

CHRISTIAN WORKER



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Will winter ever let go? Just as we thought spring had arrived, at least on the calendar, we have further warnings of snow coming just after Easter weekend. At some stage winter has to let go and allow the warmth of spring to arrive!

With the arrival of spring there are more opportunities for fellowship and study with other Christians. Already there have been study weekends, Bible seminars, and men's days. The diary shows that there are many more to come! These are good for us as they help us grow closer to Jesus and closer to each other. Try to take advantage of these if you can, even if you are not the congregation doing the hosting. I am confident that you will be blessed by being there. (And don't forget to have someone send in a report for our 'Family News'!)

We were saddened to learn that **Maureen Gaunt** has left this world. The sadness is for Michael and his family as well as for ourselves – but not for Maureen. We have confidence that she is now at home with the Lord. The number of Christians who enjoyed Maureen's hospitality over the years has to be large. She had a way of making you feel at home. We hope to have more information and details of her life in the next *Christian Worker*. Keep Michael and his family in your prayers.

Although this is a magazine for British congregations, isn't it wonderful how many Christians from the UK are involved in the Lord's work around the world? Already this year we have had news from Germany, Israel, Malawi, Nigeria and Greece. In this issue you will find reports from the Philippines and India, as well as appeals for Cameroon and Pakistan. It is good that we can highlight what so many are doing around the world.

Let's keep studying and encouraging everyone!

Jon

Correction: In Phil Slate's notice of "Free Quality Materials" last month we had the wrong weblink. The link to Ashby Camp's website should be www.theoutlet.us – obviously, we had not checked it before publication! Thanks to David Rivoire for noticing and sending the correction.

Spotlight: BBS Graduates in the Philippines

Returning home from Australia in February, after visiting our family, we made a visit to the Philippines for ten days to visit BBS graduates. This was my fourth visit over a 25 year period and it was good to see the friends made over those years. One blessing of Facebook is that it is far easier to stay caught up with people but nowhere near as good as seeing them face-to-face and encouraging them over a meal.

Manila Airport is huge, busy, hot and sticky, so it was wonderful to see **Gigie Caranza** waiting in the crowds of people. It had been eight years since we were last in the Philippines and Gigie continues to be busy.

After graduating from the British Bible School in 1995, she worked for many years organising medical missions to many countries, particularly in times of emergency. However, funding for these missions has stopped and she is now involved in organising lectureships, ladies' meetings and the Asian Mission Forum. She has travelled to many countries to help with disaster relief, and at home in

the Philippines many look to Gigie for help and support.

When she is home in Indang, a local congregation meets in her house. Around 24 Christians meet together Sunday morning and in the afternoon Gigie rents a Jeepney (a bit like a minibus) to bring children from a poorer area to her home for Bible stories, activities, and food – they all go home with a big smile and some sweeties, enriched with the love of the gospel.

On our first Sunday we met with one of the forty congregations in Manila for worship. Then, with Gigie as our organiser and guide, the three of us flew to Cebu, another of the 7,641 Philippine Islands. There we met Chito

Cusi, a business man and faithful Christian brother, who spends much of his extra time in congregational work.

We also met up with **Minnie LaGria**, a 2004 graduate of the British Bible School. Minnie

works in MARCH Village (Medical Action for Relief, Counselling and Healing), a resettlement community for those who lost



everything in Super Typhoon Haiyan-Yolanda on 8th November 2013. She is an administrator to the livelihood, health, and social lives of the those who live here. Minnie is single but has a wonderful adopted daughter Ndahafa from her time working in the hospital in Namibia. Ndahafa has been with Minnie since birth and she is now ten.

We then took a ferry to the island of Bantayan to visit to MARCH Village.

Yolanda destroyed homes, livelihoods and lives themselves. From total devastation MARCH Village was created; with help from some NGO, charities and funds from churches of Christ wooden shelters and toilet facilities were erected as immediate and temporary homes. Many in the UK sent funds to buy new fishing boats for life to start again here and in Tacloban. We were not the first Brits to go there to see this amazing project and I want to say thank you to those who have been before us – your visits were a real blessing.

