the Christian worker MAGAZINE
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BBS Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor

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CONTENTS

3 MY PERSPECTIVE
Alike…but different

4 CONGRATULATIONS
Two new Christians in Loughborough

5 BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL UPDATE
Bassenfell Family Retreat

6 DIRECTORY UPDATE
- **Northampton Update**
- **New congregation in Hull**
- **New congregation in Middlesbrough**

7 AT REST
- **John Sharp (Scotland)**

8 CHURCH COLLECTIONS
Thoughts from Trevor Williams

10 AROUND THE WORLD
- **Update from Ukraine**

11 IN THE NEWS
Freshers' fair organisers back down after blocking church stall

12 NOTICES

13 DIARY OF EVENTS

15 THE FINAL WORD
Thank you – a personal note

Front cover and above: BBS Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor

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To receive The Christian Worker Magazine as a free pdf, send your e-address to jdgalloway@mac.com. Professionally printed copies are available at cost. Please contact Trevor for details – twilliams195@hotmail.co.uk.

MY PERSPECTIVE

Alike…but different

Most of the time I have spent working with congregations during my lifetime I have worked as part of a team of evangelists and teachers. There are real advantages of working with others but there can be drawbacks. The sharing of the work that needs to be has always been useful, driven home to me especially during those times that I've worked on my own.

There have been times that the person I was working with wanted us to be identical – if he did something then I should be doing it as well. Often it wasn't something that I was very good at and it left out other work that needed to be accomplished. Ultimately it was a very inefficient way of working together.

For a number of years I worked with a team where we were all very different. We had different strengths and different personalities. We found this was a great combination for congregation work as we were able to emphasise what we did best and there was always one of us who could relate well to individuals within the group.

This really shouldn't surprise us. Paul wrote about this as he began to discuss the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Christians in Corinth.

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work." (1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NIV)

This led later in this chapter to comparing the body of Christ with a physical body. Aren't we thankful that our body has multiple organs with multiple purposes? In this way we can not only hear but smell, see, feel, walk, lift, read…and the list could go on. As Paul put it:

"If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body…Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." (1 Corinthians 12:19-20,27)

Just like our physical bodies, in the spiritual body of believers we all are not the same. We have different strengths, different abilities and different personalities. There will be areas where one person is better suited to work than in others. Just because I'm good at something does not mean that everyone should be doing the same thing (sadly, I've seen this happen too often). Paul put it this way:

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully." (Romans 12:6-8)

By contributing what we can do best the whole congregation will benefit. This isn't to say we cannot learn new skills in new areas, but common sense tells us that we will not all be doing the same thing. Instead we need to be working together and in this way build up our local assemblies, helping to grow spiritually and numerically.

Jon

CONGRATULATIONS!

Bella Havens

New Christians in Loughborough!

The Christians at Loughborough are pleased to share that two more have been added to our number.

Bella Havens committed her life to Jesus on 29th December and **Scott Farrands** was immersed on 5th January. We rejoice with them and pray that God will richly bless them as they begin their walk with him.

Jason Hill

Scott Farrands

BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES

Bassenfell Family Retreat

Record Numbers at Retreat

Our recent Weekend Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor in the Lake District saw the largest gathering we have had since the event began ten years ago. With over seventy present for the weekend, the dining room was full at mealtimes, and our times of praise and learning filled the conference room on Saturday and Sunday mornings. It really was a truly joyful and encouraging weekend.

Our theme for the weekend was "His Master's Voice" and, as is our custom during these events, we wanted to focus our thoughts on the life and teachings of Jesus. Our hope is that we might all be better listeners and followers of the Master – even those among us who have not yet made a commitment to be his disciples.

If you've not yet been to one of our *Weekend Family Retreats*, then you could make plans to be at the next one this autumn, at Letton Hall, in the county of Norfolk, from 18th to 20th September.

We'll be back at Bassenfell Manor for our *Autumn Study Week* in October, and then again, Lord willing, next January when we'll be doing it all again!

