

Hope MAGAZINE



WINTER 2020

PEOPLE WHO CHANGED THE WORLD JOHN HOWARD OF BEDFORD - PRISON REFORMER

John Howard was the local squire at Cardington (near the Wixams).

In 1773, while Sheriff of Bedfordshire, he found out that poor people, once arrested, had little chance of regaining their freedom. Howard saw prisoners "who by the verdict of juries were declared not guilty after having been confined for months, dragged back to gaol and locked up again till they should pay sundry fees to the gaoler".

"Once arrested a poor man had little chance of regaining his freedom"

Howard applied for a salary for the Bedford gaoler but a precedent was

required. Howard therefore travelled into other counties, but only saw more injustices and corruption. He said "I could not enjoy my ease and leisure in neglect of an opportunity offered by providence of attempting the relief of the miserable".

In 1777 he published 'The State of the Prisons in England and Wales' which was presented to the House of Commons. Diseases, bullying and extortion in prisons were rife. There was no fresh air in underground dungeons, exercise or sanitation.

"I could not enjoy my ease and leisure in neglect of an opportunity offered by providence of attempting the relief of the miserable".

Howard inspected prisons throughout Europe. He was careful not to visit a gaol before breakfast, Continued on page 7.



Places to go... AMPHILL PARK

Do you enjoy walking, beautiful scenery and woodland?

Amphill Park is a great place to go and explore with approximately 160 acres of parkland and woodland. There is a children's play area, park hub with cafe and toilets, tennis courts and superb view over Marston Vale. Henry VIII hunted here and the parkland landscape was created by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the 18th century. There are lots of blackberries in the summer and the large chestnut trees are good for roast chestnuts! As the park is on the Greensand Ridge Walk, it is not so muddy as Marston Vale.

Amphill Park Hub Café Open Daily 9.30am to 5.00pm - see fb. There are two car parks off the B530, Woburn Street, Amphill, MK45 2HX

www.amphilltowncouncil.org.uk/park/visiting-the-park



Who are we?

We are a Bible believing, evangelical church. We hold a church service every Sunday morning where we seek to explain God's word, the Bible, in a careful, warm and relevant way, and give the Bible's answers to contemporary questions of life. We are currently meeting on zoom, but we usually meet together at Lakeview Village Hall.



In the past couple of years we have held a traditional, Christmas carol service at Lakeview Village Hall, this year

due to lockdown we will be holding a Wixams Zoom Traditional Carol service on Sunday 20th December 10.30am to 11.30am on zoom.....see the advert on the back page for further information.



We run other activities during the week:



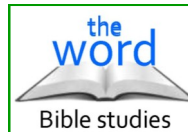
IGNITE @ 12
A friendly group for those in year 6 and above where we have fun, games, food and explore the Bible together.
We meet every Tuesday 2.00pm to 2.45pm



Games
Questions
Food
Quizzes
Exploring the Bible



Wixams Sunday Club
for children aged 4-10yrs
3pm to 4pm
every Sunday term time
Lakeview Village Hall



We meet on Thursday evenings to look together at what the Bible has to teach us.

www.christthewordwixams.org.uk and www.facebook.com/christthewordwixams

My story....

My family and I moved to Wixams 5 years ago from Kempston. Before becoming a mother, I was a primary school teacher in a local school.

I first came into contact with Christian things at middle school. There I had a friend who was a Christian; she invited me along to a Christian youth group. I started attending regularly and heard for the first time the message of the Bible. I bought my own Bible and started to read it, but I wanted to go to church to find out more.

One summer holiday when I was 19, a friend invited me to go to a church service. It had been the opportunity that I had been waiting for and I went along every Sunday. One evening I prayed to God and asked him to forgive me for the way I had lived against him. I asked God to help me turn from my past ways and live his way. I thanked him for Jesus, God's Son who lived a perfect life and died on a cross to take the punishment for the wrong things that I had done. God has been with me, helping and guiding me ever since and I know one day I will go to Heaven to be with him.

