

the Christian Worker MAGAZINE



December 2019 • Vol 51 No 12

Trip of a Lifetime – to Israel

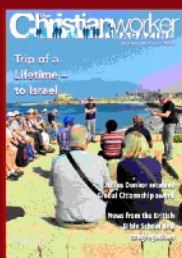


**Julius Donkor receives
Global Citizenship award**

**News from the British
Bible School and
congregations**

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ON THE COVER:
British Christians in
Caesarea Maritima.



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EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION

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MY PERSPECTIVE



**We
have
much
to do
for the
Lord**

What a year!

I don't know how this year has been for you – we each have our own experiences – but this has been an exciting one in my life, one to remember for many years to come.

This has been, for me, a year for making good memories. I get to enjoy doing what I like to do (teaching) and to be able to teach the subject I am most excited about (God's word, the Bible). You can't get much better than that! I do feel for those who are stuck in a 'job' they don't enjoy.

There are family memories. My year started off with a memorial service for my Dad. Although this was a sad occasion, it was also a time we could remember with joy the good life he lived as we shared memories with family and friends – some of whom we hadn't seen for many years (and may not get to see again). Add to this having all of our children (and their families) together on holiday, all under one roof – a wonderful time spent making more memories. And I can't say enough about being a grandfather! Every time we see our new grandson we make even more memories (and the Christmas holidays aren't here yet).

There was our recent trip to Israel with a group of Christians, most of whom I have known for years and were already dear to me. As Bob mentions in his report (page 4), not only were the sites we visited amazing, but the time we spent together with our Christian friends was equally amazing. We all have so many cherished memories of our visit to the land of the Bible.

Although this, for me, has been a year of good memories, I can't spend the rest of my life reflecting on this one year. There is so much more to see and do (and teach!).

Trevor reminds us (page 16) that we have to "forget what lies behind". Sometimes we apply that to not remembering those bad things that have happened to us, which is a valid application. Too often we can allow what we wish we hadn't done, or what we wish we had done, to paralyse our growth as Christians. We truly need to forget those bad experiences as we resolve to do better and live better lives for Jesus.

Even the memories of the good we have done can become crippling, if we allow them to make us complacent. We may get the impression that because we have done some good that we are finished because we have done our 'bit'. We can't glory in 'golden years' and forget that there is still much more to do.

We always need to be pressing forwards towards the goal line. The analogy is that of a runner running a race – perhaps a better thought is that we are running a marathon. What keeps us going? Knowing that we are getting nearer the finishing line each day. But the only way we can finish our race is if we keep going.

As we finish this year and begin looking forward to the next, cherish your good memories but remember that we still have much to do for the Lord.

Jon

Trip of a Lifetime – to Israel



On 30th October, 33 Christians flew out of Manchester for Tel Aviv, Israel, to start a “*Trip of a Lifetime*”. For the next ten days, Israel would be our home and, for all of us, it truly was a trip of a lifetime. We came from nine congregations in the UK – Scots, English, one Irish, a couple of Americans, and three from Ghana. We quickly gelled into a close group that grew closer each day through what we saw and what we experienced.

The trip was organised by Ian and Barbara Starrs, and everyone in the group spoke repeatedly about the amazing job these two did – both during those ten days and in the build up to the trip. They kept all of us well informed with every aspect of the trip and every part of it was well thought out right down to the smallest detail. Nothing was overlooked and this made the whole experience so much easier, exciting, and enjoyable. Everything was handled very professionally. Nothing was left to chance. It ran like the proverbial “clockwork.”

I can speak personally and use such words as “amazing,” “astounding,” “incredible,” “unforgettable” – the list goes on and on – all of which I heard everyone in the group repeat again and again. Each one of us felt at times as if it was all a dream. We often felt that we should pinch ourselves to see if it was really happening. We went to places and saw things that we knew so well from our reading and study of the Bible, but at the end we saw them all so much differently. Over and over again our eyes were opened and we knew that we would never read the wonderful stories and events in the Bible the same again.

This, though, is what the trip was all about for us. The comment was made several times that the Bible has become a book that we have read so often that the stories have become stale and meaningless to some of us. We knew the passages, stories, and parables so well that we could almost repeat them verbatim. We felt that what we need is to see and hear all of these passages through new eyes and new ears – through the eyes and ears of those who first saw and heard them. We have grown up with

The synagogue in Chorazin



“Sunday-School Images” in our minds, and some of these are so far off the mark that it’s unbelievable.

