



Link Up!

‘I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.’ 1 Corinthians 1 v 10

For the rest of this month: -
Sunday 17th Peter Phillips from The Vine Church, continuing our series in Luke’s gospel chapter 11:1 – 13.

Sunday 24th Harvest Thanksgiving led by Stephen Ashby, he will now be preaching from Philippians 4: 4 – 9 (which seemed to us more appropriate for a Harvest service) and also focusing on the work of International Care Network

Harvest

This is a reminder that our Harvest Thanksgiving Service is on Sunday 24th September. We will, as usual, ask you to bring items of food for Poole Foodbank to add to our Harvest display. Our financial offering this year will go to the work of International Care Network and envelopes for this offering will be on the seats on that Sunday.

Church Members’ Meetings

Church Members will be receiving in a separate mailing the agendas for both the Special Church Members meeting and the regular Church Members’ meeting which will be held on Sunday 1st October. This will take place after the service and lunch has taken place. Please bring your own lunch and drinks will be provided. Apologies for absence can be given to Janet prior to the meeting.

A few weeks ago, whilst Kim was visiting family in Chelmsford, I took the opportunity for a short city break in Belfast. It was a place I had never been before, and I was curious to see some of its history. I especially wanted to see the Titanic Museum. I ended up spending a good three hours there – there is a lot to see, and I would highly recommend a visit if you ever got the opportunity.

I also went on a coach trip to the Giants’ Causeway – another first for me! *En route*, the coach driver gave a potted history of what we call ‘The Troubles’. The ethno-nationalistic conflict in Northern Ireland between the Unionists (who wanted Northern Ireland to remain part of the UK), and the Nationalists (who wanted an independent united Ireland). Although not a religious conflict *per se*, much was made of the dispute also being between Catholics and Protestants. The conflict lasted for about 30 years until the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Almost 4,000 people died during this time.

As the driver carefully took us through the key events and aspects of The Troubles, all I could think of was “what a waste of life”, and how sad it was that two groups of people who claimed to identify with a belief in the same God ended up in such an entrenched position and in desperate conflict with each other. (I know this is a simplistic view, but even today people still use the events of The Troubles as an example of the church fighting with itself, and we can’t pretend it never happened.)

Tear Fund Quiz

On Saturday 7th October we will be hosting one of the Annual Tear Fund Quiz events in the hall. If you want to come to that please put your name on the list on the notice board. The doors will open at 7pm with the quiz starting at 7.30pm until 9pm. Drinks and snacks will be provided. Teams of up to eight can participate or come as an individual and join a team on the night. Entrance is free but donations towards the work of TearFund are invited.

Family News

Those of you who have been around Longfleet for a long time will be sad to hear that Mary's brother Tom, who used to be a member of our church, passed away last Sunday. Please remember Ann, his wife and their children Mandy and Tommy and their wider family.

Bible Reading Notes

Stephen will be collecting the Bible Reading notes for October – December from Keith Jones bookshop this coming Friday and will bring them to church on Sunday 17th September as he will be away after that. If anyone wants to change their order they should let him know before Friday.

The enemy loves nothing more than when the church (in the broadest possible sense) falls out with itself over things which really don't matter. And if we're being honest with ourselves, the church has got itself in a pickle over a lot of things over the years – it's ultimately how we've ended up with so many different denominations. That's not to say sensible discussion and debate is not a good and healthy thing, but when it overtakes and gets in the way of our actual calling as a body of God's people, it only leads to difficulties and, ultimately, a poor representation of Christ.

I once spoke of the need for unity of worship, fellowship, and discipleship, and I still believe this to be of fundamental importance to a healthy church. When a church fellowship comes together with one mind, one heart, and one voice, the truth about God is proclaimed and a powerful message is spoken and will be heard. If there is disagreement and dispute, the truth is muted, and an altogether different message is spoken. And not a good one that that!

Longfleet Baptist Church is approaching a very important time. Church members may soon be gathering to consider the appointment of a new minister, and by the time you read this I hope many of you will have had the opportunity to meet Ken and hear what he has to say. Now we need to come together in prayer, and earnestly seek God's will for Longfleet Baptist Church. We need to set our differences aside, unite as a single body, and pray, "Father God, Thy Will Be Done".

That will certainly be my prayer in the coming weeks. Will you join me?

Blessings.

Stephen Chaloner