Curriculum Development

Over the years our work has taken us in different directions, as circumstances have changed, but a part of it remains committed to delivering some form of a curriculum of Biblical studies, primarily through our various study events. The current *Applied Biblical Studies* curriculum was developed in 2008, over 17 years ago, and though suited to its time and context is now in significant need of reviewing.

Look out for further news on this in the coming months, along with other critical developments as we continue to explore ways in which we might better provide more indigenous teaching and training for both groups and individuals within the U.K.

As always, we thank you for your continued interest and support of the work of the British Bible School. May God bless us all, that we might be a blessing to those around us.

Patrick Boyns
britishbibleschool.com

Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor 2026

CW DIRECTORY UPDATE

NORTHAMPTON

Directory update –

Number of Christians – 128 (and 62 children)

Worship on Sunday at the same time
Sunday evenings – devotionals on 1st and 3rd Sundays
Monday – Zoom 11.00 am-noon; singing at the building from 7.00
Wednesday – Zoom 8.00-9.00 pm
Friday – Zoom 8.00-9.00 pm

Contact: Mark Hill (hillbilly6272@gmail.com)

HULL

New Congregation –

Number of Christians – 5

Meeting venue – 109A Rosamond Street, Hull, HU3 3RA, East Yorkshire.

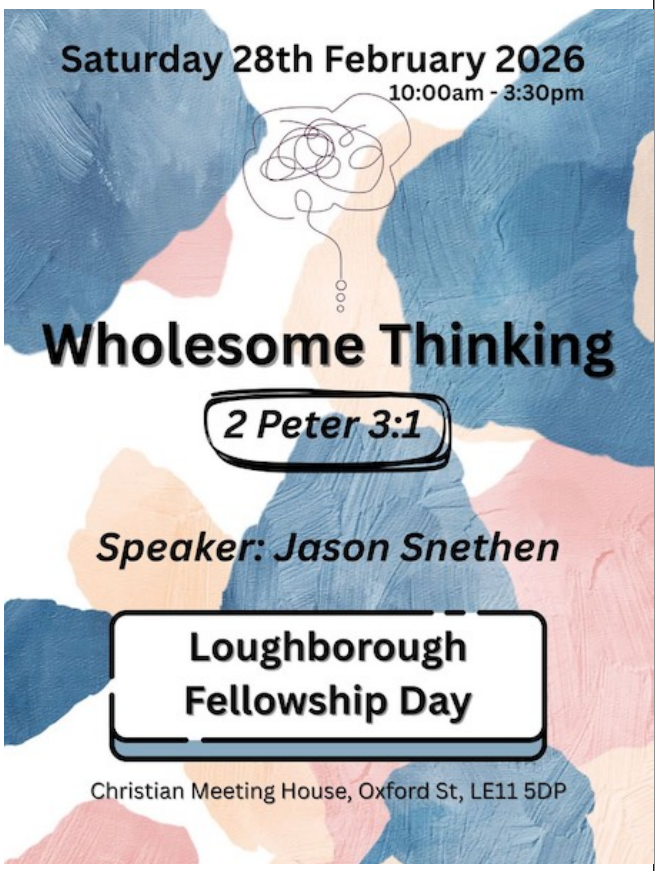
Sunday – 12.00-1.30 pm
Tuesday Bible Study – 6.00-7.00 pm

Contact: Chukwuka Ossai (07879 929545)

MIDDLESBROUGH

I am reaching out on behalf of the new congregation that is now meeting in Middlesbrough. We worshipped the first time on the last Sunday of 2024 and we have been meeting since then. We are meeting in a home and have just opened a facebook page for the congregation under the name 'Church of Christ Middlesbrough'. We are working towards getting an official place for worship so we can have an address to share publicly but right now you can contact us on okolichukwuemeka1411@gmail.com or 07876 832366.

