



The
United
Reformed
Church



Halifax Group Magazine

Heath New Hope New Providence



Pentecost

June 2019

Our vision is to know, love, live and
share Jesus, for a better world.

Letter from the New Manse

The URC Synod Handbook lists all the churches in the Synod and gives useful contact information for each one. Looking at it recently I noticed that it also gives a figure for membership. Across the Synod there's quite a variation: the smallest has 5 members and the largest is an ecumenical church with 258 members. So often in church life our focus is on how big we are, or how small we are.

During April my daily Bible readings took me to the book of Judges. I was struck again by Gideon's experience of being called by God to lead an army into battle against the Midianites. The army was 32000 strong, but God told Gideon to send home anyone who was afraid, leaving only 10000. Then, after a strange episode by some water, he was left with only 300. The challenge was to rely on God, rather than be self-sufficient. Gideon won the battle, leaving him and his army in no doubt that the Lord had given them victory. They had learned an important lesson: that numerical strength is far less important than obedience and commitment to God.

So, we shouldn't be surprised that Jesus gave the great commission to just eleven disciples. The task, "Go and make disciples of all nations..." must have seemed impossible, even with their restricted understanding of what "all nations" might mean. Even the one hundred and twenty believers who met between the time of Jesus' ascension and Pentecost doesn't seem enough to reach the world. Yet, when we read Acts we see the Gospel message spreading, lives being changed and churches springing up across the Mediterranean area. This was possible because at Pentecost the first believers were empowered for mission, and on later occasions they were filled again with

Letter from the New Manse

the Holy Spirit. Their mission was directed and fuelled by the power of God, making it effective.

Today there are very few people groups around the world who haven't heard the Gospel, however there are many individuals who so far have either not heard or who have failed to respond. At the same time, we're challenged to consider the mission of our churches. God calls us to continue Christ's mission in the world, living out his kingdom values and spreading good news by words and actions, so that individuals and communities are transformed by the Gospel. When we think about this our first reaction can easily be, "We don't have enough people!" Perhaps we need to pause and remember the experience of Gideon and those first disciples.

As we continue our thinking about mission, and as Pentecost approaches once again, we would be well-advised to seek the equipping, empowering Holy Spirit to direct and help us as we seek to reach out. If we do that, I'm confident that we'll find we're big enough to do all that the Lord asks us to do. Let's remember that being "big enough" doesn't necessarily mean being big, but it does mean relying on the help of God who says, '*Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit.*' (Zechariah 4:6)

*God bless,
Heather*

Pulpit list

Heath URC, Free School Lane. 10.30am

June

- 2 Rev Heather Pollard
- 9 Mr Martin Pollard
- 16 Rev Justine Wyatt - Communion
- 23 Mr Jim Walker
- 30 Group Service at New Hope – There will be no service at Heath that day.

Activities in June

Sunday 9 June – 4.00pm – Messy Church

Thursday 13 June – 7.30pm Thursday Club – Summer Outing

Tuesday 18 June - 10.30am - Community Coffee Morning

Saturday 22 June – 7.30pm – Savile Park Singing Group Musical Evening

Weekly Events

Regular Activities at Heath

Monday

9.30am Toddler Club

2.00pm Sing for Fun – Singing Group

5.30pm Beaver Scouts 6-8yrs

6.30pm Cub Scouts 8-10yrs

Tuesday

10.30am Community Coffee Club

(3rd Tuesday in month)

Thursday

7.30pm Thursday Club- Social Group (2nd Thursday
in month Sept - June)

Friday

7.30pm Scouts 10-14yrs

7.30pm Explorer Scouts 14-18 yrs

Savile Park Singing Group

Presents a

Musical Evening

**on Saturday 22nd June at 7.30pm
at Heath Church**

**Entrance £5 There
will be a raffle and refreshments**

**Proceeds to Charity
Children's Air Ambulance and Heath Church**

Hello Folks, how are you doing?

As the weather is warmer and even sunnier it is good to look out and see the greenery, flowers and birds. Simply “being” in the summer months where it is safe and still, and where it is quiet and warm can be truly delightful. We may be able to get out into the fresh air and enjoy the fair weather days even more.

If we are able to go outside it gives us the opportunity to move around and have some exercise, which gives us a sense of wellbeing. We naturally also want the children of our families and friends to grow up in a safe and healthy environment.

When we are in the outdoors it can make us more aware of the importance of nature around us. Enjoying the spaces we use, whether small or large. Our own or what we share.

But really, whatever we own is never really ours “...There were two flees arguing about who owns the dog they live in!” 1 Corinthians 6:19“...You are not your own; 20 you were bought with a price...” In John 6:40 Jesus tells of His return on the last day but until then – even the body, that we inhabit, goes eventually back to the ground.

Somber thoughts. Maybe, but also the reality of living on this planet. We have life on earth now and we want this to carry on, for our children. However, as we are made so aware in the news, if we do not take care of what we call our planet, this will not be possible soon.

Please bear with me on this.

I remember in the 1980’s politicians talking of the current carbon emissions and of the world becoming a waste land for our children’s children. As a teenager myself then the answer was quite simple. “Well...der...lets change them

back to before this happened”. But the change didn’t happen and emissions became worse instead. However, the informed scientific prediction then, is now again proven by scientists, as being correct.

