

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN BRAMHALL

Volume 21 Issue 5

May 2019

THE TRUTH OF THE ASCENSION

NEWS & VIEWS

'While He was blessing them, Jesus left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:51).

The Ascension is a hugely neglected festival, which deserves to have a bigger place in our church life. How do we understand it?

The Ascension tells us that Jesus is in control: 'Jesus has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand' (1 Peter 3:22). Jesus occupies the top spot in the universe; the control of our world is in the safe, scarred hands of Jesus. We can offer Him our worship and allegiance, knowing that His plans are better than those of any Prime Minister or President.

The Ascension tells us that God is committed to His world: 'And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus' (Ephesians 2:6). Jesus did not leave His humanity behind when He ascended, for we are raised with Christ to heaven. Therefore, God

is bound to His world and we can trust Him to fulfil His purpose for our lives and world.

The Ascension gives us a job to do: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:18,19). God's primary means of working in the world is now through us. He commissions for this task at Ascension and equips us at Pentecost. We are called to make disciples, starting in our workplace, family and community.

'Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world.' (Teresa of Avila).

Parish Pump Web site

MINISTER:

Rev Alan Poolton MA BA (Hons)
8 Delfur Road
Bramhall
SK7 2HG
Tel: 0161 285 9206

SECRETARY:

Graham Perkin
Chestnut Rise"
Jacksons Lane
Hazel Grove
SK7 5JS
Tel: 0161 440 9588

TREASURER:

Mr Joe James
22 Hillcrest Road
Bramhall
SK7 3AE
Tel: 0161 439 8241

CHURCH OFFICE:

Telephone: 0161 439 4807
Open: Fri 10.00am—12 noon
Room booking: 07909 940 819
Answer phone checked daily
e-mail: bramhallurc@btinternet.com
www.urebramhall.co.uk

SUNDAY SERVICES:

9.30 am All-age Worship Breakfast from 9.00 am
10.30 am Reflective Worship (Communion 1st Sunday in each month)

AFRICAN PALMS

Ever thought of where your Palm Sunday Cross comes from?

For many years we have obtained our crosses through one of the other churches in Bramhall.

This year, The Methodist Church did not have enough to spare to sell onto us, but they gave me the contact from whom they purchase - 'African Palms'. After ordering the number we require, I decided to do some research into 'African Palms' and found this intriguing story.

African Palms was started in 1965 by Revd Alan Talbot and after a very small beginning has grown so that churches in the USA, Canada, Sweden, Norway and other European countries now buy African Palm Crosses for their Palm Sunday Services.

The aim of African Palms is to give people living in a very poor part of Tanzania, the possibility of earning some extra money. The people's daily work is the planting of maize, millet and some ground nuts to feed themselves and their families. The important thing about the Palm Cross project is that it does not interfere with their work of producing the food they need to live.

Alan Talbot was born in Leyton, East London and at the age of 5yrs moved with the family to Northolt, Middx. Here he became a keen member of the local church, St Mary's Northolt. He was greatly influenced by the rector, Revd Gordon Phillips and thus began a life of service to his fellow man. After serving in world war two as a navigator in bomber command, he read Philosophy, Politics and economics at Oxford University and then went to the College of The Resurrection in Mirfield.

He was ordained Priest in 1952.

He served as a curate at St Mary of Eton, Hackney Wick and then St Saviours in Portsmouth.

In 1963 he went to Southern Tanzania to work with Bishop Trevor Huddleston who worked as a priest in a very remote area of the Masasi Diocese. It was here that the Palm Cross project was born.

In 1967 he was visited by two English Botanists who identified and confirmed that the bushes of reeds that grew wild around the village were Palm. He had recently read that the making of Palm Crosses in Devon had come to an end. This gave him the idea that the villagers could make some extra money for essentials such as salt

by plaiting palm leaves. This wouldn't interfere with their work as farmers and gave them dignity in earning their own money. He sent these back to friends in the UK with the aim that they should try and sell them, they proved popular, so he sent more back.

He returned to the UK in 1969 and continued the project which grew. He was delighted when all denominations started to use the crosses uniting so many Christians on Palm Sunday. African Palm Crosses are now sold all around the world from the UK to Hong Kong.

The Revd Alan John Talbot died peacefully at home at the age of 95yrs on the 30th August 2018.

