

CHRISTIAN WORKER



India Appeal Update
(p.12)

**Letton Hall
Family
Retreat** (p.3)

Ten new Christians!
(p.6)

**Trevor & Pauline
Williams celebrate
50 years of marriage**
(p.8)

**Christians on mission
in Malawi** (p.10)

From the editors:

Contents

- Front cover – Letton Hall Family Retreat singing
- 2 – From the editors
- 3 – Spotlight: 'Letton Hall Family Retreat'
- 5 – Congratulations!
- 8 – British Bible School notes
- 9 – Camp Heatherbell
- 10 – Family news
- 12 – Appeal update
- 13 – Notices
- 14 – Diary
- 16 – The Final Word

The *Christian Worker* is published monthly as a news magazine for Churches of Christ in the United Kingdom.



Editor-in-chief: Trevor Williams
twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk
(0115) 8376895



Production editor: Jon Galloway
www.churchesofchrist.co.uk
<https://www.facebook.com/christianworkeruk>
Deadline: 21st of each month

What an exciting issue we have this month! Ten have reported those who became Christians recently! I can't remember having this number of new Christians to report since Trevor and I took over putting together this magazine. This is truly wonderful and lets us all know that the good news of Jesus is still powerful and reaching people. For that, we give God the praise!

There is quite a bit going on throughout the country. In just this past month we have had retreats, fellowship days, ladies' events, anniversary meetings, singing days, social days, and study weekends. And this is just the beginning of the autumn. In the next month we will see youth weekends and many more events.

Try to be part of those events that you can get to. It is such a good encouragement to be with other Christians and to know that the Kingdom of God is larger than the assembly of which we are a part. Learning more from God's word is always a blessing, as well!

In January of this year we featured several articles about the need to spend time each day with God's word. We are 3/4s of the way through 2018, so maybe it is a good time to ask the question: how are we doing? Did we start out strong and then, as life began encroaching on our time, we spent less time until we are rarely opening our Bible? Or have we benefitted from time each day centred on God and his word?

In Psalm 119, the psalmist extols the value of God's word. Notice what he said in just a few of the opening verses:

How can a young person maintain a pure life? By guarding it according to your instructions! (v.9)

In my heart I store up your words, so I might not sin against you. You deserve praise, O Lord! Teach me your statutes! (v.12-13)

Open my eyes so I can truly see the marvellous things in your law! (v.18)

May we each spend time each day reading and meditating on what God has revealed to us!

Jon

Spotlight on Letton Hall Family Retreat

Almost forty Christians travelled to an out-of-the-way spot in Norfolk to spend a weekend together, building each other up and being encouraged by God's word. Yes, it was another family retreat and it proved to be a wonderful 'retreat' from the world to concentrate on what is really important: our relationship with Jesus and our Father.

The setting was the Letton Hall Christian Retreat Centre just outside of Shipdham. Once a grand home to a family for many generations, it is now devoted to being a place where Christians can come together to enjoy the house, amongst farmland in Norfolk.

The theme for the weekend was "I Want to Know Jesus." Three lessons were presented over the weekend by Jon Galloway, Patrick Boyns, and Trevor Williams. These centred on getting to know Jesus and having a relationship with him. There was quite a bit of singing, led enthusiastically by Spencer Eastland. Morning devotions centred on the Psalms.

And, of course, there were impromptu Bible discussions and studies. There was ample food to feed us spiritually during weekend.

But retreats aren't just about Bible study (although we realise that this is important).

Retreats provide a setting for Christians to get together and enjoy the company of those who see the world like they do.

Meals were provided and eaten together in

the dining room. The food was plentiful and left us all satisfied. On Saturday evening we were treated to a barbecue on the back porch with eating in the garden. It was a wonderful time to enjoy good food with good company – at least until it started

getting dark and the bugs came out!

During the study sessions Mark Hill took charge of the young ones and led them on explorations of the property to investigate the wildlife

that could be found. There was something for everyone.



Saturday afternoon was free time to either explore the property, go for a walk into neighbouring Shipdham or even drive to Norwich, and spend time enjoying each other's company. The afternoon was completed by tea and coffee with freshly baked scones and jam served in the library.



After spending time together as God's people, even those you had only met that weekend seemed like part of your family. And that is the special appeal of being part of a retreat. It doesn't matter how old or young you are, there is a place for you.

Those who attended felt blessed to have been part of this weekend. Some said it was just wonderful to get away from the bustle of everyday life and relax. Others, from smaller assemblies, just enjoyed being with more Christians and not having to do everything. Still others enjoyed the spiritual emphasis throughout the weekend. It was truly a special time.



