

Hilltop

April / May 2019

Newsletter of The Church at Bents Green

Celebrate Easter

*Good Friday walk with the cross
9.45 service, set off at 10 am
Good Friday quiet prayer 12 - 3 pm
Easter Day Service 10.30 am*

Come as you are

*Wednesday 1st May at 7.30pm
in the church. A relaxed evening of
fellowship for women of all ages
Tea, coffee and treats!*

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Action for Children

*Coffee Morning with stalls
Saturday 13th April 10 – 12 noon
in Bents Green Church*



Fireworks Quiz Night
*Sat 25th May 5.30 - 8 pm
at Bents Green Church
In aid of the Archer Project*

Christian Aid week 12th-18th May



A community church sharing the love of Jesus

Celebrate Easter with us

Good Friday: The Cross Walk begins with a short service at Bents Green Church at 9.45 am starting at 10 am to walk down Knowle Lane and Ecclesall Road, calling at Banner Cross Church for worship and hot cross buns

The church will be open between 12 and 3 on Good Friday for quiet prayer.

Easter Day: Morning Service at 10.30 am with groups and activities for young people and children.

Events in April and May

Action for Children coffee morning on the 13th April 2019 at 10am -12 noon at Bents Green Church. You will be able to have a coffee and a chat and perhaps bag a bargain from our great stalls selling plants, cakes, cards, bric-a-brac and crafts

Yorkshire Half Marathon Sunday 14th April: Watch the Marathon from here! The church is open for breakfast from 9.30 am. We expect the first runners to come past the church at about 10 am

Come As You Are on Wednesday 1st May at 7.30pm: A relaxed evening sharing sisterly love and fellowship for women of all ages. Tea, coffee and treats!

Christian Aid Week: 12th - 18th May. Please support the fundraising activities for this worthwhile cause

Fireworks Quiz Night: Sat 25th May, 5.30-8 pm in Bents Green Church In aid of the Archer Project

Prayer – If you would like us to pray for you confidentially you can contact us by email reyarp42@sky.com or leave a note in the Prayer Box in the church corridor (side entrance) which is emptied daily.

HOW
ACTION FOR CHILDREN
WORKS

Action for Children celebrates 150 years

It was on the 9th of July, 1869, that Thomas Bowman Stephenson, a Methodist minister, opened the first National Children's Home (as it was then) at Waterloo London and welcomed the first two boys: 10 year old George Oliver and Frederick Hall. 150 years on the spirit of

the founder still inspires Action for Children to act on behalf of over 300,000 children, young people, carers and parents every year across the UK. Their mission remains "to do what is right, what is needed and what works for children". The national birthday celebrations in July will see the launch of an exciting new campaign around childhood.

So please come and support the Action for Children coffee morning on the 13th April 2019 at 10am -12 noon at Bents Green Church. You will be able to have a coffee and a chat and perhaps bag a bargain from our great stalls selling plants, cakes, cards, bric-a-brac and crafts.

I hope to see you there! **Elaine Read (AFC Co-ordinator, Bents Green Church)**

The Flypast in honour of the crew of Mi Amigo



Many of us joined crowds of thousands who gathered in Endcliffe Park on 22nd February to watch the flypast in honour of the ten American crew of Mi Amigo who died here 75 years ago. Their damaged aircraft crash-landed in the trees. The BBC broadcast live from the park with an interview with Tony Foulds who has tended the memorial in their memory.

Photos from Martyn Read

Another Holy Week approaches...

This year the schools begin their new term on the Monday of Holy Week, having already had the 'Easter' holidays! In order to cope with the variable date of Easter, a fixed holiday for schools allows for better planning and better rest for pupils and teachers, rather than too long a term. So, the celebration of Holy Week and Easter will now fit around a secular timetable.

Is it as if God is being pushed out? Having less significance within society? Some may well think so. However, does this not miss the point of the Easter story? God does not fit with our plans, our preconceptions, and our convenience. The whole point of Easter is to blow open our hearts and minds.

Did Jesus ever do anything conventionally? The last days of his life were no exception. From donkey riding on Palm Sunday, to disrupting the sacrificial system by overturning the tables of the money changers. From discussing what God's radical kingdom is like, in the temple precincts, to washing the feet of his disciples. From allowing himself to be arrested on trumped up charges, and not offering any defence, to going to the place of horrific execution. From feeling abandoned by God as his life slipped from him to entering the darkness of death.

