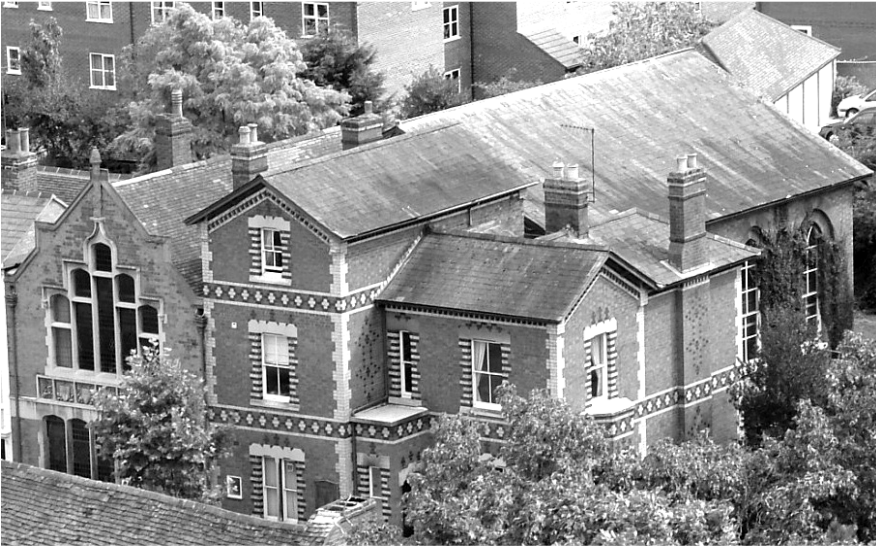


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Pershore Baptist Church



Messenger

Broad Street, Pershore, Worcestershire

September 2009

www.pershorebaptist.org

Dear Friends

Is it O.K to not be O.K?

Recently I have found myself thinking back and reflecting on life before I made a firm commitment to God. This was a time when I found myself teetering on the edge of faith, unsure and uncertain. This however was soon about to change, I was about to come into a personal and loving relationship with Jesus.

However... after making a commitment to God I still seemed to find myself unsure and uncertain! I looked at those around me and saw no signs of the same problem in their lives. For about 2 years I believed that to be a 'good Christian' your life had to be completely sorted out and everything had to be O.K.

This notion changed after reading a book by Mike Yaconelli called *Messy Spirituality*. Everything about this book challenged me to re-think this idea and re-form my own Theology.

Spirituality is not a formula: it is not a test. It is a relationship. Spirituality is not about competency: it is about intimacy. Spirituality is not about perfection: it is about connection. The way of the spiritual life begins where we are now in the mess of our broken lives. Accepting the reality of our broken flawed lives is the beginning of spirituality not because the

spiritual life will remove our flaws but because we let go of seeking perfection and instead, seek God, the one who is present in the tangledness of our lives. Spirituality is not about being fixed: it is about God's being present in the mess of our unfixedness.

So is it really O.K to not be O.K? My answer to this is a huge YES! Unfortunately somewhere along the way people have managed to put aside the miraculous and sometimes even scandalous things that Jesus did and make them seem in some way ordinary.

In Matthew 15 Jesus rebukes the Pharisees. This seems fairly ordinary at first whoever it would have been shocking at the time! He confronts the most important men of the time in front of a crowd of people and thoroughly offends them. Jesus challenges them about their hypocrisy, about the way in which they think that they are perfect and yet dishonour God.

Actually pretending everything is O.K is more dishonouring to God than admitting that there is something wrong. Unfortunately life is not always simple and things are sometimes out of our control. Being a Christian and having a relationship with God does not remove these things, it does however mean that God can be present and King of the things that get us down in life. It is time to

finally rid the world of the notion that Christian's are perfect people who have nothing to worry about and no nothing of life's worries. It is time to admit to ourselves, others and God when things are not O.K. God we are sorry for all the times that we do not bring our troubles to you, give us courage to admit our problems, give us sight to see them and wisdom to know your will. Amen.