This was a new venue and a different time of year for the British Bible School to organise a

retreat. For the past few years a retreat has been held in January at Bassenfell Manor Christian Centre in the Lake District. It is now filled to capacity without even having to do any general advertising. The governors of the School felt that this was something that should be encouraged and decided to try a second retreat in a different

location and in the autumn of the year. Those who attended were not disappointed in the least with the weekend that was provided. By being in warmer weather we were also able to take advantage of doing things outdoors – and the weather held with very warm temperatures!

We would encourage everyone to think about becoming a part of the weekend in Norfolk at Letton Hall. The Bible School is anticipating having a second retreat there next year. The location makes it ideal for those in southern England, particularly those in the London area.

We hope to see you with us next year!

Jon Galloway

Congratulations!



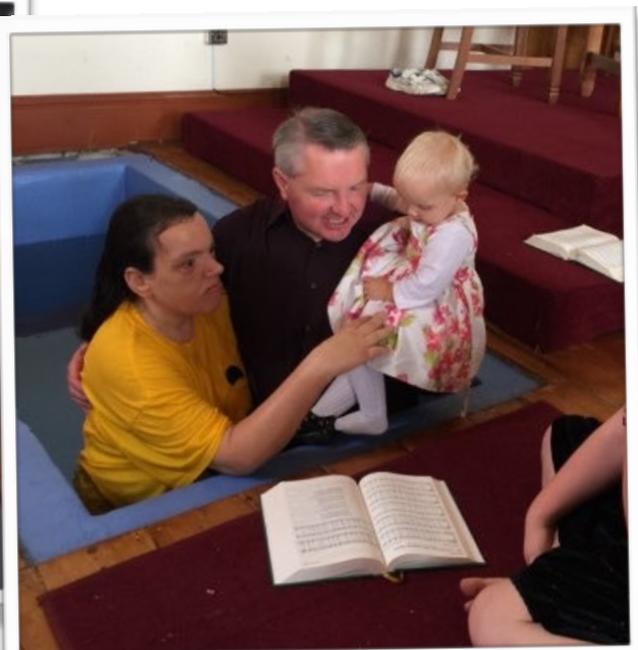
Bristol: We are thrilled to share the good news with everyone. Over the past few weeks, we have had four baptisms.

Derlin Abraham was the first of the four to be baptised; he was immersed on 29th July. **Micah Daniell** was the next to be immersed on 26th August. After going to camp, his brother, **Aaron** was baptised the following week. All these young men have been thoughtfully considering their commitment to Christ and studying hard, and we are so pleased with their decision to honour that commitment through baptism.

In the afternoon, after Aaron was baptised, **Karen Prell** spent time with Jason and Heidi, talking about baptism, and was also immersed.

We feel so blessed that we were able to witness these people commit their lives to Christ.

Robert Daniell



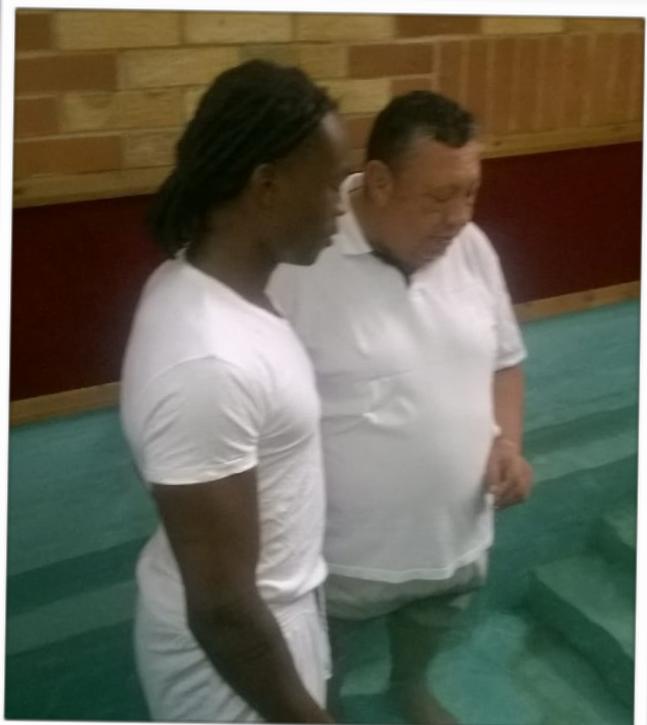
Nottingham (Stapleford): We rejoice and thank God in the baptism of **Zak Morris** on Sunday, 9th September. Zak is a young man who came up through our youth club and began to attend worship regularly. He was a valuable member of our *Malawi' 18* mission team in August, and it was during this that he expressed his desire to be baptised. We believe that God has great plans in His kingdom for Zak.

Bob Eckman



Northampton: We rejoice with Daniel and Janet **Mintah** on the baptism of their son **Derrick** on Sunday, 23rd September. Derrick is currently at university in London studying accountancy. We are trying to put him in touch with a congregation near to where he lives at present.

