

Growing into Lent

During worship in February I will be sharing a reflection I prepared on my sabbatical experience. It forms part of a fuller report which I can email to folk on request, and there'll be a few paper copies available in church. Part of that is a paper I wrote on deployment for a conference at Windermere which I recently shared with a C of E study for our Synod Pastoral Committee to consider. The C of E paper was about Church growth. It made the point that growth occurs where there is vision and an emphasis on growth, which is not necessarily limited to any particular theologies or worship styles. It did conclude that major factors which point to decline are a lack of children and shared ministry. My paper argued for us to challenge all local churches to seek to be self-sustaining, with local leadership, and look for more creative ways to deploy stipendiary ministry. That could help mitigate the latter, it is down to us to encourage and engage with the children we have got to lessen the former.

Also in February we will be entering into Lent. On Tuesday 17th we will enjoy our pancakes, we tend to omit being ashed on the following day, but we will be devoting time together on Thursday evenings to explore a dvd discussion led by Phyllis Tickle examining the changing face of Christianity and culture. Phyllis surveys 2000 years of Western history, identifying the great upheavals that occur in Western culture and Christianity every 500 years. The last was the Great Reformation of the 1500's; the next is happening now.

What are the implications of this "Great Emergence," both culturally and spiritually? What are the key questions and issues that need to be addressed? Where might we be headed next? And, perhaps most importantly, where are you, at this moment? Might you be an emergence Christian?

Lent is traditionally a time for strengthening resolve, bringing believers together in trust and encouragement as we strive to follow our calling. I do hope that we will have a good number gathering together to explore. There is much we can gain from opening ourselves up to something different and in a gentle and friendly way get to know each other better and engage with our faith.

With every blessing, Rev'd David R. Coaker

CHURCH MEETING—AGM

We will be holding our AGM on Thursday 19th February at 7.30pm. As well as reviewing the reports from our church groups (which folk are asked to submit to Ann) there is the opportunity for us to invite people into membership and to call members to eldership. If you would like to find out more there are leaflets at the front of church and please talk to an elder or David.

BIG DAY OUT 18TH JULY SOUTHPORT CONVENTION CENTRE

The URC Big Day Out will be a fun day with quiz, games, Bible study etc and bookings are now being taken. Cost £7 if booked before 5th April. £10 each if booked later. Under 18's FREE

Names are to be taken by Linda Barnes or Ann Gill
Book early!

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

We congratulate Jan and Mike Chapman on the birth of a grand daughter, Martha Jessica, baby daughter for David and Sarah.

We offer our love and deepest sympathy to Shirley Farrier and her family on the death of David, a much loved and loving husband, father, father-in-law and granddad. The Funeral Service at Penwortham URC was a very moving occasion with marvellous tributes from Shirley herself and from their three sons. The theme of the worship was 'love' and it is doubtful if the actual word 'love' has ever been used so often and so meaningfully and appropriately in one service before. So much of the background information that was given seemed to suggest that David was mainly seen in a supportive role but we at our church remember him as active for example as the Leyland church Treasurer for a number of years in the 1980's and early 1990's, and there are memories of his presence on stage in Men's Weekend and of his involvement as player and team captain in the once flourishing URCL Table Tennis club.

In our prayers we remember the following members of the church fellowship:-

Marian Howard' who has been in hospital after a fall, is now in 'Meadowfield House" in Fulwood for rehabilitation.

Frank McGuire and Charlie Hoare have both been in hospital but are now recuperating at home.

Jean Goodall has had a cataract removed and is also just recovering from a bout of 'flu.

We also think of Lois Porter, Olwyn Rayton, Alan Kay, Malcolm and Karen Birrell who are waiting to go into hospital for operations or medical assessments.

We congratulate Kathleen Bamber who won the Autumn Fair Anagrams' Quiz.

