Ric Thorpe (who actually started his ministry as an assistant to J John).

It would be a high-profile evangelistic mission: he pointed out that the last time something like this happened was in 1984 with Mission England. And he is sure that the days of large-scale evangelistic events such as this are not relics of a bygone era.

He pointed to his own experience. In 2000, as the Millennium dawned, he believed that God was calling on him to preach on the Ten Commandments. He worked on 10 talks, one on each of them, and asked his vicar if he could have 10 consecutive Sunday evening services to deliver the talks. The outcome was remarkable.

On the night he spoke on the commandment about stealing, one man put £102,000 in an amnesty bin. "I thought, something's happening here! There were envelopes with £25,000 in cash in them."

"One note I read said 'We

were burgled 28 years ago and we claimed for jewellery that wasn't stolen and we want to give it back'."

Encouraged by the success at his own church, he took the talks around the country.

When he did the series in Liverpool one talk called for people to hand in their knives, guns, weapons and ammunition. "There was so

**I am reclaiming the term 'evangelist', because that is what I am and that is what I do**

much ammunition that police had to come with armoured vehicles to take it away.

"I started doing that series in my local church to see what the reaction would be. I thought that we had struck gold here. So we did it 36 times and attendance exceeded 1 million."

So he is confident that large-

scale events like that can relate to people, both those in the churches and those who have no contact with the Church.

Following that series on the 10 Commandments he believed that God was leading him to the stadium idea. And he is enthusiastic about the evangelistic possibilities.

He said he was even more encouraged in his calling to be an evangelist after he heard about an employee of Microsoft, who is a member of a church in Reading. His business card, from the technology giant, simply describes his role as "evangelist".

"I was blown away by that. Some people think 'evangelist' is a dirty word, but even Microsoft thinks that it is a great role! I am reclaiming that term, because that is what I am and that is what I do."

He has a strong record for his new campaign, having carried out 350 missions in 69 countries around the world.

"Over the last 33 years we have been trying to demonstrate the message of Christianity in as many ways as possible," he says, and this is his latest, and most ambitious project.

But he is anxious for churches to join him in the new venture. He observes that most

church activity is either worship or pastoral care, and very few parishes devote their energies to outreach. This needs to change, he believes. But he does not think that a one-off event in a football stadium can be a quick-fix remedy for this oversight.

It can, however, unite churches in looking outwards and provide a focus for their outreach events.

He plans to devote a whole year in the run-up to the event in visiting churches, training people and encouraging them to invite friends to the Emirates. "There are almost 50,000 seats there, but we don't want it filled with Christians. If every believer brings one friend that would be great," he said.

He pointed to recent research that was carried out by his friend Roy Crowne's Hope, the Church of England and the Evangelical Alliance. The 'Talking Jesus' report found that 44 per cent of practicing Christians credit their friends for introducing them to Jesus.

That research also showed

that the majority of non-Christians view believers as friendly and caring, so the task is to encourage Christians to invite their friends to what promises to be a spectacular day in one of London's most popular football stadiums.

J John has a big vision for the Emirates, but it will also incur a big bill. The costs are being split between his Philo Trust, and churches being invited to be partners, paying £500 a year in 2016 and 2017. That would be a cost of just £1.80 a day for their involvement.

And the last part of the income will come from tickets, which will cost between £5-£10 (although the padded, posher seats will be a little more).

It will be something of a homecoming for the evangelist, whose first name is a hard-to-pronounce Greek name – hence being known as J John or just 'John'. He recalls his childhood in the area, where his mother and father owned a chip shop round the corner on the Holloway Road.

The charismatic speaker is energized by his vision and what it can do for the churches in London. And then he plans to take the event to football stadiums up and down the country. That really would be a Mission England.



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper







# Janey Lee Grace

*Live Healthy! Live Happy!*

## When essential fatty acids really are essential

There's so much confusion around essential fatty acids but one thing is certain, they are essential: we need a balance between Omega 3, 6 and 9, and the one that many of us are deficient in, sometimes without realising it, is Omega 3.

During pregnancy the foetus takes it from the mother as it is essential for their development. Here's hoping that during pregnancy good quality omega 3s are consumed or it's possible that the deficiency could lead to post-natal depression.

Interestingly we can't make Omega 3 naturally in our bodies: we need to obtain from eating the correct fats in our diet. Many years ago everyone ate the correct fats, (yes your grandma was right cooking with lard from grass fed animals or butter or ghee)

but food has become industrialised, and we are more likely to buy chemical versions of real food.

Durwin Banks is a farmer and in more recent years a food campaigner. After realising that solely farming wasn't sustainable he looked into producing linseed and linseed oil after seeing how shiny the coats of the animals were after consuming linseed oil cake.

He says that it is critical to produce it in small batches to ensure freshness and superior quality. No culinary linseed oil or meal leaves the farm older than 10 days from being pressed or milled.

There's not much this maverick farmer doesn't know about the role of good fats in the body after many years of experience and he suggests that we are 'walking chemical factories'. If we put the right fuel in,

everything works just fine, and the right chemicals are produced but when we constantly introduce denatured foods and chemicals that the body doesn't recognise problems can occur.

One such misunderstanding is that we should cook with vegetable oils. No, says Durwin, never cook with oils, as they degrade when heated. Sadly most fast food cafes cook in hot oil and marketing tells us we should cook with rapeseed oil or similar.

The best thing to do is your own research. I love cooking with pure extra virgin coconut oil or coconut butter (such as the coconut butter from Tiana Fair trade organics) – and don't worry it doesn't really taste of anything – so you won't be having a coconutty tropical fried egg!

Taste is another whole issue of course, and Durwin sells his linseed oil direct and suggests storing it in the fridge and consuming within two months. He suggests we be aware that linseed oils have a shelf life of a year or 18 months, so the chances are they will be rancid. If oil tastes bitter, he suggests that you use it to coat your fence, or coat your cricket bat: anything but consuming it!

You can add linseed oil to smoothies, make a vinaigrette, use it as a dipping oil or add to Quark and use as an accompaniment to strawberries.

[www.thelinseedfarm.co.uk](http://www.thelinseedfarm.co.uk)



the

# Whispering gallery

### Creating a crisis?

Did the C of E actually invent secularisation? The bold thesis that the church started talking about a secular society before anyone else has been advanced by a young Oxford historian, Sam Brewitt-Taylor. In an essay that attracted widespread attention he argued that radical theologians who were influenced by Bonhoeffer like John Robinson claimed Britain was secular before the idea was picked up by the media or even widely discussed by sociologists. In a new article in the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* he turns his attention to the Student Christian Movement. From a membership of 9,000 in the early 1950s this had gently declined to around 7,000 in the early 1960s but it was still a major player in universities with 250 branches and 30 full-time staff. In 1962 Bishop Ambrose Reeves became General Secretary and he was convinced that SCM should be an organisation dedicated to the cause of political and social change and not restricted to Christians. Reeves drastically overestimated the extent of religious decline and was convinced that to survive SCM had to be in tune with the concerns of students who were not religious. Brewitt-Taylor argues that exaggerated perceptions of secularisation were in fact a key factor in creating the religious crisis they claimed to describe. Even conservative figures like Eric Mascall accepted the claim of radical theologians that society was turning secular. When Reeves resigned he was replaced by a Methodist minister who wanted SCM to work for revolution. By the end of the 1960s SCM was a shadow of its former self and Christian Unions were the biggest religious organisations on university campuses.

