

Issue 123

THE LADYGROVE CHURCH



MAGAZINE

April 2017

The Ladygrove Church meets at the
Ladygrove Community Centre, Tamar Way
every Sunday at 10am

www.theladygrovechurch.org.uk

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Thank you to all our contributors this month:

Hugh Boorman, Fiona Brennan-Scott and Rachel Wright.
It would be great to see your name here next time!

The **May magazine** will be available on Sunday 30th April and the
deadline for articles to go in it is **Sunday 23rd April.**

Please give your contributions to Hugh Boorman or Mary Parker.

Thought for the Month

What's It Worth?

I would hardly describe myself as a fan but I occasionally find myself watching one of the ever-increasing number of antique programmes that seem to have sprung up over the last decade – *The Antiques Roadshow*, *Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is*, *Bargain Hunt* and *Flog It!* [It used to be just *Going for a Song* with Arthur Negus.]

I guess the thing that I find so fascinating is how the value of different items is assessed. It I've concluded that Clarice Cliff stuff will always do well but so much seems to simply be guesswork. Even some of the 'experts' regularly seem to get it wrong, either seriously over- or under-estimating the final figure.

And then there's those times when the expert tells the hopeful antique-bearer that it's a shame that they didn't bring their item a couple of years ago when it would have been worth much more.



I recognise that things go in and out of fashion but surely an antique is an antique and it's the age and craftsmanship that create its value. Clearly not!

And then this evening, I've seen a lady be told that the £60 that her loving son had splashed out on just one item of her large collection of orange iridescent glassware would actually be enough to buy the whole lot. I guess beauty (and value) is in the eye of the beholder.

Jesus tells us that the kingdom of heaven is worth something: "the kingdom of heaven is like a trader who was looking for fine pearls. He found one that was very valuable. So he went away and

sold everything he had. And he bought that pearl" (Matthew 13:45-46).

I wonder how his audience responded to that parable. Matthew didn't tell us. Instead he moved on to another aspect of the kingdom.

Perhaps it's easier to assess how we react to it. How do we feel about the image of selling or giving up everything (or at least being willing to do so) for the sake of the kingdom of heaven? Alister McGrath, the theologian and scientist, suggests:

"Many Christians are unaware of the riches their faith has to offer... For most of us, the kingdom of heaven is more like the reference manual that comes with a new piece of equipment – something complicated and dull. We feel we ought to know more about it, but rather hope that we can get by with what we already know.

There is something wrong here. The problem does not lie with the Christian faith. Christianity does indeed offer us a priceless pearl, something of intrinsic value and worth. The problem is that this pearl has been thrown before swine like us, who just don't appreciate its wonder and joy. We have failed to grasp its beauty and comprehend its value. Many of those who think that they are dissatisfied with Christianity are really dissatisfied with something else – their own grasp of Christianity. For most of

us, we have scraped the surface, and nothing more – yet we mistakenly believe our superficial encounter represents the gospel in its totality".

The Church in Ephesus was challenged because they had "forsaken the love you had at first" (Revelation 2:4) but McGrath seems to imply that many of us never have truly had that love in the first place.

What is also much easier to assess is the value that Jesus put on the kingdom of heaven. More than the 'celebrity' antique dealers, he truly put his money where his mouth was and gave up everything, as we will once again recall through the Easter events this month.

If Jesus did go to those lengths, shouldn't we go much deeper than the surface in an effort "to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge" (Ephesians 3:18-19)?

Hugh Boorman

Minister of the Ladygrove Church

Tears in Heaven (A Parable)

Taken from *the Baptist Times* 7th March 2017

In his time, Jesus was known for turning things upside down. He told parables that confounded the wise and excited the marginalised. One day, my husband and I sat chatting about another story Jesus might have told...

There was once a father who loved his son.

When the son was young he contracted meningitis and suffered brain damage that affected his lower limbs and speech. Because the father dearly loved his son, he devoted his life to nursing his son with compassion and tenderness. Daily the father woke in the dark stillness of their home and began each morning kneeling by his bed in prayer. Diligently and passionately he prayed for his son to be healed.

There were days when the burden of care was difficult and overwhelming, but the father was determined not to show his son the strain he felt. He continued to dedicate himself to caring, the smile on his face never portraying the heaviness in his heart. The seasons changed and the son's peers grew from boys to men. They rose up to look the father in the eyes, as they walked tall and talked of their future careers.

