

contact

CHICHESTER BAPTIST CHURCH

JUNE/JULY 2019

June

June is one of my favourite months.

June is the month that combines something of the freshness of spring passing with the warmth of summer arriving.

June is the month of light, as the summer solstice marks the day in the year with the most daylight hours.

June is the month of sitting in the garden late into the evening with family or friends, enjoying birdsong and a glass of one's favourite summer beverage.

When I think of June, I have only positive feelings. Life is good, because God is good. And yet, for some people, all of us at times, life is hard, and no amount of sunshine, warmth, light, or liquid refreshment can take all of that difficulty away.

In this edition we hear something of what it's like to face up to those difficult times. We have the second in our series on putting Jesus' words into practice in tough circumstances, a poem from a fulltime carer wrestling with the challenges of that responsibility, and a reminder of a tough news-shaping story from last year.

Where can we go to for help when things get tough?

The Psalmist wrote, "I lift up my eyes to the mountains – where does my help come from?"

My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."¹

The psalm in question is one of what are known as the 'psalms of ascent', psalms that were recited or sung by the Israelites as they made their way up to Jerusalem for one of the annual festivals. I imagine a family travelling up to Jerusalem from some other part of Israel, and every now and then they reach a point where they raise their eyes and they catch a glimpse of the city they are approaching. Jerusalem was where the temple was, the place where God chose to dwell, so in a sense they are getting closer and closer to God.

But what strikes me is that five times in this short psalm the writer talks about God watching over us. Our help comes from the Lord because he cares for us. In the words of another more familiar psalm, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."²

Even in the best of months, life can be hard. But if God is with us, we will have all the help that we need.

¹ Psalm 121; ² Psalm 23

Note: we hope to be offering some practical help through The Noise project again this year, but see inside for how to get the latest information on this.



Roger Hubert

LOVE, REALLY?

Jesus spoke a lot about love, but putting his words into practice is no easy matter

Imagine you've just been slapped around the face and your friend tells you to let the person slap you again - on the other cheek this time. How would you react? When Jesus is talking to his followers about loving their enemies, he says: "If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also"¹. But is he just talking about being hit in the face, or is there something else going on here?



Whatever your reaction to Jesus' words might be, I'm guessing you'd have something to say about letting someone beat you up. Because none of us would allow someone to walk all over us like that. We'd stand up for ourselves. Maybe we'd throw a punch. Never mind turn the other cheek, whatever happened to taking an eye for an eye?

In another account², we see Jesus pick up on this objection before teaching about turning the other cheek. He says, "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person." By contrasting these words from the Old Testament law with the idea of turning the other cheek, Jesus turns what we think we know on its head. At first glance, this seems like a contradiction, but one commentator suggests that in the Old Testament context, an eye for an eye was not given as a command

but as a restraint; a way to ensure that the punishment fit the crime. Another translation puts it like this: "If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff". In this way, to use Paul's words to the Romans, we are invited to "overcome evil with good"³.

So what good can it really bring if we allow people to take advantage of us? Jesus teaches us that doing good in response to evil is to act like God, who is kind even to the ungrateful and wicked. God sent his son to die in our place while we were his enemies; he loves us even though we don't deserve it. By turning the other cheek, we can show our enemies that their actions don't define our response and somehow let the mystery of God's love be revealed through our weakness.

Sophie Hawker

¹Luke 6, ²Matthew 5, ³Romans 12

Letter from a fulltime carer

Dear God, please help!

I'm finding life very tough at the moment. My not so good health is incapacitating me in many areas so I'm feeling frustrated and insecure. I know this is W.R.O.N.G.

As a lively minded go-getter (albeit a senior citizen), I'm finding that my present situation caring 24 x 7 for a chronically sick and walking wounded husband of 48 years gives me problems. I suppose I feel trapped.

And I feel guilty when I send him out so that I can have some head-space, just a bit of peace, but then I grumble when he's in because I can't get a moment to myself to be creative, do what I want, cry or even breathe (I exaggerate but you know).

I badly want to retain my sense of humour which diffuses tension, and I desperately need your assistance in coming to terms with things as they are and not as I want them to be. Calm in the midst of the storm and all that!

