

Keeping in Touch..... Number 69

Welcome to this week's KIT. Thank you so much if you sent something in this week in response to our request for more articles. Please keep the articles coming. The deadline for next week's KIT is noon on Wednesday. Please send anything to c.a.curtis@ntlworld.com Or ring Alan or Chris on 01480 350787. If you get away for a few days please send a "virtual postcard" of a few photos..

Some thoughts from Char... Babs harvest photos last week reminded Char of this quote from Clive James' wonderful biography.....

UNRELIABLE MEMORIES.

"At the Harvest Festival in church the area behind the pulpit was piled high with tins off fruit for the old age pensioners. We had collected the tinned fruit from door to door. Most of it came from the old age pensioners".

The photos also reminded me of this .

"Consider the lilies of the field,how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin"

As ever

Charx



Some thoughts from Roy.....

The URC Daily Devotion that pops into my in box every morning at, or about 6.00am is currently taking as a basis for reflection, the URC Statement of Faith. On Saturday it began: We believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, united in heaven and on earth..... and the reflection began: In the United Reformed Church we are generally stronger on the local than the universal church.... This caused me to think back to 1982 when, for four months I was minister to a Presbyterian church in Auckland and the minister of that congregation was in post in my church in Norwich. During those four months the universal church became a personal reality for Marion and me as we discovered that we were relating to the congregation of St Andrews Birkenhead in the same way that we related to the congregation of Jessopp Road, Norwich. We were not strangers, nor visitors but part of the family. Another aspect of that reality was at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand (as it then was) when the General Secretary spoke about attending the World Association of Reformed Churches assembly in Canada. He was the only representative of the PCNZ and felt a bit out of it. Then as he listened to the various speakers he found that he was putting names to them – names of fellow ministers and elders from New Zealand – and from that point he felt fully at home. At that point Marion and I almost fell off our chairs. We had been doing exactly the same thing! The universal church was once again a personal reality. People are people and the people who make up our congregations are not all that different, sharing the same variety of characteristics, insights and prejudices. Perhaps that is why we were so readily accepted. Anyone so minded could liken us to someone they knew and feel as comfortable (or not) as with that person. Not all of us have had the good fortune to travel the world, but during these past two years, video services and Zoom meetings have provided a new perspective of Church which has enlarged our vision to go beyond, but still include the local congregation that we regard as Home. If as Paul wrote to the Romans “In all things God works for the good of those who love him” (Romans 8 v 28) then even the pandemic may be for us a means of growth in grace. Roy

The URC Daily Devotion that pops into my in box every morning at, or about 6.00am is currently taking as a basis for reflection, the URC Statement of Faith. On Saturday it began: We believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, united in heaven and on earth..... and the reflection began: In the United Reformed Church we are generally stronger on the local than the universal church.... This caused me to think back to 1982 when, for four months I was minister to a Presbyterian church in Auckland and the minister of that congregation was in post in my church in Norwich. During those four months the universal church became a personal reality for Marion and me as we discovered that we were relating to the congregation of St Andrews Birkenhead in the same way that we related to the congregation of Jessopp Road, Norwich. We were not strangers, nor visitors but part of the family. Another aspect of that reality was at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand (as it then was) when the General Secretary spoke about attending the World Association of Reformed Churches assembly in Canada. He was the only representative of the PCNZ and felt a bit out of it. Then as he listened to the various speakers he found that he was putting names to them – names of fellow ministers and elders from New Zealand – and from that point he felt fully at home. At that point Marion and I almost fell off our chairs. We had been doing exactly the same thing! The universal church was once again a personal reality. People are people and the people who make up our congregations are not all that different, sharing the same variety of characteristics, insights and prejudices. Perhaps that is why we were so readily accepted. Anyone so minded could liken us to someone they knew and feel as comfortable (or not) as with that person. Not all of us have had the good fortune to travel the world, but during these past two years, video services and Zoom meetings have provided a new perspective of Church which has enlarged our vision to go beyond, but still include the local congregation that we regard as Home. If as Paul wrote to the Romans “In all things God works for the good of those who love him” (Romans 8 v 28) then even the pandemic may be for us a means of growth in grace.

Roy

Philip's mini quiz from last week.....

We only had one response—and that was incorrect! So Philip's money is safe..... Sorry Philip!

The answers...