David Attenborough’s video about climate change warns of us impending catastrophe:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-47976184>

and since then the following UN report:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-48169783>

We are stewards of our planet. Stewarding our planet gives us the opportunity to unite with all people of all faiths and none. But how do we steward? We all have a carbon footprint. We have the responsibility to keep ours and those in our charge to a minimum. To educate. Plus encouraging those in power to make local, national and international changes. If we all work with one accord we can do it. This agenda crosses all boundaries and no one can escape the outcome of our world.

In Genesis 1:26 God gave man dominion over the fish, birds, beasts and whole earth and in verse 28 He blessed the man and woman Adam and Eve and said for them to be fruitful, to fill the earth and subdue it.

Adam and Eve were blessed. Blessed of God. Blessed in the Name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Blessed with indwelling Holiness.

“Would any woodworker, upon just finishing a beautifully stained piece of furniture, tell his son to break it up for firewood? No! Just as God desires for His creation, the woodworker would put his handiwork to use and also care for it by keeping it waxed and dusted to prolong its life.

This is exactly what God told Adam. Genesis 2 contains a parallel account of creation, adding detail to certain parts of the narrative of the first chapter. Notice God's expanded instruction: "Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden *to tend* [dress, KJV] *and keep it*" (verse 15). This greatly modifies the force of "have dominion" and "subdue it" from Genesis 1:26, 28!

Tend (Hebrew *'abad*) means "to work or serve," and thus referring to the ground or a garden, it can be defined as "to till or cultivate." It possesses the nuance seen in the KJV's choice in its translation: "dress," implying adornment, embellishment, and improvement.

Keep (Hebrew *shamar*) means "to exercise great care over." In the context of Genesis 2:15, it expresses God's wish that mankind, in the person of Adam, "take care of," "guard," or "watch over" the garden. A caretaker maintains and protects his charge so that he can return it to its owner in as good or better condition than when he received it."

Extract taken from Bible Tools Topical Study ©Copyright 1992-2019 Church of the Great God. Richard T. Ritenbaugh

After watching the links above and contemplating, I thought, what can I do? What can we do individually and collectively. The answers are in our hands.

1. When God made the heavens and earth and after He had made Adam and Eve He placed Adam and Eve in the garden. The next day He rested. When Adam and Eve woke up on the 7th day it was the Sabbath. The first day they knew was a day of rest. Imagine if everyone actually rested one day a week and the ease of this on the planet

alone. Whilst as Christians we are not bound by the old testament laws we are instructed to get Wisdom. Interestingly, the fear of the LORD is the beginning of Wisdom. Proverbs 9:10

2. We must tend, keep, take care of, watch over and protect our planet. So plant trees. Tend and protect trees. Replace trees if they have been cut down for safety reasons. If you cannot plant trees, then give contributions, when you can, to someone who can.

3. Instead of other search engines when you look for something on the internet use **Ecosia** – the search engine that plants trees. <https://www.ecosia.org> **Ecosia** uses the ad revenue from your searches to plant trees where they are needed the most.

4. Eat the food we buy and don't waste it.

5. Where possible have a shower or a wash instead of a bath.

6. Don't use the car if it is not necessary to do so. Car share.

7. Think about our usage of electric and gas. Use the cold tap instead of the hot when the hot is not really needed. Can you afford to switch to renewable energy, solar panels, a small house wind turbine, an electric car?

8. When using the kettle, only fill it to the required amount. Can you afford to purchase a boiling water tap in the kitchen sink?

9. Think about choosing vegetarian options. Recycle, reuse, repair. When we go to buy something, let us ask ourselves these questions. Why am I buying this? What for? Do I really need it?

10. Spread the message.

There are of course many things that we can do. Modern living and demands have been the cause of much of the problems.

Have we been selfish, neglectful with thoughtless disregard for our responsibilities towards God's planet Earth? I know I have and I have been convicted in my spirit. But, now I am making changes, I am starting to feel better about these things. I hope that you will too.

Jesus died on the cross to take away our sin so that we can stand before the Father, spotless. It doesn't stop there though. Now we need to change, to mend our ways and we can only do that by being obedient to Him and asking Him for help. We may groan (Romans 8:23) In Romans 8:22 We know that creation is groaning and 26 the Spirit groans for us.

A Tree and its Fruit Matthew 7:...21 Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles" 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness!'

... This is crucial for us as Christians, particularly mature Christians. This can be seen when Jesus healed the man with leprosy in Mark 1:40-45 He asked him not to tell anyone. But the man disobeyed him and went abroad telling everyone. It then meant that Jesus was mobbed everywhere he went and was not able to have the freedom he really needed in his ministry. Our obedience to the Lord is key.

1 Samuel 23:8-13. When David inquired of the Lord with the ephod. The Lord said that there was going to be trouble for him and told him what was going to happen for the worse. So David made the necessary changes, slipped away and therefore preventing the war that Saul had planned for him, and so David with his men survived. Not only this but 2 Samuel 5:10 David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him. (King James Bible)

We too have been told our future. We too can make the changes to prevent the trouble ahead of us and our generations to come and survive and make things better.

Habakkuk 3:17 Though the fig tree does not blossom and there is no fruit on the vines, [though the product of the olive falls and the fields yield no food, though the flock is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls. 18 Yet I will rejoice the Lord; I will exult in the [victorious] God of my salvation! [Rom 8:37] 19 The Lord God is my Strength my personal bravery, and my invincible army; He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk]. And make [spiritual] progress upon my high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility]!