Becca Clarke



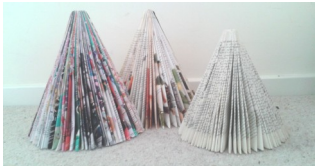


Crafty Corner

Magazine Christmas Tree

Christ the Word Church run a couple of coffee & craft mornings every year. Here is a craft for Christmas!

You will need a magazine such as a free one you get from the supermarket or a book with approx 60 pages.



1. Open the magazine, pick up the top right hand corner of the page and fold it down into the spine of the magazine, then crease the fold.
2. Fold again by bringing the first fold across to the spine of the magazine and crease again, leaving a triangle at the bottom.
3. Fold the bottom triangle up and tuck up and into the folded page. Repeat for all the pages.
4. When completed space out the folded pages to create the Christmas tree. You can add some tinsel and a star on top to decorate!

If you are stuck, here is a link to a tutorial on Youtube: <https://tinyurl.com/y3s2pgvv>



*is still meeting every
Sunday using Zoom,
10.30am to 11.30am.*

*You can join our church service
from the comfort of your own home.*



For further information please see
www.christthewordwixams.org.uk
word@wixams.org.uk -
contact Alan or Chris for details



Christ the Word Wixams

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The word 'Gospel' means very simply 'Good News'. We hear a lot of bad news in this world, but isn't it an encouragement to hear some really good news?

The good news of the gospel was first proclaimed by angels on the hills outside Bethlehem. They said to the Shepherds, "Unto you is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." You can read about it in Luke chapter 2 verses 8-18. In response, the shepherds came to Bethlehem and found a baby, the Lord Jesus Christ, lying in a manger. What a humble beginning!

Christmas is a reminder of God's love to mankind in sending His Son into the world. But there is more to it than that. It is nice to think of the nativity scene, but we don't like to think so much of the baby grown to a man and nailed to a cruel Roman cross. Yet that is why Jesus came: to be our Saviour.

The Bible says that we have all done wrong and that our sin separates us from God. On the cross Jesus died in our place to pay the price for our sin. If we repent and trust in him, therefore, we can be forgiven and will one day go to heaven.

Now, surely that's Good News!

**God sent
neither a philosopher
nor a general But
A Saviour
with the power to forgive**

HM The Queen (Christmas Speech 2011)

Real lives

Gareth Davis.....

Rescued From Aberfan



Five-year old Gareth Davies stepped out from his classroom to a bewildering scene. Everything had changed. Nothing was where it should be. The school playground, walls and buildings were suddenly nowhere to be seen.

Minutes earlier, the morning register was being taken, the children of Pantglas Junior School in Aberfan heard a rumbling sound that quickly became a deafening roar. Then a crushing flood of deadly black slurry crashed through the school, leaving classrooms destroyed and 144 people dead, including 116 children.

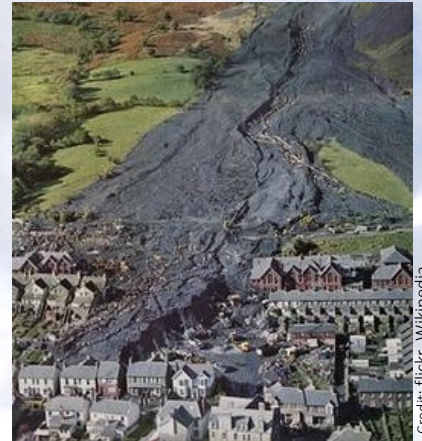
Gareth's brother was in one of the classrooms engulfed in the slurry. He was one of only a few children in his class to be pulled out alive that day. But in Gareth's young mind, his main worry was his mum would be cross that there was now blood on

the new jumper she had knitted for him.

The Aberfan disaster of 1966 changed this Welsh village forever. Yet, like many others, Gareth's family buried their memories away, not talking together about what had happened for decades to come.

Gareth grew up as one of the small number of Aberfan children who hadn't been killed or moved away after the disaster. He felt that an unexpressed sense of grief and anger hung over the village. His way of escaping from it was to spend hours in the pool, training as a competitive swimmer.