What we saw was a far cry from those early days; brick homes now stand with

electricity, plumbing and sanitation. Men are fishing again and selling their catch.

There is a nursery and a clinic for pregnant women. The basketball and volleyball courts are used enthusiastically after school.

An open sided room with a 'kitchen' provides a central meeting place and it is from here that Minnie works long days talking, counselling, liaising, and advising between the people and the supporters of

MARCH Village, government, charities and churches. A large church building has been erected and is a place for worship, study and fellowship. In the kitchen there is a new cooker and some of the girls have started to make brownies and chocolates which are sold to make a little money for village projects.

They also make shell necklaces, grow vegetables and fish.

But all is not rosy. One of the local Christians told us about the night that Yolanda came and the terror of that time can still be seen in his eyes when

he talks of it. He suffered physically and mentally and lost everything.



Minnie LaGria with Ndahafa



Men fishing from boats funded by UK Christians

On our return to Cebu we met with other BBS graduates.

Mhalbie LaGria now has secular employment since his support ceased. Mhalbie graduated in 2005 and worked for many years in small villages preaching and teaching. He is now married to Queen and they have a beautiful four year old daughter Saara.



Lancaster but as yet does not have the funds to take it up. He loves to sing and would like to take a year out to study more and teach others more about singing. Don is single.

Let me commend to our

readers to help, encourage and pray for Gigie, Minnie, Mhalbie and Don to continue their brave work for the Lord in difficult places. For Gigie, Minnie and Don, their monetary income is never certain and there is always someone who needs help. They often go without so they can help others.

We also met **Don Buo** who graduated in 1998. He worked with several congregations in the Philippines and Singapore and now teaches at the Cebu Bible College, training fellow Philippino Christians. He has been awarded a scholarship to study with Keith



You can contact them by email or contact me for more information.

Gigie: helengie@yahoo.com

Don: donbuo@yahoo.com

Mahlbie: mhalben_lagria@yahoo.com

Minnie: pmathena@gmail.com

Trevor Williams



Galatians is one of the earliest letters from the apostle Paul to any group of Christians. It is quite different from Paul's other letters.

There are two distinguishing features of this letter. The first is that he gets right into the substance of why he was writing.

Usually after his 'salutation' ("from Paul to the saints in ...") there is a section of giving thanks for them and the blessings they have. Not in Galatians. Instead, he begins with a rebuke: *"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are following a different gospel – not that there really is another gospel, but there are some who are disturbing you and wanting to distort the gospel of Christ"* (Galatians 1:6-7 NET).

The second distinguishing feature is his giving an extended account of his early life as a Christian.

He did this to refute what his opponents in this region were saying in trying to discredit him.

His opponents seem to have been teaching that Paul did not have the same authority as the other apostles. After all, they might have taught, he wasn't there with Jesus, he didn't see Jesus' immersion, he didn't see Jesus' miracles, and he didn't see Jesus on the cross. He was simply teaching what the apostles had taught him and what he was

teaching was different than what the other apostles taught, especially in his not emphasising the need of circumcision for the Gentiles who became Christians.

To counter this, Paul gave details of the first fourteen years of his life as a Christian. He could not have been taught by the apostles simply because he had only been with some of them twice during this period. To put it in his own words, *"the gospel I preached is not*

of human origin. For I did not receive it or learn it from any human source; instead I received it by a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12). He was taught directly by Jesus during the three years he spent in Arabia and Damascus.

When he finally met the apostles and presented what he was teaching, fourteen years had elapsed since his becoming a Christian. The apostles had nothing to add to what he was teaching and

agreed that he and Barnabas should go to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:1-10). They were in agreement, even on the matter of circumcision. As proof of this he mentioned that Titus, a Gentile Christian who was with him, wasn't compelled by the apostles to be circumcised.

