

# THE MESSENGER

December 2017

## From the Minister

Dear Friends,

Last month, the Diaconate spent a day 'away'. This was an opportunity for us to come together for worship and reflection. During our time together we particularly focused on the account of a visit that Jesus made to the home of his good friends Mary and Martha. Martha was busy preparing a feast for him, and Mary was sitting at his feet spending time with him, listening to what he was saying. Martha wanted Jesus to make Mary help her in the kitchen, but Jesus gently reminded her that she was being distracted by her busyness and missing an important part of her relationship with him, which was spending time with him. This year has been a time of great change for all of us in the church, and times of change can also be times of great busyness, when it becomes especially easy to become distracted with activity. So taking a quiet day to re-orientate ourselves towards God and his plans was important for us.

Whilst on my recent retreat I was able to reread a book written by Eugene H Peterson called 'Working the Angles'. It is a book written for pastors about the importance of good foundations to pastoral ministry. He likens the work of a pastor to a triangle, with the lines being the visible actions of a pastor; preaching, teaching and administration. He stresses that as important as these visible activities are, the crucial things that give ministry its shape, that hold the lines together as a triangle, are the angles. These are the hidden things that enable all the visible things to be done well. The angles are prayer, scripture, and spiritual direction. It is these activities, which no-one is aware of, that give integrity to the work of a pastor. It is these disciplines that enable us to learn how to be more like Mary, so that the Martha like busyness that we engage in, is appropriate to ministry and not a distraction from it.

But I would suggest that the truths of these observations, are applicable to all of us. What gives our lives their shape and integrity to our life together as a church, serving God in this place, are the hidden activities of prayer, engaging with scripture, and seeking spiritual direction for our lives. To allow these things to become the angles that hold everything else together is an adventure and we often don't know where it will take us. But it is an adventure that God calls all his people, not just pastors, to undertake.

Jesus invited Martha to set aside her distractions to make this journey of engagement with him a priority. He calls us to set out on the same journey, learning how to listen to him. As with all journeys we can choose to travel alone, or in company with others. There is an African proverb which says this: If you want to travel fast go alone, if you want to travel far go together.

As we discern what ministries God is asking us to exercise as his people in this place, it is vital that we learn to travel far, and not just fast. Whatever personal adventure in prayer that we might engage with, we also need to learn to journey together.

Jesus said, 'Martha, Martha you are worried and distracted by many things, but Mary has chosen the better portion.'

Together may we learn to choose the better portion.

**Lynn**

### **Deacon's Diary**

My last diary twelve months ago talked about our lives being like a rollercoaster ride and our wait for a new minister like the slow ride up the incline to the top. Well, at the beginning of June, we reached the top and were blessed to welcome Rev Lynn at her Induction Service. I reminded us that the waiting time is in God's time...not ours' and we should just rest in His peace and enjoy the fruits of His Spirit.

That notion of resting in His peace became more real at our recent Deacon's Awayday. At Lynn's suggestion, it was an opportunity to take "time out" to talk to God and each other and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to examine our church and consider the way forward.

There's no doubt about it – we live in a busy world. As we approach the build up to the festive season – even more so. With all the time saving devices in our homes and work places one would think that we would have so much more time to do the things we like to do, to spend more time with our families, volunteer more of our time to charity and the church. Time is something we wrestle with every day. Our lives are packed so full that the day is finished before we have accomplished half of what we wanted to do.

If there was ever a busy person it was Jesus. There was a constant flow of people wanting to see him, to hear him, to have him heal their sick and to test out his theology. For the disciples it wasn't any different. (Jesus) said to (his disciples), ' Let us go off by ourselves to some place where we will be alone and you can rest a while.' (Mark 6. v31) All of us have days where we need that kind of invitation.

Can I therefore take this opportunity to invite you and all your friends and families to take "time out" during this Christmas to celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, here at Union Street. A special welcome will be offered as our augmented choir invite you to join "The Inn Crowd" by Roger Jones on Sat 16<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm.

An Advent service (followed by communion) will be held on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 10.30am and an evening "Churches Together in Crewe" Advent service at St Mary's Church in Crewe. Further service details during December will be detailed in our weekly Church Newsletter.

Take time out to spend it with the God who loves you. He made you, saved you, brought you into his family through baptism and has given you saving faith. As we look forward to the Christmas season and the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, may we continue to create a welcoming, relaxed, inclusive and spiritually encouraging environment for all. May the Light of His Love remain in your hearts this Christmas and always and may we always be ready to take time-out with Him.

**Gill Mulrey**

I knelt to pray but not for long, I had too much to do.

I had to hurry and get to work for bills would soon be due.

So I knelt and said a hurried prayer, and jumped up off my knees.

My Christian duty was now done my soul could rest at ease.