Months became years yet the passion in the father's voice didn't fade, as he fervently called on God to heal his beloved son. Then each day, the father looked down at his son, contained within a wheelchair, dependent on care, limited by stairs and hampered by prejudice.

One day the father rose to pray, only to find his son had died. Within a week he stood, heartbroken, by his dear son's grave.

Rain soaked the father's hair as drops followed a well-worn path of many tears. The brave smile was gone and the raw pain of the last 20 years savagely exposed. Amidst his grief, the father was comforted by the belief that his son was finally whole. He had so longed to see his son healed, and in his absence he finally was.



He imagined his son running and smiling, enjoying the beauty and eternity of heaven.

For years, the father visited his son's grave until one day he too was called home and found himself opening his eyes to the beauty of heaven. His heart swelled at the excitement of seeing his son in all his wholeness.

As his vision came into focus, the father found himself gazing into the unforgettable brilliance of his son's dazzling blue eyes. He held his gaze, not wanting to look away, captured by the experience of being able to look directly into his son's face. Finally, they stood as equals.

Smiles grew and laughter echoed as they embraced once again.

Then slowly as the father withdrew he noticed he wasn't standing, but rather sitting opposite his son. Looking down his spirit stilled. He realised his son remained in the same old, battered wheelchair.

Like a dawn light sweeping across the land, he began to realise that he too was strapped into a wheelchair. With confusion in his eyes he looked up again at his son's face, who hadn't stopped laughing or smiling. Without a word from his father the son began to speak and sign.

"Dad, welcome to heaven.

You'll love it here.

Don't worry about the wheelchair it doesn't stop you enjoying all the best of living.

Here we don't value independence because it's all about interdependence.

No one is burdened with care because we all help one another, living as God created us to be; part of one community, his family.

No one is in need because we share.

No one is left out because we are inclusive.

There are no disabilities because they only exist when the world does not accommodate our needs.

Our vulnerability is not weakness, but an opportunity for love and relationship.

Everything God treasures is here; peace, joy, hope, faithfulness and especially love."

The father's mouth dropped open as he began to look around heaven. It seemed everyone had a 'frailty'; a need that was supported by others. This was a tactile world, alive with colour, smells and noise. Everywhere people were signing as they communicated; there were no stairs, no inaccessible places, no isolation, no burdens too heavy to bear.

All around him the father saw serving with laughter and love without limits.

'So this is heaven, this is healing.'

Rachel Wright is a nurse, writer, wife and mum of three boys. Her eldest son was born with complex disabilities. The 'Skies I'm Under' is her memoir of living with faith and an unexpected life. She blogs at 'Born at the Right Time' (well worth a read), where this piece was first published, and worships with her family at Belle Vue Baptist Church in Southend-on-sea.



baptist assembly

Saturday 13 May 2017

10:30 – 20:30

Harrogate International Centre, Harrogate

baptistassembly.org.uk

April Prayer Diary

Feel free to make suggestions of topics that we can add and, in the future, if you would like prayer for something particular on a specific date, whatever it might be, please let one of the editors know and we can add it to this prayer diary.

Saturday, 1st April

- Please pray for our town centre.
- People living in Yealm Close.

Sunday, 2nd April

- Please pray for our AGM happening during our shared lunch today.
- People living in Tweed Drive.

Monday, 3rd April

- Please pray for God's blessing upon Prayer Spaces taking place at Stephen Freeman School this week.
- People living in Cray Court.

Tuesday, 4th April

- Please pray for Rebekah Moffett, our mission partner in Madrid. See her Facebook page "Joy For Spain - Praying for Bekah Moffett in Madrid!"
- People living in Brent Avenue.

Wednesday, 5th April

- Please pray for the AGM of CTDD, particularly for the appointment of a new chair, vice chair and secretary.
- People living in Cherwell Close.

Thursday, 6th April

- Please pray for God's blessing on the Easter Service taking place this afternoon at All Saints' School.
- People living in Rugge Furlong.

Friday, 7th April

- Please pray for those with eating disorders and the people who support them.
- People living in North Bush Furlong.

Saturday, 8th April

- Please pray for Messy Church meeting this afternoon.
- People living in Bayswater Brook.

Sunday, 9th April

- Please pray for our prayer team.
- People living in Shinmoor Close.

Monday, 10th April

- Please pray for Didcot TRAIN Youth Project and give thanks for the additional workers they have been able to employ to expand their work.
- People living in The Frith.

