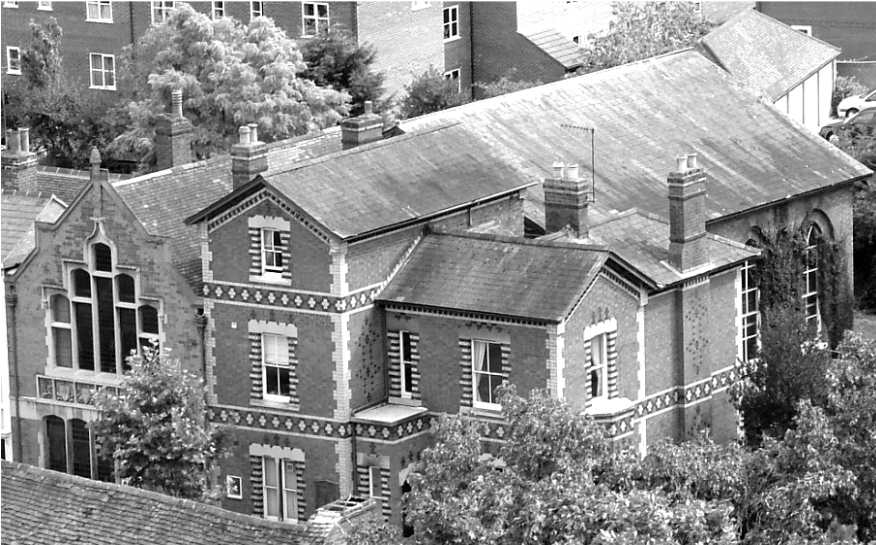


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Pershore Baptist Church



Messenger

Broad Street, Pershore, Worcestershire

October 2009

www.pershorebaptist.org

Dear Friends

As I write, I'm in the throws of preparing for a Boys Brigade Divisional Founders Day Parade Service back in Birmingham. I have many, many happy memories of my time in the BB (whose object begins 'The advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys') and it represented a formative time for me of growth in character and toward faith in Jesus. Notable among my cherished memories are those of annual camp each summer to such great places like Dyffryn with its massive Sand Dunes; to Dawlish with its challenging Pitch n Putt Golf and to Bembridge on the Isle of Wight with its force nine gales which reeked havoc on the medical tent in which I was recovering from a nasty migraine.

One recollection is particularly clear and vivid in my minds eye, imbedded I strongly suspect from every evening of every summer camp is that of us singing in unison and without musical accompaniment of the Vesper. This was usually after grated cheese on Jacobs cream crackers with a hot chocolate drink. (Anyone who knows me well, will recognise that I still love the said food items, although hot chocolate has been known to give way to a modest intake of Tawny Port.) Yet what I have come to recollect more so, is the abiding rhythm of ending each

day well, by simply and intentionally bringing everything before the Lord in whose presence and by whose Spirit 'we live, and move and have our being.'

I'm told the Vesper is a word used in ecclesiastical circles to denote the sixth of the seven canonical hours, or put more simply, the time of evening prayer. So the BB Vesper was and is a beautiful sung prayer, which I can still, after a break of over a quarter of century, recall both the words and tune, almost word perfect. It begins 'Great God who knowest each boy's need, bless now our watch and guard our sleep ...' It thereafter incorporates elements of seeking forgiveness and renewing peace with God; of bringing thanksgiving and experiencing release from what is now past, of laying all of our cares and burdens, anxieties and worries down at his feet and expressing trust in Christ for what lies ahead, known or unknown.

Now I'm not for a minute suggesting we adopt a particular set form of words although you might find that helpful as a starting point. I am encouraging us to capture the Spirit of this discipline and, by God's grace, to cultivate a godly habit of God consciously ending and indeed beginning each day well. It is something I'm confident that many of us already practice, but if not then I encourage us to explore this gold mine further.

