



# Link Up!

**‘And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.’  
Hebrews 13 v 16**

## **This month**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> August we will have Ken Adolphe, the chaplain at Blandford Army camp, leading us and continuing on from Luke 9: 43b – 62. Ken and his family are coming on an introductory visit to the church as a prospective candidate for our pastoral search.

**On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August we will be holding a Day of Prayer specifically to surround the whole process of the Ministerial Search in prayer. Sessions will be from 10.30 – 12noon and 7.30 – 8.30pm. Please do make a special effort to come and join us in the church at either of those sessions or to make time to pray yourself at home.**

And to complete August, on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>, we will have Stephen Ashby leading our service and preaching from Luke 10: 1 – 24.

**Following the service on 27<sup>th</sup> August there will be another short Church Members’ meeting for everyone to share their thoughts on Ken’s visit to us the previous week.**

## **September brings: -**

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> Prayer Service with Pam Anselm from Christians Against Poverty

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> Rev Colin Pavitt

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> Peter Phillips from The Vine Church

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Harvest Thanksgiving led by Stephen Ashby

I was reading recently about survivorship bias and how it causes problems in decision making. Essentially the problem comes when you make decisions based on just the remaining “survivors” of a group rather than the results for the group as a whole.

One example is that of the US Navy Air Arm in the Second World War. When reviewing the planes that returned from combat, they saw that many had severe damage on the tail and wing tips and concluded that these areas should be reinforced as these get shot most often. However, they realised that it was the undamaged areas that needed reinforcement because the planes that got damaged in those areas did not return.

So why am I sharing this with you?

When I was reading about this I was thinking about our church and how we may demonstrate our own survivorship bias in our church life. In some respects, we are the planes that have come back. To stretch this analogy to its breaking point, how do we enable more planes to make it to fellowship with God?

#### Harvest

Those of you who were at the Church Members' meeting in June will remember that we talked about the idea of having a Harvest Lunch after the morning service on the Sunday of Harvest Thanksgiving, 24<sup>th</sup> September. This is instead of an evening Harvest Supper on the Saturday before Harvest that we used to do until 2019. The suggestion was that we have a buffet lunch, like the one we had at the Coronation Event and then follow this with some form of 'social activity'.

A list will be up from Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August for people to sign up to say they are coming and a list of suggested food that will need to be provided for a 'Bring and Share' buffet lunch will be available alongside this. Please sign up to both these lists if you can.

Ideas for the social activity for after lunch are in the pipeline. Hopefully nothing too taxing either mentally or physically will enable everyone to join in!

#### B.M.S. World Mission news

Attached to this mailing is a sheet and newsletters announcing our new B.M.S. Church Partner Mission workers. Do have a look at them all and start getting to know them.

Now that this has been settled, we are looking for someone in the church who would be willing to be the Church Representative for BMS. See the sheet attached for more information about what that involves.

#### Family News

Please remember Delia and Colin Lothian in prayer. Colin's stepmother passed away recently, and they are responsible for making the funeral arrangements and sorting out her home.

Unfortunately, I don't have any simple answers, just more things to consider:

- Are we too comfortable?

God is a comforting God but that is not to say that he wants us to be comfortable. A comfortable church is a stagnant church, a church that has fallen asleep. God wants His church stirred into action. *"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God"* 1 Corinthians 15:34

- Do the things we do prevent others from coming to God? How much of what we do as a church has been commanded by God and how much is tradition and habit which outsiders might find impenetrable. For example, the Bible has a clear commandment for us to meet together to encourage each other (Hebrews 10:24-25) but nowhere in the Bible does it specify that it **must** be on a Sunday. Indeed, Colossians 2:16 says *"Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath."* Do we need to provide more opportunities for people to meet with God throughout the week rather than focussing on how many people come to a Sunday service? Particularly now that Sunday no longer enjoys the same level of protected status as it once did in this country.

- Do we meet with non-Christians too?

We are called to be lights to the world, but how much of our social circles are people who walk in darkness? If we don't meet non-Christians how can we bring God to them. I remember hearing a visiting speaker at Wimborne Baptist who encouraged the church to join non-church groups so that they may meet non-Christians. One of the most essential parts of the great commission is the instruction to go. We cannot make disciples of all people by sitting in our churches anymore than the Disciples could spread the Good News by staying in the upper room.

All of this may seem quite daunting but we can draw solace from the words of the Lord to Joshua. *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."* Joshua 1:9

*Graeme Smith*