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Good Grief

In March we continue the journey through Lent to Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter. The stories we tell at this time of year are vivid and full of powerful emotions. I'm not quite sure whether it is one of the blessings or one of the curses of faith that we live with the emotions of the moment but we also see the stories of faith with the insight of hindsight. We know what comes on Easter Day so some of the terror and loss of Good Friday is lost on us.

After Jesus' death his followers were scattered, Judas racked with the shame of betrayal, Peter with the guilt of denial, and the others just lost in grief and fear. Eventually they come together in a private room, not in anticipation but with the stunned disbelief of those whose world has just fallen apart.

The day between Good Friday and Easter Day is known as Holy Saturday. For the first disciples it was not a day of waiting for resurrection. It was a day of wondering 'What now?' Later tradition imagined Jesus descending to hell on that day and bringing salvation to the righteous who had died since the beginning of the world but before the time of Jesus.

But for those first followers this was not a time of hopeful waiting sandwiched between crucifixion and resurrection, death and life. For those disciples, who had to live in the emotion of the moment and did not have the benefit of hindsight, this would have been a time of desolation, of total loss.

I hope that you are by now aware that there will be an exhibition of sculptures in the church in March with the title 'Good Grief'. This exhibition provides an opportunity not



only to see some powerful art but also to reflect on the emotions that people experience around times of grief and loss – which might be experienced in many situations, not just following a death.

Within the programme of events around the exhibition there will be a special service on the Holy Saturday for those who have experienced grief and loss. I am calling the service 'Thanks for the memory'. Hopefully there will be memories to give thanks for but it is important also to recognise that for some the dominant emotion are not always thankfulness. Anger, bitterness and pain are part of the emotions of the moment that we often cannot see beyond.

Without wishing to deny the reality of these emotions it is hoped that the exhibition and the 'Thanks for the Memories' service will help us understand that, as in the Easter story, the desolation of death and loss are not the end of the story; God's love can lead us to a place of healing and peace.

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Nick Skelding

Organ Odyssey

In my late teenage years I learned the basics of playing the organ on the instrument in Old Meeting Church. The congregation had bought the organ from William Hill & Son in 1905 for £242, but an appeal to the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie brought a cheque for £100 towards the cost. In 1946 an electric blower had been added, which was a blessing to me. I did not have to ask someone to come in and pump the handle to get some air. (Nevertheless there are still a few of us around who did just that for services before 1946.)

The organ continued in use when the Providence Church congregation transferred to Old Meeting to form Uxbridge Congregational Church in 1962, but in September 1965 it was replaced by a Compton electronic organ donated by James Hutchings in memory of his family. The opening recital was given by Geoffrey Morgan FRCO, a local man who had at one time played at the

Methodist Central Hall in Uxbridge, but had gone on to higher things - Westminster Abbey and Guilford Cathedral !

on the pipes has been retained. I am so glad that after 111 years the old lady is still in service.

Ken Pearce

The old organ was stored in Providence, which was then standing empty, but was soon snapped up by West Drayton Baptist Church. They continued to use it until 2006, when they needed more space for building extensions, and I learned that it had been given to a church in Holland.

Imagine my surprise then, when recently Geoffrey Morgan - now at Christchurch Priory in Dorset - sent me a photograph of the instrument in the cathedral at Breda in Holland. It is not of course the main organ there. They have a four-manual monster for the main services, but "my" organ is used for smaller services in part of the building. The photograph shows that minor changes have been made to the organ case, but otherwise it looks just the same. Even the painted pattern

The Octopus



Deep, deep in my underwater paradise,

I rule with an iron tentacle

Endless supplies of food will not suffice,

In this cobalt clear underwater spectacle

Most know me as an innocent looking creature,

With eight long tentacles like lace

But my suckers are my most dangerous feature,

I'm a hoover with a face

I'm like a hover-craft in the water,
The spider of the sea
I kiss my prey like you would your
daughter,
Then drag them down to my belly
for eternity

I'm calm, smart and sharp like
scythe,
An innocent looking killer
Locking them in my legs day and
night,
Prey makes an excellent tummy
filler!

But here is a word of warning,
To all you crustaceans
If I were you I'd run in the morning,
You'd wish you had been
abducted by aliens!
Nycie Wontumi

What is the purpose of the church? (In the footsteps of Nick Skelding)

Nick asks 'what is the purpose of
the Church?' As ever, he was

thought provoking and so I've
been thinking! It's a huge
question and I dissent from
nothing that Nick preached and
has written.

Perhaps the purpose of the
Church is to be prophetic? To
move ahead of the social
climate into accepting the
marginalised and the outcast.
But, woefully, it is often the
Church that lags behind and
drags its feet. Its record with LGBT
people is poor. It took decades
to come to terms with divorce
(and the Roman Catholics still
haven't. Methodism for a long
time refused its pulpits to
divorcees. Its attitude to
unmarried mothers has been less
than warm. It has been slow to
build bridges to those of other
faiths and of none. It so often
prefers to keep its head down, to
be invisible, so as not to be
'controversial'. Instead it could
have outpaced society as it
made clear its wish to accept
people where they are.

