

Summer/Autumn 2016

CLIS Christians *in*
Library *and*
Information
Services



***CHRISTIAN
LIBRARIAN***

CONTENTS INCLUDE

- ***SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER 2016:
NICK PAGE LECTURE IN COVENTRY***
- ***CHRISTIAN LIBRARIANS CELEBRATE FORTY YEARS***
 - ***DR. JOHN ANDREWS REMEMBERED***
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- ***THE ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIBRARIAN IN A
THEOLOGICALLY TURBULENT AGE***
- ***ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS***

EVENTS AT A GLANCE

● **THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2016: VISIT TO THE LIBRARY, LONDON SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, GREEN LANE, NORTHWOOD, HA6 2UW, FROM 2.30. p.m.**

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SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER 2016: "ART AND ARCHITECTURE" TOUR OF COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

Details: pp. 13-15

● **SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER 2016: ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE**

Methodist Central Hall, Warwick Lane, Coventry, CV1 2HA, from 2.30.p.m. Speaker: Nick Page, author of *A Nearly Infallible History of Christianity on Martin Luther and Mass Media.*

Details pp. 13-15.

PRAYER NOTES FOR SUMMER/AUTUMN 2016

PLEASE PRAY FOR

● Forthcoming CIS activities including our annual lecture in Coventry and next year's annual conference.

● Our recent speakers **Nick Spencer** and the Rev. **Will Morris** and their work at *Theos* and *St. Martin-in-the-Fields* Church and elsewhere.

● The work of the *Universities' and Colleges' Christian Fellowship*, the *International Fellowship of Evangelical Students* and the *London School of Theology*.

● Christians involved in the media including **Pam Rhodes** and the Rev. **Kate Bottley**.

● The *Arts Centre Group* and its work serving Christians in the arts, media and entertainment.

● Those working in the public library service and other branches of the library profession facing further cutbacks and closures.

● **Kevin Carey** and the work of the *Royal National Institute of Blind People*.



FOUNDED IN 1976 AS THE LIBRARIANS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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THE FIRST WORD

ROS TURNER of *Transform Work UK* sends greetings – and a challenge – to CLIS members as we celebrate a significant anniversary

CHRISTIAN LIBRARIANS CELEBRATE FORTY YEARS



Dear Graham and all at *Christians in Library and Information Services*,

The *Transform Work UK* team is sorry that it is unable to physically be with you as you celebrate your fortieth birthday. However we are keen to be involved and to say a big “*well done*” for standing in the gap for so many years and being a support and often a life-line for isolated Christians working in libraries and information services across the UK.

Having a birthday is not only an opportunity to celebrate, it’s also a time to stop and ponder, to think about what you’ve achieved but also to dream and plan about what could be. As I’ve set aside time in my day to think of what to write to you, two scriptures come to mind immediately.

The first is about pondering and looking back from Mark 2:22.

“And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins”.

I can remember the time when I used to flick through the yellow pages and ‘phone directory to search for the relevant information whenever I needed to call a company or friend. I also remember popping down to our local library for a new book to read or to use the photocopying machine. Now, of course, so much can be done simply through a smart ‘phone and google search engine. We can read books, take pictures of relevant information, e-mail message ‘*WhatsApp*’, ‘*Snapchat*’ to an individual or out to the masses via *Twitter* or *Facebook* ... and where do we do all this – all from the comfort of our living room sofa as and when we want.

As technology advances and the pace of life quickens due to new communication tools, every sphere of society and organisation is impacted, none more so than the library and information services. You are the workers at the frontline who see and feel the changes, some drastic, some subtle, some positive and some negative.

Amongst all the changes and developments there is a fundamental truth, and that is, that people have the same basic needs today as they did forty years ago and those will remain the same into the future. Colleagues need to know they are doing a good job. They need friendship at work, and they need a sense of purpose and value, a sense of fulfilment and a sense of security.