As God leads, develop your own rhythm of grace for this important time of day. 'And the evening and the morning were the first day.' (Genesis 1:5 KJV) 'And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.' (Genesis 3:8)

For the Bible is far from silent on the important and highly relevant subject of sleep. After all, for good or ill, sleep or the lack of it impacts upon something like a third of our total life experience! Here is a sample to whet your appetite:

Psalm 127:1-2 'He gives his beloved sleep.' *Sleep is a precious gift to be received.*

Matthew 8:23-27 '... the ship was covered with waves: but he (Jesus) was asleep.' *Who is in control of your life? Do you really need to let go of some stuff and let God?*

Psalm 63:6 'On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.' *What we think about when we retire is a good yardstick of the true nature of our life of worship and discipleship?*
Psalm 4:8 'I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.'
Psalm 5:3 '... in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.' *Is not how we lie down, the essential prelude to how we can then wake in eager anticipation?*

Ephesians 4:26 'In your anger do not sin' Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, do not give the Devil a foothold ...' *Is there a back log of unresolved angst or*

accumulated debris which needs, with the Spirit's help, processing? Are there fears which need to be released, sins which need to be confessed, forgiveness to be received or given? Is tomorrow ruined before it has even started?

As Thomas Merton said '... it becomes very important to remember the quality of one's night depends on the thoughts of the day.' Similarly, Ian Stackhouse observes 'The way we live the day and, more specifically, the way we reflect back on the day, has everything to do with the way we put the day to bed. Furthermore, the way we close the day has everything to do with the way we begin the next. If I have slept well, there is every likelihood I will live well.'

My prayer is that we sleep well and live well!

Yours because we are His beloved children,

Mark

Accept, O Lord, my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding and my will. All that I am and have, you have given me; and I give all back to be governed by your will. Give me only the joy of your love and the comfort of your grace; with these I am rich enough, and I ask nothing more. Amen

Ignatius of Loyola

The Scriptures give four names to Christians: saints, for their holiness; believers, for their faith; brethren, for their love; disciples, for their knowledge.

Andrew Fuller

The story behind Harvest Festivals

Who began Harvest Festivals? Have you ever wondered? It seems pretty obvious to thank God for the harvest, but actually, it is a comparatively recent church service. Less than 200 years ago, harvest was not formally 'celebrated' in church, but in the taverns and on village greens of the countryside, with wild drinking and eating before the harshness of winter set in.

Then in 1834 an eccentric clergyman called the Rev Robert Stephen Hawker arrived in Morwenstowe, a tiny hamlet of a few farms perched high on the windswept cliffs of the north Cornish coast. The church had been without a vicar for years, but now Robert Hawker strode the lanes of Morwenstowe in a bright purple or red cassock.

Rural life in those days was harsh, and Hawker soon realised the sheer effort needed to survive in those parts. Harvest was the only thing that got people through the winter: a poor one meant starvation. Each bad year Hawker buried some of his congregation.

But the summer of 1843 was perfect, and the harvest that year was exceptionally bountiful. The people of Morwenstowe were getting set to celebrate with their usual abandon, when Hawker stepped in. Who, he asked, did they think had given them the harvest? Were they not going to even say 'thank you' to Him?

Abashed, the people came to church, and Hawker led them in giving thanks to God for his rich blessing upon them. The 'Christian' Harvest Festival had arrived – in Morwenstowe.

Nowadays Harvest Festivals are enjoyed by both regular church-goers and visitors, making it one of the most popular services in the church year.

Clocks go back

on October 24/25.

The time of the evening services has yet to be confirmed

The gender pay gap starts with your pocket money

Girls get paid less than boys even in childhood: parents give boys 10% more pocket money than girls, right up to the age of 15.

New research has found that girls under 16 are given an average of £3.42 pocket money a week, while boys in the same range get £3.80. This means that boys are given £19.76 more a year than girls.

