

Journey

with

the
church
at CARRS LANE



THE
CONTINUING
STORY OF
THE CHURCH AT
CARRS LANE



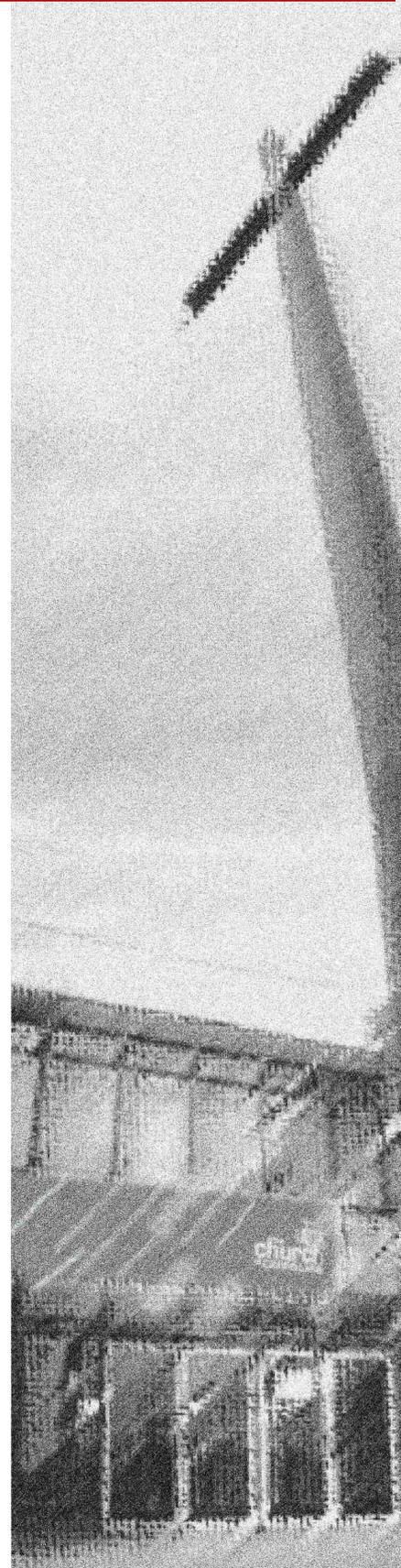
Lent

Working Positively Together
Reflections on Lent; Golden Anniversary
Lent activities and Eco Lent Challenge
Christian Aid; Fair Trade; Events

United in Jesus | serving the city

The home of a partnership of Christian ministries
supported by the Methodist and United Reformed Churches

Spring 2020



Content - Spring 2020 issue



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Email: clerk@carrslane.co.uk Telephone 0121 643 6151 www.carrslane.co.uk
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Editorial Team: Pat Davies, Steph Neville, Lindsay Peniston

The Summer issue of *Journey* will be a Special Edition.

Deadline for submissions to the Autumn issue: 19 August 2020.

Pastoral Letter



Dear Friends

*“and he was in the
desert for forty
days, being
tempted by Satan.”
(Mark 1:13a)*



The focus for this edition of our ‘Journey’ magazine is the season of Lent. Like Advent, Lent is a time of preparation for a major Christian festival. These festivals draw our attention to fundamental theological insights at the same time of every year, just as the natural seasons remind us of the rhythms of life. Advent is the opportunity to look forward in hope for the celebration of Incarnation at Christmas, when heaven and earth collides in the birth of Jesus. During Lent we are encouraged to reflect upon our lives as we prepare for the events of Holy Week, which culminate in another act of divine solidarity with humanity through the suffering and death of Jesus on Good Friday.

It is interesting to note that in English the word ‘Lent’ (along with the Dutch and German equivalents) refers to springtime, locating the liturgical period to a specific annual season in the natural cycle. But different European

languages and cultures, such as in France and Italy, place an emphasis on the forty days of the Lenten period, while others, including Polish and Russian, refer to it as a time of fasting. Whatever the actual meaning of the word in different societies and contexts, for the worldwide Christian community the forty days of Lent mirror the forty days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness as he prepared for his public ministry.

According to the composers of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke), Jesus was propelled into the wilderness, a place on the very margins of his society. There at the margins of everything Jesus was forced to grapple with how his public ministry would express the cosmic collision of Incarnation and reveal God's will for a New World – the Kingdom of God on earth. The temptations confronted by Jesus to feed the hungry, dazzle the disillusioned, and seize power from the oppressor were overcome by the deep sense that the old prophecy of a Suffering Servant rings true. From then on, he shows us that divine solidarity is experienced through daily miracles of love, justice and peace – therefore, whether it be the season of preparation in Lent or Advent, with Jesus new life is always before us.