At his funeral Father Henry from African Palms USA told of how Palm Crosses had affected millions of people in Tanzania over the years, both through the work of making the crosses and through money left over being used in Education and Healthcare projects. It is amazing. How such a small idea could affect and encour-



age people in their daily lives around the world.

So, keep your Palm Cross through the year, somewhere prominent where you can see it, to remind you of where it was made and the people who made it. But remember to get a new Palm Cross each year to ensure the continuation of this valuable project started by Revd Talbot fifty years ago.

Graham Perkin



A MOTHER'S POEM

Cleanin' and dustin' can wait for tomorrow.
 Babies grow up, I've learned to my sorrow.
 So quiet down cobwebs; dust go to sleep
 I'm rockin' my baby, cause babies don't keep!"

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REVD ALAN POOLTON FAREWELL SERVICE

I assume most of you will know that Alan retires from the ministry at the end of June this year.

His final service will be a joint service with the Cheadle Hulme United Reformed Church at Swann Lane. . This date also coincides with Cheadle Hulme Church Anniversary and Gift Day and we are all invited to join them for their 150th Anniversary. I hope you all will consider coming along to this service to say farewell to Alan and Karen and to celebrate 150 years with the fellowship at Cheadle Hulme.

Note that there will be a 9.30am Café Worship, as usual, on that day at Bramhall.

Graham Perkin

CHURCH DIRECTORY

It is a few years now since we issued a new, updated, Church Directory.

That is a listing of all members and adherents with address and telephone numbers.

Over previous years this has proved to be a very useful document for members and adherents to be able to contact each other, so we are keen to update and publish.

Under the new General Data Protection Regulations, we have to ask each individual if they are happy to have their information in the directory, therefore we will be asking all to sign giving permission.

Over the next few weeks there will be signup sheets available in the church. These will be lists of all members and adherents, in alphabetical order, on which there will be space for you to sign and to

indicate that you are happy for your name, address and telephone number to be shown in the directory. If you do not want your telephone number shown, just don't tick the relevant box.

So please look out for the signup sheets and hopefully we can publish the new directory soon.

Graham Perkin

CHRISTIAN AID

Christian Aid week starts 12 May through to 18 May. We hope you are able to help with the distribution and collection of Christian Aid envelopes. If you are a regular collector then can we thank you for once more stepping up and helping raise money for this worthy cause. If this is your first time then "welcome to the club"!

Let's hope for a good week. There is a sponsored walk if you would like to take part. Details will be available over the coming week.

We raised £168 for the victims of the cyclone Adia in Africa, with £122 gift aided this adds a further £30 to its value.

Thank you.

Stuart and Andy

A TRUE STORY

Sierra Leone is the world's most dangerous place to become a mum. Every day 10 women die from giving birth. In Sawula district, the community struggle with a clinic which has no electricity and only two delivery beds.

Jebbeh is heavily pregnant but as her baby grows, it's not joy that fills her heart, but fear. When Jebbeh's sister Fatmata went in

to labour, there were so few ambulances that Fatmata had no choice but to walk for three hours under the baking sun, to the nearest hospital. The journey was long and with every step Fatmata struggled to keep walking.

Jebbeh told us: 'My sister was crying out with hunger. She died on the side of the road. She never gave birth.'

This Christian Aid Week, together, we can make childbirth safe for mums and babies. Through our gifts and prayers, we can help give the world's poorest mums a chance to live.

This Christian Aid Week, 12-18 May, our church is [Add details of what you're doing for Christian Aid Week and how others can get involved]. If our church raised £300, it could help provide a new delivery bed so more mums like Jebbeh can deliver their babies safely.

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DREAM BIG

Just a reminder that our next Dream Big meeting is Tuesday 30th April at 7.00pm.

We will concentrate and offer Prayers on the Adventure items. These are the things that we feel as a Church we should be aiming for in the next few years and more importantly what God thinks we should be aiming for.

All the times you have sat there and said or thought we should be doing "this", or we should be doing "that", this is the meeting you need to come to and speak out.

So, don't let your ideas be left out come along and share them.

Elaine Noden

CHURCH PHOTOGRAPHY/ VIDEO RECORDINGS

Photography and video recordings are important ways of recording church activities and illustrating important moments in people's lives and the life of our church. It is however a powerful and personal process and we must therefore respect the rights of everyone to make the choice of whether or not to be photographed.