The Co-operative Investments Child Trust Fund also found that with the onset of recession, parents are making their children (of both sexes) carry out chores for their weekly allowance. And yes, you guessed it – often the whole girls are asked to do housework, while boys work in the garden or wash the car....



KING & SAINT

If there is one date that nearly everyone knows it is 1066 when the Normans invaded England, William the Conqueror became king when he invaded the country after Edward the Confessor died.

Edward was King of England but he wasn't like most rulers of the time; he was a peace-loving man of God who put all his energies into building churches. His most famous church was Westminster Abbey. It was built on marshy land by the River Thames in London and it was Edward's chief delight to watch the building grow. And when he died he was buried in his new church – as lots of kings and queens and famous people have been in the centuries which followed.

Lots of rulers have nicknames: Edward I was the Hammer of the Scots, Richard I was the Lion-heart, all very warlike. But Edward was called the Confessor because of the way he lived his life witnessing to his belief in Christ. So each year on 13th October we remember the king who was a saint.

NICKNAMES or NOT?

All of these are nicknames of real rulers from the past – apart from 2 which I put in to confuse you. Which ones are made up?

Charles the Bald

Eric Bloodaxe

Ivailo the Cabbage

Boleslaw the Curly

William the Beetroot

Pippin the Short

Niall of the Nine Hostages

Gln the Green

Ragnar Hairy Britches

Louis the Stammerer



What do Eric the Red and Winnie the Pooh have in common?

They have the same middle name.

What did Vikings use for secret messages?

Norse Code.



Answers: all real, however unlikely, apart from William the Beetroot and Gln the Green (there was a Viking king of Dublin called Gln the Iron Knee but I don't think he was into recycling).

News of the Family

Praise and prayer for **Claudine Mee, John Gosney, Pat Hooper, Diane McBride** and many others still needing a healing touch.

Keep **Jim and Grace** very much in your prayers.

Pray God's blessing on our older members and those who are not able to join us such as **Mary Pugh and Les Brookes**.

What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.

Cameo Group

On Saturday the 5th September the ladies of the "Cameo Group" met together for a meal accompanied by their husbands, an enjoyable evening was had by all. In friendly surroundings we lingered over our meals and appreciated the friendly banter. Some husbands we have seen in a different light, and without exception the evening was a success. I would like to thank you all for your support, and making it such a lovely evening.

We are now turning our thoughts to out reach in the coming weeks, and have some ideas which you may feel you like to be part of. When more details become available we will let you know.

Events for October 2009

Friday 9th October

"The Angel" at 7.30 pm

Drink and a chat

Friday 30th October

Shoe Box Appeal

Time and venue to be arranged.

Mary Taylor

Toothsome

When I had a job delivering lunches to elderly house-bound people, I used to take my four-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, 'The tooth fairy will never believe this!'

Teacher: John, how do you spell 'crocodile?'

John: "K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L"

Teacher: "No, that's wrong"

John: "Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it."

October 14 Donation

c 484 martyr

Some Christians today have the curious idea that being a Christian guarantees a prosperous life in this world. St Paul was more realistic – throughout his epistles he urges Christians to pray for patience and endurance in this world. Donation is a timely reminder that we are called to be witnesses, and that that may not be easy.

When Hunneric, the King of the Vandals, closed all the churches in North Africa in the late fifth century, Donation and his friends were tortured, driven into the desert, and left to die of exposure. Many Christians in Muslim Africa today face similar dangers for Christ. Pray for them, that they find the courage and endurance they need.

Thursday Club

On 22nd October Christine Seal will give a talk entitled *The Poor in the 19th Century: Workhouse & Almshouse*. The meeting will begin at 7.30pm in the lower schoolroom. All are welcome.

Women's Own

Oct 7	Wesley, Muriel & Fred <i>Poetry and Music</i>
Oct 21	Mark Jennings <i>Communion service</i>

Volunteers are urgently needed to join the depleted group of people who stand at the front door of the church and greet the congregation as they arrive on a Sunday morning. It means being there at about 10am. Anyone who is willing to help please have a word with me.