Okoli Chukwuemeka



John Sharp

1938- 2026

On 11th January 2026 John Sharp went, suddenly but very peacefully, to his eternal reward, just seven weeks before his 88th birthday.

John was baptised into Christ in 1957 at Newtongrange (Scotland); he married Margery Robertson (also of the Newtongrange congregation) on 24th February 1961.

In 1972 they took their year-old son, Steven, to Belfast where John studied under Joe Nisbet at North Ireland Bible School, returning to Scotland in June 1974. He worked as an evangelist with Alex Strachan and Paul McGregor in the fledgling Glenrothes congregation for several years, (where daughter Susan was born), then with the Oxford congregation, and, latterly, the Kirkcaldy congregation. In 1987 the family moved to Ayr where John laboured single-handedly to begin a new congregation.

In the summer of 2000, both children now married, John and Margery settled in Falkirk where John continued in Multi-Level Marketing. They worshipped with a local Evangelical congregation. After Margery lost her battle with cancer in April 2008, John continued until surrendering his driving licence due to failing eyesight, and thereafter worshipping with the local Baptist church.

Throughout his days John remained a faithful servant of the Lord. He was always known as a kind and considerate, loving man, who had an aptitude for speaking to anyone – friend, associate, business contact, stranger – about matters of eternity.

He is missed by his family and relatives, and by all who knew him. To God be the glory for his life of love and service.

Dick Carter (Livingston)

Double Honor Retreat for 2026

Free rest and respite week for couples who are Christian workers in southern Normandy, subsidised by Double Honor Ministries.
The next retreat will be 23rd-26th March 2026.
All accommodation and meals included.
$150 towards travel.
Visit the Double Honor website for details.
https://doublehonorministries.com/retreats/
La Maison de Perrine website:
Faithworks-lachapelle.com

CHURCH COLLECTIONS

For several years I have been thinking and asking myself, are we doing what the Bible says about taking up collections? For as long as I remember somewhere, about the time of communion, there has been a bag, plate or basket sent around to take up money from the people attending. The reason was for the work of the congregation. But are we doing it the right way?

I have heard sermons that insist that we **must** give every Sunday though, in fairness, I have heard far more addresses that we need to give as we have prospered. I well remember one dear brother who tried to encourage us by saying that we should give until it hurt. I rather like the idea of the Lord loves a cheerful giver. That word cheerful really means hilarious and so rather than being hurt by our giving we should be laughing.

On two occasions in Scripture, the raising of funds is discussed. We find in Acts 4:32 that many of the early Christians raised funds from the sale of possessions and property and put the funds in the hands of the apostles; this in turn was distributed to anyone who had need. We must presume that a large number of those who had visited Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost, became Christians and stayed on in the city but were running out of funds. This led on to Acts 6 when the Grecian Jews became distressed because the Hebraic widows were receiving food and the Grecian widows were not. This was food paid for through the funds given to the apostles.

The second time we read about collections is in 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 when the Apostle Paul encouraged them to take up the collection for funds that would be sent to Jerusalem, something that the Corinthians themselves had decided to do (2 Corinthians 9). The need was a famine situation – the church decided to help but seemed a little slow in fulfilling their own plan. The suggestion by Paul was that on the first day of every week each of the Christians should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so when he arrived there would be no need for a collection. Now how this should be done is not explained.

Often people would be paid for their work each day – there were not the banking facilities as we understand them. We know that Judas Iscariot was the holder of funds for the apostolic group and trust was involved. Was the early church to find a Christian or two to act as money holders? or was each Christian family to put something aside, saving it up until Paul arrived and all they had to do was to give their gifts to him? – this way there would be no scurrying around trying to raise the funds.

The Christian church in all the various groupings has traditionally taken up an offering at Sunday services but is it right and what is it for? In both cases discussed raised funds were used for famine relief. The apostle Paul did receive funds for his mission work from the Philippian church on a few occasions (Philippians 2:10-20). Nothing is mentioned about how or when the money was raised.

