

Link

For the parishes of Bunbury & Tilstone Fearnall



June
2017

We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails Bertha Calloway

Bunbury Church Fête - a record breaking success...



More than 1,200 people enjoyed the fun & sunshine at this years' event.

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Who we are



TIM HAYWARD

Vicar

St Boniface, St Jude's,
Calveley

t: 01829 261511

e: revtimhayward@gmail.com

VICKI RILEY - Parish Administrator

t: 01829 260579

e: bunburyparishoffice@gmail.com

For pastoral visiting team, please call
Amber Middlemiss on 01829 261437 or
email bunburypastoralteam@gmail.com

St Boniface

Churchwardens

David Cox 01829 261349

David Kendrick 01829 733254

Youth Worker

Abby Cooper 07926 364957

Organist

Andrew Dean 261222

Treasurer

John Mason 733971

Flowers

Margaret Bourne 260944

St Jude's

Churchwardens

Elizabeth Marren 01270 528556

Vacancy

Secretary

Jenny Brooks 01829 730225

Organist

Ann Badrock 260343

Calveley

Churchwardens

David Cox 01829 261349

David Kendrick 01829 733254

Secretary

Yvonne Wood 01270 528442

The Link

Please contact us if you would like
to advertise your business or to send
us your news, views and pictures.

Advertising:

parishlinkads@gmail.com

Editorial: Joy Parker

t: 01829 260032

e: parishlinkeditor@gmail.com

Graphic design: Lucy Oates

You can also read The Link online at:
www.stbonifacebunbury.org.uk

Community news

We welcome **Tallulah Maisie May Lloyd**, daughter of **Paul and Carolyn**, who was baptised at St Boniface on 30 April.



Congratulations to **Mike and Hilary Watson** on the arrival of grandson **Charlie Bear Jago Watson**, son of **Andrew and Alice**.

Ted Fowles, who has played the Last Post at Remembrance services for the last 65 years, ever since he was 16, was



delighted to see the Queen and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, and attended with his daughter, Yvonne Wood.

Bunbury had the honour of hosting the **Archdeacon's Visitation**, this year. This is a service where Church Wardens and Sidespeople are admitted. Two whole Deaneries (our Malpas Deanery and Chester Deanery) of Church Wardens and Sidespeople filled the church and had refreshments afterwards. Many thanks to **Joyce Buxton and Debbie Shears** for organising the arrangements for this large number of people.

Vicky Barrett, our new Curate, will be ordained at Chester Cathedral on Sunday 2 July. If you would like to support Vicky at her Ordination, there will be a bus from St Boniface at 8.45am. There will be the usual 8am Holy Communion at Bunbury on that day, but no later services at Calveley or Bunbury. If you would like to reserve a place on the coach, please contact our Parish Administrator on 01829 260579 e:bunburyparishoffice@gmail.com

Many thanks to all who supported **Beeston Fête**. It was a lovely day and a huge success, raising £11,000 (£8,721 net), for Bunbury church beating even 2015's record! (Report and photos on p8).



Many thanks to all who supported **Calveley Summer Fayre**. It was a most enjoyable and successful event, raising over £900 for Calveley Church. (Report and photos p10)

Rev Tim, Jonny Arnold, Nick Mould and Chris Jones, all Dads from Bunbury School, are Middle Aged Men who ran the Windermere Marathon on 21 May, the same day as the Bunbury Fun Run. They ran in memory of Brian Stansfield (a wonderful husband, dad and grandad), who sadly passed away this year. They raised money for the Motor Neurone Disease Fund - amount not confirmed as we go to press - and would be grateful for any further sponsorship. Their just giving page can be found at: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jonnynickytimmychrissy Rev Tim is also running for the new school running track.

The next meeting of **Bunbury Gardening Club** will be a visit to Stonyford Cottage, Stonyford Lane, Oakmere on Tuesday 20 June. Meet at the property at 6.30pm. Admission £4.50. Further details from Margaret Bourne 01829 260944.

Margaret and Mike Bourne will again be opening their garden at Long Acre, Wyche Lane, Bunbury CW6 9PS for Charity under the National Gardens Scheme on Sunday 18 June from 2pm to 5pm. Tea and cakes, plant stall. Admission £4-50 for adults, children free. Charities supported include Marie Curie, Macmillan Cancer Support, Hospice UK and the Carers Trust.