Mike Taylor

The Bible is not a kind of horoscope by which to tell your fortune... I do not deny that God sometimes reveals his particular will by lighting up a verse of Scripture. But this is not his usual method, and it is highly dangerous to follow such supposed guidance without checking and confirming it.

John R W Stott

There are two kinds of friends: those who are around when you need them, and those who are around when they need you.

A prayer for morning... and for evening

O God, who divides the day from the night, separate our deeds from the darkness of sin, and let us continually live in your light, reflecting in all that we do your eternal beauty.

O God, who gives the day for work and the night for sleep, refresh our bodies and our minds through the quiet hours of night, and let our inward eyes be directed towards you, dreaming of your eternal glory.

Weekly Church Events

Sundays	
10.30am	Family service with Sunday School Communion 3rd Sundays
Time to be confirmed	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.

Statistic of the month: *Mid-week Attendance is Growing*

Church always used to be thought of as a Sunday activity. Over the last 20 years, however, that perception has changed. For one thing there is more competition now on what happens on a Sunday morning – sports fixtures, school events, band practice, shopping (although relatively few churchgoers actively shop). For some, however, the sheer pace of life has meant that Sunday has to be used to “chill out”, for family time, or to go and visit a relative. So the opportunity to go to church on a Sunday for a number of people is no longer a priority.

More than two-fifths of churches, 42%, hold some kind of service or specifically spiritual/worship activity mid-week. Numbers attending these *who do not also come on Sunday* amounted collectively to about 127,000 people in 2005, or 0.3% of the population, up from 93,000 in 1998.

The latest research across a wide sample of churches suggests the numbers now are even greater – an increase of some 18% to 150,000 people, although still 0.3% of the population. The number of churches holding such services has not increased, but the average number attending such services has.

Mid-week services are only part of the activities that churches hold mid-week. A quarter, 27%, of churches run some kind of youth activity, with over 300,000 young

people involved of whom over half just come mid-week and do not attend on a Sunday.

The 2009 research shows that the proportion of young people who come *both* mid-week and on a Sunday increases with age – 53% of those aged 11 to 14 and 59% of those aged 15 to 17 – something not previously known definitively. This is important as it indicates that mid-week youth activity is good for the long-term viability of the church. So these days, if a church doesn't have a youth activity, for any age-group, mid-week, it could well be worthwhile to start such an activity.

A number of church leaders who have found it difficult to attract volunteers have begun asking people directly if they would consider it and offering them training to help them if they would – and find folk respond positively!

Harvest Supper

When the church council asked for a report on how the Harvest Supper had gone, the church secretary was at least succinct: “More was prepared than was served. More was served than was eaten. More was eaten than was necessary.”

The limit of giving is to be the limit of our ability to give.

C S Lewis

Blessed are those who can give without remembering and take without forgetting.

Give a Bible – change a life

Life was tough for Kelvin. He had always struggled at school in Ghana's capital Accra, until he read a book which changed all that. He read stories about people who persevered when times were equally hard. The book was the Bible and through reading it Kelvin discovered a living God who was there to help him.

Kelvin is one of thousands of schoolchildren who've now been given a Bible by Bible Society of Ghana, which wants to see a whole generation of children growing up reading it. It hopes to give a million Bibles to children across the country by 2011.

Brian Dacre, Head of Supporter Relations at Bible Society in Swindon, says: ‘Funding this project has been made possible thanks to the amazing generosity of our supporters. Some 500,000 Bibles have now been given to schoolchildren who otherwise had no chance of getting one.

‘After reading his copy Kelvin began asking for God's help every day and found that school was easier. It's an amazing story of how interaction with God, through the Bible, impacted on one child's life.’ The campaign has been backed by the First Lady of Ghana, Ernestina Naadu Mills, who has been a long time supporter of Bible Society. Mrs Mills handed out the 500,000th Bible to be donated on a visit to a church in the country.