### Reporting the Vatican

John Allen has been critical of the British press coverage of religion. When it comes to reporting the Vatican he is a major figure who was constantly on US television during the Pope's visit. But he has attracted criticism himself for being too much of an apologist for the Vatican rather than offering impartial analysis. When Mgr Krzysztof Charamsa announced that he was gay and in a relationship, Allen dismissed him as a 'minor Vatican functionary'. In fact Charamsa has worked for the CDF since 2003, was adjunct secretary to the International Theological Commission and held several teaching positions in pontifical universities in Rome. As another Vatican correspondent, Robert Mickens, commented, this is 'no minor Vatican pen pusher'. Charamsa is writing a book on his experiences which, he says, will detail how the current head of the CDF, Cardinal Muller, and other high-ranking officials work to thwart Pope Francis' attempts to introduce reform. Charamsa also served under both Cardinals Ratzinger and Lavada so he should have revelations about them as well and what Mickens terms 'the unsavoury activity of the doctrine office'. If there are gay networks in the Vatican, Charamsa could shed light on them. As Mickens puts it: "If he tells all he knows his book could be extremely explosive." On another topic, Massimo Faggioli, a leading theological commentator on Vatican affairs, has also rebuked Allen, insisting that despite what Allen says, the question of Communion for the remarried is not off the current Synod's agenda.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to *The Guardian* for appointing a religious affairs correspondent. Neither *The Daily Telegraph* nor *The Times*, since the departure of Ruth Gledhill in 2014, has had a reporter exclusively concerned with religion. Now [i] The Guardian has appointed Harriet Sherwood, a senior figure who has also been head of news planning, Jerusalem correspondent, foreign editor and home editor. This reverses a trend that has probably been driven by cost-cutting rather than any perception that religion is of declining importance in the world. It remains to be seen if Sherwood's appointment will mean a reduced role for Giles Fraser. Andrew Brown continues to offer comment on religion. In a recent piece he wrote that opposing gay bishops for the sake of unity of the church is a mistake. He is right to argue that the current bench of bishops in undistinguished, a second eleven at best, and that Jeffrey John would add intellectual and theological distinction. But it is not just gays who are seen as too dangerous to be appointed bishops. With a double first in English and Theology the Bishop of Fulham is among the brightest members of the current bench but given his opposition to the ordination of women the chances of him being translated to a diocese are nil. Part of the trouble is that synod representatives and dioceses now have a major say in episcopal appointments. This means that such appointments reflect the balance of church parties in synod and that dioceses look for someone who will not rock the boat. The days are over when lively mavericks like Mervyn Stockwood and David Jenkins could be appointed bishops.

### Doing God Down Under

Press comment on the replacement of Tony Abbott by Malcolm Turnbull as Prime Minister of Australia has focussed on Abbott's monarchism and Turnbull's republicanism as well as on Turnbull's role in the Spycatcher affair but the differences in their religious views are also interesting. Abbott is a conservative Catholic who refused to allow Liberal MPs a free vote on gay marriage. Instead he promised a referendum, a move welcomed by the Diocese of Sydney. On returning to Australia from Oxford he tried his vocation in a seminary and then wrote a magazine article attacking the Australian Catholic bishops for being too liberal. Turnbull is a convert to Catholicism but is much quieter about his faith. According to an article in *The Melbourne Anglican* he has described himself as a 'very imperfect Catholic'. His family background is Presbyterian but he married his wife in an Anglican church in Oxfordshire. A brash 25-year-old non-believer he persuaded the Vicar he had a duty to marry him to prevent fornication in the parish! He has told the press that his religious beliefs are 'off limits' but it seems he followed his wife into the Catholic Church sometime in his 40s. He has a genuine interest in theology but he has admitted his faith is still evolving. "I think religion is a mystery," he has said. "It's very hard; it is not something that is easily rationalised."



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper







# A wrong approach on climate change



Nicholas Holtam

I have in the past criticised the Church's catastrophist view on climate change because, though the greenhouse effect is undoubtedly a real and potentially dangerous phenomenon, there is much less certainty in the computer models predicting runaway warming than activists would have us believe.

Sadly, the Church of England's lead bishop on the environment, Nicholas Holtam, is again ratcheting up the rhetoric with a whole series of statements that are open to question. He claims most risibly that climate change has a direct association to the Syrian conflict and the refugee crisis (cofecomms.tumblr.com).

He also declares: "The scientific evidence is

clear and overwhelming. Climate change threatens the way of life of everyone on the planet, including us in the UK, and is set to be catastrophic for the world's poorest."

He is doing what green activists have done for years, which is put people off with claims that can neither be proven nor disproven and are therefore worthless. When you make the problem too big, too catastrophic and too apocalyptic people feel that they cannot possibly act in the face of such large challenges. They give up and ignore the problem. Scaring people into action never works. I should know, I smoked for years in spite of worrying about the risks to my health. It is partly this atmosphere of doom

that leaves us with no confidence to deal with the problem.

And in fact a rather less ideological approach to the subject is much more sustainable and realistic. There will be a role for both mitigation and for adaptation, as the climate always changes. When we plan to mitigate we should adopt strategies that do not inhibit development of the poorest economies, increase poverty and punish the poorest-paid.

The evidence suggests we should plant many more trees. We should move from dirty coal to cleaner gas, especially plentiful shale gas, and even cleaner nuclear energy. Our support for expensive renewables should be realistic rather than idealistic because we face a very real risk of the lights going out in Britain in the near future.

But above all, the way we mitigate should be thought through with regard to the consequences. There is evidence that the expansion of biomass, and the increasing use of bio-fuels has sometimes led to deforestation and food shortage in some parts of the world.

A panicked and ideological reaction to man-made climate change does not lead to good policy. And in fact many green campaigners give the impression that they want to stop economic growth where it is, leaving poorer nations with little or no hope to develop in line with wealthier advanced economies.

As Christians we are stewards of the environment but our response to the challenge must put human development first. The challenges of poverty, and war are our first priorities and these are best resolved through economic growth, and the spread of education.

## Back to 1973

Charles Moore rather wisely pointed out at the weekend that the risks posed by a Brexit were not really so great. Leaving was merely a return to the status quo of 1973 and centuries of independent, successful British trade throughout the world ('Leaving the EU would be a leap into the known', *Sunday Telegraph*, 11 October).

And though the polls clearly favour those who wish to remain in Europe, the spectre of fear and insecurity that politicians used successfully to keep Scotland in the Union will be less telling.

Apart from anything, Europe is clearly dysfunctional. It has broken under the strains of its contradictions twice in recent years. Firstly, its democratic bonds are broken as a result of the financial crisis. The imposition of its will on countries like Greece has badly damaged relationships among other member nations. The risks of factionalism, extremism and unrest within Europe are now very great indeed.

Secondly, the principle of free movement is now under pressure from its external and internal borders because of the refugee crisis. The failure of Europe's much-vaunted solidarity has led to the re-imposition of some border controls and the forcing of quotas on reluctant countries and resistant refugees.

Many of the refugees within Europe have very firm ideas of where they want to live. Only the prosperous northern nations will do, or at least those places where they can join families and friends. If they are given a home in Hungary they will soon move on to German, Sweden or Holland.

For the first time, therefore, a Brexit is likely. David Cameron will have to return with considerable concessions from his European partners if he is to close the door to Brexit. Alternatively, he and his allies will have to come up with better arguments.

