

Winter 2014

CLIS Christians in
Library and
Information
Services



CHRISTIAN LIBRARIAN

CONTENTS INCLUDE

- ***TRAVEL BROADENS THE MIND***
- ***SAVE SOULS, GROW SAINTS AND SERVE
SUFFERING HUMANITY***
- ***THE THREAD OF REDEMPTION***
 - ***MAKING THE CONNEXION***
- ***RESOURCES FOR MAKING BETTER DECISIONS***

EVENTS AT A GLANCE

●SATURDAY 18 APRIL 2015: ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**YMCA, 7 East Street,
Leicester, LE1 6EY.
Speakers: Diana Edmonds
and Emmanuel Oladipo.
Details: p. 8.**

WEDNESDAY 13 MAY 2015: VISIT TO BOOK AID

**Bromley Hose, Kangley
bridge Road, Lower
Sydenham, London, SE26
5AQ. Details: p. 9.**

SATURDAY 17 ANNUAL 2015: ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE

**Gallery, First Floor,
Salisbury Library, Market
Place, Salisbury, SP1 1BL,
from 2.30.p.m. Speaker:
Kevin Carey, Chair, *Royal
National Institute for Blind
People.* Details: p. 9.**

PRAYER NOTES FOR WINTER 2014

PLEASE PRAY FOR

●Our forthcoming activities including our 2015 Annual Conference in Leicester and Annual Lecture in Salisbury.

●The CLIS Executive Committee and its individual members. Pray, in particular, that all vacancies will be filled at next year's Annual General Meeting and that we will find candidates to serve as Chair, Scottish Secretary, and Web Site and ***E-Newsletter*** Manager.

●The work of the *Bunyan Meeting* and *Bunyan Museum and Library* in Bedford.

● The work of archivists and librarians in the various Christian denominations including the *Salvation Army* and *Methodist Church* featured in this issue.

● The work of Dr. **Peter Brierley** and *Brierley Consultancy* and others involved in research on behalf of the Christian churches.

●**Tony Collins, Penelope Wilcock**, *Lion Fiction*, and others involved in the writing and publishing of Christian fiction.



FOUNDED IN 1976 AS THE LIBRARIANS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

An organisation 'in liaison' with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. Affiliated to: Christian Research Association; Christians at Work; Evangelical Alliance; Transform Work UK; Universities' & Colleges' Christian Fellowship. Web Site: www.christianlis.org.uk

CHRISTIAN LIBRARIAN: NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL OF CHRISTIANS IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES (ISSN 0309-4170) No. 67, Winter 2014.

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Printing: Concisely Supplies 4 Business, Chelmsford, Essex. CLIS Logo Design: Megan Andersen. 2014 Conference transcripts: Robert Foster, Janice Paine.

Views expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of CLIS as a whole. Acceptance of advertising leaflets does not indicate official endorsement by CLIS.

CLIS minimum subscription for 2015: £27.00 Reduced rate for student, retired and unemployed members/subscribers: £17.00.

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THE FIRST WORD

EDDIE OLLIFFE visits a city up there as a “notable book trade site”

LEICESTER

Visiting the City of the English King, Richard III

I travelled to Leicester on business in August. With a couple of hours on my hands between trains, I headed for the Cathedral. St Martin's Church has been on this site for over a thousand years but has only been a Cathedral since 1927. Named after the early Christian soldier and saint, St. Martin of Tours, the church has been in the news recently due to the controversy following the exhumation last year of the remains of the English King, Richard III from underneath a local car park. After a protracted legal tussle between the cities of York and Leicester, Richard III is to be reinterred in Leicester Cathedral next year on Thursday 26th March.

King Richard III died at the Battle of Bosworth Field on 22 August 1485. Aged thirty-two, he had been King for only two years and was the last in the line of Plantagenet royalty. St. Martin's has been the place of Richard's memorial since 1980. This is seen locally as a great honour for the city, as only one memorial stone is permitted for each English monarch. All of this history has placed Leicester firmly in the national and indeed, international, spotlight. On the day of my visit, a large area surrounding the Cathedral was swarming with builders, machinery and workmen. Even the sacred interior of the Cathedral itself was not immune from the noise and bustle as the

new tomb and its surrounding ambulatory is readied (at a cost of £1.5 million) in time for next year's high profile ceremony.

What *was* striking was how, right on 1.00 pm, the builders' hubbub and the clanging of scaffolding poles subsided, giving way to the quietness and peace of the lunchtime Eucharist. I decided to stay. Incongruously, the service took place in St. George's Chapel, with its strident memorials and brass plaques of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment. It was packed. The priest delivered a thoughtful homily, having first read passages from Ezekiel and Matthew. Sitting under the flags of past empire; the draped colours of the 'Tigers' reflecting the power and dominance of Victorian England, the incumbent spoke of society's '*need to align with the values of the Kingdom*'. He drew attention to the original manner of the disposal of Richard III's mortal remains as being so undignified but that this was the way of all human life returning as we all do, regardless of status, to the dust of the earth.

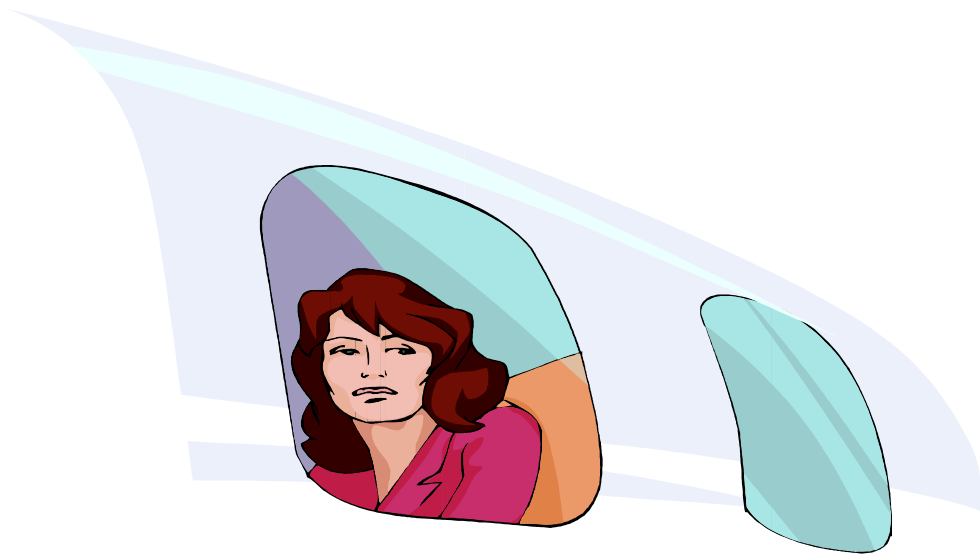
Interestingly for librarians and booksellers, Richard III whilst King passed a law protecting the European book trade, enabling education to be pursued. In 1484, at the only Parliament of his reign, Richard devised the first piece of legislation for the '*protection and fostering of the art of printing and the dissemination of learning by books*', which, as far as I'm concerned, puts Leicester right up there as a '*notable book-trade site*'!

Eddie Olliffe is President of CLIS and Consulting Editor for ***Together*** Magazine. He blogs at <http://eddieolliffe.wordpress.com> and is on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/eddieolliffe>

THE SECOND WORD

LOUISE MANNERS finds new uses for a Swiss army knife and reports from a culture very different to that known in the United Kingdom

TRAVEL BROADENS THE MIND



Since I arrived in the Middle East to work and live I have used every single part of my Swiss army knife. Preparing for a party I cut up what I thought was a melon but which turned out to be a fruit imported from China similar to a giant grapefruit! Opening up a torch to put in the batteries would have defeated me without the smallest blade. The piece for removing stones from horses' hooves proved useful when removing packaging from purchases. While hunting in the 'pound' shop for tea towels I found and bought a set of knives, so now I will use the Swiss army knife less!

Working on Sunday is compulsory because the working week is Sunday to Thursday. Christmas Day is a normal working day. In spite of all this change what I have found most alien is not having any say in how long things will take to happen. For example I was a passenger in a minibus. The driver parked the minibus, disembarked and was greeted by an older man at the side of the road. The two of them leisurely drank tea from small beakers. When they had finished their tea more people got on to the minibus and the journey continued.

The future of every Middle Eastern country not being invaded is with its young people. At the hairdresser, much to my surprise, the client next to me greeted me and asked how long I had been in the country. She explained that she had recently graduated in English and was looking for a job as an English teacher. In addition she introduced me to her mother and said she and her mother would be visiting Paris in 2015. Of course a typical response to my presence in a hairdresser would be indifference or outright hostility. However I am pleased to learn that the young men from wealthy families do travel a lot and the young women from wealthy families travel when they have permission from the male head of the family or from their husbands. “*Travel broadens the mind*”, as they say.

Louise Manners, *DipLib, MA, MCLIP*, serves as Chair of the Executive Committee of *Christians in Library and Information Services*.