Each step through Holy Week is a step closer to God showing us, as clearly as he can, how he offers himself in love to the world. Whatever we throw at him, he absorbs; injustice, pain, betrayal, hate, separation, and finally death. God, dead on a cross. And at the end of the story, the tomb, the burial, the tears and numbness of grief. And just when we think that it is all over, there is this ridiculous rumour of an empty tomb, a missing body, and encounters with a Risen Jesus.

I hope and pray that you will walk through Holy Week alert to how God is speaking to you, awake to the possibility of life changing encounters, willing to receive new insights and hopes, and to see God breaking into our everyday experience of life.

Peace, Tim



Holy Habits – getting to sound familiar?

It will take two years to complete, and for the last 6 months we've heard of little else – but STOP! I'm not talking about Brexit but something entirely more uplifting – Holy Habits! Yes, our Christian discipleship programme has looked at Prayer, Gladness & Generosity and (currently) Breaking Bread. It has been good to spend time unpicking each of these themes. We might think we know just about all there is to know about them. And yet in planning each theme the Holy Habits team (whose accumulated Christian experience must be upwards of 200 years!!) have been amazed at the hidden depths we've found. With God you'll always find there's more!

As we have travelled through the habits week by week (and been inspired by those truly amazing weekly emails) I can see a clear theme emerging. In each case, **the true value of the habit is revealed in the blessing it brings to others.** We get closer to God in prayer, and in return He inspires us to change lives for the better. We practise gladness and generosity towards others, and in return God makes us glad. We give 'our bread' (our talents, experience, etc.) to Jesus; he blesses it and giving it back enables us to 'feed' many, many others. In short, in developing the habits we strengthen relationships, with everyone.

It comes as no surprise, then, that the next Habit we shall explore (through May and June) is Fellowship! Now, that sounds like a nice cosy one, doesn't it – casual conversations, comfy chairs, fun and laughter. Compared with the others, May and June should be a breeze! Ah, but wait: the Holy Habits programme introduces Fellowship in the Christian context as believers "sharing their lives with each other and the world around them ... a powerful sign of a Spirit-filled way of life ... a true community of belonging and service". Ooh, now then, that's a bit more tricky. I told you there's always more to it!

The Acts 2:42-47 passage which inspired the Holy Habits programme shows that Fellowship in the Early Church meant commitment – to Christ, to one another and to sharing the joy of what they had together with others. If that sounds a bit frightening, fear not! God always takes us forward in small steps. For you, 'doing' this habit might mean joining a small group to share your Christian journey with others; making more of an effort to meet with a Christian friend for mutual encouragement; inviting someone to join in one of our activities – or taking 'church' to them in some way. Whatever, developing the habit of Fellowship can only make you, the church and our communities stronger! If only we could say the same about the Brexit process ...

If you want to find out more about Holy Habits at Bents Green do come and see any of the planning team: Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne & John Wilkins. **Martyn Read** (martyn_read@hotmail.com)



The little children



Chuchi Face



The Morris Dancers



Truly and the Toymakers as the dancing dolls



Baron and Baroness with their Pirates and inventors



The Pott Family



Spies on the beach with Caractacus eating seaweed



The Child Catchers



The fairground entertainers

With thanks to Ecclesall Print for printing these pages in colour in support of the Bents Green Pantomime



Ensemble with Chitty Bang Bang

Chitty Bang Bang

Count Zborowski's famous real-life car was brilliantly recreated in February by our marvellous designers, engineers and technicians, and was expertly driven from our church hall into the church. There she took off and we saw her fly out of the front doors and up and over Bents Green. After circling around she set off for Ladybower, then the sunny Welsh seaside, and finally to Vulgaria.

Vulgaria is the home of the evil Baron and Baroness Bombast with their courtiers, pirates, guards, world-famous inventors, spies taught by James Bond himself, toymakers and the wicked Child Catchers. We saw the capture of the village children, and their rescue when Chitty Bang Bang flew up to the castle, ran over the Baron and Baroness and reunited the village families.