As Habakkuk and David did also as seen in 1 Chronicles 29:10-13, let us sing and rejoice in the Lord for Nehemiah 8:10 "The Joy of the Lord is our Strength." enabling us to be obedient and do what He wants us to do. Proverbs 16:3 Roll your works upon the Lord [commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and] so shall your plans be established and succeed. . <http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-1->

HEATH

[chronicles-29-10-13.htm](#) And finally for now: 3 John 1:2
“So dear friends, I pray that you may enjoy good health and
that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting
along well”.

With many blessings and please don't hesitate to contact
me: 07803295002. Please leave a message and I will get
back to you. Thank you. Dawn Weald, Parish Nurse, Heath
Church.

Sent to print 7th May 2019 There are exercise tips on my
board on Manor Drive which also includes protection in the
sun and further information on the topics above.



Mission

HEATH

I have been thinking about mission within our group, partly triggered by Mike's item in the May magazine and by catching up with minutes etc. following my holiday. Maybe this is why Valerie Jenkins words stood out for me, when she was preaching at Heath. I have Valerie's permission to share some of her words here and do so following the reading from Acts to which they refer.

Acts 9:36-43 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

³⁶ Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas.^[a] She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷ At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, 'Please come to us without delay.' ³⁹ So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, 'Tabitha, get up.' Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴² This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner. *Peter took a risk. Have we learned from him and the examples of all the Acts of the Apostles recorded by Luke in this wonderful book?*

Do our church communities ever demonstrate resurrection confidence? Do we ever try risky things?

Peter's act brought local fame. Sometimes within our churches we are too afraid to do something different. We are all far too familiar with the voices that say at our Church and Elders Meetings "Well we've always done it like that!" If we look back at the life of Jesus and the Acts of the Apostles and the advice for churches to be found in the Epistles – there's no blueprint here for repetition and just being church amongst the people like us.

Perhaps we are afraid of being accused of exhibitionism, or stepping out of line, or glory-seeking? How can the Spirit strengthen and support us, both as individuals and as a church, unless we are willing to take risks – and gain publicity. We need to do those things if we are to seek to care, to heal and to bring in the kingdom...and sometimes to defy the world?

Several disciples are mentioned in this passage: Tabitha who does practical good works; Peter who prays and heals; Simon who offers hospitality; and even two problem-solving messengers who fetch Peter. How good are we at fostering all the gifts available, or potentially available, among our members? Do we seek people out, as the messengers did Peter? Do we encourage those with special gifts to use them? Conversely, do we ever discourage the exercise of gifts that lie outside our comfort zones?

Does Acts 9 have anything to say about priorities? Is healing more important than making practical provision for the well-being of others? Are some gifts more 'spiritual', more worthy, holier? Or is the church sustained by the exercise of many gifts in mutual support? What can we learn from this passage about working together, sharing, and respecting the diverse gifts of others, whether male or female, friends or strangers?

Many churches find their numbers declining, their buildings in need of repair, and a spirit of gloom descending. Would our church life be improved by more emphasis on imagining glory and less on accepting and managing a dispiriting here and now?

When exploring the future for our church communities, can we tread the line between deluding ourselves with evocations of cloud cuckoo land and offering a positive vision in faith that the Spirit will fulfil all promises?

To me this is just the kick we need. Using our talents doesn't necessarily mean doing everything ourselves. Mike is right, of course we can't, but we can use our imaginations, be creative, be daring. We are already doing that within the group; Parish Nursing, Debt Counselling and Transition. These are all different to anything we have done before, they involve 'buying in' external skills, they do involve risk, but they bring care and they bring healing. We are making a real difference to lives, in each of those services the actual number of beneficiaries may be relatively small, but I don't think God, or those who have benefited believe the services are not worthwhile. There is a growing understanding within the URC (very convincingly put across by Alan Yates at the March Synod meeting) that sitting on our money, waiting for a rainy day (or dry rot) is not God's way. It is to this end that Synod have released additional money for mission. We should embrace that and think creatively, positively and daringly about what we might do then go ahead in faith. Stretching ourselves to outside our normal comfort zone is not being delusional, it is taking us one small step further to God's Kingdom come, His will be done.

Jane Simmons

Can you hear the stranger?

It is interesting that whilst I was writing the item on mission, an email from the Cinnamon Network popped into my inbox. It is reproduced below (with permission).

Jane Simmons

As churches, how many of us run the same initiatives expecting different results?

Albert Einstein is widely credited with saying, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." We certainly live in a 'results-orientated' world where our endeavours are measured by 'key performance indicators' and 'return on investment.'

As Christians we face the challenge of wanting to use the resources God has given us to good effect, but at the same time recognising that God's timing, while always perfect, doesn't necessarily fit into neat measurable parameters.

Don't Sleep Walk

We are called to persevere, but that doesn't mean simply sleepwalking through the motions of our faith hoping God will bless what we've been doing for the past five or ten years.

You might be interested to know that the word 'perseverance' occurs 13 times in the NIV Bible – all in the New Testament. The root of the word comes from the Greek verb that is often used to describe the permanence of God in contrast to the mutability of mankind.

This is important. When it comes to perseverance, lots of us make the mistake of focussing on what we are doing rather than who we are doing it for.

Stranger on the Beach

In John 21 we meet some frustrated disciples. They had been

fishing all night long and had nothing to show for their efforts. When a 'stranger' on the beach suggests they cast their nets on the opposite side of the boat, the men surely rolled their eyes and folded their arms in incredulity – as if that was going to make any difference!