Gareth grew up as one of the small number of Aberfan children who hadn't been killed or moved away after the disaster.



Later, Gareth was glad to get away from Aberfan by going off to university in Aberystwyth.

But tragedy struck again. After his parents had dropped him off at the start of his first term, his father was killed in a car accident on the way home. How would Gareth escape from the grief? As a competitive swimmer, he hadn't been drunk before, but now alcohol became his escape route.

Tasty Treats....

Vegetable and Fruit Curry

Ingredients:

Olive oil or similar
One chopped onion
Curry powder to taste
1 level tablespoon of flour

$\frac{3}{4}$ pint/425ml hot stock
1 chopped apple (leave skin on if an eating apple)
Handful of sultanas/raisins
Salt and Pepper

Variety of prepared (bitesize) vegetables and fruit - e.g. Carrots, parsnips, sweet potato, pear, dried apricots (I try to include pear - skin on - and dried apricots, since these seem to enhance the flavour. If I want to bulk it up a bit I add potato and any leftover veg from the day before). The aim is to make a good panful to last at least 2 days! You can freeze it too.

After university, Gareth began work and got married. When his wife gave birth to a baby boy, he was overjoyed at becoming a father. But his family life came crashing down when he found out that his wife had been unfaithful and the baby was another man's son. Divorce followed and again Gareth turned to drink as his coping mechanism.

Later, having built up a successful business, a change in legislation led to Gareth's business going bust overnight. He was left to break the news to all the employees, and forced to sell his house and car to deal with the debts. This time, with too little money to turn to drink, recreational drugs became his way of escaping from reality.

Yet despite these setbacks, Gareth always seemed to come out on top in the end. Why would someone like him, who had been through so much, need anyone else to rescue him now? He had made his money again in business and retired early to the Welsh countryside, happily married and a determined atheist.

What did Gareth need rescuing from? Not just the memory of Aberfan or the tough times he'd been through, but more importantly, the wrong he had done, his sin.

But his world was shaken again

when his wife faced a serious health scare. Everything pointed to cancer and on the day she was to get the final results, an appointment was already booked with the surgeon. But the tests were clear – there was no cancer. They were overjoyed, but for Gareth's wife there was something more. Although she had turned away from her Christian upbringing, she knew her mother and aunt had been praying for her. God's hand was in this. She came home and started attending a small church nearby. Eventually she persuaded Gareth to join her, and he was impressed by the kindness of the people he met.



Although he was still an atheist, Gareth enjoyed listening to the sermons and began to understand the Bible's message about God's great rescue plan. What did Gareth need rescuing from? Not just the memory of Aberfan or the tough times he'd been through, but more importantly, the wrong he had done, his sin. A line from a hymn struck home to him: "The vilest offender who truly believes, that moment

from Jesus a pardon receives". Gareth knew he had done wrong against God – although he hadn't seen himself as that bad a person, before God he was still a 'vile offender'. He had lived by his own rules and gone through life denying the existence of God.

But he also realised that the rescue Jesus offered could be his as well – he could receive a pardon from Jesus for his sin. Gareth now trusted in Jesus to forgive him and change him. But what about Gareth's atheism? Becoming a Christian wasn't a comfortable experience, but when God tapped Gareth on the shoulder, there was no way he could ignore it. He had been happy as an atheist, but he had never used the word 'joy' to describe his life until now. This new joy ran deeper than any tragedy he had been through – and he knew it would stay with him for the rest of his life on earth and beyond into heaven.

Article by kind permission www.thebeachteam.org



Would you like to read about more Real Life stories?

