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## GOD UNDERSTANDS OUR CARES AND LISTENS TO OUR PRAYERS

### We are a small fellowship at Bozeat TLC with very dedicated members

**Our dear friend and member of TLC, Sue Woods, is married to Roger who had some serious health issues last year.**

Sue was taking him to Northampton General Hospital about every 10 days for urgent treatment, which was wearing them both down, apart from the worry of his health deteriorating.

It came to a point that if the next procedure didn't 'work', the consequences would be serious. **Roger didn't know which way to turn and so in desperation one day he asked Sue to ask us all to pray for him.**

We have a great team of pray-ers in the village and so, of course, we all prayed.

**We were so thrilled when God answered our prayers. Roger is doing SO well.**

He then started to attend worship every week with Sue, who was, of course 'over the moon'.

A few weeks ago at our business meeting he asked if he could attend, and during the meeting he thanked us all for our prayer support and said what a difference this has made to his life. He then said he would like to be received into membership of our church. We all cheered and clapped!!

**So, on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May Roger gave his testimony and Peter Norton 'offered him the right hand of fellowship'.**

We all hugged him and assured him and Sue of our continued prayers. He is a valued member of our fellowship, what a blessing he is!



# My Walk with God

by Steven Jenkins

I've been asked by the editorial committee to introduce myself a little more to the Wesleyan Reform Union. First of all, let me say a big 'thank you' for your very warm welcome towards me, especially as I am not from a WRU background. I am a Bristolian (and my accent is still there in places!) and I made a decision to follow Christ during Billy Graham's visit to Bristol during Mission England '84.

My life immediately went from being purposeless to purposeful and although I had failed all my O levels that particular summer, with no job prospects on leaving school, the Lord went before and I found a satisfying job in HR (or Personnel as they used to call it). I retook my exams after a year of night school and day release and passed them all the following year.

There then followed several years of technical college and business school before feeling the call to train for ministry – which I did at Mattersey Hall Assemblies of God Bible College near Doncaster. I met my future wife, Deborah, who is American, during a summer mission trip in 1990 with Operation Mobilisation in Belgium. She studied at Emmaus Bible College in Iowa and after both of our graduations, we married in the States in 1993. After the wedding we returned to the UK and we pastored my home church in Bristol for 4 years before pastoring a small church in Stroud, Gloucestershire. I was

then asked to join the faculty of Mattersey Hall where I worked for 18 years as a lecturer and eventually Vice Principal of the college. During this time, I also gained a Masters degree with Sheffield University and a Doctorate with Chester University.

After some changes at the college I left and took on a position as a Missions Director with OneByOne and had the joy of seeing a children's home established in Lahore, Pakistan for 60 child brick slaves. During this time we were also able to see several sewing businesses start for widows in Sri Lanka.

During the pandemic, my position came to a mutual end and I began an itinerant ministry of preaching and teaching in the UK and writing. In 2022, I visited Mexborough Life Church for a couple of Sundays and was asked if I would consider becoming the pastor. We have been with the church for almost two years now and it has been wonderful to see the Lord's blessing upon the church and community.

Activities have started, the church has been restructured, a number have joined us and several have found Christ! I am ably supported by an excellent team of elders and trustees and faithful people. We look forward to all that the Lord has for his people in this needy area of South Yorkshire.

In addition to my church



responsibilities, I have served on the board of Pioneers UK as Vice Chair for over 10 years now. We are in the process of merging with Arab World Ministries, based in Loughborough. I have been so pleased to see the way that the Lord has brought this union together at this time and it's been good to work a little with Helen from AWM who is supported by the WRU.

A final word about my family, I have now been married to the lovely Deborah for 31 years and we have two fine boys who are both married, and both going on in their relationship with the Lord. What a joy for any Christian parent! Our eldest son lives in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and he is in law enforcement. He and his wife are expecting their first child, a son, in November 2024, so we're going to be grandparents for the first time.

Looking back over 40 years (this year) of following the Lord, I thank him for his faithfulness in the past. I also believe some of my best years are ahead of me and I remain excited to be living 'at such a time as this'.

## WRU CONFESSION OF FAITH

**5. That the Lord Jesus Christ offered Himself as the substitutionary sacrifice for the sin of the whole world, He was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven to be our Advocate and Mediator, and that He will personally return in power and glory.**

A little white lie here, a bit of gossiping there – we can so easily trivialise and talk ourselves out of being a real sinner. **But if a single episode of the News, can't convince you that sin is the greatest problem we face, then re-read the statement above, and see how serious God considers the sin that separates us from Him.**

The word 'SIN' is not a measurement of wickedness or to give us a scale for judgment. **Only one link in a chain needs to be broken, for the whole chain to be broken and if it was a bracelet, it could be lost forever.** The effects of doing wrong things, lying, stealing, abuse or violence all have their consequences and we judge these rightly by the effect they have on others. The Old Testament used a phrase "an eye for an eye"; in other words, our deeds have consequences and some create greater consequences than others.

