

Brightstar

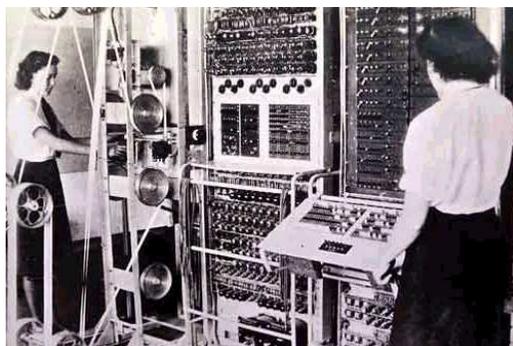


December 2009
January 2010

From the Manse

Dear Friends,

How many times in life have you met someone who has unknowingly had a connection with your past experiences and as such you are led after speaking with them to reflect and to learn something new of yourself and your relationship with God? Possibly very rarely but when it happens our lives I suggest are given a boost of confidence and assurance!



In recent days I had the privilege of speaking for some time with Harry Fensom, who incidentally knows I'm writing this article, and whom some of you may know for he lives in Felixstowe and was an instrumental figure during the Second World War. Our common interest is that we both worked as telecommunication

engineers for the Post Office which later became British Telecomm and later still BT. I will not try to equate my skills with those of Harry's who had an incredible career especially when seconded to the Home office to work at Bletchley Park in developing equipment that would decipher coded enemy messages and which subsequently led to thousands of lives being saved.

I can only admire his ability but I could relate to some of his experiences when developing electronics for telephone exchanges on his return to life after the war for I discovered he designed equipment I subsequently maintained and supported during my career.

We chattered for some time about machine and application codes, interfaces and the internet (yes Harry helped to develop the prototype that is used by millions today) before Harry revealed something he obviously wanted to get off his chest. "*I have learnt during my lifetime*" he said "*there is no such thing as luck*". He explained his work in finding the key to supposedly unbreakable codes had led him to a rock solid belief that there is always a reason to be found for everything in life and

a purpose in finding answers to the most complex phenomena. I was encouraged by this statement as Harry went on to explain that his faith is centred on using his talents alongside others in helping God complete his plan for our lives and the universe.

At this time of the year we are encouraged to lift our horizons beyond ourselves to the culmination of God's phenomenal work through his Son Jesus Christ and the incredible part we are called to play as people of faith. The principle characters of the Christmas story, those who foretold and predicted the events surrounding our Lord's birth on earth and those who were present at the time, contributed a great deal through their faithful actions towards the plan God had set in place even though they probably had little idea of the impact it would have to their lives or on the world in the future.

As we unpack our crib sets, sing carols and send Christmas cards all reflecting God's light coming into the world, this year let us also take the time to dwell on the part we are called to play in God's plan. Let us count our blessings as Mary and Joseph, the angel Gabriel, the Shepherds and the Wise Men did in knowing that our contribution, however small it may seem to us, matters a great deal to God!

May God bless you and your family with His love and peace this Christmas!

David and Elizabeth

Christmas Post Box

As in previous years we are again organising a Christmas card "sorting & delivery service" for members of Seaton Road this year. Just put your pile of cards in the post box provided – they will then be sorted and given to the right people (please include surnames to avoid any confusion and only 'post' cards for people who actually attend church). For this service we are simply asking for a donation to the work of JMA. The postbox will be available on 6th December and the last 'collection' will be on 20th December.

Robin

Worship

Sunday 6th December

9.45am Mr Bryan Nichols

Sunday 13th December (Holy Communion)

9.45am Revd Barry Middleton

Sunday 20th December

9.15am Breakfast for 9.45am Christmas Cafe Worship

Tuesday 22nd December

7.00pm Carols by Candeelight

Thursday 24th December at Kirton

7.00pm Family carol service , followed by refreshments

11.15pm Mince pies at Trinity, followed by 11.30pm communion

Christmas Day

9.45am Christmas Praise

Sunday 27th December

9.45am Revd David Kemble

Thursday 31st December

11.15pm Watchnight service at Trinity

Sunday 3rd January 2010

9.45am Mrs Alyson Ellis (Coffee in hall after the service)

Sunday 10th January (Holy Communion)

9.45am Revd David Kemble

Sunday 17th January

9.15am Breakfast for 9.45am Cafe Worship

Sunday 24th January

9.45am Revd David Kemble

Sunday 31st January

9.45am Mr Stephen Caley

Sunday 7th February (Holy Communion)

9.45am Revd David Kemble (Coffee in hall after the service)

From the vestry

- a contribution from the team of stewards

As you read this at the beginning of December, our Advent preparations in church will have already started with the lighting of the Advent candles. So what does Advent mean? The word comes from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming". It is a season of the Christian church, the period of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus; in other words, the period immediately before Christmas.