We at Christ Church had an opportunity with our reflection on Living with Difference. The answers to our questionnaire showed that in many ways we were ahead of the game. Did we make them known to other churches, the local press, the library users, Brunel students?

No! We put the answers in a cupboard!

With some exceptions, churches seem not filled with people with feet on the accelerator but rather with people whose feet hover near the brake. We want everything kept as it is and we want to open our doors to people just like those inside and not to people who might press us to change. We don't want to engage in debating the things that matter to those outside our walls and relate them to our faith. We want a bolt hole, a comfort zone.

To many in the churches it is still 'gentle Jesus meek and mild'.

But Jesus of Nazareth wasn't like that. He was a revolutionary. He said some tough and controversial things. Look at Matthew 10 v 34. He was seen as a threat and killed for it. So what would be the reaction of the churches if he returned now?

Yes, it is the purpose of the Church to continue the mission of Jesus, the real Jesus. The tough guy who caused upset and demanded change and befriended people that no-one else wanted to know. But what would the first ten people asked in Uxbridge High Street say was the purpose of the Church?

I am frequently assailed by people who ask how I can belong to the Church. I am told that it is stuffy, reactionary, that it has outlived its place in history, that it is dying on its feet. I argue back. What would YOU say?

Howard Cooper

P.S. By the way when I use a capital C I mean the whole

Christian Church in the world not just us at Christ Church, Uxbridge!

Good Grief - Bald Statements

An exhibition of sculptures by Jean Parker

12th to 27th March at Christ Church

The sculptures in this exhibition were born as a reflection of Jean Parker's own experience of cancer. The eight terracotta heads emerged during the course of a seven-day silent retreat, and present a powerful and unique visual exploration of the grief process. These relate not only to loss of health, but also to significant loss of any kind. The hope is that the exhibition will help stimulate discussion and the understanding of powerful emotions, which can feel overwhelming.

To see these images as transitional stages and part of a natural

process experienced by many may prove helpful and reassuring, offering glimpses of hope when all seems lost. The emotions expressed in the sculptures – Denial, Disbelief, Questioning, Anger, Depression, Acceptance, Healing and Peace – are all part of this natural process.

Grief is a journey everyone makes at some time. It is the aim of this exhibition to enable that to be a journey towards Peace.

The sculptures will be located in the church and can be seen whenever the building is open.

Official opening times are:

Tuesdays, 10am-3pm

Wednesdays, 5-8pm

Thursdays, 10am-12.30pm

Saturdays, 10am-12noon

Special events include:

Saturday 12th March, 11.00am, official opening, with talk by Jean Parker

Sunday 13th March, 11.00am morning worship, with Jean Parker
Good Friday, 25th March, 10.00am-12.00noon, time for reflection

Saturday 26th March, 1.00pm, 'Thanks for the Memory' a service for all who have someone they want to remember

Easter Sunday, 27th March, 11.00am morning worship

Volunteers wanted to be available during the official opening times. If you can help please contact Nick Skelding.

Donald Wells

Some will remember Donald Wells (and his son, Martin) who moved from Uxbridge some years ago to live in Emsworth.

In his Christmas card he says: "We are both keeping well and active. Martin is pleased with Watford FC and still has a season ticket.

I am busy at Havant URC and still lead 'Walking for Health' at Havant and Emsworth with up to 50 walkers each week, I cycled the Romantic Road in Bavaria visiting the walled towns in May and June. I am flying to Sydney in January for eight weeks. "

My Childhood

The 'From the Archives' regular feature is taking a break for a while. Syd Wilson has been recording some of the memories from his childhood days and will be sharing some of these over the next few issues of Look-In.

My Childhood - Part 1

I was born in a house in New Windsor Street in October, 1920. The house was one of a terrace and had three bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs. The bathroom had no hot water and the bath was so large that to get sufficient hot water for a bath would have meant carrying

probably 10 to 15 buckets up the stairs. In any case there was no means of heating such a quantity. A tin bath in the kitchen was therefore used for bathing.

There were two reception rooms, a kitchen and scullery downstairs. The only WC was outside but actually built into the house abutting into the scullery. The weekly rent was ten shillings. Cooking was carried out on a cast-iron cooking range in the kitchen. As a schoolboy my job each Saturday was to black-lead the range and polish the fire irons with emery cloth. There was a brick-built boiler in the scullery which was used for the weekly wash, and outside the kitchen door was a very large wooden-rollered mangle to squeeze most of the water from the clothes.

From a child's play point of view one should remember that there was very little traffic on the roads and half of that was horse-drawn. Also, in those days there was not

the danger from pedophiles and other bad types as abound now. It was quite safe for children to roam far and wide. There was no television and only the lucky people had a wireless set and then mainly only a crystal set. This was just after the First World War; jobs were scarce and therefore so was money.