This month's "Dear Friends" article is submitted by Chessie Coakley. Chessie is a Third Year Theology Student and about to commence her final year's studies at Cliff College in Derbyshire. She very much values our prayerful support and practical encouragement.

Do drop her a line at chessica@hotmail.com although she cannot promise to always reply straight away. Pray especially for her as she seeks to discern God's best in her next steps, especially for the choice of college and ministry placements.

And yet...

Jesus had no servants, yet they called him Master.
 Had no degree, yet they called him Teacher.
 Had no medicines, yet they called him Healer.
 Had no army, yet kings feared him.
 He won no military battles, yet he conquered the world.
 He committed no crime, yet they crucified him.
 He was buried in a tomb, yet he lives today.

Enjoying the beauty of God's creation

A couple of weeks ago Pete and I walked the Pembokeshire Coast Path, starting at St Dogmaels near Cardigan and finishing 186 miles later at Amroth, a little way beyond Tenby. I had expected the scenery to be nice but it really surpassed all expectations and was stunning: beautiful beaches, crystal clear sea and amazing rock formations. We also saw seals, birds of prey, countless butterflies and a variety of wild flowers. Although our feet were tired at the end of the day our eyes never tired of the wonderful views. The oil refineries around Milford Haven are not the most attractive aspects of the walk but they made us appreciate the coast all the more when we got back to it. The chorus that came most often into my mind was 'Our God is an awesome God' which has a good strong beat and helped me to keep a steady walking pace and the Bible passage that I reflected on most often was Psalm 121 - I lift mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help. Every day I rejoiced in the wonder of God's creation and gave thanks for the health and strength to enjoy it.

A P Taylor

Mark Tall and Jennie Seal

are getting married in London on Saturday 19th September. We pray that they have a long and happy life together.



THE RIGHT TIME

It is harvest time now. I suppose we think of harvesting wheat, corn, things like that; but do you think of sugar? A lot of the sugar we use in this country is home produced. It comes from sugar-beet which is harvested at this time of year. The roots are taken to factories where they are washed, sliced and crushed. The juice is carefully heated in a huge container and at exactly the right moment a tiny spoonful of powdered sugar is added to the boiling liquid. This tiny amount turns the whole batch into sugar crystals. The right thing and the right time coming together to make a complete change.

Moses told God that he wasn't very good at anything; others were much better, more clever than him. He said 'please send someone else' (Exodus, chapter 4) but God's reply was 'I will be with you'. With God everything is possible. God helps the impossible change into the possible - and God uses the most unlikely people and things to do it.

SWEET WORDS

Can you rearrange the letters to find the sweet things? Answers at the bottom of the page.

1. LLLYO
2. DUGEF
3. CEIRQULIO
4. ETFOEF
5. CLOTACHEO
6. LYJEL ABBY
7. ATREES GEG
8. MIPPETPENR
9. EIC MAREC
10. HALARMSLOWM



Why did the chewing gum cross the road?

Because it was stuck to the chicken!

What do bees chew?
Bumble gum!

What's a toad's favourite sweet?
Lollihops!



ANSWERS: 1) lily 2) fudge 3) liquorice
 4) toffee 5) chocolate 6) jelly baby
 7) Easter egg 8) peppermint 9) ice cream
 10) marshmallow

Operation Christmas Child 2009 – time to pack your shoe box!

Last year the generosity of adults and children throughout the UK meant that more than 1.2 million disadvantaged children in parts of Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe were able to have a Christmas present – a Christmas shoe box full of small gifts from a stranger (here) who cared enough to send it (there).

Operation Christmas Child is the world's largest children's Christmas appeal and began nearly 20 years ago. It enables anyone here in the UK to directly impact the life of a disadvantaged child overseas.

If you would like to consider buying small gifts and packing another shoe box this year, here's what to look for at the shops over the next few weeks:

Toys : small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos,

harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), etc.

School supplies: pens, pencils and sharpener, crayons or markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, colouring and picture books, etc.

Hygiene items: toothbrush, toothpaste, mild bar soap (in a plastic bag), comb, washcloth, etc.