It wasn’t just a holiday (some would say, “It certainly wasn’t a holiday!”) but a hands-on teaching experience. Some of it was tough with early starts, but on even the “toughest” of days, all of us finished tired but elated from where we had been and what we had seen. Smiles were seen on all of our tired faces!

To give you some idea of our itinerary, we were met at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv by our Israeli guide, Guy, who was with us the whole time. He was a mine of information on both Old and New Testament history, archaeological sites, and Jewish culture – both ancient and modern. Our driver for the week was Mark, also Israeli, who did an almost miraculous job getting us around and through some of the tightest of spaces and always being where he should be at the right moment. Quite a bond was built between the group and these two men.

Galilee

From Tel Aviv, our first four nights were in Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, with many of us waking up each morning to a glorious view over the lake. We spent those first four days touring around Galilee where Jesus grew up and spent most of his time during his ministry. We went to Caesarea and the magnificent marina that Herod the Great built, Mt. Carmel, Megiddo, Mt. Precipice, Nazareth (including the “Village of Nazareth”), a boat ride on the Lake of Galilee, saw the “Jesus Boat” (a fishing boat dating from the time of Jesus that was

found a few years ago), the supposed site of the “Mount of the Beatitudes”, the supposed site of where Jesus fed thousands with a young lad’s lunch, Capernaum (Peter’s town), Magdala (home of Mary Magdalene), Caesarea Philippi, Tel Dan, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Kursi, the Golan Heights, Samaria, Sebaste (ancient Samaria), Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.

The Dead Sea and Masada

On the fifth day, we made our way to the Dead Sea, visiting Jericho (especially the archaeological site and the ancient walls), the supposed place of Jesus’ baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, and on the one evening that we stayed by the Dead Sea, we all had a “swim” (float) in the Dead Sea. That was a real – and almost surreal – experience for all of us! Unforgettable!

On the sixth day, we headed towards Jerusalem, visiting Masada, Herod’s fortress and palace (also the site of a suicidal massacre of Jews in AD 73-74 after Jerusalem, beautiful Ein Gedi (the area where David is supposed to have hidden from King Saul, and the Qumran caves and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Jerusalem

The seventh day, waking up in Jerusalem, was the start of about the most hectic part of the trip. The group would be here until we left for Ben Gurion airport on the Sunday. It’s hard to know what to



The lower falls at Ein Gedi

say about Jerusalem. It is undoubtedly one of the most amazing cities in the world. Ancient archaeology is everywhere – and so are the crowds! We visited just about every tourist site in the Old City and the “City of David.” The Temple Mount with the Islamic “Dome of the Rock” is just incredible. The group had one of its earliest starts on the day that we visited the Temple Mount – so that we could get a head-start on the crowds that would arrive. We were told that on the Friday (Islamic Shabbat) the site would be filled with more than 50,000 people!

One of the most moving places in the city was the “Garden Tomb”, one of the possible places (but highly unlikely) of Jesus’ burial. Whether or not it was where Jesus’ body was placed after his death may be debatable, but it gave all of us an insight into what first-century tombs were like. There is so much in Jerusalem that leaves you wondering what is true and what is not, but that didn’t matter. So much of what we saw helped us to better understand the time that Jesus spent in the city, especially during his final days before crucifixion: the Mount of Olives, the “Upper Room”, Gethsemane, the house of the high priest Caiaphas and Peter’s denial, Pilate’s palace, and the possible place of Jesus’ crucifixion. While no one can ever be certain as to the accuracy of each place, it certainly helped us to see the reality of Jesus’ crucifixion more clearly.

Devotionals

Each evening back at the hotel and after our evening meal, we had a time of thought and

Walking down the Mount of Olives



devotion, with everyone getting the chance to express their thoughts of the day and to be inspired by one of the men in a short talk. This time was always special. More than any site that we saw while in Israel, the richest blessing was the time that we spent with one another at breakfast, lunch, dinner, sitting on the bus, and singing and reading from God’s Word with one another. Old friendships were enriched, and new friendships were made. The mutual love and concern that we all felt for one another is something we will never forget.