Tuesday, 11th April

- Please pray for our homegroups.
- People living in Upperway Furlong.

Wednesday, 12th April

- Please pray for those working in marketing.
- People living in Bush Furlong.

Thursday, 13th April

- As we recall the Last Supper, let's pray for those agonising over impossible decisions.
- People living in Middle Furlong.

Friday, 14th April

- Please pray for God's blessing upon the CTDD Good Friday Act of Witness being organised this year by the King's Church.
- People living in Short Furlong.

Saturday, 15th April

- Please pray for those who find themselves in the depths of depression.
- People living in Abingdon Road.

Sunday, 16th April

- CHRIST IS RISEN!!!!!!
- Let's give thanks to our Lord and Saviour for the sacrifice he made for all the world and let's pray for the courage, wisdom and discernment to declare his Gospel to all we encounter.
- People living in Tamar Way.

Monday, 17th April

- Please pray for people struggling to make sense of life.
- People living in Lune Close.

Tuesday, 18th April

- Please pray for those working in software development.
- People living in Stour Close.

Wednesday, 19th April

- Please pray for Sharon Jones, our mission partner in Lima, Peru with Latin Link.
- People living in Medina Close.

Thursday, 20th April

- Please pray for those who mourn.
- People living in Arun Mews.

Friday, 21st April

- Please pray for those who are experiencing loneliness.
- People living in Hamble Road.

Saturday, 22nd April

- Please pray for those who are working in care.
- People living in Waveney Close.

Sunday, 23rd April

- On our patron saint's day, please pray for our nation.
- People living in Eden Court.

Monday, 24th April

- Please pray for Didcot Girls' School as they hold Prayer Spaces once more and please pray for an opening at St Birinus Boys' School so that they would also embrace this important ministry.
- People living in Thurne View.

Tuesday, 25th April

- Please pray for those working in event management.
- People living in Derwent Avenue.

Wednesday, 26th April

- Please pray for our Wednesday Parent/Carer and Toddler Group and Thursday Rock-a-Tots Group.
- People living in Orwell Drive.

Thursday, 27th April

- Please pray for those finding it hard to balance life at the present.
- People living in Humber Close.

Friday, 28th April

- Please pray for our BMS World Mission partners, David and Dorothy McMillan, in Amsterdam.
- People living in Loddon Drive.

Saturday, 29th April

- Please pray for Didcot Railway Centre, celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year.
- People living in Yare Close.

Sunday, 30th April

- Please pray for our music group and those who operate the mixing desk.
- People living in Calder Way.

May

Monday, 1st May

- Please pray for those whose lives are tainted by bitterness.
- People living in Nene Grove.

Tuesday, 2nd May

- Please pray for the Revd David Rice as he is licensed as our new Area Dean.
- People living in Welland Avenue.

Wednesday, 3rd May

- Please pray for the Bungokho Rural Development Centre, our mission partner, in Mbale, Uganda.
- People living in Bure Lane.

Thursday, 4th May

- Please pray for the people attending our Emmaus Course – Adino, Gillian, Penny, Rachel and Tamzin.
- People living in Wensum Drive.

Friday, 5th May

- Please pray for those working in our emergency services.
- People living in Arndale Beck.

Saturday, 6th May

- Please pray for experiencing homelessness.
- People living in Trent Road.

Sunday, 7th May

- Please pray for Benjamin Sykes and all his family and friends, joining us for his baptism this morning.
- People living in Washford Glen.



Idol

When God created Adam
Is it possible he thought
he would be enough for Adam
With all the living creatures and beauty
around them?
God is a jealous god.

“The Lord God said, ‘It is not good
for man to be alone.’”
Yet he walked with him
and talked with him.
Was it not good enough?
God is a jealous god.

“I will make a helper suitable for him.”
And so he made Eve from Adam’s rib
while he was asleep. Surprise!
God is a jealous god.
Yet it is not suitable for man to be alone.

And more than this
He allowed us to make more of ourselves.
It is not good for man to be alone.
God is a jealous god.

With more of us and choice
We choose to make more of us,
so much more of us.
God is a jealous god.
It is not good for man to be alone.

There’s so much more of us
and so much more choice,
to choose to be alone –
to choose to be without God.
To choose to be alone
with so many people.

God is a jealous god.