On 8 June **Bunbury WI** will have a talk by Yvonne Harris on the history of Waitrose.

Bunbury Village Day goes 'On Safari' on Saturday 24 June. With a climbing wall, rodeo bull, segways, birds of prey, Punch and Judy, donkeys, Rose Queen and King, the parade, fantastic food and

drink plus lots more, there will be plenty to keep everyone entertained. The Village Day Team look forward to seeing you all. You can follow us on Facebook: search 'Bunbury Village Day'. See you all on the day!

St Jude's Summer Lunch will be on 9 July at Tiresford, by kind permission of Susannah Posnett.

The Children's Society thank all box holders for the £260 collected this year.

On 23 April **Claire Dickens** ran her first ever marathon raising funds for Breast Cancer Now. It took her just over 5 hours to complete. "I'd like to say a massive thank you



to everybody who has supported me so far". She has raised over £5,000 with matching from St. James's Place Foundation the total is £10,000. If you'd like to support Claire her page is still open for donations. <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/ClaireDickens>

Bunbury Bowling Club is looking for new members. Club practice is Monday afternoon 1.30 - 4.30pm and Thursday evening. They have some new members this year, but the green is open to all who want to 'give it a try'. Free coaching is available to all. Info: Dave Evans 01829 262514.

Bunbarians will be sad to learn of the death of **Colin Knowles**, who was Parish Clerk to Bunbury Parish Council, for many years. He enjoyed a happy retirement in Surrey.



Please could you let the church know, if you saw somebody damaging the step at Bunbury Memorial Gates.

Our prayers for June

We pray for all who are ill, especially **Hazel Wilkinson, Jenny Brooks, Judy Morris** and **Blanche Wilgose**. We give thanks for **Mary Evans'** recovery. We also pray for all who are mourning a loved one, including the families of **Nora Pope** and **Colin Knowles**.

A THANK YOU..

Mary Evans would like to thank so many kind people for their cards and good wishes during her stay in hospital. She is glad to be home in Bunbury again.

TIM HAYWARD Your Vicar



I am writing this short article still wet from the water fight I have just had with the Year 6s after

their dreaded SATs. Three members of staff and myself versus 25 young people was hardly a fair fight, but it was wonderful to see the Year 6's so happy and relaxed after what has been a testing few weeks for them all.

We all have to face exams or tests or inspections throughout our lives, whether it be at school or later in life at work. We approach them differently, but often you can feel the stress levels rise, along with the blood pressure, and you begin to wonder is it really worth all the hassle. Unless you are super confident, you begin to doubt yourself and/or the people around you. There tends to be something you're not sure about, and you spend the time that is left filling in the gaps.

It takes a fair amount of skill and mental gymnastics to get yourself in a good frame of mind: wanting to be the best you can be and to thrive under pressure, whilst at the same

Exam Time!

time if things go wrong, being able to move on, to be kind to yourself and others, and to learn from the experience!

My prayer for the Year 6s, and indeed our teenagers taking their GCSE's and 'A'Levels at this time, is that they might see the bigger picture, and that their faith in God and in themselves will help to inspire them. (I must say a brilliant letter went out to all of the Year 6's and their parents and carers from the school reminding them that SATs is only one measure of the kind of young people they are becoming.) May they see a God who wants the very best for them, a God who believes in each one of us, and who will help us to be the people he has created us to be.

And yes, this will mean hard work for the most part, but may we never miss an opportunity to relax and to have fun. My Super Soaker is empty and needs more water!

God bless all our work and play.

Return of Complimentary Drop-in Surgery for your Finances

Local Chartered Financial Planners, Illingworth Seddon, are restarting a complimentary drop in surgery for local residents of Tattenhall and the surrounding areas, which will take place in their new offices just off the High Street in Tattenhall.

The surgery is to provide access to expert advice on a range of financial topics such as Pensions, savings and investments, life insurance and Inheritance Tax Planning without the need to pay any initial consultation fees.

The service has been created to try and encourage the public to consider their financial situation more and put plans in place early to protect their current and future wishes.