LIZ HOARE

thespiritualdirector

By the Rev Dr Liz Hoare

*When Jesus turned and saw [the two disciples] following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see,' John 1:38.*

If we were to stop and ask people in the street, 'What are you looking for?' what kind of answers would we get? I wonder? Some might think of the immediate thing that brought them there – a cup of coffee, a friend they were due to meet, somewhere to sit down. Others might take a more existential approach and say things like love, hope or the meaning of life.

We can look at the answer the disciples gave to Jesus and wonder if they hadn't missed the opportunity of a lifetime. Here was God incarnate, the creator and sustainer of the universe standing before them. He asks them what they were looking for and he could grant

them anything he thought fit but all they could come up with was 'Where are you staying?'

Jesus, however, is not like a genie in a bottle who can be summoned to grant our latest or greatest wish so perhaps their response is not so foolish after all. In fact it was probably the best thing they could have said.

They had previously been followers of John the Baptist and heard him exclaim that here was the Lamb of God and something in John's words made them forsake their first teacher and turn to Jesus instead.

Their answer to Jesus' initial question draws forth the invitation of a lifetime: 'Come and see.' Jesus invites us to stay with him always. His final words in Matthew's Gospel are 'I am with you always to the end of the age.' (Matt 28:20).

To be invited to someone's home is to be offered an intimate glimpse into what they are really like. Jesus is offering these two strangers the gift of hospitality,

which is fundamental to the Christian Gospel. Hospitality breaks down barriers, involves generosity and a willingness to be vulnerable. The Lord of the universe desires that we should be at home with him.

Jesus' pattern of discipling people was first to call them to be with him. 'Come, follow me' means that we go where Jesus goes and stay where he stays. We have to come before we can go.

We don't always know what it is that we are looking for, but in the presence of God himself we have space to find out. Meaning, security, hope and suchlike are hard to unpack and describe in terms of concrete reality, and anyone who has become a follower of Jesus knows that the important focus of them all has to be Jesus himself.

As long as he is there and with us, we have all that we need and more besides, no matter what kind of storm is raging. 'What are you looking for?' is a question to ponder ourselves in the presence of our hospitable saviour.



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper





# Are gay people 'Grafted in'?

## Shared Conversations

*The Church of England Newspaper* reported on 2 October that the Anglican Church of Canada have been told, in a document entitled *This Holy Estate*, as part of a campaign for 'same-sex marriage' to be legitimised by authorised rites, that "Theology backs gay marriage".

The ACC is part of a powerful nexus in the western church pushing to bring church teaching and liturgy into line with western secular liberal values; at or near the top of the list is an insistence that homosexuality is a positive good, to be encouraged in every way possible.

This is happening worldwide in a concerted effort to change the declared mind of the Lambeth Council 1998 (Resolution 1.10) and other declarations of the wider Church, which a large number of 'global south' Anglican Churches (claiming to represent the majority of Anglicans) continue to uphold and respect. In their promotion of this agenda, these liberal theologians say that the Holy Spirit is doing a new thing among us, that we should see God at work releasing homosexuals from centuries, nay, millennia of oppression, and that actively homosexual people can be just as much children of God as anyone else.

Have they got right on their side? Are they on solid ground when they propose that this 'new thing' is analogous, for example, to the 'grafting in' of the Gentiles (Romans 11) that gave rise to the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15? After all, they say, surely we need to be aware of and open to God's new deeds in bringing salvation to those who once were considered outside the pale of his people?

Must we not recognise "that God's grace is broader than we had assumed, and that those who had been excluded are now being invited in"? (This Holy Estate, quoted in CEN, 2 October).

The Council of Jerusalem and the communiqué that issued from it are crucial in this area, since these flowed with, and gave the whole church's approval to, Paul's theme of the 'grafting in' of the Gentiles, developed in Romans, and of their full inclusion in the church, expounded in other letters.

The council arose because Gentiles were coming to faith in Christ, raising the question for the church's leaders: should the Gentile converts submit to the Torah and become messianic Jews or was God manifesting a new way of incorporating people within his Kingdom?

The discussion and outcome hinged on two related points.

First, it was observed that evidence of salvation was apparent among the Gentiles. This then caused the members of the council to go back to the Scriptures (our Old Testament) to find evidence that this was a right and proper expectation.

There they found the second telling point: the Scriptures foretold the Gentiles becoming part of the people of God. Therefore they concluded that the Gentiles might properly come to the Messiah for salvation, for salvation was not found in keeping the Jewish Law, but only in the Messiah, the Christ.

The Council of Jerusalem was necessary because people had so absorbed the Jewish culture that they couldn't see how God could act outside that culture. So how can we know if we are in danger of that same failing in relation to homosex-



uals and Christian culture?

But there is a substantial difference between the historic issue of Gentiles coming into the early church as distinctively Gentile Christians rather than as Jewish converts, and the contemporary issue of human sexuality and Christian discipleship.

For a true parallel we would have to find, firstly, evidence of salvation apparent among the group proposed for full inclusion in the church and then, secondly but crucially, Scriptural indications foretelling the inclusion of that group among God's people.

The homosexual lobby claim the former, but as we go to the Scriptures, the latter is nowhere to be found. Without Scriptural affirmation that practising homosexuals will one day be fully included without needing to change that aspect of their lives, we may find we have to apply the apostolic command of 1 Corinthians 5:9-13.

The Gentile Christians were told that they would not be burdened with the requirements of the Jewish Law, but that they should "abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality" (Acts 15:29). Whatever has been forbidden in the area of sexual conduct remains forbidden.

It is significant that everything that is still forbidden relates to the satisfaction of physical appetites: what we do with our bodies directly affects our ability to be holy, even under the new covenant.

There is also a major difference between unclean and forbidden. In God's law, contact with uncleanness was inevitable in everyday life, but meant exclusion for a limited period, followed by cleansing; a forbidden act was forbidden, not to be counted inevitable, and meant exclusion until repentance and sacrifice for the atonement and expiation of sin.

The jibe, "If I can eat prawns, why is homosexuality still sinful?" suggests that as uncleanness has been dealt with in Christ, so allowance should be extended to all issues of sexuality. But Acts 15 says that although uncleanness has indeed been done away with in Christ, nonetheless the prohibition on sexual behaviour outside monogamous heterosexual marriage still stands. That Christians also fall for many other sins makes no difference. Sin remains sin.

In the Law, God regulated existing practices of sexual relationships. Polygamy and divorce were restricted, and banned in certain situations. Strong restrictions were placed on those with whom sexual relations might legitimately be pursued (eg Leviticus 18, that passage so hated of liberals). Sex between close relations by either blood or marriage, or with different people who were themselves closely related, was outlawed, as were same-sex intercourse, sex with animals and cross-dressing.

The inclusion of porneia in the list of things still prohibited to Gentile Christians under the New Covenant shows that the prohibitions on adultery and fornication, incest, homosexual activity and bestiality all remain.

God is deeply concerned about what goes on in the bedrooms of Christians.

The New Testament writings offer not one whiff of positive assessment of same-sex acts, and lifestyles of settled practice at odds with Christian commitment are outlawed—with the Epistles explicitly excluding homosexual lifestyles among others. Clearly both the acts and the lifestyles that they define are out of order.

The letter of James (1:13-15) forbids us to ascribe to God's creation our desires that lead us into sin. "God created me this way" won't wash before him. The only conclusion that seems right to draw from this is that we are explicitly forbidden by God in his Word to relax these rules in our day (or in any day).