Church Collections

So, I asked myself: should we take up a collection on Sundays? It is very obvious that as a community gathering there are going to be expenses which must be paid for (that is unless the meeting is small enough to be held in an average sized home or there is a wealthier benefactor). Churches need money one way or another, but do we have to pass around a container to gather the gifts?

For some time, the Ilkeston congregation simply has a basket on the communion table and anyone who wishes to give can put their offering in. The reason we decided to do this was because several brethren make a monthly gift through the bank and sometimes, we passed around a basket, and little was put into it. Most people are paid monthly – even pensioners are paid monthly, so why not give monthly?

But I think even more importantly that those who do not have the funds to give should not be embarrassed in worship; indeed, do our visitors feel they are obliged to pay to go to worship? Attending worship is a free gift and does not have to be paid for. For many years and in many places the collection was taken up immediately after the drinking of the cup – during that quiet time of contemplation there was a clicking of handbags and purses as people brought out their offerings. One young Christian said to me it is a bit like paying for your little bit of bread and the drop of grape juice.

If a congregation decides it will take up a collection it is not because Paul told the Corinthians to do it, it is because of a need. I strongly suggest that if the church insists on taking up the collection by passing around a collecting receptacle, then it is done at a different time than the communion. We do not do bread, wine, and money. There are several places of worship that have now brought in card machines to make it easier for people to make donations on a credit/debit card. I wonder what the early church would have thought about that.

Finally, the local Christians need to know why it is gathering in funds. To simply take up a collection is not good enough. Let the people know where the money is going and why – then let them rejoice in the Lord.

Trevor Williams

Daughters of Christ UK & International
DOCUK & INT'L
Ephesians 2:10
Serving to Make a Difference

DOCUK & I'NTL Ladies Ministry

Health Awareness Day

Date: Saturday 28th February 2026
Time: 2:00pm to 5:00pm UK Time

Topic: Women's Heart Health: The Unique Signs, Risks and Prevention of Heart Disease
Speaker: Esther Mbom – Heart Failure Specialist Nurse

Topic: Gut Health – The Secret to a Happier Healthy You
Speaker: Health Coach Maa Doris – Naturopathic Doctor, ND

Topic: Autoimmune Diseases
Speaker - Dr Ime-Obong Ekanem – Paediatric Registrar

Meeting Link: https://tinyurl.com/yvm6em2k

AROUND THE WORLD

UKRAINE

I wanted to share some news from Lviv, Ukraine, the city where I preach and serve the Lord. Recently we held a four-day youth seminar and young people came from across Ukraine, from various congregations. Lviv is in the rear of this war, and for those who travelled from places under constant shelling, it was a real blessing and relief to be in a relatively quiet place – to study God's Word, sing songs of praise, and pray together.

I used part of the donations recently received from various sources including the UK, to help cover accommodation, food, and materials for the seminar. The sad news is that the war continues and many people are still being killed. Even today Russia struck Lviv with an intercontinental missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead (thank God the strike was not nuclear). Even to think and speak about such things feels like madness in the modern world. My family and the congregation in Lviv send their greetings to you and to everyone who hears this news.

Stas

We met Stas at the European Vision Workshop last year and found him to be bouncing with the good news of Jesus. He has stayed with the brethren in his own country working with them and helping every way he could. Anyone who hears the news will be continually horrified by the constant bombing of the country by Russia. Many even in the battle zones are willing to open their hearts to Jesus and receive baptism. We are doing our best to help Ukrainian brethren through those we know who can best fill some gaps where need is like an open wound. Please help either individually or collectively and mark your donations Ukraine. Details for sending funds is on Page 2. Thank you so much.

Trevor

IN THE NEWS

29 Jan 2026 – **Freshers' fair organisers back down after blocking church stall**

Organisers of a university freshers' fair have reversed a ban on a church stall after legal pressure raised concerns about unlawful religious discrimination.

The reversal has reopened a gospel presence at Goldsmiths, University of London during one of the most significant points in the academic calendar, when thousands of new students arrived on campus.