CHRISTMAS 2014

Christmas began early this year. The church decorations were in position well before Advent began as we hosted our, and Leyland's first 'official' Christmas event even before Advent Sunday itself. South Ribble Borough Council again used our church as the centre of the jollifications and this certainly drew the crowds to the Hough Lane area. The town Christmas tree was in our garden and we were open all afternoon with the Scout group dealing with the demand for hot food and sweet meats from their stalls outside. When people, not necessarily with church links, entered the building they were clearly impressed by the really superb window displays, the colourful tree and lights. Every credit to those who did so much to get everything ready so willingly and skilfully and to Julie, Jackie, Betty and Mollie for their flower arranging and tree decorating skills. As it grew dark we hosted a Christingle Service led by the Elders followed by the Tree lighting ceremony outside taken by the Mayor of South Ribble - and we thank him for this.

The Sunday services in the following weeks were also rather special. The parade service, left completely to the Uniformed organisations themselves had a 1914 theme, for they had been dealing with this in their ordinary meetings. We were perhaps most impressed by the way the younger groups remembered the 1914 Christmas Truce by singing 'Silent Night' in German, by the number of youngsters involved, by the first hand account of a service visit to Sri Lanka by a member of the Guides and by the number of Shoe Box Gifts brought for distribution overseas through International Aid. By tradition, this service was also the time when the years awards to the best Cub / Scout / Guide etc were presented. The groups themselves

provided the music for the whole of the morning. Well done to everyone

The Junior Church Festival was, as always a very special service. We had a lovely nativity narrated by Ian and for which David Holmes had used some electronic magic to generate appropriate images on the screen. The actual service was led and planned by Ann, Lorna and Christine with 'games' such as 'Chinese Whispers', stories and a Quiz. There was something for everyone and it was voted one of the very best celebrations we have ever staged. There was even a trumpet cabaret from William during the brew time. Frank McGuire was busy recording the event on film and the really beautiful results are on the wall display in the Church Hall. I personally feel that one of those photographs could- be used for a Leyland URC Christmas card for 2015.

So far so good! It is a pity that mention of our own 'ordinary' Christmas services are not so enthusiastic. Our Christmas Eve teatime service of Lessons and Carols had few people other than the designated readers which must have given a rather poor impression to the two or three 'strangers' who had come to join us. Though we did not have a Christmas Day Service in Leyland at all, only three Leyland folk actually joined the large Penwortham URC congregation which is clearly used as a Family Reunion event. Though not a Christmas event, the first Sunday of 2015 was also different. Shirley Farrier was to have led the worship but in her unavoidable absence, at short notice, Ann and Lorna led the service and, without any formal preaching, really involved the congregation in a practical application of faith. Following the December service above we have the nucleus of a splendid
Worship Group

Ernest Wrennall

`CHRISTMAS CONT.

Your reporter was not present at the Sunday afternoon 'Tea With Santa' event in the church hall which drew a capacity number of parent and child groups. Each Child not only had the opportunity to receive a personal gift from Santa in the grotto prepared by the Scouts but also were able to use the rest of the time by working through the splendid DIY Christmas packs which Christine had prepared and which gave the children something they had made which they could treasure. And while this was going on the parents had the pleasure of taking tea with lovely home made cakes. Many who came were grandchildren of church people or were drawn from the members of the wonderful Tuesday morning 'Mites' group which Ann has created. Christine and Lorna were the instigators of this venture but others from church who attended and helped were lavish in their praise for what was achieved.

E.W.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MAGAZINE

**AAPRIL/MAY TO LINDA KAY BY 22ND MARCH AT THE LATEST
PLEASE**

Email: lindakay@blueyonder.co.uk

PAUSE FOR THOUGHT!

It should be noted that the majority of this magazine is written by Ernest Wrennall. If it wasn't for Ernest it would only contain rotas and the gardening slot. So the editor challenges you to be more pro-active in contributing something of interest—please!

EMBRACING EMERGENCE CHRISTIANITY

In a series of studies this Lent author, historian and keen cultural observer Phyllis Tickle invites us to join her in examining the changing face of Christianity and culture.