In our changing world we can hardly put our trust in long term jobs any more and so for the Christian working in libraries and information services we put our trust and faith in the One who knows the beginning and the end and loves us, His children. He has a purpose for our lives. Even now, today, Father God is wanting to encourage you into your next season. The new wine is coming and will you, CLIS, surrender all to him, and be the new wine skin? So what is the new wine? It’s not necessarily new technology or structures. It is the greatest prize of all: new members coming into God’s great family through you. It’s younger people coming into the profession who are going to be supported by CLIS through encouragement, advice, love, prayer and a listening ear. It’s CLIS growing Christian Workplace Groups of praying members in libraries and information service organisations across the UK that invite the presence of the Holy Spirit to invade those workplaces so that in all things He is

lifted high and draws men and women to Himself.

The second scripture that comes to mind is from Isaiah 54:2: in particular, “*Think Big or you’ll limit me*’ – that’s a paraphrase from **The Message** translation.

“Clear lots of ground for your tents! Make your tents large. Spread out! Think Big! Use plenty of rope, drive the tent pegs deep. You’re going to need lots of elbow room for your growing family.”

I love these verses where God promises a great future for the Israelites. The words are so very practical. You’re going to need rope and plenty of it! How do these words resonate for you today? What is it that you need to do to make room for your growing library and information service family? What would it look like to have double your membership, double your resources, double your impact? So, ‘*Think Big!*’

It dawned on me recently whilst reading the Bible, that God does new things ... He doesn’t patch up old vessels. He makes them new ... He is about new things (Isaiah 42:9), a new song (Isaiah 42:10), a new heaven, a new earth (Isaiah 65:17) and I want to encourage you to prayerfully seek out His new things for you, as you move forward into your fortieth year.

Forty seems to have been a significant number in the Bible – forty years in the wilderness for the Israelites; forty days when Jesus prayed and fasted and then just look what happened! It was almost like the starting pistol being fired to mark the beginning of Jesus’ amazing, life changing ministry – a new promised land, a new powerful ministry. So be expectant for the new work God has for you and be prepared to put it into a new wineskin, a new way of doing things whatever that may be for CLIS.

The *Transform Work UK* team is excited about what the future holds for CLIS! *Transform Work UK* is here to pray for you, encourage you, and to support you all the way.

Ros Turner works for *Transform Work UK* as their Lead Ambassador and can be contacted at TWUK, 1 Christie Drive, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 6JD.

THE SECOND WORD

ROBERT FOSTER reflects on the strains and stresses of commuting to work but finds an unexpected point of contact with the central figure in the New Testament

TRAIN OF THOUGHT



In the last Second Word I mentioned my journey into work. Like the vast majority of people who travel into London every day, I use public transport. It takes up a fair bit of time, the door-to-door travel time being somewhere in the region of one hundred to one hundred and twenty minutes. Whilst this feels like quite a long commute, I'm convinced that this is by no means out of the ordinary, and it's understandable that most people will occupy the time one way or another, quite often reading. One doesn't always know for sure because with the prevalence of laptops and smartphones, people may indeed be reading, but they might also be *'taking the office home'* with them by working on an e-mail or spreadsheet, or they could be listening to music, playing a game or watching a film etc.

A few weeks ago, a person in the seat in front of me had a laptop open to watch a TV programme, whilst producing an immaculate piece of cross-stitch. I think they even managed to order a pizza to collect during the commercial break. There are times when you just have to applaud that kind of multi-tasking. However, hard-copy is still very much in evidence: a newspaper, a thriller, a graphic novel, a magazine, a

college textbook, a music score, a surveyor's report, and so on. And it is quite noticeable, to me anyway, how many people will read the Bible or a piece of '*devotional*' literature. It's not always easy to do this consistently, particularly if much of your journey is spent standing up, but for quite a number it quite clearly is their choice, on a regular basis.