Mark Hill



London (Edmonton): To God be the glory! **Isaac Essien** gave himself to Christ by being baptised on 16th September. Let us pray for our brother to remain strong in the Lord.

Charles Banin

Livingston: We are delighted to announce that **Kaitlyn Dale** was baptised on 13th August. This has been a great encouragement to the congregation.

Mark Montgomery

Cambridge: We thank Almighty God for the commitments that **Abena Acheampong** and **Yaa Acheampong** have made to the Jesus and his family. Abena was baptised into Christ on 21st August and Yaa was baptised on the 28th August.

Please pray for them for their commitment, and that they may grow in the knowledge and wisdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Cyril Uleinman

Doug Melling and **Sue Woodhouse** were married on 1st September at Wigan. Congratulations to this lovely couple and



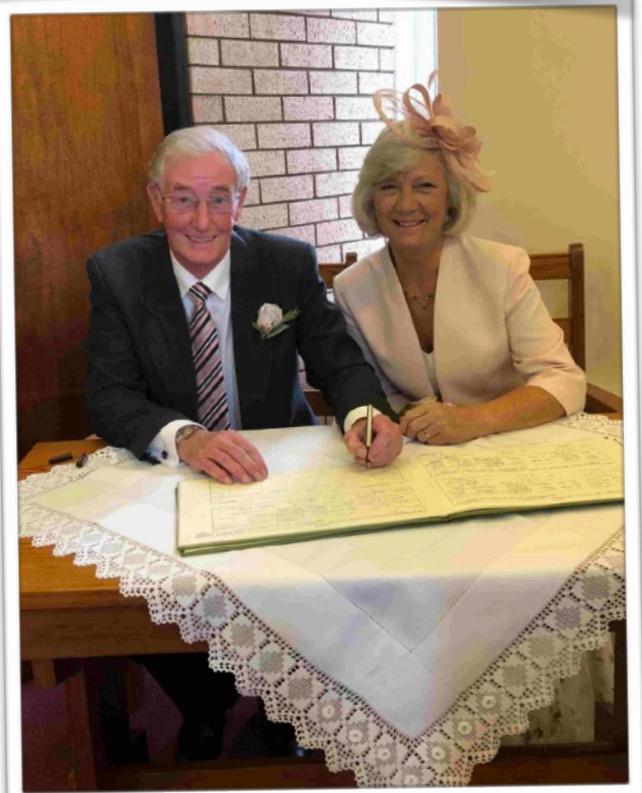
we pray that you will have a long life of service together.

Trevor Williams

Trevor and Pauline Williams celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in September with a gathering for family and friends. They were married on 2nd September 1968 at the Summer Lane chapel in Birmingham.

We pray that they will have many more years together and continue to be fruitful in the Kingdom, wherever they are serving the Lord.

Jon Galloway



British Bible School Notes

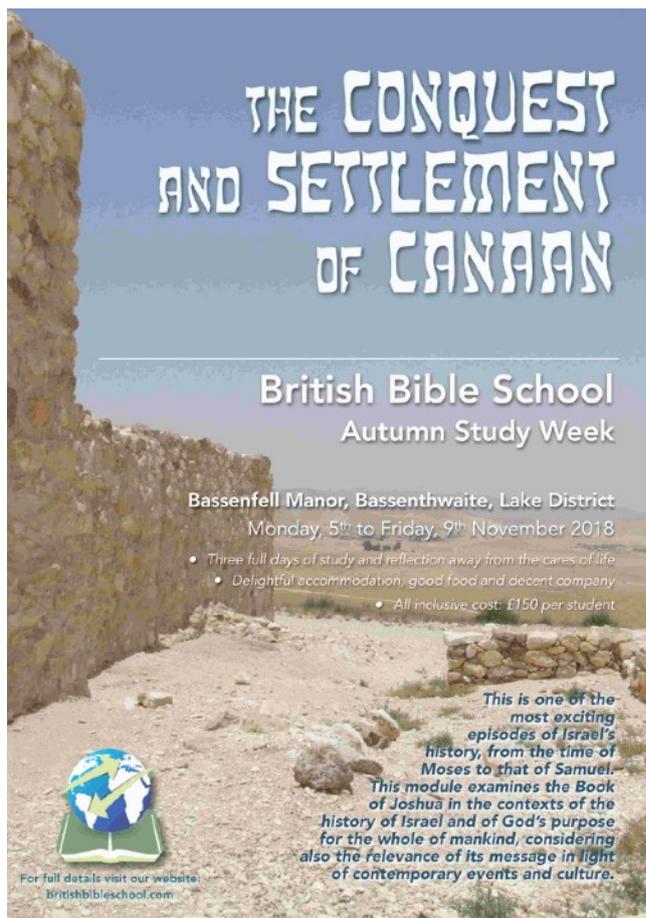
Our autumn teaching schedule is in full-swing. Patrick Boyns, Jon Galloway and Jack Paton completed their first weekend at East Kilbride on 'Hebrews' at the end of September. The second session will be at the end of October.