Grace Church Greenwich had booked a stall at the university's freshers' fair, as it had done for several years. However, Native.fm, the company responsible for managing stall bookings, informed the church it could no longer attend due to a recent update in company policy excluding religious groups.

Native.fm said it could not support campaigns that explicitly promoted specific religious teachings.

Similar issues affecting Christian groups on campuses had been reported by Good News for Everyone, formerly Gideons UK.

The church's minister, Andrew Sach, challenged the decision and warned Native that the policy could amount to unlawful discrimination.

After The Christian Institute intervened on behalf of the church, arguing that Native.fm's policy could breach the Equality Act 2010, the company later suspended the policy on religious bookings "without admission of liability".

Sach said in statement that stalls such as theirs were particularly important on campuses without a Christian Union. "Stalls like ours are the only gospel witness to the thousands of students who attend," he wrote.

He said the case highlighted the need for churches to defend religious freedoms protected under UK law.

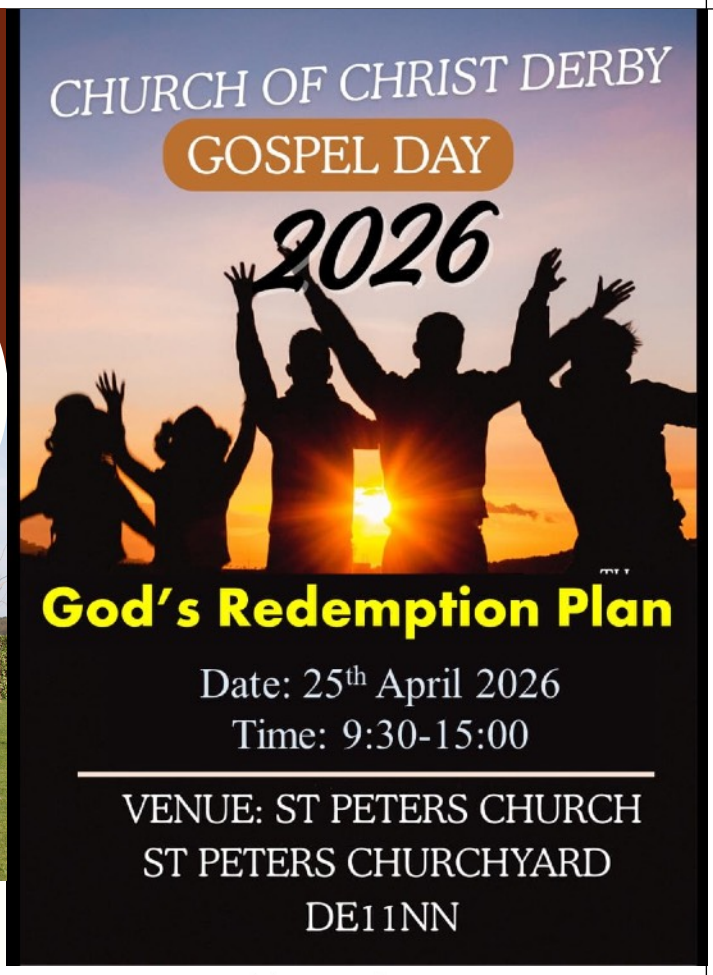
Pro-life groups had previously faced similar barriers to campus access. The Family Education Trust had also warned that sexually explicit clubs, including "kink" and "BDSM" societies, had been permitted to promote themselves at freshers' fairs.

Premier Christian News

NOTICES

APRIL 3-6, 2026

DE HOOF 18, THE NETHERLANDS



DIARY

February

2nd – British Bible School evening class: "Ezra-Nehemiah" – continuing class led by Patrick Boyns each Monday, 8.00-9.00 pm, for twelve weeks. Links to join the class can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

5th – British Bible School evening class: "In the Beginning…" (Genesis 1-11) – continuing class led by Jon Galloway, each Thursday, 8.00-9.00 pm, for twelve weeks. Links to join the class can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

7th – Cumbernauld: Men's Day – "The Name", 10.00 am-4.00 pm (breakfast will be served at 9.30), at 2 Carron House, Carron Way, Cumbernauld G67 1ER. Contact: Graham McDonald (graham@gmcd.net).