In this letter, Paul's shows that he is a true apostle and that Christians have been freed from the slavery of the Law.

Jon Galloway (www.britishbibleschool.com)

Appeals

Cameroon: For a number of years, the congregation in Motherwell has been supporting Christians in Cameroon. They are now in need of more regular assistance because the political situation in this Central African country has been steadily declining over the past few years.



One Christian brother, Edem Solomon, has not worked since November, 2016 because his teaching licence was revoked. He and his family and other Christians live in the English-speaking area. There have been conflicts between the English-speaking and French-speaking regions with major consequences, including the scarcity of food. Food prices have soared as many farmers have fled out of fear for their lives. The violence, which has resulted in a number of deaths and imprisonments, has traumatised the saints. Edem Solomon seeks your prayers and support. Normally, when funds are received, food is purchased and distributed to the Christians and non-Christians alike, including those in prison, whose plight is especially serious.

If you can assist in any way, then please forward funds directly to the Church of Christ, Motherwell; account: 00130423; sorting code: 83-16-15; or by cheque to our treasurer: Ian S Davidson, 21 Glen Lyon, St Leonards, East Kilbride, Glasgow, G74 2JJ.

William Purcell

Pakistan – Sahiwal Bible College: The College in Sahiwal, Pakistan, prepares young men to preach and teach the Gospel throughout that benighted Muslim land. They are aware of the dangers they face, but are brave in their faith to carry on.

Any support we Christians in Britain can give them is gratefully received and vital to their mission. Almost £3000 has gone out to the work of the College this year, but their needs are still great.

Many thanks for all that has been contributed, but if any of you wish to add

to it (especially on a regular basis) please send your donations to Mrs Barbara Fisher, 5 Portway, North Marston, Buckingham, MK18 3PL,

with cheques made out to “Barbara Fisher (Pakistan Account)”.

Barbara Fisher



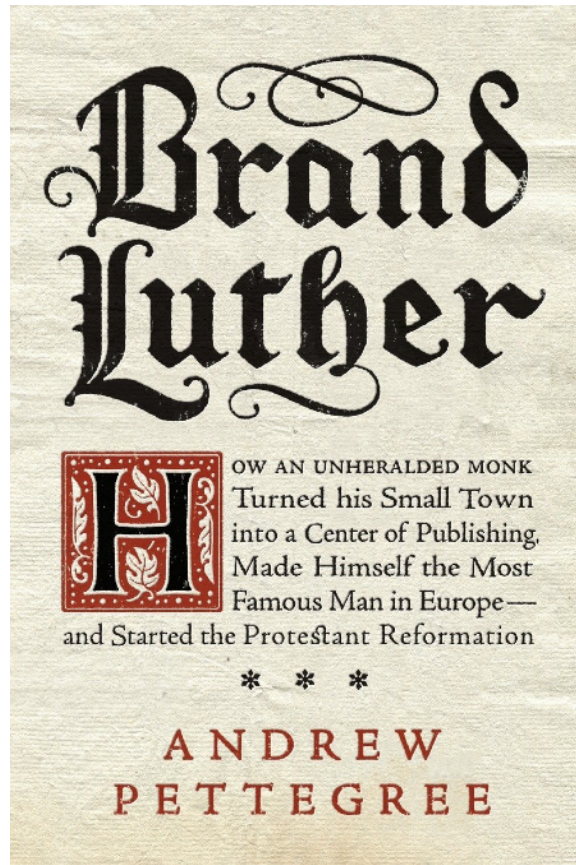
Book Review

Over the past few months I have read the book *Brand Luther* by Andrew Pettegree (published by Penguin Books, 2015, ISBN: 1594204969). The 341 page text is filled with historical reference to people and events but tells the story of the development of printing books as well. I found the book interesting but it probably would not be for everyone's bookshelf. The following are a few thoughts I wanted to share.