We are eagerly anticipating our second residential week of study at Bassenfell Manor. Patrick Boyns, Jon Galloway and Mark Hill will be centring the studies on 'Joshua', looking at the text and themes which are introduced. There are still places available so it is not too late to sign up (you can do this at our website).

At Wembley in November the study will concentrate on 'Isaiah' and will be taught by Patrick Boyns and John Griffiths. If you can attend this study, you will benefit greatly.

Jon Galloway

www.britishbibleschool.com



THE CONQUEST AND SETTLEMENT OF CANAAN

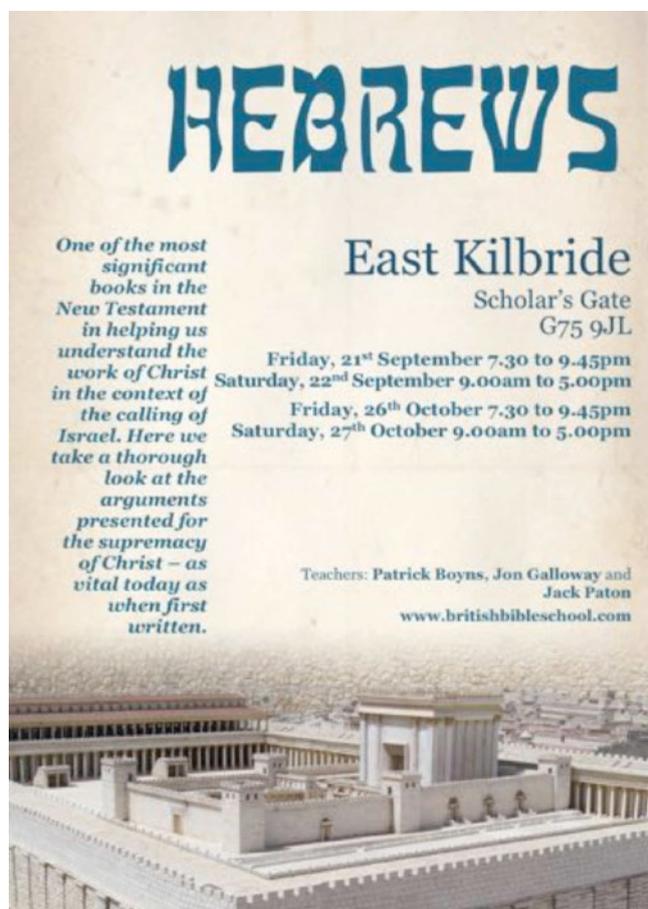
British Bible School
Autumn Study Week

Bassenfell Manor, Bassenfthwaite, Lake District
Monday, 5th to Friday, 9th November 2018

- Three full days of study and reflection away from the cares of life
- Delightful accommodation, good food and decent company
- All inclusive cost: £150 per student

This is one of the most exciting episodes of Israel's history, from the time of Moses to that of Samuel. This module examines the Book of Joshua in the contexts of the history of Israel and of God's purpose for the whole of mankind, considering also the relevance of its message in light of contemporary events and culture.