13th-15th – Bristol: Youth Weekend – "Why Stop There?"; arrival on Friday at 6.00 pm and departure on Sunday at 2.00 pm. Contact: Jason (07795 560990).

16th-22nd – Gemünden, Germany: Advanced Bible Study Series – Tuesday-Friday ABSS I, Friday-Sunday ABSS II. Contact: abss.gemunden@gmail.com or Paul Brazle (brazle.paul@gmail.com).

21st – Liverpool: Gospel Meeting – "Seeing the Unseen", 6.30 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Speaker: Paul Hill. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

27th-28th February – Kirkcaldy & Hyvots Bank: Joint gospel meetings – "What This World Needs", 7,00 pm (Friday in Kirkcaldy and Saturday at Hyvots Bank), speaker: Aubrey Boyns. Contact: Nick Wilson (hnickwilson@icloud.com) or Alan Moyes (alan.J.Moyes@gmail.com).

28th – Loughborough: Fellowship Day – "Wholesome Thinking", 10.00 am-3.30 pm, at Christian Meeting House, Oxford Street, Loughborough LE11 5DP. Speaker: Jason Snethen. Contact: Jason Hill (j.hill147@hotmail.co.uk).

March

14th – Great Barr (Birmingham): Bible Seminar – "Godly Homes: A Blueprint for Transforming Society", 12.30-4.30 pm. Speakers: Mike Glover and Kunlie Orekoya. Venue: The Beacon Church Hall, Collingwood Drive, Birmingham B43 7JL. Contact: Sola Adeosun (sola.adeosun@gmail.com).

21st – Kirkcaldy: Annual Social, 1.30 pm. Speaker: Ian Starrs. Contact: Allan Hughes (allan580@virginmedia.com).

21st – Liverpool: Evening of songs, 6.30 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

23rd-26th – Double Honour Retreat in southern Normandy, organised by 'Double Honor Ministries'. All accommodation and meals provided plus $150 towards travel. For details: https://doublehonorministries.com/retreats/.

28th – British Bible School: "Tel Beth Shemesh – evening lecture by Patrick Boyns, 7.30 to 8.30 pm on Zoom. Links to join the lecture can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

April

3rd-5th – European Bible Lectureship: "The New Testament Church". Venue: Jugendherberge Duisburg Sportpark, Kruppstraße 9, Neudorf-Süd, 47055 Duisburg, Germany (near Dusseldorf). Cost: Adult – €75, youth (10-18) – €60, children (6-9) – €40, below 5 – free. Register here: https://forms.gle/ANp4AexzFdnu6JV27. Contact: eubiblelectureship@gmail.com or +49 15122 374151.

3rd-6th – IGNITE for Christ Europe for ages 12-30. Venue: De Hoof 18, Netherlands. Cost: €70-115. This event is in English (translations available for some other languages). For more information about the organisation, the event and to get your tickets, check out our website: igniteforchrist.com.

18th-19th – Milton Keynes: Bible Seminar – "Scheme of Redepmption", 10.00 am-4.00 pm, at Monkston Park Community Centre, 10 Pimlico Court, Off Plaistow Crescent, Milton Keynes MK10 9PN; speaker: Tim Burrows. Contact: Samuel Adorm (s_adorm@yahoo.com).

24th – Liverpool: "Scheme of Redemption" Bible study evening, 6.00 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

25th – Derby: Gospel Weekend – "God's Redemption", 9.30 am-3.00 pm. Venue: St Peters churchyard, Derby DE1 1NN. Contact: Paul Hill (paul.h41@outlook.com).