Thank You

Finishing with something that all of us feel, I would like to thank Ian and Barbara for the hours, days, weeks and more that they spent in preparing this “Trip of a Lifetime” for each of us. I could not think of anyone more suitable for what must have at times been a gruelling task. Their patience, love, hard endeavours, was just amazing. We are all deeply grateful to them for all of this and so much more. This one word sums up both the whole experience and how we all feel about Barbara and Ian: Amazing!!

Bob Eckman
Stapleford, Nottingham

A Note From Ian

Knowing that I was writing this report, Ian sent me this email: “If you are interested in joining our next Bible Lands trip, please email Ian Starrs at jes22ian@msn.com.”



Singing in St Anne’s in Jerusalem



CONGRATULATIONS!

Ghana Defibrillator Project – Further Update

The August issue included an expression of thanks from Julius Donkor for the support and encouragement received from congregations and individual Christians throughout the UK. He also gave an update on what had been achieved with his trip to Ghana to deliver defibrillators and provide training to medical professionals.

The project he initiated has attracted a lot of interest and press attention. One of his colleagues at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary nominated Julius for the 2019 Scottish Health Awards in a new Global Citizenship category. Julius was selected as one of three finalists and invited to attend the awards ceremony dinner (with a few of us tagging along to provide moral support!). This category

was the final one awarded at the ceremony and it was clear that he was up against very stiff competition from two other finalists who had been involved with two excellent projects. To our delight Julius won the award which was presented by two Scottish Government ministers!

Julius has consistently stated that this is a team effort with lots of people contributing to its success. There is no doubt however that Julius is the one who initiated it and keeps it moving forward. He always gives honour to God and tells everyone about how his Lord has transformed his life. In all the interviews and conversations in the UK and in Ghana he tells how the Lord’s church has worked together to make this the success it has become.

Well done Julius! And may the Lord continue to use you to serve those in need with love and compassion in His name.

There is a video of the award including a video interview with Julius played at the ceremony and his acceptance speech on YouTube. You can access it using the link below or just type in Julius Donkor in the search box on YouTube. It’s well worth a look!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLwbwKWgvxs>

Thanks once again for all the support for this project which clearly has a long way to run and will need continued encouragement and ongoing support.

David Murray
Aberdeen

**Julius
Donkor
receives
Global
Citizenship
Award**



Julius receiving his award



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Christian
Worker,
Volume 18,
Number 2
February 1985

The Wind of Change

Several years ago a famous politician used this phrase to describe the political scene. “The wind of change” was blowing, and great changes were imminent. However, most people – if they listen – are extremely sceptical about political announcements. Especially – but not only – changes for the better. These, of course, depend on trusting them, supporting their policies, following their leadership.

A BETTER FUTURE?

We ought not to be over-critical of people who too readily respond to the appeal of glib politicians. In a world where there is war (raging but forgotten, in a number of countries), famine, political oppression and lawlessness – all overshadowed by the possibility of nuclear war – men and women long for assurance. People are desperate for security.

“SAFED”

We believe that, desirable as political stability is – wonderful as physical security is also – that God, the gospel, offers the infallible help for man’s deepest need. It offers him the opportunity to enter into full fellowship with God in Christ – to be God’s beloved child. That is the ultimate security, that is salvation. A Dutch brother preaching in English, quoted the great commission thus: “Go into all the world, preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptised shall be *safed*” – made safe.

EVANGELISTS

Recent directory returns made us wonder how many evangelists are working for the Lord among the 75 congregations which chose to be listed in the “Christian Worker” directory. As far as we can determine, there are 66. That is a substantial increase in a comparatively short time. If – which God grant – each of these is a worker who lives, labours and loves to the absolute limit of his capacity to help others fall in love with Jesus – then grow up into HIS likeness – then there will be great changes for the better in this nation.

*“Hark the voice of Jesus crying,
‘Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvests waiting –
Who will bear the sheaves away?’
Loud and long the Master calls.
Rich reward he offers free.
Who will answer, gladly saying,
‘Here am I, send me! Send me!’”*

Albert E. Winstanley

This article grabbed my attention in light of our general election in a few days time. We are in the process of updating the CW Directory so we will be interested in seeing where we are in comparison to our last published directory in 2016.