Thursdays, 7.30-9.00pm, the Manse

5th March	1 Emergence 101
12th March	2 Where Now is the Authority?
19th March	3 The 20th Century and Emergence
26th March	4 Gifts from Other Times
9th April	5 How Then Shall We Live?
23rd April	6 Hallmarks of Emergence

Phyllis surveys 2000 years of Western history, identifying the great upheavals that occur in Western culture and Christianity every 500 years. The last was the Great Reformation of the 1500's; the next is happening now. What are the implications of this "Great Emergence," both culturally and spiritually? What are the key questions and issues that need to be addressed? Where might we be headed next? And, perhaps most importantly, where are you, at this moment? Might you be an emergence Christian? Each session begins with a video presentation by Phyllis Tickle, lasting from 10-15 minutes. Ms. Tickle's presentation is followed by filmed interaction with a small group. Some preparatory work is encouraged for each session and resources will be available to help us "join the dialogue"

CHURCH AND WORSHIP DIARY FOR FEBRUARY



Sun 1 st	Worship led by Revd Geoff Tolley	10.30am
Tues 3 rd	Luncheon Club	12 30pm
	Amnesty International	7.30pm
Sun 8 th	Worship led by the minister	10.30am
Mon 9 th	Fabric Meeting	7.30pm
Fri 13 th	Christian Aid team Quiz at Fulwood URC 7 for	
	7.30pm	
Sun 15 th	Worship led by the Worship Group	10.30am
Thur 19 th	Elders Meeting	7.00 pm
	Church Meeting AGM(*1)	7.30pm
Sun 22 nd	Worship led by the minister	10.30am
	Parade	

(*1) The Church AGM will be to elect and appoint Elders and other church officials and to consider reports from church organisations and groups. There are two retiring Elders Ann Gill and Neil Fow and both are eligible for re-election for a further period of service. However the number of serving elders is still below a full complement and further nominations would be welcomed. The reports on the years activities is best done if members can read written reports in advance so group leaders or secretaries should let the minister (for Ann is not available) have them at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

The Fund Raising Group will be holding a 'Bag and Bring Festival' on a Saturday in mid February. Keep your eyes open for the exact date- if only to find out what a 'B and B Festival' actually is.

CHURCH AND WORSHIP DIARY FOR MARCH



1Sun 1 st	Worship led by Revd. Geoff Tolley	10.30am
Tues 3 rd	Luncheon Club	12.30pm
	Amnesty International	7.30pm
Thur 5 th	Lent Course at the Manse Part1 (*1)	7.30pm
Fri 6 th	Women's World Day of Prayer (*2)	
Sun 8 th	Worship led by the minister	10.30am
Mon 9 th	Fabric Committee	7.30pm
Thur 12 th	Lent Course at the Manse Part2 (*1)	7.30pm
Sun 15 th	Mothering Sunday	
	Worship led by Ernest Wrennall	10.30am
Thur 19 th	Lent Course at the Manse Part 3 (*1)	7.30pm
Sun 22 nd	Worship led by the minister	10.30am
	Parade	
Thur 26 th	Lent Course at the Manse Part 4 (*1)	7.30pm
Sun 29 th	Palm Sunday	
	Worship led by the minister	10.30am

(*1) The Lent Course is "Embracing Emergence Christianity" based on a series of DVD studies by historian Phyllis Tickle emphasising the upheavals which have transformed western Christianity and Culture over the last 2000 years. Each session is from 7.30 to 9.00 pm. Parts 5 and 6 will be covered in early April.

(*2) Information about time and place will be available later.

DOES FOUR GO INTO ONE?

This is not a mathematical question at all. Of course the answer is 'Yes' if you allow answers to be less than one - such as $\frac{1}{4}$, or 25%. But when we speak of grouping we are talking of four (or more) separate entities becoming one new (and bigger!) whole.

For example:-

England +Wales+Scotland +Northern Ireland (4)=United Kingdom (1)

Or Congregational +Presbyterian+ Churches of Christ =U.R.C

But what about Leyland URC + Penwortham URC +Fulwood URC + Kirkham URC? Can they become one? - The Central Lancashire Group of United Reformed Churches?