NEWS

CLIS

Christians in
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NEWSLETTER

From The Secretary:

Graham Hedges, Hon.

FCLIP, MCLIP, 34

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NEXT YEAR'S CONFERENCE

Next year's Annual Conference is to be held on **Saturday 18 April 2015** in the **Theatre, YMCA, 7 East Street, Leicester, LE1 6EY.**

CLIS member **Diana Edmonds**, Head of Libraries at *GLL*, who currently run the public library services in *Greenwich* and *Wandsworth*, will be speaking on the hot topic of library privatisation and outsourcing.

Emmanuel Oladipo, who has been involved in *Scripture Union*, Nigeria, and with the Rev. John Stott's *Langham Partnership*, will be our second speaker. We have suggested that he might like to speak on his

own work as a Christian writer, the importance of encouraging Christians to read, the state of Christian publishing in developing countries, or a combination of these topics. More details will appear in the new year but please book the date now and plan to join us in Leicester.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of *Christians in Library and Information Services* will be held on **Saturday 18 April 2015**, from 11.20. a.m at the **YWCA, Leicester**, as part of the annual conference programme.

Nominations for office and notice of any motions to be put to the meeting should be in my hands not later than *Saturday 21 March 2015*.

Nominations for the following executive committee posts are invited: Chair, Secretary/Publications Editor, Treasurer, Overseas Secretary, Web Site and E-Newsletter Manager, Library Assistance Manager, Recruitment Secretary, Scottish Secretary, Minutes Secretary, Member Without Portfolio.

Each nomination will require a proposer and seconder

and each candidate should indicate their willingness to serve in writing.

A formal agenda for the meeting will be circulated to members not less than two weeks before the meeting.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Some existing committee members may be willing to stand for re-election but other positions are likely to become vacant and we urgently need to appoint a new Chair to succeed Louise Manners and a Web Site and **E-Newsletter** Manager in succession to Mary Wood. If these are roles that you might be able to fill, or would like more information, please let me know.

In addition, Anne MacRitchie is keen to find a successor as Scottish Secretary and we have not yet been able to find anyone to fill the new position of Recruitment Secretary. Can you help?

VISIT TO BOOK AID

On **Wednesday 13 May 2015** we have arranged an afternoon visit to the current headquarters of **Book Aid** at **Bromley House**,

Kangley Bridge Road, Lower Sydenham, London, SE26 5AQ.

This is a Christian organisation that collects books from UK Christians and, when appropriate, re-distributes them to developing countries.

ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE

Next year's **Annual Public Lecture** is to be held on **Saturday 17 October 2015** in the **Gallery, First Floor, Salisbury Library, Market Place, Salisbury SP1 1BL.**

Our guest speaker will be **Kevin Carey**, Chair of the *Royal National Institute for Blind People*, and author of the ***Third Testament for the Third Millennium*** series of novels.

Mr. Carey is a Reader in the *Church of England* and his interests include disability, information technology and fiction writing. His talk may deal with all, or any, of these topics: watch this space for more information. Please book these dates now and plan to join us for one or more of our activities in 2015.

PRAYER SUPPORT

CLIS will be launching an on-line prayer request form in the New Year. If you are able to volunteer to pray for the requests coming to us please contact our Prayer Secretary Karen Hans ktedhans@aol.com

In the meantime Karen has updated our annual prayer diary and copies are being sent to all CLIS members with this issue of **Christian Librarian**. Please make use of the diary as often as possible: we need your support.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NEWS

- **Elizabeth M. Barber**, who left library work in 1983 to work in her family's music shop, the *St. Albans Music Centre*, has written to tell me of the "*amazing deliverance*" experienced by her business.

After putting the shop's original premises at 20 Holywell Hill, St. Albans, on the market in March 2013, Elizabeth has found new accommodation in premises just a few hundred yards from the previous building. The *St. Albans Music Centre* is now happily established as a tenant at 38 Holywell Hill, St. Albans,

Hertfordshire, AL1 1BU.

The new building is a delightful medieval building with a Georgian frontage. The music shop rents the ground floor which consists of a front room, now used as a showroom, and a back room which serves as an office and store room.

I am sure that Elizabeth will be pleased to see any CLIS members who may visit St. Albans.

Elizabeth Barber is the founder of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship*, one of our Life Vice-Presidents, and worked previously as a mobile librarian serving schools in Oxfordshire.

- Our past speaker **Tom Davies** has had several of his novels of twentieth century Welsh life re-issued in the Kindle format.

One Winter of the Holy Spirit, Fire in the Bay, Black Sunlight and ***Polly Garter's War*** have all been published by Thistle Books and are available, price £3.99 each, from www.amazon.co.uk

Also available for the same price and from the same publisher is Tom's autobiography, ***The Reporter's Tale***, telling the story of his career as a writer, Fleet Street journalist and campaigner against violence in the media.

The relationship between violence in the media and violence in “real life” formed the basis of our Annual Public Lecture which Tom Davies gave in Cardiff Central Library in October 1992.

- Our recent annual lecture provided an opportunity for the present writer, **Graham Hedges**, to talk about the work of CLIS on the BBC’s *Three Counties Radio*, the local station serving Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire.

The radio interview with presenter **Helen Legh** took place on Sunday morning 12 October 2014 and also gave me an opportunity to nominate my own favourite Christian fiction titles: C.S. Lewis’ science fiction trilogy and Marguerite Steedman’s historical novel ***Refuge in Avalon***.

- Our Dublin bookseller member **Louis Hemmings** has recently written and published ***Goodbye ... Au Revoir ... Slan*** which he describes as a graphic novel-style account of a stillborn child and her brothers. This is based on the true life experience of Louis and his wife Liz, whose daughter, Holly, was stillborn on 1 April 1993. The story is told from the point of view of Holly’s

brother, Lawrence, then aged three and a half, and ends with the happy event of the successful birth of another child, Luke, some time later.

The booklet tells a simple story and would be suitable for giving to a young child trying to come to terms with a family bereavement.

For further information on the booklet, or related video, please contact Louis Hemmings, Avonbeg, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock, Dublin, Ireland. E-mail louis@samovarbooks.com

- **Rachel E. Johnson** is the author of the recently published book ***A Complete Identity: the youthful hero in the work of G.A. Henty and George MacDonald***.

This is a study of the hero figure in the works of two well known nineteenth century writers: **G.A. Henty** (1832-1902) and **George MacDonald** (1824-1905). The book relates these writers to the political, social and religious milieu of the Victorian age and responds to some earlier critiques of their work.

The book is published by *Pickwick Publications*, a division of the American Christian publishers *Wipf and Stock*, price £13.77, ISBN 978-1625642387, and is also available in a Kindle

edition for £6.02. Although published in the United States it can be ordered on-line from www.amazon.co.uk

Rachel Johnson is a long standing member of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* and *Christians in Library and Information Services* and is an Associate Researcher attached to the *International Forum for Research in Children's Literature* at the *University of Worcester*. She has also recently taken up a temporary position at *Tyndale House*, the biblical research library in Cambridge.

- CLIS President **Eddie Olliffe** has taken up the new role of General Manager of the *Christian Literature Crusade* on a one-year fixed-term contract. Eddie's mandate will include the oversight of the recruitment of a new National Director for this leading Christian bookselling and wholesaling organisation.

CLC's plans for the future also include re-locating their current headquarters from Alresford, Hampshire, to a new site in the Midlands or the North of England.

CHAIMA CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE

Regular readers will already be familiar with the *Chaima Christian Institute Maridi*, in the South Sudan.

Chaima Christian Institute serves the Anglican Diocese of Maridi and offers courses in Theology, Professional Studies and Vocational Skills. Their library is housed in a classroom, but the Institute would like to build a larger purpose-built library which will cost £30,000.

The Institute launched an appeal for funds in 2013 in order to buy books and other resources in Theology, as well as in Development and Business Administration; purchase a computer; train members of library staff; and catalogue the library collection.

In the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* we supported the Chaima project as part of our re-launch as *Christians in Library and Information Services* in April 2014. Members attending, the re-launch conference, and others, donated £330 which has been sent to the *Church Mission Society* to forward to the Institute.

The *Christian Book Promotion Trust*, sponsors of the *Speaking Volumes* library project, made a grant of £2000 towards the purchase of books for the library. This money has been

used to purchase text books and the gift has been appreciated by the students.

The Rev. Canon Patricia Wick, a mission partner with the *Church Mission Society*, has served as the Principal of *Chaima Christian Institute* but will be stepping down from this role in December 2014. Prayer is requested for the Institute as they appoint a new Principal and for Canon Wick as she seeks a new ministry within the *Church of England*.

Chaima Christian Institute Maridi can be contacted at P.O. Box 110, Juba, South Sudan and their web site is available at www.chaima.maridi.anglican.org

WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL

Regular readers may recall that LCF/CLIS members have been involved in the *Methodist Central Hall, Westminster*, during the past few years.

