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November

As we head out of October into November we head into a month of transition, full of dates and events that remind us of change and flow. The weather is the first thing that we notice change. These days October is still generally pleasant, it can feel as much like late summer as early autumn, but November can be cold and wet and feels like the start of winter.

Then there are the special days that remind us of death and change: All Saints (1st), Bonfire Night (5th), Armistice/Remembrance (11th), and for those with an American connection there is Thanksgiving (26th). These days all teach us to value life, to treasure memories of the past, and remind us of what is important to hold on to and fight for.

Toward the end of the month faith organisations in Hillingdon have another opportunity to value, treasure and consider what is important in their own tradition and that of other people

during Hillingdon Inter Faith Week (23rd -29th November). At Christ Church we are planning to invite members of other faith communities to our church over the weekend of Friday (27th) to Sunday (29th). It would be good if we all help to welcome any visitors who come, whether it is to the exhibition that will be up on Friday and Saturday or to worship on the Sunday. Please look out for more details nearer the time.

Sunday 29th is also the first Sunday in Advent, the Sunday in which the cycle of the Church calendar restarts. Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation for Christmas (oh dear, have I mentioned the 'C' word already?). But what does Advent (and Christmas) mean for us? To help us reflect on that question, this year our Advent theme will be "If Uxbridge were Bethlehem, where would Jesus be born?" As part of that we will be thinking about Jesus born a migrant, becoming a refugee and how we might



respond to the current situation locally in Uxbridge and further away.

To get us started in our thinking there will be a film night on Wednesday 25th where you can watch the film 'Whistle Down the Wind'; there will be opportunity to discuss the film the following Wednesday (2nd Dec).

And finally, as part of our Christmas preparation and church decoration this year we are holding a 'Cardboard Christmas'. You will be familiar with flower festivals and Christmas tree festivals where people prepare a floral decoration or decorate a Christmas tree on a particular theme. Well, the idea of a Cardboard Christmas is similar. Everyone is invited to take a cardboard box (any size large or small) and put in it item(s) that represent something of what the Christmas message means or says to you. For example, you could build a nativity scene in the box, or put in it a picture of a Christmas dinner (please no actual perishable goods!), you could fill it with stars or straw (no cowpats, they would come under the banned perishable goods act). These are just illustrations, please use your own

imagination. Completed boxes should be brought to the church by the weekend 4th-6th December so that they can be arranged in time for the parade service on 13th December.

Best wishes

Nick

Tails Wagging Dogs?

"I always preach to the lectionary" a preacher told me recently. She added that if she did not want to preach to two of the lectionary passages then she 'may as well' preach to the third. I said nothing! However, as the service proceeded I wondered if we were hearing what she felt called to say or what she may as well' say!

This reinforced my reservations about us following a lectionary. To many who preach it becomes an instruction and a self-imposed straightjacket rather than a suggestion. We nonconformists are not committed to a liturgy. We commit the leadership of worship to the preacher. He/she has been called to preach and is guided by God in constructing an act of worship. It is surely for the preacher to

choose what Scripture we hear and not for a lectionary to determine to what theme a service should adhere!

Many churches, including our own at Christ Church, have 'pew bibles'. That implies that all Scripture should be read from just one version. Surely it is for the preacher to choose whatever version he/she believes most perfectly expresses what is right for any service!

Many churches, again including our own, appoint members of the congregation to read. But even the most gifted of public readers can lay the emphasis in a completely different place from what the preacher would wish. What would be wrong in a preacher deciding to read him/herself?

I have had robust conversations with friends of mine who are organists in their churches. They expect to choose the hymns. I have asked them how they can choose them without knowing what the preacher's mind is for the act of worship. They claim they can 'tell' from the lectionary! Even the tune for a hymn can be part of the mood music of a service and should

be chosen by the preacher. Nick reminded us that he is asked why he chooses the hymns that he does. He chooses hymns that 'belong' with that act of worship. I once was caught by a minister looking through the hymns before a service. He said he knew I was trying to work out the likely content of his sermon. "You won't", he said, "I just chose the hymns I like or ones I've been asked for"! I said nothing but I thought plenty!!!!

To my mind, a service should have a unity. Every breath should be woven into a seamless fabric and should be uttered with total commitment. A preacher who 'may as well' follow the lectionary is more than likely to deliver something that is lacking in unity and devoid of passion. To those who preach I say it's YOUR service. YOU have been called to the pulpit. Can we imagine that Soper, Sangster, Weatherhead, Griffiths, Morris et al felt they should be governed by a lectionary or told what version of Scripture to use or what hymns to include? Then why should you? You are the dog, not the tail!

Howard Cooper

Peter Hull - Player of the Year Award

Congratulations to Peter Hull on receiving an award from Middlesex County Cricket Club. The award was for Physical and Learning Disability Squads Player of the Year. The award was presented at the Middlesex County Cricket Club 2015 end of season's dinner and players' awards evening at the Thomas Lord Suite, Lords cricket ground on Thursday 1st October 2015. This was a great achievement for Peter as it was his first season playing for Middlesex. Angus Fraser MBE and Andrew Strauss OBE were there with the Ashes Review. A great evening was had by all who were treated like VIP including Peter and his mum, Janice.

From the archives

The following article appeared in the November 1982 issue of Look.