For full details visit our website: britishbibleschool.com



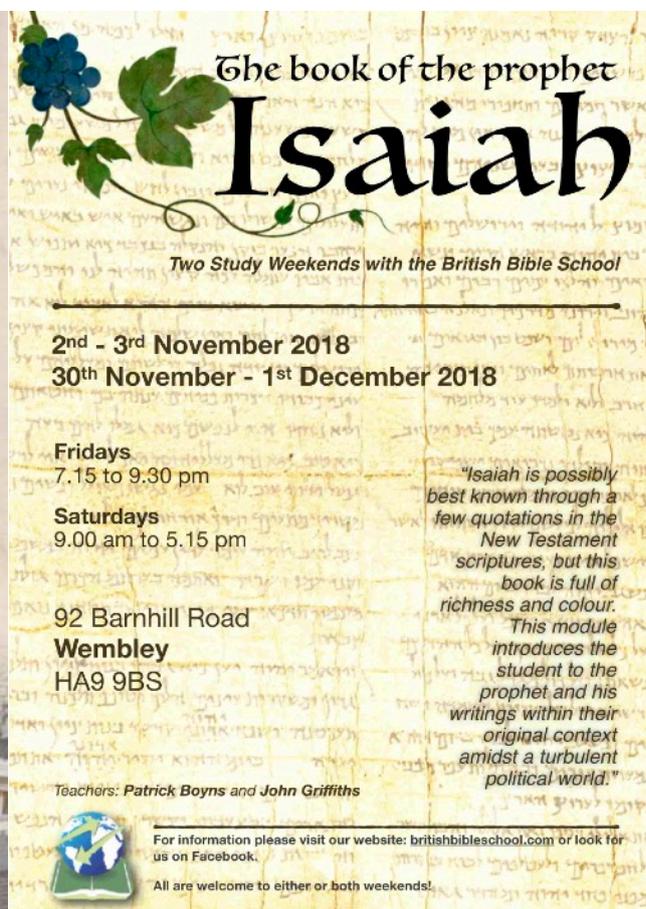
HEBREW'S

One of the most significant books in the New Testament in helping us understand the work of Christ in the context of the calling of Israel. Here we take a thorough look at the arguments presented for the supremacy of Christ – as vital today as when first written.

East Kilbride
Scholar's Gate
G75 9JL

Friday, 21st September 7.30 to 9.45pm
Saturday, 22nd September 9.00am to 5.00pm
Friday, 26th October 7.30 to 9.45pm
Saturday, 27th October 9.00am to 5.00pm

Teachers: Patrick Boyns, Jon Galloway and Jack Paton
www.britishbibleschool.com



The book of the prophet
Isaiah

Two Study Weekends with the British Bible School

2nd - 3rd November 2018
30th November - 1st December 2018

Fridays
7.15 to 9.30 pm

Saturdays
9.00 am to 5.15 pm

92 Barnhill Road
Wembley
HA9 9BS

Teachers: Patrick Boyns and John Griffiths

"Isaiah is possibly best known through a few quotations in the New Testament scriptures, but this book is full of richness and colour. This module introduces the student to the prophet and his writings within their original context amidst a turbulent political world."

For information please visit our website: britishbibleschool.com or look for us on Facebook.

All are welcome to either or both weekends!

Camp Heatherbell

Camp Heatherbell entered its 51st year with the theme “5G: Full Coverage”. Our teachers gave lessons on the nature and work of God in our lives and did an excellent job. We had children from Cumbernauld, Perth, Livingston, Dennyloanhead, Hyvots Bank, and Falkirk. It was a great week with our staff doing an outstanding job.

As well as the Bible lessons, the children participate in the annual “Parrish/Steele Bible Bowl”. The trophy is named after Claude Parrish and Willie Steele who were instrumental in starting the camp in 1967. The campers are assigned house teams for this and the Directors’ Cup. This year they studied Paul’s second missionary journey and Strachan House held off some stiff competition to lift the Bible Bowl. In the end, it was the junior campers that swung the win their way.



In the Directors’ Cup, the house teams battle it out in games trying to accumulate points. They earn points for helpfulness, too. It was a close competition this year between the four houses: Brunton, Cameron, Hughes, and Strachan (each of the houses are named after former

directors of the camp). In the end, Strachan House got across the line first to win the Cup, edging out Hughes House who nearly won it for the first time.

On the last night was our annual Talent Show and most everyone gets involved. The whole week was lots of fun and a time for new friendships,

renewal of old ones, to learn and to love God.

Camp Heatherbell is already booked for 28th June to 5th July 2019 at the Auchengillan Outdoor Centre.



Adam & Melanie Barr and Graham McDonald

Family News

Malawi Mission Trip: A team of 21 from four congregations in the Midlands made a Mission Trip to Malawi, 11th-26th August. The main organisers of the trip were the congregations in Loughborough (ten team members) and Nottingham (Stapleford) (eight team members). They were joined by two Christians from Leicester and one from Ilkeston. Most were involved in organising Holiday Bible Clubs for children while four went to teach and present lessons at a number of places. These were Paul Hill, Calum Hill, Ken Mullan and Bob Eckman.

During the first week, the group went out into the bush to the remotest of villages. These are the poorer parts of Malawi, the places which tourists never see. One village said that they never get anyone from outside visiting it. These are villages that you won't find on Google Maps! It was encouraging, though, to see that in each place the congregations were strong and thriving. Before every HBC was conducted, classes for the adults were requested, with the four above being called on at the last minute to bring these lessons via translators. In each case, these were to be held in the very primitive church buildings, but the crowds were so large that they had to be held outside.

The Bible Clubs taught about Noah's Flood and David defeating Goliath. A lot of work

went into preparing the lessons to be taught to the children: handouts for the children to colour and take home were prepared, crafts that the children could make as reminders of the stories, puppet sketches, and songs (although these were in English and the children spoke Chichewa, they soon learned the simple words and especially the actions). The children loved all of it! They especially loved the puppets and were mesmerised by them. Some of the group also spent time playing games with them, and (as usual) football and skipping ropes were the international languages that all understood



and loved. The group took 26 footballs with them which were prized 'gifts' in every place. As we departed each place, we left behind loads of happy, smiling faces, and they left with us some warm and wonderful memories.