And yet they swallowed their pride, put aside their scepticism and gave it a go. Their reward – a net overflowing with more fish than they ever thought was possible, and breakfast on the beach, cooked by their best friend and risen Lord.

Not Alone

How many times do we as churches become stuck in our ways? Our activities can easily become stale, out dated or even a means to an end in themselves.

We can become so attached to our models of ministry or our ways of working that we fail to hear the 'stranger' on the beach calling us to cast our nets elsewhere. Whether you are struggling to engage with your community or your social action projects are full to bursting point – we all need to be open to new ways of working.

We will never know what a catch could be waiting for us, unless we try.

Perseverance is all about keeping our eyes focused on our goal – Jesus. The path he takes us on could lead into completely unknown territory, but when we listen to his voice, the path through becomes less daunting. Perhaps we all need to be a little bolder in actively listening for that stranger on the beach.

Written by Kate Sharma at Cinnamon Network - <https://www.cinnamonnetwork.co.uk/> These blogs are available on a monthly basis.

Pulpit Supply

June 2019

June. 2nd Mrs. Juliet Foster
June. 9th Mr. David Truswell
June. 16th Rev Heather Pollard
June. 23rd Mr. David Truswell
June. 30th Rev Heather Pollard

Friendship Hour at 2.15pm

We meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays most months to enjoy each others company, have a cup of tea, coffee and biscuits and meet new friends. The meeting on June 12th will be 'Quiz time' with Barry and Sylvia. The meeting on June 26th will be 'Norway' with Cynthia Feather

On Sunday June 16th there will be a Church Meeting after Morning Service.

Ladies Excercise Class: Wednesdays at 7.30pm
Boys' Brigade: Mondays from 6.30pm

LEST WE FORGET

The writer experienced what the young call a “senior moment” a few weeks ago, much to the amusement of the empathic group present. The moment was the loss of the word, pasta (food), it could not be dislodged from its resting place inside the brain plates. We got there eventually and solved a recipe problem. The writer thinks that young people have “junior moments” because they don’t have the background to sift through to find the word.

Everything in the natural world is subject to the normal distribution curve, memory not being an exception. Some of us can remember different things better than others. Ask an engineer a technical fact, out comes the answer from the stored information. Tell the engineer a technical fact, it is immediately stored for retrieval. Do the same with a verse of poetry and the technical mind dismisses it, but the arts orientated mind will remember it.

All this takes place within the spread between good memory and bad memory, short term and long term. So if you loose a word, don’t fret, its quite normal, its because your brain didn’t think it was important and stored it away in its slow recall section.

Attending Church regularly enables our bible memory to be refreshed giving us faster recall of the stories and lessons to be learned. (The writer is at the lower end of the non-technical memory scale, thus is bad at names etc.)

NEW PROVIDENCE

Pulpit Supply

JUNE

- 2nd...Dawn Walker
- 9th...Rev. Heather Pollard (Communion)
- 16th...Alison Dobson (Parade)
- 23rd... Mrs. Juliet Foster
- 30th...Group Service New Hope

New Providence

Diary

JUNE

- Tuesday's – 5.00pm Garden Gang
- Friday's – 6.30pm Brownies at New Providence
- Friday's – 6.45pm Boy's Brigade / Girl's Association at the Carlton Centre
- Sunday 9th – 12.30pm Celebration Lunch
- Monday 24th - 7.30pm – New Provi Circle

Celebration Service

On June 9th we will celebrate the Church life at New Providence and make a monetary gift to give thanks for our witness in the area.

At the time of going to press the forthcoming Church Meeting will decide to where this year's gifts will be donated.

The service will be our morning worship at 11.00am and will be followed by a Celebration Lunch served in Church. Lunch will cost £7.50 per person and all are welcome.

Summer Solstice

Many moons ago (or should I say many suns ago) when I was a student at Bristol University, a group of us had the crazy idea of driving up to Stonehenge on the summer solstice to see the sunrise over the heel stone. Those were the days when you could walk freely around the stones, and there weren't the hordes of tourists and Druids etc. that you get these days. My memories of the trip (like the weather that morning) are pretty hazy. It was very cold I seem to remember and it got quite light, way before the actual sunrise time, the 'false dawn' I think it is called. There was no dramatic beam of sunlight at the official sunrise time, it just got lighter and lighter, and we got colder and colder, so half an hour after the documented sun rise time, we were back in the car, heading back to the halls of residence. In November the fifth terms, 'a damp squib' !

The summer solstice marks the peak of summer and takes place on the longest day of the year when the sun is at its highest in the sky. Solstice is derived from the Latin words sol (sun) and sistere (to stand still). In the northern hemisphere this takes place on 20th or 21st June. The summer solstice has been celebrated since ancient times and is still celebrated around the world today.

At the summer solstice there are many places in the far north, within the arctic circle where the sun never sets. These include parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Iceland. Places known as the Land of the Midnight Sun.

The solstice is marked all over the world. Although there are differences between cultures, there are also some striking similarities. Many different cultures celebrate the solstice

with bonfires. And many different places have monuments designed so that during the solstice, they will line up with the Sun.

In Britain the solstice is famously associated with Stonehenge. When the Sun rises on the day of the summer solstice, it lines up with one of the stones, called the heel stone, and its first rays shine through a stone archway in the centre circle. (Well sometimes!) Stonehenge first existed 5,000 years ago, thousands of years earlier than Ancient Egypt or Ancient Rome.