1. Sally Bank's maiden name was Pinkerton.
2. The doyen of the youth Club in the 1950s was David Bryant.
3. The best known piano teacher was Miss Agnes Green of 2 Globe Place.
4. The old interior of the church was heated by a ground floor boiler system. The chimney of this boiler followed exactly the contour of the right section of the apse arch.

Philip goes on to say that he once helped the late Frank Enfield sweep the chimney—it took nearly 30 rods to reach the top!

Irene calling.....

IT'S CRAZY!

Forget about Red and Amber and Green,
It's all too much trouble
Who cares where you've been?
Confusion and bungles
Are crowding the scene!

Delta is rampant now back in Wuhan
They're counting the cases
Each woman and man
Jump on the roundabout
Dodge if you can!

Australia Locks for only a few
So careful and stealth like,
And what do we do?
We open the doors
To greet variants new.

Bribes for jobs? Surely not? That can't be right!
Shame on you Ministers
Just give them a fright,
A pass or no entry
To Nightclubs at night!

We who have shielded, the ill and the old
Who've followed the rules
Done what we've been told,
Watch as you bargain
Makes our blood run cold!

cc. IRENE CARTER



News from David, our Church Secretary.....

August is traditionally a month when Church activities wind down, allowing some to take well-earned breaks. Barbara and I aren't going away until next month, but we had some old friends staying with us for a few days. Richard and I were each other's "best men" 45 years ago. It was very relaxing and certainly brought home the value of friendship in the ups and downs of the lives we lead.

Looking ahead, September is always a busy month for the Free Church. After the summer break, people are often keen to restart activities and that is particularly true this year. With the relaxation of restrictions, we can once again plan for more meetings "in person". As always, these plans are subject to review in the light of any changes in regulations or reassessment of risks. Sadly, I always have to add that proviso these days.

So, we start on 1st September with our first Elders' Meeting in the building since March last year. It will be interesting to see how we adapt after all the Zoom meetings – subtle muting is not so easy for the chair when meeting in person! On 4th September I plan to go with Catherine to Stowmarket URC for the Induction Service for our new Eastern Synod Moderator, Rev Lythan Nevard.

On Saturday 11th September we will be welcoming participants in Ride and Stride, a cycling and walking event organised by Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust. Then a week later on 18th September we will be welcoming visitors for the St Ives Heritage Open Day. We have supported both of these events in previous years and may well need some volunteers to provide a welcome – more to follow nearer the time.

Finally, I'm pleased to say that we plan to hold an "in building" Church Meeting immediately after worship on Sunday 19th September. In the past 18 months, Elders have had to make decisions on behalf of the whole church and we look forward to being able to involve church members more fully again.

God bless you all and your families and friends.

David

BANK HOLIDAY SNACK BAR 30TH AUGUST 2021

We are hoping to hold a long-awaited snack bar on the August Bank Holiday. At the moment we have the minimum number of volunteers needed to make the snack bar viable.

Some volunteers work from 8:30am to 2pm as time is needed to set up and clear away.

These volunteers need a break in turn so we urgently request help from 11 am till 1 pm.

Our main concern is the washing up as we no longer have the help of Gerry Mears, who sadly passed away recently.

People generally work in pairs. The dishwasher is simple to use and only involves cups, saucers, mugs, plates and cutlery, with no heavy saucepans.

It would also be useful if someone was on hand to do toast and teacakes in the coffee-shop area. Other lighter duties include taking out the orders and clearing tables.

If you are able to spare any time, whether it be 30 minutes or an hour or more, please contact Mavis as soon as possible so the rota can be organized.

Since the return of the market to the town centre our footfall has noticeably increased and people will expect us to be open.

My mobile number is: 07931676034.

Many thanks,

Mavis.

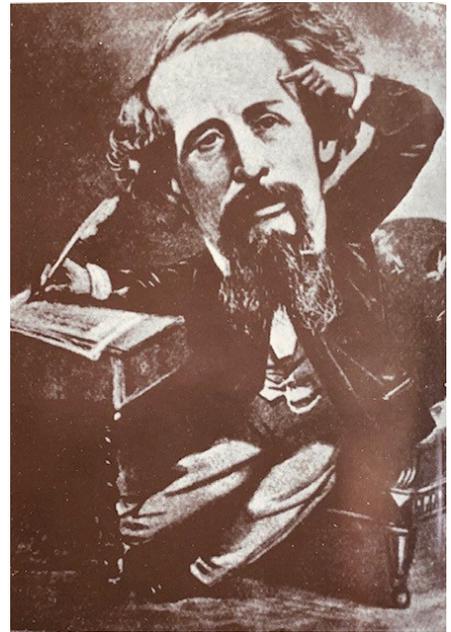
And from Liz Denham..... she writes.....