A personal note: In a separate envelope, you may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family. (If you include your name and address, the child may write back.)

DO NOT INCLUDE: Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; chocolate or food; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snowglobes or glass containers; aerosol cans

News of the Family

Too late for last month's Messenger, at the end of July **Colin McLellan** had a fall and spent time in hospital.

Elaine Webb, wife of a former minister (Ron was minister until the late 1970's, before Arthur Williams), died at the end of July. On Ron's retirement they moved to Saffron Walden. She was 95. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

I would like to say a most sincere "Thank you" for all the prayers and considerations during my illness these past few weeks.

Sylvia Christian

Georgina Klee

Thank you (Mark) so much for preparing and taking the service, and all the effort you put into making yesterday a special day for Mum's farewell.

I wonder if you would please be kind enough to extend our warm thanks to the friends from the church who attended, and also to those who could not attend but who knew Mum and have had her and the family in their thoughts and prayers.

Thanks again,
Best wishes,
Dave

School blues

A little girl had just finished her first week of school.... "I'm just wasting my time," she said to her mother. "I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!"

For our prayer support

Jim and Grace, Diane McBride, Carol Heath, Francis and Brian Collingbourne.

Still needing our prayer support but with much cause for praise **Claudine Mee, John Gosney, Sylvia Christian, Pat Hooper and Tony Beaton.** It was lovely to see Pat and Tony back in church. Not forgetting those not able to join with us now **Mary Pugh and Les Brookes.**

"O Lord hear my prayer when I call, answer me"

Beware your bent elbow

New technology brings new ailments: have you heard of 'mobile phone elbow' yet? Orthopaedic specialists have found that people who talk on their mobiles for long periods of time can over-extend their ulna nerve, leaving them tingling or numb from their elbows to their fingers.

The nerve extends along the arm underneath the funny bone, and can be damaged when someone's elbow is bent for too long a period. Surgeons say that if you must talk for a long time on your mobile, at least switch hands regularly....

Lectionary for September

6 September 2009

Proverbs 22.1-2, 8-9, 22-23
Psalm 125
James 2.1-10, (11-13), 14-17
Mark 7.24-37

20 September 2009

Proverbs 31.10-31
Psalm 1
James 3.13 - 4.3, 7-8a
Mark 9.30-37

13 September 2009

Proverbs 1.20-33
Psalm 19
James 3.1-12
Mark 8.27-38

27 September 2009

Esther 7.1-6, 9-10; 9.20-22
Psalm 124
James 5.13-20
Mark 9.38-50

Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Dear me, the Lord got on very well before I was born, and I'm sure he will when I am dead.

CH Spurgeon.

Thursday Club

Sept 24th The meeting will be held at the George Marshall Medical Museum in the Worcestershire Royal Hospital. We shall have a talk by the curator and then a guided tour. We shall leave from outside the church at 7pm. All are welcome to join us. Please let Pam Rayner know if you would like to come, so that transport can be arranged.

Women's Own

Sept 9th	Shirley Prince from the Gideons
Tuesday Sept 15th	Autumn Missionary Rally at Milton Hall, Kidderminster
Sept 23rd	Communion Service with Rev Arthur Williams

Men's Conference - 26th September

Lenchwood Christian Centre,
Spiiten Farm, Ab Lench, Evesham, WR11 4UP
3.30pm – 8.30pm ish
£10, includes evening meal
Guest speaker David Carr

For more information contact synergy2010@live.co.uk
There's an article on Synergy 2010 in next month's Messenger

Remembering the Great War

30th Sept 2008 - 6th Sept 2009
[Imperial War Museum](#), Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7416 5320
This is your last chance to see the major exhibition commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Armistice - 'Remembering the Great War' in London. The exhibition concentrates on the personal stories of those who experienced the First World War, through the stories of more than 90 individuals. It is deeply moving, and well worth a visit. Entry is free, and it is open daily 10am to 6pm.

Would you say grace?