Diary

25th – Liverpool: All Day Youth Fellowship from 10.00 am-4.00 pm, venue: 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. For further information contact Rexford AB (07538 563751).

May

16th – Milton Keynes: Men's Leadership Training, 10.00 am-4.00 pm, at Monkston Park Community Centre, 10 Pimlico Court, Off Plaistow Crescent, Milton Keynes MK10 9PN; lessons presented by Patrick Boyns. Contact: Samuel Adorm (s_adorm@yahoo.com).

23rd – Liverpool: Gospel meeting, 6.30 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

30th – British Bible School: "A funny thing happened on the way to the gallows – the story of Esther" – evening lecture by Steve Whitehead: "Esther", 7.30 to 8.30 pm on Zoom. Links to join the lecture can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

June

20th – Reading: "Song Fest" from 1.00-6.00 pm at the Crescent Resource Centre, Warbler Drive, Lower Earley, Reading, RG6 4HB. Food will be provided, please let us know of any allergies. For enquiries please email: readingchurchofchrist@gmail.com.

27th – Liverpool: Annual All Day Fellowship, 10.00 am- 4.00 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

27th – Bristol: BIBLEFEST2026 – Bible related challenges, activities and quizzes taken from the books of Hebrews and James for all ages (children under 8 years must be accompanied by an adult/guardian). Questions and Passages taken from ESV. Bookings or questions: Jason (07795 560990). Bible Fest 2026 'Timeless' booking form: https://tinyurl.com/bdcpe59p

July

3rd-10th – Camp Heatherbell: "More than a name. Venue: Compass Christian Centre, Glenshee. Cost: £195. For more information or to be sent an application, contact: admelbarr@gmail.com.

24th-26th – European Youth Lectureship: "The Young Shall Grow", hosted by the Edmonton (London) congregation. Venue: St Mary's Church of England High School, Lieutenant Ellis Way, Cheshunt, EN7 5FB. Ages 18 and above. Speakers: Douglas Attuah, Benjamin Archen, and Calum Hill. Contact: S. Ofori-Dwumah (edmontonchurchofchristuk@gmail.com).

25th – Liverpool: Gospel meeting, 6.30 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

25th – British Bible School evening lecture by Jack Paton, 7.30 to 8.30 pm on Zoom. Links to join the lecture can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

August

2nd-7th – British Bible Camp: bookings will open at 12.00 am on 16th February 2026. Camper application form: https://tinyurl.com/3zs2crk2. We are currently recruiting volunteer staff (age 18+ – staff dates 1st-8th August). Staff booking form: https://tinyurl.com/4z6snftb. Contact: Jason (07795 560990).

30th – Liverpool: Praise and Harmony with Keith Lancaster, 10.00 am, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

September

18th-20th – **British Bible School** Autumn Weekend Family Retreat. Venue: Letton Hall, Norfolk. For more information and to book a place visit our website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

26th – British Bible School evening lecture by John Griffiths, 7.30 to 8.30 pm on Zoom. Links to join the lecture can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

29th-2nd October – European Vision Workshop in Romania. Venue: 2 Hotel Sir Royal, Bucharest, Romania.

October

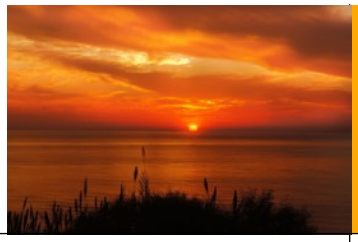
24th – Liverpool: Evening of songs, 6.30 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

26th-30th October – British Bible School Residential Study Week at Bassenfell Manor: "The Synoptic Gospels". Contact: study@britishbibleschool.com.

November

21st – Liverpool: Gospel meeting, 6.30 pm, at 1 Picton Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 8QH. Contact: Charles Yankiah (cyankiah@hotmail.com or 07359 750645).

28th – British Bible School evening lecture by Jon Galloway: "Influential Christians from the Past", 7.30 to 8.30 pm on Zoom. Links to join the lecture can be found on the BBS social media and website: www.britishbibleschool.com.