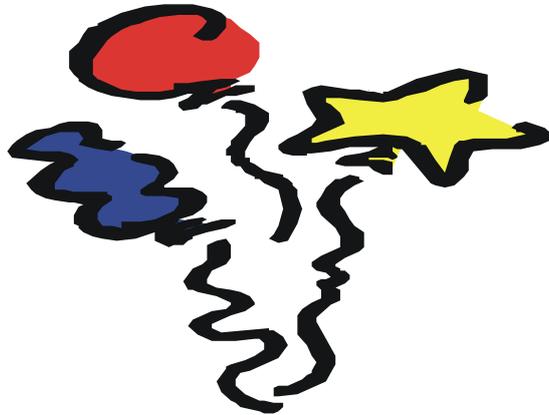
It's not hard to see why though. The papers will from time to time tell us how stressful commuting is. For some people it can be more stressful than their job, planning a holiday or even going to the dentist. A report done twelve years ago looked into the health consequences of dealing with a difficult journey to work on a regular basis (see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4052861.stm>) and the subject regularly comes up in the media. I was once on a course entitled '*Emotional Intelligence*' which used a difficult journey as a case study for thinking more positively. I'm not sure I can put that sort of thinking into practice that much, but one thing is true, there are plenty of people who would far rather be where I am - people who are out of work, or ill, or homeless or whatever. I have to consider myself one of the fortunate ones, in reality. But like the vast proportion of people travelling into London, I like a bit of personal space when I can find it, and I will usually have something to read.

But there is something else, which I find reassuring. Whichever account of the gospels you look at, travelling was an important part of the life of Christ on this earth. Sometimes alone with friends, he nevertheless was often in crowds of people, often very close at hand. There is one incident, when he was passing through a place, where people were surprised that he said "*Who touched me?*", so near were so many people to him. As so often, He has experienced what we experience. I'm sure there will come a time when I can be without the commute, but for the time being it helps to see His life once more meeting ours where I might least expect it.

Robert Foster, BA, DipIM, MCLIP, is Chair of *Christians in Library and Information Services* and works as an Assistant Librarian at the *Royal College of Music*,

FORTY YEARS OF LCF/CLIS

ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS



From Nick Poole, Chief Executive, *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals*

“On behalf of the staff, Board of Trustees and Presidential Team of CILIP, I am pleased to send congratulations to our friends and colleagues of the *Christians in Library and Information Services* on the celebration of your fortieth Anniversary.

I note your aims of promoting fellowship and unity between Christians involved in library work, providing a Christian voice within the wider library profession and making the skills and training of librarians available to the wider Christian community. In the complex times in which we live, these principles of fellowship, unity and collaboration are more important than ever and I join you in celebrating them on this happy occasion.

The relationship between faith and professional values is an important one, and I am pleased that it is to be the subject of

your discussions today. As a profession, we must be committed to the free and open exchange of information and ideas between people of all faiths, to serving the public in all its diversity and to advancing the general cause of human knowledge. At the same time, I believe that library and information work provides an excellent vehicle for the Christian values of charity and empathy and the Christian mission of education and the eradication of poverty.

I look forward to hearing more about your work and to building on the strong relationship between CLIS and CILIP in the future.
"

From Steve Clifford, General Director, *Evangelical Alliance*

“Greetings and congratulations to CLIS as you celebrate forty years of service

It’s a delight and honour to be able to extend a greeting and indeed a word of congratulations to CLIS on behalf of the leadership of the *Evangelical Alliance*.

At a time when Christians in the workplace can feel marginalised and under pressure, there is great value in the mutual support and encouragement which organisations such as CLIS are able to offer. We are strengthened as we stand together as brothers and sisters in Christ, members of the same family with the privilege of praying to our ‘*Father in heaven*’.

So as you meet today, may you find yourselves growing in faith for the mission field to which God has called you.”

From Rev. Brian Allenby, *Christians at Work*

“Warmest greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It gives me great pleasure in sending our heartiest congratulation on achieving your fortieth Anniversary.

In these times of great change, it is my view that the Library and Information Services have perhaps suffered more than most and I believe this demonstrates the real need for close fellowship. As a regular reader of your journal, I see all too well how you support and encourage one another, surely a shining example to other professional Christian groups. May you long continue to function in this ministry of support and encouragement to one another.

My footnote – ‘*Bar-humbug*’ to change – I loved my local library and it’s quiet efficiency, I now have to travel many miles to look for various older books and other information or go on-line to an impersonal and cold web-site! Long live the Library and Information Services.”

From Steve Briars, *Christian Resources Together* and *Together* magazine

"Congratulations on achieving such a prestigious landmark as you support and serve Christian Librarians across the UK. Long may it continue."

