

**Stainbeck Church (United Reformed)**

# **OUTLOOK**

**MAY 2017**



**Please worship with us:  
Sunday Morning at 10.45am  
Thursday Evening at 7.30pm**

<http://stainbeck.urc.org.uk>

**MAY 2017**



Dear Friends,

I have just returned from a meeting of Team Beckhills – estate members intent on improving the environment, safety and well-being of all residents. Over the past year there has been a good deal of hard work: door knocking, listening and encouragement to share their stories and experiences. Life is tough for many. Alongside this there has been a building up of trust and growth in confidence as we have worked together supported by Leeds Citizens.

We have seen some surprising outcomes and indeed there has been transformation. See the picture above. Talk to Helen Booth or David Wilson – look at the Café notice-board – talk to residents at Café time. Change IS possible. Transformation takes many forms.

And I reflect on the Easter Story at the heart and life of our faith. What does it mean to live as an Easter people? What does it mean to witness to the risen Christ in today's world?

And I remember the experiences of those first disciples. Isn't it the reality of the scars and the wounds that Jesus bore that helped them grasp the extraordinary truth?

This Easter then let us look for resurrection in the places of damage – in the scars and wounds of life where we allow God to work in our lives/to change us. I want to suggest that resurrection is about the very different pattern that God puts onto the harsh things of life that we bring to him. Resurrection never denies the pain and wounds of life: it is not a pretty picture covering up nasty things. Rather it is the reality of God with us; it is the difference God makes; it is the inspiring change that turns our ideas upside down – and gives us life and hope again.

You may find my links between new steps and 'new life' tenuous – but move on to your own experiences of those tough times and hard places. 'Do not doubt but believe', Jesus tells Thomas.

We are an Easter people. Believe and live it!

Angela

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS

*Where there is tender care and love, God is present*

Our thoughts and prayers are with Liam Brigg and his family – Liam's much-loved Granddad died last month. Our love to you all.

Some of our Church Family are experiencing health problems and are having to attend the hospital for various tests and investigations; you are all in our thoughts and prayers.

Members of our lunch club have also been unwell and need our love and prayers.

We think of all those others who have on-going health issues or who are struggling in other ways, who come and go through our building: you are remembered – **God loves you all.**

Congratulations to **Glen Riley** who attended the *9<sup>th</sup> WUKF European Karate Championships* in Romania where the England Team (of which Glen is the coach) returned triumphant with 2 European Champions – 2 Gold Medals, 5 Silver and 4 Bronze. Well done to all! This is impressive.

## HERE AND THERE

### Looking back.....

Half-term last month saw the running of two very successful Fun days, one very busy one at Woodhouse cricket club on a glorious sunny day and a second at Stainbeck. The one at Stainbeck was well organised by Team Beckhills (see photo) with games, dancing, competitions, food and a report from the Team about the progress which is being made on the estate regarding the reordering of the steps and bin collections. Oliver Priestly from Leeds City Council, a guest at the event



congratulated the Team for all that they had done and again committed the council to working with them to improve the lives of those living on the estate.

Our worship for **HOLY WEEK** once again guided us from the joy of PALM SUNDAY to the cross.

On **Maundy Thursday** we joined in Communion around the Table. And on **Good Friday**, a few of us from Stainbeck joined with friends from our local Meanwood Churches in a new undertaking.

After prayer at Holy Trinity Meanwood we followed the cross in a **walk of witness** to Stainbeck stopping twice more along the way for prayer. We finished with prayer and song on the steps of Stainbeck before going in to the Café room to share hot drinks, hot cross buns and conversation.

*It is true to say I think that everyone who took part found the walk to be a valuable experience, taking time out from all the busyness to focus on the meaning of Easter to each one of us. We are grateful to our friend Luke Dean and to Cherie Carter from Holy Trinity for encouraging and enabling us to share in this way....and to Avril and Brian for welcoming us with sustenance back in the warmth at Stainbeck.*

The evening of Good Friday found us back at Stainbeck to take part again in the moving and meaningful **Tenebrae Service of Shadows** as the story of the Cross was told again.

And after the dark, the pain and the awful solemnity came the exuberant joy and celebration of Easter day.

**Christ is risen!**  
**He is risen indeed! Allulia!**



Early communion, breakfast shared, the smell of bacon pervading the air, flowers bringing alive the cross, joyful singing. New life!