The drop ins are on the 1st Monday of every month. There is a lunch time session between the hours of 12pm-2pm, along with an evening session from 5pm-6pm for those who would like to attend after work. There is no need to book an appointment for the drop in sessions, however you may wish to call ahead to arrange a specific time slot.

The new offices are located in the Old Mill, Old Mill Place, Tattenhall, and you can book an appointment by calling 01829 771707, emailing illingworthseddon@sjpp.co.uk or simply turn up on the day.



Church diary for June

Sunday 4 June	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Holy Communion (with Sunday School) 10.30am Family Worship 11.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley	Wednesday 21 May	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Wednesday 7 June	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface	Sunday 25 June	9.30am Holy Communion 10.30am Family Communion	St Jude's St Boniface
Sunday 11 June	9.30am Holy Communion 10.30am Family Communion	St Jude's St Boniface	Wednesday 28 June	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Wednesday 14 June	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface	Sunday 2 July	8.00am Holy Communion 10.00am Ordination of new curate	St Boniface Chester Cathedral
Sunday 18 June	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Family Worship 10.30am - Family Worship 11.00am Family Worship 6.00pm Evensong	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley St Boniface	Wednesday 5 July	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface



Pat Edgley Ellis

Reader

Make hay while the sun shines

There is a magical quality to the light in June.

As we approach the summer solstice, light early mornings and long warm days gliding effortlessly into soft dusky evenings, imagine the blessings of this extra light for the farmers of long ago getting in the hay with nothing but scythes and rakes, to prepare for darker days ahead.

For Christians, this is a time of preparation, too, preparing us for taking God's message out into the world.

Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came in tongues of fire on Jesus' disciples, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, and Trinity, when we look at the unfathomable mystery of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus, our Saviour, has died, risen, ascended into heaven and now pours down upon us all his precious gift of the Holy Spirit, his light, wind and fire to illumine and inspire us to live our lives a little bit better.

*Holy Spirit of God,
Baptize me with your Grace
Like early morning dew.*

*Pour on me your Holy Fire
Like the burning sun of noon.*

*Blow through me your Wind of Change
Like a sudden storm on a clear day.*

*Shine in my life
With your glorious light,*

Illuminate my path with your Holy Word

*That, each and every day,
I may see you more clearly,
Follow you more nearly and
Love you more dearly.*

In the name God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



THE MANE EVENT!

JOIN US ON SAFARI
BUNBURY
VILLAGE DAY
24 JUNE 2017



PARADE 12.30PM AT THE CHURCH
GATES 1.00PM - JUBILEE PLAYING FIELDS
HURST CLOSE, BUNBURY CW6 9QP

ATTRACTIONS • STALLS • RAFFLE • BBQ • BAR
ADULTS £2.50 CHILDREN FREE

NO DOGS, EXCEPT GUIDE DOGS

www.bunburyvillage.info

Burland Hall Country Fair

Burland, Nantwich CW5 8NE

Sunday 11th June 2017, 12 noon

Help your
local Hospice



- Beautiful grounds and lake setting
- Rodney Denson wines & spirits, a Pimms bar & The Brew Foundry micro brewery
- Foods stands or pre-cooked afternoon teas
- Woodfire pizza oven & C. J. Allen's sausage sizzle
- Live musicians, 78's DJ & outdoor dance floor
- A complimentary therapist tranquility garden
- A vintage & classic car show
- Fly Ball demonstration by Chuffs finalists
- Punch & Judy & circus workshop
- Traditional Edwardian country games & stands
- Demonstration marquee including floristry, baking & animal first aid
- A shopping mall marquee with over 20 stands

There is also a fabulous picnic ball on Friday 9th!

For more information, please contact our events team on 01606 555688 or visit

stlukes-hospice.co.uk/burlandhall

Book your entry tickets in advance to save money and get priority parking

St Lukes Hospice

St Lukes Cheshire Hospice

T 01606 555246 E Enquiries@stlukes-hospice.co.uk

St Luke's Cheshire Hospice, Rosewood House, Greenway, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 3BA

www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 11220

Congratulations to Eric Wallington!