Two volunteers recruited by our Fellowship - Janet White and Elizabeth Williams – catalogued a collection of books from the former *Methodist Publishing House* which now forms the *Epworth Library* housed in the Central Hall basement. The present writer visits the Central Hall from time to time when a few more books need to be added to

the collection.

There has now been a further request that a group of CLIS volunteers might form a small working party to place plastic jackets on hymn books.

This is not really a library project as such but it is something that we could do to help Central Hall where we already have an involvement and where we sometimes hold committee meetings.

If you would like to spend a pleasant day in the company of two or three other CLIS members, and enjoy a complimentary lunch in the Central Hall's *Wesley's Café*, please let me know. The working party could be on either a weekday or a Saturday: please let me know your preferences and dates when you might be available.

The working party *may* have to wait until the new year but if we could get something organised in December, that would be a bonus.

WRITING FOR THE WRONG REASONS

The offices of the *Society of Authors* in Kensington, London, provided the venue for the second playwriting awards ceremony sponsored by the *Arts Centre Group* and held on Thursday 23

October 2014.

As a bust of the arch-sceptic Voltaire looked down incongruously on the proceedings, our past speaker **Tony Jasper** explained that this year's competition to find the best drama scripts had attracted many excellent entries. This was in contrast to the first drama competition, two years ago, when the judges had felt unable to award a full prize.

Sixteen year old **Emma Rogerson** was declared the winner in the "Under 30s" category for her play ***Sad Truth***, dealing with the subject of Depression.

In the "Over 30s" section, **Katrina Ffiske** was the winner with her play ***If Only Every Day***.

The special guest at the awards event was **Peter Moreton**, actor, playwright and founder of the *Applecourt* theatre company.

Peter explained that *Applecourt* had been founded out of an interest in Bible stories and in presenting their contemporary meaning. Early performances had taken place in the *White Hart* pub in East London, rather than in churches. The company has recently been touring theatres with a stage production of ***I Am Mark***, based on the Second Gospel. In contrast, their next show will be a production of ***Dracula***, in which they recognise

a redemptive theme as well as darker concerns.

Questioned by Tony Jasper, Peter suggested that much "*Christian drama*" failed because the writers were "*writing for the wrong reasons*", aiming to produce propaganda rather than art. He agreed with a suggestion in a recent Sunday newspaper article that "*the job of art is to be divisive*".

Details of *Applecourt* can be found at www.applecourtlive.org Information about the *Arts Centre Group* is available at www.artscentregroup.org.uk

RETIRED LIBRARIANS

As mentioned in a recent issue of our ***E-Newsletter***, I would be interested in the views of CLIS members on the place of retired members within professional associations.

I have noticed that a number of CLIS members have allowed their CILIP membership to lapse when reaching retirement age. However, it seems to me that retired members are the "*elders of the tribe*" and the "*collective memory*" of an organisation, and should be encouraged to continue making a contribution to the professional bodies to which they have belonged.

The same thinking, of course, applies to the continued membership of retired librarians in CLIS. We need your support, please don't desert us now!

CILIP has been through some difficult times in recent years and is said to have suffered a significant drop in membership. It certainly deserves the support of Christian librarians. This support does not have to be uncritical but should certainly include praying for the Institute's officers and staff, even when it is not possible to play an active part in CILIP activities.

BEST CHRISTIAN BOOKS

St. Augustine's ***Confessions*** recently topped the poll in a listing of the one hundred best Christian books of all times selected by a panel of experts and published in the issues of the ***Church Times*** dated 26 September, and 3 and 10 October 2014. The fifth century Bishop of Hippo also achieved a second top ten hit with his ***City of God*** at number 8.

The top ten was dominated by spiritual classics from earlier centuries, among them Thomas a Kempis' ***The Imitation of Christ***, at no. 9, John Bunyan's ***Pilgrim's***

Progress, at no. 7, and Julian of Norwich's ***Revelations of Divine Love***, at no. 4.

More recent religious classics figured elsewhere in the top hundred with Dietrich Bonhoeffer's ***Cost of Discipleship*** appearing at no. 40, G.K. Chesterton's ***Orthodoxy*** at no. 38, and Hans Kung's ***On Being a Christian*** at no. 80.

Books included in the listing came from a wide theological spectrum with John Stott's ***Basic Christianity***, at no. 86, rubbing shoulders with John Hick's ***Evil and the Love of God***, at no. 87.

Some of the books were of Christian interest but not strictly Christian – for example the Jewish scholar Geza Vermes' ***Jesus the Jew*** at no. 90.

Very recent books were not entirely excluded with Tom Wright's epic ***Paul and the Faithfulness of God*** appearing at no. 81.

C.S. Lewis achieved no less than five titles in the top hundred: ***Mere Christianity***, ***The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe***, ***The Screwtape Letters***, ***A Grief Observed*** and ***Surprised by Joy***, while his fellow Inkling Charles Williams appeared at no. 71 with ***The Descent of the Dove***.

The listing included poetry and fiction as well as conventional theological titles with works by John Donne, John Milton, T.S.

Eliot, R.S. Thomas, Dante, and Graham Greene appearing in the selection.

Inevitably the selection did not satisfy all readers of the **Church Times**. Evangelical readers may have felt that their viewpoint was under-represented and might have wished for more popular evangelical titles – David Wilkerson’s **The Cross and the Switchblade** or Corrie Ten Boom’s **The Hiding Place**, perhaps.

One reader wrote to say that he had looked in vain for any book by “*such profound thinkers and engaging writers*” as Thomas Torrance, John Polkinghorne, Arthur Peacocke, Keith Ward or Alister McGrath. Another reader drew attention to the surprising absence of John Calvin’s **Institutes**.

In an article entitled *Bread for the Journey*, included in the issue of 10 October 2014, Chine Mbubaegbu commended Francis Spufford’s **Unapologetic** as a book that she would give to someone exploring the question of faith. In the same issue’s *Reaching for the Bottom of the Pile*, **Christian Librarian** subscriber David Winter nominated tele-evangelist Kenneth Copeland’s **The Laws of Prosperity** as the worst “Christian” book of all time.

An article *Where’s the Ker-ching?* in the issue dated 10

October 2014 questioned why the books included in the list were not necessarily the books that sold the most copies year by year. In the previous issue dated 3 October 2014 articles entitled *Lines Written with Care* and *It’s Always Storytime* explained the value of poetry and fiction in exploring matters of faith and doubt.

A parallel list of the top ten Christian children’s books, published in the issue dated 3 October 2014 included some surprising choices with C.S. Lewis’ **Complete Chronicles of Narnia** appearing at no. 1 and Philip Pullman’s **His Dark Materials** at no. 10. The inclusion of the last named was explained on the basis that “*the story depends on a hidden paradigm of Christian assumptions, and the narrative draws the reader into reflection on a host of ‘big questions’ about human destiny, the soul, love, loyalty and the possibility of redemption*”. Discuss.

You can consult the complete listings, and related articles, on the web site www.ct100books.co.uk You can find information about how to subscribe to the **Church Times** at www.churchtimes.co.uk/subscribe

LIBRARIAN'S CHOICE

My appeal in a recent **E-Newsletter** for members to send in their own "top ten" listing of Christian books inspired the following from our Suffolk member **Ngaio Malcolm**:

Foxe's Book of Martyrs

The 1662 **Book of Common Prayer**

Mere Christianity – C.S. Lewis

The Letters of John Newton

William Law's **Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life**

Pilgrim's Progress – John Bunyan

Escape from Reason – Francis Schaeffer

Poetry: Milton's **Paradise Lost**

Children's Books: **Chronicles of Narnia** – C.S. Lewis.

Ngaio notes that possibly something by a Puritan writer like John Owen should be included, but she is not sure which one. Suggestions please.

Please let me have your suggested top ten which I will include in a future issue.

CURRENT AWARENESS

- The recently opened *Mary Jones World* visitor centre tells the story of the young girl whose journey to buy a Bible in Welsh led to the formation of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*.

The Centre is located in *St. Bueno's Church*, Llanycil, North Wales, on the shores of Lake Bala, and is the result of eight months of building work and many years of planning and fundraising by the *Bible Society*.

The Centre preserves many of the original features of the church but tells the story of the Bible using high-tech touch screens.

Until March 2015 the Centre will be open to school visits and group bookings only but it will re-open to the general public in April 2015.

Mary Jones World Answers Prayer appears in the **Methodist Recorder** for 24 October 2014, p. 14.

Information is also available from the following web site www.biblesociety.org.uk/about-Bible-Society/our-work/byd-mary-jones-world

- Sarah Meyrick's *Christian Fiction in a Novel Form* provides a profile of the writer Catherine Fox, whose novel **Acts and Omissions** (SPCK, £7.99, ISBN

978-0281072347) has recently been published.

More than a decade has passed since Catherine's first three novels of contemporary church life were published. The new book was first published in instalments on the author's blog which allowed her to write "a sort of spoof Victorian serialised novel" based on life in an imaginary cathedral town.