In 2016 there were 80 assemblies meeting throughout the UK, which was an increase over 1985. As we no longer list evangelists, the best that I can determine, there are only around 25-30 who are currently able to devote their full-time as an evangelist or teacher. There is a great need for everyone to be doing what they can to tell others. – Jon

Put on your Christian armour

I just came across an article in a small pamphlet produced in 1928 called "Following Christ" by W. Mander (B.A.) of the Twynholm church, London.

Under the section dedicated to prayer he quotes (assuming that W. Mander is a gentleman) a statement made by the author of "Take My Life and Let it Be" and "Thy Life for Me" – Frances Ridley Havergal.

He puts it like this:

"Frances Ridley Havergal once wrote: 'Were the question asked, "What one thing do you suppose has most hindered the largest number of Christians in their spiritual life and growth?" I should reply unhesitatingly, "Probably the temptation not to rise in time to put on their armour as well as their dress before breakfast. A mere ten minutes – is that enough preparation for our warfare and provision of our wants; for spreading all our needs and difficulties before the Lord; for telling Jesus all that is in our hearts; for bringing before Him all the details of our work; for searching to know His mind and His will; for storing His word in our hearts; for replenishing our seed baskets that we may have something to sow, and getting Him to sharpen our sickles that we may reap; for confession and supplication, and intercession, and, above all, for praise?"'"

I thought this may be a reminder to all of us about our preparation for the day in the very busy lives that we live. I don't know the time that Frances Havergal wrote this but, as you may know, she lived between 1836 and 1879.

Adrian Limb
Eastwood

Desires

Set a bound to your desires; think not of how much others have, but of how much which they have you can do perfectly well without.

Be not the slave of show or circumstances.

Do not lose the present in the vain perplexities about the future.

If fortune frowns today she may smile tomorrow; and when she lavishes her gifts upon you cherish an humble heart, and so fortify yourself against her caprice.

Keep a rein upon all you passions – upon covetousness above all; for once that has you within its clutch, farewell for ever to the light heart and the sleep that comes unbidden; to the open eye that drinks in delight from beauty and freshness and infinite variety of nature; to the included mind that judges justly and serenely of men and things.

Enjoy wisely, for then only you enjoy thoroughly.

Mar not your life with a hopeless quarrel against destiny.

Sir T. Martin

The Christian Advocate, Third Series, Vol. IX

1887 – page 495-496

Congregation contact update (we are gathering information for the new directory, which should be published at the end of this year or beginning of 2020).

Northampton:

Delete contact Richard Sharpe.

Send information to: **Mark Hill** (w. Suzanne).

☎ (01604) 945016 mob. (07434) 956692

e: marks@uwclub.net



BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES

Thankful for the opportunities

As we come to the end of our round of study events this autumn, we give thanks for those who continue to benefit from these events and to those who support the work we are doing here in the UK. Constantly we are looking ahead to the future and to the need for the people of God in this land to be well equipped to teach others and to provide godly, spiritual leadership. So we are thankful for the opportunities he gives us to serve in these ways.

A week in the Lakes

Our Autumn Study Week in the Lake District was a time of great encouragement and learning. We have never anticipated having a huge crowd for this event – though we would have been more than happy to have had a few more – but the quality is what counts and we had a great group of students.

We spent three solid days working our way through the books of Judges and Ruth as we explored *The Deliverance of Israel* – one of our Old Testament Modules. Our teachers for the week were Patrick Boyns, John Griffiths and Steve Whitehead. There is only so much

one can do in such a time as this, but such a concentrated study enables one to focus on the whole and not lose sight of the big picture.

It is a real joy to be able to spend quality time together, not just in the classroom, but around the meal table and in the evening activities too. Along with the now obligatory Study Week Quiz, which this year produced a draw, others also led us in various alternative quizzes and games. The dates for next year's Autumn Study Week are: 2nd to 6th November 2020.

Autumn Study Weekends

Our programme of Study Weekends continued with a couple of weekends in East Kilbride, south of Glasgow, studying the book of the prophet Ezekiel. There seemed to be pleasant surprise at just how relevant this text is for us today.