On 24 June Eric Wallington will celebrate his 89th birthday and enter his 90th year. (We are amazed because he certainly doesn't look it and we'd love to know his secret). Eric has penned a column for the Parish Link for many years, but has decided that the time has come to lay down his pen. The Parish Link and the members of all three congregations would like to thank Eric for all his hard work and for coming up with something new and insightful every month. We will miss your contribution, Eric, but wish you a happy retirement and a very happy birthday.

Update on Friends of Bunbury Churchyard

Towards the end of April a group of twelve or so volunteers came along to the first working party in response to the "Friends of the Churchyard" initiative. Amazingly, the weather was fantastic, clear blue skies and sunshine, so a lunchtime BBQ was an added bonus. The work focused on some specific tasks which had been identified in the new churchyard: weeding, cleaning and edging the path in the new churchyard, improving access to the sheds which were in danger of being overcome by creepers and tidying and clearing the area near the entrance to the churchyard. In addition to clearance of garden waste several refuse bags of general rubbish - bottles, cans etc and, ironically, a sign saying "No Tipping" were cleared away. A big thank you to all who came to help and to Derek Burrows, Si Lees-Jones and Andrew Bird who so kindly loaned their trailers and wagons to clear away all the waste. This was the first working party and further dates are to be organised. In addition to this work our regular maintenance contractor will be visiting the new churchyard more regularly to help us maintain the churchyard to a standard we can all be proud of. If you are interested in joining the next working party please contact Vicki Riley, Parish Administrator at bunburyparishoffice@gmail.com

Parish Council Pursuits

On 10 May, the Parish Council held its AGM, followed by an Ordinary Meeting. Ward Councillor, Michael Jones and three parishioners attended.

Election of Officers:

Ron Pulford - Chairman

Nick Parker - Vice Chairman/Playing Fields Committee Chairman

Ron Pulford - Tree Warden/Sadlers Wells Woodland Trustee

Pam Brookfield - Footpaths/Police Liaison

Leila Potter - Press Officer for local publications

Michael Thomas - Bunbury Charities

Other Councillors are: **Tony Greco, Gary McCormack, Graham Griffin, Mark Ireland-Jones** and **Chris Green**.

Ron Pulford gave an excellent Chairman's Report, covering the last twelve months, Nick Parker reported on Playing Fields issues and our Clerk, Marilyn Houston, delivered her report on Council assets. The Parish Council then continued with an

Ordinary Meeting. The old playground was discussed in depth. The Parish Council is planning to combine it with the current car park, to provide more parking spaces, to serve the village centre. A local tarmac company has been consulted and is providing further advice. Speedgun training for our local 'Speed Watch' team should take place soon. Strutt and Parker, the agents for Town Field on Wyche Lane, have assured us that the overgrown hedge, which is obstructing the view towards the church, will be cut down to its previous height after the nesting season finishes. Two new residents have moved into the area at the village end of Vicarage Lane, a pair of Mallard ducks, a welcome sight each morning as they waddle up and down the road. Wishing you a happy summer and don't forget the suntan cream.

Leila Potter (Press Officer)

The copy deadline for the July edition of the Link is Friday 16 June. The magazine should be in church: Friday 28 June.

Calveley Summer Fayre



Calveley Summer Fayre was a huge success and drew quite a crowd. Apart from the usual white elephant stall, bookstall, tombola, raffle and café, there was a lovely big stall of local produce all 'Made in Cheshire'. This ranged from an array of home-made cakes to cheeses made in Calveley, including one called 'Volcano', with added chilli. There was bottled spring water from the Peckforton hills, 'The Calveley Cook Book', hand-made greetings cards, locally produced fruit juice and many other delights. Keen gardeners could enjoy a garden stall, with very competitively priced filled garden tubs, seedlings, seeds and garden equipment. The atmosphere was completed with summery music played on the church organ.



Bunbury's first Airbnb opens its doors



Lucy Oates, owner of Garden Cottage in Bunbury, writes: I grew up in a house which always had guests. Whether it was visitors staying for a couple of days or people for dinner, my Mum (a true Northern Irish

hostess) made anyone who walked through our doors feel welcome.