In the October 2017 edition of the *Christian Worker* we remarked on the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther posting his thoughts on the church door in Wittenberg. This was actually nothing strange as the doors were always covered in notices to tell students of times and purposes for discussion groups.

Up until this time Luther was an ordinary monk and lecturer at the University, but after this time in 1517 his writings became prolific. Many were originally written in Latin for the theologians and then increasingly in German for the ordinary people. As the writings grew so did the problems of publication. At that time there was a huge paper shortage because printing was very much in its infancy. If a book was to be printed, enough paper had to be purchased to print the book (guessing how many books he could sell). Each page

had to be printed individually using movable type and so had to be reset for each page. It would therefore be very labour-intensive. The author of the book would receive no funding for his work and often had to pay for the printing up front.



The situation for this poor monk was that, with so few printing presses around, it could take anything up to six months for the work to be produced. Then there was often a wait until a book fair was held in a major town where the work could be sold. It seems so odd to us now that there were no bookshops, that books would have to travel for miles and took such a long time before they could be sold, thus allowing the printer to recoup his funds.

In the early days there were constant inventions to make books better. Instead of printing one page, a larger sheet of paper was used to print eight pages front and back and this would then be folded into four, and thus was invented the quarto. Then came the idea of leaving white space around the edges of the type instead of printing across the whole area of paper. After this came the invention of pictures. Made of wooden blocks the picture would be carved in the reverse, initially added to a blank square in the printed page and then added to the text at the time of printing. It has been suggested that not

only did Luther push forward the Protestant movement but he initiated the promotion of books across Europe, allowing discussion verbally and in literature. This is all a long way from desktop publishing which we use today.

But what was Luther's place of worship like? On All Saints Day in 1520, 18,970 individual religious objects were put on display including milk from the Virgin Mary and a twig from the burning bush. If a pilgrim saw every item of the collection they could gain 1,900,000 days of indulgences (days out of purgatory, or so it

was believed). At this time on a normal day 9,000 Masses were said at the various altars and 40,000 candles lit in honour of the dead. Is it any wonder that there was a need for reformation?

This is all a far cry from simple New Testament Christianity. Salvation is for all received by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10). I know that I am thankful that my salvation was paid for on the cross and not by looking at 'sacred' objects nor by lighting candles.

Trevor Williams

Film Review

The film *Mary Magdalene*, directed by Gath Davies, starring Rooney Mara and Joaquin Phoenix, was released in the UK on 16 March 2018.

So how close, if at all, did it stick to the scriptures? The answer sadly is not close, as what we actually know of Mary Magdalene, from the Bible alone, is not much. We first meet Mary Magdalene in Luke 8:1-3, where, as well as having seven demons driven out of her, Mary was just one woman among others. The other verses of scripture only say that she was there when Jesus died on the cross and she was the first witness of the risen Christ. In John's account she mistakes Jesus for the gardener. So there is not really too much to go on. In a normal film about Jesus, Mary would be relegated to a bit part, a minor character, so to get their screenplay, there had to be large doses of 'Artistic licence'.

The credits at the end state that Pope Gregory in 591 CE (the notation used in the film) described her as a prostitute,

although it is not in scripture. One can only assume she was deliberately confused with the woman caught in adultery of John 7. The film also mentions how recently she had her reputation restored (but who made the Vatican an authority regarding God's Word?).

Here are the parts that are not in harmony with scripture. Mary is supposed to be married off to someone but does not want that for herself and wants other things. That is more 21st century thinking than 1st century. She goes into the men's part of the synagogue to pray, because she does not want to be married, bringing shame to the family. They then have the men of the family try and perform an exorcism of demons, supposedly the seven, which are blinding her to her duty of being a wife and mother. Mark 16:9 says it was Jesus who drove them out.

Then they call for the "healer". Incidentally, unless I missed it, it was about an hour before the name of Jesus is used. Until then this 'healer' just comes across as some

itinerant American preacher, mouthing platitudes and experiencing self-doubt. Not the confident Jesus I read of in the gospels.