For apéritifs and appetisers,
entrées and desserts,
for cheese and biscuits,
coffee and mints,
for Rennies, Bismag and Gaviscon
we thank you, Lord. Amen

Weekly Church Events

Sundays	
10.30am	Family service with Sunday School Communion 3rd Sundays
6.00pm (5.00pm in winter)	Evening Worship Communion 1st Sundays
Mondays	
1.30pm	Little Fishes playgroup
7.45pm	Prayer meeting at Church
Tuesdays	
7.30pm	House Group – Main Street , Pinvin
Wednesdays	
2.00pm	Women's Own – Lower Room
7.30pm	House Group – 46 Holloway Drive
7.45pm	Prayer and Bible Study 21Ganderton Court
Thursdays	
10.30am	Baby talk
7.45pm	Deacon's Meeting 1st and 3rd Thursdays

There is a **Monthly Communion service** on a Wednesday at 2.30pm

Impact- A generation Youth Event on 4th Sunday at 7.00pm

The **Thursday Club** meets in the Lower Room at 7.30pm on the 4th Thursday of each month.

Church Badminton is between 8-9pm on 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month in Pershore High School. Details from Anne Sadler.

The **Multiple Sclerosis Group** meet on Monday mornings in the Worship area.

The **St John's Ambulance** use the Upper and Lower Rooms on Tuesday evening.

U3A Choir uses the Upper Room on alternate Wednesdays at 2.15pm.

Is the local church saving the world?

Local churches are the answer to community needs, according to a recent report published by Tearfund.

In the Thick of It, a position paper making the case for Tearfund's view that local churches are key players in international development, describes the role that local churches are taking around the world in meeting local community needs.

"We passionately believe that local churches have something extremely valuable to offer, around the world," says Matthew Frost, Chief Executive of Tearfund.

"In our experience, faith and development are inextricably linked in the developing world, and that makes the church an essential partner in delivering sustainable development at the heart of the world's poorest communities.

"In fact, we would argue that there are some parts of the world where

development simply would not happen without the local church."

In the Thick of It calls for Governments and international donors to recognise the role of faith in development and to develop strategies to engage with faith groups.

As a natural progression from delivering services through local church networks around the world, Tearfund also runs Connected Church; a project linking UK churches with those in developing countries, in order to encourage UK churches to follow best practice when supporting overseas development projects and to engage with poverty issues back home too.

"It's time to translate debate about faith and development into active partnership," says Matthew Frost.

"And it's time for the church in the West to realise fully its role and potential in tackling poverty at home and overseas."

As another Autumn gets underway....

It's September already, and the nights are fast drawing in. 2009 is speeding by – and soon retailers will begin their annoying Christmas countdown ("September 16 – only 100 shopping days left!")

September heralds the return to the 'rat-race'. Many of us expect work to be very busy over the coming months. Some of us dread even returning to work. Others of us struggle to cope with on-going family problems, or with mounting debt.

Whatever lies ahead of you this autumn, here is what the Bible says about trusting in God:

"Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shall you dwell in the land, and you shall be fed. Delight yourself in the Lord, and he shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." Psalm 37: 3 – 5

The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Proverbs 29.25

The Bible: there's nothing else like it....

Former Poet Laureate Andrew Motion says it is becoming increasingly difficult to teach English Literature because students don't know the Bible (see April 2009 Messenger). Andrew Motion was talking part in a BBC radio interview when he said that students had a sketchy understanding of once familiar stories -- a depressing trend which threatened to leave future generations unable to fully understand the works of Milton, Shakespeare or more modern writers such as TS Eliot.

Literature is one of many aspects of British culture with roots in the Bible, but Bible reading is more than a cultural exercise. For millions of people across the globe, the Bible is the main reference point for life's biggest questions: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? What is the purpose of life? How should I live? That's why many Christians make Bible-reading a part of life's daily routine. It's as vital as eating and drinking.

The Bible is unlike any other book. People who read it find that often the words come alive to them. Millions of Christians around the world can look back on several key points in their lives when it has been as if God is speaking just to them about their immediate circumstances. This shouldn't be surprising. As the Apostle Paul wrote: 'Every part of Scripture is

God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way.'