Email us for a

**FREE
Real Lives
Book**

word@wixams.org.uk

Method

1. Heat oil in a heavy based pan and soften the chopped onion until lightly brown.
2. Stir in the flour and the curry powder (I use a rounded teaspoon of hot powder for a good 'bite', but you can adjust to taste). Simmer gently for about 5 minutes, stirring regularly to prevent sticking.
3. Stir in the hot stock.
4. Add the prepared vegetables, fruit, and seasoning to taste.
5. Bring to boil, cover and simmer gently for about an hour, stirring occasionally. If the curry looks a bit thick, add water; if a bit runny, remove the lid and simmer until some of the liquid has evaporated.
6. Enjoy with rice/naan bread!



Who is God?

You might think 'You must be joking!' Who asks those kind of questions today?
But MANY people believe in God and there are very few people who do NOT
pray in difficult times.

So, what does the Bible say about God?

God is Eternal

Who made God? Unlike us, God doesn't have a birthday! God has no beginning and no end. That is why God said that his name was 'I AM'¹. He is always present. He is eternal.

God is All Powerful

We all know the universe is vast. But do you know how vast? Travelling at the speed of light (186k/mps) it would take 200,000 years just to cross our Galaxy, the Milky Way. There are another 200 billion galaxies in the universe! Where did all that matter come from? Some speculate there was a big bang that started the universe, but that leaves a lot of questions unanswered. What went 'bang'? How can something come from nothing? The Bible says there is an all-powerful God who created the universe. He has left his signature in the universe with the unique conditions for life on planet earth that could not have happened by chance.

God is Personal, Love and Truth

The God of the Bible is not a cold, distant, impersonal force. He is and always has been three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit². God is also *Love* – he is caring, takes responsibility, shows respect and knows. God is able to understand, experience and give love precisely because he is not just one person. God is also *Truth* – he is passionate about justice, truth telling and honesty.

God Communicates

When you have a really important message for people you love, you might write a letter. But the best way is to turn up in person!

That is exactly what God did. Do you remember that famous Christmas carol - 'Hark the Herald Angels sing'? Talking about Jesus, it says 'Veiled in

flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity!
Christmas is about the birth of Jesus. Emmanuel - God with us.

God the Father sent the Son to our world so we could know what God is really like. He is the living Word³. When Jesus was on earth he showed his power over nature, and his compassion for people. He also said he was the only way to God⁴. He said the person who had seen him had seen the Father. Because of Jesus, everyone could see what God is like - all-powerful, personal, full of love and truth.

But most of all, the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, as he foretold⁵. God told Joseph concerning Mary, "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins"⁶. Jesus who was the sinless Son of God came to our world and went to the death on the cross to purchase our pardon and save us.

Three days after his death he arose bodily from the dead, to demonstrate that he truly was the eternal Son of God. It was God's plan. The first Christians boldly proclaimed the bodily resurrection of Jesus as a historical fact - the tomb was empty!

That all leads to a pile of questions. What about evil and suffering? How do I know the Bible is true? Can I know God? A faith based on what God says in the Bible is never afraid of questions and reasoning.

There are some pointers in this publication. In depth answers can be found at the following:

www.thechristiananswer.org and
www.bethinking.org

Bible references: 1) Exodus 3:14, John 8:58 2) Matthew 3:16-17
3) John 1:1-18 4) John 14:6 5) Luke 24:44-47 6) Matthew 1:21

Christianity Explored

One life.
What's it all about?

Want to know what's in the Bible?

Why not join us for a 7-session course looking at Mark's Gospel. It gives you time and space to consider the big questions of life and to explore the life of the person at the heart of the Christian faith - Jesus Christ.

- You won't be asked to read aloud, pray or sing
- You can ask any question you want, or just listen

For more information please see www.christthewordwixams.org.uk/explored or call Alan & Anne on 07879716958 or email word@wixams.org.uk



EVIDENCE FOR THE BIBLE

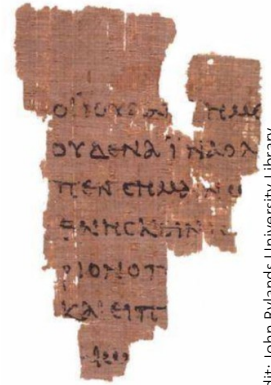
The message of the Bible hasn't changed

Is it just a legend? Some people view the birth of Jesus, his death and his coming alive from the dead as a fairy story that has been made up over the centuries.