On the Saturday of the first week, the Area 47 congregation in Lilongwe had planned a city-wide Fellowship Day with the theme being "Unity." Ken, Bob, Paul and Calum were asked to present four lessons each with assigned titles. These were presented via translators, which was an experience for all of them (except Ken as he'd done it on several occasions in India). They soon warmed to it and found a terrific rapport with their Malawian helpers. A rough guess was that somewhere around 600-700 attended the Fellowship Day. So as not to

be a burden on the congregation, the Team gave the Area 47 funds in advance with which to purchase food so that everyone who attended got a good, hot meal, thanks to the Malawi sisters.

Each member of the team was responsible for raising their own funds for airfare and accommodation and the younger ones are to be commended for their diligence in this. We could not have asked for a better team. Everyone – especially the younger ones – worked hard, did everything that was asked of them and more without any complaint, and they all found a wonderful warmth within the group. They knew they were part of something special. All of them will testify to the fact that the Malawi people were kind, friendly and warm-hearted. No wonder Malawi is called “*The Warm Heart of Africa.*”



Statistically, let me sum up all that we did in the two weeks. In total we gave lessons to close to **900 people**. We taught around **800 children** in HBCs, gave away **600 pencil cases** (filled with pencils, crayons, coloured pencils, pencil sharpeners), gave away about **400 toothbrushes and toothpaste**, and **over forty ‘pillowcase’ dresses** (we left these with the village chiefs to distribute as we were afraid that it would be a free-for-all if we started giving them out).

Only 21 went to Malawi but behind the scenes leading up to the trip there were countless people who, through their generosity, made it possible for all of the supplies to be bought. Christians from congregations all over the country and in other countries helped to provide the funds needed for these supplies. Indeed, even some who aren’t Christians saw the “good works” and also helped both financially and in kind. The Mission Trip was a great witness for the Lord both in Malawi and wherever people heard of it.

Three in the Team were not Christians.

Some might question this, but all three of them were great, worked hard, and the experience made a massive impression on them. It helped them to see God’s kingdom in action and not just in worship. One of

them, Zak Morris, indicated that he wished to be baptised, and this took place on the group’s return to England. He was thrilled that all but two of the Malawi team were able to be present.

This is the third Mission Trip (2013 and 2015 to Honduras) that Christians in Loughborough and Nottingham have organised. Where will the Lord send us next? God is always full of surprises!

Bob Eckman

Manchester (Stretford): On the day of the Royal Wedding this May, whilst billions of eyes were on Harry and Meghan, the Christians in Stretford were making good on our own commitments. We had highlighted as a congregation earlier in the year that we wanted to work on our time and prioritising, so we invited Chris Monney from Wembley and Steven Eusell from Stockwell to speak on “Am I too busy for God?” A very worthwhile day was had and helped us to examine ourselves, our lives and our busy-ness. The message about appropriate rest was taken on board, with children writing poems (these are on the CW Facebook page).



Recently in September we had Graeme Morrison expand on another congregation-chosen topic of “I am good already, I don’t need God!” The next gospel meeting we are holding is on Saturday 13th October from 1.00 pm at our Green Hut. The title will be “Why do I need God?”. As always, the invitation is open to all.

After a long long stint in hospital, our much-loved Gretchen Ashurst has gone to her eternal reward. We will have more details later.

Sam Appiah-Anane

Appeal Update

India Flood Appeal: I want to thank those who contributed to the relief fund to help

those affected by the flooding in Kerala, India. £1,400 was raised.



I have been in regular contact with the Christians in Kochi. There was wonderful cooperation from our congregations in various parts of that country. Things are beginning to get back to normal.

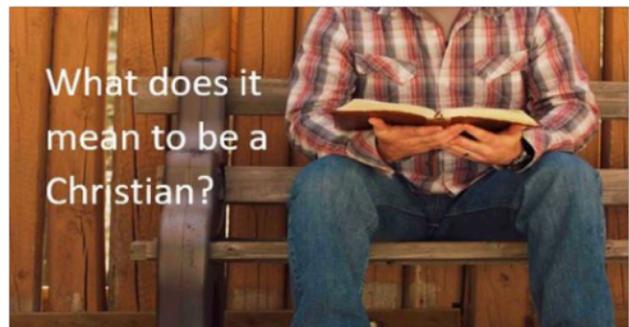
Once again, thank you on behalf of the Indian brothers and sisters whom you helped.

Tony Coffey

“For such a time as this ...”