The commissioning editor of the daily devotional series *Day by Day with God* (BRF), Catherine Butcher, says that she always challenge the contributors to let the Bible speak for itself, so that God can speak into readers' lives. Wherever possible contributors she wants to use contemporary examples to bring the Bible to life so that readers can root their own lives in the Bible's teaching.

Day by Day with God is written mainly for women by Christian women at different stages in life. Some contributors are single women, some are mums or grandmothers, some are career women, several are Christian leaders or are married to a church leader, some are homemakers, some face disability, all draw strength daily from a living relationship with God.

If you would like to receive a free sample of *Day by Day with God* 01865 319700 or Email: enquiries@brf.org.uk or visit www.daybydaywithgod.net

Catherine Butcher,
Bible Reading Fellowship Editor
of *Day by Day with God*.

Education is what is left over when you subtract what you have forgotten from what you have learned.

Nick's News – an update from Nick Price: Minister in Training

It has been a year since I started my training to become a Baptist Minister at Bristol Baptist College and what a hectic and tiring year it was. I've had an extremely busy timetable of lectures as I am hoping to complete the degree course in two years and then in my third year start some post graduate studies. In my first year I have covered lots of subjects and read many, many books. Greek was both fascinating and baffling! The experience of preaching at college and at churches I have visited has been on one level very scary and on another wonderful as I have seen God use me in ways I didn't think possible.

The Baptist College works closely with Trinity Anglican College and between the two there are many respected Bible scholars and authors. The colleges are based on opposite sides of Clifton Down which provides a beautiful early morning walk from accommodation at Trinity to morning prayers at the Baptist College and back again for lectures. The tutors have been excellent in their support and I would encourage anyone considering any form of Biblical study to check out the courses on the college website at <http://www.bristol-baptist.ac.uk/index.html>.

The students all support one another across the two colleges and there is a strong sense of

unity. The libraries are full of fascinating books and my own library has grown considerably. In this God has answered my prayers by providing extra bookcases just when they were needed!

Starting college has had an impact on the whole family. I stayed in Bristol two nights a week during term time and it took us all some time to adjust to being apart. Regular involvement in activities at Pershore Baptist Church has been difficult, even attending regular Sunday worship due to preaching away many Sundays. It can sometimes feel that we are not able to participate as full members of the church, but someone recently likened being at Bible College to missionary type living, when members are sent out as representatives of the local church community.

September sees me start working one and a half days a week with Harvington Baptist Church just North of Evesham. This is a wonderfully friendly and supportive community in the heart of the village with very close links with the Harvington Youth Project. This opportunity at Harvington has been an answer to prayer as I need to demonstrate some competence as a minister to satisfy the requirements of both the college course and the Baptist Union of Great Britain to become an accredited minister.

Although the call from God to train as Baptist Minister came as a

surprise and quite a challenge to how I saw myself the call has been confirmed constantly along the way; firstly by the local church, then the Heart of England Baptist Association, Bible College and now Harvington Baptist Church. God has provided graciously for all our family's needs and we have all grown in our faith as a result of being obedient to God's call. In human terms life before college had appeared secure and safe. By trusting God and allowing Him greater say in our lives we have come to recognise the lack of security the world provides in contrast to the constant and enduring loving protection of our Heavenly Father. May God bless you as you seek to hear His voice and follow His call on your life, whatever and wherever that may be.

N. Price

A mixture of misery and education is highly explosive.

Herbert Samuel

Children are natural mimics they act like us in spite of all our attempts to teach them good manners.

Why gossip is good for women

Having that natter with your girlfriend has always FELT good, but now scientists have discovered that it really IS good for you. It seems that when women get together to compare notes about life, it boosts their levels of progesterone, a hormone which reduces their levels of anxiety and stress.

Progesterone plays an important part in social bonding, and makes women more willing to help people in trouble. "Many of the hormones involved in bonding and helping behaviour lead to reductions in stress and anxiety," says Prof Stephanie Brown of the University of Michigan. Progesterone is produced by the ovaries and at higher levels it increases a woman's desire to bond with others. This recent research, published in the journal *Hormones and Behaviour*, is the first to show that gossiping and chatting can stimulate its production.