Fiona Brennan–Scott

Sharing our Testimonies

During our All Together service on Sunday 5th March, looking at Exodus 15, we were encouraged to remember all the amazing things that God has done, and to share examples of God at work in our lives. Recognising that it can be difficult to stand up and share our testimonies in front of everyone, we were invited to write them down or draw a picture to represent them. Elisa and Martin read them out and it was encouraging to hear so many examples of God at work in and around us. Here are the written inspiring testimonies.

Lord, in the past you have seen me through stormy waters. Those waves are crashing around me again so I ask for your guidance and calmness to see me though another storm.

Keeping our family close, a tight unit through everyday issues.

God helped me cope with the loss on my sister.

God giving me patience and being there holding my hand.

Thank you God for my amazing family. Thank you for providing all that we need.

Thank you God for helping with my writing. It's getting better now.

Thank you for your never-ending love and faithfulness. Thank you for defending me.

Thank you, Lord, for mending fragile relationships.

Lord thank you for making me know you are there. Through guidance as a parent, business owner and teacher I know your support has brought me through times of uncertainty.

God gives me and my family the strength to know that we are all being looked after, and that we will be okay.

Providing for my family in so many ways.

Father God, you continue to hold us in the palm of your hand. We thought we would struggle and lose everything, but you are there.

Thank you for providing when needed. Thank you that you will provide in the future.

God is helping my grandson bring up his twin boys after the tragic death of their mother.

Thank you for bringing me to this amazing church. Thank you for my family and all you teach me through them.

I am in a very difficult work situation and am building my trust in God to 'pray through' this and he will bring it to a resolution.

Thank you for the grace you're giving me to trust you for my work. I thank you - you're always faithful God.

Healing of migraine and stomach bug. Teaching me not to worry or be afraid - to trust the Lord completely.

Experience has taught me that stamina not disability is my problem. Stamina is being increased so I can do a new job I love and more has been possible in my own strength.

God thank you for helping me cope when Katie is away from me at home all weekend. I know she is safe and happy.

As I have given more so he has rewarded me many times over.

Helping Matilda sleep better the last week. Giving Imogen an eye operation sooner than expected.

I have been taken on as a volunteer at Shaw Trust as a sales assistant 2 days a week. It helps me find trust in other people and gives me hope to move on in life.

There have been times in my life when so many changes have happened over a short period of time and God has been with me, whatever has happened. Recently there have been more changes and these will create challenges ahead. The past experiences has shown me to put more faith in God to help me through.

Having been unwell since Christmas I have found strength in the church congregation who have prayed for me and the inspiration from others who continue with struggles far more than mine.

I have heard the expression 'freedom in Christ' many times over the years but not really registered what it means. God has opened my eyes and heart through his word and worship songs that this gives me the freedom to love everyone no matter where they are, what their beliefs etc. I am allowed to accept them without prejudice.

God is going to move me to a family. I do believe it's important to me.

For signs of spring and sunshine. For your loving arms around me all the time.

My rock through tough times. Without God's unfailing love I'm not sure what the outcome would be.

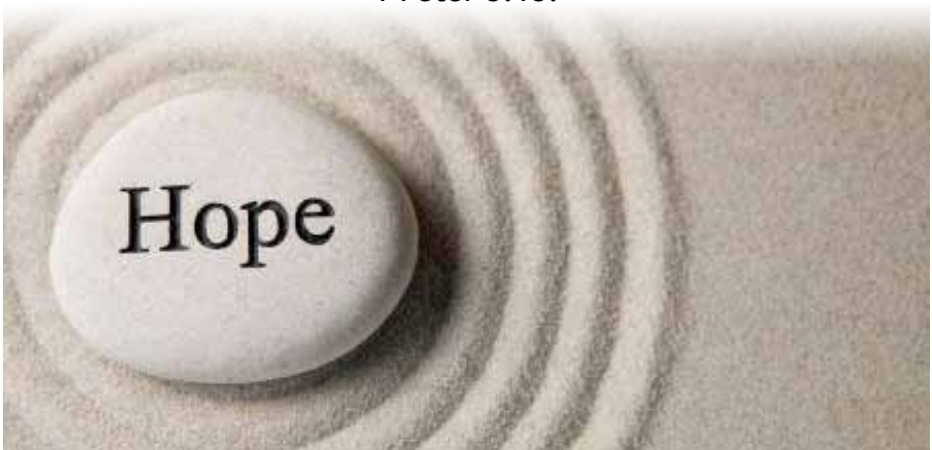
Giving birth to my first daughter, Maria, I was injected a medicine which was supposed to help me. While the nurse was administering it intravenously, I developed an anaphylactic shock and stopped breathing. It was very scary and painful in the beginning. The nurse ran to call for re-sus team. For me, passing away started. The pain and fear stopped, I felt warm, safe and bathing in light. I clearly saw myself on the bed and the fellow woman who shared the labour suite with me. I knew, I am living. I told Him, Lord, if it's my time to leave, I do. But I cannot leave the baby alone. When re-sus team arrived, I started breathing again, without them. Only with His help - He brought me back.