Native Americans made a number of monuments that work in a similar way to Stonehenge. In Chaco Canyon, USA, there are some rocks called the three slabs, put there around 1,000 years ago. They are positioned so that during the summer solstice, the Sun shines in a dagger shape onto a spiral on the wall behind them.

There is a modern day henge in Nebraska, USA, called Carhenge - it is an exact copy of Stonehenge, except it is made out of old cars.

People across Europe have marked the solstice since ancient times with bonfires and celebrations dedicated to different gods. When Europe became mostly Christian the festivals stayed but turned into a celebration of St John the Baptist. To this day, Christians in many parts of the world celebrate St John's Day, which takes place on 24th June. Midsummer traditions are particularly important in geographic Northern Europe - Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The celebration of Midsummer's Eve (St. John's Eve among Christians) was from ancient times a festival of the summer solstice. Some people believed that golden-flowered mid-

summer plants, especially Calendula, and St. John's Wort, had miraculous healing powers and they therefore picked them on this night. Bonfires were lit to protect against evil spirits. Rolling wheels of fire downhill is a tradition in some countries. The wheel is rolled to signify the sun rising to its highest point and at once descending again, representing the cycle of the seasons.

In Latvia, Midsummer is called Jani (Janis being Latvian for John). It is a national holiday celebrated on a large scale by almost everyone in Latvia and by people of Latvian origin abroad. Celebrations consist of a lot of traditional and mostly pagan elements - eating Jani cheese (special recipe with caraway seeds), drinking beer, singing folk songs dedicated to Jani, burning bonfires to keep light all through the night and jumping over them, wearing wreaths of flowers (for women) and oak leaves (for men). People decorate their houses and lands with birch or sometimes oak branches and flowers as well as leaves, especially fern. In modern days small oak branches with leaves are attached to the cars in Latvia during the festivity.

In late 15th-century England, John Mirk of Lilleshall Abbey, Shropshire, gives the following description of Midsummer festivities. "At first, men and women came to church with candles and other lights and prayed all night long. In the process of time, however, men left such devotion and used songs and dances and fell into lechery and gluttony turning the good, holy devotion into sin."

The church fathers decided to put a stop to these practices and ordained that people should fast on the evening before, and thus turned waking into fasting.

Mirk adds that at the time of his writing, "...in worship of St John the Baptist, men stay up at night and make three kinds

of fires: one is of clean bone's and no wood and is called a 'bonnefyre'; another is of clean wood and no bones, and is called a 'wakefyre', because men stay awake by it all night; and the third is made of both bones and wood and is called 'St. John's fire' ."

Geoff Quick

.....

A Bad Day

There I was is sitting at the bar staring at my drink when a large, trouble-making biker steps up next to me, grabs my drink and gulps it down in one swig.

"Well, whatcha gonna do about it?" he says, menacingly, as I burst into tears.

"Come on, man," the biker says, "I didn't think you'd CRY. I can't stand to see a man crying."

"This is the worst day of my life," I say. "I'm a complete failure. I was late to a meeting and my boss fired me. When I went to the parking lot, I found my car had been stolen and I don't have any insurance. I left my wallet in the cab I took home. I found my old lady in bed with the gardener and then my dog bit me."

"So I came to this bar to work up the courage to put an end to it all, I buy a drink, I drop a capsule in and sit here watching the poison dissolve; then you, you jack-ass, show up and drink the whole thing! But enough about me, how's your day going?"

When is Father's Day and why do we celebrate it?

Each year in the UK Father's Day takes place on the third Sunday of June - which falls on June 16 in 2019. According to one tale, Father's Day first began because of a woman named Grace Golden Clayton from Fairmount, West Virginia. An orphan, Grace lobbied her local Methodist ministers for a church service to honour fathers in 1908. The story goes that she was inspired to do this after a mining disaster killed 362 local men. Their deaths orphaned more than 1,000 children and Grace wanted to pay tribute to the children's dead fathers - as well as her own.

Another story involves the daughter of a civil war veteran, Sonora Smart Dodd, from Arkansas. While listening to a sermon for Mother's Day, Sonora became convinced of the need to celebrate dads too. She then campaigned to her religious leaders for a special service dedicated to fathers. In U.S. in 1966, President Johnson designated that the third Sunday in June should be Father's Day. Six years later, Father's Day was made a permanent national holiday in the U.S. when, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed it in to law.

While countries including the UK, Ireland, US, France, Cyprus, South Africa, Netherlands, Greece, Japan, Canada and Saudi Arabia celebrate Father's Day every June, others have the day on a completely different date. Instead, Australia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand celebrate their dads in September. Many people believe that the celebration date is different in the southern hemisphere because June is their autumn, rather than their spring, and the day can be marketed better in the

spring season. And in Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal and Croatia it's in March. For Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Iceland, Father's Day celebrations are held on the second Sunday of November - and in Bulgaria it's on the same day as Boxing Day, December 26. The dates usually correspond to each country's culture and traditions. While there may be many different dates dedicated to dads across the globe, one thing is for certain, they all celebrate the same thing – fantastic fathers.

"Some dads are gentle, some dads are kind,
some dads are busy, and some dads are fine;
some dads are caring, and some dads refined;
some dads are workers, and some dads recline...
some dads are loved, and that dad is mine." --

Paul Mullinax

"When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant
I could hardly stand to have the old man around.
But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how
much the old man had learned in seven years." --

Mark Twain

100+ Years of Fatherhood

In 1900, fathers prayed their children would learn English. Today, fathers pray their children will speak English. In 1900, if a father put a roof over his family's head, he was a success.