“Field of Refuge”
 Women’s Renewal Weekend
 12th-14th October 2018
 Tulliallen Castle
 Kincardine FK10 4BE

Cost: £120
 Contact:
fieldofrefuge@hotmail.com



OCT 26 Livingston Youth and Young Adults Weekend
 Event for Church of Christ Livingston Youth Events · Hosted by Wendy Montgomery

X Can't

Church of Christ Livingston
 Garden Place, Eliburn, EH54 6RA Livingston, West Lothian [Show map](#)

PRIME TIME 26th-28th October

“Out of this World”

Bedminster Church of Christ’s popular biannual weekend for those in the prime of their lives (40 and over)
 Come along for a weekend of Fellowship, Praise and Biblical based discussion about our World
 Starts Friday 26th October, evening meal available from 1800
 Fellowship meal after service on Sunday
 Please could you indicate if you are a National Trust Member

Further information contact Martin Nelson or Jason Snethen
martin.p.nelson4@gmail.com 07786157417
jsnethen@hotmail.com 07789998042

Accommodation is available

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN WORKSHOP

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

22nd-24th August 2019

Theme: THE JOURNEY

Fee: £150 (Before 31st May), then £160 After.

We can set up an easy payment scheme for you.

Please contact: Stephen Woodcock

Phone: (01509) 768789

Email:

registration@europeanchristianworkshop.com

www.europeanchristianworkshop.com

Looking forward to seeing you there.

WEMBLEY CHILDREN'S DAY
 Refuge

08.12.2018
 AGES 5-12

10.30AM - 3.30PM
 92 BARNHILL ROAD | WEMBLEY, HA9 9BS

YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED TO ATTEND WEMBLEY CHILDREN'S DAY

A ONE DAY EVENT FOR THOSE AGE 5-12 TO ENJOY TIME TOGETHER LEARNING ABOUT FINDING REFUGE IN JESUS

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

PLEASE CONTACT ATHENA THEODOTOU 07402 437 837

THEODOTOUATHENA@GMAIL.COM

TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

Diary

October

3rd-5th – Bratislava, Slovakia: European Vision Workshop; venue: The Park Inn Danube. Contact: Doug Reeves (dreeves@sibi.cc).

6th – Newtongrange: Annual Social Day, 1.00 pm.

12th-14th – Kincardine: Field of Refuge Women's Renewal: "For Such a Time as This" at Tulliallan Castle, Kincardine FK10 4BE. Cost: £120 (£8 saving if you pay deposit before 1st June). Contact: fieldofrefuge@hotmail.com.

13th-14th – Stapleford: Weekend meetings with Ken Mullan. Saturday: 7.00 pm; Sunday: 11.00 am and 6.00 pm. Contact: Bob Eckman (bbobeckman@aol.com or 07714 207279).

26th-27th – East Kilbride: British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: "Hebrews" (part 2), teachers: Patrick Boyns, Jon Galloway, and Jack Paton. Friday: 7.30-9.45 pm; Saturday: 9.30 am-5.00 pm.

26th-28th – Peterborough: Women's retreat – "What is your worth?" at Holiday Inn West Peterborough. Cost (for twin room): £140.00. Contact: Marsha Erysthee (01733 351192 or 07541 333908 or merysthee1@aol.com).

26th-28th – Bristol: PrimeTime – A weekend of fellowship, praise, and Bible teaching. Contact: Martin Nelson (martin.p.nelson4@gmail.com).

26th-28th – Livingston: Youth and Young Adults Weekend – "What does it mean to be a Christian?". Register by 21st October. Contact: yw@churchofchrist.co.uk.

27th – Ilkeston: An evening of praise and worship. 6.00 – evening meal; 7.00 – Praising the Lord. Contact: Trevor Williams (twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk).

November

2nd-3rd – London (Wembley): British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: "Isaiah" (part 1), teachers: Patrick Boyns and John Griffiths.

2nd-4th – Glasgow area: Joint gospel meetings – "Have Faith." Guest speaker: Ian Davidson. Friday at Clarkston, Saturday at East Kilbride (both at 7.30 pm). Joint worship at Clarkston on Sunday morning. Contact: Jack Paton (jgp@britishbibleschool.com or 07766 047160) or Jon Galloway (jdgalloway@mac.com or 07906 060618).

5th-9th – British Bible School: Residential Study Week at Bassenfell Manor, near Keswick. Module: "The Conquest and Settlement of Canaan – a study of the book of Joshua". Contact: study@britishbibleschool.com or visit: <http://britishbibleschool.com/upcoming-events/autumn-study-week-2018-the-conquest-and-settlement-of-canaan-joshua>

9th-11th – Loughborough: Youth Weekend – "Building the Temple". Contact: Liam Bates (liam.bates1992@gmail.com).

10th – Eastwood (Nottinghamshire): Quarterly Outreach meeting: "Jesus – the New Beginning"; light refreshments at 6.00 pm and lesson at 7.00 pm. Contact: Adrian Limb (cofceastwood@aol.com).

10th – East Kilbride: An afternoon of praise, 1.00-4.30 pm (doors open at 12.30 pm).