In a sense they already have. After considerable small group work, a plan for such a grouping was worked out, agreed in principle by all four Church Meetings and on Sunday afternoon, 11th January, in the context of worship, a formal act of commitment was held at Kirkham URC.

It was a memorable afternoon with a decent sized congregation considering that all four churches had held their own morning services already that day. A good number of people met at Kirkham for a shared lunch, excellent home made soup! - and then we had worship led by Revd. Michelle Jarman (from our Clitheroe Church) who had acted as Interim Moderator for the project when Paul Pells felt that he had to step down. However prayers and readings were in the hands of representatives from the four churches and indeed, the whole service had been worked out by the Worship sub committee of the Group.

The formal part of the service was the signing of the Articles of Memorandum by the four Church Secretaries. Ann acted on our behalf in this. Next we did something which was perhaps a unique symbolic action in creating a Chain of Fellowship on which each individual member of all four congregations, whether present or not, played a part.

Each church had been given a pack of gummed paper strips in contrasting colours, different for each congregation. Leyland were all of a red hue. Beforehand, the name of a member of every church fellowship was written and then made up into mini paper chains of about 10 links. Then in the service these chains were joined, mixing up the church colours, into one huge multi-hued paper chain long enough to encircle every member of those present. The music of "Chain of Life" from a Christian Aid musical was played in the background and when completed, a photographic record was made of the event. It was very impressive and made a strong visual representation of togetherness. So our four churches have at least started to become one. Naturally each congregation continues with its own identity but we do need to start to think co-operatively and, I indeed actually meet as one from time to time. Joint Elders Meetings are proposed and individual church events should be advertised in the other churches. Thanks to the work of the group Secretary, Margery Pitcher from Fulwood URC, we already have a Four Church Preaching Plan though the possible coming of a second minister for the Fulwood and Kirkham half of the Group would involve a rethink for this. Dave will mainly concentrate on the South Ribble part of the Group but, as a Lay Preacher in the combined preaching pool. I seem to be planned to lead worship in two of the four churches every month. For the past good number of years I have preached regularly in all four churches and can assure you that each one, though with individual worship characteristics, is made up of very similar people. So we welcome our new partners. Help our new group to grow in togetherness and take this opportunity to become one family of God. Four into one will go - if we want it to do so.

Ernest Wrennall

RAMBLES AND PLODS

Instead of the usual Rambles and Plods Page we take this opportunity to report on the one and only excursion that has taken place. There was nothing at all in December but on a cold and eventually very wet New Years Day afternoon, five brave souls did set out from the Ward residence to explore part of the nearly deserted Cuerden Valley Park. But the hot drinks and warm mince pies - and the log fire that was waiting on their return made it all worthwhile. The walkers shared the hospitality with a number of less brave (or less foolish?) friends and it was all very much appreciated. Mollie did the walk (and the baking) while Peter kept the fire going. And - stop press news -on checking the records we find that the first of these New Years Day walks from the Ward's house was in the year 1990 which means that, we have never failed to start and finish at Greenbank Farm every year since then, this was the TWENTY FIFTH anniversary. What a record - and how much we thank them for it..

We have a Rambling Club planning meeting at the end of January to arrange the 2015 Diary of Rambles and there will have been a mid week Pensioners Plod already held before you read these notes. So things are beginning to get going and we do welcome any of our readers - or their friends - to get involved. None of our activities are 'members only' happenings. You would be very welcome.
E.W.

GARDENING

Winter is really with us now as a thick coating of hailstones is lying frozen on the lawn and pathways. I am constantly filling the bird feeders with seed and peanuts and these are attracting a variety of birds into the garden for me to watch through the window.

The fuchsia plants are all tucked up in the greenhouse being kept frost free by a small heater. Yesterday I disinfected the hot bed and switched on the soil warming cables to encourage some growth to take place. When the new shoots are big enough to take and plant in fresh compost, they should root quickly and grow on to make strong plants.