Today, it takes a roof, deck, pool, and 4-car garage. And that's just the vacation home. In 1900, a father waited for the doctor to tell him when the baby arrived.

Today, a father must wear a smock, know how to breathe, and make sure a new tape is in the video camera. In 1900, fathers passed on clothing to their sons. Today, kids wouldn't touch Dad's clothes if they were sliding naked down an icicle. In 1900, fathers could count on children to join the family business.

Today, fathers pray their kids will soon come home from college long enough to teach them how to work the computer and set the VCR. In 1900, fathers shook their children gently and whispered, "Wake up, it's time for school." Today, kids shake their fathers violently at 4 a.m., shouting: "Wake up, it's time for hockey practice!" In 1900, a father gave a pencil box for Christmas, and the child was all smiles. Today, a father spends £100 at Toys 'R' Us, and the kid says, "But I wanted an X- box!" In 1900, a father came home from work to find his wife and children at the supper table. Today, a father comes home to a note: "Jimmy's at baseball, Cindy's at gymnastics, I'm at gym, Pizza in the fridge."

"The one thing children wear out faster than shoes is parents." -- John J. Plomp

FAITH AND THE DANDELION

I remember as a young boy picking my mum bouquets of dandelions. The smile that came to her face, the gentle kiss on my forehead and the soft words she spoke as she reconfirmed what I already knew. “Sweetie, those are the prettiest flowers I’ve ever seen.” She would say. “How about we put them on the table where everyone can see them.” I’m convinced they were beautiful since they always made her happy.

Years later I moved into my own home and my neighbours were consumed with the war they’d declared on the “dreaded dandelion.” I sheepishly grinned within because I knew they were up against a worthy opponent. Nonetheless, they brought in their heavy artillery and advanced across the battlefield destroying and crushing under their feet, mum’s favorite flower.

One early morning, while having a cup of coffee on my deck, admiring the beautiful array of yellow dining room flowers canvassing my “No War Zone.” I was reminded, everything and everybody that God created is beautiful and valuable in His eyes, designed with a purpose.

I’ve learned three valuable lessons from the dandelion. First, they will bring a smile to a mother’s eyes. Second, they aren’t destroyed when they’re exposed to heat. Thirdly, they spring forth the next morning full of life. No matter how hard they were hit the day before. I do realize I said three reasons, but this one is free since this is my story and I can. My grandpa always said, “If, Jesus can turn water into wine.

Then certainly he can make a good wine out of a dandelion.”

And, a final thought to pass on about the dandelion is, even though you can't see it at dawn's break, doesn't mean it's not there. So is, our faith the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen. The dandelion springs forth with new life when exposed to the morning sun, just as our faith becomes alive when we're exposed to the "Son."

Michael W.Cochran

.....

"Lord, make me an instrument of Your Peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow Love;
Where there is injury pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.
O' Divine Master, grant that I may seek
not so much to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
for it is giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.
Amen" -- Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Pentecost

Pentecost is a Christian celebration which occurs fifty days after the Christian celebration of Easter. It is also a celebration for the Jewish religion but in different circumstances. For the Christians, when counting the fifty days, Easter Sunday is included within the count. Therefore, Pentecost occurs on the seventh Sunday after Easter Sunday. The foundation of Pentecost arises from the Israeli people.

History

Prior to the arrival of Jesus, Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks began as a celebration day for the Israeli people. In the Book of Leviticus 23:15-16, the Lord spoke to Moses saying “You shall count therefore from the morrow after the Sabbath, wherein you offered the sheaf of firstfruits, seven full weeks. Even unto the morrow after the seventh week be expired, that is to say, fifty days, and so you shall offer a new sacrifice to the Lord.”¹ The ‘new sacrifice’ mentioned was an offering to the Lord in the House of God as a thanksgiving of a harvest. The Pentecost celebration within the Jewish community is also known as the “Giving of Torah” or a spiritual redemption from bondage to the idols and to immorality.

The Christian population brought the Pentecost celebration into their religion based on the facts from the New Testament of the Bible. After Jesus died on the cross, He rose from the tomb on the day Christians call Easter Sunday. He remained on the Earth for forty days, walking

with His disciples and teaching them the word of God. In the Book of Acts 1:3, the Bible states “To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many proofs, for forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God.”

On the fortieth day, Jesus again spoke, according to the Book of Acts 1:8, stating to His disciples that “you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you..” The disciples returned to Jerusalem and abode in the “upper room” along with Mary, the mother of Jesus and other persons numbering about one hundred and twenty. Suddenly, the room was filled with a sound of mighty wind “And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon everyone of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues..” This event is known in Christian communities as the Pentecost.

The day of Pentecost for some churches is the celebration of the beginning of the modern church, one in which the Holy Spirit was sent. When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, they began to speak many languages. This miracle was given so that the disciples could spread the word of Jesus to many people throughout many different lands and these people would understand the word of God given to all by Jesus.



The Pastor's Cat

Dwight Nelson recently told a true story about the pastor of his church. He had a kitten that climbed up a tree in his backyard and then was afraid to come down. The pastor coaxed, offered warm milk, etc.

The kitty would not come down. The tree was not sturdy enough to climb, so the pastor decided that if he tied a rope to his car and pulled it until the tree bent down, he could then reach up and get the kitten.

