

# contact

CHICHESTER BAPTIST CHURCH

AUGUST/SEPT 2018

## Time to take time

For many of us, summer is a time to take time.

Just over a hundred years ago, the poet W. H. Davies wrote about the fact that we miss out in life if we miss out time to stop and look. His most famous poem begins:

*'What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.'*

This summer, the current Children's Laureate, Lauren Child, is promoting something very similar, except she is calling, not so much for staring at interesting things in nature, but for finding time to daydream and stare out of the window. I'm a fan of Lauren Child. Through my children's interest (honestly!) I learnt to appreciate 'Clarice Bean' and particularly 'Charlie and Lola' with the accompanying children's TV series.

This point she is promoting makes good sense. So much of children's lives are filled with targets, tests and standards to meet or else IT devices to distract (all of which have their place) and there is little space to stand and stare or to stop and gaze. Her belief is that, in gazing we give space for children to use their imagination and to exercise their creativity.

I wonder this summertime if there is a lesson and application for adults as well as children?

The pressure of busyness and the need to

complete the next thing on our to-do list can so easily rob any of us of the time to stop and stare – the time to observe, to reflect, to think and explore our creativity.

This interests me as church minister for a couple of reasons.

Firstly, I believe our natural creativity comes from a source. My faith tells me our creativity points back to a creative God.

Secondly, I have found that faith grows when I make time to think and reflect, but many other things compete for that time.

**I have found that faith grows when I make time to think and reflect...**

Part of the aim of regular Sunday worship services is to build in time to consider things greater than the next task in our diaries, but it is more than a Sunday thing. In

stopping, staring and appreciating there is so often space to personally give thanks to and connect with God.

So, children or adults alike, if we find time to stare out of the window this summer or find other ways to use our imaginations and explore our creativity, may it point us to the one who was creative first.



Ken Benjamin

# The Real Jesus

Jesus. We have heard of him, perhaps. But who was he – really? In this the third of our mini-series we continue to explore that question ...



**“Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” This question starts one of the most intriguing conversations in the Bible. We do not know why the ‘rich young ruler’ asked it. Did he genuinely want to understand Jesus’ claims about himself, sincerely seeking an answer? Was he playing a political game, wanting to be seen to be asking a clever question? Or perhaps he was trying to gain kudos by tripping Jesus up with a tricky question. Jesus’ reply is unexpected. He ignores the question and retorts “Why do you call me ‘good?’”. Addressing Jesus as ‘teacher’ was already a term of respect, so Jesus challenges this double compliment. He goes on, “No one is ‘good’ except God.” The undercurrent is this: “Am I more than just good teacher – do you believe I am somehow divine? That’s the key to your question: you don’t need to do anything – you need to believe in me.”**

C. S. Lewis, author of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, also wrote *Mere Christianity* in which he unpacks the idea that Jesus left no room for belief that he was just a good man. He argues that we have three options: Mad, Bad or God. But not Good. Jesus’ claims were outrageous; his behaviour upset the authorities; he aligned himself with

the marginalised and he performed miracles that nobody at the time could explain.

Getting back to that rich young politician... Jesus went on to say he should sell his riches and give the money to the poor. Jesus was challenging him, “You call me good; are you also calling me God? If so, put your money where your

mouth is...” You can read the whole conversation in the Bible at Luke 18:18-25. We are told that the man went away sad. But we are not told what happens after that. Did he get his head around that idea and act on it? Or did he go away unable to face the challenge? So, what about you and me? Do I turn away sad, not



up for the challenge? Or am I willing to explore further who this Jesus is and what he wants of me? And you?

**James Wilson**

**See the back page for details of our Alpha course, one way to explore further who Jesus is and what he wants of us.**



## Ladies & Gentlemen!

**O**r rather, Lords-and-Ladies, for that is the name of the shade-loving plant whose fruit start to show this time of year. You had better not taste its fruit though, as all parts of the plant are poisonous.

Victorian scientists believed it had evolved its red berries to poison the birds that ate them and referred to it as a “crafty and malignant antediluvian vegetable”!

Arum, to give it its proper name, is one of nature’s many examples to us that not everything that looks good is good. One of the Bible’s many examples is the Old Testament character Samson<sup>1</sup>, a leader in Israel in the days before the monarchy.

Samson just couldn’t keep his eyes

off the ladies, and Israel’s enemies knew this only too well. There was one woman in particular that Samson became infatuated with. He’d had experience with Philistine women in the past and had got his fingers burnt, but Delilah was irresistible to him. He just couldn’t see through her beauty to the poisonous consequences of a relationship with her. It didn’t take long for her to become his downfall, as the rulers of the Philistines manipulated her for their own purposes.

So if you stumble across some Lords-and-Ladies in your travels, just remember ... some things may appear very tempting, but giving in to them may spell disaster!

<sup>1</sup> His story is told in Judges 13-16.

# Christians Against Poverty



The word “charity” has its origins in a word meaning “dear”. People support charities because of the value they place on others. One of our members explains why she got involved with Christians Against Poverty

When she moved into the area with her family a little while ago, Debbie decided to spend some time working for CAP because of the difference it makes to people’s lives.