Grace be with you all,

Neil

Lent and Easter at The Church at Carrs Lane



DURING LENT

Tuesday 25 February – Friday 3 April

Weekday morning prayer at 7.30am

Weekday evening prayer at 7pm

Sunday 1 March - 10.30am - Lent 1

Temptation and Power

Sunday 8 March - 10.30am - Lent 2

Forgiveness and Growth

Sunday 15 March - 10.30am - Lent 3

Self-denial

Sunday 22 March - 10.30am - Mothering Sunday

Love, Appreciation, and Safe Space

Friday 27 March – 6pm – Opening Event

Exhibition: Stopping Places

A series of ceramic panels by Mary Flitcroft

(Stations of The Cross)

Sunday 29 March - 10.30am - Passion Sunday

Whose will be done?

Monday 30 March - Friday 3 April, 11am-3pm &

Tuesday 31 March and Thursday 2 April, 5.30pm-7.30pm

Exhibition: 'Stopping Places' by Mary Flitcroft

Sunday 5 April - 10.30am - Palm Sunday

Crowd Power and Discernment



H O L Y W E E K

Monday 6, Tuesday 7, Wednesday 8 April - 7pm

Evening Prayer

Thursday 9 April - 7pm - Maundy Thursday

Being Aware Service and meal

Friday 10 April - Good Friday - 10am

Stations of the Cross Walk of Witness

City Centre Churches' ecumenical pilgrimage starting from
The Church at Carrs Lane



E A S T E R

Sunday 12 April - 10.30am - Easter Day

Renewal and New Life



Two Bowls of Water



Many of us were moved and challenged by the words of the Revd Dr Mark Oakley, when he gave the October Lectures here at Carrs Lane. More recently, the few of us who attend the “Thinking Allowed” group that meets on the first Thursday of every month were strongly challenged again when we studied a chapter in Mark Oakley’s recently published collection of sermons, *By Way of the Heart*. The chapter is entitled ‘Two Bowls of Water’. Much of what he writes seems relevant to the current discussions we are having at Carrs Lane about the format of our communion service on the first Sunday of each month.

Dr Oakley is concerned about how institutional traditions of the church can obstruct the path to Jesus who should, of course, be at the centre. He discusses the command that Jesus gives to his friends that they should be prepared to wash other people’s feet. He goes on to say that this command is as “strong and as absolute as his command to take bread and wine and remember him by sharing it”.

He writes, “... if, instead of Communion, the Church had decided to centre the Sunday and daily services around the washing of the feet command, instead of the bread and wine command. Just imagine what we would have made of it. We would be having arguments about which foot should be washed, right or left, we would have synods on whether the water should be cold or hot or, if Anglican, probably luke warm. We’d be fighting over whether women can

wash feet, whether gay people can have their feet washed, and we would wonder how to behave to those who'd never had a foot washed. We have a clever knack of concentrating on what doesn't matter to hide what does. In the upper room the clarity is potentially life changing. 'By this love you have for one another, people will know that you are my disciples.'"

I leave it to our readers to consider whether this message applies to us at Carrs Lane and to borrow a copy of this book to read the whole chapter and others in it.

Gill Barfield



Image by falco-81448 from Pixabay

Golden Anniversary Time



Fifty years is a long time, however you measure it. At Carrs Lane, we have allowed fifty years to pass, almost without noticing - some of us quite literally - except in the seemingly never-ending rounds of routine and extreme maintenance, the consequences of a flat roof and internal drainpipes, among other architectural features. We have not measured our fifty years here in our 'new' church building where we have faithfully worshipped, week by week and day by day. Rather, the anniversary comes as something of a surprise, prompted by the celebrations this year of the Carrs Lane Players, inspired by the festival of events that heralded the building's official opening on 5th June 1970.

The festival lasted for ten days and, as well as drama and dance, featured *The Carrs Lane Show*, a dramatic documentary made by a group of our young people, looking at a day in the life of our city; an evening of songs and poems with Benita Kyle called *Anthology of Love*; a public lecture given by Adrian Cadbury '*Industry today – What do we expect from our work?*'; concerts by The Canoldir Male Voice Choir and The Midland Youth Orchestra and *Explorations*, an evening of 'public conversation with many songs and words to make you think' by Donald Swann and Sydney Carter. Worship was led respectively on the two Sunday mornings by Revd Hugh Jones, West Midlands Moderator of the Congregational

Church and The Rt Revd Laurence Brown, Bishop of Birmingham. Both the evening services were led, as usual, by our then Minister, Revd Michael Hubbard, who is fondly remembered by many of us and whose name graces one of our meeting rooms, with due acknowledgement of his contribution to the whole new church project.



The opening of this building was a major event in the life of the city. It was extensively reported by the Birmingham Post, at the time the leading local newspaper in the country. On Thursday 4th June, it devoted a whole broadsheet page to articles under the banner headline: *New Church Centre to be used seven days a week*. Included were details of the forthcoming festival and retrospective pieces on the church's *'Indelible mark on history'*, for this, the fourth Carrs Lane building on the site, with its *'spiritual ancestry'* in The Old Meeting House, believed to have been built in 1689 nearby in the centre of Birmingham.