Mary is then seen as a daughter abandoning her family just to follow this itinerant preacher with the other disciples. Yet in Luke 8 it mentions that Mary, along with other women, were able to support Jesus and the apostles out of their own means. Luke 8 therefore indicates that Mary Magdalene, (after she is released from those seven demons), like Lydia of Acts, was a woman of wealth, and not someone following along with the other disciples depending on others for the next meal. She was there, helping provide the next meal!

As for the disciples, Judas is portrayed as mentally unstable, grieving over his family who had been murdered by the Romans. He betrayed Jesus to force

him to call on his followers to rise up against the Romans. Judas was a thief! (John 13:6) and betrayed Jesus for money Matthew 26:14-15. The film has Judas hanging himself because his plan for Jesus to lead a bloody rebellion had failed. The scriptures tell us he was filled with remorse for betraying Jesus for money (Matthew 27:3-5).

The rest of the disciples are portrayed as rebels also hoping Jesus would lead a rebellion. Perhaps the film makers had a point given how some were despondent as

they walked to Emmaus talking about Jesus' death (Luke 24:13-22). Remember when Jesus was arrested Peter resorted to using a sword which Jesus commanded him to put away (John 18:10-11).

Regarding the cleansing of the temple, that was appallingly done, with an out of his depth Jesus failing to achieve anything and only being able to upset one money changers table before being dragged away by the temple authorities. This is not how I read it in the gospels.

As for the resurrection, where were the other women? He only appears to Mary Magdalene

and then sits down while she goes to the disciples where Peter mouths a tirade against her. (At this point I thought maybe they had referenced gnostic sources which allege that there were tensions between Mary and the

male disciples.) After giving up on a bunch of men, portrayed as misogynist, she returns to the tomb where Jesus is sitting on the ground waiting for her. Again this is not how I read it in the gospels.

This film is yet another one that goes beyond what is written in some parts and portrays a different Jesus to the one portrayed in the New Testament. As for Mary herself, it imports modern western ideals onto someone from a different time and culture.



Graeme Stickings

Around the World

India: You've heard of the film, "Trains, Planes and Automobiles"? Well, that almost resembles the first leg of our journey to India in January 2018. Due to long lay overs, a flight cancellation, a flight diversion, a bus journey which landed us in a village I know not where, and eventually being collected by Vijay Kumar we were on the move for 35 hours from leaving Dublin to arriving at our destination. But it's extraordinary how a shower and the warmth of the sun cancel everything out.

Kakinada (Andra Pradesh) update

Seminars. In Andra Pradesh there was a one day seminar and I taught on the theme, "Meeting God in the Prophet Amos." About 140 preachers and church leaders were present. Later a smaller seminar with 70 in attendance was conducted two hours away. In addition, we conducted meetings in homes and encouraged the believers.

The SWAN Project. This began over two years ago. The aim is to enable poor village girls and women to learn a skill which will enable them contribute to the family income. The women who are accepted into a training programme are carefully chosen and properly trained by local women. They commit to giving 10% of their earnings towards the support of the local preacher.

Over the past year women have been trained to do stitching. In India, each outfit

is made to order. The sari is purchased and the blouse material is at the end of the sari. The blouse is stitched according to the woman's wishes. If material is purchased for a tunic and trousers outfit, they are tailor made. So stitching is still in demand. Those who finish their training to a high standard are offered a sewing machine. Each woman is required to pay half of the cost of the machine. This shows their good faith and interest. They may have to take out a small loan to do this.

When funds become available other projects are envisaged. One is the training of girls

who finish 10th form in school to use a computer. Most of the girls in these villages will finish school at this time and have no job skills. The training facility for these projects has been made available free of charge and the trainers are paid a small salary.