It is so hard to swim against a cultural tide. It would be oh, so easy for those who resist the liberal sexual agenda to fall into line and agree with it, as the liberals so earnestly desire. At a stroke it would remove a great stick with which the secular western world beats the church (suits the liberals, but the world would find other sticks to use), and with which we are beaten within the church (would that cease?).

But God in his Word makes it abundantly clear that all sexual activity outside monogamous heterosexual marriage always has been and always will be intrinsically sinful.

Furthermore, those involved in a settled lifestyle centred around and defined by such sinful sexual behaviour must surely renounce it, or we will find it hard to accept as genuine the 'evidence of salvation' which they suggest may be pres-

ent in their lives. Satan can fake anything, even piety and goodness, so as to deceive the faithful into accepting what God condemns (2 Corinthians 11:12-15).

These people assuredly do not consciously set out to serve Satan, but in allowing themselves to be deceived by their desires and the blandishments of our sinful world, they serve his purposes full well, if they contradict God and promote as good what he defines as sin.

Of course, anyone may be a Christian, a child of God, grafted in to the olive tree through faith in Christ, and yet subject to a particular ('besetting') sin — including sexual sin, of which same-sex sexual activity is but one aspect.

Whatever our besetting sin, be it gossip and slander, lying, prideful disdain for others, drunkenness, any kind of sexual sin, of any gender orientation, or sin of any other stripe, when we fall into it our only hope is to return to our loving heavenly Father in sorrow and desire to amend our life and practice, and seek his forgiveness.

Only recognising and confessing sin can bring us back into a right relationship with God as we receive his forgiveness. Not to do so runs the risk of following Demas (2 Timothy 4:10). Settling our life and lifestyle around the sin puts us at risk (at the very least) of the broad and easy way to destruction.

And finally, we cannot count liberal activists guiltless, in this or any other area where they argue that, really, it's OK to do what the Bible describes as sin — whether they actively engage in the behaviour or simply promote its acceptance. Jesus said that to cause another to fall into sin was so terrible that for the one guilty of such transgression, "it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6).

Does the Bible describe what we want to do as sin? Then we may not call it anything else.

In that case, there is no way in which conservative Christians of any tradition can change their view on this subject and still remain faithful to God, his Word and his people — even should they be persuaded that such a change would be humanly desirable.

Our concern is not to exclude, but to enable people truly to be included. Only God can do that, through the gospel of sins forgiven and sinners restored — but he does so only on his terms. The whole tenor of Scripture shows that God is not doing a new thing, and is not 'at last grafting in' a new 'wild branch' to the olive tree: rather this worldwide campaign is a novelty that is, at best, 'of the flesh,' and, at worst, truly diabolical.

In human terms, to stand up and be counted as those who abide by the Word of God may cost us respect, friendship, preferment or promotion; it may lead to scorn and ridicule, ostracism and even persecution. But (to borrow that famous line), "Here we stand: we can do no other".

*This article has been written by a priest in the Northern Province. However, because this is a sensitive issue in his present parish, and in order not to reopen old wounds, he would prefer not to be identified as the author*



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper





## BIBLE CHALLENGE

**Day 290** – Ezekiel 39-40, Psalm 88, Revelation 11  
**Day 291** – Ezekiel 41-42, Psalm 89:1-18, Revelation 12  
**Day 292** – Enjoy hearing the Scriptures read aloud in church  
**Day 293** – Ezekiel 43-44, Psalm 89:19-52, Revelation 13  
**Day 294** – Ezekiel 45-46, Psalm 90, Revelation 14  
**Day 295** – Ezekiel 47-48, Psalm 91, Revelation 15  
**Day 296** – Daniel 1-2, Psalm 92, Revelation 16

## APPOINTMENTS

**The Rev Dr Glyn J Ackerley**, Vicar [also Diocesan Director of Ordinands], Shorne (Rochester), to be Vicar, Bushmead (St Albans).  
**The Rev Judith Allford**, Head of Pastoral Care, Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust (Guildford), and Honorary Priest Vicar, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Guildford, to be also Honorary Canon of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Guildford.  
**The Rev Dr David Atallah**, Assistant Curate (Northmoor Team) Benefice of Okehampton, Inwardleigh and Belstone (Exeter), to be Assistant Curate with the title Associate Minister, St Mary's Maidenhead (Oxford).  
**The Rev Richard Banham**, Rector, Wheathampstead (St Albans), to be also Rural Dean of Wheathampstead (St Albans).  
**The Rev Anne Bond**, Assistant Curate, to be Associate Priest of Corfe Castle, Church Knowle, Kimmeridge & Steeple with Tyneham, (Salisbury).  
**The Rev Nicholas Cheeseman**, (On-going) Vicar, All Saints, Reading and Associate Area Dean of Reading, to be also Priest in Charge, Holy Trinity, Reading (Oxford).  
**The Rev Laurie Clow**, Team Vicar, Hampreston Benefice, to be Rector, St Leonards, Chesham Bois (Oxford).  
**The Rev Lydia Cook**, Associate Priest, to be Rector of Okeford, (Salisbury).  
**The Rev Martin Davis**, Associate Priest, St Francis of Assisi, Terriers, High Wycombe, to be Team Vicar, Kidlington Benefice (Oxford).  
**The Rev Deborah Davison**, Assistant Curate in Training, Benefice of St Paul, Wokingham in the Deanery of Sonning, to be Assistant Curate with the title Associate Minister, South Newbury Benefice of St George the Martyr and St John the Evangelist (Oxford).  
**The Rev Nicolas John Michell Freeland**, Assistant Curate of Jersey, St Peter, to be Assistant Curate (Self-Supporting Minister) of Jersey St Brelade with St Aubin.  
**The Rev Hannah Hobday**, Associate Priest, St George's, Chesterton, to be Assistant Curate with the title Associate Minister, St Peter's, Earley (Oxford).  
**The Rev Philip Hobday**, Fellow, Dean of Chapel and Director of Studies in Theology and Religious Studies, Magdalene College, Cambridge, to be Vicar, St Peter's, Earley (Oxford).  
**The Rev George Howard**, Permission to Officiate (Oxford), to be Vicar, Manor Park St John the Baptist and Whitby Road St Michael (Oxford).  
**The Rev Matthew G Hunter**, Assistant Curate, (West Yorkshire and the Dales), to be Associate Priest of Hexham (Newcastle).  
**The Rev Denise Gloria Jones**, Senior Chaplain, Birmingham Women's Hospital, (Birmingham); Assistant Priest, Christ Church, Yardley Wood, (Birmingham), to be Priest-in-charge Hamstead, St Bernard, (Birmingham) (this post to be half time; Denise will remain part time as Senior Chaplain to Birmingham Women's Hospital).  
**The Rev Neil McCathie**, Team Rector, St Peter's Church, Parr, Merseyside, to be Vicar, Britwell Benefice (Oxford).  
**The Rev Alison Mathew**, Assistant Curate to St Mary's, Osterley Road with St

## ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

**Friday 16 October.** Psalm 121, 1 Kgs 1:38-53. Tennessee - (IV, The Episcopal Church): The Rt Rev John Bauerschmidt  
**Saturday 17 October.** Psalm 122, Mt 9:27-34. Terekeka - (Sudan): The Rt Rev Micah Laila Dawidi  
**Sunday 18 October.** Pentecost 21. Psalm 123, Mt 9:35-38. The Arctic - (Rupert's Land, Canada): The Rt Rev David Parsons; Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of the Arctic - (Rupert's Land, Canada): The Rt Rev Darren McCartney  
**Monday 19 October.** Psalm 124, Mt 10:1-15. The Episcopal Church in South Carolina - (IV, The Episcopal Church): The Rt Rev Charles VonRosenberg  
**Tuesday 20 October.** Psalm 125, Mt 10:16-23. The Murray - (South Australia, Australia): The Rt Rev John Frank Ford  
**Wednesday 21 October.** Psalm 126, 1 Kgs 3:16-28. Thika - (Kenya): The Rt Rev Julius Njuguna Wanyoike  
**Thursday 22 October.** Psalm 127, 1 Kgs 4:29-34. Thoothukudi - Nazareth - (South India): Vacant

Luke's Kingsley Road, Kensington, to be Assistant Curate with the title Associate Minister in the Benefice of Radley, Sunningwell and Kennington (Oxford).