The page was illustrated with views of the church room, the foyer and the new bookshop, provided by the Birmingham Council of Christian Education. All the advertisements were related to the building: Laing, the contractor; Premix, suppliers of concrete; W A Bennett, heating and mechanical engineers; Warner's, the glaziers; C S Phillips, responsible for the steelwork structure of the building and the external cross (at the time the tallest freestanding cross in the country) and Hardman Studios

where the abstract coloured windows in the church room were designed and made. All expressed pride in being associated with this new building and tendered their 'sincere good wishes' for its future.

In the Saturday edition of the Birmingham Post that weekend there was an account of the service of thanksgiving which had marked the official opening the previous evening, with a photograph of Michael Hubbard with the Bishop of Aston, the Archbishop of Birmingham and the Lord Mayor, Alderman Stanley Bleyer. The report recorded an attendance of 500.

The staff were not forgotten. In looking forward to the official event, coverage in Friday morning's edition featured Caretaker Ralph Kirby, pictured with his vacuum cleaner in the church room (with flower arrangers behind... in those days it was a team effort!). Under the headline *Carrs Lane sweeps into 70s*, Ralph described how much easier it was to clean carpets than to spend two and a half days getting the floors in shape in the old building. Although the new building was much bigger, he said, he could get round and 'do the cleaning in a flash'... I'm not sure Nathan and his team would agree, but then they didn't know the old church!

To mark what was a huge step for the church, a book called *Carrs Lane Church 1970* was commissioned. It was billed as a '*fascinating record of old Birmingham and the beginnings of this church; a brief and revealing history of the 150 years' life of the old building; an analysis of*

Birmingham today and full details of the design and intentions behind the new premises'. It had 40 pages and cost 8/- (eight shillings, equivalent to 40p!).



Some of us *will* be reflecting on those days because we were there! For the majority who weren't, I have a copy of the book and the press cuttings if you are interested... And, if you haven't ever done so, have a look at the heritage boards outside, on the Carrs Lane side of the green behind the church, where all this is documented and illustrated.

So, if it's a golden anniversary in June, why this article now? It's because, just as the Queen has an official birthday as well as her own, the church has an official golden anniversary - in June - but its *real* anniversary is Sunday 19th April, the date in 1970 when the first service was held in this building. The whole community walked together, out of the old church, down Carrs Lane, round the corner, in through the foyer and into the new church room. That was a palpable time of thanksgiving. With gratitude for the sterling efforts and determination of those responsible for the project, the congregation gathered in this building to worship God for the first time. It was a most significant date for those of us who were there and one I hope we can collectively remember in a few weeks' time, even if our attendance has been five weeks rather than 50+ years! As to what we might do in June, I think we would be open to suggestions!

Julie Grove

Prayers for reflection ...



**Let nothing disturb you,
let nothing frighten you,
all things will pass away.**

**God never changes;
patience obtains all that it strives for,
whoever has God lacks nothing.**

God alone suffices.

Amen.

Towards the end of her life, my maternal grandmother, Nan, moved to a sheltered accommodation flat nearer to our home. I remember that she had the text of this prayer by St. Teresa of Avila in a frame on her wall. It looked like it had been cut out from a magazine many years before. Nan was a patient, caring, loving person who put her trust in God, so the prayer always seemed particularly fitting in that place.

The Taizé Community has a beautiful setting of the prayer; *“Nada te turbe, nada te espante, quien a Dios tiene, nada le falta. Nada te turbe, nada te espante, solo Dios, basta.”* This starts with a soothing melody of reassurance that nothing can trouble or frighten, and moves to the emphatic statement at the end that God alone fills us, God is all in all.

There is an urban myth that there are 365 occurrences of “Fear Not” or “Do not be Afraid” in the Bible, one for each day of the year. There are certainly over a hundred, often at times of encounter with the divine. In the story of the Transfiguration, Peter, James and John climb a mountain with Jesus and, there, experience a revelation of Jesus’ messiahship. A voice speaks from heaven, “This is my Son, in whom I am well pleased, listen to him.” The disciples are filled with fear until, at the end of the vision, Jesus comes and says to them, “Do not be afraid.” (Matthew 17:1-8)

In Luke 12 Jesus also tells his disciples “do not be afraid.” Here, he is teaching them to trust, which is the true message of St. Teresa’s prayer. Following Jesus in the midst of a hostile, attractive, provoking, exciting world is a challenge, and we need assurance and confidence.

The prayer reminds us that God is always with us, and in the turmoil of life we should remember this and patiently follow the way of love and reconciliation which was Jesus’ walk towards the cross.



Peter Woodall

Question & Answer



Q: From Reader,

I read recently that a team of astrophysicists have concluded that there are over a trillion galaxies in the observable universe. Given what we know, and given the photos of the universe available today, how can I possibly conceive of God?



A: By Carl Krieg

Dear Reader,

During biblical times the three-tiered universe provided a place for God and for us: God was up, the nether world was down, and we stood on the plain in the middle.

