



Burnham URC



**Southminster
Christ Church URC**



Vision-UPBEAT

February/March 2016

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Minister's Jottings

Christmas seems a long time ago; even the more forgetful by now are used to writing 2016 as the date. Time stands still for no-one. As most of you will know, I ask you to look at what we have achieved in the time since the last edition of the Southminster magazine or the united 'Upbeat'. The list is a long one so I will not go through them, but we are on the right track, we are on the map as a church with a mission, not just a mission statement. Please fill in for yourselves on page two the things and the outreach and in-reach achievements we have put together. And in doing so, list the people who have been involved that you came into contact with during the Christmas and Epiphany celebrations

During the this Advent, Christian and post-Christmas time, I have had time to reflect on what we have done through the power of argument, discussion, compromise and collaboration through the Holy Spirit that helps me more to guide through discernment the will of God for his church. I am not naive in recognising that all people like what and where the church is at present and where it will be going in the future. As I have said, times stands still for no-one, yet often we stop time by refusing to move with the times.

Bob Dylan wrote a song with the title 'the times there are a changin'', and they are! We cannot stop the times changing, it is part of evolution whether we like it or not.

Part of the review of the URC was to urge us to become a mission structured church – looking outwards rather than having our attentions focussed inwards. The church needs to be supporting each member and friend in their daily lives, but it is outside the church where mission happens. It is outside where the values of the kingdom have to be fought for, and there the love of Christ has to shine through his followers. Do we hear God calling us in certain directions or to certain posts in our week-day lives? Perhaps we really don't expect to or would not want to listen even if we did? But surely, we should be open to hearing God's call as we bring our daily lives into our prayers to God.

There are also issues of recognising callings in other people. The kingdom of God, the work of God is not for the few, it is for everyone who calls themselves Christian. Too often we look at a new member and want our own criteria satisfied as to their calling rather than seeking out the gifts given to that person by God.

Some dates for your diary

Tuesday:
Ducklings 10-12
Pilots 6.15-7.30
Fury 7.30-9

Women's Guild:
Every Wed at
2.30 in the
Church

Men's Forum:
Thursday 2.15 in
middle Hall

Bible Study: 1st
and 2nd Sat;
10.30 – 11.30 and
Thursday after
Iona worship

Charity lunches:
2nd Saturday of
the month

Traidcraft: 2nd
Saturday of the
month

**HAVE YOUR
SAY!**

**HERE IS
YOUR OWN
SOAP BOX:
Use it and speak
your mind**

Some are called to be ministers of Word and Sacrament, others to be Elders; but both are called. Some are called to be CRCWs, others lay preachers, some to teach in Junior church, others with teenagers, coffee and welcoming duties, others to pray, some to play music, the internal vocational list is almost endless; and we know all that, but how do we really feel the confidence to let parts of that go for the sake of the whole, whilst looking after what has been given up by the individual.

And what of the outward mission, we have been exemplary at this over the years. The vision for the redevelopment has played a major part in our outreach despite fears and doubts. WE now though have the opportunity to do more, to bring our vision statement even more to life; *'bringing the gospel of Christ into the heart of the community'*; Will we grow not just in what we do in mission, but will we grow through worship, Bible study, Spiritual worship through Iona, house groups, the living message as we learn to be a community, a real family of Christ's people, not just on a Sunday, or a disparate group meeting in committee, but a place that people come in to as they pass by. I have always wondered why the café in Southminster, or the numerous ones in Burnham see more people than we do. I asked that question to the owner of the 'Tall Green house', the answer was, 'we don't preach, we serve, and we are there for the when they want to come in'. A GOOD POINT, *N'est-ce pas?*

We cannot do it alone, we need the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the resolve we have to learn more, be more in fellowship and give things up to take on new roles with new gifts.

We have an AGM coming up, but before any decisions are made about this that and whom, we need to be enlivened by the Spirit, reconciled within the fellowship and reliant upon Christ for our lives. Surely, we can only do that with more regular learning, sharing and discussing and then worshipping in any way we feel called to present to our Lord

But, and here is the enormous but, we are do all this to build the kingdom on earth, not for ourselves, not for our survival, but for the love of Christ given freely to us, and because of that, we take on the cost of discipleship as we engage in Christ's mission for others in our daily lives.