**The Rev Jonathan Ian Moores**, Assistant Curate in the Benefice of Carlisle St James, has been appointed Team Vicar of the Benefice of Atherton and Hindsford with Howe Bridge (Manchester).  
**The Rev Marian Needham**, Assistant Priest, Dodleston Parish (Chester), to be Assistant Curate with the title Associate Minister, the Chase Benefice (Oxford).  
**The Rev David Payne**, Associate Clergy, Vale Benefice (Oxford), to be Priest in Charge, Bottesford and Muston (Leicester).  
**The Rev Valerie Plumb**, Rector of the Quantock Towers Benefice to be also Area Dean, Buckingham (Oxford).  
**The Rev Dr Michael Rajkovic**, Vicar of Bricket Wood (St Albans), to be Team Rector of Maltby and Priest in charge of Thurcroft St Simon and St Jude (Sheffield).  
**The Rev Susan Rolfe**, has been appointed Assistant Curate of St Mark's Wellingborough (Peterborough).  
**The Rev Canon David Seymour**, Vicar of Sturminster Newton, Hinton St Mary and Lydlinch, to be Priest in Charge of Marnhull, (Salisbury).  
**The Rev Adel Shokralla**, Priest, St Michael and All Angels, Cairo, to be Vicar, Old Windsor (Oxford).  
**The Rev Robert Simmonds**, (On-going) Senior Chaplain, Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, to be also Associate Minister, Holy Trinity, Reading (Oxford).  
**The Rev Canon Ian Smith**, Vicar of Warmsworth St Peter and Honorary Canon of Sheffield Cathedral, to be also Area Dean of West Doncaster (Sheffield).  
**The Rev Harry Steele**, Priest in Charge of Greenhill St Peter (Sheffield), to be Vicar of Greenhill St Peter (Sheffield).  
**The Rev Jeremy Tear**, Assistant Curate with the title Community Priest, St John's, Caversham (Oxford), to be Team Vicar, West Warrington Church (Liverpool).  
**The Rev Lucy Thirtle**, Incumbent of Kingsclere and Ashford Hill with Headley, to be Associate Minister, The Ray Valley Benefice (Islip) (Oxford).  
**The Rev Talisker Tracey-Macleod**, Assistant Curate, All Saints, Hove (Chichester), to be Rector in the Benefice of Cherbury with Gainfield (Oxford).  
**The Rev Julie Wearing**, Assistant Curate in the Parish of Upton-Cum-Chalvey (Oxford), to be Vicar, St Faith and St Martin with St Peter at Arches, (Lincoln).  
**The Ven Anthony Wilds**, PtO Priest, to be Associate Priest of Marnhull, (Salisbury).

## RETIREMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

**The Revd Michael Banks**, Chaplain to Beeston School (Norwich), retired on 21 July.  
**The Rev Alan Dibden**, Incumbent of the Benefice of Taplow and Dropmore (Oxford), retired from 30 September.  
**The Rev John Horatio George Lewis**, retires as Vicar of Borden (Canterbury) with effect from 31 January 2016.  
**The Rev Phillip Mears**, Team Vicar, Quainton Schorne Team (Oxford), retired from 30 September.  
**The Rev Jitesh Patel**, Associate Minister, North Abingdon Benefice (Oxford), resigned from 30 September.  
**The Rev Dr Victoria Slater**, Chaplain at Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust (Oxford), resigned from 30 September.  
**The Revd Marilyn Zipfel**, Lead Chaplain, James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust, is to retire from 30 October. Marilyn will remain Associate Priest OLM (Ordained Local Minister) in the Oulton Broad Benefice (Norwich).

## DEATHS

**The Rev Richard Cleland**, died on Monday, 5 October 2015 after a long battle with Alzheimer's Disease. Richard was Master of Wyggeston's Hospital from 1983 - 1997 and lived at Stuart Court, Kibworth Beauchamp (Leicester). Richard leaves a daughter, Ruth.  
**The Rev Mary Kerslake**,



Born: 21st December 1939, Ordained Deacon: 1st October 2005, Ordained Priest: 1st October 2006, OLM, Hethersett (St Remigius) w Canteloff w Little Melton and Great Melton, Diocese of Norwich (2005-2009). Retired 2009. Permission to Officiate, Diocese of Norwich from 2010. Died on 16 September.  
**The Rev Peter Rutherford**, Born 3 January 1934. Norwich Ordination Course 1973. Ordained deacon, 27th June 1976. Ordained priest, 1st January 1977. Non-stipendiary minister, New Catton (Christ Church), Norwich 1976-1979. Non-stipendiary minister, Eaton (Christ Church) (St Andrew) Norwich 1979-1980. Non-stipendiary minister, Norwich (St Stephen) 1981-1992. Permission to Officiate - Norwich 1992-1994. Honorary priest in charge, Earlham (St Mary) Norwich 1994-1999. Rural Dean, Norwich South 1998-1999. Retired from 01.09.1999. Permission to Officiate Norwich from 1999-2011. Died on 6 September.  
**The Rev Graham Sanders**, Permission to Officiate in the Diocese of Oxford, died on 16 September.

Available on the  
**App Store**

**Subscribe today from just 70p**

**Also available on Android**



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper





# The pick of the new books

Bart Erhman's *The New Testament* (OUP) has now reached its sixth edition, a proof of its popularity as a scholarly, accessible historical introduction to early Christian writings. It is beautifully produced with excellent photographs.

Parish churches contain some of our greatest treasures in carvings, stonework, paintings and other objects of art. John Goodall, Architecture Editor of *Country Life* writes a weekly series for the magazine celebrating notable objects to be found in churches. Now he has produced *Parish Church Treasures* (Bloomsbury) devoted to what he calls 'the nation's greatest Art Collection'.

Worshipping God should transform our lives and turn us into people who really want to be followers of Christ. What happens on Sunday in church is meant to connect with the rest of our lives. This is the theme of Bob Kauflin's *True Worshippers* (IVP), a book that leads into a deeper understanding of worship.

Monty Python's *Life of Brian* was used to examine the historical Jesus in an innovative conference held at King's College, London. The papers have been published in *Jesus and Brian*, edited by Joan E Taylor (Bloomsbury). Contributors to this original and stimulating book include Richard Burridge and Bart Erhman and both John



Monty Python's  
The Life of  
Brian

Cleese and Terry Jones give the book their enthusiastic recommendation. "I was astonished when I heard there was to be a conference

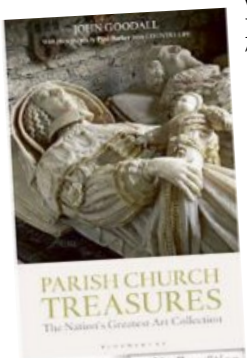
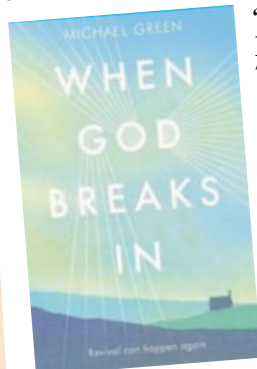
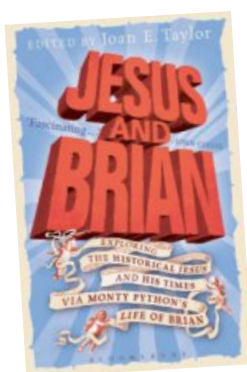
will be welcome by many who find the Celtic approach to prayer useful. Both books are superbly produced by Collins in hardback.

