

Open Space

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

MAY 2010



Now that Easter is over..

AFTER EASTER, as we celebrate the amazing events that unfolded over the Easter week it's harder to remember the pain of Good Friday and the confusion and suffering that the disciples felt even for the short space between Good Friday and Easter day.

We are readying ourselves for celebration, anticipating the Good News. But actually it was so hard for the disciples to actually believe the evidence of their own eyes – Jesus living, breathing, eating with them – that Thomas has to touch the wounds to realise it is true.

As we experienced the story of Good Friday in the first hour, this year we visited the tomb with the children and began to understand a little about the fact that for the disciples as they waited there was no apparent hope, their Easter vigil was full of pain, they had no idea that the story had not ended.

In fact the pain, rather than being fruitless, was – like the pain of childbirth – leading to a new beginning, a miraculous new beginning, and like childbirth, was leading to new life but for not just one child but for all God's children.

So we, as disciples now with the whole of the story before us – how should we behave? Well Peter who was part of the story who heard these words and went through that painful experience of Easter first hand, has something to say to us – this new life

that we have through Christ is a life in God's kingdom which makes us like aliens and strangers in the world. That is not to say that we are separate from it but we should be leading the way in challenging those things in this world that demand our attention.

Our lives should be such that:

“our good deeds glorify God”... we must not keep the great news about Jesus and the love we have and share – to ourselves – we need to share it. Could part of the problem be that we do not always behave, as a church or as individuals in such a way as that the world feels compelled to listen, because the world actually questions our integrity?

Now, the world, especially in the media, has its own agenda and will use many means to stop its ears to the message of love that we have to deliver.

The life changing news we have, should have had a life changing effect on ourselves first, making us eager to share, to love, to risk, to put others first, following Jesus's commandment to love one another and lay our lives down for one another

I want to ask what difference that first Easter day makes to our lives.

Jesus has ensured everlasting life for us and has gone before us and waits for us.

Jesus is alive, loves us and cares about all we do, we will never be alone.

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VOLUME 2 Issue 4

Mission Partners
with St Stephens:

Bristol City Centre
Soup Run
Bristol/Uganda Link
Christian aid
Emmaus
Fair Trade
Frenchay Hospital
Chaplaincy
Volunteers
Soundwell
Community Trust
Stop the Traffik
International
Justice Mission

*We will hear more
of these partners in
future issues of
Open Space*

Open Space is usually
published on the first
Sunday of the month.

If you would like to
publish something then
please give it to:

David Packe
or send an email to
david.packe@bt
internet.com.
to arrive mid month
preceding.

Thank You.

This IS Church – *but not as you know it*



Jumping for joy, and Abigail: 22 May

A member of St Stephens, Amanda Carter, is soon going to jump out of a plane from 12000 feet!

When is she doing this? Indeed, why is a normal, sensible young mum going to do this!

Well, Amanda wants to help raise much needed funds for a charity: Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Her beautiful daughter Abigail suffers from this horrid disease. She was diagnosed at just 8 weeks old and Amanda and partner Charlie have devoted their lives to keeping her well. Amanda says:

“Abbie is the inspiration for doing this...I am jumping for her! She and all the other sufferers deserve a cure, I am hoping that one day CF will stand for Cure Found!☹☹”

The dive will be a Tandem (accompanied) sky-dive and will take place 22 May at Langor airfield, located in Nottinghamshire.

There are currently nearly 60 people jumping.

All have been touched by CF in some way or another. There are a couple of ‘jumpers’ that do actually have Cystic Fibrosis and some who have had lung transplants.

Purple helium balloons will be released on the day to remember those who have lost their battle to CF and for sufferers who are still fighting.

The lady who is organising the event is Lorraine Barnes who has 2 boys that also have CF and her web page is www.thebarnesboys.org.uk



I am currently seeking sponsorship either via the **just giving** page: www.justgiving/CFAngels or by taking direct donations.

Barclays bank (my employer of 25 years!) have agreed to match on a £ for £ basis everything I raise which is fantastic news!

I would dearly like for you to consider giving to this worthwhile cause, not just for me and Abigail but for all who suffer from this condition.”

Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is one of the UK’s most common life-threatening inherited diseases which affects over 8,500 people in the UK.

Over two million people in the UK carry the faulty gene that causes Cystic Fibrosis: around 1 in 25 of the population.

If two carriers have a child, the baby has a 1 in 4 chance of having Cystic Fibrosis.

Cystic Fibrosis affects the internal organs, especially the lungs and digestive system, clogging them with thick sticky mucus. This makes it hard to breathe and digest food.

Each week, three young lives are lost to, and five babies are born with, Cystic Fibrosis.