Creative Worship

Worship is meant to be a two way process. God is "speaking" to us, we

are responding to God. Because the primary nature of worship is response to what God has done and is doing in Christ, then it is not meant to fulfil all our particular wants and desires. For example, it may or may not (to use a modern phrase) "turn us on". Again, church worship is not private worship. There may be times in a service which are set aside for private devotion, but it is always in the context of a community.

Now, of course, because of inherited tradition worship has become ritualised and stylised. The "Faith and Order Committees" of the various Church denominations authorise what should and should not be included. "The Sunday Service" for example is the "authorised" version of the Methodist Communion Service.

Many people like a structure to worship, a framework, a liturgy which incorporates the essential Theological beliefs and practices. The Kiss of Peace, for example, which some find embarrassing, has been passed down to us from the early Church which

didn't seem to have our modern reluctance to embrace one another.

Yet what of "unauthorised" forms of worship? – spontaneous hand-clapping or lifting of the arms, dancing around, changing time-honoured words, taking up a guitar and playing it. How far can we go? Are there any limits? Well, of course, there are. Some charismatic services, commendable for their naturalness and spontaneity, can be questioned as to whether it is the Holy Spirit at work or some other spirit. Again, when do we know if the teaching in worship is false teaching or not? Paul had his hands full dealing with this sort of problem in Corinth.

Yet the local believing community, I think, should be the monitor. We should always be asking questions like:

- 1) Is this worship being true to the story of Jesus and honouring him.
- 2) Does this worship truly reflect what this community is doing in the name of Jesus. (The Greek word from which we get "liturgy" means

"service") What we are rehearsing in worship is a reflection of what service we are performing in society (casting out demons, making people whole, confronting the powers).

- 3) Am I using language which the "outsider" can understand or am I only using "the language of Zion"?
- 4) Is this worship being helpful to people in order that they may grow in the Christian life and serve him in the world?
- 5) Is it truly joyful and expressive of what we believe or is it simply borrowed from a bygone age where the language and thoughts have gone dead on us? Or does it help to gain strength from a previous generation's understanding of God and his love?
- 6) Are the people of God participating, not as private individuals anxious to do their bit, but identifying themselves with the overall aim to respond to God and for God to find us?

Now, of course, we don't often ask questions like these.

Worship should not be boring, it should be lively and relevant but not at the expense of wishy-washy, sentimental cooing about how we feel inside, as if that were the main aim of being disciples.

It should be an expression of joy but not at the expense of ignoring the doubts and fears and anxieties of some people. Its language should be meaningful and relevant but not at the expense of undermining the basic Biblical and Theological insights that we have inherited as Christians.

I am all for creative worship. Let's have lively, powerful, meaningful, participatory, helpful worship but don't let's pretend that even if it did bring the unchurched back again to church (if they ever came) that this would be the Kingdom of God. If disciples are not being made, if people are not led to grapple with the ethical issues of our society, if they are not influenced in taking on responsibilities in the

community of faith, and outside then it will be simply one more channel people can switch on to when they get bored with all the rest.

Martin Eggleton

Churches Prayer Diary

w/c 1st November - Ruislip Methodist

w/c 8th November - Ruislip Manor Methodist

w/c 15th November - South Harrow Methodist

w/c 22nd November - South Ruislip Methodist

w/c 29th November - 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 December issue and the deadline for articles for this is Friday 27th November.

Church Calendar

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

Day/ Date	Event	Group	Leader	
November				
Sun 1	Members' meeting	Church		
Tue 3	Tuesday Club	Church		
Sat 7	Saturday morning coffee			
Sun 8	Sunday Lunch	Church	Jean George	
	Church Parade	GB/BB	At memorial	X
Tue 10	Tuesday Club	Church		
Thu 12	Craft group	Church	Doreen Smith	
Sat14/ Sun15	Young leader training	GB	Stephanie Marr	X
Sat 14	Saturday morning coffee			
Sun 15	Prayer meeting	Church		
Tue 17	Tuesday Club	Church		
Thurs 19	Pub lunch	Church		
Sat 21	Saturday morning coffee			
	From Broadway to the Barricades concert	Pyramix	Louise & Jean George	
Tue 24	Tuesday Club	Church		
	Worship planning group	Church	Peter King	
Thu 26	Christmas Craft for all	Church	Doreen Smith	
	Church Council	Church		
Sat 28	Saturday morning coffee			
	District Advent event Explorers/Juniors	GB	Stephanie Marr	X
Sun 29	First Sunday in Advent Inter-faith week service	Church		
December				
Tue 1	Tuesday Club	Church		
Fri 4	Battalion Bible Quiz	BB	Paul Edgeworth	
Sat 5	Saturday morning coffee			
	U3A Christmas Concert	U3A		
Tue 8	Tuesday Club	Church		

WHO'S

Christ Church
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Skelding
Deacon Jackie
Fowler

Administrator
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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!

November Services

(All services are 11am unless stated otherwise)

- 1st Rev'd Nick Skelding (Holy Communion, Covenant Service)
- 8th Mr Ken Pearce (member of Christ Church) (Remembrance Sunday)
- 15th Mr Peter Briggs (Methodist local preacher)
- 22nd Rev'd Michaela Youngson (Chair of London District, Methodist Church)
- 29th Rev'd Nick Skelding (First Sunday in Advent)

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(See 2+Corinthians 6:14)

11-09-2012

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