An appearance at the annual *Greenbelt* festival led to SPCK agreeing to publish the novel in book form. This major Christian publisher wished to move into serious fiction publishing and has since commissioned a sequel from Catherine and acquired the rights to her back catalogue from Penguin.

Catherine denies that any of her characters are based on real people in the *Church of England* but admits that she draws pleasure from allowing certain characters "to say all the things you don't if you are married to the Dean [of Liverpool Cathedral, past LCF speaker, Pete Wilcox]."

The article appears in the **Church Times** for 12 September 2014, p. 22.

- Olly Grant's *From Sanctity to Sleuthing* provides the background to the ITV drama series **Grantchester** featuring actor James Norton as clergyman

turned detective Sidney Chambers and set in the 1950s.

The series is based on **Sidney Chambers and the Shadow of Death** (Bloomsbury, £7.19, ISBN 978-1408857700) by James Runcie, who is the son of the late Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury. Sidney Chambers does not fit the usual media stereotype of the clergyman and Runcie created him as an antidote to all the clichéd comedy Vicars.

Chambers is young, a lover of "hot jazz" and blunders on occasion but is not bumbling. He is also a war veteran, having fought in the Second World War.

Runcie's portrayal of Chambers commended the stories to the production company that made the series. Executive Producer Diederich Santer is the son of a former Bishop and wanted to provide an alternative to earlier "soppy figures" of clergy as played by actors such as Dick Emery and Derek Nimmo.

James Runcie describes the series as "an unfashionably Christian series. It comes directly out of the Christian tradition".

The article appears in the **Church Times** for 19 September 2014, pp. 21-22.

- Stephen Laird's *Fellow-feeling for a Scarred Landscape* compares and contrasts the work of the deaf and blind Cornish poet

Jack Clemo and the abstract-landscape painter Peter Lanyon.

The two were both giants of the Cornish cultural scene and displayed a distinctive “*religious*” preoccupation with the county’s man-made, debris-strewn post-industrial landscapes.

Clemo was a convinced Calvinist who remains distinctive among landscape poets in rejecting ideas of “*natural theology*”. Lanyon’s religious beliefs, by contrast, are difficult to define: they are vague and eclectic rather than dogmatic. However, many of his works “*resonate with ideas, symbols and stories from Christian redemption mythology*”.

There is evidence that Lanyon read, and was profoundly moved by, Jack Clemo’s autobiography ***Confession of a Rebel*** (Chatto and Windus, 1949) and this may have influenced his work.

The article appears in the ***Church Times*** for 5 September 2014, pp. 24-25.

- Newspaper articles published to mark the centenary of the First World War, include an article on the wartime experiences of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien.

Despite the slaughter in the trenches, Lewis and Tolkien were able to see heroism and nobility in

the so-called “*war to end all wars.*” These writers were able to reject the agnosticism and cynicism of the era and insist on the existence of a moral universe. Evil was a force that threatened every human soul but God and goodness were the ultimate realities.

Lewis and Tolkien are described as the most influential Christian writers of the twentieth century and it is suggested that their works of fantasy were able to revive the epic romantic tradition of ***Beowulf*** and ***Le Morte D’Arthur***.

Why Hobbits Triumphed in the Great War, by Joseph Laconie, appears in ***The Times*** for 2 August 2014, p. 24.

EBSCO PUBLISHING

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GRAHAM HEDGES
reports on a worthwhile
afternoon spent in the
Salvation Army
International Heritage
Centre in London's
Denmark Hill

SAVE SOULS, GROW
SAINTS AND SERVE
SUFFERING HUMANITY

On Wednesday 17 September 2014 eight members and friends of *Christians in Library and Information Services* spent an enjoyable and informative afternoon at the *Salvation Army International Heritage Centre* which is housed in the *William Booth Memorial College*, opposite Denmark Hill Station in London.

Our host for the afternoon was Steven Spencer, the Archivist and Assistant Director of the *International Heritage Centre*, who introduced us to the *William Booth Memorial College*, which trains officers for service in the *Salvation Army*, and told us something of the history of the *Salvation*

Army itself.

The present *William Booth Memorial College* was built in 1929 when an earlier building was deemed to be too small. The building was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott who was also the architect responsible for the building now occupied by *Tate Modern*.

The building was designed to accommodate eight hundred students (cadets) but this figure was never achieved. At the present time thirty new cadets are received each year to train for service within the *Salvation Army*.

The *Salvation Army* was founded by William and Catherine Booth in 1865. William Booth was originally a Methodist preacher, who ministered in the East End of London, but later became independent. The movement was originally called the *East London Christian Mission* and was not intended to become a separate denomination. It took some time for the movement's theology to settle down, and in the early days Communion and

Baptism, which are no longer part of the Army's life, were practised.

The Army's anti-smoking and anti-alcohol positions, however, were a feature of the movement from its earliest days.

Military language began to be used during the 1870s and was reflected in the title of an early booklet, ***Christian Mission is a Salvation Army***. The present name was finally adopted in 1878. Various military trappings – such as uniforms – were adopted along with the practice of describing members as Officers or Soldiers.

William Booth was the Army's first General and was succeeded in this role by his son, Bramwell Booth. The original intention was that the future leaders of the movement would be members of the Booth family, but in 1929 Bramwell was removed from office and a High Council formed to appoint a new General every five years.

There was considerable opposition to the Salvation

Army in its early days, much of it originating with the Established Church, secularists such as T.H. Huxley, and hotel managers and local authorities who disliked the sound of brass bands! There were even anti-Salvationist riots and some officers may have been killed in these disturbances.

In the early days there was a policy of not paying fines and some officers went to prison.

The movement's social work began in the 1880s and in 1885 Bramwell Booth joined forces with the journalist W.T. Stead to campaign against child prostitution. William Booth's classic book on social deprivation ***In Darkest England and the Way Out*** appeared in 1890.

The Army expanded internationally, especially within the British Empire. By the Second World War, the Army was active in every European country, and it has been able to return to Eastern Europe since the fall of the Communist regimes. The Army is now active in some

hundred and twenty-six nations.

Music has always been important to the Salvation Army and by the 1880s every local corp had its own brass band.

George Bernard Shaw's play ***Major Barbara*** may have had mixed results for the Salvation Army. While many saw it as an attack on the movement, it may also have helped to swell the ranks at a time when theatre-going was often frowned upon among Christians.

Changes occurred in the 1990s when uniforms were modified and the rules on marriage relaxed so that officers were no longer required to marry fellow officers.

The present *Heritage Centre* began in the 1970s although there is known to have been an earlier Salvationist museum in the 1930s. The first professional archivist was not appointed until 2007 when Steven Spencer joined the staff. There are four lay members of staff and also a Director who is always an officer in the

Salvation Army.

The Centre moved into its present accommodation in 2011, and in the same year a museum of artefacts telling the story of the *Salvation Army* was opened.

The Centre receives an average of one hundred enquiries and twenty visitors to the archives each month. Much of this interest comes from the academic world and from the media. There are also one hundred and seventy monthly visitors to the Museum, which is open to the public.

We were able to inspect some of the items held in the Centre's archives which included an early pamphlet on women in leadership written by Catherine Booth, a list of cadets in training during 1917-18, and an early letter by General Booth, dating from before his *Salvation Army* days. The oldest item held is a will giving details of a property owned by the Army in Upper Thames Street, London.

The Centre's reference library collection consists of some three thousand books

and pamphlets, including one copy of each of the Army's own publications, plus Army periodicals from Britain and overseas. This is distinct from the College Library which is used by the cadets in training and where CLIS member Winette Field is the Librarian.

The Museum includes displays and objects telling the story of the Army's diverse work in evangelism, social action, and in responding to natural disasters and acts of terrorism. The Army was on hand at the time of the Lockerbie disaster in 1988 and has also responded to natural disasters and terrorist attacks such as the Docklands Bombing in 1996.

I especially enjoyed seeing a panel on the work of the *Joy Strings*, the pioneering music group who flourished during the 1960s. This was formed after a newly appointed General, Frederick Coutts, explained that as part of their evangelistic work, officers of the Army might have to take up guitars and perform in coffee bars. The group

stayed together for several years and their debut single, ***It's An Open Secret***, in 1963, reached the lower end of the national pop charts.

I well remember the enthusiastic reception that the *Joy Strings* received when they played at my school in 1968. Later I attended performances by their successor groups, including a concert televised from the crypt of *St. Paul's Cathedral*.

One display panel in the Museum ably summed up the work of the *Salvation Army* which exists to "save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity".

Our thanks are due to Steven Spencer and his colleague for a very worthwhile afternoon.

Graham Hedges, *Hon. FCLIP, MCLIP*, is the Secretary of *Christians in Library and Information Services*.