Along the way we visited the local tax-fiddling garage, the Scrumptious sweet factory, the Pott family home and the fairground with its acrobats, Morris dancers and other entertainers. Finally we heard the Christian message of forgiveness, spoken and put into action by the village children forgiving those who had captured and imprisoned them.

All this came about thanks to the 70 children and young people involved in the Pantomime, the 40+ adult helpers and the 400+ people who watched. Thank you all very much indeed. **Glenn Evans.**

Supporting the Archer Project – Update

By the Fireworks Junior Church Group: **Georgia, Jessie, Olivia and Ruvimbo**

We put up a massive sleeping bag to collect donations of tea, coffee and biscuits in the church. Then we took them down to the Archer Project on the bus. There were 7 bags and they were extremely heavy, but we were happy to do a good thing.

When we got there, we met Emily, who told us lots of interesting facts and figures about the homeless, like how many breakfasts they provide and how many people they see each day. We learnt interesting stories about some of the people that they have worked with, who now work for them.

On our tour we saw lots of different rooms like the doctors' room, lounge and outside space. They were very proud of the doctors' room because people can come and they don't have to wait for an appointment. Emily also showed us the place where the homeless can store their things, so that they don't lose them. She explained that the project provides 2 meals, a free breakfast and a £1 lunch to people who either have nowhere to live or who do not get any benefits from the government. For breakfast they have sausage, eggs and beans and other days they have bacon. **(continued on p6)**



(Supporting the Archer Project continued) In the conference room we asked Emily questions and found out there are probably around 26 rough sleepers in Sheffield, but that it is very hard for them to know the exact number and it could be as many as 100. The project is a really useful place for the homeless; to get accommodation, homeless people need an address and so the project allows them to use theirs. They have helped a lot of people, some have now become workers there like James, who is now their operations manager. They gave us a book full of stories of people who have been helped and supported by them.

The Archer Project has been open a long time and will be celebrating their 30th anniversary this year. They are called the Archer Project because of an ancient stone that was found nearby that had a figure of Jesus as an archer on it.

We had a really great time and Emily was very kind and really loves her job. It is great to know that there is really good help for homeless people in Sheffield, but they need a lot of support from us to be able to do this. We are excited to be able to continue doing this at Bents Green. Our sleeping bag is still in the church for donations of tea, coffee and biscuits and on Saturday 25th May 2019 join us for a Quiz Night.

A HUGE thank you to all those who donated over the last few weeks, please continue to do so and we look forward to seeing you at our **Quiz night on Saturday May 25th 5.30 – 8.00 pm at Bents Green Church.**



Hillsborough – the 30th anniversary

15 April this year is the 30th anniversary of the disaster at Hillsborough football stadium, which cost the lives of 96 fans, and caused physical or psychological injury to hundreds more, many of whom suffer to this day.

No doubt there will be commemorations of various kinds, including tv coverage, showing film from 30 years ago, interviews with victims' families, analysis of what went wrong etc. But is unlikely that anything will be said about someone many of us at Bents Green knew, who made a major contribution to the response to the disaster.

Gordon Wilson was a Methodist minister, who served as an industrial chaplain in Sheffield for most of his ministry. He has preached at Bents Green, and in retirement lived on Abbey Lane and was a member at Totley Rise. He died a few years ago. The part he played is summarised in a book charting the history of workplace mission in South Yorkshire, called 'The Church beyond the Church'.

The book says: 'Wilson heard the news of the disaster on the radio. He went straight to the ground. For the rest of that week he spent every waking hour there. As chaplain to both Sheffield Wednesday and the Fire Service he played a key role in the emergency operation and in the days afterwards. He was given complete authority to act on behalf of the Club in matters relating to counselling. He had to negotiate with the Social Services, the Police, denominational authorities and others to ensure that all worked smoothly together. On one occasion he threw an ITN crew out of the ground. He offered counselling and support to those away from the limelight, the ground staff and others, who were equally deeply affected by the tragedy. He worked closely with the West Midlands Police investigating the tragedy. He participated in the memorial services held in both Sheffield and Liverpool Cathedral. Such intensity of work was only possible on the basis of the relationships that had been built up over ten years' chaplaincy to Sheffield Wednesday.'