Sugar Cane. Last year we leased six acres in which to grow sugar cane; this required a

large investment. Our thinking behind this project was to generate an annual profit which could be used to fund some of our other projects. With funding becoming more difficult to obtain and a strong possibility that the India government may put a heavy tax on foreign money coming into the country for Christian work, we needed to be looking at some alternatives.

Rice project. Over the past several years this project has shown itself to be very beneficial. The government is now giving a small monthly pension to the elderly (1,000



rupees a month, about €14). This has allowed those we help to buy some of their own rice and we supplement this. Now we are able to feed 200 people each day.

News from Kochi (Kerala)

Our work with the congregation in Kochi included a one day seminar, along with a number of smaller meetings. The spiritual health of the church has been nurtured under the leadership of Saju George. Several months ago a Bible school was started with a small enrolment. The goal is to train future leaders for the church. Their annual three day lectureship continues to attract good attendance and has become a focal point for many of the congregations in the state of Kerala. This is funded by the local Christians.

On my first visit to Kochi I met a family of a Lutheran pastor who was not being supported by the church because he refused to relocate, thereby making it possible for them to sell the facilities. Through donations from friends and congregations we were able to provide education for the three girls. Today two of these girls have their MA and one has her Ph.D. Henni came to visit us; the other two girls live a long way from Kochi, but called us. Their expressions of gratitude were humbling to hear. Since returning home we heard the tragic news that Henni's husband collapsed and died. We are shattered.

A real highlight of our visit to Kochi was meeting the girls from The Morning Star

Children's Home. A little background: about sixteen years ago a friend of mine in Kochi gave us the use of his ancestral residence as a home for destitute girls. We housed about fifteen girls. They attended the local school and we always received excellent reports about them. Then five years ago a government inspection said that the facilities did not meet the necessary requirements and made us close the home.

The local congregation decided to let the girls return to their homes and we would continue to pay for their education and meet their

basic needs, which we did.

On the Sunday we were there eleven of the girls who were in the Home made the journey to join us, one coming from as far away as Delhi. Nine of the girls who were in the Home have continued their education into third level and one is doing her Masters. The other girls are in various jobs: banking, dental assistant, travel advisor and one is married. Looking back on

the project I can see that this is an investment that has paid rich dividends.

And finally, as far as I can tell, this may be my last visit to Kochi. The congregation is doing well and I am surplus to requirements, and that's the way it should be. Looking over the congregation on Sunday I saw families who had come to faith in Jesus in those early days. I saw their grown up children and enjoyed time with their grandchildren, the third generation walking with the Lord.



Fellowship with Christians in Kochi

Tony Coffey

Directory Update

INVERNESS (Invernessshire) – please delete this entry as Drew and Lorna have moved near Dundee.

Family News

Great Barr: The congregation at Great Barr, Birmingham hosted a Bible Seminar on Saturday 11th March. The theme of the programme was 'Leadership' and it was attended by 37 people including children.

The day began with about 20 minutes of singing led by Sola.

Afterwards, Adrian Limb (from Eastwood) presented a lesson on 'Leadership in the home and in the community'. This was followed by two



lessons on 'Church Leadership' presented by Jason Snethen (from Bristol).

Mid-way into the day, we had a buffet style feast which was very great. There was also time for group discussions and a Bible challenge, as well as further time for singing.

In all, it was a very enjoyable and edifying time for those who were present. It was

indeed wonderful to see the fellowship of Christians from various congregations in Bible Study and discussion.