KAREN HANS reports on the visit to Bedford's *John Bunyan Museum and Library* arranged before our afternoon lecture on Christian fiction held on Saturday 18 October 2014

BUNYAN REMEMBERED

Although LCF/CLIS members have visited the *John Bunyan Museum* a few times over the years, Graham Hedges was the only one of our party of eight who had been before. The Museum is next to the *Bunyan Meeting* church which is a fine building – the third on the site. We had time for a cuppa and cake at the church café before moving next door to the Museum itself. Our tour guide first introduced us to an impressive Madame Tusaud's quality life-sized model of John Bunyan which

had cost over £7,000 fifteen years ago.

We proceeded through a replica kitchen of Bunyan's time to a model of Bunyan as a young apprentice at his anvil. Remarkably this really was his anvil, found by chance and discovered to have his name carved on it. He must have been a gifted metal worker as the Museum houses a metal violin he made which apparently plays very sweetly. We were told that Bunyan did not allow the frivolity of music in church services. Perhaps this was in part a reaction against his own, self-confessed, youthful hedonism? Next came Bunyan as a young soldier, during which time he began to become spiritually awakened.

Members of the party were then invited to mount one of the pulpits that Bunyan often preached from, which had come from *Zoar Street Chapel* in Southwark. We also saw his actual vestry chair and a replica of his prison cell with the very jug his blind daughter used to bring him soup from home. Our guide explained that the settings of various scenes

and trials in Bunyan's most famous book ***The Pilgrim's Progress*** were local to the area, for example Vanity Fair being Bedford itself.

In the ensuing discussion it was admitted by many that they had not actually read the book, the exceptions being those who had read it many years ago as children. I have become very familiar with Geraldine McCaughrean's version, which I would recommend as not only an excellent adaptation for children, but enjoyable and instructive for adults too. The Museum held many translations into other languages and other archive materials.

To end the visit we were shown the beautiful stained glass windows in the church, depicting scenes from ***The Pilgrim's Progress***, including the famous one that was sent as a postcard to Terry Waite in his time of captivity.

As we left we admired the heavy church doors which were made from bronze scenes from the book – the church portico had been built

especially to protect them.

The afternoon bookstall at the lecture had a lovely looking book, which had been recommended as a guide and introduction by one of the party: ***The People's Pilgrim*** by Peter Morden, published by CWR, February 2013, ISBN 978-185348361.

Karen Hans, BSc, MA, MCLIP, is Librarian of *St. Martin-in-the-Fields High School for Girls* and serves as Prayer Secretary of *Christians in Library and Information Services*.

**DIANA GUTHRIE reports
on the CLIS Annual
Public Lecture on
Christian fiction held on
Saturday 18 October
2014 in the Bedford
Central Library**

THE THREAD OF REDEMPTION

Bedford's Central Library was the venue for this year's CLIS Annual Lecture: a fascinating two-hander by **Tony Collins**, Publishing Director for *Monarch Books* and *Lion Fiction*, and **Penelope Wilcock**, established author of poetry and fiction, including *The Hawk and the Dove* series. Their theme was Christian fiction, seen from both the publisher's and the author's point of view.

Tony kicked off with a run-down on Christian fiction production in the UK, which is surprisingly different from Christian fiction production in the United States. This is because much Christian fiction comes from the pens of evangelicals, who are the Christian mainstream in the US, but who feel far more marginalised in the UK, and this is

reflected not only in the publication of Christian fiction, but in the writing of it too.

Fiction in general is overwhelmingly popular – people like a good story, and they are prepared to suspend their prejudices when reading or hearing one. So a persuasive argument wrapped in a good story is likely to be better received than the reasoned argument alone. There are still dangers however in trying to put forward an argument forcefully; Tony instanced two very popular modern secular writers, some of whose later novels he feels descend into unappealing (anti-Christian) propaganda.

What makes fiction Christian? Firstly, it should be written by a Christian, and secondly, it should have a thread of redemption running through it, affirming the best things in life: goodness, truth, forgiveness, a spirit of service. When Tony considers publishing a novel, he is looking for writing that promotes these qualities, but without an overtly Christian agenda.

Penelope spoke about the process of writing Christian fiction; she felt that it can't help putting out a message – all stories do. She agreed with Tony that humans are moved by stories, as they wouldn't be by doctrine. And stories have the added advantage of being able to present a debate without having to present a logical ending. Dogmatism has no place

in Christian fiction (rambling monologues being a particular turn-off).

The key to a good novel is authenticity, with the author getting inside a character or a situation, and the reader finishing the novel feeling moved to compassion.

Questions and Comments

How many copies of a Christian novel need to be sold to make a profit?

E-books have changed the big picture enormously, but Tony aims for £10,000 profit per book; Five thousand copies sold is regarded as a success.

What makes a Christian novel sell?

There is always the danger that it might be seen as overly Christian or not Christian enough; what is seen as acceptably Christian in the UK would probably be criticised for being not Christian enough in the United States. Booksellers can be wary, but good reviews in mainstream review journals are enormously valuable.

Tony aims to publish good

novels. Penelope added that if the Christian viewpoint is a fundamental part of the story, then it should be acceptable.

Does Lion Fiction use Christian readers to sift out possible publications from all those that are submitted?

Tony relies on his sceptical colleagues to critique his choices!

One of the audience commented in defence of Terry Pratchett that his ***Small Gods*** is more of an attack on organised religion and ideologies in general, than on the church today, and Penelope agreed with this.

Diana Guthrie, MA, serves on the Executive Committee of *Christians in Library and Information Services* as Minutes Secretary.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

***News from the Membership Secretary:
Janice Paine, MCLIP, 22 Queensgate Gardens,
396 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, London,
SW15 6JN.
Tel. 020 8785 2174***

Listed below are those who have renewed their membership since July. and those who have changed their details. Please inform the Membership Secretary of any *changes of address, job etc.*

LATE RENEWALS

EDMONDS, Mrs Diana J., The Vicarage, Presents Lane, Belton, Leics LE12 9UN - Head of Libraries, GLL. Tel: 01530 2223447 – E mail: dianaedmonds1@btconnect.com

GILLINGS-GRANT, Mrs Faydene L.A., 29 Cornyx Lane, Elmdon Heath, , Solihull, West Midlands B91 2SQ - Tel: 0121 694 9623 – E mail: flagg@blueyonder.co.uk

JONES, Mrs Anna H.

REED, Mr David M., 39 Main Street, Wolston, Coventry, CV8 3HH - Stock Support Services Libn., Oxfordshire Co.Co. Tel: 02476 542516 – E mail: dandlreed@hotmail.co.uk

CHANGES TO ADDRESS, JOB ETC.

JOHNSON, Dr Rachel E., 30 Fitzgerald Close, Ely, Cambs CB7 4QD - Assoc. Researcher, International Forum for Research into Children's Literature. Tel: 01353 968564 – E mail: wanderinglibrarian56@gmail.com

REVIEW

ROBERT FOSTER reviews a recent book that is especially apt for members of Christian workplace organisations and even includes an anecdote about a librarian

LIVING ON THE FRONTLINE

Fruitfulness on the Frontline

Mark Greene

Inter-Varsity Press, 2014, £8.99, Pbk., 202p.,

ISBN 978-1783591251

This is an apt book for a Christian workplace organisation. *Fruitfulness on the frontline* is about taking your Christian life out to work, or to whatever your frontline happens to be. The theme of the book is that whatever we are doing, even if we are not going to work, we will be 'in the world' at some point and we are to work in those situations as if we were doing it for God. Although the workplace features strongly in Mark Greene's examples, he makes it clear that less obvious scenarios, such as having tea with a grandchild who never has anything to do with Christian people otherwise, is just as much a frontline as the workplace. He also makes the point that whilst sharing the gospel is included, it's actually just one aspect of fruitfulness. Greene has six guidelines which form the framework of the book: Modelling godly character, Making good work, Ministering grace and love, Moulding culture, Being a mouthpiece for truth and justice and Being a messenger of the gospel. He calls these the 6'M's, which, he acknowledges, overlap quite a lot.

The style of the writing makes it very easy to read. It is light, positive and humorous, without being trivial. More significantly, Mark Greene gives the impression that you as an individual could do similar things that occur in the stories in the book,

because virtually all the examples are about people doing things in their immediate area of influence, often starting small. In some ways it is so easy to read that you can gallop through it, which would be a shame because there are numerous examples and illustrations which are worth taking time to reflect upon. Moreover, the chapters conclude with some questions to ponder. In the chapter on the final 'M' I did have a slight sense that the point was being laboured, but never enough to make me want to stop reading.

What did I like the most? Firstly, the outward-looking focus is refreshing. Being fruitful could imply soul-searching, but even the chapter on modelling godly character is more about action than self-examination. Secondly, there are plenty of suggestions for ministering in the workplace and what that might involve; this includes being supported in your ministry, and he advocates getting frontline work on church agendas. Church prayer meetings, he says, rarely touch on our workplaces or related frontlines. (Members of CLIS might like to know there is an anecdote about a librarian on page 27.) Thirdly there is a holistic approach which challenges the view that if you haven't seen conversions in your workplace you are not being fruitful. As the 6 'Ms' indicate, all aspects of life come into play.