Thinking he had disproven a religious hypothesis, the first

Russian cosmonaut went up in space and reported that he found no god up there. Today, not only do we know the world is a sphere, with no up and down, but also that the universe “out there” is literally beyond imagination. There may be a trillion galaxies that we can see in theory - the observable universe - but then there exists what can never be known because it is accelerating in its moving away, and its light will never reach us. We will remain in total and eternal ignorance of that unknowable part of the universe. We are, alas, a tiny speck in this ocean of infinity.

And yet, the presence of God is as near to us as our neighbour. Remembering one of Jesus’ most famous parables, a man approached Jesus and asked what he must do to inherit eternal life? Jesus responded quoting the Shema: You know the answer. Love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, and your neighbour as yourself. And the man asked: who is my neighbour? “A man was walking...” Jesus tells us, and was beaten and robbed, “and then a Samaritan came along...”. We all know the story. When we love, we make God real in our own life, and this experience is so much more than conceiving God, it is manifesting God. God is love, and that is something we can experience and know right here and right now.



There continue to be many attempts to find a place for God to be in the universe. Some say God can be identified as the consciousness of the universe. Some say God may be found in extra dimensions that exist right alongside us. Some say in the dark energy inhering space-time. Perhaps. But we need not look any further than the fullness of God's creation that surrounds us and the love that upholds us. And when we in turn reach out in love, we do better than conceive of God. We make God incarnate in our own life.

Most people today in our culture do not even use the word "God", and that trend continues and increases. Many in the church decry the trend toward secularism, but the movement seems not only inevitable, but is, I think, beneficial, and beneficial in the sense that it focuses on the essence of who God is and what God wants. The Hebrew prophet Amos put it starkly, teaching us that God hates and despises the festivals and takes no delight in the solemn assemblies of religious institution, but instead desires that "justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream". Jesus echoed that sentiment exactly, and secularists are as capable of fighting for justice as are religious folk. We don't need to use the word "God" when we have the word "love". And we don't need to conceive of God in the abstract when we can love our neighbour.

As we gaze into the infinity of the stars out there, we have three options for the attitude we can take. One is to believe that the universe is amoral. It cares not about anything, just moving along. The second is the thought that evil runs the show. The last is to see everything as imbued with love, and that really is the message of Jesus' life, death and new life, that ultimately, death and destruction are overcome, and love rules the day.

~ Carl Krieg

Dr Carl Krieg received his BA from Dartmouth College, MDiv from Union Theological Seminary in NYC, and PhD from the University of Chicago Divinity School. He is the author of [*What to Believe? the Questions of Christian Faith*](#), and [*The Void and the Vision*](#). As professor and pastor, Dr Krieg has taught innumerable classes and led many discussion groups.

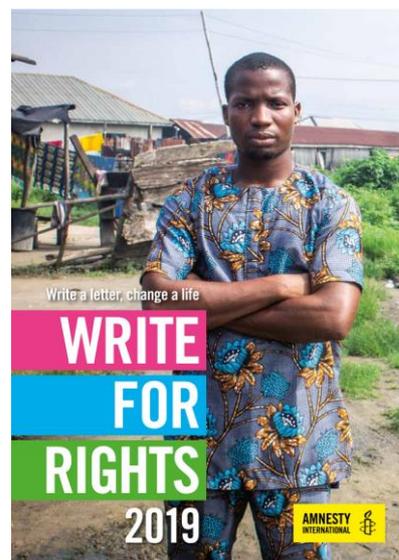


Amnesty International Greetings Card Campaign

Write for Rights 2019



During the service at the Church at Carrs Lane on 8 December 2019, the Sunday before Human Rights Day, we wrote greetings cards to children and young people who had been affected by Human Rights abuses. I want to thank everybody at The Church at Carrs Lane who took part in this campaign either on that Sunday or at other times. Again, we sent off around 100 cards. A number of people also took part in online appeals and sent greetings by email.



So many people contribute in different ways that it is a real team effort and could not be done without all your support. It is much appreciated. The children made and wrote their own cards and I would like to thank Stephanie Neville for organising this and for introducing our youngsters to the idea of Human Rights.

As I said in the service on 8 December, The Church at Carrs Lane has written Greetings Cards every year since 1984. All our cards are made by Margaret Cross to meet the stringent postal weights for overseas.

Your messages of support mean a huge amount, because the recipients have told Amnesty they do.

After last year's campaign the Sengwer Indigenous people of Kenya wrote:

'We would like to thank Amnesty for the work that they have done, especially on the Write for Rights campaign. We are so thankful to Amnesty. We would like to thank the entire team for exposing the ills, for exposing the problems and the challenges the Sengwer community underwent. God bless Amnesty and God bless the Sengwer as we seek for justice.'

Please do let me know if you receive a reply from anybody. I will then forward the information to Amnesty in London.

For further information you can look up the website www.amnesty.org.uk/write

Thank you so much to everybody.