Sola Adeosun

Notices

Liverpool ∞ Skelmersdale Ladies Day

Saturday 21st April 2018

Venue: Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 8QH
9.30am–3.30pm (Registration 9.30am–10.30am)

The virtuous woman in the 21st Century

Speakers: Arlene Galloway (East Kilbride)
Funmi Oloko (Brighton)
Laverne Davis (Leicester)

Contact: Funmi Glover (07915 389552 or fynejp1@aol.com)

**Come and enjoy a day of fellowship,
encouragement & fun**

WEMBLEY LADIES' DAY

Date: Saturday, 2nd June 2018

Time: 10.00 am–3.30 pm

Theme: Love in Action

Venue: 92 Barnhill Road, Wembley HA9 9BS

Speakers:

Athena Theodotou (Wembley)
Esther Chikurunhe (Thamesmead)
Amanda Appiagyei (Wembley)

**Come and join us for a day of
fellowship, encouragement and
uplifting from God's words.**

Contact: Anne Airebamen (07415 135166 or Anne-andrew@live.co.uk)



Taking up your role in His family

"For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned." [Romans 12:3]


This Spring we will look into what it entails for each individual Christian to be a part of the body of Christ and how each individual can contribute to the greater good of the body. So join us for another weekend of encouragement and spiritual growth.

Speaker: Gert-Jan van Zanten, evangelist in the Netherlands.
Date: 20-22 April 2018
 (Sign up by April 13th on our website)
Location: Bibelfreizeitheim
 Goldhecker Weg 6
 61276 Weilrod-Gemünden, Germany
More info: www.singlesretreat.net




...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds...
 Hebrews 10:24

Autumn Family Weekend Retreat
 Friday, 14th to Sunday, 16th September 2018
 at Letton Hall in Norfolk



I want to know JESUS

... learning to know Jesus, not just about him



www.britishbibleschool.com

Diary

April

13th-14th – Aberdeen: British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: “Galatians” (part 1) presented by Jon Galloway and Jack Paton. Friday: 7.00-9.00 pm; Saturday: 9.30 am-4.15 pm. Contact: study@britishbibleschool.com

14th – New Cross (London): Songs Fest, 10.30 am-4.30 pm. Venue: Barnes Wallis Community Centre, London SE14 5LL. Contact: Hogan Udo, (hoganudo@yahoo.com or 07801 494938).

20th-21st – Northampton: British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: “The Letters of John” (part 2). Friday: 7.00–9.30 pm; Saturday: 9.00 am-5.15 pm. Contact: study@britishbibleschool.com

20th-22nd – Gemünden, Germany: European Christian Singles Retreat – “Taking up your role in the family” at Bibelfreizeitheim, Goldhecker Weg 6, 61276 Weilrod-Gemünden, Germany. Speaker: Gert-Jan van Zanten. Sign up by 13th April on the website. Contact: www.singlesretreat.net.

21st – Liverpool: Ladies’ Day – “The Virtuous Woman in the 21st Century” (jointly hosted with Skelmersdale), 9.30 am-3.30 pm, at Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 8QH. Speakers: Arlene Galloway, Funmi Oloko and Laverne Davis. Contact Funmi Glover (fynejp1@aol.com or 07915 389552).

21st-22nd – Stapleford: Weekend meetings with Paul Hill. Saturday: 7.00 pm; Sunday: 11.00 am and 6.00 pm. Contact: Bob Eckman (bbobeckman@aol.com or 07714 207279).

May

12th – Eastwood (Nottinghamshire): Quarterly Outreach meeting: “Jesus – the True Vine”; light refreshments at 6.00 pm and lesson at 7.00 pm. Contact: Adrian Limb (cofcastwood@aol.com).

12th-13th – East Kilbride: Outreach meetings with David Murray. Saturday: refreshments at 6.00 pm and lesson at 7.00 pm; Sunday: 10.00 and 11.00 am. Contact: Jon Galloway (ek.klesia@icloud.com).

25th-26th – Aberdeen: British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: “Galatians” (part 2) presented by Jack Paton and Jon Galloway. Friday: 7.00-9.00 pm; Saturday: 9.30 am-4.15 pm. Contact: study@britishbibleschool.com

25th-27th – Northampton: Youth weekend. Contact: Mark Hill (marks@uwclub.net).

28th – Tooting (London): Lectureship – “Setting Things in Order – Towards a Spiritually Organised Leadership, 10.00 am-4.30 pm. Contact: Daniel Anoff (tootingcoc@live.com).