But there is clear evidence that the legend theory is simply not true. We have over 5,000 early Greek manuscripts of the New Testament—the life of Jesus and letters of the first followers of Jesus.

Papyrus P52 is the oldest existing fragment of the New Testament. It is on display in the University of Manchester. It is part of John's Gospel, written in Greek, the original language. John's gospel is thought to have been written AD90-95. This papyrus is dated c. A.D. 100-150.

There are so many early manuscripts of the New Testament that it is possible to demonstrate the accuracy of the text. There is no good reason to think that the text – the Gospel account - has changed in 2,000 years. And the Bible today is translated from those early Greek manuscripts.



Credit: John Rylands University Library

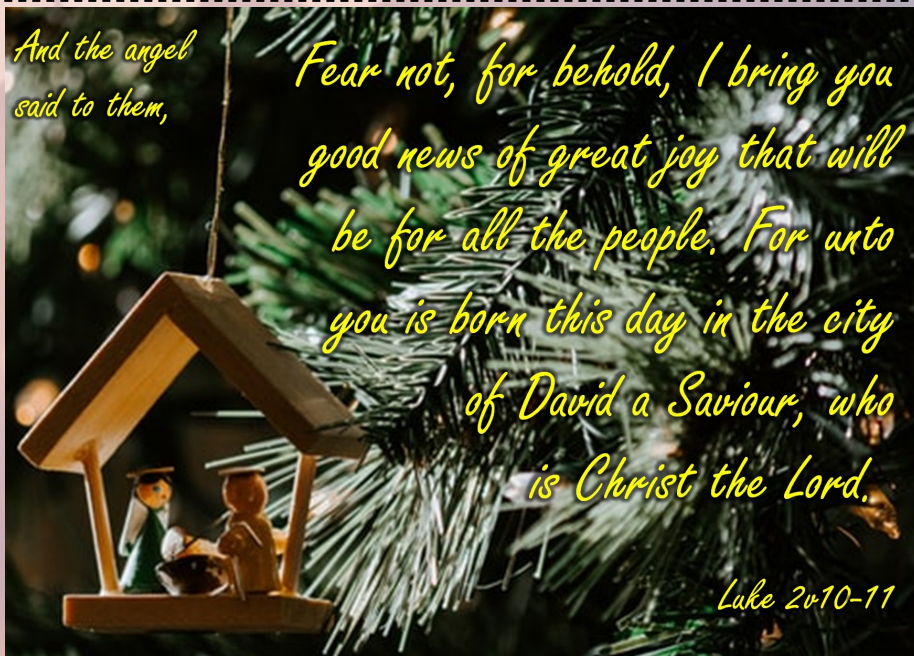
Further Reading – 'Can We Trust the Gospels?', Peter J Williams, Crossway 2018

Cut out and keep

*And the angel
said to them,*

*Fear not, for behold, I bring you
good news of great joy that will
be for all the people. For unto
you is born this day in the city
of David a Saviour, who
is Christ the Lord.*

Luke 2:10-11



Continued from page 1 JOHN HOWARD OF BEDFORD - PRISON REFORMER

.....not to breath too deeply and changed his clothes regularly. Travelling from prison to prison on his inspections, he carried a small brass kettle, a tea pot, cups and saucers and a supply of green tea! When a British ambassador asked him to tone down his criticism of torture in the Austrian empire he said "What, shall my tongue be tied from speaking truth by any king or emperor in the world? I repeat what I have said and maintain its veracity". In the last 5 years of his life he became a passenger on a plague bound ship in the Mediterranean to examine the state of quarantine.

● Visiting ill people in Kherson, Ukraine in 1790, he contracted a fever and died. On his tombstone it said "whoever thou art thou standest at the tomb of thy friend".
● In his life he travelled nearly 60,000 miles and spent a personal fortune to fund prison reforms.

What motivated John Howard?