To most of us it also means a frantic time of hustle and bustle, of endless shopping and of writing cards. For our family in particular, it also means playing carols with the Brass Band outside supermarkets, collecting money for local charities. But amongst all the excitement and celebrations it may be possible that you start to feel the effects of the 'Advent Virus' – be on your guard, the symptoms may creep up on you when you least expect them!!!

Liz Benyon

WARNING.....: ADVENT VIRUS (via email by 'anonymous')

Be on the alert for symptoms of inner Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to this virus and it is possible that people everywhere could come down with it in epidemic proportions. This could pose a serious threat to what has, up to now, been a fairly stable condition of conflict in the world.

Some signs and symptoms of The Advent Virus:

A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than on fears based on past experiences.

An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.

A loss of interest in judging other people.

A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.

A loss of interest in conflict.

A loss of the ability to worry. (This is a very serious symptom.)

Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.

Contented feelings of connectedness with others and nature.

Frequent attacks of smiling.

An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.

An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

Please send this warning out to all your friends. This virus can, and has, affected many systems. Some systems have been completely cleaned out because of it.

December Prayer Diary.

Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually.

1Chronicles 16, v11

Please include the following in your daily prayers:

- 6th Bryan Nichols leading our worship this morning
- 7th Revd Alan Taylor and all circuit ministers
- 8th Revd David Kemble and his work in this section and the dock chaplaincy
- 9th Parish Nurses
- 10th Midweek worship/coffee led today by our minister
- 11th St Elizabeth Hospice
- 12th The other churches in the section; Trinity, Trimley and Kirton
- 13th Associated churches in Walton
- 14th Churches Together in Felixstowe
- 15th Forces serving in areas of unrest in the world
- 16th Work of the Leprosy Mission and Bible Society
- 17th Church Christmas lunch
- 18th Care homes in Felixstowe, staff and patients
- 19th Revd Michael Allen and Paul Taylor and their work among the elderly and infirm in our part of the town
- 20th Christmas Cafe worship
- 21st Stephen Caley, lay worker at Hollesley Bay prison
- 22nd Carols by Candlelight
- 23rd Our preparation for Christmas- practical and spiritual
- 24th Family and friends who may be travelling, perhaps to celebrate with you
- 25th Christmas Day Worship. Those separated from their loved ones, and those without relatives and friends
- 26th Hospital & prison staff, those maintaining public services (gas, electricity, water etc.)
- 27th The Street Pastor scheme
- 28th As a new year approaches, remember those without a job to go to and little hope for the future
- 29th A young prisoner at Hollesley Bay recently committed his life to Christ, now being transferred to a tougher/harder regime early in the new year - remember him before the Lord
- 30th Look back and give thanks for what God has done for you during 2009
- 31st Commit 2010 to God and pray for his blessing on your life and the lives of those close to you

January Prayer Diary

- 1st Operation Restoration working to rescue street children in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. (Information is on vestibule noticeboard.)
- 2nd Midweek group that meets at Museum Street called Hot Potatoes, an outreach initiative
- 3rd Churches observing Covenant service today
- 4th People of our church fellowship who may be suffering in body, mind or spirit
- 5th Heather Bentley and Stephen Caley (Circuit lay workers)
- 6th Seamen's Mission- Felixstowe Dock and worldwide
- 7th Work among local young people eg Level Two
- 8th Organisations and groups using our church premises
- 9th Staff at Norwood MHA home in Ipswich
- 10th Other Walton churches - St Mary's and Maidstone Rd Baptist
- 11th Felixstowe Street Pastors
- 12th District world partner church - Latvia
- 13th Chairman of our District, Revd Canon Graham Thompson
- 14th Our section minister, Revd David Kemble
- 15th Ministers of all denominations working in Hollesley Bay prison
- 16th Forces working abroad, endeavouring to bring peace to divided communities
- 17th Cafe worship with Revd Frank Aichele
- 18th Christians suffering persecution in Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan etc
- 19th Our circuit superintendent and ministers
- 20th Circuit admin staff eg treasurer, stewards, property etc
- 21st Schools in Felixstowe - in particular Jane Reed with responsibility for two schools
- 22nd Our minister and the dock chaplaincy
- 23rd Paul and Heather as they lead the music in weekly worship
- 24th Churches Together in Felixstowe
- 25th Linda Grimshaw who runs the playschool on our premises
- 26th For the solution to the problems hindering the refurbishment of the church hall
- 27th East Anglian Children's Hospice
- 28th St Elizabeth Hospice
- 29th Pray for guidance in planning the next Cafe worship
- 30th Heather Bentley - for strength and health to enable her to meet the demands of Lay Worker
- 31st Give thanks for the witness of Stutton Chapel, holding its last service today

New Year, New Menu?