In the borders the snow drops are beginning to show white buds down amongst the leaves and the daffodil leaves are pushing through the soil.

The spring bulbs which I planted in a tub at the Guild are not showing yet but the three cyclamen plants which I finished off the top with have been in flower all the time and are still full of buds to come. They really are hardy and have been worth the money.

One job that urgently needs doing is to prune the wisteria, shortening each long branch to just one or two leaf joints. This will encourage it to flower well in May and June. I am waiting for a better day to complete this task.

Enjoy your garden



Eddie

FLOWER LIST FOR FEB/MARCH

- 1ST FEB Bob Kay and family
- 8TH FEB Memories of Ivy Ainsworth and loved ones
 from the family
- 15TH FEB Memories of mum—Julie Key
- 22ND FEB Ann Gill—Memories of dad
- 1ST MAR Eddie and Alison—memories of Mary
- 8TH MAR Brenda Holmes—Memories of mother
- 15TH MAR Olwyn and Arnold Rayton—Memories
- 22ND MAR Janet Baxter Bennett—Loving Memories of my
 mum
- 29TH MAR Barbara and Frank McHugh—Memories



FOOD BANK

**We are collecting items of food to donate to
St Mary's food bank.**

**Lists of appropriate food items are available in
church and it is hoped that this will become a
regular weekly activity.**

**The food box is located in the left hand side
porch.**

**Please look out for details in church and try to
support this worthwhile initiative.**

ROTAS FOR FEBRUARY

	Steward	Lessons	Flower Distribution
1st	Marjorie Wrennall	Sarah Goldson Jackie Cochrane	Sylvia Bairstow Mollie Ward
8th	Eddie Reynolds	Arnold Rayton Jan Chapman	Linda Barnes Lois Porter
15th	Stella Eccleston	Linda Barnes Mollie Ward	Barbara McHugh Linda Crump
22nd	Frank McHugh	Uniformed Organisations	Marjorie Wrennall Alison Dempsey

If you need to change your place on the Lessons rota please arrange your own swap and then let Linda Barnes know

SUNDAY REFRESHMENTS FEBRUARY

1st	Barbara McHugh	Frank McHugh
8th	Linda Crump	Sylvia Bairstow
15th	Irene Entwistle	Brenda Farrer
22nd	Uniformed Organisations	

SATURDAY CAFÉ FEBRUARY

7th	Jackie Cochrane	Linda Barnes
14th	Irene Entwistle	Brenda Farrer
21st	Sylvia Bairstow	Mollie Ward
28th	Lois Porter	Ernest Wrennall

ROTAS FOR MARCH

	Stewards	Lessons	Flower distribution
1st	Julie Keys Rhys Pownall	Ian Dempsey Stephen Crump	Jan Chapman Jackie Cochrane
8th	Irene Entwistle	Linda Kay David Holmes	Sylvia Bairstow Mollie Ward
15th	Sylvia Bairstow	Sarah Goldson Jackie Cochrane	Linda Barnes Lois Porter
22nd	Marjorie Wrennall	Uniformed Organisations	Barbara Mc Hugh Linda Crump
29th	Eddie Reynolds	Arnold Rayton Ann Gill	Marjorie Wrennall Alison Dempsey
April 5th	Frank McHugh	Linda Barnes Mollie Ward	Jan Chapman Jackie Cochrane

SUNDAY REFRESHMENTS FOR MARCH

1st	Frank McHugh	Barbara McHugh
8th	Linda Crump	Sylvia Bairstow
15th	Irene Entwistle	Brenda Farrer
22nd	Uniformed Organisations	
29th	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	
April 5th	Linda Crump	Sylvia Bairstow

SATURDAY CAFÉ MARCH

7th	Jackie Cochrane	Linda Barnes
14th	Irene Entwistle	Brenda Farrer
21st	Ann Gill	Ernest Wrennall
28th	Sylvia Bairstow	Mollie Ward
4th April	Jackie Cochrane	Linda Barnes