THE FINAL WORD

Thank you – a personal note

Hanging on my study wall is a Certificate of Graduation from North Ireland Bible School dated 31st January 1976. That was fifty years ago. Pauline and I, with our oldest two sons Philip and Matthew, had lived in Belfast for almost two years at the height of 'The Troubles'.

Previously I had studied under Leon Crouch for seven months, driving from our home in Birmingham to Wembley each week for three days. I stayed in the home of David and Yvonne Hadland overnight whilst there – that was from . January until July 1972. Leon returned home to America.

In December 1972 we moved to Harrogate to work with Philip and Judy Hardy who had recently graduated from Sunset School of Preaching. We lived there until May 1974. During that time we knocked doors, taught and preached, encouraged and visited and did what we could to try to get things moving to establish a congregation in the town. Because we lived by faith with little money coming in, I also worked as a baker for thirty hours each week. The bakery was small and run by the owners and was simply the lower part of their home. Eventually Joe Nisbet encouraged me to move to Belfast and study at N.I.B.S.

Our parents, living in Birmingham, were not impressed at our decision to live in Northern Ireland. We had no telephone, communication was by post, but we were able to rent a house where Gwyn and Rita Williams (no relative) had lived whilst Gwyn studied at the school. I remember that we regularly heard guns and bombs go off and windows rattled. Studies included two, three-hour lectures five days a week and then I studied for a further six hours a night at home.

I was often asked to either teach or preach both at the church meeting in Upper Newtownards Road as well as various other congregations. During our mid-term 'study' week we would often work with other congregations and would be found leafleting or conducting a Holiday Bible School for children or some other work. During my summer breaks I lead three Holiday Bible Schools each year, eventually leading to me moving to work with the Christians in Brandon, Suffolk, where we served for the next five years.

We were a class of four students at N.I.B.S. Robert Limb, an Englishman living in Paris, was married and the other two guys were single. Robert was and still is a far more academic student than me and I am thankful for his ability. Exams were somewhat of an endurance test, and I remember finishing the exam for Acts of Apostles after 11 hours and was the first to complete. I think some others went another three hours.

The centre of Belfast was fenced off with wire netting and bags were constantly searched going in and out of shops (we

Four Videos by Tony Coffey

A Model Church (1)
https://youtu.be/aRqtQlLAld4

A Model Church (2)
https://youtu.be/OmnfVSpO2Qw

A Model Church (3)
https://youtu.be/TLYCX7q-wf0

A Model Church (4)
https://youtu.be/5pTY7wgra9o

THE FINAL WORD (continued)

were searched for weapons and bombs). Most shopping was done locally. There was no such thing as Amazon; McDonalds was an American company not yet everywhere in Britain; computers were still sci-fi and smart watches were old watches with a new strap.

Students had little time and even less money – for fun we developed international dinners held in our home. Each student brought some typical food from their homeland but just the amount that they would eat for themselves – that way there was no extra cost involved. We all dressed up for the occasion.

We could not go to many places because of the troubles so we did things in style as best as we could. Of course, in those days, everyone wore their best clothes to church services and no one would have dreamed of wearing jeans there.

The Christians at the Eastside congregation were kind to us. Joe Nisbet was the Director and, with his wife Beryl, a constant source of encouragement. Bill and Abby Mullan acted as grandparents to our two boys by making sure they had some sweets alongside their own grandchildren. Lyn Mullan made friends with Pauline and our children played together.

A few may still remember our being in Belfast but for us it was a time of jumping into the deep end of commitment to Christ and we left feeling that we had been incredibly blessed. Fifty years have come and gone since graduation day so thank you to those who have been part of the journey: Kenneth Nisbet, Rita McHale, Sue Stretton, Leslie McKay, Bertie Ritchie, as well as all those who have gone to glory.

Trevor

North Ireland Bible School Graduating Class 1976