Finding me the right job.

Thank you that nothing can separate me from your love and with your Holy Spirit in me I can do mighty things.

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

1 Peter 3:15.



April Diary

| Date | Time | Event |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Sunday 2nd | 10am | Worship All Together Mark 7:31-37 God Comes to His People: Ears and Eyes |
| | 12:30pm | Church AGM with Shared Lunch |
| Monday 3rd | 8pm | Prayer Hour at 12 Trent Road |
| Wednesday 5th | 7:30pm | CTDD AGM at All Saints Church |
| Thursday 6th | 7:30pm | Emmaus Couse at 12 Trent Road |
| Saturday 8th | 8am | Service Leading Team Breakfast Meeting |
| | 3pm | Messy Church |
| Sunday 9th | 10am | Baptist Communion Palm Sunday Service with Children's Groups Mark 11:1-11 God Comes to His People: Into Jerusalem |
| Monday 10th | 8pm | Messy Church Debrief and Planning Meeting at 12 Trent Road |
| Thursday 13th | 7:30pm | Passover Meal at 12 Trent Road. All welcome. |
| Friday 14th | 11:15am | Good Friday Act of Witness and Worship (meet at the Methodist Church from 10:30am for hot cross bun and a drink) |
| Sunday 16th | 5:45am | Easter Sunrise Service on the Mound between Lostock Place and Ladygrove Park Primary School followed by a light breakfast at the Community Centre |
| | 10am | Worship All Together Anglican Communion Mark 16:1-8 God Comes to His People: Risen! |
| Sunday 23rd | 10am | Morning Service with Children's Groups Luke 13:10-17 God Comes to His People: Back Healer |
| Monday 24th | 8pm | Worship All Together Planning Meeting |

April Diary

| Date | Time | Event |
|----------------|--------|--|
| Wednesday 26th | 8pm | Treasure Times Planning Meeting at Didcot Baptist Church |
| Thursday 27th | 7:30pm | Emmaus Course at 12 Trent Road |
| Sunday 30th | 10am | Baptist Communion with Children's Groups Luke 17:11-19 God Comes to His People: Ten Healed |

May Diary

| | | |
|-------------|--------|---|
| Tuesday 2nd | 7:45pm | Deanery Synod Meeting at St Peter's, Didcot with the licensing of David Rice as Area Dean |
| Sunday 7th | 10am | Worship All Together with the Baptism of Benjamin Sykes Genesis 12:1-9 God's Call and Promise: Abram's Call |

Messy Church

Saturday 8th April - 3-5pm
Ladygrove Community Centre



Crafts, games, activities, worship and tea for families.
Offers of help and donations of finger food and cake will be welcome! Please speak to Hugh for more information.

Homegroups

There are a number of homegroups meeting throughout the week at various times and venues - some with a specific focus; others more generic.

For more details, speak to Hugh.

| | | |
|------------|----------|--|
| Tuesdays | 10:00am | Daytime group Contact Jo 799322 |
| | 7-8:30pm | RGB youth group for secondary school and sixth formers at Sarah and Vaughn Lawfull's home Contact Sarah and Vaughn 211868 |
| | 8:00pm | Re-hydrate Men's Group on the first Tuesday of the month for Bible study Contact Jamie 07881 710171 |
| Wednesdays | 8:00pm | Home Group at Ian and Kathryn Sykes' home (fortnightly) Contact Ian and Kathryn 850085 |
| Thursdays | 7:30pm | Kitchen Table for 20's and 30's at Sarah and Vaughn Lawfull's home Contact Sarah and Vaughn 211868 |
| | 8:00pm | Refresh Ladies' Group at Ruth and Liam Busby's home Contact Ruth 511622 |
| | 8:00pm | Re-hydrate Men's Group on the third Thursday of the month for a social gathering Contact Jamie 07881 710171 |