Book One is entitled 'The Journey Begins' and Book Two 'Further Up and Further In'. Both volumes are the work of the Northumberland Community. Volume One was originally published in 2002 but Volume Two is a new publication.

appears bleak and finds lessons for the church in the UK from what is happening elsewhere in the world and from the New Testament.

Mind over matter could be said to be the theme of Joyce Meyer's *The Mind Connection* (Hodder). The author argues that our moods, behaviour and the decisions we take are influenced by the thoughts that influence our minds. With God's help we can control our thinking and change our lives.

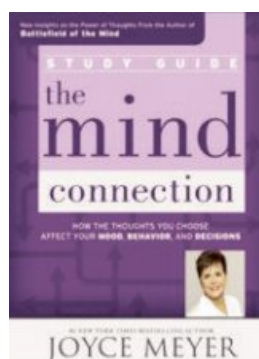
Many books have been devoted to CS Lewis but less attention has been paid to Joy Davidman. In *Yet One More Spring* (Eerdmans) we are offered a study of Davidman's life and work. This is a book that sheds much fresh light on a key figure in the life of CS Lewis.



where proper New Testament scholars would be discussing what they had learnt from *The Life of Brian*," writes Cleese. "This is the result. Fascinating."

A more orthodox approach to biblical scholarship is deployed by David Firth *The Message of Joshua*, the latest in IVP's The Bible Speaks Today series, edited by Alec Motyer.

*Celtic Daily Prayer Volumes One and Two*



## SUNDAY SERVICE

Last Sunday after Trinity — Sunday 25 October 2015

Jeremiah 31:7-9  
Hebrews 7:23-28  
Mark 10:46-52

The readings for this week rejoice in the everlasting salvation that Christ has brought to his people, opening their eyes to see his glory as they approach him by faith.

Jeremiah's prophecy of a return from exile for the remnant of Israel begins with loud shouts of gladness and praise to the one who saves his people. But it is more than a localised event — they come from the land of the north, but also from "the farthest parts of the earth" to enjoy restoration and refreshment. And in this mass movement of people come not just the strong but the weak and vulnerable too: the blind, the lame, pregnant mothers. They come weeping, but will be consoled; thirsty, but will find brooks of water; "through many dangers, toils, and snares," led on a straight path back to God their Father.

One particular blind beggar shouts out to the Lord and is saved, in our Gospel reading. He can't be silenced by the stern rebukes of onlookers, but cries out even more to "Jesus, Son of David" — the merciful king. Martin Luther once pictured those crowds trying to silence Bartimaeus as like the crowd of thoughts that seek to hinder us from praying: "Why do you want to pray? Do you not know what you are and what God is?"

Many voices tell us that it is pointless to pray and it accomplishes nothing, that Jesus cannot or will not give us what we need and want. They are "burdensome for the spirit," said Luther, "and hinder very many." Yet we must push through the crowds, for Jesus stands and bids us come to him. As Luther says, "a truly great struggle of the spirit is necessary."

The blind beggar came not just asking for money or help for the moment, but for sight. His spiritual perception was acute, for he recognised Jesus for who he was, and on this basis Christ restores his vision as well. It is a gift with a purpose — that the man might now follow Jesus in faith on the way.

Hebrews 7 speaks of a solid salvation that is accomplished once-and-for-all, and never needs to be repeated or reiterated. The priesthood of Christ, it says, is permanent because he is alive forever. Priests under the old covenant needed to be replaced from time to time because they had a limited lifespan and tended to die eventually. But Jesus lives forever! "Consequently, he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him." He did not leave us for the glories of a distant heaven, passing on his priesthood to another (whether Peter, the Pope, or anyone else). He continues to exercise it himself, personally and directly, making intercession for all those who come to him.

What's more, his sacrifice is far superior to the sacrifices made by any earthly priest. Unlike them he is holy, blameless, undefiled, and utterly exalted. Yet he gave up his own life for weak and needy sinners like us, as a perfect and definitive, once-and-for-all-time offering which needs no repetition. As the old hymn puts it, "Because the sinless saviour died, my sinful soul is counted free. For God the just is satisfied, to look on him and pardon me."

The perfect priest offers the perfect sacrifice, and he "ever lives and pleads for me" — he is alive forever, continuing to apply the benefits of his saving work to his faithful people, so that "no tongue can bid me thence depart." So let us press through the crowds that would keep us from him.

Dr Lee Gatiss is editor of *The Effective Anglican: Seizing the Opportunities of Ministry in the Church of England*, and Director of Church Society ([www.churchsociety.org](http://www.churchsociety.org)).

## HYMN SELECTION

Before the throne of God above  
Alleluia, sing to Jesus  
Be thou my vision  
I heard the voice of Jesus say  
Amazing grace

All books reviewed on these pages are available from [www.churchnewspaper.com/shop](http://www.churchnewspaper.com/shop). In case of difficulty please call 020 7222 2018



[cen@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper.com)



[facebook.com/churchnewspaper](https://facebook.com/churchnewspaper)



[@churchnewspaper](https://twitter.com/churchnewspaper)





# Streep steals the show

Steve Parish reviews some of the week's new movies

In *Suffragette* (cert. 12A), Carey Mulligan plays invented East End laundry worker Maud Watts, drawn into the women's suffrage movement by her workmate Violet (Anne-Marie Duff) and articulate pharmacist Edith Ellyn (Helena Bonham Carter). It's 1912, nearly 10 years since the Women's Social and Political Union had broken from moral force National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and embarked on a physical force campaign.

In the film, that means bombing of letterboxes and Lloyd-George's unfinished house. It's the sort of thing that might justify the otherwise unjustifiable surveillance of Inspector Steed (Brendan Gleeson), bringing his experience of dealing with Fenians in Ireland to the streets of London.

It's uncertain why the filmmakers (director Sarah Gavron, writer Abi Morgan) would want to make the protesters look more like terrorists. Even "low-level" violence - arson against property including churches (bishops seemed OK with force-feeding of prisoners on hunger strike), and personal attacks on politicians - caused further splits in the movement, and this is barely considered.

Maud's husband Sonny (Ben Whishaw) isn't keen on her activities but it's not clear whether in 1912 he had the vote (and as the WSPU wanted to keep the property qualification, there's a question whether its objectives would have got Maud the vote). Their son George (Adam Michael Dodd) gets in the middle of their conflict, with parental rights on the side of the man.

What the film does do is highlight that domestic violence, sexual harassment, custody battles and equal pay demands have not gone away. It passes over that much of Maud's work situation is nothing to do with being a woman, but just awful working conditions.

So when our own two-faced government - good cop rhetoric but bad



cop legislation - is diminishing union rights, and about to carry out the biggest disenfranchisement in British history, maybe there are unintended parallels to be drawn. Hackney is where Maud works - it's also one of the areas where, thanks to the bedroom tax and benefit cap keeping the poor on the move, people will drop off the electoral register and not get on again under the new individual registration rules.