● Firstly, he was influenced by the 18th century Evangelical awakening, and his love for the teaching "love your neighbour as yourself" found in the Bible. Secondly, he realised that Jesus

● said "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
● Therefore, if his Saviour had bought him with so costly a price - a ransom on the cross - he was not his own, and he ought to serve his Lord with all that he could give.
● Today in Cardington, where he started a school for boys and girls, you can see the cottages he rebuilt.
● The statue on Bedford market square was erected in 1890 through public subscription.
● The Howard League for Prison Reform was named in his honour.



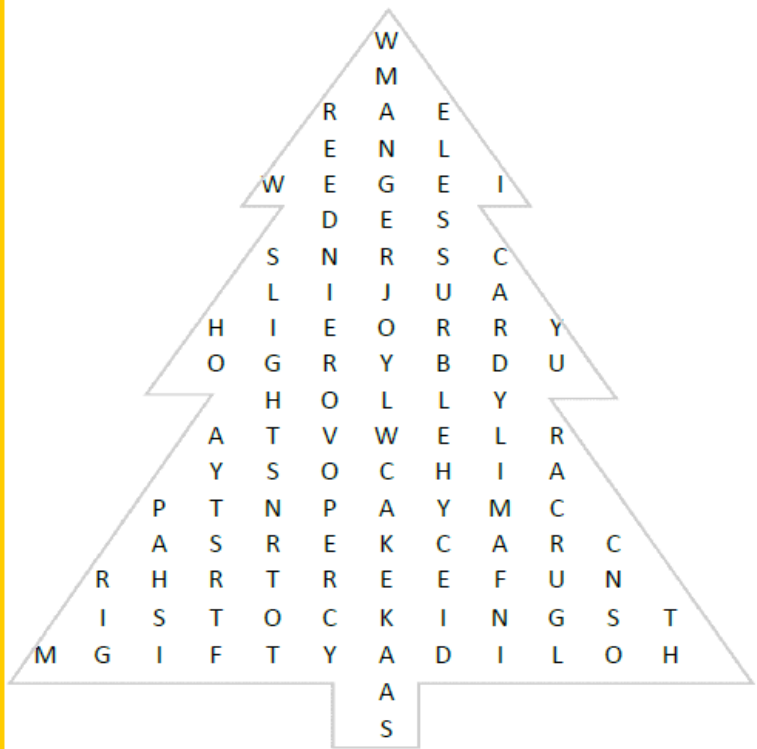
COMPETITION TIME

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| <input type="checkbox"/> MANGER | <input type="checkbox"/> SNOW |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY | <input type="checkbox"/> REINDEER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TREE | <input type="checkbox"/> HOLLY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CRACKERS | <input type="checkbox"/> HOLIDAY |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> STAR | <input type="checkbox"/> JOY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STOCKING | <input type="checkbox"/> FUN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CAKE | |

Use the letters left over to fill in the blanks below

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PHOTOGRAPH YOUR ENTRY AND EMAIL TO
word@wixams.org.uk FIRST THREE CORRECT
ENTRIES DRAWN OUT OF A HAT ON FRIDAY
18th DECEMBER WILL RECEIVE A PRIZE!



Family fun

SCAVENGER HUNT

Let's take a walk. Tick each item as you find it!



- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue door | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas lights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spider web | <input type="checkbox"/> Something square |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Number 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> White flower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog | <input type="checkbox"/> Chimney |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas wreath | <input type="checkbox"/> Green Car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something orange | <input type="checkbox"/> Bench |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas tree | <input type="checkbox"/> Pebble |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Litter bin | <input type="checkbox"/> Post box |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swan | <input type="checkbox"/> Street light |

All are welcome to our
Wixams Traditional
Christmas Carol Service on Zoom

Sunday 20th December 10.30am
On ZOOM: Meeting ID: 836 9322 2050
Passcode: 0232345450
www.christthewordwixams.org.uk



Christ the Word
Church Wixams
wishes you and
your family a
very happy
Christmas and a
blessed 2021.