If your frontline regularly involves the more philosophical debates then this book won't give you much to work on in that respect. You aren't going to find many tips for taking questions on world events or national news either. But in any case, such matters often require a whole book or some larger kind of study.

This book has a lot to commend it, and would be a good buy for any church library or perhaps even a training college library.

Robert Foster, BA, DipIM, MCLIP, works as Senior Library Assistant at *King's College*, London, and is a member of the executive committee of *Christians in Library and Information Services*.

ARTICLES

PHILIP THORNBOROW explains how Methodists have preserved their heritage while remaining true to their calling as a “discipleship movement shaped for mission”

MAKING THE CONNEXION

Archives and Archivists within the Methodist Church in Britain

The background

Although, as its very name implies, the movement has always been well organised, and kept records, the *Methodist Church* is like most other private bodies and did not address the long term preservation of its records until after the Second World War.

For half of its history Methodism was split, and whilst all the branches had similar systems of administration, they had different attitudes to records management.

The *Wesleyan Book Room* began life in the basement of what is now *Wesley's Chapel* in City Road, London. Basements seem to be a recurring theme in archival studies!

In 1799 it was decided to keep the Conference journal and other documents deemed worthy of preservation in the Book Room. By 1848 it had been decided that a fireproof safe was required, and that completed minute books from the Districts (the Methodist regional bodies) and “*other connexional records of former times, which are in the houses of our*

ministers" (another recurring theme in our professional lives) should be sent to the Book Room.

The *Primitive Methodists* appear to have made no provision for preservation. *The Methodist New Connexion, Bible Christian* and *United Methodist Free Churches* deposited in local boxes and then sent material to their training colleges.

There were also a number of private collectors of Wesleyana and Methodist materials: including the *Wesley Historical Society*, which is not a department of the *Methodist Church*. Some of these individuals chose to donate their collections to the church, so much valuable material, including Wesley's diaries and letters, but also artefacts also entered the basement of *Wesley's Chapel*.

Even after Union in 1932 Methodism was as guilty as most organisations in thinking that looking after the archival materials that had been accumulated was something that an existing employee – the Book Steward - could do in their spare time. It took until 1956 before a plan for archives administration, research service and the preservation of local, as well as connexional, records was formulated, and in 1961 the Methodist Conference appointed a minister to be full-time archivist, and an Archives Committee.

Although much was done in the next fifteen years, the Archivist lacked sufficient staff or finance, however, to do everything he would have wished, or was required. The church found itself unable to provide professionally trained staff to assist their archivist. It could and did appoint volunteers across the country and mandated the deposit of District, Circuit and Chapel records in local record offices.

By 1976 there were serious doubts about the sustainability of *Wesley's Chapel*, never mind the collections. Archival practice had developed rapidly, and the Church was unable to keep up. The importance of the Archive was, however, realised, so a new home was sought.

Having considered various options it was decided to deposit the *Methodist Archives and Research Centre* in the *John Rylands University Library* of Manchester. The University had built up a reputation for non-conformist religious studies, and already possessed over three thousand volumes of Methodist material. The size of the collection transferred from London was estimated at over 26,000 printed items and approximately six

hundred feet of manuscript shelving. Those collections have now grown to 60,000 printed items and about 100,000 items in the manuscript collections

There had been a proposal to merge the Connexional Archives with those of the *Methodist Missionary Society*, which date back to 1791 and were held at MMS headquarters on the Marylebone Road. In the event, the MMS archives and library were deposited by agreement at the *School of Oriental and African Studies*, who were already looking after the records of the *London Missionary Society* with missionary accounts being central to the scholarly interests of the School. At the last count there were 26,000 items here, with seven thousand books from the *Methodist Missionary Society*

Our philosophy

Other Churches have made their own choices as to the care of their records. At the end of the day Methodism is true to its current strap line “*A discipleship movement, shaped for mission*”

We resource mission, looking forward and not back: that’s what we are good at. Whereas, the university and public repositories in which we deposit “*have experience and expertise in the operation and care of library and archive materials*”.

We aim to use our heritage as a tool for contemporary mission, however.

We are currently bringing the agreements into the twenty-first century, future proofing, and also harmonising two agreements. We think users should have the same expectations of both repositories.

The *Methodist Church* will continue to deposit: we will not donate or gift our heritage.

As well as the deposit agreements, we will have service level agreements, which cover the expectations on both sides. The Church will manage expectations through advice given on the Methodist Heritage web pages.

The Methodist Heritage Committee has recently set out its vision for archives and libraries under four headings.

- First, accessibility. We believe that all such Methodist materials must be made available as readily as possible to the widest range of people, particularly through accurate and timely accessioning and cataloguing. There are many and diverse constituencies who seek access to Methodist records within the Methodist family and, most significantly, outside it.

- Secondly, digitisation. Modern academic and archival practice is electronic, digital and dispersed. Where things are kept is becoming progressively less important and it is contended that very few people indeed need to handle an original document once material is digitised and accessible electronically. Our vision is that all Methodist historic materials should be digitised, and electronic access enabled for all.

- Thirdly, professional care. It is imperative and the current policy of the Methodist Church (SO 015) that primary materials, some unique and/or very fragile, are kept in proper conditions and cared for professionally, i.e., currently according to the BS5454 standard.

- Fourthly, place. As a policy, we favour Methodist archival collections being associated with other complementary collections for comparison and context. Anyone who is studying Methodist history benefits from all these records being in the same place: putting Methodism in its social context and helping to show the influence of Methodism to community, work, politics etc.

We still have our own smaller archives and libraries in our training institutions at

- Wesley House, Cambridge
- Queen's Foundation, Birmingham
- Cliff College
- The Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History
- Southlands College

We are using the Methodist Heritage website <http://www.methodistheritage.org.uk> to educate Methodists and potential users as to care of our records, where they might find them, and in the conditions for access.

The records of our four thousand eight hundred individual churches, three hundred and seventy five Circuits and thirty one Districts are held in local authority record offices across the country. A good way to find out what is available is the National Register of Archives <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/default.asp>

The *Methodist Church* and local record offices have agreed to arrange records by Circuit, and not by individual church. We have developed this tool to help people find out where these records are kept <http://www.methodistheritage.org.uk/research-circuitarchives.htm>

A network of volunteers

Not only does the *Methodist Church* not have a central archive or library, we also lack salaried staff to look after this area of work. The church asks its members to give generously of their time and talents, so the care of our records is in the hands of volunteers. The Methodist Heritage Committee, acting through the Archives and Records Advisory Group, co-ordinates the work. My role as Liaison Officer for Methodist Archives is to provide a point of contact with the two universities caring for our national and missionary records, and to advise county librarians of changes to Methodist policy. Each of the Districts appoints a District Archivist, who co-ordinates the deposit of material from all the churches and circuits in their District. Methodist standing orders make provision for these appointments and lay down the ground rules for deposit. We have also written guidance documents that are available on the *Methodist Church* and Methodist Heritage websites.

Our Districts cover large areas, and we currently have only nineteen District Archivists in post. As much of the work of the church occurs at the local level we are encouraging Circuits to appoint archivists. The church has also adapted to the modern age by transferring the burden of administration from ordained ministers to paid administrators, and as

record creators and holders these people are well placed to deposit records.

Since 2000 there had been biennial training weekends for our volunteers: we have now moved to a pattern of two training days each year, which allow colleagues who often plough a lone furrow to meet, exchange experience, and learn new things. This network of volunteers is coordinated from Methodist Church House.

In the last two years we have also set up a number of online community archives. My Methodist History, My Wesleyan Methodist Ancestors, My Primitive Methodist Ancestors together aim to share information and research about every aspect of Methodist history: its early development, nineteenth-century splits and sub-denominations, overseas mission and life post re-union in 1932. Staffed by volunteers, the sites encourage the online sharing of information. Our printed archives tell the institutional story: we hope that our community archives will give a sense of what it was (or, indeed, is) to be a Methodist.

Philip Thornborow is the Liaison Officer for Methodist Archives in which role he provides strategic support for the Connexional management of the *Methodist Church's* historic archives and modern records.

He studied at the Universities of Durham, Leicester and Northumbria and has a Postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship and an MSc in Records Management from the last named institution. He has also worked as a librarian in the University sector specialising in what is currently known as resource discovery and management, and as a records manager. He managed the Archive at the University of Northampton for a number of years and the Library special collections for the past ten years.

PETER BRIERLEY stresses the importance of reliable information and identifies some recent key factors affecting both Church and Society

RESOURCES FOR MAKING BETTER DECISIONS

An Address to “Moving Forward”, the Launch Conference of Christians in Library and Information Services, held on Saturday 5 April 2014 in the Chancellor’s Room, Hughes Parry Hall, 19-26 Cartwright Gardens, London, WC1H 9EF.