When you hear about Hillsborough this April, remember Gordon Wilson, a faithful servant of God. **John Wilkins**

Friendship Club

I think this is one of my two favourite times of the year; late spring moving into early summer (the other, in case you are wondering, is late summer into early autumn). Things are really taking off in the garden and the air is warmer. The birds are really out in numbers now with welcome new arrivals from abroad and if you travel away from moorland Sheffield to the coast or more southerly parts you are always likely to see different birds and hear different songs. There is a buzz in the air.

There has also been a buzz in the Friendship Club as we have moved away from colder weather that may keep some people inside, although the FC crowd is pretty indomitable! The recent programme of events has seen a super talk on the history of Whirlow Farm going back to Roman times and a very lively and enjoyable talk, with music, on the life and times of George Formby. The buzz will continue with amongst other items our good friends the Meersbrook Orchestra, a talk on the Sheffield Blitz, some wonderful music and a rather exotic sounding talk on the Gardens of Barbados. (Full programme on p7). So, come along and be part of that buzz and enjoy good fellowship and friendship at 2:00pm in the Church Hall. All are welcome. **Arthur Blacklock**

Regular church activities and contact details

Services at the Church at Bents Green

All are welcome at these services

Sunday mornings at 10.30 am During morning services there is a crèche for little ones, Sparklers and Sparks Clubs for younger children and Fireworks and Sunday Club for older children and young people.

Sunday evenings at 6.30 pm - An informal service often including tea, coffee and time to chat about the Christian faith.

Café worship on the first Sunday of each month. Breakfast from 10.00, with worship at 10.30. This is an informal service, so please make yourself at home. Drinks are available at any time.

Wednesdays at 10 am: Midweek service.

Activities for Children and Young People

New members are welcome at these activities at the church.

Contact the named person for more details.

For younger children

Crèche	0-3	Sun 10.30 am	Ruth	2686507
Sparklers	4-5	Sun 10.30 am	Ruth	2686507
Sunbeams	0-4	Wed 9.15-12noon	Katie	07464 824462

For children and young people

Sparks	5-11	Sun 10.30 am	John	2307556
Fireworks	12-14	Sun 10.30 am	Emma	07707 500226
Sunday Club	15-18	Sun 10.30 am	Sue	2307556
Girls' Brigade	5-18	Thurs evening	Marian	2361316
Lighthouse	5-11	Wed 3.45 pm	Cherry	07853278612
Lampstand	12-18	Fri 8-10 pm	Cherry	07853278612
Craft Services	3-12	Festivals	Sue	2307556
Drama group	All ages	Various	Glenn	2351057
Pantomime	All ages	Annually	Glenn	2351057
Musical	All ages	Special events	Christèle	07912207661
Holiday Club	4-11	August 5 th -9 th 2019	Lesley	2686461

Friendship Club Programme:

Tuesdays at 2 pm in the Church Hall (enter by side door opposite the shops). A warm welcome awaits any who would like to come – especially men and women over 60.

Tues 2nd April	Lady Mary Montague
Tues 9th April	Friends in Harmony
Tues 16th April	Easter Celebrations (No meeting on 23rd April)
Tues 30th April	The Runaways by Ian Gregg
Tues 7th May	Meersbrook Orchestra
Tues 14th May	The Sheffield Blitz – May Anne Brown
Tues 21st May	Pat Hall
Tues 28th May	Spring Bank Holiday – No meeting

**For more information contact Pat 0114 2497280
or Jackie Smith 0114 3483069**

Contact Details:

Lay Assistant Minister: John Wilkins
Tel 0114 2361306 (First contact)
Email: johnwilkins73@googlemail.com

Minister: Rev Tim Crome
Tel. 0114 4389012
Email: Tim47Crome@msn.com

For Room Bookings contact:
Peter Larder Tel. 0114 2686507

Church website:
www.bentsgreenmethodist.org.uk
Church office answerphone:
0114 2361912

Regular church activities

Games, chat, crafts

Wednesdays 12.30 to 3 pm in the church.
Indoor bowling, scrabble, chess, dominoes, jigsaws and cards, knitting and crafts.
Contact Ruth: 0114 2686507

Coffee Mornings in the Church:

On the first Saturday of every month
from 10.30 am – 12noon

Harbour Coffee

On Wednesdays in term-time from 3.30 – 5.45 pm in the Music Room

Tea, Toast & Time 4 Thinking:

Thursdays @ 10.30 am each week. Upstairs in the Church Lounge.