1864 was a momentous year for the Free Church. It was also the year in which Charles Dickens wrote his last complete novel, ***Our Mutual Friend***. He died in 1870.

So in the year of our church's opening Dickens was at the very height of his powers, and of course popular as almost no author before or since! Publishing his novels in his magazines in instalments, they were easily accessible to ordinary folk, who read them as they came out, with great enthusiasm!

So, to compare the press release of our opening to his style of writing, we need look no further than the opening of Bleak House, 1854, and the influence his writings were having on the journalists of the day!

"Implacable November. As much mud in the streets, as if the waters had but newly retired from the face of the earth.....Smoke lowering down from chimney pots, making a soft black drizzle, with flakes of soot in it as big as full-grown snow-flakes—gone into mourning, one might imagine, for the death of the sun.....Foot passengers, jostling one another's umbrellas, in a general infection of ill-temper, and losing their foothold at street corners, where tens of thousands of other foot passengers have been slipping and sliding since the day broke (if the day ever broke) adding new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud.....and accumulating at compound interest.



And here to compare, is the press report of our opening in the Huntingdonshire Gazette, 1864.

"Wednesday morning opened sullenly enough, just as if it had got up 'on the wrong side', and had not made up its mind to be out of temper or otherwise. Heavy rain clouds came in fast procession, driven swift onwards by a stirring wind, and now and then Jupiter Pluvius seemed as if he was inclined, after his long holiday, to set vigorously to work, by way of compensation, for lost time. But as the day went by, little flashes of sunshine broke through the scudding grey clouds, and thus the weather if not exactly brilliant, was not unfavourable. It would have made small difference if it had poured. No amount of damp could have kept people at home, notwithstanding damage to toilets and damp feet. There were evidences of preparation at an early period. People with packages, carts with flowers, cooks and bakers bearing odorous trays, ladies in carriages, gentlemen in ditto and on foot, crowds of holiday-attired children and groups of strangers from all parts of the country, by road and rail, all tending to Cromwell-place, or sauntering through the streets, gave the town an unwontedly stirring aspect".

Liz

Free Church Bowls & Social Club

The Bowls Club recommences on the evening of 6th September, it would be great to see some new faces. We meet at 7.30 and usually play for about 2 hours, it is a very sociable and fun evening. The subscription for the season is £10 and £3 for an evening session which includes a hot drink and a biscuit. If you would like to join us, please come along on the 6th of September at 7pm, you would be very welcome.

If you would like more information, please speak to me or e mail me at

gillian.german@ntlworld.com

Gill German

A blast from the past.....

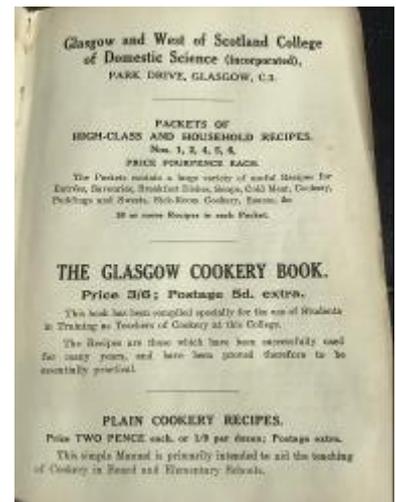
I recently found my mother's original "Glasgow" Cookbook which was her handbook (Bible?) when studying at The "Dough School" in Glasgow during the war. It is very faded and held together by parcel tape.

In the notes pages at the back I found in her handwriting (in pencil) what I assume were some assessment tasks. They reflect the time when she was studying.....

1. Prepare a picnic meal, oatmeal biscuit and cheese dish.
2. Dinner for three schoolgirls without meat and include a wholemeal loaf. Prepare a meat dish for the following day which can be easily heated up.
3. A three course dinner for three to include white sauce. Make wartime gingerbread with no egg and serve with coffee.
4. Show how you would use cold meat. Cook and serve two vegetables using what you consider the best method in wartime. Include a hot sweet.
5. Prepare selective dishes suitable as meat substitutes. Make a loaf of beard and scones
6. Cook a three course meal to include soup and a steak pie. Serve with coffee.



Mum (on left) in 1943 with a fellow student



And more from Char.....

How lovely it is, she says, to get postcards, even if they arrive after the holiday makers have returned! They are becoming a thing of the past.....