Types of decisions

It seems to me that there are different types of decisions. What types of decisions do we make? There are legal decisions, decisions we have to make: if you are a car owner, for example, you have to decide which company to insure your car with. There are personal, voluntary decisions that we make all the time: some are important, such as marriage. There are business and financial decisions, which we make not for the good of ourselves but for others. Then there are humane or charitable decisions, so that we can help more children out of poverty or something similar. We take many of these types of decisions every day.

Sizes of decisions

Decisions come in different sizes. The smaller ones, such as which insurance company we choose doesn’t matter that much: one may be £5.00 cheaper – so what? Then there are the medium decisions, things which affect a community: we have to think how we promote our business or charity so it will make a difference. We would want to promote a child poverty action programme effectively because it could affect a large group

of people. Then there are the large decisions, which can change our lives, like who we marry.

Speeds of decisions

Decisions have speed attached to them. An insurance company decision can be taken fairly swiftly. Other ones have to be taken more carefully so you discuss it at board level, or committee. Then there are the long-term decisions, with strategic evaluations, where we are seeking to understand all the options. It seems to me that this last category contains elements which we rarely consider, and it is that long-term kind of decision that I want to look into further now; that is to say, those decisions which are likely to have the greatest impact.

The helicopter approach to decision-making

To go up in a helicopter is to get a better view of things. So the 'helicopter' approach is looking at particular elements – what is the future of this, how is it growing, what is it and what do we know about it? It is about looking outside at the immediate context. It is assessing future trends alongside the present.

Seven current trends

With this in mind, I want to ask '*What are some of the key issues which are impacting our church and our society today?* ', thinking that if we are going to take strategic decisions we ought to take cognisance of some or all of these elements. I have identified seven key trends. I'd like you to think "*Do any of these apply to me?*" and if so, to ask yourself what you might do about it.

The church is declining in numbers and influence

It is interesting that we are not declining in numbers quite as fast as we were, because of the huge impact of immigration, and because of the

huge success of things like *Fresh Expressions*. Nevertheless, whilst such things are helping, they are not overturning the general picture of decline. Looking ahead to 2030, we can see that church attendance in the UK will decline from 900,000 today to 500,000 in around fifteen or so years' time. That is something we can expect. That has all sorts of implications in terms of buying power, Christian products, reading; Many churches will close, simply because there aren't enough people around to run them. I often go to a conference centre near Norwich, which as you drive to it happens to have a church very close to it. I said to somebody "*How many people go to this church?*" and he said "*If we are lucky we get four*". This is a large building. What will happen when those four people die? Moreover, the percentage of general churchgoers who are under thirty is declining most rapidly. The only group which is keeping going is the older people. By 2030 the older people, aged sixty five and over, will form 50% of the church.

We know all this, but what does it mean? 8% of the population were at church in 1990, 6% in 2010, 4% in 2025. It means a loss of influence. To have some societal impact, you need a critical mass of 5%. By 2025 that will have gone. The next census will show that below 50% will say they are Christian for the first time. The loss of influence is being seen in that the Christian basis of our judicial system is being replaced with more secular values. There is currently some residual influence through our monarch and her strong faith. It is unlikely that she will face too much criticism for this while she is alive. But overall, the influence of Christianity is dwindling.

What are the consequences of this? Many churches engage in large amounts of community work. There are currently seven thousand church projects in London, directly touching somewhere in the region of 390,000 people, using 40,000 volunteers. In the north of England there are five thousand social projects run by 45,000 volunteers, generating something like £80m in welfare. As the church declines, the loss or reduction of such community involvement will bring a greater cost to society, either to replace it, or else that service will be lost. So it isn't just a case that decline is sad for the church, it will impact the community at large as well. So when we are thinking about what we want to do in the long term and the 'macro', the implications of decline need to be taken into consideration.

Sexualisation

This has become a major part of society. The implications and the detail are frightening. Pornography is now very accessible; something like 12% of five year-olds have been exposed to it, and for eleven year-olds the figure is as high as 50%. 4% of websites in 2010 were pornographic and 13% of web searches were for pornography. Getting these statistics is very difficult – even using the web – as you tend to get contradictory figures. Some would say these estimates are far too low, and could be more like five or six times higher. 13,000 pornographic videos are made in the US every year, but they are also being made in the UK, and some are being made by teenagers. 900 billion accesses of web pornography were counted five years ago. It is bound to be much higher now. You are probably thinking that as there are only seven billion people on the planet, that is around a hundred and thirty per person! Obviously not everyone is viewing pornography on the web, and the use will be that much higher where people are using the web in that way. This then is part of everyday experience for many, many people.

Nakedness is now a norm. Sexting – sending a nude photo of yourself via your mobile – is now very common. 90% of teenagers have now either sent or received one. Some students are happy to lap-dance naked to earn the fees for their courses. Sexual harassment has become a common news story, and it has been said that the Jimmy Savile case is but the tip of the iceberg.

All that leads to early sexual experience. 35% of 18-24 have had sex, and frequently it is the kind of casual sex, which de-links the act from the emotional relationship. 43,000 teenagers gave birth in 2012, with all but 2% outside wedlock. This figure has actually gone down in the last few years but this is not because of decreased sexual activity, rather that the abortion rate has gone up. Christian teaching on chastity is followed less and less, even amongst practising Christians.

This sexualisation is everywhere we look – especially in the newspapers. It is part of life, you might say, but it used not to be. Forty or fifty years ago it was nothing like this.

Youth are being mastered by technology

People have grown up with laptops, ipads and smartphones for a while now. Some - the Millennial Generation (or Gen Y) - have never been without it. Those born since 1990 have always had a laptop at home. I help to run an orphanage in Kenya, and I know of a young lad there who has a smartphone, and the manager of the home had a Blackberry. I said to the lad "*You'll never ever want to own a Blackberry, will you?*" and he replied that the Blackberry was yesterday's technology. I asked him if he needed money for food but his smartphone needed to be recharged which would be more important – and he replied that the recharging was the more important. We can see then the priority of having the ability to talk all the time. One statistic: 17% of drivers in the UK use satnavs; 43% of those in their twenties use satnavs. The younger generation is now rarely without technology and even at night-time it remains switched on. There are a range of social media tools which are constantly available. It is there, it is constant – it is never-ending.

So what is this technology used for? It's about maintaining social contacts and relationships. Social media is 'it' – it is part of life today. It is a different world now, and the idea of walking along relating what you are doing now, even the most mundane things, is commonplace, and not something that people once bothered with. Another use is international gaming. Many teenagers, as well as people in their twenties and thirties spend an evening a week, two evenings a week, sometimes two nights a week, playing international games, with teams from Australia, Peru, Russia working as teams against other teams from Croatia or New Zealand for example. Sadly, the values being espoused in these games are anything but Christian, and they usually involve killing.

Texting, email, news, information, anything . No longer do we use encyclopaedias – we type into Google and we request any sort of information or picture. I recently sent a letter to an archdeacon, which was returned undelivered. Did I look him up in a directory? No - I did a search on the web and found out the post was vacant. I didn't know that but that's where I went to get the latest update. It may not necessarily be accurate but that's the general approach to finding things out.

Other uses of the technology include TV, which includes pornography sadly. I heard of a girl who came home from her secondary school to tell her mum she wished the boys wouldn't spend all their break time watching pornography on their ipads etc.

Our workplaces can also encourage BYOD (Bring Your Own Device to work). In other words, the company doesn't give the employee a laptop, it says we prefer you to use your own because you are used to it.

What are the implications of all this? One of them is highlighted in an interesting book by Jane MacDougall who is a web designer. She says that one of the reasons why games are so popular is that you are connecting to something bigger than yourself, when you are in the web or the 'cloud'. There is a quasi-spiritual dimension to some of this.

A second point is that there is an expectation of continual advancement. A recent article in the ***Economist*** predicted that the driver-less car will soon become a reality, but it's not a car manufacturer that is leading the way with this, but Google. We can even have automatically replaced refrigerator items: use some butter or similar product and the fridge will order the replacement at the appropriate time. The world is different, and our mode of communication is changing. This means that whatever we do, especially in terms of marketing, we have to think of doing it in different ways. If something goes 'viral' on Twitter or Facebook, something like half a million people have seen it in an hour or two. This is the kind of medium we have to deal with and use. Is this the way to market Christian books? Is this the way we can market CLIS? I have to think if I can market my consultancy like that. Perhaps Twitter and Facebook are not the answer, but we have to start thinking radically differently.

Current Generational variations

There is now a vast gap between the way generations think and operate. Some of this has already been alluded to, but here are some key points.

Generational values and experience are different in terms of habits and world views. Someone who was born in 1930 or just after would be 80-85 now. Virtually all of those in that age group are in the developed world. They went to school during World War II. Imagine what that meant in terms of getting a job in the 1940s and 1950s. If you were born in 1945, you would be seventy. Again, most live in the developed world. They will have formed their world view before the sexual revolution in the 1960s.