June

2nd – Wembley (London): Ladies’s Day – “Love in Action,” 10.00 am-3.30 pm. Contact: Anne Airebamen (020 8205 8218 or 07415 135166 or Anne-andrew@live.co.uk).

20th-23rd – Athens, Greece: Christian Family Retreat – “The Harvest” (hosted by the Omonia congregation). Cost: €180 per person. Contact: Alexander or Eleni Melirrytos (amelirry@aol.com or emelirry@aol.com).

23rd – Liverpool: All Day Fellowship – “The Love of God,” 9.30 am-3.30 pm; speaker: Tony Coffey. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07891 262910).

July

14th – Edmonton (London): Men’s workshop.

20th-27th – Camp Heatherbell: Auchengillan Outdoor Centre (Allander Chalet); theme: “5G”; Contact: Adam Barr ((07889 631218), Graham McDonald (07748 787744) or email 5G@campheatherbell.org.uk for more details and camp forms.

21st-25th – Commonwealth of Dominica: 8th International Women’s Lectureship – “Wise Woman, Hold On, the Best is Yet to Come.” Contact: eighthiwl2018@gmail.com.

29th-3rd August – Camp Tayside: Douglaswood Scout Camp, Dundee. Contact: Contact Aubrey Boyns (07502 220902) or camptayside@gmail.com

August

11th – Eastwood (Nottinghamshire): Quarterly Outreach meeting: “Jesus – the Way”; light refreshments at 6.00 pm and lesson at 7.00 pm; speaker: Jon Galloway. Contact: Adrian Limb (cofceastwood@aol.com).

16th-18th – Lancaster: European Christian Workshop: “Digging Deeper”. Contact: Stephen Woodcock (registration@EuropeanChristianWorkshop.com or 01509 768789).

September

8th – Great Barr: Fellowship Day.

14th-16th – Letton Hall Family Retreat in Norfolk (IP25 7SA). Theme: “I Want to Know Jesus.” Cost: £70 per person (children ages 4-12 are half price). Organised by the British Bible School. To book, visit the BBS website: <http://britishbibleschool.com/news-and-events/upcoming-events/letton-hall-family-retreat-2018-2>

October

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).

November

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/news-and-events/upcoming-events/autumn-study-week-2018>

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).

February 2018

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).

The Final Word: "Be silent and listen"



"Be silent O Israel, and listen!" (Deuteronomy 27:9)

Over the past two or three centuries the world has moved from being agricultural societies to living in vast cities and towns. There is almost nowhere that people can go and hear the sound of silence. Even on the mountains we can still hear the distant hum of traffic or the noise of an aeroplane.

Living in cities there are all the sounds of industry. Noise never seems far away. Even in our own homes televisions, radio and telephone interrupt the quiet of a peaceful place. Perhaps that is why on this occasion Israel is told quite specifically, "Be silent and listen."

Listening is a skill we now have to learn. Our attitude is to speak up, be heard, but Israel needed to listen.

The reason for this silence and the need to listen is now told: "You have now become the people of the Lord your God." What a wonderful reason to be silent and listen! We all now may need to take that same advice. If we are joined to Christ through the power of the gospel we too need to take time to be silent and listen.

So often our prayers are filled with requests for this blessing or another. God delights in this but how often do we become silent to hear what God is saying. Perhaps the nearest we get to this is during the sermon time in worship but even then it is not silent as the preacher speaks.

It is difficult for a group to be quiet, but perhaps we as individuals may try this blessing. Be silent in mind and in the deepest part of our emotions. Be silent, leaving the cares of life to one side, and then listen. Listen to the sound of silence; listen to the voice of God. Give God a chance to enter our lives, to answer our prayers, to still our hearts.

Be silent and listen, for you, even you, have become the people of the Lord your God.

Trevor

*Let my mouth be silent
My emotions stilled
And my ears open
To hear you speak
O Lord my God and Saviour.
Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.*