Radio was not as today; in 1920 it consisted of Marconi test transmissions and other amateurs testing. The first proper service was the British Broadcasting Company broadcasting from Savoy Hill in 1922. One heard "This is 2L0 calling" "from the BBC". This was an almost National service but only transmitting between certain hours each day, mainly evenings. This service was gradually extended and became known as the National Service. Sometime later regional services started, giving people a choice.

Some of my earliest memories, probably before I was five years

old, were of being taken to my Father's allotment which was situated where the Fasnidge Memorial Ground is now. The allotment was approximately in the position of the bowling green. The whole of the memorial ground area was allotments in those days.

Most of the allotments had a well as it was only necessary to dig a hole about twice the diameter of a bucket and three to four feet deep. This would contain about a foot of water as the water table was not very far down in that area. As my Father was a keen fisherman, I was also taken fishing, mainly to the dock behind Fountain's mill and occasionally to the canal near the Swan & Bottle.

I well remember being taken to start school when I was five. This was to Whitehall school in the infants class. Miss Harvey was the teacher. My Mother had taken me and when morning

playtime came along I thought it was going home time, and so home I went. As my Mother had gone shopping on the way home, she found me on the doorstep when she returned. Needless to say I was returned after lunch.

In those days, of course, it was normal for children to go home for a meal at lunchtime, there was a two hour break from 12 until 2 o'clock. It should be remembered that most women did not work then and so were at home when the child arrived. Normally lunch would be the main meal of the day (we knew it as dinner) later was teatime, and then supper in the later evening. On special days we would have toasted crumpets or muffins for tea. These were bought from the Muffin and Crumpet man who walked the streets with a large tray of those things on his head; it was always covered with a green cloth. As he walked he rang a bell to let

people know he was in the area. While talking about delivery people e.g. dairies in this area mainly belonged to local farmers, the large combine dairies were not around at that time. Milk was taken round in two-wheel carts called milk floats. In the centre of the float was a very large milk churn and to obtain milk, people had to go out to the float with their jugs. The milkman had a half and a one pint measure which he used to dispense the milk. These measures had a long hooked handle and were hung on the side of the churns when not in use.

My great friends at that early age were Les Marsh, the youngest son of the Marsh family who ran the Hercies farm dairy (Les was well known after the war as the manager of Charrington's coal depot. He had started with the company on leaving school). Also Tim Smith, who after the war became a teacher at St. Andrews school. He,

unfortunately, died very young and Guy Pearce, Son of Cecil Pearce of fish shop fame.

Syd Wilson

Churches Prayer Diary

w/c 6th March - Ruislip Manor Methodist.

w/c 13th March - South Harrow Methodist.

w/c 20th March - South Ruislip Methodist.

w/c 27th March - Trinity.

Look-In

Please help us to produce an interesting newsletter by handing in news items or articles to the office, or sending them by email to Louise George (publicity@christchurchuxbridge.org.uk). The next issue of Look-In will be the April issue and the deadline for articles for this is Friday 25th March 2016.

Church Calendar

All events are at Christ Church unless indicated by an X in the final column

Day/Date	Event	Group	Leader	
March				
Tue 8	Tuesday Club	Church		
Thu 10	Craft Group	Church	Doreen Smith	
Sat 12	Saturday Morning Coffee			
Sun 13	Sunday Lunch			
Tue 15	Tuesday Club	Church		
Thu 17	Pop-in	Church		
Fri 18	Last meeting session	GB/BB		
Sat 19	Saturday Morning Coffee			
	Company Explorer Event	GB	Stephanie Marr	
	Battalion Figure Marching & Single Line Drill Competition	BB	Paul Edgeworth	X
	London District Gymnastics Competition	BB	Paul Edgeworth	X
Sun 20	Company Church Parade – Palm Sunday	BB/GB	Stephanie Marr /Paul Edgeworth	
Tue 22	Worship Planning Group	Church		
Thu 24	Craft group	Church	Doreen Smith	
Fri 25	Good Friday Walk of Witness	CTU		X
Sat 26	Saturday Morning Coffee			
March 8 - 29	'Good Grief' sculpture exhibition			
Thu 31	Pop-in	church		
April				
Sat 2	Saturday Morning Coffee	See separate rota		
Tue 5	Tuesday Club	Church		X
Thu 7	Craft group	Church	Doreen Smith	

WHO'S

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Contacts via office for:

Brigades:
Girls' -
Stephanie Marr
Boys' -
Paul Edgeworth

Junior Church
Club -
Jenny Peet

Tuesday Club -
Wendy Pollard

Prayer Tree -
Val Bailey
Rosemary Moere

WHO!

March Services

(All services are 11am unless stated otherwise)

- 6th Rev'd Nick Skelding (Holy Communion)
- 13th Deacon Jackie Fowler
- 20th Rev'd Nick Skelding (All Age Worship) (Palm Sunday)
- 24th Rev'd Nick Skelding (Maundy Thursday, 7pm)
- 27th Rev'd Nick Skelding (Holy Communion) (Easter Day, 9am)
Jean Stafford (Methodist local preacher and Christ Church member) (Easter Day, 11am)

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(See Genesis 2:18-25)

03-28-2011

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I'LL GET THE PAPERWORK STARTED**

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