By today's standards, these people will be 'old-fashioned' in outlook. One third went to Sunday School. Those born in 1960, now aged about fifty-five, will always have had television. Many will probably remember as a young person the 1969 moon landing. Those born in 1975 – nearly forty now - were at school when the Berlin Wall came down, and the moon landings are history. They are used to having multiple jobs, because jobs don't last very long or because they do two jobs at once. They may also have several families because divorce for this group is common; mum or dad has remarried, perhaps several times. They have a distrust of leaders. Those born in 1990 – the millennial generation or Gen Y as they are sometimes called – they use the web, ipads, mobiles etc. Church is boring for this group, and casual sex is commonplace. Those born in 2005, now at school, are living in the aftermath of the world recession. A few go to church, but not many. Of those who do, a third will leave between ages ten and twenty, and of those still going to church, one half will leave before they reach the age of thirty.

You can see for yourself then, the huge differences between the generations, and the great changes which have taken place over the last seventy or eighty years. Church attendance is one aspect of this. In 2010, 30% of churchgoers were over sixty-five. It is predicted that by 2025 that figure will have gone up to 43% and by 2030 it will be 50%. In 1990, 9% of those who were under thirty, 8% of those thirty-sixty four and 11% of those sixty-five and over were going to church. Church attendance was 8% as a whole and the average age was thirty-nine. In 2010, 5% of under-thirtiess, 5% of those thirty-sixty four, and 11% of the over-sixty-fives went to church. The overall figure had come down to 6%, and the average age was forty-five. By that reckoning, in 2025 only 3% of under thirties will be in church, only 4% thirty-sixty four and 9% over sixty-five. Church attendance will be 4% and the average age fifty three.

So when we are taking big decisions we have to take into consideration the people who will be interested in anything we do if we call ourselves Christian. How can we sustain that interest?

Here are some of the generational differences:

i. Baby-boomers have a family home with a partner. They were born in the 1960s and those working in office are used to wearing a suit and tie. They generally have a fair degree of loyalty to the employer and they like talking face-to-face.

ii. Gen X people may have a second family home, will only wear a suit to work if there is a special meeting. They will usually have a smartphone or Blackberry, but they are not so keen about being face-to-face. Employer loyalty is less strong.

iii. Gen Y millennials will usually be living with a partner, usually wear casual clothes the whole time, have low employer loyalty and use social media constantly.

One of the consequences of this is a lack of transmission of faith. Christian families are not seeing their children come to faith. This is true of very committed Christian families. Somehow the transmission process isn't working. This is partly because we are getting to the point where families have a lower priority than one's career. It's also the case that one's childhood denomination has no particular pull. One may grow up as a Baptist or Anglican, but people will go to the church which does more of what they like. That may mean getting in the car and not going to a local church.

What this means is that when we are talking about differences in society, age is a very important factor.

The Crumbling of our Christian Heritage

There are five major institutions which underpin the structure of society. They are: the Economy, Family, Education, Law and Governance, and Religion. This was decided by the House of Lords in a meeting about six years ago. What they said was the following: “*This has changed Britain from a centuries-old Judaeo-Christian heritage to a poly-cultural, multi-religious society with no fixed standards of personal or social morality.*” You might ask what the House of Lords is doing about it, but that is a different issue!

What are the implications of this? Firstly there is the loss of a shared vision of society. A Christian believes in the return of Christ. How that return will take place, when it will take place, are questions we discuss and disagree on, but the principle is shared. Take this away from society and replace it with nothing, you have to ask ‘*where are we going?*’ Are we going towards 2100 or will the earth be flooded, say, by then? Our shared vision of the future has been eroded.

Secondly there is confusion over the values for decision making. Is our key value the economic one? Or is it because we care for individuals? An interesting article was published in ***Christianity Today*** where a man spent a long term researching the impact of democracy across the world. He asked “*What does democracy do?*” and “*What did the Empire do when it took democracy abroad?*” What it did was not only export a system of government, but bring an expectation that everyone would have an education. The result was quite uneven, but nevertheless there was that expectation. Christianity was also taken to these countries, along with the associated values. The Empire has long gone, but the effects of it are still being worked out. Take countries Ghana and Togo for instance. Togo was ruled by the French, where education was restricted to the elite, whereas the British in Ghana gave education to all. One hundred and fifty years later, Ghana has universities, but Togo doesn’t and education remains limited. Christianity has made some crucial differences to the world in the past. Part of that difference is to do with those values which we believe are consistent with what Christianity is about, and education is part of that process.

The loss of the Judaeo-Christian heritage is a loss of the common good. Where are we going? What is good? There is a deterioration of respectful dialogue. A girl that was taken into care, was constantly crying and was asked why she was unhappy. *"I'm unhappy because people are always shouting at me"* she replied. We have lost respectful dialogue even for children. We have abandoned moral character and personal decency. Let us not think that the decline of Christianity is without loss. We have built an enormous edifice, which the world does not recognise but whose value is inestimable.

What are the implications of this? What grounds for appeal do you have when a library closes? Do you say this is loss for people and the community? Or is the answer all about money? Which comes first? Understanding and literature or saving a few pounds? How do you weigh those two values up? There is a loss of confidence in the gospel, and the books by Dan Brown and Richard Dawkins have been very popular. Dan Brown has put it to us that Jesus had a child by Mary Magdalene. We will argue that it isn't true, and that Dan Brown himself says his work is a novel. Despite this he maintains that he researched it, although he doesn't put those two sentences together. The fact is that many people read the book and will question Christians as to how they know they are right. The Gospels say nothing about this, but the question will come back *"The Gospels were written two thousand years ago – how do you know they are right? What makes you think they are relevant to today?"* And many Christians can't answer that question.

The spread of Islam is also a threat. The number of Muslims in this country has doubled in the last ten years. Their average family is 3.5 children, whereas the average Christian family is half that.

Finally there is the whole area of standards in our current generation. What grounds do we appeal on? What is it that we say, where do we take our stand? These are big and difficult questions. As we consider what we are doing as Christians and how we do it, these are some of the macro issues that we have to consider.

The increase in longer-living population

There are about 18,000 centenarians in Britain and its a group that is increasing enormously rapidly. When she became Queen, Elizabeth II would send a card to anyone on their hundredth birthday with her own signature. Now there are too many people to send cards to so the signature is printed, and you need to notify the Palace if you want a card.

There are a number of issues with what is now a worldwide problem. It is true in the developing as well as in the developed world. At one time it was true that half the world's population was under fifteen. It is unlikely that this will ever be true again. There are increasing costs in health and welfare, and the working population has to support a growing number in pro rata terms. More people are living alone as a consequence of living longer. There is also the issue of pension funds – can that resource last?

People are having babies much later. It was reported that for each week of last year, three women aged 50+ had a baby. Those having children over forty is now much higher. At one time people started a family at twenty-five or younger, we now see people delaying having a family until later and the average age for starting a family is around thirty. There are currently lots of grandparents and great-grandparents, although with parenting happening later the number of people living to see their great-grand-children is likely to decrease. (I was recently asked to estimate the number of great-grandparents going to church, and the figure was about 200,000.) We are probably the generation that will see the most great-grandparents, certainly more than the past, and probably more than future generations.

Those 55-64 represented 16% of English churchgoers in 2012, and 12% of the population. 32% of this age group had been to Sunday School. Those 65-74 were 20% of church attendees, but only 8% of the population, and 36% went to Sunday School. Those 75-84 make up 8% of church attendees and 6% of the population, but 48% went to Sunday School. Those 85+ make up 4% of church attendees, amount to 2% of the population and 52% went to Sunday School. There is a huge change in church activity, and it is noticeable that the decline coincides with the

sexual revolution of the 1960s.

Christian message critical for the future

The Great Commandment and the Great Commission are eternally applicable and relevant. We must not forget these two things. We need to read the Scriptures and immerse ourselves in them. I spoke with your first speaker today from the *London Institute for Contemporary Christianity* over lunch and he identified the major problem in the church today as one of discipleship: people are not reading and learning from the Bible.

Making better decisions requires clear evaluation, decisive action, impassioned praying, and strategic thinking. What is strategic thinking? We've looked at the decrease in the size of the church, the increase in sexualisation, the dominance of technology, the large generational variations, waning Christian heritage, the fact that people are living longer, and that Christian values are still critical; taking those things on board will I believe provide the resources for making better decisions.

Previously the Director of *Christian Research* and *MARC Europe*, Dr. **Peter Brierley** now runs *Brierley Consultancy* in a full time capacity. Its aim is identical to the previous organisations – to strengthen church leadership, in whatever way that may be appropriate. That means providing key data for strategic planning, undertaking research projects, including national church censuses, interpreting the research of others, obtaining and publishing factual resources and providing specific material for church leadership in an easy-to-read format.