It's something I've always tried to emulate since setting up my own home, and at the back of my mind I've had a pipe-dream of running my own B&B. So, when we bought our home in Bunbury which had its own annex, I started getting excited about the possibility of making those pipe-dreams a reality. However, we also had our son shortly after moving to Bunbury, and I realised trying to serve up full cooked breakfasts every morning with a young child to look after might be biting off more than I could chew! That's when the idea of Airbnb came into play. Airbnb is a global community of hosts who lease or rent short-term lodgings such as apartments and holiday homes. It has over 3,000,000 lodging listings in 65,000 cities and 191 countries - and now (after a LOT of hard work, mainly by my husband) Bunbury has its first listing on Airbnb - Garden Cottage.

Garden Cottage is two bedroom self-contained cottage with its own fully equipped kitchen and private garden. It has a very spacious double master bedroom and the second bedroom can be set up as either another double bed or two singles. We wanted to make the cottage as versatile as possible so we've designed it to be both child and pet friendly. The lounge has a working open fire, perfect for keeping cosy on winter nights, and guests who have spent the day exploring the local walks can unwind with a steaming hot bath.

We hope Garden Cottage will feel like a house away from home to guests and we welcome any locals who are looking for a place for family or friends to stay to get in touch. To see the Garden Cottage's listing on Airbnb, visit:

www.airbnb.co.uk/rooms/17759492?location=Cheshire

To find out more, email Lucy Oates: lucy.m.oates@googlemail.com



The Journeyman Theatre moves on



Johnny Gillett (aka The Journeyman) writes:

It with some sadness that I announce the closure of The Journey Man Theatre (JMT) in Bunbury. After nine years of offering drama clubs and Speech and Drama sessions, we have now supported our last cohort of children through their drama exams.

It was soon after my creation of The Journey Man, as a storytelling persona, that in the autumn of 2008 I set up a small drama club in Bunbury for just a five week trial period. Parents heard about it and more children joined. Others requested solo sessions. And a year later, I was asked to take over the Speech and Drama work at Bunbury Primary School. Things just grew and grew from there. Along the way, I was joined by whole host of fantastic people to help me the increasing number of sessions, which for some years covered 22 different schools, as well as giving me the chance to take up teaching and performance opportunities abroad. It was here in Bunbury I developed my unique Shakespeare project, which has now been picked up in Asia. Since 2009, we have seen almost 200 different children pass 480 exams; 65% at Distinction level. And there have been countless children joining our weekly drama clubs across a number of schools in the area or performing with us annually at Nantwich Skoolzfest.

My greatest memories from over the years include:

- seeing groups of children who did not initially think much of each other, become a supportive troupe able to present a show with minimal adult support.

- watching children who were nervous and shy quickly grow in confidence and stand along holding the attention of an audience of over 100 people
- working with children, who would be known as 'Special Needs', to find their voice and be as much a part of the company as anyone else
- children and teenagers developing a love for poetry, Shakespeare and Ancient Greek Theatre

It has truly been an honour to be part of these young people lives, but now it is time for me to pack up the props bag. It has become increasingly challenging to provide JMT sessions in schools, both due to the demands now on the school day and the difficulty to find good drama practitioners. I have also gained many more opportunities for my work in Asia, which makes it difficult for me to be in Cheshire regularly enough to support the sessions here. Although it is sad to see something end, it has been a great journey and I look forward to the next exciting chapter in the adventures of The Journey Man.

A big thank you then to everyone who has been part of the journey - my colleagues, the teachers, the parents, grandparents, uncles and aunties - and of course, the children themselves. It's been an incredible nine years!



Beeston Castle Fête



1,282 people came to this year's Beeston Fête, which was a resounding success, on what developed into a lovely sunny day. They were able to enjoy the dog show, a dog display team, music by the Holy Bandits, hoopla, lucky dip (and even a doggy lucky dip), book stall, various refreshment stalls and an amazing tea tent. Sarah Thompson, organiser of the Beeston Fête writes: "I did feel that the layout and ingredients this year came together to make a really successful day. The afternoon's burst of sunshine swelled arrivals, though sadly they had missed the goat race. K9200, the dog display team, were excellent and kept their show light hearted and entertaining. We managed the goats extremely well, I fear that next year people want more races and two sessions of them - spells trauma all round! It is a lovely day where the parish comes together working towards such a great result, I am always delighted and proud to be part of that team. We have raised an amazing £11,000 (£8721 net) for the church which is a record, certainly according to me, in the 17 years I have been involved with the fête. Thank you for all your support throughout the day."