We were delighted to hold our first Study Weekend at Morley, near Leeds, this month and are looking forward to holding the second of two weekends on 6th to 7th December. We are studying Paul's letter to the Ephesians and look forward to seeing as many as are able to be with us.

Funding

As our work continues and expands, so too do our needs. To those who are already helping us on a monthly basis – we thank you. Over the next couple of months we are going to be looking at ways in which others can play a part in this too.

May God bless his people throughout this land, that we might be a blessing to all in his name.

Patrick Boyns
britishbibleschool.com



John Griffiths teaching at Bassenfell Manor



FAMILY NEWS

ILKESTON

Along with many others, the Ilkeston congregation gathered with family and friends to support a well known charity, MacMillan Cancer Support. Not only was it a chance to help those in need, it was a lovely opportunity to bring people to our meeting place who would not normally attend or have not been into the chapel before.



Trevor Williams

EAST KILBRIDE

October and November have been busy months for us in East Kilbride. October began with our annual joint gospel meeting with the Clarkston congregation. This year our speaker was Bob Eckman. He presented four lessons on the resurrection of Jesus. It was good to spend time with those from Clarkston once again.

Over two weekends in October and November we once again hosted a British Bible School Study Weekend. This year the module was “Ezekiel”. It was a wonderful time of learning with good application for our lives today.

Jon Galloway

THANKS FROM ISHABY

On behalf of my family and most of all individually it is my wish to express my heartfelt gratitude for the unwavering support you have extended to me during the the hard times of undergoing a heart operation and all processes involved therewith.

It is with love that I appreciate and will forever cherish the support rendered to me in all forms be it socially, financially, materially and most of all keeping both hands on the plough spiritually.

Your generosity has taught me to lead on with a life of love.

Ishaby Tinarwo





Around the World

Share a
blessing
with
India

We can't help everyone, but
everyone can help someone.
- Ronald Reagan

Share A Blessing - *The Joy of Giving*



Share A Blessing is a community cause initiative of church at Gollaprolu, during this festive season of Christmas, we encourage our friends and family to share a blessing with those around them who are less fortunate than them. It may not be a life changing gift, but something that brings a smile on their face, reminds them of love and fills their heart with gratitude and joy. A small toy, a blanket, a new dress, a sari, a pack of groceries, pair of sandals or even a delicious meal can do the magic and make their day. Wherever you are we want to encourage you to make use of this festive season to show and sow the love of God by sharing your blessings and experience the

Joy of Giving – Twin a gift. If you want to be a partner with us in this blessed work , please let us know and share your blessings, we will make sure they reach to the most needy. – **every little help, Helps !!**

for more details please contact - tonytyson66@yahoo.co.uk or joelmadiki@gmail.com

Book Review

The Race Set Before Us: A Journey of Running and Faith

By: *Bruce H. Matson*

Mission Books / 2013 / ISBN: 1618433482

Let me state at the outset of this little review – I am not a runner and do not plan to take up running anytime soon. At least in the physical world.

That disclaimer out of the way, let me say that this was a wonderful read – or rather, in my case, a listen. I obtained this book for free as an audiobook through christianaudio.com – each month they have a book that can be downloaded free and played on your own mp3 player of choice. (They also store them for you to download when you want.) I highly recommend the service.

But back to the book. Although I don't run I do walk a few miles each day, with the occasional hill-walk thrown in for good measure. So I can relate to the training needed to go distances.

I can also relate to the author's health crisis which got him back into running. He was diagnosed with, as he put it, "a severe case of sleep apnea". The same thing happened to me a few years ago. This diagnosis prompted him to take a serious look at his diet and exercise, nutrition and physical activity – as I have also had to do. So there are parallels.

Although he bases his book on his own personal journey of getting back into shape and being able to run marathons, he uses that to talk about his need to spiritually get back into shape.

It wasn't that he wasn't religiously involved: he and his wife attended a local church and he was somewhat active within that group. His problem was that

he was questioning his own faith and his belief about the existence of God.

The book is not only a chronicle of his getting back in shape physically, but it is also a chronicle of his journey of faith as he examined the arguments for the existence of God.

There are seventeen chapters plus an epilogue and a few appendices at the back (having Bruce's race times and running tips as well as a list of the top arguments for the existence of God), giving the book a total length of 222 pages.

