

## ...what's the difference?

...THOUGHT  
FOR THE  
MONTH

**Do you remember doing those old 'Spot the difference' puzzles? You don't seem to see them so much these days, there were two pictures that looked identical, you needed to look carefully and find the often tiny differences in them.**

We are living in times when people are asking more and more – what's the difference? Not too long ago we read of the differences in the amount paid to BBC journalists who were male and female. There was a significant difference in the amounts paid with the females receiving much less. Today I was reading an article where Steph McGovern from BBC Breakfast has said that there's a disparity between presenters who are 'posh' and herself (she comes from the north-east and speaks with a strong northern accent). I wonder what her 'posh' colleagues think?! More and more, equality is called for in lots of different areas.

There is no doubt that we are all different and I'm not here to discuss the relative merits of that. But there is one area where we are all the same – men, women, young, old... the list continues. The Bible makes very clear 'There is no difference... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'. I remember being hit by that verse on a poster at the Birmingham City Mission Care Centre where we often used to go to help and lead a short devotional time. I often struggled as I talked with people who very often through no fault of their own had so little in comparison to my 'luxury', but those words made me realise that whatever our differences – we were all sinners.

That verse though is followed by another: 'But God treats us much better than we deserve, and because of Christ Jesus, he freely accepts us and sets us free from our sins' (*Romans 3 v 24 CEV*). Although all are sinners, not everyone accepts that free gift that Jesus offers. It doesn't matter what your accent is or your background, male or female, old or young – that offer is there for you. Have you taken it? One thing is sure – the benefit might not be financial – but it's of greater value than anyone can earn!

### INDEX:

- 2** Billy Graham
- 3** missionary report  
// Easter
- 4** diary dates
- 5** sunday services
- 6** various
- 7** various
- 8** puzzle page



## Billy Graham, 1919 – 2018

A few days ago, the greatest evangelist of our age died. Many have commented upon his life and preaching and we will all have different memories of him. Here are a few quotes attributed to him:

*'I am not going to Heaven because I have preached to great crowds or read the Bible many times. I'm going to Heaven just like the thief on the cross who said in that last moment: 'Lord, remember me''*

*'I look forward to death with great anticipation, to meeting God face to face.'*

*'The Bible says today is the accepted time, today is the day of salvation... but there will come a time when it will be too late for you.'*

**'We aren't only called to become Christians; we are also called to be Christians.'**

*'The only time my prayers are never answered is on the golf course.'*

*'A real Christian is a person who can give his pet parrot to the town gossip.'*

*'I've read the last page of the Bible, it's all going to turn out all right.'*

***'Someday you will read or hear that Billy Graham is dead. Don't you believe a word of it! I shall be more alive than I am now. I will just have changed my address. I will have gone into the presence of God.'***



## church offerings

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<b>SUNDAY 28th</b>	<b>JANUARY.....</b>	<b>£307.70</b>
<b>SUNDAY 4th</b>	<b>FEBRUARY .....</b>	<b>£328.40</b>
<b>SUNDAY 11th</b>	<b>FEBRUARY .....</b>	<b>£327.80</b>
<b>SUNDAY 18th</b>	<b>FEBRUARY .....</b>	<b>£300.54</b>

In addition, the sum of £1290 is currently paid direct into the bank each month. Many thanks.



## missionary report

Kevin Deighton

*Missionary  
Secretary*

**A lot of activity has happened in the short month of February, partly due to administration problems with the bank account which have delayed payments being made. The good news is this has been rectified so I will update you on the gifts sent in February.**

£200 has finally been sent to Karen Baxter at Veritas. We had been trying to set up a direct quarterly payment to her since September without success so we have reverted to the old cheque payment and another donation will be sent shortly. We sent £100 to the WRU Home Missions re their annual appeal for funding and also £100 to the WRU Overseas Missions, again from a letter to our Church passed on at our AGM. This gift together with £77.37 raised when the High Street had the Christmas Lights turn on has been sent for use in the Union's Project in Yemen, see the Contact magazine for details.

At the end of January we had our annual Leprosy Mission Sunday and £68 was donated in the envelopes. £63 has been allocated to pay for a child's 12 month's education in Niger, another gift of £50 has been sent for their general funds. £100 went to Open Doors and their work amongst the persecuted Church and £100 to NOVIMOST as they start to prepare for their Spring/Summer Camps in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

I must apologize for what seems like a shopping list, hopefully next time I can give more substance to our charitable giving.