She became what’s known as a CAP Befriender, accompanying the CAP manager or debt coach when they visit someone in debt, acting in a friendship and support role rather than in an official capacity.

“Many CAP clients find themselves in situations any of us could find ourselves in. I visited one lady, a single mother, who got into debt because of a relationship breakdown. Her partner had put her name down as the payee for various things without her knowledge, and then left the country.”

Others find themselves in financial difficulty because of ill health, unemployment or other factors outside of their control.

“It’s good to be able to show love, support and friendship to someone at a vulnerable time in their life. CAP is so worthwhile – it really provides a way out of debt for people.”

The first few steps towards help with debt can be very hard. It’s not easy to pick up the phone and admit you need help, and can be tough digging out the bills to enable the CAP team to get a clear picture of the situation, but Debbie notices what a difference even that first visit can make.

“The relief is quite instant in some cases. You can see hope and reassurance in people’s faces from the word go.”

For more information about CAP, check out the CBC web site or <https://capuk.org/>

## #getoffyourphone #listentoyourkids

In May this year, a picture of a primary school child’s class assignment started trending on Facebook. In response to the question “Tell me about an invention that you don’t like. Why?”, the child wrote:



Let’s be honest. Parenting is hard. Parents need all the help that they can get. So we’ve enlisted the help of some of our young people who have kindly agreed to offer some parenting advice on



## LISTENING

Here are their top tips.

Are you listening, parents?!

- ✓ Give me a chance to speak.
- ✓ Every once in a while, ask if I want to chat about things which might be worrying me.
- ✓ Take what I am saying seriously, and listen to me first time.
- ✓ Build my confidence by believing my problem.
- ✓ Make time to listen to and respond to what I am asking.
- ✓ Maintain eye contact (no texting or looking at screens please!).

IF I HAD to tell you what invention I Don't like, I would say that I Don't like the phone. I Don't like the phone because My Parent are on their phone every DAY. A phone is sometimes A really BAD habit. I hate My MOM's phone AND I wish she never HAD one. THAT is A invention that I Don't like. I hate it.

# ONE thing



**If there's one thing I've learnt, it's that we must have the courage of our convictions.**

Fifty years ago my best friend was killed in a car accident in Flimwell, on the border of East Sussex and Kent. I had thought about her on the anniversary of her death every year since, but had lost touch with the family. On this the fiftieth anniversary I drove up to Bidborough, some fifteen miles from Flimwell, and left a laminated note tucked behind her gravestone, inviting any family members to get in touch to talk about her life.



Sometime later I received an e-mail from the fireman who carried my friend from the crash. Later still, my friend's sister, who had been three years old at the time of the accident, wrote, and then her brother. My brief graveside note has opened up a whole series

of warm and moving communications with people I knew only as children, but we have been drawn together in remembrance and thankfulness.

The sister began her e-mail by commenting on how brave it was to get in touch. I hadn't thought about it in those terms at first, but now I reflect on it I can see that it took some courage to act on a prompting, and to travel up to leave the note, not knowing how it would be received. But I am so glad I did. When we take a risk and follow through on something we believe to be right, we are so often blessed in return.

**Jennie Redhead**

## sunday services

**10am Morning service** with children's and youth groups and crèche.

Please join us for tea or coffee and a chat after this service.

**6.30pm Evening service**

**Communion:** 1st Sunday of the month during the 6.30pm service and the 3rd Sunday of the month during the 10am service.

## Do you wrestle with the big questions of life?

Would you like to explore them with others in a relaxed, friendly environment? Alpha is a course which attracts people of different ages and backgrounds who share an interest in discovering more about Christianity.

**Our next course starts on**

**Tuesday 25th Sept.  
at 7.30pm.**



**Contact the church office to register.**

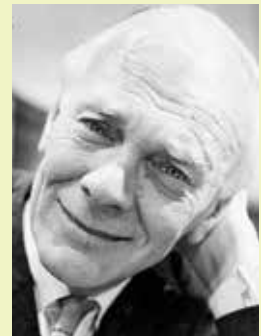


## Wasted Time

Shortly after his college days at Cambridge, Malcolm Muggeridge wrote his own epitaph to a friend. "Here lieth one whose soul sometimes burned with great longings, to whom sometimes the curtain of the Infinite was opened just a little, but who lacked the guts to make any use of it."

The title of his unfinished autobiography, *Chronicles of Wasted Time*, suggests a similar train of thought.

Perhaps the themes of this edition of *Contact* – making time to think, listening, considering who Jesus really was and is, courage, making a difference – amount to more than just a series of unrelated thoughts for you. Does your soul 'burn with great longings'? Has the curtain of the Infinite been opened to you just a little? If so, how will you make use of it?



Chichester Baptist Church, Sherborne Road,  
Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 3AW.

T: 01243 782582 E: [info@chichesterbaptist.org.uk](mailto:info@chichesterbaptist.org.uk)

[www.chichesterbaptist.org.uk](http://www.chichesterbaptist.org.uk)