**But the word "SIN" describes our rebellion against God.** It describes a spiritual consequence of breaking our relationship with God by rebellion. The links of the chain if you like could be lying, stealing or murder and morally these each could hold different consequences of judgment and effect on those involved. **But once the chain is broken, we are cut off from God, we have rebelled against His authority and will, we have sinned and are a sinner.** In fact, we started life as a sinner, not because we had done anything wrong, but because

the whole human race exists in a state of rebellion against God its creator. **Right from the beginning when Adam rebelled, we have all followed his path.**

So why hasn't God abandoned the human race? Because we were made in His image and although that image has been wrecked by our rebellion, God sees something in us that is worth redeeming, putting right, even making new. **He first loved us, despite our sin. So, He sent Jesus (the only perfect human this world has ever known) to represent the human race as a substitute.** He died in our place, taking the punishment we deserve. On the cross Jesus asked, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" No longer referring to God as His Father, He had become Sin for us, and God punished Him in our place.

**Did his death work for us? Yes!! He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven.** Now we have a human being, seated in heaven as our representative, to mediate on our behalf.

**The question is – What have you done with Jesus? Do you believe He died for you? Do you accept Him as your Saviour? Do you reject sin by repentance and turn instead to follow Jesus as your Lord and God?**

**Pastor Andy Wilcock  
(Hampden View Church)**







# We all care...

## but what kind of carer are you?

When I was at school the 'Caretaker' lived in the house at the bottom of the school drive. He acted a bit like a security guard, cleaner and general maintenance man all rolled into one. He was friendly, firm and well respected. Anyone caught smoking behind the bike sheds immediately apologised and went off sheepishly. His role was safety, security, maintenance and the cleanliness of the building.

"Care" was defined in terms of the functional needs of the organisation and premises.

Churches often had caretakers who were responsible for locking up, opening up and ensuring the maintenance was done and everything was in order. Some churches had their own flat or a house nearby where the caretaker would live. This role also involved a fair bit of security, maintenance, cleaning and checking that things were running smoothly and safely. Just like school caretakers, 'care' was defined in terms of the functional

needs of the organisation and premises.

Nowadays, in many schools, this title has changed to "Maintenance/Operations Manager" – and in churches, "property team/elder/steward." These roles are often done by 'willing' and 'dedicated' volunteers.

It's interesting that the word 'care' was used in these job titles in times past.

Do we care any less now? Or do we use the word 'care' in a different way?

We care for all sorts of things: people, places, the environment...

We care for relatives and loved ones.

We care about what we look like (well some of us do!)

We care about ethical issues surrounding food/fairtrade/clothing.

We care about our country.

We care for those in need.

We care about who we are and where we're going.

We care about ourselves, our faith, church, Jesus, Christianity, making Jesus known... Do we care about those we don't like... even our enemies?

Maybe we're all called to be 'Caretakers'?

We might take our responsibilities very seriously when it comes to cleaning the building, ensuring all the chairs are in their correct places and the heating is on. But this is not what I mean and must never be a priority or substitute for what we are truly caretakers for: The souls of those around us and the story entrusted to us.

We are 'Caretakers of the Word' in an ever-increasing world where scripture and the power of the Word of God is being diluted and minimised to suit agendas, branding and ideology.

We are 'Caretakers of People and of Story'. The greatest Story ever.

The one true Story that makes sense of all our stories.

Caring is not functional, it is controversial, hard, tough and certainly not fluffy!

We are called to do it and may need to do it, at the expense of our buildings if they are no longer fit for purpose – this will be hard, but if we are to truly be 'caretakers' in a new missional way, it will mean putting people before premises and protecting and caring for that which is sacred and really needs to be our priority.

Jo A. Siddall

## SHARING AND CARING AT WORSBROUGH COMMUNITY CHURCH

I was asked to write an article on the theme Caring and Sharing so I immediately thought about our Pantry.

For many years the fellowship at Worsbrough had prayed about how we could reach into our community. We had tried leaflet drops, special services etc, but none had really worked. At the beginning of Covid we could feel a need to provide food in some form. We discussed the Food Bank idea, but **we wanted weekly contact with the community, that's when the pantry idea was formed.**

In November 2020 God answered these prayers when we opened the Community Pantry. It began in the

middle of Covid, so we started in a small way, but we now have 70+ regular members, thankfully they haven't all turned up on the same day! But we do however average out at about 35 members per week.