Mulligan should get award nominations for her role, from downtrodden worker and harassed mum to prison and being force-fed, then accompanying Emily Wilding Davison (Natalie Press) to Epsom on Derby day. The theory is that she couldn't put a suffragist sash on the King's horse in the parade ring so tried to do it during the race, and died.

That's one of several stunning scenes, but the one that really grabs the attention is Meryl Streep's brief appearance as Emmeline Pankhurst, stepping onto a balcony to deliver a stirring speech and then escaping arrest. It may be little more than a cameo, but she steals the show.

# Cracking down on the cartel

*Sicario* (dir. Denis Villeneuve, cert. 15) is a violent thriller, supposedly showing American agents co-operating with the Mexican government to deal with a vicious drugs cartel - but only by getting a slightly nicer cartel back in business. Its unique selling point is Emily Blunt as FBI agent Kate Macer, recruited from a hostage situation team in Arizona.

After she comes across a charnel house, booby-trapped (a brilliant shock for the audience), she is offered the chance to be part of a team looking for the drug lords responsible. In reality, she and her lawyer background colleague Reggie (Daniel Kaluuya) are along to give some sort of indemnity to otherwise illegal activities, including torture.

Matt Graver (Josh Brolin) is the laid-back leader of her new assignment, but it's mystery man Alejandro (Benicio Del Toro) whose mission seems rather unclear. He is the sicario, a Latin American term for a hitman, a word helpfully traced to the Zealots and the Latin for a dagger (but avoiding the more dubious link to Iscariot).

A convoy over the border to Ciudad Juarez suggests a totally lawless town - though it's now only the 37th most dangerous town in the world. The return trip has enough action to mean you may never again moan about being stuck in a traffic jam.

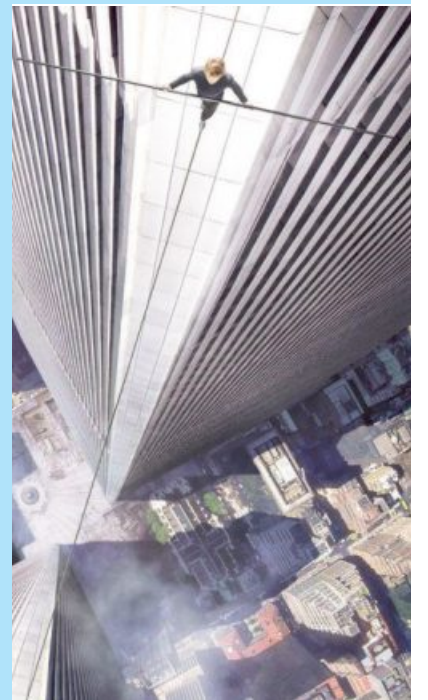
Kate's main function seems to be as moral compass, and how to fight monsters without becoming a monster yourself, and to promote the tobacco industry - there's a lot of product placement here. It's a cracking pace, and "the lesser evil" is unspoken in almost every scene.

# High wire tensions

*The Walk* (dir. Robert Zemeckis, cert. PG) is a dramatization of Philippe Petit's 1974 high wire walk between the Twin Towers, still under construction. It is spectacular - and those with a head for heights might fancy it in 3D IMAX.

Joseph Gordon-Levitt plays Petit, narrating his own story, and recruiting assistants of various reliability to get past security with his 200kg steel cable. Jean-Louis Blondaue (Clément Sibony) is his main man, and photographer, and his work was the basis for the 2008 documentary *Man on Wire*, which added recreated scenes to the contemporary footage.

That's the intriguing contrast. Gordon-Levitt is not really walking, kneeling, and lying down on a wire - well, he is, having been taught by Petit, but not 400m above the ground - while *Man on Wire* had the immediacy of being real, and closer to the destruction of the towers. The new film allows more backstory - romance with Annie (Charlotte Le Bon), and lessons from Czech circus artist Papa Rudy (Ben Kingsley) - and certainly captures Petit's obsessive dream to pull off "Le Coup".



## CD CHOICE

**Roland Dale Benedict**  
**Gregorian Rock 2**

It doesn't take a degree to work out from the name that this has chant-style vocals over a rock-based backing.

Heavily treating multi-tracked vocals, project driver Roland Dale Benedict echoes the harmony-rich feel of monks singing. Sometimes it works, but mostly it just sounds processed, losing the authenticity and making the lyrics harder to decipher. But the tracks sometimes echo Taizé in their reflective simplicity, which aids the Gregorian feel.

Technophile Benedict has created a beautifully clear mix throughout and on popular hymn "O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus," the Gregorian Rock style pays off. The slower, atmospheric treatment fits this strong tune like a glove.

Benedict shamelessly reveals his influences. There are Wakeman-like flourishes aplenty, right from the opening moments in "Deus Lux" and particularly on the instrumental "The Good Guys Win," which has the strongest melody of the



collection. "O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus" and "The Battle" both tip their hat to Keith Emerson, but it is in tone, rather than virtuosity, that Gregorian Rock reflects these masters.

A piece like "Semper et in Perpetuum" stands out for the exotic feel of the crisp, percussive rhythm it rides on. Like several of these works, it has a distinctive feel, giving the project form and character.

While Benedict is creative in this monk

persona, the rock is tempered by the Gregorian stylings, losing its intrinsic drive. Gregorian Rock's website strapline claims to combine "ancient with modern to create a serene, yet pommelling sound." Serene maybe, but pommelling? No. Some tracks need something extra to carry the weight of the concept.

But this is worth investigating for anyone who wants to mix proggy influences and faith for a somewhat monastic take on 21st century music.

Derek Walker

## WINE OF THE WEEK

**Pazo Torrenquintans**  
**Albariño 2014**  
**Tesco finest £6**



Here's a harbinger of great good news. Tesco's "finest" range now has an increasing list of good bottles at a very reasonable £6, some labels sounding exotic, viz: Frappato; Peccorino; Tapiwey...I can hardly wait to investigate. If this Albariño, Spain's good white grape is a fair example, a rewarding voyage of discovery awaits around that supermarket's shelves. Serve moderately chilled. Water-clear in the glass, on the nose freshness, with hints of pear. The palate found at first sip restrained sweet notes, then a rapid expansion into greater complexity, with restrained minerality allied to something of dried apricots. The finish had stimulating warm notes at its end.

Alcohol by Vol. 12%. An excellent aperitif, a great match for shellfish. This wine is produced by a co-operative of 550 families on over 2,400 tiny plots, its back label tells us.

Graham Gendall Norton



cen@churchnewspaper.com



facebook.com/churchnewspaper



@churchnewspaper







# Transforming work

The Work Forum team at The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity answer your questions about faith in the workplace...

**Q:** My boss is a total nightmare and is disliked by everyone in the company, and I'm really struggling to love and pray for him – help!  
Jen, 38, Lawyer

**A:** Your situation reminds me of Laura, a senior executive in a large civil service department whose boss was very unpleasant. Laura struggled but felt God calling her to stay, so she started praying specifically for her boss and their relationship. Years later Laura sensed a calling to ordination and the application process involved getting a reference from her boss. As she read his words they brought her to tears, as they

revealed just how much of Jesus he'd seen in her character, even commenting "if Laura ran a church, I'd go to it". The reality is that you're in a hard place, but God loves your boss. In fact, Jesus died for him. So instead of trying to will yourself to love a person who may not be particularly likeable, why not try putting your energy into seeing your boss through God's eyes, with his love. You could start by simply asking God to help you pray for your boss. You might not want to pray for him yet, but you clearly want to want to! And don't worry if your feelings don't change immediately – just remember Laura. It took years for her to see the fruit of her prayers, but because she was willing – despite how much she struggled – God was at work the whole time.