Blessings; Jon

Christ Church update

We are moving towards closure on some of our projects. In the case of the inside Hall doors we literally have closure in that we have now fitted hydraulic door closers onto the doors. The benefit of so doing is that the doors will no longer bag if the outside doors are left open. The down side is that they are hard to open as anyone who has been into the Hall will testify. However, I am sure that we shall soon become accustomed to the extra workout in opening the doors. We were prompted to add the closers because it was too easy for toddlers attending Ducklings to slip out of the Hall unnoticed. However, as you see all will benefit.

Please let me know if anyone is unwell or would like a visit. Sometimes I don't get to hear and I don't want to miss anyone.

The Minister
can be
contacted on:
01621
786789/075393
03577 or leave
a message on
01621-783393

Who is My Elder?
If you're not sure, then contact Sylvia for the name and contact number.

Do you like singing or can you play an instrument, then come and join us as we begin to build up a music group. All standards welcome, informal and lots of fun: See Margaret or Jon

Regarding the Church Floor we are now looking at how to lessen the impact of the marks left by the pews and end up with a first class surface.

As you may recall, we were having an issue with being listed on the Royal Mail database. I had thought that the issue had been resolved as I had seen our listing included. Unfortunately last week, I discovered that for some reason we had been removed. Therefore we were back to square one regarding bringing the Church into the twenty first century by having Wi-Fi internet access at the church. I am pleased to report that we have now been put back and our account opened. Therefore we wait upon the engineer to come and restore the phone line and then we shall be up and away.

As you will have realised I have not mentioned the toilets. This is because this is the one area that has stalled. We are now in the position where we are trying to find someone to fit the replacement sanitary ware at a reasonable price. I am sure that we shall reach our goal soon.

Rupert

Christmas Day Lunch 2015 Report to AGM

This Year we again cooked Christmas Lunch for people in need of company on this very special Day.

We did not have as many people attend this year as last year; it seemed that the people that came from the Baptist Church and Southminster last year had other arrangements made for them.

However we did cook for some of our own members, also several people who were in need of our facility from the community.

All those attending also had a dinner for Boxing Day to take home with them and we had enough to provide the Mens Forum with some of their food for their Christmas Meal.

We again had help from Paul, who is on his own and is very happy to be able to come and do the starters, vegetables and the washing up! Thank you Paul!

A really big thank you to all those people who donate each year, and for all the good wishes we receive from everybody, thank you so very much.

We advertised in the Press, also the Community Magazine but perhaps we need to find some other way of ensuring that people know about it if we do it again next year.

We must not despair if there are no people lonely in Burnham that is a good thing not a bad thing to happen. We hope however that if there are lonely people that got away they will be able to find us next year!

As you can see from our Accounts we have a surplus of £72.66 this year and added to the one last year it amounts to £110. 97.

A proposal is needed from all those that contributed to this very worthwhile cause, of what we do with this?

Una and Jo

Alternative Worship



Iona Style worship with recommence on the second Thursday of the month at 6.30pm in the church.

This style of worship is quiet and reflective, it does not contain a sermon, just a reflection and should be thought provoking as well as comforting. The spirituality behind it is Celtic, that is simply engaging with all of creation, earth, sea and sky, remembering that we are a part of a whole creation and therefore fit into a pattern that involves the whole of creation and not just ourselves. Do come and join the small group and relax through song and prayer.

'Be a bright flame before me, O God a guiding star above me.

Be a smooth path below me, a kindly shepherd behind me

today, tonight, and for ever. Alone with none but you, my God I journey on my way; what need I fear when you are near, O Lord of night and day? More secure am I within your hand than if a multitude did round me stand.' Amen

The Minister will be in the study at Church every Thursday evening between 6.30-7.30 for a chat. No appointment is needed, just drop in.



Can you help with pastoral visiting, or would you and a friend like to visit with the Minister someone who cannot get to church? Please contact an Elder or the Minister

To have your say in the next issue of *Vision* - **UPBEAT**
email vision4burnhamurc@gmail.com