Christine Rowntree, January 2020



To make trade fair, make it green



At first glance, ‘making trade fairer’ and ‘protecting the planet’ might seem like two different objectives.

One focuses on tackling poverty by securing decent incomes and just treatment for farmers and workers; the other on preserving the natural environment. But hold this premise up to scrutiny, and it quickly unravels.

For far too long, conventional trade and business has been driven by both exploitation of some of the world’s poorest people and a sapping of the planet’s natural resources. People living in poverty continue to be deprived of the right to earn a dignified living and afford everyday essentials – and at the same time, the environment is being destroyed and carbon levels are rising.

As a result, the climate crisis continues to escalate. Sea levels are rising, forests are burning, and entire communities are uprooting themselves simply in order to survive. It’s never been more obvious that anything that affects the planet has very real consequences for people, too.

At Traidcraft Exchange, we see evidence of this through our work in many different countries.

In Kenya, for instance, farmers are able to negotiate fairer prices with buyers and better support their families when

they work together. But if weather patterns become too unpredictable to navigate, and their soil is depleted of nutrients, it's only a matter of time before they have no more crops to sell at all.

If we're serious about building a future where all trade is fair, we must be prepared to shift our perceptions a little about what "fairness" in trade really means.

In other words, trade must be fair to the planet, or it will never be fair to people. That's why Traidcraft Exchange tackles environmental harms in trade and mitigates the effects of climate change by providing solutions wherever we can - work that is only possible thanks to people like you.

Your support has helped fruit farmers in Senegal learn to protect the forests they rely on for their livelihoods, and enabled smallholders in Kenya to grow crops that flourish even in extreme weather.

You've helped textile workers in India to use eco-friendly dyeing and production practices and supported innovative small businesses in Bangladesh to create recycled clothes from fabric waste discarded from factories.

Wherever it's made most sense to do so, you've also helped people sell to local or regional markets rather than international ones.

This is for two reasons – firstly, to move away from a model where the poorest countries are heavily reliant on

trading with the wealthiest, by enabling them to become more self-sufficient. Secondly, it cuts down on the carbon footprint of long-distance freight transport.

You might also have signed our petition last year asking the UK government to stop including ISDS clauses in new trade deals with poor countries, which allow big business to sue countries for millions if they pursue policies that could threaten corporate profits.

Fossil fuel companies have used this clause to pressure governments to drop climate friendly policies. At Traidcraft Exchange, it's our role to shine a light on this kind of injustice and come up with solutions to change trade for the better.

But it's people like you, who support us and take action with us, that actually make that change happen. Time and time again, we see it's the poorest people in the world who are hit hardest by the effects of climate change and environmental degradation – the very people who have contributed least to the problem.

As the devastating impact of the climate crisis becomes ever more apparent, it's clear that international trade must urgently be transformed so it benefits both people and planet.

Pages 12-13 of Trade Matters, Traidcraft Exchange, January 2020

A Traidcraft Favourite: Sumatra Coffee



Traidcraft's Jude visits Sumatran producers

Here at Traidcraft, we believe that visiting producers is crucial to our understanding of fair trade and our ability to progress and pioneer the future of fair trade. That's why at the end of 2019, Traidcraft's Jude travelled to the source of some of our most popular coffee, Sumatra, accompanied by Traidcraft's resident coffee expert, Alex Urban.

The trip to source was extremely eye-opening for Jude. Here, Jude explains all about Permata Gayo Cooperative and what difference fair trade has made to their cooperative, workers and community.

“The real purpose of the trip was for Alex and I, in collaboration with Roasters United (a group of European coffee roasters committed to working directly with small farming cooperatives to promote high quality coffees that are organically grown in democracy), to support the on-going relationship with Permata Gayo Cooperative. However, I also wanted to delve into the world of our coffee producers, come back with some real-life stories behind the coffee you buy from Traidcraft and to get a better understanding of what fair trade really is.

The eagle eyed amongst you will have spotted that our Eat Your Hat coffee range doesn't display the Fairtrade mark on the packaging. The reason for this is simple: in order to use the Fairtrade logo, all of the various organisations in the supply chain must be Fairtrade certified. Although Traidcraft and Permata Gayo



Cooperative are certified, Roasters United and some of the other cooperatives from whom we buy coffee beans for Eat Your Hat are not certified. This does not mean we don't pay a premium. When buying coffee beans from Permata Gayo Cooperative, Roasters United (who buy coffee on behalf of Traidcraft) pay much more than the Fairtrade price.

During my visit to Sumatra I wanted to see what Permata Gayo spend this additional money on. Some of the extra income is used communally by coop members – as they see fit – to improve their social, economic and environmental conditions. In 2018, with some of the money, they decided to buy agricultural tools for the processes involved in farming, e.g. brushes for cleaning and rakes for drying the beans.

Fairtrade money has also enabled Temas Mumanang village to invest in a new depulping unit (a machine used to remove the red cherry skins from the coffee beans, a crucial step in the bush to bean journey – more on this later). We were lucky enough to see this machine in operation during our visit!