Half of all sufferers can expect to live over 38 years, although improvements in treatments mean a baby born today could expect to live even longer.

We wish Amanda and her fellow jumpers well and a safe landing!



ASCENSION DAY

ASCENSION DAY is observed in the UK on the 40th day of Easter commemorating Jesus Christ’s ascension into heaven, according to the New Testament of the Bible.

What do people do?

Ascension Day marks the end of Rogationtide, which is a time when people pray for blessings to occur.

It is not a public holiday here. Offices, shops, schools, institutions and public transport don’t stop.

Ascension Day is one of the earliest historical Christian celebrations and dates back to 68 AD. In the New Testament account, Christ met with his disciples several times in the 40 days following his resurrection and instructed them on how

to follow his teachings. On the 40th day he took them to the Mount of Olives, where he ascended to heaven.

Ascension Day is usually a Thursday marking the end of the Easter season, ten days before Pentecost.

However, many churches choose to celebrate on the following Sunday.

Belief in the Ascension of Jesus is found in the Nicene Creed, and is affirmed by Christian liturgy and, in the West, by the Apostles’ Creed. The Ascension implies Jesus’ humanity being taken into heaven.

Why not read up about the Ascension in your Bible!

Research by David Packe

Is the general election a Heaven sent opportunity?

EVERYONE seems agreed that the problems faced by our country need solutions.

The general election appears to have opened a door for churches.

We are called for such a time as this... *Are we ready?*

Party leaders have said that churches have a vital role to play under future governments.

Gordon Brown, David Cameron and Nick Clegg were recently interviewed on BBC Radio 4 where they explained their plans for seeing faith groups more active in the public arena.

During the interview the three main political party leaders speak enthusiastically about how the Christian community can help to deliver vital services under the next administration, revealing a commitment to the principles of the Faithworks 2010 Declaration.

"We have a duty as government to see that more faith-based services are provided," said Gordon Brown.

Nick Clegg said that: "Churches and the community groups that work out of them will have an even bigger role in the future. Whitehall shouldn't do everything."

"The church should be active in the community," said David Cameron.

You can get involved:

- Pray for the issues affecting your community.
- Take an active role in the voting and democratic process.
- Proactively engage with your local authority – show them that churches and faith based projects are up to challenge.
- Visit www.faithworks and Sign the Faithworks 2010 Declaration.

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So what difference to our lives, does that amazing news have on us?

Dallas Willard says:

“...it could well prove to be a major turning point in our life if we would ... ask ourselves if we really do intend to be life students of Jesus. Do we really intend to do and be all of the high things we profess to believe in? Have we decided to do them? When did we decide it? And how did we implement that decision?”

I know for many of us in St Stephens, it has been and will be a difficult time as we have changed our way of doing things, but Jesus has shown us that there is new life to experience, we must find ways to share this good news.

We have a task to fulfil, like Mary, Peter and the other disciples, our task is to share the good news of Jesus with as many people as we can.

I believe that our new pattern of services will enable us to do this and I believe that the Holy Spirit has inspired us and will continue to inspire us in our task.

We have begun a new way of life which we all share together, a life filled with opportunity. Alleluia!

LIZ PERRY

PENTECOST

PENTECOST from the Greek, means 'the fiftieth'. Pentecost as a prominent feast in the Christian liturgical year is celebrated seven weeks (50 days) after Easter Sunday, hence its name, and on the tenth day after Ascension Thursday.

The feast is also called Whitsun, Whitsunday, or Whitsuntide. Why?

An ancient tradition of churches in ancient times was to baptize converts on Pentecost. They wore white robes on that day, so Pentecost was called 'White Sunday' or WhitSun for short.

Pentecost is both historically and symbolically related to the Jewish harvest festival of Shavuot, for the time when God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses fifty days after the Exodus.

For Christians, Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus. Pentecost is sometimes described as the 'Birthday of the Church'.

The biblical narrative recounted in Acts 2:1-4:

The Lord's followers were together. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind. It filled the house where they were. Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a

tongue came and settled on each person there. The Holy Spirit enabled them to speak whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

According to English legend, King Arthur always gathered all his knights at the round table for a feast and a quest on Pentecost:

'So ever the king had a custom that at the feast of Pentecost in especial, afore other feasts in the year, he would not go that day to meet until he had heard or seen of a great marvel.'

The main sign of Pentecost in the West is the colour red.

It symbolizes joy, and the fire of the Holy Ghost. Ministers and choirs often wear red vestments, and in modern times, the custom has extended to the lay people of the congregation wearing red clothing in celebration as well.

The season after Pentecost is the longest season of the church year: it lasts from Trinity Sunday until the first Sunday of Advent. The church stresses vocation, evangelism, missions, stewardship, almsgiving, and other works of mercy and charity as ways in which Christ empowers us by His grace to share the Gospel with others.