From Geoff Booker, Chair, *Christian Book Promotion Trust*

“It is with great joy that the *Christian Book Promotion Trust* sends its congratulations to you on reaching your fortieth Anniversary - a significant milestone! It has been a pleasure for CBPT to walk with you for so many years as we are both dedicated to the greater provision of quality Christian literature being readily available through the library network. As your 'industry' suffers from the financial strains imposed upon it, our working with you through donated Christian literature becomes even more important and vital. We pray we may continue to walk with you for many more years!

May God's richest blessings be upon your time together and with each one of you as you return to your place of work”.

From Carol Reekie, Chair, Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries

“On behalf of ABTAPL I would like to send you all our warmest greetings and to congratulate you on achieving your fortieth Anniversary. I hope that you have a memorable conference and that the association continues to thrive and build on its good work. I look forward to reading about it in your journal.”

NEWS

SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER 2016

CHRISTIAN LIBRARIANS SENT TO COVENTRY

10.30.a.m.

**“*ART AND ARCHITECTURE*” TOUR OF
*COVENTRY CATHEDRAL***

12.15. p.m.

LUNCH AT *METHODIST CENTRAL HALL*

2.30.p.m.

**CLIS ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE at
Methodist Central Hall, Warwick Lane,
*Coventry, CV1 2HA***

Speaker:

NICK PAGE

**Martin Luther and Mass Media
The Reformation in Books, Pamphlets, Prints,
Sermons and the Social Media of the Day**

ANNUAL LECTURE

Christian librarians (and guests) are to be sent to Coventry on **Saturday 15 October 2016** for the annual public lecture arranged by *Christians in Library and Information Services*.

This is to be held at the **Methodist Central Hall, Warwick Lane, Coventry, CV1 2HA**, from 2.30.p.m.

Our guest speaker is **Nick Page**, prized for his skills as a writer, speaker, unlicensed historian and general information-monger. Nick has written over seventy books, including ***A Nearly Infallible History of Christianity*** and ***God's Dangerous Book***. He is not now, nor has he ever been a theologian!

Nick's subject is to be: ***Martin Luther and Mass Media: The Reformation in Books, Pamphlets, Prints, Sermons and the Social Media of the Day.***

Nick is currently writing a new book ***A Nearly Infallible History of the Reformation***, due to be published in 2017. This will commemorate the five hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther publishing his *Ninety-Five Theses*, an event that sparked off

the Protestant Reformation and changed the course of history in Europe and the world for ever.

Nick's lecture will look at the effect that the new media of printing and print-making, and the explosion of new books, new words and new readers had at the time of the Reformation.

Please join us in Coventry, if at all possible, for what should be a fascinating and informative lecture. Although planned by CLIS, the lecture is open to all and we hope to publicise it within wider library and Christian circles. Please encourage friends and colleagues to attend.

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL TOUR

For those who can arrive in Coventry in time we have booked ten places on a morning "*Art and Architecture*" guided tour of the nearby **Coventry Cathedral**, from 10.30.a.m. which will take in many of the artistic and architectural highlights of this major ecclesiastical building.

The current cathedral (*St. Michael's Cathedral*) was built next to the remains of the former cathedral, which was destroyed by bombing during World War II.

The present building was designed by Basil Spence (later knighted for this work) and consecrated on 25 May 1962. The modernist design caused much discussion but on opening to the public it rapidly became a hugely popular symbol of reconciliation in post-war Britain.

Notable artistic features of the interior include Graham Sutherland's huge tapestry (once thought to be the world's largest) of Christ. Other highlights include the sculpture *Mater Dolorosa* by John Bridgeman in the East End and the Baptistry window by John Piper of abstract design, which comprises one hundred and ninety five panes. Also of interest are the stained glass windows in the Nave.

There is a charge of £5.00 for entrance to the Cathedral and a further £3.00 for the guided tour.

LUNCH ARRANGEMENTS

After the Cathedral tour we will be adjourning to the **Methodist Central Hall** for a "*Sandwiches and Cakes*" platter lunch. The cost for this will be £5.11 per head, including VAT.

If you would like to book a place or places for the Cathedral

tour and/or lunch please inform our committee member Diana Guthrie at the address below and enclose a cheque for the appropriate amount made payable to Diana Guthrie. Please book early for the Cathedral tour, to avoid disappointment

There is *no need* to book a place for the afternoon lecture.