That's what he did, all the while checking his progress in the car. He then figured if he went just a little bit further, the tree would be bent sufficiently for him to reach the kitten. But as he moved the car a little further forward, the rope broke.

The tree went 'Boeing!' and the kitten instantly sailed through the air - out of sight.

The pastor felt terrible. He walked all over the neighborhood asking people if they'd seen a little kitten. No. Nobody had seen a stray kitten.

So, he prayed, 'Lord, I just commit this kitten to your keeping,' and went on about his business.

A few days later he was at the grocery store, and met one of his church members. He happened to look into her shopping cart and was amazed to see cat food.

This woman was a cat hater and everyone knew it, so he asked her, 'Why are you buying cat food when you hate cats so much?' She replied, 'You won't believe this,' and then told him how her little girl had been begging her for a cat, but she kept refusing.

Then a few days before, the child had begged again, so the Mom finally told her little girl, 'Well, if God gives you a cat, I'll let you keep it.'

She told the pastor, 'I watched my child go out in the yard, get on her knees, and ask God for a cat. And really, Pastor, you won't believe this, but I saw it with my own eyes. A kitten suddenly came flying out of the blue sky, with its paws outspread, and landed right in front of her.'

Lesson learned... Never underestimate the Power of God and His unique sense of humour.

.....

Two robins were sitting in a tree. "I'm really hungry," said the first one.

"Me too," said the second. "Let's fly down and find some lunch."

They flew to the ground and found a nice plot of ploughed ground full of worms. They ate and ate and ate until they could eat no more.

"I'm so full I don't think I can fly back up to the tree," said the first one.

"Me neither. Let's just lay here and bask in the warm sun," said the second.

They plopped down, basking in the sun. No sooner than they had fallen asleep, when a big fat tomcat snuck up and gobbled them up.

As the cat sat washing his face after his meal, he thought, "I just love basking robins."

Crossword Clues

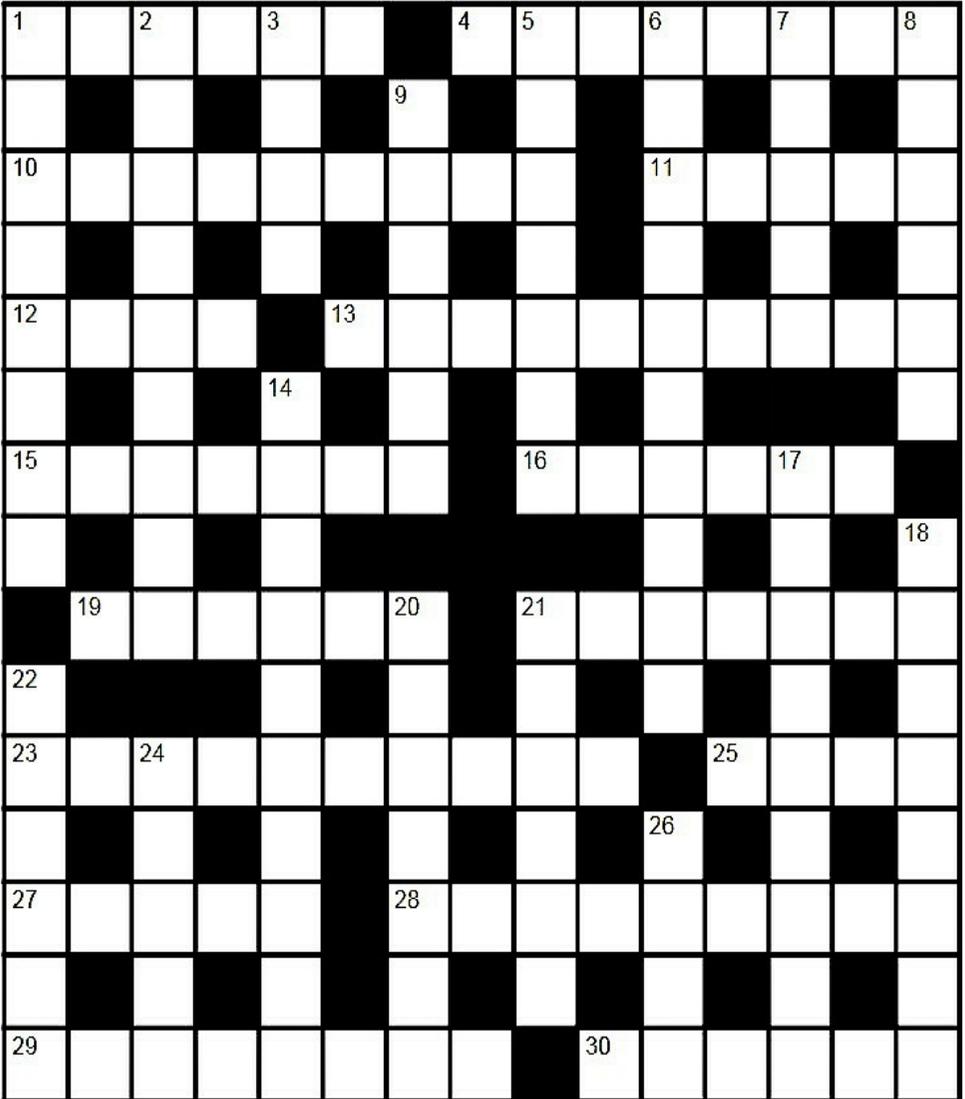
Across

- 1 An ancient weight (6)
- 4 Seemed (8)
- 10 New Testament book (9)
- 11 Unit of length (5)
- 12 '...it is a _____ thing the king requireth' (Dan 2:11) (4)
- 13 Contemplation (10)
- 15 Abigail supplied David with one hundred clusters of these (7)
- 16 A son of King David (6)
- 19 Concurred (6)
- 21 Light sources (7)
- 23 Propitiations (10)
- 25 A false god (4)
- 27 Gather (5)
- 28 Abimelech was hit by this (9)
- 29 Instructors (8)
- 30 Hastily (6)