New legislation came out in the UK last May, that requires all organisations (including churches) to protect all individual's personal data, this data includes the use of photographs and videos.

So please be aware that if you are taking photos of church activities there are rules to be followed, the main one of which is that **Formal Written Consent** must be received from the persons being photographed in order to take **and use** the said photograph, particularly on Social Media.

The notices shown below will be displayed in the church and the hall to remind



Please do not film or take photographs of people and post these on social media without their consent

Bramhall United Reformed Church
GDPR Regulations

you of these restrictions. All concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported the event organiser, the minister, or church secretary.

If you have any questions regarding this article, please direct them to Graham Perkin or Jackie Hill.

Graham Perkin

No Unauthorised
Photography or Filming



Please respect
other people's
privacy and dignity

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RETREAT DAY

On Saturday 6th April our Church played host to a retreat day for members of the South Manchester and Cheshire partnership to come and have some much-needed time out from busy personal and Church lives.

The theme was on creation and there were different tables with bible verses and the words of songs and hymns on them and items to help reflect on.

However, the main thing for me was some of the lovely things that people said about our Church. They felt it had a lovely welcoming and warm feel about and it made them feel safe.

One lady who had come through a very difficult week where one friend had been put on end of life plan and another diagnosed with cancer she had not felt able to shed a tear even in her own Church but she felt safe to do so in ours, and although she had never been to our Church she was drawn to the place where the prayer tree normally stands where she sat and wept feeling safe and secure.

Others said they felt renewed, so in all a very successful day.

Elaine Noden

QUESTIONS ASKED ON A CRUISE SHIP

Do these steps go up or down?
Which elevator do I take to get to the front of the ship?
Does the crew sleep on the ship?
Is this island completely surrounded by water?
Does the ship make its own electricity?
Is it salt water in the toilets?
There's a photographer on board who takes photos and displays them the next day... the question was asked: 'If the pictures aren't marked, how will I know

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BRAMHALL & WOODFORD (CTIBW) UPDATE

CTiBW Prayer Breakfast:

The next Prayer Breakfast will be held at the Methodist Church, on the 25th May from 8.30am. Please think about coming along and joining other local Christians in Prayer and enjoy a hearty breakfast.

Pentecost Praise: Plans for a combined ‘Songs of Praise’ to be held on the afternoon of the Day of Pentecost, (Sunday 9th June) outside Bramhall Hall are being made. Please get the date in your diaries and plan to come along and add your voice to the praise and worship. Another great opportunity to publicly witness our faith in Bramhall.

Holiday at Home Summer special: Monday 12th to Wednesday 14th August 10.30am until 4.00pm

Churches Together in Bramhall in Woodford are once again hosting the Annual Summer Special ‘Holiday at Home’ at the United Reformed Church and this year please note that the dates of the week for the event have changed from ‘Tuesday to Thursday’ to ‘Monday to Wednesday’.

Holiday at Home is for the senior citizens of our community who do not get out much and perhaps live alone and provides three days of fun, friendship, singing, games, flower arranging, marvellous home cooked lunches and a trip to Tatton Park!

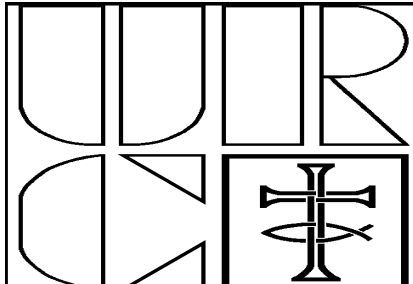
Do you know anyone who would benefit from attending? If so speak to Graham or Carole Perkin.

Can you Help? Help is needed in all sorts of ways from providing transport to get folks from their homes to our Church (and back home again), to helping set up tables or being there during the event acting as stewards and carers.

Help is also needed on the evening of Sunday 11th August from 6.00pm to help move furniture, put out tables/chairs and put up decorations.

If you can help at all, on any of the dates above, (for the whole day, or just a couple of hours), contact Graham or Carole Perkin.

Graham Perkin

<p>Production Editor Jean James 22 Hillcrest Road Bramhall Tel: 0161 439 8241 e mail jc.james@talktalk.net</p> <p>Copy Editor Linda Phillips 5 Charlecote Road Poynton Tel: 01625 875913</p>	<p>JUNE DEADLINE</p> <p>SUNDAY</p> <p>14 MAY</p>	
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