Church Away Day Continued - 7 Marks of a Healthy Church

One of the vicars of a growing church was asked "to what do you attribute the success of this church?"

The vicar struggled to answer. Whenever he mentioned something he was always aware of other factors too. Growing a healthy church is rather like baking a delicious cake. Good ingredients are a vital start. Then comes getting the proportions and mix right and knowing how long and at what temperature to cook it for. So with healthy churches, as indeed with healthy relationships, it is the interplay of a number of factors that enables things to work well... So here are the 7 ingredients / marks:

Mark 1 - Energised by faith

Whilst all the marks are important this one rightly stands at the head of the list and is the entry point into health for any church, since from it all the other marks flow.

Some churches lack any internal energy. Everything is an enormous effort. As one person puts it: 'our church is like a wheelbarrow, nothing moves unless you push it.' Other churches have energy, but not necessarily from an entirely healthy source. Energy can come from making sure our group keeps control, or from a desire to keep things as they are, or just simply to keep things going. Survival is a powerful motivator. But where there is motivation only from secondary matters it will often be seen in competing personal agendas and power struggles.

In a healthy church people want to serve God and one another, the focus is on helping people to encounter the presence of God. Joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, will be in evidence. Healthy churches are not afraid to wrestle with how the Bible relates to life today and how it can and should be allowed to affect our values and lives. Faith is not assumed, but spoken about and seen as central to the task of the church.

Mark 2 - Outward-looking focus

One of the striking characteristics of healthy churches is that they are not ghetto churches, hiding from life. Church is not the be-all and end-all of their existence. It is God's love for all of creation that motivates them.

Healthy churches embody the truth that we must stop starting with the church. The starting point for these churches is the world around and the whole of life. Churches of this sort do not need to know all the answers or always be the ones who solve problems. They are able to offer what they can and are willing to work as partners alongside others, having a considerable knowledge of the local area.

For the vast majority of lay people, the main focus of their ministry lies in the opportunities presented by their everyday responsibilities.

Healthy churches recognise this and work to equip church members to live their faith in the whole of life.

Churches with these characteristics are deeply attractive because their focus is not on themselves and their programmes but on God's goodness.

Mark 3 - Seeks to find out what God wants

At one stage, the term 'clear sense of direction' was used'. In our western world we feel much more at home with that sort of language: about how we are sorting the church out and getting it properly organised. But once we get into that mindset we all too easily lapse into letting our own preferences set the church agenda. This is why they decided to revert back to the more disturbing wording... 'seeks to find out what God wants'.

This mark makes clear that the Church is first and foremost God's church. It is his Church, long before it is 'my church' or 'our church'.

Some churches are so confident they know what God wants that they have long abandoned honest or earnest seeking after God's will. Such a know-it-all attitude is a sign of disease, not health, in a church. There is a world of difference between Christ's promise that the truth would set us free and an attitude that indicates that the truth has made us right.

Where churches are seeking to discover God's will rather than get their own way, there is usually plenty of prayer, personal and corporate, conversation and consultation about the church's direction. An unhurried approach is the typical approach.

Mark 4 - Faces the cost of change and growth

Change is a sign of life and growth - it is a fact of life. All of us are changing all the time; indeed not a single atom now contributing to the make up of our physical being was part of our body seven years ago.

A nun once said 'real change does not happen on an electrical timescale but a horticultural one'. Real change takes time to grow and develop.

Our calling is to improvise in ways which surprise and delight and yet ring true with the past.

Broadly speaking that improvising comes in two shapes, the evolutionary and the revolutionary, and it's good to be alive to both those options. We see it today in the larger scene of the life of the church. The evolutionary mode is about the Church operating in inherited mode, making church as we know it work in today's changing world. The revolutionary way is to start with a new group in a new setting and work out together how to nourish and express our faith. Often a combination is required.

Trees and even skyscrapers bend with the wind. Human beings make choices as they adapt to changed circumstances. So too do healthy churches. They are responsive rather than rigid and ploughing on regardless come what may.