A time to reflect on what following Jesus is all about. A place for all those seeking answers. Carers of young children especially welcome.
Contact Sue: Tel 0114 2307556

House groups

Many people in the church belong to a house group and meet regularly to pray together, read the bible and talk about the Christian faith. If you are interested in joining a house group contact Sue: Tel 0114 2307556

Hilltop Editor:

Tricia North Email: tn-bg@live.co.uk
Please send material for the next issue to the editor by Sunday 12th May 2019.

If you would like to receive **Hilltop** by email please email the editor: tn-bg@live.co.uk

Porter Valley Dementia Café offers a social afternoon with snacks and refreshments, a range of activities and relevant speakers and guests. It is for people with dementia who live in their own homes, and for their families and carers. It is held on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 2-4 pm in the church (main door of the church).



Walking the Jesus Trail from Nazareth to Capernaum

The Jesus Trail is a recognized walk of 45 miles from Nazareth to Capernaum and I have just returned from walking it over 5 days as a sponsored walk to raise funds for Nazareth Hospital. Thank you very much to everyone who has contributed to help to refurbish the maternity department.



In March 23 of us set off up the hill from Nazareth hospital and out into the fields. The fields were a lush green and full of wild flowers. We saw anemones, lupins, clumps of cyclamen, bee orchids, and many tiny flowers in bright pinks and blues and yellows. The countryside was hilly and often, at the end of the day, we had to climb up towards our accommodation. Fortunately, we had pauses when our guide gathered us round to tell us some stories from Biblical times, Crusader warfare, or 20th century events. There is such a lot of history to tell and he told it well.

It was amazing to walk through the countryside where so many of the place names are familiar from Bible stories. We saw Mt Tabor and Mt Hermon, stayed at Cana and sailed on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and his disciples spent a lot of time walking from place to place through the same scenery and sailing on the water. It was easy to imagine them there. It felt a privilege to be walking in the landscape rather than travelling in a tourist bus from one site to another.

Our accommodation each night showed us something of the varied communities in Israel. In Cana we stayed in a guest house run by an Arab family who laid out long tables in their kitchen and living room and family members served the meal. The next day we were in a hotel on a Jewish religious Kibbutz. Then we were in wooden holiday homes on a cooperative farm (a moshav) and lastly at a Youth Hostel by the Sea of Galilee.

Each day staff from one of the hospital departments met us along the route with a delicious cooked lunch which they had made at home. Some staff members walked with us for a day and we enjoyed finding out more about the hospital and life in Nazareth. On our return to Nazareth Hospital a pipe band led us through the hospital gate and escorted us to a reception under a banner welcoming us back!

Tricia North



Prayer for the nation

Gracious God,

As we move into uncharted waters may we look to you.

You are our anchor and our hope.

Help us to keep our eyes upon you

For our prime minister and those involved in negotiations

Grant them wisdom, understanding and patience.

Help them to speak graciously, deal honestly and work diligently.

Lord as nations in the United Kingdom may we always be people of hospitality, compassion and kindness.

Welcoming the stranger and loving our neighbours

In your mercy Lord may we go forward with confidence

That you would enable us to flourish in your grace

In Jesus' name, Amen

<https://www.eauk.org/church/pray-with-us/prayer-for-our-nations>

Were You There?

The human race was there, sinned against and sinning, all represented; not just one part from which we might safely dissociate ourselves.

Of course, none of us would go so far, would we? We wouldn't put our strongly held beliefs before you Lord. We wouldn't want to crucify you just because you challenged our motives, our good works, or because you refused to keep our petty rules. We wouldn't drag you before the authorities because your life shows us how fickle, devious, disloyal, two-faced, callous, cruel and self-centred we are!

Neither would we share the murderous hatred that could exult in torture, mockery and lust for blood...would we?

Well, we might not have done anything to prevent it — what could we have done against a crowd like that? Perhaps Pilate had a point: better to wash our hands of the whole affair. Not that they did!

“Let his blood be upon us and upon our children!”

On balance, perhaps it's as well we were not there that day.

Janet Nowell