By profession, Bruce Matson is a lawyer in Richmond, Virginia (as my brother lives in Richmond, I could also relate to some of the area he wrote about). I say that to simply indicate that this is not a deep theological book, nor is it a dry lawyer's book. By alternating between writing about the races he was training to run and his search for understanding God's existence, he makes this an interesting look at his life, both physically and spiritually. Perhaps he missed his true calling – of being a writer.

I would recommend this book as being an easy-to-read and accessible book on arguments for God's existence – as well as being just an enjoyable read. Although not life-changing for me, it was useful to view one man examining and weighing the arguments for God's existence. And I would recommend a practice Bruce has – listening to books and podcasts as you run (or walk, in my case).

Jon Galloway

NOTICES

Two Study Weekends ... One Beautiful Letter

Morley

3 Zoar Street, Morley, Leeds, LS27 8JD

Friday, 8th November 7.00 to 9.30pm
Saturday, 9th November 9.00am to 4.30pm
Friday, 6th December 7.00 to 9.30pm
Saturday, 7th December 9.00am to 4.30pm

Paul's letter to the Ephesians takes us beyond this realm and into the heavenly places. Though the theological implications are vast, there is a wealth of practical instruction that cannot be overlooked.

Teachers: Patrick Boyns, Jon Galloway and Mark Hill
www.britishbibleschool.com



Study Weekends provide opportunities for short periods of instruction in a group setting. Participants can expect a fast-paced, intensive approach, covering a significant amount of material from a selected module.

For more information please visit our website or look for us on Facebook.

All are welcome to either or both weekends!



Trip to India

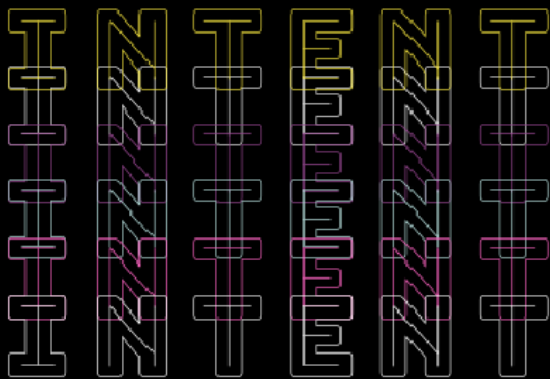
Earlier this year I wrote a report of my visit to the Christians in Cochin, India. I was made aware people were interested in my taking a group to help the congregation there. We would need to do a lot planing throughout next year.

If you are seriously interested in going with me to India in 2021, can you email your intention by the end of this year? You will be blessed if you make the decision to be involved.

Send your response to -
kennethmullan@hotmail.com.

Many thanks

Ken Mullan



CAMP CHARNWOOD 2020

AGE 7+

Sunday 16th August-Friday 21st August 2020

For more information:

Guy Sandison on 07791101397
guyandison@hotmail.co.uk

or

Simon Hardy on 07728028636
simonthehitman@hotmail.co.uk

or

Debbie Hill on 07940160634

Advanced Bible Study Series in Gemünden, Germany

ABSS I – 17th-21st February

ABSS II – 21st-23rd February



Contact: Paul Brazle
brazle.paul@gmail.com



DIARY

December

6th-7th – **Morley**: British Bible School Study Weekend. Module: “Ephesians” (part 2). Teachers: Patrick Boyns and Jon Galloway. www.britishbibleschool.com

13th-15th – **Dundee**: Young Adults Weekend. Venue: Windmill Christian Centre, Arbroath, DD11 1QG. Cost: £40 per person. Speaker: Patrick Boyns. For any bookings please contact Dan Jones: jonesdp1116@gmail.com.

January 2020

17th-19th – **BBS Family Retreat**: “Walking with Jesus...”; venue: Bassenfell Manor Christian Retreat Centre near Keswick. Contact: britishbibleschool.com

February

21st-23rd – **Northampton**: Youth Weekend. Contact: Mark Hill (marks@uwclub.net).

28th-29th – **Hyvots Bank & Kirkcaldy**: East Coast Joint Meetings – “2020 Vision”, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Mark Hill. Friday at Hyvots Bank, Saturday in Kirkcaldy (Hayfield Community Centre). Contact: Alan Moyes (alan.j.moyes@gmail.com) or Nick Wilson (hnilson@blueyonder.co.uk).