Seaton Road is famous for its Café Worship, because we understand the need for people to be fed both physically and spiritually. From this same source we are offering you all, two new feeding opportunities as 2010 begins.



Firstly, we are hoping to run a short series of sessions (4-5 weeks) on the theme of Journeys to God. Each session of about an hour long, will involve watching a programme where people from a wide range of backgrounds describe their experiences and then we will reflect on them together afterwards. Come and share tea or coffee and biscuits and some food for thought too!

Please sign the notice board in the vestibule or let one of the stewards know if you would like to come. (Possible times –Tuesday evening or Weds Afternoon.)

Secondly, many of our members find that having a programme of Daily Bible passages to read helps them keep daily contact with God. They find that this daily feeding gives them energy and strength to live their Christian lives better. There are a wide range of guides and as usual there will be a selection available for you to look at in the vestibule.

If you would like to join the scheme (where we order for you) or if you would like to continue with it, please sign the list in the vestibule or let me know by Sunday 13th December.

Heather B

Circuit Arts and Crafts Festival 2010

A reminder that a copy of the schedule for next year's Arts and Crafts Festival is now on the noticeboard in the vestibule. Please do not remove this copy. If you have access to the internet you can download it from the church website www.seatonroad.org.uk. or if you have a problem with this please have a word with Rose or Mary.

The date of next year's Festival is **Saturday 27th March** and it will be held at **Museum Street Methodist Church, Ipswich**. Please book the date now and also have a look at the schedule to see what you can be working on during the darker evenings.

As a church we will again be hoping to enter the singing group class. If you would like to join us please have a word with Heather Farthing.

I know the date seems some time off but as this edition of Brightstar covers both December and January by the time the following issue is in circulation there will only be a couple of weeks before I need to have lists of classes people will be entering. There is something on the schedule for everyone so please don't leave it to just a few. Please look at the schedule and start working on you entries to avoid the last minute panic!!!

Rosemary and Mary

Rev. Leslie G. Cowell

Rev. Leslie Cowell was the minister of the Felixstowe section of the Methodist church between 1969 and 1974.

Before coming to Felixstowe with their three young daughters Leslie, and his wife Margaret, had been missionaries in Burma so they brought a wealth of experience of the World Church (Methodist Church Overseas as it was called in those days) to Seaton Road.

In 1955 Leslie and his colleagues founded the Methodist Theological School in Tahan to train lay pastors and ministers. Unfortunately this work had to be abandoned in 1965 due to the political unrest in Burma. In 1999 the college (Upper Myanmar) was reopened and the Methodist Church is continuing to support young people there with their studies ten years later. This college was always very close to Leslie's heart and the family asked that donations in his memory were given to support its ongoing work.

Leslie and Margaret returned to Seaton Road on several occasions. The last was probably the (new) church's 60th anniversary celebrations in 1997. They spent their retirement in Sampford Peverell, Tiverton, Devon and it was here that Leslie died on 18th October aged 85.

We remember Margaret, Mary, Ruth and Rachel and their families in our prayers at this time of bereavement.

Churches Together in Felixstowe

ANNUAL UNITED SERVICE

Sunday January 24th 2010

St. John's Church, Felixstowe 6.30pm

Speaker: Mark Warner from the Sailors' Society

Holy Father, God of our yesterdays, our today, and our tomorrows.
Thank You for the year behind us and for the year ahead.
Help us in Your new year, Father, to fret less and laugh more.
To teach our children to laugh by laughing with them.
To teach others to love by loving them.
Knowing, when Love came to the stable in Bethlehem,
He came for us.
So that Love could be with us, and we could know You.
That we could share Love with others.
We rejoice in the world You loved into being.
Thank You for another new year and for new chances every day.
We pray for peace, for light, and for hope,
that we might spread them to others.
Forgive us for falling short this past year.
We leave the irreparable past in your hands, and step out into the un-
known new year knowing You will go with us.
We accept Your gift of a new year and we rejoice in what's ahead,
depending on You to help us do exactly what You want..
We rejoice! In Jesus name, Amen.



Café Worship

something for everyone -
expect the unexpected!
why not invite someone new

More pictures
are on the
website.

Brightstar

Hazel Rusby resumes responsibility for the magazine from February and will be pleased to have all your contributions as usual