*There are so many people who made it a good Easter again. We thank you all for your giving and sharing of time, talent and skill. Particularly, we express again our thanks and our love to Angela in appreciation for all that she brings to us and enables within us.*



**On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, some of our Elders attended the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Elders' Conference at St Andrews, Roundhay. It was encouraging to see and meet Elders from across the Synod and to share and listen to ideas at the various workshops that had been carefully thought out and were easy to understand and access. We all enjoyed the day. Lot's to think about. Thank you to the Elders' Task Group who organised it and to those who led workshops and worship.**

The **After 8's** April meeting was the popular **Darts and Dominoes** evening. There were fewer people than usual as some of our regular players were on holiday. There were 16 people involved in the knock out competition (which is an ideal number) that left just 2 not competing. I think everyone enjoyed the evening. The winners of the Darts were Peter and Joan Craske and the Dominoes winners were Dave Hood and Pete Moore – well played. Thank you to everyone who helped especially Pete, Doreen and Colin.

Our May meeting is a walk led by Sheila Ryan at Harewood. Please speak to Doreen or myself for details (time etc and transport).

*Sandra Smith*

At the last Elders' Meeting it was agreed to introduce something new to the weekly Thursday worship time. Now on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month all are invited to **'Come and Read the Bible with us.'**

A group of us gathered to read a well-known passage together and then, in pairs we talked about what we had read. We shared what was familiar

in the passage, what was difficult, what we particularly liked about it. We thought of the context of the passage – what would it have been like to be there, in that situation. What did each of us take from the passage? How was God speaking to us through it? Then we shared our thoughts all together and finally asked ourselves how we were we moved to act as a result of what we had read?

*We were all surprised at how much we had found to share and how we had enjoyed our time together and, of course, we finished with a cup of tea. We would all recommend that this is a group worth joining. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month. Next one - May 18<sup>th</sup>.* **Ann Coates**

The celebration of our **86<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** is the highlight of this month. Do come and join us as we mark all those things which we do together and for which we give God thanks and praise. This Sunday affords another opportunity to share in food, fellowship and conversation. Just bring something for yourself and a little more to share. Coffee, tea and juices will be available of course.

## Looking forward....



**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK:  
14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May**

Our Christian Aid service on the 14<sup>th</sup> May will mark the beginning of this year's Christian Aid Week, celebrating 60 years since it first started.

Although lives have changed considerably in that time, the need for help in so many countries has continued to increase. The money raised during the week will be the biggest source of income received by the charity in the year. House-to-house collections usually bring in around £9 million, and provide a great way for churches to be visible in the local community.

We are very grateful for the help of our regular dedicated group of volunteers, but would welcome new collectors to join us and work alongside the more experienced. If you have an hour or two to spare during the week and could help to deliver and/or collect envelopes in local streets, please speak to Angela or June.

We aim to have hand - made greetings cards for sale at the Café during the week, also please look out for the Yorkshire 2017 Paper Quiz sheets, which provide the chance to win a Fair Trade goody bag.

*June Mawson Tel. 2938941*

Peter Ward, a friend from St Matthew's again invites you to an annual Quiz Night in support of **Christian Aid**. This will take place in *Stainbeck Hall* at 7.30 on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May. Tickets £4 include supper – you are asked to bring your own drinks and glasses. Why not make up a table? Or just come along and join in this friendly evening, please speak to Ann Coates for tickets.

*Mentioning Peter reminds me that he and his wife Carol very often take our PAFRAS gifts to the centre for us and we thank them for this. We are still collecting items in support of Asylum seekers and gifts may be put in the box at the rear of church. They are always welcome.*

Copies of **MICA** the newsletter of the churches in the **Leeds Mission and Care** group are regularly made available in the church and on this web-site . Members and friends are always welcomed to the meetings but this coming meeting is different. The next meeting is at **Stainbeck**. We will be welcoming friends from across the city. How encouraging it would be if there were some Stainbeck folk ready to greet them.

Do please consider coming on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 pm, for a drink and biscuit before the meeting starts at 7.30 pm. An opportunity to hear more of the Leeds Partnership, of the activities of our sister churches ... and the meeting is always over by 9.00 pm. You are most welcome.

Meanwood Festival is a fantastic week-long event, culminating in a Family Fun Day at Meanwood Cricket Club next to the Myrtle Tavern on Bank Holiday Monday.

This year a few different organisations have got together to help ensure more people from ALL parts of Meanwood are involved. So, we are having two street festivals, one at Farm Hill South on Monday 22nd May and one at Stonegate Green on Wednesday 24th May. Both will run between 4.30pm and 6.30pm and will include street entertainment and food.

We will need some help! We would love for the local churches to be actively involved in making these events special for the residents living in the areas where they take place. If you can be involved in helping to set up/clear up, make home bakes and/or being around to generally help during the events themselves, it would be a great and fun way of giving to our local community. Please talk to Ness if you would like to support these events.

Inter**ACT** (and therefore Stainbeck Church!) will also have a presence at the Bank Holiday Fun Day. Please come along and say hello.