Partly financed by Fairtrade money, Permata Gayo Coop are currently implementing a new Compost Project, which uses, amongst other things, the red cherry skins to produce natural fertiliser for the coffee bushes.

In collaboration with Permata Gayo Coop and Coop Coffees in Canada, Roasters United are also contributing to what's called a Project Fund. This additional pot of money helps the coffee farmers to launch more innovative projects. 75% funded by Roasters United and Co-op Coffees, and 25% funded by the Fairtrade Premium, one such project is the Climate Change Adaption Program which was implemented in 2019 and was one of the most exciting things I saw during my visit.

It is primarily a tree planting scheme with three main aims:

1. To protect the coffee bushes (they require partial shade and protection from the rain to grow best).
2. To help farmers diversify their income (from fruit trees).
3. To improve soil quality.

Different crops and trees are being planted on different farms, for many different reasons. The following factors are involved in the decision:

- Rainforest Alliance states there must be at least 12 tree varieties within the scheme.
- Farmers decide what type of tree they need based on what's good for their coffee bushes and their own requirements. As well as the tree planting scheme, the programme involves planting more coffee crops, but specifically those that are more pest-resistant such as Tim-tim, Bourbon and Catimor.

One final thing I discovered is that Permata Gayo Coop have a programme in place to help their farmers during the low seasons. That is, some of the additional money received from organisations, such as Traidcraft, who pay more than the fair price, enables the coop to distribute rice to their farmers and workers during the off season, when they don't have an income from coffee. This fully holistic approach shows why fair trade is fundamental to smallholder farmers of seasonal products such as coffee".

(Reproduced with permission from Traidcraft's February 2020 Bulletin)





**Carrs Lane
FAIR TRADE SHOP**

**Carrs Lane Fair Trade Shop
at The Church at Carrs Lane**

Open Wednesdays through to Saturdays

10.30am - 2.30pm

For Easter cards, gifts and Easter Eggs

Tel: 0121 643 6151

Email: fair-trade@carrslane.co.uk



← *Traidcraft Organic Milk and Dark
Chocolate Hazelnut Easter
Egg*



*The Way, The Truth &
The Life Easter cards,
£4.50*



← *Wooden cross
wall decorations
£16.80*



*Spring Flowers
cards
£4.50*





**Carrs Lane
FAIR TRADE SHOP**

You are warmly invited to the

Carrs Lane Fair Trade Shop

Annual General Meeting

Monday 23 March 2020, 10.30am

at The Church at Carrs Lane

Light refreshments will be served from 10am

All are welcome

COULD YOU BECOME A FRIEND?



Accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. Providing an oasis of calm in the heart of the city for over 50 years. Low cost, first class counselling for adults, assisting with a range of issues.

Friends are people who know of the excellent work of the counselling centre and want to support the counselling centre to continue into the future. If you would like to know more, or to receive a 'Become a friend' form, please contact

caroline.homan@methodist.org.uk

Lent and Easter Appeal

Help more women like Faith to fight for a green future



Can you support Christian Aid's Lent and Easter Appeal? Your donation will help families facing poverty and injustice around the world.

Faith's fields used to be dirt and dust. Ongoing drought in Kenya meant next to nothing grew. Hunger was a reality.

But now Faith grows crops that are lush and green thanks to a nearby dam. Her local community got together to build the sand dam with your support.

This Lent, you can help others do the same. Together we stop this climate crisis.

*We made such a difference together last Lent and Easter.
Can you help Christian Aid again?*

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>



Christian Aid Campaigns: Getting involved

www.christianaid.org.uk



1. Displaced People

Christian Aid says that two-thirds of people forced from home are still in their own country. Seeking safety but unwilling or unable to leave, they are denied the official protection given to refugees.

We can sign a petition to support displaced people.

We can volunteer to host Christian Aid's church exhibition tour to raise awareness of internally displaced people.

2. Climate Change

Millions of the world's poorest people are feeling the worst impacts of climate change, and experts predict more floods, drought and extreme weather patterns to come. For those living in poverty, this means more hunger, conflict and insecurity, and a more uncertain future for us all.

We can demand a new deal for climate justice by signing a petition to the Prime Minister.

We can find out more about The Big Shift Global and sign up to receive Christian Aid's updates on ways to take action.

The Big Shift Global campaign demands that all people have access to sustainable and affordable renewable energy. Christian Aid believes that the World Bank should be contributing to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal of universal energy access for all by 2030.

We can email the President of the World Bank, David Malpass, and ask him to drastically increase the funding for sustainable renewable energy access for the poorest people on the planet.

3. Emergencies

Christian Aid is based in countries affected by disasters so they can be there before, during and after an emergency to save lives. The approach is fast, community led, long term, inclusive, responsible and aims to build skills.