## the minister's school assemblies this march

(for your prayers please)

- MONDAY 5th** – Whitefriars Primary School (Juniors)
- WEDNESDAY 7th** – Whitefriars Primary School (Infants)
- WEDNESDAY 21st** – Tennyson Road Infant School
- WEDNESDAY 21st** – Alfred Street Junior School



## Easter celebrations

**Keep the dates free and do join with us for any or all of the following:**

**WEDS 28th MARCH** 7.30pm Informal Holy Week Communion at the Manse – **ALL WELCOME!**

**FRI 30th MARCH** 11.00am Council of Churches Service in the High Street  
*Meet at the Salvation Army from 10.30am*

**FRI 30th MARCH** 2.00pm Good Friday Family Crafts

**SUN 1st APRIL** 9.00am Easter Day Communion  
9.45am Breakfast for all  
10.30am Easter Day Praise

**MON 2nd APRIL** Walk & Fellowship at 21 Palm Road  
*(details soon!)*



# march 2018

## weekday diary dates

<b>THURS</b>	<b>1st</b>	2.00pm 6.00pm 7.30pm	Women's Auxiliary – Rev. Phil Hearson Allsorts Children's Club Y-Not Youth Club
<b>SAT</b>	<b>3rd</b>	10.00am	Coffee Morning
<b>TUES</b>	<b>6th</b>	10.00am 2.00pm	Prayer Meeting – 15 Fern Road Short Mat Bowls
<b>WEDS</b>	<b>7th</b>	9.15am 12.00 noon 7.30pm	Jellybabes Toddler Group Lent Lunch – St. Mary's Church Home Group – 7 Lodge Road
<b>THURS</b>	<b>8th</b>	6.00pm 7.30pm	Allsorts Children's Club Y-Not Youth Club
<b>SAT</b>	<b>10th</b>	10.00am	Coffee Morning
<b>TUES</b>	<b>13th</b>	10.00am 2.00pm	Prayer Meeting – 50 Boundary Avenue Short Mat Bowls
<b>WEDS</b>	<b>14th</b>	9.15am 12.00 noon 7.30pm	Jellybabes Toddler Group Lent Lunch – St. Mary's Church Home Group – 7 Lodge Road
<b>THURS</b>	<b>15th</b>	2.00pm 6.00pm 7.30pm	Women's Auxiliary – Mrs. Sue Merrifield Allsorts Children's Club Y-Not Youth Club
<b>FRI</b>	<b>16th</b>	6.00pm	Family Cinema Night – The Secret Life of Pets
<b>SAT</b>	<b>17th</b>	10.00am	Coffee Morning
<b>TUES</b>	<b>20th</b>	10.00am 10.00am 2.00pm 7.30pm	Circuit Prayer Meeting at Isham Prayer Meeting – 15 Fern Road Short Mat Bowls Leaders Meeting at the Manse
<b>WEDS</b>	<b>21st</b>	9.15am 12.00 noon 7.30pm	Jellybabes Toddler Group Lent Lunch – St. Mary's Church Home Group – 7 Lodge Road
<b>THURS</b>	<b>22nd</b>	6.00pm 7.30pm	Allsorts Children's Club Y-Not Youth Club
<b>SAT</b>	<b>24th</b>	10.00am 10.00am	Church Members Meeting Coffee Morning
<b>TUES</b>	<b>27th</b>	10.00am 2.00pm	Prayer Meeting – 50 Boundary Avenue Short Mat Bowls
<b>WEDS</b>	<b>28th</b>	9.15am 12.00 noon 7.30pm	Jellybabes Toddler Group Lent Lunch – St. Mary's Church Holy Week Informal Communion at the Manse
<b>THURS</b>	<b>29th</b>	2.00pm 6.00pm 7.30pm	Women's Auxiliary – Easter readings & songs Allsorts Children's Club Y-Not Youth Club
<b>FRI</b>	<b>30th</b>	11.00am	Council of Churches Good Friday Service in the High Street (meet from 10.30am at the Salvation Army)
<b>SAT</b>	<b>31st</b>	2.00pm 10.00am	Family Craft Afternoon Coffee Morning



## march 2018

### sundays at high street

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**SUNDAY** **4th** 10.45am Rev, Phil Hearson  
(including Communion)  
6.00pm Home Meeting

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**SUNDAY** **11th** 10.45am Rev. Phil Hearson  
4.00pm **2nd Sunday!**

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**SUNDAY** **18th** 10.45am Rev. Phil Hearson  
6.00pm Communion Service

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**SUNDAY** **25th** 10.45am Rev. Phil Hearson  
5.30pm Service at the Mission Church  
(Rev. Ian Fall)

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### a reminder...

Should you ever find it difficult to join us for any service you wish to attend please don't hesitate to speak to either the minister or a church leader about arranging a lift, we are always happy to sort something out - **don't miss out!**



## God is able to forgive

***'Jesus said to the man, 'Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.'***

*(Matthew 9:2).*

**A Sunday school teacher asked her class, 'Can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin?' One small boy spoke up, 'Sin!'**

If sin is our greatest problem, then forgiveness is our greatest need. The story of the healing of the paralyzed man (*matt 9 v1-8*) reminds us that God is able to forgive our sins.

Jesus' first words to the paralytic focus on forgiveness, even though his friends lowered him through the roof to be healed by Jesus. Matthew is making the point that forgiveness precedes healing, as Jesus came first to restore our relationship with God as Father. Like the man, we too can be paralysed by past actions, hurtful words and unforgiveness, that leave us guilty and ashamed. Jesus offers us forgiveness and acceptance to enable a fresh start in our lives.