The God-slot without God

The BBC may soon be offering a secular 'Thought for the Day' on Radio 4 in the morning. The BBC Trust is reviewing the slot, and has said a decision will be made later this year.

In recent years secular groups have claimed that the 'God-slot' (as it is sometimes known) has discriminated against non-believers. The slot is currently supplied with 'thoughts' from a range of Christian churches, as well as representation from the Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and occasionally, Jain communities. Now it may be that secularists and humanists will be included.

Dates for your diary

Sunday 13 September 09 (10.30am) - Baptismal Service - Anyone considering following the example of the Lord Jesus in this joyful step of obedience by being baptised is encouraged to speak to Mark.

Sunday 27 September 09 (10.30am) - Back to Church Sunday <http://www.backtochurch.co.uk> - Theme 'Come As You Are.'

Have a look at the following You Tube link for more inspiring information:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvtHXgDTf4s>

Sunday 4 October 09 (10.30am) - Harvest Festival - We have an opportunity to focus on the work of BMS World Mission in the Lebanon under the theme 'Seeds of Hope.'

Social Events

September 19th – **Barn Dance** – Peopleton Village Hall

October 17th – **Variety Evening** – Pershore Baptist Church

November 21st – **Quiz & Chips** – Pershore Baptist Church

For details of any of the above see Tracy Wheeler

Badminton September 4th and 18th at Pershore High School, 8-9pm – details from Anne Sadler

Before they invented drawing boards, what did they go back to?

Say it slowly

On a beautiful late summer's day, two American tourists were driving through Wales. They reached Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwyllyllantysiliogogoch (yes, that place in Wales) and stopped for lunch.

Still gazing in fascination at the place name on the sign outside, one of the tourists approached the waitress and said: "Before we order, I wonder if you could settle an argument for us. Can you pronounce where we are, very, very slowly?"

"Sure," the girl shrugged. She leaned over the counter and said: "Burr gurr king".

The UK Border Agency has done a great service to the people of Scotland in its refusal to allow the Lahore Pipe Band to perform at the bagpipe competition in Glasgow. We have no need to add a further 30 pipers to the already large number of indigenous practitioners

of this barbaric, unpleasantly loud and totally non-melodic "instrument". If only the more refined Northumbrian pipes were to be heard in their stead, Scotland would be a calmer and more pleasant place.

Letter in the Telegraph from an Edinburgh man.

Prayer Calendar for September 2009

- 1 Andrew & Anne Sadler & family
- 2 Hasnah Sheriff
- 3 Andy Smith
- 4 Simon & Julie Smith & family
- 5 Phyllis Smith
- 6 **As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another** *Proverbs 27:17*
- 7 Alan & Mary Taylor
- 8 Mike & Brenda Taylor
- 9 Pete & Ann Taylor
- 10 Elisabeth Taylor
- 11 Margaret Thomson
- 12 Richard & Alison Tisdall & family
- 13 **Let everything you say be...an encouragement** *Ephesians 4:29*
- 14 Marina Townend, family & Sheriff
- 15 Simon Townend
- 16 Peter & Penny Wagner & family
- 17 Gemma Watford
- 18 Margaret West
- 19 Rob & Tracy Wheeler & family
- 20 **You have only one Teacher, the Christ** *Matthew 23:1*
- 21 Andrew Whichman
- 22 Adrian & Ann White
- 23 Vi Wilcox
- 24 Tim & Emily Wood & family
- 25 Marc & Kate Young & family
- 26 Wesley & Muriel Adamson
- 27 **BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY**
- 28 Peter & Sheila Allies
- 29 Mary Attwood
- 30 Betty Banbury

Editorial

1. Messenger material for the October edition to be in by **noon on Sunday September 20th**. Please observe this deadline.
2. If there are any serious errors/oversights, please tell me!
3. If you would prefer a larger print version of the Messenger, have a word with me.

Thanks

Mike Taylor