We can respond to current emergency appeals which at present include: Amazon Rainforest, South Asia Floods Appeal, Ebola Outbreak Appeal, Cyclone Fani Appeal, Cyclone Idai Appeal, Indonesia Tsunami Appeal, Philippines Typhoon Mangkhut-Appeal, Kerala Floods Appeal, Rohingya Crisis: Forgotten Children Appeal, Syria Crisis.

“Where words fail, music speaks”

(Hans Christian Anderson)



During the year we have been privileged to hear some wonderful and diverse music played and sang to us by Tim and the choir. It both sets the mood for our worship and brings us together in fellowship. It helps us to reflect on the peace and beauty of life, the love of God and also, the more discordant music, to reflect on the conflicts which we all encounter. I am sure we would all like to thank Tim and the choir for all their hard work and commitment in providing such an essential part of our worship. Thank you!

Janet Searle



Forthcoming Events in and around Birmingham



Music:

Spring Spectacular

From Fauré to Sinatra and Sounds of the Sixties
with the Midlands Hospitals' Choir, directed by James Llewelyn Jones

3pm on Saturday 21 March 2020

St John's and St Peter's Church, Darnley Road, Ladywood,
Birmingham B16 8TF

Tickets £10 adults (5 for under 16s)

Tickets available from secretary@midlandshospitalschoir.org.uk
or at the church on the day



Verdi's Messa da Requiem

with the University of Birmingham Music Society conducted by Daniele
Rosina and with Julian Wilkins as chorus master.

Soprano: Gweneth Ann Rand

3pm on Sunday 22 March 2020

Birmingham Town Hall

Tickets £5 - £18

Book online at <https://www.thsh.co.uk/event/university-of-birmingham-music-society-presents-verdis-messa-da-requiem>



Verdi's Requiem

'Singalong' with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Simon Halsey

Concert starts at 7pm on Sunday 29 March

Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

Tickets: £17-£40

HOLDERS OF CHOIR SINGER TICKETS WILL REHEARSE FROM SATURDAY 28 MARCH



Songs of Praise Invitation to Young Choir of the Year 2020

The competition filmed for BBC1 will be taking place on 21 & 22 March at Butterworth Hall, Warwick Arts Centre in Coventry.

Saturday 21 March 2:30pm – 6:30pm Junior competition

Sunday 22 March 2:30pm – 6:30pm Senior competition

Book you FREE tickets: -

Send your name, address, contact phone number and number of tickets requested to SOPcongregations@avantimedia.tv and include Young Choir Recording in the subject line. Alternatively, you can telephone 0161 873 7073.



Music for a Spring Evening

with the 'Heart of England Singers' directed by Martin Bates

7.30pm on 4 April 2020

Solihull Methodist Church, Blossomfield Road, Solihull B91 1LG

Tickets: £10 adults (£5 for under 16s)

Tickets available from choir members or by calling Sally on 0121 783 4427. Email: sally531@live.co.uk



Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts

Birmingham Cathedral

1.10pm on Mondays 16 & 30 March, 27 April, 18 May

(Suggested donation £4)

<http://www.birminghamcathedral.com/musicforlunch/>

Thursday Organ Recitals

St Chad's Metropolitan Cathedral

FREE, 1.15pm-1.55pm on 2 April, 7 May, 4 June

<https://www.stchadscathedral.org.uk/cathedral/music/>

Other Events



Traidcraft Roadshow

Saturday 23 March 10.00am-4.30pm

Wylde Green United Reformed Church, Britwell Road
Sutton Coldfield, B73 5SW

A day filled with vision and fun with a chance to take home some bargains. As well as the chance to order from the new range, Traidcraft will be bringing a range of sale stock that can be purchased on the day. During the afternoon you will have the opportunity to hear from members of the team and from some of Traidcraft's partner organisations on the latest developments in the fair trade world. Refreshments will be available throughout the day, but you will need to bring your own packed lunch.

Please ask Joan Davies for further details or book online (free of charge) at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/traidcraft-spring-roadshows-2020-midlands-tickets-88659313393>



Workshop Afternoon, 29 March 2020, 13:30-15:30

If you're interested in helping to lead worship, or taking part in any way, this workshop is for you. We'll look at what's involved in leading or taking part in worship and how you might be able to join in. We'll identify how we might need support or training to help each other take part. This includes a 'bring and share' lunch. Contact Helen Woodall or Revd Cristina Cipriani for more details or to let them know you'll be there. Email:

minister@carrslane.co.uk





Christian Aid in the West Midlands:

Lent Lunch in Whitchurch, Thursday 2 April, 12:00-14:00

Civic Centre, High Street, Whitchurch SY13 1AX

Join Churches Together in Whitchurch for this fifth Lent Lunch hosted by Whitchurch Christian Aid Committee. Contact helen@triggfamily.org.uk if you need more information



Beyond Our Vision

What are we looking for in 2020?