All day long I had no time to spread a word of cheer.

No time to speak of Christ to friends, they'd laugh at me I'd fear.

No time, no time, too much to do, that was my constant cry,

No time to give to those in need but at last the time, the time to die.

I went before the Lord, I came, I stood with downcast eyes.

For in his hands God held a book; it was the book of life.

God looked into his book and said "Your name I cannot find.

I once was going to write it down... But never found the time."

(Author unknown)

**Submitted by Gill Mulrey**

### Secretary's Notes

We celebrated our Harvest Service, and Edleston School celebrated their Harvest Festival service at Union Street in October. It is lovely to welcome the children and their families at our church on several occasions during the year. They will be back soon for Christmas events.

In November, we held our Church Anniversary and Gift Day service, and had a Dedication service for Raluka and Mircea's baby daughter Maise. Now we are planning our Advent and Christmas services. It is surprising how quickly the year passing.

The Deacons took part in an Away Day at Audlem Baptist Church last month. All involved enjoyed the 'quiet time' to think and discuss several church matters.

We at Union Street were sorry to hear of the death of Rev Cyril Millwood last month. Four of us went to his Memorial service at Worcester. Helen Millwood, Joy and Kenneth were pleased to see us and we were pleased to be able to attend. It is 24 years since Cyril retired from Union Street and many friends send their condolences to Helen and family. We have some lovely memories of the family's time in Crewe.

Our church choir will sing 'The Inn Crowd' by Roger Jones on Saturday 16 December at 7-00 pm. Please come along if you can to support our friends and enjoy some seasonal music.

**NEXT MESSENGER DEADLINE** will be in at the end of January 2018. Please pass any items to Annette Elliott. Thank you.

We hope to welcome you to our Christmas services this month:

Sunday 3 December  
10-30 am Advent Service & Communion:  
6-00 pm Churches Together in Crewe  
Advent Service at St Mary's R C Church, Crewe.

Sunday 17 December  
10-30 am 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent Worship:  
6 pm Carols by Candlelight at Union Street.

Sunday 24  
December 10-30 am Christmas Eve  
Worship

Monday 25 December 10-30 am  
Christmas Day Worship.

Best Wishes to everyone,  
**Helen Birtles**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hatch". The signature is written in a cursive style and is crossed out with a large, light grey 'X'.

## Memories

In the 1930's, I started Sunday School here at Union Street. At the time, it seemed a long walk from Claughton Avenue. Now, looking back, it was a happy and enjoyable time.

Somewhere in church, there's a photo of the Sunday School Anniversary (postcard size). There were about 90 children on the platform – on the pew in front of me was Phyllis, Jennifer's mum.

There was also good attendance of boys and girls on Monday evenings in the Friendship Room. It was called "Band of Hope". At times, we performed concerts. There's another photo of me as Band of Hope Queen. Another pleasant memory was the Adult Concert Party where I was a soprano soloist. David's mother (she played the piano) and father (a great performer) – what happy times.

The 27 October 1935 was a memorable day. I was baptised, along with Phyllis. So why did my Mother choose a Baptist Church?

My 3 times great grandfather John Kelly (1786 – 1868) preached the Baptist religion as a young man, and baptised people in the sea and in the River Clwyd in North Wales. He became a minister at 65 years old, at St Asaph in a village church.

Could that be the reason why?

**Ivy Hart**

## Ministry of Flowers



### DECEMBER

- 3 In memory Mr & Mrs G Helsby & Sophie Piziuca  
10 In memory of Nancy & Charles Lythgoe  
17 In memory of Mr & Mrs R Cornes  
24 In memory of Brian Skelton  
31 Vacant

### JANUARY

- 7 Vacant  
14 Vacant  
21 In memory Fred Hope  
28 In memory of Bernice Grocott

### FEBRUARY

- 4 Mr & Mrs E Denyer  
11 Mrs R Johnson

### Regular activities at USBC

#### Sunday

**Morning Worship & J-Club for young people**  
10.30

#### Monday

**T-Club** 13.30 (on 2nd and 4th Mondays)  
**Rainbows, Brownies** from 17.00

#### Tuesday

**Prayer Group at Ellie's** 14.00  
**Choir** 19.00

#### Wednesday

**Contact Club** 19.30 (last Wed of each month)

#### Thursday

**Coffee and Refreshments** 10.30 - 12 noon

#### Friday

**Beavers, Cubs, Scouts** from 17.00

#### Saturday

**Social/Other Events** as announced

**Minister: Revd Lynn Clack**  
**Tel: 07774 635001**

**Secretary: Mrs. Helen Birtles**  
**Tel: 01270 589075**

**Find us on the internet:**  
**[www.crewebaptist.co.uk](http://www.crewebaptist.co.uk)**