Angels Not Pumpkins!

31st October has become an evening which many people fear, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, who are uneasy about opening the door on a dark night. Many worry about the kind of trick which might be played on them.

Now a Christian company, Silent Lights, is offering free ways to help people to celebrate the positive aspects of All Hallows Eve, the night before All Saints Day.

A number of churches and families now arrange alternative parties for their children, so they can dress up as angels or in bright colours and have fun without any of the risk or offence of trick or treating. An outline of craft ideas based around the theme of Light is available free from www.silentlights.co.uk

Many people have ‘trick or treaters’ arrive at their front door. Silent Lights has designed a gift tag which can be attached to some gift wrapped treats. The gift tag has a simple message stating the Christian view point. There is space on the tag to print your own message or local organisation contact details. Sheets of gift tags and leaflets can be downloaded free from the ‘get involved’ section of their website www.silentlights.co.uk/tags

For anyone who likes to bake, Silent Lights even offers a pumpkin muffin recipe.

Prayer Calendar for October 2009

- 1 Tony Beaton
- 2 Stan & Joan Bell
- 3 Ema Birch & family
- 4 Praise the Lord for the Harvest**
- 5 Mary & Norman Bowley
- 6 Nick Bridges
- 7 Les Brookes
- 8 Peter & Wendy Burfitt & family
- 9 Miriam Burton
- 10 David & Brenda Cameron-Mitchell
- 11 Make the most of every opportunity**
- 12 Eamonn & Kathy Canning & family
- 13 Ann Chaplin
- 14 Stephen & Cindy Chidlow & family
- 15 Sylvia Christian
- 16 Chessie Coakley
- 17 Brian & Frances Collingbourne
- 18 Be still, and know that I am God**
- 19 David & Vera Davies
- 20 Lorraine Dawes
- 21 David & Sandra Dixson
- 22 Hilda Everitt
- 23 Pete Everitt
- 24 Jim & Grace Fasey
- 25 Casting all your Care upon Him**
- 26 Marshall & Helen Faizey & family
- 27 Jimmy & Rosie Flanders
- 28 Philip & Jean Gelaky
- 29 Tracy Genever & family
- 30 Angela Godwin
- 31 John & Doreen Gosney

Colossians 4:5

Psalms 46:10

1 Peter 5:7

Editorial

1. Messenger material for the November edition to be in by **noon on Sunday October 18th**. 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

Dates for your diary

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.'

Sunday 11 October 7pm - We are privileged to be hosting Saltmine Theatre Company at Number 8 for a presentation of Marlowe's challenging play, Faustus. This comes highly recommended and is an excellent opportunity to invite unchurched friends and family to a powerfully life challenging production which is touring major provincial theatres as well as the Edinburgh Fringe.

'John Faustus has made a deal. Whatever he desires, anything can be his. All he has to give in exchange - is his soul. Having taken the deal he enjoys his new-found power: wealth and celebrity, women and drugs, it all comes so easily but as his time runs out Faustus knows he's made a mistake. Can he be saved? Or has he just lost the biggest gamble of his life? Adapted from Christopher Marlowe's classic script by Richard Hasnip this incredible play is brought to you as you've never seen it before.'

Social Events

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

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

For details of any of the above see
Tracy Wheeler

Badminton October 2nd and 16th
at Persore High School, 8-9pm –
details from Anne Sadler

The Golden Years!!

My wife said, "What are you doing today?"

I said, "Nothing."

She said, "You did that yesterday."

I said, "I wasn't finished."

Don't Give In

When the odds appear all stacked
against you

And you feel you have reached your
wits end,

Don't throw in the towel or give up the
ghost,

For with courage you'll make it my
friend.

When it seems that you're destined for
failure

And that maybe your last chance has
gone,

When you've come to the end of your
tether,

Then just tie a knot and hang on.

For soon you'll see things will get better
And a loss can be turned to a win,

And the reason you are able to
triumph,

Is because, you just didn't give in.