Led by Lawrence Moore, Mission and Discipleship Consultant

Saturday 25 April, 10am-4pm

Broadway United Reformed Church, 77 High Street, Broadway
WR12 7AL

Bring your own lunch. Refreshments provided. If you would like to attend, please contact the Minister, Richard Becher at becherhouse@btinternet.com



Prayer in the way of Taizé

Held monthly on Sundays at 6pm

**15 March: Holy Name Catholic Church, 9 Cross Lane,
Great Barr, B43 6LN**

19 April: The Church at Carrs Lane, Birmingham B4 7SX

17 May: Ss. Peter and John, Darnley Rd, Ladywood B16 8TF

21 June: Church of the Ascension, Pineapple Grove, Stirchley B30 2TJ





Birmingham Council of Faiths

Sacred Space Project

7.00pm for 7.30pm start, Monday 16 March 2020

The Alborz Restaurant (Formerly Purple Rooms)
1076 Stratford Road, Birmingham, B28 8AD

The Sacred Space Project hopes to provide a meeting place for people of many faiths: a place to enjoy good food and drink, listen to an interesting speaker, ask questions, make new friends, share experiences and concerns, and find ways of working together to build a more informed and inclusive society.

GUEST SPEAKER FROM: SAWIYAN (Arabic for 'together')

Michelle Savage, Project Coordinator, will share about how this work helps people from diverse ethnic, faith and cultural backgrounds connect and understand each other better.



PLEASE NOTE BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL: £8 per person cash or cheque (payable to "Birmingham Council of Faiths") on the night.

Please contact: Jane Bailey Tel: 0121 707 1008

Mobile: 07949215273, j.gallagher@lineone.net

More 2020 events at The Church at Carrs Lane



Heretics Anonymous

Start time: 7.15pm for light refreshments before start at 7.30pm. A time for questions in a non-judgemental space.

Monday 16 March

What is Prayer?

Monday 20 April

Jesus – the Son of Man, by
Kahlil Gibran

Monday 18 May

Science, religion and the
search for meaning

Monday 15 June

Topic to be confirmed

Monday 20 July

‘In Thanksgiving’ – a feast
(including review and
planning)

No meeting in August

Group contact:
Mina Tilt on 07719 625418
E: theminatree@btinternet.com

Thinking Allowed

Start time: 10.15am until midday.
Genuinely open discussion about
issues of faith, belief and doubt.

Thursday 2 April

Old ideas, new words?

Thursday 7 May

The challenge of Jesus
the man?

Thursday 4 June

God is everywhere ...
except in us?

Thursday 2 July

An alternative utopian history
of Britain?

Thursday 6 August

Wisdom of the mystic?

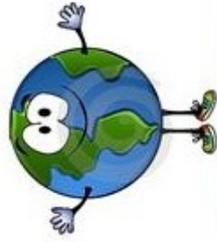
Thursday 3 September

Franciscan Mysticism ...
what's in it for us?

Thursday 1 October

Right, Left, Right:
the Divided Brain?

Eco Lent Challenge—The Church at Carrs Lane

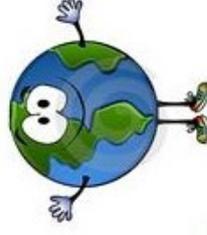


Below are some ideas to be greener and reduce your carbon footprint.

Put a tick in the box each time you try something.

Please add additional comments and details of your actions on the back.

Please return this chart with your comments at Easter!



<p>Go vegetarian or vegan for a day or a week (or for Lent). Ensure you keep proteins and essential nutrients in your diet. (nb if health issues, please check with GP before making changes).</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>	<p>Reduce plastic waste. Avoid buying plastic wrapped food or food in plastic cartons. Reduce plastic use in the bathroom and kitchen.</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>	<p>Reduce food waste. Use all the food you buy before it turns bad. Use the food in your freezer and pantry. Cook from scratch.</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>	<p>Reduce domestic power use by 10%. E.g. Iron fewer items, have shorter showers, turn your thermostat down. Take a meter reading today and compare use during Lent with average use.</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>
<p>De-clutter your house. Fill at least one bag a week and take it to the charity shop or recycle in some way.</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>	<p>Try the 100mile diet. For Lent, source only ingredients that come from within a 100mile radius of your home.</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>	<p>Try a digital detox. Set strict limits for use of your electronic devices or designate a time slot for checking emails/social media.</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>	<p>My own eco idea/ comments</p> <p>Comments: I found this easy/difficult I would/not do this again</p>

Exhibitions at



stopping
places
building



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a series of ceramic panels by Mary Flitcroft
Stations of The Cross
Opening event on Friday 27 March at 6pm

EXHIBITION

open: Monday 30 March - Friday 3 April 11am - 3pm
evening openings Tuesday and Thursday 5.30 - 7.30pm



REFLECTIONS in WORSHIP

on Sunday 29 March at 10.30am
Prayer on 6, 7 & 8 April at 7pm

united in Jesus — serving the city

Carrs Lane, Birmingham, B4 7SX | 0121 643 6151 | www.carrslane.co.uk