**Through this ministry we hope to show God's love in a practical way, through the food provision. But also, as the members become friends, they are beginning to feel comfortable talking to us about their fears and problems.**

We have a couple of pantry members who are now part of the small volunteer base who help to run the pantry each week. In a world that

doesn't seem to care, we offer them a chance to see that people do care for them.

One of our members, who has many problems, hadn't been to the pantry for a number of weeks, we sent her a card to say we were thinking of her and hoping all was well, she was so grateful that someone would care so much. A small thing to do but it meant so much to her.

We pray that God will use us to reach these people and that He will give us the strength to carry on running the pantry, week after week.

Tracy Hamby  
Worsborough Community Church

# WHAT'S ON at Aldermans Green

## CONGRATULATIONS!

### Bianca Clarke and Chris Whitty

Congratulations to one of our Sunday School teachers, Bianca Clarke, on the occasion of her recent marriage to Chris Whitty (no, not THAT Mr Whitty!). The wedding took place on Saturday 25th May and Revd Peter Norton officiated.

As a church we wish Bianca and Chris a long and happy life together and pray for God's blessing on them.



## DEDICATION SERVICE

### Rosie Porter

Congratulations to James and Suzy who, after years of waiting, welcomed Rosalyn (Rosie) Jacqueline Porter into the world back in February. A service of dedication and thanks for Rosie took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> June and Revd Peter Norton led the service. James is one of our Trustees and also the church organist.



## CARING AT HOME AND ABROAD

We were very pleased to welcome Bernard Every to preach at our Sunday services on four consecutive weeks, starting 9<sup>th</sup> June. Bernard comes to us from the Hillfields Church, Coventry and is also a Trustee of a church in Tenerife, known as the South Tenerife Christian Fellowship. This was started through the faith of just two or three people who gathered regularly to pray. God answered their prayer with what is now an expanding 'holiday' fellowship, with a central core of regular members. Having trained initially with a man in Nepal, Bernard is now also part of Asia Link, a missionary organisation that has seen 4 churches planted in the mountain regions of Nepal, in the Salyan district.

Taking one chapter each week, Bernard spoke on Paul's letter to the Philippians – a book whose overarching theme is one of great joy and encouragement, in the face of what may have happened to Paul whilst

imprisoned in Rome. The following verses were selected for display on the welcome screen at the start of each week:

**Week 1** – *“Striving together for the faith of the Gospel”* – Philippians 1:27

**Week 2** – *“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves”* – Philippians 2:3

**Week 3** – *“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ”* – Philippians 3:20

**Week 4** – *“Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice”* – Philippians 4:4

If anyone would like to make contact with Bernard and speak further about his work or preaching, he can be contacted by email [Bernard.every@btinternet.com](mailto:Bernard.every@btinternet.com) or by 'phone 02476 412305 or 07961 050116.



Bernard's time with us has been an encouragement and we are forming a strong relationship with both Bernard and his wife, Jane. To mark his last Sunday, a 'bring & share' hot & cold lunch was held to extend the time of fellowship. Attended by approx. 45 members and friends, including regular newcomers to our Friday café who were pleased to accept the invitation and one of whom also attended the morning service. We trust that the Lord will continue to bless our outreach in this area.

**Avril McIntyre**



# PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

## Wellingborough Circuit

On Sunday the 1<sup>st</sup> September Wellingborough Circuit was blessed by a visit from our President George Phillips and his wife Julie and a amazing tea provided by our hosts the Little Chapel at Bozeat. Although the Circuit no longer has an official role in the WRU, the seven churches do continue to support one another when needed and meet twice per year for a Morning of Prayer along with occasions such as this.

The day was also the 51<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary of the Rev Peter & Mrs Sue Norton.

David Rooksby



**FRANK W BRUNTLETT**  
(Bethel Community Church)

On Monday 29th July we said our farewells to Frank William Bruntlett at Bethel Community Church in Bierley, Bradford. The wide respect for him was mirrored in the attendance at his Thanksgiving Service when members of the Union, the Circuit, the church family and people from the locality joined his family to give thanks for his life.

## OBITUARY

Frank was a member of the Union Youth Committee, a General Committee Member, a Guardian Representative and Union President in 1973. He was heard to say that having the honour of being Union President led to the most memorable year of his life.

A number of people have spoken of their remembrances of Frank and Muriel heading up Youth Holidays at Avon Tyrrel, including the singing of the 'green beans song'!!!

At Circuit level Frank was a well-respected local preacher and within his church he was a Youth Leader, Sunday School Teacher, Secretary, Property Trustee and Charity Trustee.