Research by **David Packe**

MAY CYCLE OF PRAYER BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK:

2 May	International Justice Mission	Edna Southall, Margaret Stawte Ken & Sheila Stone, Marlene Stone Steve & Greta Summerill, Roy & Vera Tanner	Hilltop Gardens Hilltop Road Hill View
9 May	Christian Aid Week	Dorothy Tarrant, Rita Thorne, Geoff Timmins Christine Tippett, Ken & Gill Tizzard Eileen Tomlin, Joy Underwood	Howard Road Irving Close James Close
16 May	Trinity Theological College	Jean Wadsworth, Kay & Darren Warr Jonathan & Rachel Watts, Tony Weare, Ron & Pauline Webb, Bernice & John Webber	James Road Jubilee Road Kerr House
23 May	Emmaus Bristol	Margaret White, Lisa & Paul Wigmore Leslie, Helen & Catherine Willcox Joan Williams, Don Williams	Kingswood Court Lansdown Close Lansdown Road
30 May	Sisters of the Church	Ian & Helen Wills, Chris & Tina Wilmot Derek & Jenny Wiltshire, Mary & Paul Winrow, Keith Winter, Gladys Woolford	Larch Road Lees Hill Leicester Square

MAY DIARY

02 Sunday	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
	09.30am	Parish Communion
	10.00am	Café Central (til 12.30)
	11.00am	No Limits! Service
	06.30pm	Evening Prayer
05 Wednesday	10.15am	Holy Communion
	07.30pm	Marriage Prep
08 Saturday	09.30am	DAD & ME (for dads and their children)
	02.00pm	Church CELEBRATION DAY picnic
	07.30pm	Church CELEBRATION DAY party!
09 Sunday	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
	09.30am	Parish Communion
	10.00am	Café Central opens (til 12.30)
	11.00am	No Limits! Service
	03.00pm	TEA SERVICE
	06.30pm	Evening Prayer
12 Wednesday	10.15am	Holy Communion
	10.30am	Coffee Morning - New Room
	07.30pm	Marriage Prep
13 Thursday	07.30pm	ASCENSION DAY SERVICE
16 Sunday	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
	09.30am	Parish Communion
	10.00am	Café Central (til 12.30)
	11.00am	No Limits! Service
	06.00pm	ROCK COMMUNION at St Aidan's (St George)
	06.30pm	Evening Prayer
17 Monday	05.30pm	Junior School Governor's Meeting
18 Tuesday	07.30pm	Songs of Praise at Staple Hill Methodist Church
19 Wednesday	10.15am	Holy Communion
	07.30pm	Marriage Prep
23 Sunday (Pentecost)	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
	09.30am	Parish Communion
	10.00am	Café Central (til 12.30)
	11.00am	No Limits! Service
	06.30pm	ROCK COMMUNION at St Stephens
26 Wednesday	10.15am	Holy Communion
30 Sunday (Trinity)	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
	09.30am	Parish Communion
	10.00am	Café Central (til 12.30)
	11.00am	No Limits! Service
	06.30pm	Evening Prayer

E&OE

FROM THE REGISTERS SINCE JANUARY

Funerals

- 22 January: **Brian Ponting**, aged 65 of Kingswood. Westerleigh Crematorium. A local Scout leader, Brian's son joined the 37th Scout troop in 1988, where Brian helped, and later he became leader. Brian then moved on to lead 78th Badminton Rd where he organised Gang shows, before leading 1st Winterbourne. He died of cancer and leaves a widow Mary, son Andrew, daughter Wendy, and two small granddaughters.
- 7 April: **Irene Gladys Lynes**, aged 91, at Westerleigh Crematorium. Irene passed away at Deerhurst Nursing Home. She leaves husband Ron and family and friends.

Please remember family and friends of the deceased, in your prayers and thoughts, in their time of sorrow.

Sayings...

'GREAT SPIRIT, HELP ME NEVER TO JUDGE ANOTHER UNTIL I HAVE WALKED IN HIS MOCCASINS'.

'I SOUGHT MY SOUL, BUT MY SOUL I COULD NOT SEE. I SOUGHT MY GOD, BUT MY GOD ELUDED ME. I SOUGHT MY BROTHER AND FOUND ALL THREE'.

Jackie Sheppard

Open Space is available 'on-line' each month. Just go to the church website and on the home page click on the link to a PDF document which will download for you to read and or print off as you wish. In colour too!

BLOGGERS

YOU CAN JOIN the St Stephens BLOG and leave your feedback and comments or you can chat to us on Facebook.

To get there, just click the links on our website home page:
www.saintstephensoundwell.org

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