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| ALLERTON  CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH |



August/September 2021 Newsletter

Dear Friends

One question that I’ve been pondering over the past year and a bit is this: does it matter what hymns or songs we sing in church? In one sense this has been an academic question as we have not been singing hymns together in worship services since March 2020. As we are probably all aware singing has been in the category of activities that we have been strongly advised not to do by the government, although it has never actually been illegal. Hopefully we will begin to sing our praises to God together again in the near future once again.

In the Scriptures there is good evidence for sung worship being a part of services both for the Jewish people and the early Church (for example, see Ephesians 5:19). The Psalms have often been described as Israel’s hymn book, and there is certainly truth in that. Within the Psalms there are encouragements to praise God with different musical instruments (for example, see Psalm 150), and that is what we try to do through singing hymns. I am content that there is a very strong biblical case for God’s people worshipping God with music when they come together.

That being said, what kind of music should we use? This is where it can become a bit more tricky for several reasons. Firstly there is the matter of personal tastes in music. One person may love the oratorios and fugues of JS Bach and wish to sing hymns based upon them. Others may prefer the simple tunes that accompany many of the songs and hymns from Ira Sankey’s ‘Sacred Hymns and Solos’. Yet another might prefer more contemporary musical styles. Undoubtedly all musical styles, within reason, have their place in worship within God’s worldwide Church. As long as it is appropriate and praises God then that’s alright, or is it?

Sadly there are many ‘churches’ that preach and teach a false ‘Jesus’ and a false ‘gospel’. Should we be using songs written by those associated with such churches? Some Christians would say that as long as the words of the song in question are orthodox in their theology then we may. Others, myself included, have come to question the wisdom of this. If we sing a song from the music publishing house of a false church, might people think that we are endorsing not only the song, but also the songwriter and the church? Possibly so, and this is where I believe we have to be careful. There is also the additional issue of copyright revenue. Every time we reproduce the words, or record a version of the song, money goes back to the songwriter and/or publishing company, and so by singing their songs we are in effect financially supporting them.

Let me use an example to illustrate this point. In the past we have sung a popular worship song called ‘My Jesus, my Saviour’, written by an Australian woman called Darlene Zschech. She was the primary worship leader of the Australian Hillsong Church for a number of years in the 1990s and 2000s, and the majority of her songs are published under the Hillsong Music banner. Hillsong Church is a worldwide network of churches, overseen by Brian Houston, and originating in Sydney, Australia.

There are a number of worrying aspects to the teaching, theology and practice of Hillsong Church. Amongst other things they proclaim the false health and wealth ‘gospel’, that states that God’s will is for us all to be healthy and wealthy all the time. All we need to do is confess this positively with our mouths and have faith (of course, this is false, and is NOT found in Scripture). They speak of God’s love in Christ, but do not call people to repent of their sin. They also have quite a few former pastors who have stepped down for sexual misconduct or abuse, and have not always handled such tragedies well in the past, although we could probably say the same of many established churches and denominations too. Should we be using songs from a ‘church’ like this in our worship of the living and holy God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

My intention in writing this article is to get us to think about the music we use to praise God together. Is it music that truly honours God, proclaiming truths about Him, and seeking His glory? There are great old hymns of the faith that beautifully express the truth of the Gospel, just as there are twee hymns that trot out false platitudes. There are some absolutely awful modern songs that focus on us rather than God, but there are also some amazing hymns that teach good sound doctrine too. Perhaps the best way forward is to sing that which is true and honours God, both old and new. Maybe we should avoid songs that come from false ‘churches’ such as Hillsong? Let’s consider these things together in a prayerful way as we return to singing hymns together in church.

Yours, Fred.

(Note: This was prepared before 27th June – Ed.)

tary’s Thoughts





 !

!"

##

 



$!#

"%& '(

)

\*

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+$,

"

' -

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts





 !

!"

##

 



$!#

"%& '(

)

\*

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+$,

"

' -

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts





 !

!"

##

 



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Secretary’s Thoughts

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 

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Secretary’s Thoughts



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Secretary’s Thoughts

When you read this newsletter, so-called ‘Freedom Day’ will have passed – what does this mean for our Church family?

We can now choose not to wear masks, but my feeling is that it would be a good idea to wear masks in church when moving around. Also to keep using hand sanitiser and social distincing. These measures have worked well so far and I can’t see any point in changing things – we still need to keep each other safe.

Janet

Preaching list for August and September

Sunday 1st Aug David Muschamp – Communion

8th Aug David Muschamp

15th Aug Fred Rich – Church Meeting

22nd Aug David Muschamp

29th Aug Trevor Hippey

5th Sept Fred Rich – Communion

12th Sept David Robinson

19th Sept Fred Rich – Harvest

26th Sept Trevor Hippey

Dates for your Diary

Sunday 15th August Church Meeting after morning service

Sunday 19th September Harvest Festival

Memorial Service for Mrs Molly Hastings – Update!

There will be a service in the church to celebrate the life of Mrs Molly Hastings on Monday, 9th August at 11.00am. The family invite all of her friends to come, and for refreshments afterwards. The venue for refreshments has been changed. It will now be the Oakwood Hall Hotal, Lady Lane, Bingley BD16 4AZ and her family look forward to meeting all of those who knew her.

Ian Hastings

Good News from Shelf

Trevor and Ruth Kershaw are delighted to announce the arrival of their first grandchild – Charlie Andrew John Kershaw was born on Wednesday 14th July at 9.50 am, weighing in at 6lbs 12 ounces a son for Philip and Charlotte.

We send our congratulations and best wishes to both parents and grandparents.

Bible Reading Rota and Coffee rota

If you would like to offer to read the Bible for Sunday services, the Bible reading rota is on the notice board in the vestibule.

As we are hoping to return to having coffee in a few weeks time, the coffee rota will be available once the starting date has been agreed.

Notice for Church Meeting

A Church Meeting will be held on Sunday 15th August, following the morning service.

This meeting will be “informal” – there will not be an agenda. This meeting is for information sharing following the Deacons’ Meeting and looking at plans for the future.

However, it is important that as many members as possible attend.

Harvest Festival

This is being held on September 19th and contributions for the Bradford Metropolitan Food Bank will be appreciated. This has been well supported in the past.

Note from the Editor

Next newsletter due 26th September – please let me have any items for inclusion by 17th September.

Thank you – David

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