Mark 5 - Operates as a community

In today's culture, people value relationships and want to belong, typically doing so in small, informal and fluid networks. The church that functions as a community is more likely to engage with people today than a church that operates in organisational mode. This may well explain the research that small churches are doing better than large ones. Small churches naturally operate as communities, whilst large ones easily feel like an organisation. Not surprisingly, one of the characteristics of flourishing larger churches is that they make considerable use of small groups. They have found ways of building the value of the small into the structure of the large, thus enabling them to operate as a community.

Leadership is key here - despite the considerable range of personality types evident among the leaders, what was evident was that their style was an enabling one. There were no one-man or one woman bands. They celebrated the gifts of others rather than feeling threatened by them. There has been a shift in the role of clergy from being providers of answers to formulators of questions that the church needs to address. Healthy churches are highly participative and recognise lay ministry as key.

Mark 6 - Makes room for all

A number of years ago the Pentecostal church in South America did some research into why some people who started coming to church only came for a few weeks and then stopped whilst others became full and long-term members. They came up with a simple principle about the importance of forming significant relationships with people who were already members. The statistics were quite stark. Of those newcomers who formed a significant relationship with six members of the church in their first six months of attending the church, 98 per cent stayed. For those who made no significant relationship, only 2 per cent stayed. That is the heart of welcome, opening our hearts, ourselves and our lives to others. Relationships are key to a healthy church.

In earlier forms of this mark the wording used was 'make room for others'. Some who had been practising this mark for years pointed out the danger of the terminology. The point they made was that, if we see different groups as 'others' in an 'us' and 'them' dynamic, then any incorporation will be partial. Although they find a place in church, they will remain 'the others'. This is why we changed to the present wording to communicate this sense of the church as a rich and diverse community, held together by the love of God and one another.

Mark 7 - Does a few things and does them well

This is the mark that most surprised us and uncovered in us an unconscious assumption that growing churches were simply churches running faster than others, being more energetic and active than most. What we discovered was very different. Here were churches and people relaxed and comfortable with what they were doing. They were focused rather than frantic. These churches were not primarily distinguished by doing extraordinary things or by doing a vast number of different things, but by doing a quality job with the basic things. Quietly efficient seems to be their style.

In contrast, in other churches, too much is taken on, done in a rushed and slapdash way, so what is done does not really work. The result of this approach is the feeling 'if only we did a few more things' all would be well. In truth the answer is to do less and do it better, but that seems far removed from the culture of such churches.

Laughter is one of the marks of a healthy church and one could add tears, for healthy churches have an attractive and real humanity and are not trying to impress or achieve

Barbara Croley sees how Save the Family goes music and dance

Barbara Croley writes: Seeing a note on a recent weekly church notice sheet for StF, I decided to go to the Music and Dance Evening. When I arrived, there were very few parking spaces left, so I thought - this is going to be good! In the reception area there was a lot of noise and a lot of tables and chairs. At the serving hatch, there was a choice of chicken curry, lamb stew and a pasta dish, all served with rice, salad, wonderful fresh bread and loads of nibbles. On another table there were enough chocolate biscuits to fill an army, fresh fruit salad and various cakes. The fee was £5.

I then went into a beautiful large hall and the concert began. Luca Darlington sang two songs from current popular films, Joe Sealy sang a selection of Frank Sinatra songs and then the children who live at Cotton Hall (aged between 3 and 8) performed a dance to a pop tune. They were very serious, but hilarious and the three leaders did a wonderful job.

There was an interval (where you could have seconds) but the children devoured the chocolate biscuits and by 9pm I was glad I didn't have to put any to bed!

In the second half of the programme, a young lady named Aimee sang two songs, then a professional singer,

Ruthanne, sang, three other young ladies also performed songs from films and shows. The evening ended at 9pm with all the children singing, 'I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony'. Over the past few weeks, they had tie-dyed their own shirts and were very proud of them. I believe all the performers gave their time free of charge, which of course helps a worthwhile organisation.

The food was excellent, and cooked by the resident team. In passing, I would like to mention that, if anyone would like to have the chance to look around, and also book a meal at Cotton Hall (cost approx. £3.00) they would be very pleased to show off their little kingdom. It's not the Ritz, but to see how Save the Family has saved many families from becoming broken individuals - educating not only children, but adults who were cast aside, is wonderful. Over the years, many of the children have gained places at university and many parents made it to professional jobs.



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