Diana is the contact person for further information about the day's activities and can be contacted at 5 Arden Mead, 4 Staveley Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 7LH. Tel. 01323 419181. E mail dhguthrie@btinternet.com

SEE YOU IN COVENTRY?

Coventry should prove to be a convenient location for members and friends coming by road since it is situated at the hub of the national motorway system. Rail travellers can get there in just over an hour from London Euston or in a couple of hours from our Midlands, Northern and Western regions.

The Central Hall is within a short distance of the railway and bus and coach stations, and there are car parking facilities nearby.



CLIS NEWSLETTER

**From Graham Hedges,
Hon. FCLIP, MCLIP,
Secretary, 34 Thurlestone
Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG3
9DU. Tel. 020 8599 1310. E
mail**

secretary@chrstalis.org.uk

**Web site
www.christianlis.org.uk**

VISIT TO LONDON SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY LIBRARY

Members and friends of CLIS will be taking part in a visit to the library of the **London School of Theology, Green Lane, Northwood, London, HA6 2UW**, on **Thursday 8 September 2016**, from 2.30. p.m.

LST's large library is housed in the former chapel and holds over 50,000 volumes. It is recognised as one of the best

specialist theological libraries in the UK. The periodicals room has archives of many theological journals many of which are being made available on-line to staff and students. There is a separate music library with music books, hymnals and sheet music.

Originally founded as the *London Bible College*, LST was launched in the middle of World War II with a vision for an inter-denominational evangelical college that would provide an alternative to the prevailing liberal theology of the day and prepare students to interact with the post-war world.

Originally based in central London, the College moved to its present Northwood site in 1970 and adopted its present name in 2004.

Travel directions to the LST can be found at <https://www.lstonline.ac.uk/directions>. The College is thirty minutes northwest of central London on the London Underground and within easy reach of the M1, M40 and M25 motorways. For those coming via the Underground, Northwood is on the Watford branch of the Metropolitan line.

It is hoped that those who can arrive in Northwood in time will be able to have lunch together prior to the afternoon visit in a local restaurant from about 12.15.

If you would like to book a place or places on the visit, and/or for lunch, please contact Robert Foster, 6 Norjo-Ann Villas, Moor Road, Chesham, HP5 1SA. Tel. 01494 580102. E-mail Robert_foster31@hotmail.com

LORD FOR THE YEARS

Lord for the Years became something of a signature tune for the LCF/CLIS fortieth anniversary back in April.

Timothy Dudley-Smith's stirring hymn of thanksgiving was not only included in the worship session at our anniversary conference but also played and dedicated to CLIS members by the Rev. Tony Miles on the *Premier Christian Radio* programme "*Saturday Quiet Time*" and by Diane-Louise Jordan on the *BBC Radio Two* programme "*The Sunday Hour*".

The anniversary was also mentioned on the air by *Premier* presenters Anna Cookson and John Pantry.

There were other opportunities to publicise CLIS on the radio during the anniversary period. Along with CLIS Chair, Robert Foster, I was interviewed by Andy Peck for *Premier's* "*The*

Leadership File" programme. I was later interviewed by Jumoke Fashola on *BBC Radio London's* "*In Spirit*" and by Paul Hammond on *United Christian Broadcasters* (UCB1).

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Our Membership Directory for 2016 was sent to members and personal subscribers by e-mail in late May. If you did not receive this please contact our Webmaster John Wickenden: webmaster@christianlis.org.uk

On the other hand, if you would like a printed copy please contact our Membership Secretary, Janice Paine, 22 Queensgate Gardens, 396 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, London, SW15 6JN. Tel. 020 8785 2174.

The Directory listed those whose subscriptions had been received by May 2016. If your details have not appeared, either we have made a mistake, or your subscription has not been received. In either case, Janice will be pleased to hear from you.

Our apologies to Vernon Burgess and Hilary Butt whose details were inadvertently left out of the Directory.

The subscription for 2016 is

£30.00 with a reduced rate of £20.00 for unwaged members and subscribers. Two members living at the same address, and sharing mailings, need only pay £20.00 each.