**POST SCRIPT:** On 22<sup>nd</sup> April a few of us joined Christians from across the city to be part of **PRAY4LEEDS** – a 24-hour Prayer vigil focussed on the different sectors of our city.



## REFLECTIONS

4<sup>th</sup> April 9.40am Mallorca. Reading by the pool. Sound of fountains and running water. Perfect temperature. Peaceful. Blue sky. White buildings. Reminds me of the Vistana Resort in Florida, years ago. Am I considering an aspect of a proof of God's existence or regretting the Pain au Chocolate?! Probably both.

**9<sup>th</sup> April 1.42pm** Sitting up on the ‘stage’, about to serve communion, I suddenly thought, and felt like shouting it out, ‘we must keep Jesus Christ alive!’

**11<sup>th</sup> April 11.45pm** Rare event: went to a Labour Party meeting tonight with Boz, (Elanor’s husband). Why? Because it was at the Myrtle, and because Fabian Hamilton was speaking. He’s been the local MP for 20 years, and though he’s worked a lot on the Foreign Affairs Committee, he’s never been offered a post in Government or Opposition. Until, that is, his phone buzzed as he was talking to a constituent, and the name Jeremy Corbyn appeared. Fabian was asked to become Shadow Minister for Peace and Disarmament. He gave a very interesting talk about the various organisations around the world which work for peace and against the ‘Masters of War’ (apparently more people die in Africa from weapons than from Malaria and other illnesses combined). He knew the acronyms off by heart. For example, CTBTO, the comprehensive nuclear-test ban treaty organisation, which relies on seismic measurements from stations all over the world, and ensures that there can be no secret development of these weapons, which are capable of ending life on Earth.

**18<sup>th</sup> April 10.36am** Alex of Wigton Moor, preparing for Sunday, asks for testimonies of times of trial and the subsequent blessings which followed. Is the implication that our faith is tested by God? More likely, it seems to me, by life (and loss) itself. But God supports us, and so blessings follow.....

**19<sup>th</sup> April 3.30pm** ‘The damage inflicted by the hypocrisy of the apparently sincere is more serious than the damage inflicted by the transparently untrustworthy’. (Guardian). Politics is the art of the possible and offers the seduction of power.

**20<sup>th</sup> April 7pm** Sunny intervals on a walk round Eccup, reciting a somewhat rambling, and far-too-long ‘testimony’, having earlier looked at the reading for Sunday, 1 Peter 1:3-9, ‘you have had to suffer various trials’. Clearly Peter, whose faith is more like certainty, believes that it is God who is responsible for the testing of faith.

Many years ago I, supremely unqualified, led a group Youth Hostelling in the Lake District. We decided to climb the highest mountain in England,

and it was David Dalrymple who was the first to the summit. When I joined him he turned to me and asked, ‘Pete, you said we were climbing the highest mountain in England, but what’s that one?’ The familiar cry of those holidays rang out, ‘just one more hill to go’. We were at the top of Scafell, and, just 48ft higher, was Scafell Pike. There followed a hair raising scramble in the mist, as it turned out, and a legendary survival course, which saw Robin Dove, navigating with the help of a map on the back of a postcard, leading a breakaway group down to a barn where they spent the night.

More recently, I walked to the top of Scafell Pike from the other direction, alone (of course!), on a beautiful, clear day. I decided to go on to Scafell, but, rather than return the same way, to drop into the valley. I then had to climb to the top of the ridge, bypassing the mountain tops. As I climbed I noticed, or perhaps heard, to my right a storm developing. It was late in the afternoon, and I was exposed on the hillside with thunder and lightning nearby. I fell to my knees. Whether this was to call on God’s help, or because I was exhausted, I’m not sure. Probably both. But I clearly remember a sudden surge of strength which drove me to the top of the ridge, where, adopting my favourite rolling gait, I walked down the mountainside and ‘home’. God did not calm the storm; it drifted away. Nor was I shielded in some way. God will not intervene to break the laws of nature which he has created. God, I believe, is a part of each one of us, as of all creation, and as such will intervene, from within.

**23<sup>rd</sup> April 3pm** Hilary’s testimony: a cross in the sky (nature around us); visiting someone ‘at the right time’ (a prompt from within); discussing a bible passage (a new idea). As Bultmann points out: ‘By faith I can understand an idea or a decision as a divine inspiration, without detaching the idea or decision from its link with its psychological justification’.

**PLC**

***Transport:*** if you require any transport to church or for any other event, please contact John Mawson (2938941). Alternatively, contact your elder or Angela or, on a Sunday morning, telephone the church (2370251) and leave a message.

*Views expressed by individuals are personal and not necessarily those of Stainbeck Church.*

***Revd Angela Hughes, Minister: 0113 225 3766***

***Avril and Brian Bellwood, Church Secretaries: 0113 293 5847***