Thank you, God, for reading this prayer. I await your kind intervention in these matters,

Yours sincerely,

Anon

RESCUE

It was only last year that a dramatic event in Thailand spanning the months of June and July captured our attention. Twelve members of a junior football team and their 25-year-old assistant coach entered a cave after a training session. Shortly afterwards, heavy rains flooded the cave

and the group found themselves trapped.

Along with people all over the globe we followed the story with fascination, hope and prayer as it unfolded, and looking back now a year later certain things stay with me.

In particular, I remember the search for possible solutions, including the offer of a mini-submarine (not used) from billionaire Elon Musk, as experts wrestled with an apparently intransigent problem. I remember too the sheer scale of the operation. Apparently, it took 18 days of rescue effort, with extraordinary resources involved, the number of people alone estimated at more than 10,000.

A huge price was paid because we cared about the lives of these young men and their coach. But no-one paid a greater price than Saman Kunan, the 37-year-old former Thai Navy SEAL who died of asphyxiation while returning to a staging base in the cave after delivering supplies of air.

One man gave his life so that others might live. I'm reminded of another who gave his life that others might live, one who willingly laid it down because he cared about us. As Mark puts it in his gospel, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Mark 10:45, The Bible



THE NOISE RUBBISH COLLECTIONS

**Wednesday 29th May (pm only)
to Friday 31st May inclusive.**

At the time of going to print we do not know if we can provide this service this year owing to the extensive fire at the Westhampnett Household Waste Recycling Site (HWRS) on Tuesday 2nd April. The only information we had was that it was closed 'until further notice'.

If the HWRS has re-opened in the intervening period (and accepting charitable waste) then you will see our teams 'out and about' in the surrounding streets during the above dates. Give us a wave if you see us!



**For up-to-date
information check**

- The PRA Facebook page
- Noticeboards by the Parklands shops, at St Wilfrid's and at the Baptist Church

■ The voice-mail message on 07522 857001 (1st May onwards)

Rubbish collections, if happening, can be booked via 07522 857001 (1st May onwards).

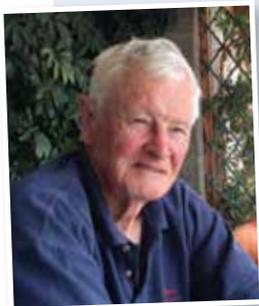


ONE thing



If there's one thing I've learnt, it's that a happy wife makes for a happy life!

In the course of a career marked by nearly a dozen moves in Africa, the Americas and the Middle East, looking after the interests of all members of our family at any one time has required considerable flexibility and adaptation. As the main bread winner, my career with the United Nations Development Programme has been greatly helped by a wife with just these characteristics, and kids who have been able to adjust to a rather peripatetic lifestyle.



Work pressures on my side requiring long hours in the office were often the norm. Making a home in houses with designs, staff, water and electricity idiosyncrasies required ingenuity.

Separation from kids, as one by one they departed for school in the UK, brought feelings of bereavement. Long hours without a formal 'job' as opposed to that of 'accompanying spouse' needed considerable ingenuity and adaptability. Diplomatic entertaining with a wide array of people was enough to make even the strongest nervous. And finally, operating in a foreign language, namely French and Spanish, all presented challenges. Despite the above, we managed to work together to make the best of the circumstances, and to overcome the challenges, often with substantial sacrifices on both sides. Making a wife happy in all circumstances is a challenge to us husbands! Doing the same abroad can be even more so! But the long-term rewards are infinitely worth it. Something which one never learns at school, but only in the ups and downs of life, but definitely a 'one thing' which is worth learning!

Mike Askwith

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



Saturday 1st June
Parklands Green, Sherborne Road
11am to 3pm.

In addition to a BBQ there will be a variety of activities and entertainments including bouncy castles, face painting, bicycle maintenance, stalls, refreshments tent, DVD and book swaps, cream teas, and more! All totally free to residents. So, come along and join in the fun!

Jointly organised by CBC and St. Wilfrid's.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.

SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUB

9.30am to 12.00 on Wednesday 24th to Friday 26th July

with a Family Service at 10am on Sunday 28th July

for children finishing school years Reception to Year 5.

Bible stories, games, crafts and songs.

Everybody welcome

£5 per child for whole week, maximum £10 per family.

Go to chichesterbaptist.org.uk/specialevents for more information and to book online.



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