A long list of roles however does not capture the real essence of a

person. His decision to accept Jesus as his Lord and Saviour at the age of 17 was his motivation and strength throughout his life and he lived for Jesus as His disciple right through to his death at aged 99 (he would have been 100 In September)

Muriel and the family have received so many cards and letters of condolence that pay tribute to the man he was. His love for his Lord and for people shone through and he always showed that love and care to all. He was a man of prayer and of God's Word and that undergirded all he said and did.

Frank will be missed by everyone who had the privilege of knowing him, but we have that sure and certain knowledge that he is now with the God he loved and served for so many years.

(formerly Local Preachers' Fellowship)

## CERTIFICATES PRESENTED TO LOCAL PREACHERS

As a Union and as churches we do want to honour the many local preachers who have served faithfully over many years, especially in churches where there is no minister or pastor.

There has been a good response so far to the call for churches to recommend preachers to be recognised in this way, but I am sure there are more people whose service needs to be celebrated.

Please let me know (details below) and we will arrange for a Certificate. This can either be posted or even better, presented by one of our team at a Sunday service or other event.



In May this year we were delighted to present Certificates to Martin Drake and Barry Kimber at a service at Muff Field in Bradford.

Martin who led the service has been a local preacher for 54 years and Barry for 50 years.

## DAY OF MINISTRY 2024



## Bringing Community into Church

By now you should have received the posters for this event, but the details are repeated here.

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2024, 10am till 3pm**  
**Bethel Community Church, Shetcliffe Lane, Bierley,**  
**Bradford BD4 6DF**

A day of interactive workshops exploring different ways of bringing our communities closer to Jesus, led by Cassie Biggin and her team.

**ATTENDANCE IS FREE THIS YEAR!**

This day is for all ages, teenagers to seniors. Lunch will be provided. There are still places but these are limited so please book in good time.

Contact **David Tuckett** by email or phone to book  
Email: [dtuckett@btinternet.com](mailto:dtuckett@btinternet.com)  
Phone: 0114 231 3475/07789 770344

**Jackie Clark has now kindly offered to take over the role of secretary and after this year's Day of Ministry I will become chairman.** The other members of the team are Daphne Hodgkinson, Cliff Darby, Brian Hyde, Howard Copley, Phil Hartshorn, and Jim Rossell.

You are very welcome to join us at one of our regular Zoom meetings – if so, please contact Jackie or me.

**Dave Tuckett**



# The gardener and the Vine

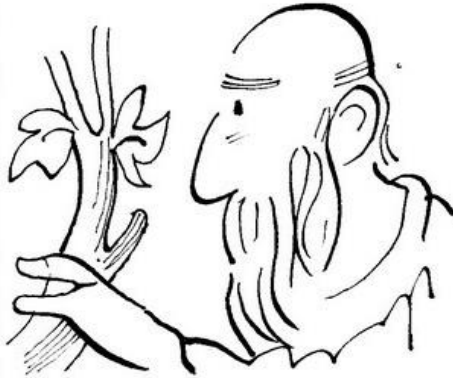


JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONCE HE TOLD HIS FRIENDS ALL ABOUT A GARDENER.

THE GARDENER'S JOB WAS TO CARE FOR THE VINES



HE WOULD LOOK AT EACH BRANCH CAREFULLY..

... AND IF IT WAS PRODUCING GOOD FRUIT, HE WOULD CARE FOR IT AND NOURISH IT.



IF IT WAS PRODUCING BAD FRUIT...

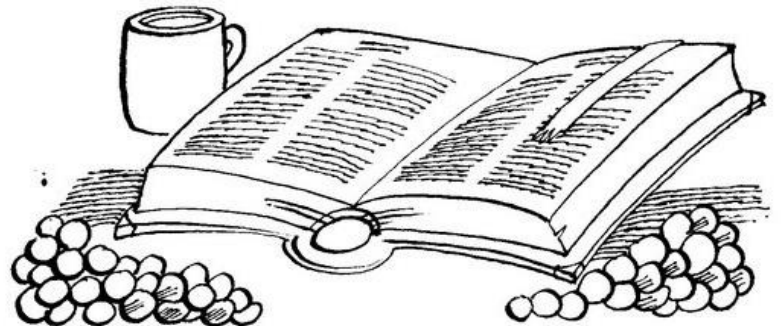


...OR NO FRUIT AT ALL...



... THEN THE GARDENER WOULD CHOP IT OFF, AND BURN IT IN THE FIRE!!

JESUS WANTED HIS FRIENDS TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS - THAT'S LIKE THE VINE BEARING GOOD FRUIT.



YOU CAN READ THIS SPECIAL PARABLE IN JOHN'S GOSPEL, CHAPTER 15.