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| ALLERTON  CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH |



Taken at Chellow Dene 21/04/2020 by DJM

February/March 2022 Newsletter

## Website: allertoncongregationalchurch.org.uk

** facebook.com/allertoncongregationalchurch**

Dear Friends

In our hymn books there are a large number of hymns that we rarely, if ever, sing. There might be a number of reasons for that such as us not knowing them, not liking them, or simply just forgetting they exist. A small number, though, are often avoided because they are not thought to be appropriate any more. This may includes hymns that use militaristic (fighting/war) expressions. As someone whose personal views often tend towards pacifism I can understand this reluctance, but are we missing something helpful by not singing them any more?

Today I’d like to draw our attention to the hymn ‘Fight the good fight’, written by John Samuel Bewley Monsell, which was first published in 1863. Monsell was born and raised in Ireland, and was the son of the Archdeacon of Derry. He went on to become ordained in the church, serving in both Ireland and England. The hymn that he wrote is based upon the King James Bible translation of 1 Timothy 6:12, which is, “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”

So what does this verse, and the hymn based upon it, have to say to us? Earlier in the chapter Paul has instructed Timothy to watch out for false teachers, and instead focus on the truth and godly living. The instruction to ‘fight the good fight’ is a continuation of this, urging Timothy to stand up for the true faith revealed by Jesus Christ. It is a clear call for Christians to be like Timothy and “Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.” (1 Timothy 6:11)

How does the hymn help us to apply the teachings of this Scripture? Here are the traditional words,

1 Fight the good fight with all your might,

Christ is your strength and Christ your right.  
Lay hold on life, and it shall be

your joy and crown eternally.

2 Run the straight race through God's good grace;

lift up your eyes, and seek his face.

Life with its way before us lies;

Christ is the path and Christ the prize.

 3 Cast care aside, lean on your guide;

his boundless mercy will provide.  
Lean, and the trusting soul shall prove

Christ is its life and Christ its love.

4 Faint not, nor fear, his arms are near;

he changes not, and you are dear.  
Only believe, and you will see

that Christ is Lord eternally.

The hymn encourages us to focus on Jesus and rely on Him for strength and guidance, and certainly this is a good way to live out our Christian faith. If we look to Jesus we won’t go far wrong. There is also a message of not worrying too much about the problems of life because Jesus will be with us, as indeed He promises He will be in the scriptures. It is an encouraging hymn, but it is also one that challenges us. Fighting the good fight will not always be easy, especially as it may involve conflict and disagreement as others don’t always appreciate us doing the right things!

I have recently begun reading a book entitled ‘The Greatest Fight in the World’ which is an adaptation of one of Charles Spurgeon’s sermons. In the introduction, Spurgeon says “when we have great work to do for Christ… a higher power is needed to cut through coats of mail. To the God of armies I look up.” He is encouraging his hearers to recognise that true strength to do, or speak, the right thing in the right way comes from God. In other words, if we try to do things in our own strength we are likely to go wrong, but if we rely on God in Christ then we will be able to do the right thing.

So let us fight the good fight, looking to Jesus for our strength. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ who has revealed the truth to us. May we speak forth the truth of the Gospel with grace and love, presenting the true faith once delivered to all of God’s people. Whatever we do, may we do it with love and to God’s glory. Above all, though, let us keep on following Jesus each and every day!

Yours, Fred.

retary’s Thoughts

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

)

\*

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

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

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

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Secretary’s Thoughts

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

)

\*



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

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

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

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

)

\*



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

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

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

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

)

\*



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

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

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

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

)

\*



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

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

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

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts

We do seem to be moving forward slowly, in spite of restrictions and mixed messages from the Government.

It is really good to see new faces in our congregation, we are welcoming Daphne, Suri and Anthony, and Terry on a regular basis.

We now have Thornton Singers using our premises on a Wednesday evening for rehearsals – the move from Haworth Road Methodist Church went smoothly.

You will have noticed that we have a hole in the ceiling in the hall. It was fortunate it fell dpwn when there was no one around.

I would like to encourage you all to think about the Readers and Coffee lists and, of course, put your names on them.