If you have an e-mail address but do not receive our **E-Newsletter** and other e-mails, we would encourage you to sign up for these. Being able to contact you by e-mail makes it easier for us to disseminate information quickly, and it can also save us money on postage. Please contact John Wickenden at the address above.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NEWS

- Our past speaker **Tony Collins**, who gave our annual lecture in 2014, is the author of **Taking My God for a Walk** (Monarch, £8.99, ISBN 978-0857217738), an account of Tony's four hundred and ninety mile walk along the pilgrim trail to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

- Another past speaker, the Rev. **Lionel Fanthorpe**, took part in an episode of the *Forbidden History* series broadcast on the *Yesterday* TV channel on 26 February 2016.

The episode was entitled *The Real Ark of the Covenant* and examined the tradition that the biblical Ark of the Covenant was removed from the Temple in Jerusalem by a son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and is now to be found in a chapel in the highlands of Northern Ethiopia.

Lionel, an acknowledged expert on the paranormal and unexplained mysteries, gave our annual lecture in Cardiff in 1998.

- How did you vote in the referendum on British membership of the *European Union*? The May/June 2016 issue of **Idea**, magazine of the *Evangelical Alliance*, included short comments from nine contributors (including the present writer, **Graham Hedges**), arguing for and against British membership (pp. 18-19.)

Later, in the same issue, our member **Kim Walker**, the EA's Senior Research and Information Officer, contributed *The Alliance's Long History with Europe*, looking back over past coverage of European issues in **Idea** and **Crusade** magazines (p. 38)

- We were sorry to hear that **Pamela Jackson** (nee Cripps) died in February 2016.

Pamela, a member of LCF/CLIS since 1981, worked, until her retirement as Special Services Manager for the *Berkshire Library and Information Service*.

Members will wish to give thanks for Pamela's life and Christian witness and remember her family and friends at this time of bereavement.

- Many readers will know that our President, **Eddie Olliffe**, suffered a stroke earlier this year. He is recovering well but a complete recovery may take some time.

Please pray for Eddie and his family during this time of recovery.

- Our member **Andrew Parker** has included his review of the film *Risen* in *Radius Performing*, the magazine of the *Religious Drama Society of Great Britain*, Spring 2016, p. 15.

In the same issue our past speaker **Tony Jasper** contributes *Bowie and Belief* (pp. 2-5), a survey of religious ideas and themes in the life and music of rock star David Bowie, who died in January 2016.

- CLIS member the Rev. **John Waddington-Feather** has

written a play *Martin Luther* which is to be performed in Dallas by a Texan drama company in 2017. The play is in eight episodes and each episode is introduced by a poetry narrator who outlines an abstract idea, like ambition or greed, before being followed by a prose narrator who gives historical information to aid the audience.

John's play has now been published as a Kindle at the generous price of 97p.

- Our past speaker, the Very Rev. Dr. **Pete Wilcox**, Dean of *Liverpool Cathedral*, was on our TV screens on Sunday 15 May 2016 when he led the Pentecost morning service on BBC1.

SO MUCH LITERATURE

Dr. Donald Drew's 1981 lecture on literary criticism and the purpose of literature, included in the Spring 2016 *Christian Librarian*, drew the following response from Dr. **Roger Kojecky**, Secretary of the *Christian Literary Studies Group*.

"Thank you for sending a complimentary copy of the Spring 2016 issue. So much in it about

literature! I suppose engineers, scientists and business people also make use of libraries!

*I have read right through Donald Drew's article. He was a member of the CLSG until 2008 and contributed a review of a volume of poems by Walter Nash to our journal **The Glass**.*

Donald's lecture is an apologia for imaginative writing and takes some broad views. One detects his background at Cambridge (F.R. Leavis) and his admiration for C.S. Lewis. Literature is to be read in relation to experience. It is to be appraised by reference to what is true, and to what is good, noble, of good report etc. He has a lot to say against Expressionism. His references are wide ranging but there are some confusions.