March

14th – **Great Barr**: Bible Seminar. Venue: Main hall, Collingwood Community Centre, Collingwood Drive, Birmingham. B43 7NF. Contact: Sola Adeosun (sola.adeosun@gmail.com).

April

11th – **Kirkcaldy**: Annual Social Day, 1.30 pm. Speaker: Adam Barr. Contact: Alan Moyes (alan.J.Moyes@gmail.com).

July

3rd-10th – **Camp Heatherbell**: “Focus” at Auchengillan Outdoor Centre, Stockiemuir Road, Blanefield, Glasgow G63 9BA. Contact: Adam Barr (brujnr@icloud.com) or Graham McDonald (Graham@gmcd.net).

August

16th-21st – **Camp Charnwood**: John’s Lee Wood campsite, Markfield Lane, Leicester, LE67 9PS. Contact: Guy Sandison (07791 101397) or Simon Hardy (07728 038636).

27th-29th – **European Christian Workshop**: Lancaster University. Theme – ‘AWAKE’. Contact: Stephen Woodcock (01509 768789 or registration@europeanchristianworkshop.com).

September

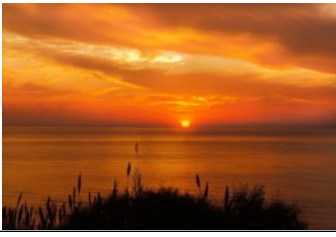
5th – **Great Barr**: Fellowship Day. Venue: Main Hall, Collingwood Community Centre, Collingwood Drive, Birmingham. B43 7NF. Contact: Sola Adeosun (sola.adeosun@gmail.com).

European Events Calendar

February 2020

17th-23rd – **Gemünden, Germany**: Advanced Bible Study Series. Arrive Monday evening for ABSS I, which begins on Tuesday morning. ABSS I – Tuesday-Friday; ABSS II – Friday-Sunday. Contact: Paul Brazle (brazle.paul@gmail.com).

27th-1st March – **European Ladies’ Retreat** in Burg Lichtenberg, Thallichtenberg, Germany. Theme: “A Royal Priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9). Organised by Christian women in the UK. Contact: elrorganizers@gmail.com. Website: <http://elr.yolasite.com>.



THE FINAL WORD



Forgetting
what lies
behind ...

“Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward towards what is ahead I press on.” (Philippians 3:13-14)

Those who know me know that running is not necessarily my greatest gift on the sporting front. I have always been good as the anchor in a tug of war but that is because I have always tended to be a man of substance! The Apostle Paul urged his readers, the first Christians in Europe, to strain forward. Note however that his first thought is to forget what lies behind.

There has been a great deal of talk in the news this year about mental health. For most people this is a delicate subject and few want to admit that they have some problems that are affecting them; I know because I am one of them. Not everyone may want to know the days that I have spent under a grey cloud and feeling suffocated.

The pills my doctor gave me only made things worse so I was encouraged to try counselling. Surely my faith in Jesus should be strong enough, I told myself, but it has been good to talk to someone who does not know me. I have a supportive wife and family as well as supportive brethren and I feel blessed. The clouds are going away.

I am trying hard to acknowledge that there are some things in the past that I can do nothing about, nor need to. I have always believed Jesus is Lord, he is all in all and he is my Saviour. But life can sometimes be heavy and sometimes I cry. I cry for the things I should not have done and the things I should have done better; but that is in the past.

So I am straining forward towards what is ahead and I intend to press on. It does not matter what Heaven is like, nor how long I live, or if I will end up with dementia in a nursing home, or if I cannot be all things to all people. I intend to press on and if the journey involves some straining I want to do it because the hand of Jesus is pulling me along toward him. When I fall I am trusting Jesus to pick me up.

Many will be in the rush of the ‘party’ season. Eat well, enjoy good things. Sing the praises of Jesus who was willing to come to earth as a baby and as a man to die for all people. For those who are straining forward, push with all your might and run into the arms of Jesus. As preparations for 2020 are being made, clear out the rubbish of life and look again to what is ahead and straining forward press on.

Trevor

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