Colin Hammacott

All you need to know about "SYNERGY 2010"

Where did the idea come from? You may recall HOPE 2008 which was a nationwide initiative during 2008 to make people aware of the love of Jesus and the hope which he brings. Hope 08 Evesham was possibly the first time for many years where churches of different "brands" put aside their differences, concentrated on their core beliefs and worked together to demonstrate the Christian gospel in action. It was a great success – people who were from a non-church background saw churches working together in a positive way all over the nation. Only recently have we heard of local people coming into personal relationship with Jesus as a result of HOPE 08. During 2008 the churches involved each contributed a sum of money to fund the event which comprised, Christian music concerts for young people, a family day with 1000's of burgers and hot dogs being given away (many people found the concept of truly free, no strings attached very difficult to understand), various children's activities, lunches for those more mature in years and a service of celebration on the final day.

What does it mean? Synergy focuses on the fact that "Together we can do more". For example; if two horses can pull 9000 pounds, how much can four horses pull? Surprisingly four horses can pull

more than 30,000 pounds! When we as Christians set aside our differences and focus on the message of Jesus together, we can do more.

Why do it? Whether we like it or not, people generally do not have a high opinion of church and often do not want to come to church to hear the gospel message. That leaves us with a problem: How do we tell them about Jesus? We need to present the message of Jesus in an environment where they feel comfortable.....we need to go to them rather than expect them to come to us.

When is it? 2 to 6 June 2010

Where is it? Crown Meadow Evesham.

What's happening? Synergy has started already with awareness events already being held. Members of the Synergy steering group have been visiting churches in the local area to share the vision for 2010. There is a men's conference planned for 26 September 2009 and women's conference for 14 November 2009. On Saturday 1 August 2009 we gave away 1000 doughnuts and Synergy information slips to shoppers in the town. Many remembered us doing this last year and gave them a more positive opinion of Christians. For the main event in 2010, there will be two youth focussed events with themed concert nights, a children's holiday club, Dan Magness the football freestyler world record holder will

be there, Dougie Dud Dug (Doug Horley) and his children's team, Mark Ritchie who uses humour to communicate the gospel and many other events yet to be planned.

Who's going to pay for it? The event will be funded differently to HOPE08. We honestly believe that there is money out there to fund this. Our vision is to present a high quality event which is honouring to God. Rather than funding coming directly from churches, we are asking Christians within churches to commit to the event by paying a sum per month towards it. Your church treasurer has details. for further information

For more information speak to Keith or Janet Southwell or visit the SYNERGY website:

synergy2010.co.uk

Choice

A father was standing at the edge of a cliff admiring the sea below, the sandwiches clutched in his hand. His son approached him and tugged at his coat. "Mum says it is not safe here," the boy said, "and that you are either to come away, or else give me the sandwiches."

The best thing to give to your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to a father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity.

Benjamin Franklin

Winners never quit and quitters never win.

Theological colleges full-up!

The total number of Theological or Bible Colleges where you can study full-time in the UK is 101, four fewer than in 2006. If 2009 was like 2008 when the new academic years started this autumn, these Colleges collectively offered some 8,300 places for students, and some 8,200 students took those places up – 99% full!

Of these 101 colleges, 14 are Anglican, 11 are Roman Catholic, nine are Baptist, and there are Methodist, United Reformed, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Salvation Army, Seventh-day Adventist and other denominations, but the largest group are the Interdenominational Colleges, which also include a dozen or so Universities offering relevant specialist courses.

Three-fifths, 61%, of the places offered are for either men or women, but a quarter, 23%, of theological places are only for men, and one-sixth, 16%, are only for women.

As elsewhere, the costs of training have gone up by well over the rate of inflation these past two years.

The average cost for accommodation and tuition is now £6,200 per annum, with some considerably more than that. The cost of obtaining a suitable qualification will not give most students much change, if any, from £20,000.