'Myth seeks ... to assist in dividing the unified self' he writes (p. 40) but I suspect a slip; myth unites the divided self surely. As mentioned he takes against self-expression as a sufficient explanation of literary writing; and another warning concerns presuppositions. 'The reader has to be alert to the presuppositions which the critic brings to bear' (35), 'but a wise reader will not allow himself to be handcuffed by presuppositions' (36). Why are all presuppositions labelled as bad? We can't think or perceive without them in some form, and

presuppositions are, I would say, a pre-requisite of Christian wisdom and insight Not bad ones but enlightened, spiritual or inspired ones.

He refers to the myth or account of Eden. 'Man has always longed for that return. The pagan myths have expressed it as has the Bible' (39) But I can't think of where this is to be found in these terms in the Bible. The canonical texts use different imagery for the need for a restored relationship with God. "

Information about the *Christian Literary Studies Group* can be found on their web site at www.clsg.org

BEN-HUR RIDES AGAIN

Ben-Hur is due to return to our cinema screens this August in a \$90 million re-make of the story of the embittered Jewish nobleman who learns to forgive the Romans after witnessing the death of Jesus.

This new version of the classic story features Jack Huston as Judah Ben-Hur, Rodrigo Santoro as Jesus, and Morgan Freeman as Sheik Ilderim.

Mark Downey and Roma

Downey, the team responsible for the 2014 TV series ***The Bible***, are also reported to be involved as producer and executive producer.

This will be the fifth screen version of ***Ben-Hur***. The 1959 epic, starring Charlton Heston, was preceded by earlier cinema versions (including a silent movie) and followed by an animated adaptation and a television mini-series. There have also been radio serialisations and theatrical productions at the *O2 Arena* and elsewhere.

Lew Wallace's 1880 novel has been re-written for a contemporary readership by Carol Wallace, the original writer's great-great grand-daughter. UK and European rights have been acquired by *Lion Fiction*.

Film-related resources for churches and other groups are available from *Damaris Media* at <http://benhur.damarismedia.com>

MARY JONES WORLD

Mary Jones World is a new visitor centre which tells the story of Mary Jones, the fifteen year old girl whose long walk to obtain a copy of the Bible in Welsh helped to inspire the formation of the *Bible Society*.

Located in the historic *St. Bueno's Church* in Gwynedd, North Wales, off the A494 on the edge of Llyn Tegid and one mile south of Bala High Street, *Mary Jones World* tells the story of Mary Jones and the impact of the world's best-selling book on Wales and the world.

The Centre provides interactive displays, videos, exhibits and artefacts, and "*hands-on activities*" for adults and children.

The Centre is open from late March - late October and you can obtain more information from www.bydmaryjonesworld.org.uk
Tel. 0808 1784 909.

Most CLIS members live too far away from Llyn Tegid to make an organised visit feasible, but if any individual members visit the Centre I would be pleased to have their reports for ***Christian Librarian***.

STRANGE AND TWISTED PILGRIMAGE

Members of the *Christian Arts Centre Group* met at the *London Institute for Contemporary Christianity* on Saturday 14 May 2016 to commemorate the centenary of the birth of the

celebrated Christian poet **Jack Clemo** (1916 – 1994).

The proceedings began with a rare showing of ***A Different Drummer***, Norman Stone's 1980 television film on the early life of Clemo.

A Different Drummer re-enacts Clemo's early life in the seclusion of the Cornish china clay mining district, the son of a devout Methodist mother and a father with few spiritual inclinations. The film tells the story of Clemo's "*strange and twisted pilgrimage*", his struggles against the "*dark shadow of a bad heredity*", his experience of blindness and deafness which afflicted him for most of his adult life, his conversion to Christian orthodoxy after a period of "*natural mysticism*" and the beginnings of his literary career.

In a talkback session, Norman Stone described the process of making this drama/documentary on the limited budget provided by the BBC's religious programmes department.

Cleomo's biographer Luke Thompson explained that he had been brought up in the same clay mining landscape described in Clemo's early poetry and had been drawn to research Clemo's story by a sense that aspects of the poet's story had never been

told. He suggested that Clemo's writings "*revealed and withheld*" information at the same time. He was aware of a tension between the "*fulfilled believer*" presented in Clemo's published works and the anguished individual revealed in his diaries who believed in supernatural healing but had not experienced it.

Luke had also been intrigued by Clemo's three main themes of "*sex, faith and love*".