17th – Northampton: Ladies' Day.

30th-1st December – London (Wembley): British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: "Isaiah" (part 2), teachers: Patrick Boyns and John Griffiths.

8th December – London (Wembley): Children’s Day – “Refuge”, ages 5-12, 10.30 am to 3.30 pm. Contact: Athena Theodotou (07402 437837 or theodotouathena@gmail.com).

January 2019

18th-20th – Bassenthwaite Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor, near Keswick. Theme: “Good News is Jesus...” Cost: £60 per person (children ages 5-16 sharing a room with parents are half price, 0-4 are free). Fully booked. Organised by the British Bible School.

February

18th-24th – Gemünden, Germany: Advanced Bible Study Series. ABSS I Monday-Friday, ABSS II Friday-Sunday. For further information or to book your place, contact: Paul Brazle (brazle.paul@gmail.com or +32 488 481 082). (Follow group on Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/697781630273815/>)

March

1st-2nd – Scotland East Coast: Joint gospel meetings. Friday at Hyvots Bank, Saturday at Kirkcaldy, 7.30 each evening; speaker: David Chapman. Contact: Nick Wilson (nick-donelda@blueyonder.co.uk) or Alan Moyes (alan.J.Moyes@gmail.com)

9th-10th – Birmingham (Great Barr): British Bible School Study Weekend, part 1.

23rd-24th – Birmingham (Great Barr): British Bible School Study Weekend, part 2.

24th – Edinburgh: *Solus* singing at ‘St. Giles at Six’ – St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, 6.00 pm.

April

18th-21st – 16th European Annual Bible Lectureship: “Leadership – a crying need for the church.” Cost: £120 (adults), £80 (6-12 year olds) – this covers accommodation and meals. Venue: All Saints Pastoral Centre, Shenley Lane, London Colney, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL2 1AF contact: Bright (07985 205561).

27th – Kirkcaldy: Annual Social Day, 1.30 pm.

June

28th June-5th July – Camp Heatherbell. Venue: Auchingillan Outdoor Centre, Blanefield, Glasgow G63 9BA. Contact: Graham McDonald (graham@gmcd.net).

July

28th-2nd August – British Bible Camp. Contact: Jason Snethen (jsnethen@hotmail.com).

August

22nd-24th August – European Christian Workshop: “The Journey,” at Lancaster University. Cost: £150 (if register before 31st May, £160 after). www.europeanchristianworkshop.com
Contact: Stephen Woodcock (01509 768789) or registration@europeanchristianworkshop.com.

The Final Word: "Why we need flutes, harps, trumpets and organs in church"



I am very aware that a great deal of our readers do not always read what is said on the back page but I hope this time I may have grabbed your attention and you may even read on to learn why we need such instruments in church.

For the past 65 years I have sung *a cappella* in worship services and see no reason to change, but over and over I have wished the singing could be better. I am fully aware that God listens to the crows as well as the nightingales but when I feel I am not praising as I could or should there is a problem. I have attended services where I was booked to preach and the hymn leader was choosing hymns at the last minute and this was supposed to be a gospel mission. The singing has been slow and dreary with no life. The start of hymns has been with a quiet voice with some in the congregation not even sure if we had started or not. Can you imagine what it would be like if we did have an orchestra leading the praise and playing that badly?

In 1 Corinthians 8:7-8 Paul writes "*Even in the case of lifeless things such as the flute or the harp, how will anyone know what the tune is unless there is a distinction in the notes. Again if the trumpet does not give a clear call who will get ready for battle.*" How many of us have sung "O Happy Day" as if it were a funeral dirge? Sometimes congregations will slow down the singing and it is up to the leader to make sure the tempo keeps on going – it just does not happen by magic. I want to encourage congregations to practise singing together outside of worship. The hymn leader, cantor or whatever you want to call him needs to practise over and over again. So, if lifeless musical instruments need to be practised to make the right sound how much more does the human voice? Do we need an organ in services? Absolutely YES and everyone needs to bring their own: lungs filled with breath, hearts filled with love, mouths filled with rejoicing, minds filled with thanksgiving.

We usually read Ephesians 5:18-20 and Colossians 3:15-17 in our defence of singing without musical instruments and that is good, provided we read all of it and understand that we are filled with the Spirit of God when we sing. Let's do it well. And then let's sing new songs, after all Psalm 96:1 says, "*Sing to the Lord a new song.*" All old favourites were at one time new songs. We can do better.

Note the title of these thoughts – I did not write about having musical instruments in worship but in church, in the people. As part of the body of Christ we **ALL** need to make the right sounds in reaching out with the gospel.

Thanks for reading.

Trevor

Open the eyes of our hearts Lord, we want to see you, to see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory, Pour out your power and love as we sing holy, holy, holy.

Amen