Jesus was aware of the criticism of the teachers of the law, who believed that only God could forgive sins. As Jesus says, 'Which is easier: to say, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Get up and walk"?' Jesus secured forgiveness on the cross, which secures transformation from the inside. It gives us power to forgive others and ourselves from past hurts and actions.

Finally, Jesus says to the paralysed man, 'Get up, take your mat and go home.' The man's trusting obedience enables him to be completely healed and go home. Where do we need to know forgiveness in our lives and relationships? Are we ready to receive what God promises in our lives?

'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.' (1 John 1:9).

*By Rev. Paul Hardingham [www.parishpump.co.uk](http://www.parishpump.co.uk)*



## Constance Coltman

**If you watched Songs of Praise on Sunday 4th February, you would have seen a short feature about Constance Coltman (nee Todd). Ann Bryant saw it and was moved by her story and asked if we would do a short piece in this edition.**

Constance Todd was born in 1889 and became conscious of a call to the ministry but she was told that ordination in the Presbyterian Church of England would be impossible. The President of the (then) Congregational, Mansfield College, Oxford was persuaded that her call was genuine, and she was accepted as a student in 1913. On 17th September 1917, she and her fiancé Claud Coltman were ordained – she was one of the first women to be ordained to the ministry. The following day they were married. They ministered together until 1949. She said: 'The only right that no branch of the Church has ever denied to women has been the right of confessing the faith by martyrdom.'

**If you would like to find out more, a short film about her can be seen on 'YouTube' (search for Constance Coltman – the film is called 'Constance')**



## church birthdays

If you would like to be included please let Jeanette know and we'll endeavour to get a card to you on the Sunday nearest the date, giving us all the chance to wish one another all the best on our birthdays.

<b>4th</b> - <b>ANTHEA HOLDAWAY</b>	<b>15th</b> - <b>CHARLIE RAWLINGS</b>
<b>10th</b> - <b>AMELIA PORTER</b>	<b>16th</b> - <b>DEBBIE REEVE</b>
<b>11th</b> - <b>ADA FORSTER</b>	<b>17th</b> - <b>DAVID RAWLINGS</b>
<b>12th</b> - <b>OLIVER FORSTER</b>	<b>18th</b> - <b>WENDY NEWMAN</b>
<b>15th</b> - <b>PAM BARNES</b>	<b>20th</b> - <b>BELLA LAMBERT</b>

*Plus our apologies for an oversight:* February's birthday dates should have included **JAMES RAWLINGS** on the **16th**



## flowers this month

Thanks to the following who have agreed to supply flowers for the church, and to Jill and Madge who arrange the rota.

<b>4th</b> - <b>ANN BRYANT</b> <i>(Wedding Anniversary)</i>	<b>18th</b> - <b>PAM BARNES</b> <i>(Birthday)</i>
<b>11th</b> - <b>ANTHEA HOLDAWAY</b>	<b>25th</b> - <b>BRIAN LACK</b> <i>(for Beryl)</i>



## benevolent fund

**Did you realise that the church has a Benevolent Fund to help those in urgent need – Pam Barnes, Kevin Deighton and Phil Hearson administer this, so if you feel at any time that there is a pressing need someone has please speak to them in confidence.**

This is currently funded by the money given at coffee time on Sunday mornings (after the cost of milk and biscuits etc).

## table amnesty!

**We cannot find one of the small tables from the hall.**

If you've borrowed it and overlooked to bring it back, please will you do so ASAP. Thank you!



## dates for your diary - april 2018

<b>MONDAY 19th</b>	Officers and Trustees Meeting in the Vestry (7.00pm)
<b>TUESDAY 17th</b>	Leaders Meeting at the Manse (7.30pm)
<b>FRIDAY 20th</b>	Circuit Preachers' Meeting at Rev. G. D. Lee's home – meet in the Mission Car Park at 6.15pm



## puzzle page

This month it's an anagram puzzle. Can you work out what the following Bible place names are? Hand in your answer before 30th March and you may win a small prize.

1. **RULE JAMES**
2. **A LEG LIE**
3. **BIG ONE**
4. **TO CHINA**
5. **ANY BLOB**
6. **CHIN ROT**
7. **OMIT AS A POEM**
8. **SEASONAL ITCH**
9. **A TRUSS**
10. **CAMERA PUN**
11. **I'M A SARA**
12. **HAIRY TAT**
13. **CLOA IDEA**
14. **BALES HERE?**
15. **SAME PILOT**
16. **PUSH? SEE!**
17. **SPACE IDOL**
18. **HEN VINE**
19. **HEAP HID A PILL**
20. **NO HERB?**

**Answers to last month:** 1. Top Gear; 2. Watchdog; 3. Coronation Street; 4. Eggheads; 5. The Weakest Link; 6. The Bill; 7. Waterloo Road; 8. Location, Location, Location; 9. Eastenders; 10. A Touch of Frost; 11. Deal or no deal?; 12. Songs of Praise; 13. Cash in the Attic; 14. Neighbours; 15. Family Fortunes; 16. Countdown; 17. Panorama; 18. Gardener's World; 19. Last of the Summer Wine; 20. One Man and His Dog.

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