**Q:** I work in a company that's very sales-focused and I'm feeling a lot of pressure to hit targets – I don't mind working hard, but how can I stop being so consumed by worry about results?  
Mike, 29, Sales Executive in the automotive industry

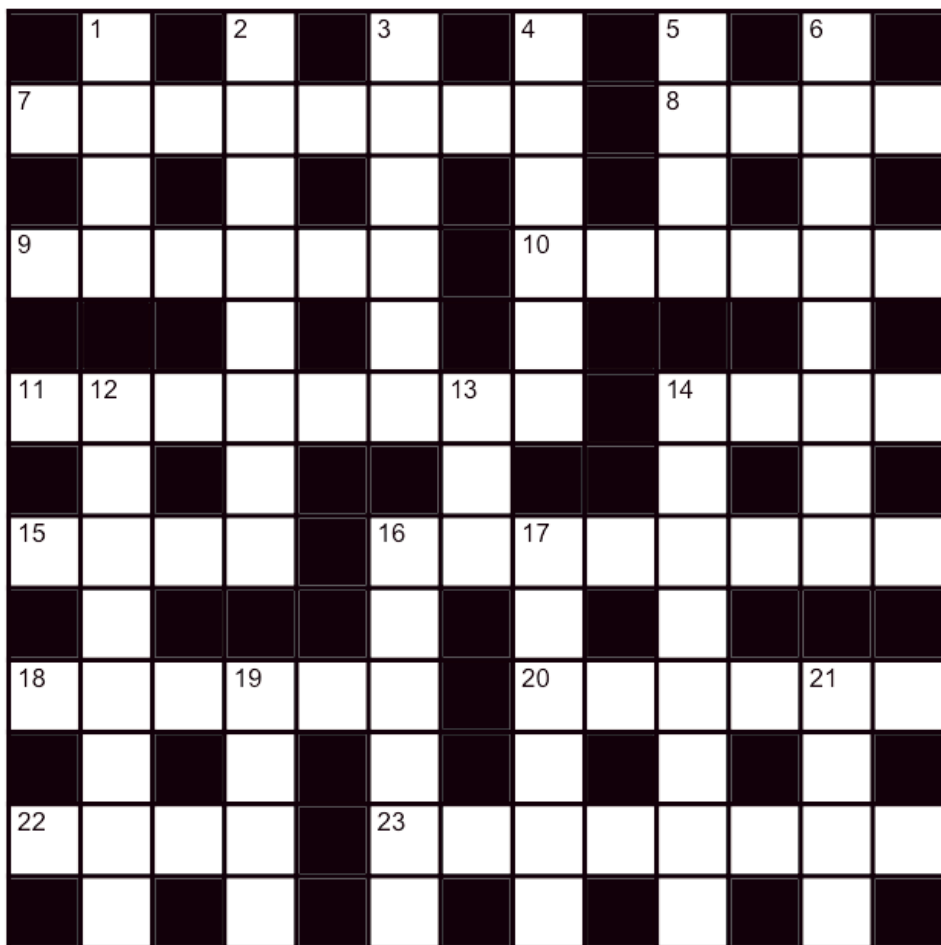
**A:** Deep anxiety about meeting targets or achieving certain results can stem from an insecure sense of identity. We try to validate ourselves through what we do, rather than focusing on who we are. We talk often in Christian circles about being a child of God, but do we ever connect that identity with our role in the workplace? When our sense of who we are is rooted in our position as sons and daughters of the King, then achievements and results flow out of loving service for him. Whether that service looks like success or failure in

the eyes of the world (or indeed our own eyes), we enjoy the unconditional acceptance of our heavenly Father so our identity as God's children remains secure and we break that cycle of worry and unhealthy driven-ness.

You also need to feel reassured that God sees the intrinsic value of the work you do regardless of the outcomes – your job is more to God than just the 'bottom line'. God created us to work: it's not something that came as a result of the fall. Work, and the pleasure and challenge we get from it, was in the plan from the start. So while targets can be helpful measures, don't let them cause you to lose sight of the great worth of the work itself.

*\* Do you have an issue with work? Send your question in to us and the team from LICC will try to provide an answer. Email your question to [cen@churchnewspaper](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper) or write to us at 14 Great College Street, London, SW1P 3RX*

## PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 972 by Axe



### Across

- 7 City where the bodies of Saul and Jonathan were put on its walls [1 Chr] (4,4)  
8 Hebrew word meaning 'so let it be' (4)

- 9 'And God created great —, and every living thing that moveth...' [Gen/KJV] (6)  
10 '...I will accept nothing but...the share that belongs...to

- Aner, — and Mamre' [Gen/NIV] (6)  
11 One of Jacob's 12 sons (8)  
14 Ancient kingdom east of the Dead Sea, home of Ruth (4)

- 15 Essence of the Pentateuch, for instance (4)  
16 Scottish bishop and missionary who evangelized the southern Picts (2,6)  
18 Son of Levi [1 Chr] (6)  
20 Song of praise to God, a saint or a nation (6)  
22 The —, an epithet for the Church of Scotland (4)  
23 One of Daniel's three companions in Babylon (8)

- 13 Nephew of Abraham (3)  
14 Cathedrals or large churches originally connected to monasteries (8)  
16 Formal separation of a church into two churches (6)  
17 Syrian army officer healed of leprosy by Elisha [2 Kgs] (6)  
19 Acre as known to Hebrews [Judg] (4)  
21 '— man is to take his censer and put incense in it...' [Num/NIV] (4)

### Down

- 1 Third son of Adam and Eve (4)  
2 False teacher denounced in 2 Tim (8)  
3 'The second angel sounded his trumpet, and...a huge mountain...was thrown into — —' [Rev/NIV] (3,3)  
4 Desert place where David sought refuge from Saul [1 Sam] (6)  
5 One of the five traditional Philistine strongholds [Josh; 1&2 Sam; 2 Kgs; 2 Chr] (4)  
6 Joash's chief priest [2 Kgs; 2 Chr] (8)  
12 Turkish plateau, roughly Asia Minor of old, and the Asia of the NT (8)

### Solutions to Crossword Number

Across: 1 Disease, 5 Panic, 8 Delilah, 9 Odour, 10 Micah, 11 Othniel, 12 Sisera, 14 Sticks, 18 Cleopas, 20 Tamar, 21 Perga, 22 Idumaea, 23 Still, 24 Hebrews.

Down: 1 Didymus, 2 Selects, 3 Allah, 4 Ephron, 5 Prophet, 6 Naomi, 7 Carol, 13 Raphael, 15 Compare, 16 Syrians, 17 Isaiah, 18 Capes, 19 Edrei, 20 Thumb.

The first correct entry drawn will win a book of the Editor's choice. Send your entry to Crossword Number 972, The Church of England Newspaper, 14 Great College Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3RX by next Wednesday

Name

Address

Post Code

PRICE £1.50 / €2.00 / \$2.50



[cen@churchnewspaper.com](mailto:cen@churchnewspaper.com)



[facebook.com/churchnewspaper](https://facebook.com/churchnewspaper)



[@churchnewspaper](https://twitter.com/churchnewspaper)