Janet

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 8th February - 10.00 am Finance Committee

Saturday 9th April – 10.00 am – Leprosy Mission Coffee Morning

Congratulations to the Kershaw family

Trevor and Ruth are delighted to announce the arrival of a granddaughter, Sophie Ida May, born on 4th January 2022 at 4.10 pm at BRI, who weighed in at 7lb 5oz. Mother and baby both well.

Flower Rota – flowers provided by:

Sunday 6th  Feb Mr & Mrs R Hardy

27th Feb In memory of Mary & Dennis Cockcroft

6th Mar Mr & Mrs I Hastings

27th Mar Mrs Smith & Mrs St Claire

On Sundays not listed, silk flowers will be used.

The Leprosy Mission – Greater Heights Campaign

The Leprosy Mission (TLM) have launched their Greater Heights Campaign to raise awareness of the state of the premises at Anandaban Hospital, where pioneering work is taking place in a bid to end leprosy. In a crumbling lab on a mountain top, the team are making scientific breakthroughs that will have a global impact. Sadly, the lab is now at risk of closing. It’s too small, not fit for purpose and was severely damaged in the terrible earthquakes of 2015. It won’t pass the upcoming Nepali Government inspection. Without this lab, the chance to end leprosy in our lifetime will be lost forever. The research team desperately needs to develop an early diagnostic test for leprosy. This is vital to diagnose leprosy on the spot, so they can cure people as quickly as possible. To save more people from the devastating effects of leprosy, they need to build a new world-class research centre at Anandaban, on the roof of the world.

They are supported in this campaign by Paralympian Stef Reid, a Vice-President of TLM, who won silver medals in the long jump in London and in Rio, and is a former world champion.

We are holding a coffee morning for TLM on Saturday 9th April and this will be followed by a Leprosy Sunday Service on 10th April. We’ll be looking to raise as much as we can towards the Greater Heights Campaign and leaflets and giving envelopes have been ordered.



To give you an idea of some of the things needed and the costs involved, this is a slide from the Powerpoint presentation TLM have prepared for the service.

Preaching list for February and March

Sunday 6th Feb Fred Rich – Communion

13th Feb Terry Hepworth

20t Feb Trevor Hippey

27th Feb Fred Rich

Sunday 6th Mar David Robinson - Communion

13th Mar Fred Rich

20th Mar Richard Lewis

27th Mar Trevor Hippey

Finance Committee – A message from the Financial Secretary

Over the last two months, activity has continued to address the list of items David read out at the Church Members meeting in October.

The new windows, mentioned in the last update, have been installed and makes the meeting room look much better and also warmer due to the double glazing. The new windows include 2 large opening lights which users of the room are encouraged to open, when ventilation is required. Whilst the handles incorporate a lock these windows will not be locked to make use easy.

After reconsideration, the mould-stained paintwork at various locations around the building has been cleaned and the result is a much improved appearance of these walls.

The large set of step ladders stored behind the stage have now been removed.

Sadly, not all news is good news. Members will have seen the unwelcome hole in the main hall ceiling. This is in the process of being investigated with the hope that it is a further isolated area of damaged ceiling, which can be repaired rather than anything more wide spread. This serves to remind us all of the age of our building, now 134 years old, when much of what was original is now well beyond its intended life expectancy.

Members may have noticed that the sign at the rear of the building is badly faded and this is to be renewed shortly.

The School has just informed us that they propose to start to lock the access gates to the car park and our entrance. This has been the result of some anti-social behaviour taking place in the car park outside of school hours. We have noted that this will give issues to Members and users of the Church accessing the building, but we have agreed that we will not object to this proposal. The gates will be locked using a digital lock and the code for this will be issued to keyholders, once this code is available.

It is hoped that this update gives Members an insight into the work of the Committee, but if any Member has any questions, please ask Chris Ing or any member of the Finance Committee.

Coffee Rota

As we have returned to having coffee after services, it would be really helpful if those on the rota could come a little earlier to set things up. You will not need to bring milk.

The coffee rota is on the notice board in the vestibule and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

Bible Reading 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 and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

Shirley Copley

A card has been received from the Copley family thanking the friends at Allerton for their support and kind wishes following the death of Shirley.

Note from the Editor

The next newsletter is due on 27th March – please let me have any items for inclusion by 20th March.

Thank you – David

Sundays - Services at 10.30 am.