Down

- 1 Skilled animal workers (8)
- 2 Inspiring (9)
- 3 Compass point (4)
- 5 Intense emotion (7)
- 6 The words of Jeremiah said not to listen to these (10)
- 7 Jewish leader (5)
- 8 'He is proud, knowing nothing, but _____ about questions and strifes of words...' (1 Tim 6:4) (6)
- 9 Bread makers (6)
- 14 In this year of King Nebuchadrezzar's reign, Nebuzaradan arrived in Jerusalem (10)
- 17 Ancient city of Og, King of Bashan (9)
- 18 Stringed instrument (8)
- 20 Joseph, perhaps? (7)
- 21 Tiny amount (6)
- 22 Jesus did this with authority (6)
- 24 Last letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
- 26 Province of the Roman Empire (4)

CROSSWORD



FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH: SALVATION

FIND 15 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PICTURES



Answers

Crossword

Across: 1 Shekel, 4 Appeared, 10 Ephesians, 11 Cubit, 12 Rare, 13 Meditation, 15 Raisins, 16 Nathan, 19 Agreed, 21 Torches, 23 Atonements, 25 Baal, 27 Glean, 28 Millstone, 29 Teachers, 30 Rashly.

Down: 1 Shearers, 2 Exhorting, 3 East, 5 Passion, 6 Enchanters, 7 Rabbi, 8 Doting, 9 Bakers, 14 Nineteenth, 17 Ashtaroath, 18 Psaltery, 20 Dreamer, 21 Tittle, 22 Taught, 24 Omega, 26 Asia.

Wow! What Happened at Babel?

L
Q D E
B X E L A
S J E R D A R
D I F F E R E N T
Q N S E T T L E D G H
P E O P L E T O W E R U P
I N I M R O D A T S H I N A R
Z H V G M B R I C K S D R O N G T
Z F Y H C O N F U S E D T O N G U E S
B A B E L K C I T Y C E E I M A D F H S Y

Babel
bricks
city

common
confused
different

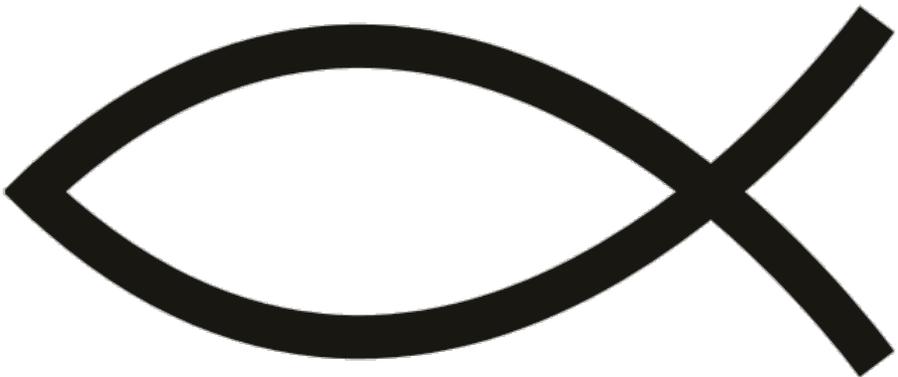
Earth
languages
Nimrod

people
scattered
settled

Shinar
tongues
tower

GROUP CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>What's on</u>
<u>June</u>			
Sun. 9 th	12.30pm	New Providence	Celebration Lunch
Sun. 9 th	4.00pm	Heath	Messy Church
Wed 12 th	2.15pm	New Hope	Friendship Hour
Thu. 13 th	7.30pm	Heath	Thursday Club
Sun. 16 th	12.00pm	New Hope	Church Meeting
Tue. 18 th	10.30am	Heath	Community coffee morning
Sat. 22 nd	7.30pm	Heath	Musical Evening
Mon 24 th	7.30pm	New Providence	New Provi Circle
Wed 26 th	2.15pm	New Hope	Friendship Hour



PREACHER PLAN

HEATH URC, MANOR DRIVE, 10.30 AM

- June. 2nd Rev Heather Pollard
June. 9th Mr. Martin Pollard
June. 16th Alison Dobson
June. 23rd Mr. Jim Walker
June. 30th Group Service at New Hope

NEW HOPE URC, WARLEY ROAD 10.30 AM

- June. 2nd Mrs. Juliet Foster
June. 9th Mr. David Truswell
June. 16th Rev Heather Pollard
June. 23rd Mr. David Truswell
June. 30th Rev Heather Pollard

NEW PROVIDENCE URC, KEIGHLEY ROAD 11.00 AM

- June. 2nd Dawn Walker
June. 9th Rev Heather Pollard
June. 16th Alison Dobson
June. 23rd Mrs. Juliet Foster
June. 30th Group Service at New Hope





"Er, I don't think there is a Patron Saint of the internet."

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July Deadline



All contribution need to be in by **FRIDAY JUNE 14th** please. These can be either handed in to your church reps or stop press direct to the editor at:

Thank you.