He noted that Clemo had been part of the literary mainstream in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, with major writers championing his work, but that he had fallen out of fashion in later years and was often assumed to be of only Christian and Cornish interest.

Luke then took part in a discussion panel with writer and broadcaster Tony Jasper and contemporary poets Stewart Henderson and Steve Turner.

Exploring the reasons for the decline in Clemo's literary reputation it was suggested that this had occurred at a time when publishers were dropping poets from their lists. Clemo's move away from his native Cornwall and changes in his subject matter may have also been contributing factors. However, it was pointed out that poets often have their seasons but are re-discovered at

a later date.

It was suggested that Luke's biography might play a part in re-establishing Clemo's reputation in the literary mainstream.

Stewart Henderson said that he had first been drawn to Jack Clemo by the writer's "*dark mysticism*" and it was noted that Rowan Williams had described Clemo as one of our most "*uncomfortable poets*".

The afternoon continued with the announcement of the winner of the 2016 *Jack Clemo Centenary Poetry Competition*. The three shortlisted entries covered such topics as prayer, the resurrection and Christian conversion and the winner was declared to be Alwyn Marriage with her poem *Transition*. The prizes were presented by the Rt. Rev. Tim Thornton, Bishop of Truro, who brought the day to a close with some concluding remarks.

Luke Thompson's ***Clay Phoenix: a biography of Jack Clemo*** (Ally Press, £15.00, ISBN 978-0993473494) is now available. Some of Clemo's poems have been set to music by the folk singer Jim Causley on his album ***The Clay Hymnal*** – for more details see <https://jimcausley.bandcamp.com/album/the-clay-hymnal>

Information about the *Arts Centre Group* is available from Colin Burns, c/o *Paintings in Hospitals*, 1st Floor, 51 Southwark Street, London, SE1 1RU. E mail info@artscentregroup.org.uk

“YES!” TO LIBRARY DONATIONS

For the first time this year the *Christian Resources Exhibition International*, held at London's *ExCel Centre* between **17-20 May 2016**, included a Christian book fair showcasing titles from various Christian publishers.

On Tuesday 17 May, ***Songs of Praise*** presenter **Pam Rhodes** officially opened both the main exhibition and the book fair. Stressing the importance of new technology in getting the Christian message across Pam noted that printed books are still as popular as ever.

The morning continued with the 2016 *Christian Book Awards*, sponsored by the *Christian Book Promotion Trust's Speaking Volumes* library scheme.

This year's awards were presented by TV Vicar, the Rev.

Kate Bottley, who serves as the incumbent of three parishes in the North of England and is also a college chaplain.

Kate first attracted wider attention when her display of breakdancing at the close of a church wedding service went viral on the Internet. This led to her becoming a regular participant in *Channel Four's* BAFTA award winning **Gogglebox** programme and to her giving talks for *Radio Two's* **Pause for Thought**. She also presented BBC1's Good Friday documentary on Judas Iscariot. She wrote recently in the **Radio Times** that her appearances in the media have led to more conversations about the Christian faith than any of her sermons!

Despite describing herself as a “*running around shouting in the playground*” person rather than a “*silence in the library*” person she gave an unequivocal “yes!” to the value of donating good Christian books to library collections.

Paula Renouf, Director of *Speaking Volumes*, briefly introduced the scheme which gives grants to enable Christian books to be placed in public and school libraries, community centres, care homes, churches and other places where they can

be borrowed and enjoyed.

Books considered for the book awards were nominated by publishers and members of the public and a shortlist drawn up by a panel (including CLIS Life Vice-President Margaret Keeling). The final choice of winners was made by public voting via the SV web site.

The winning book in the adult category was announced to be ***The Shed that Fed A Million Children*** by Magnus Farlane-Barrow, (William Collins, £8.99, ISBN 978-0007578313), the story of *Mary's Meals*, a global charity that now feeds over 800,000 children a day.

The winning children's title was ***The One O'Clock Miracle***, by Alison Mitchell and Catalina Echevern, a re-telling of the story of Jesus healing the official's son from John 4.

The shortlists for both awards were exceptionally strong this time. The adult list also included ***Joy***, Abigail Santamaria's biography of C.S. Lewis' wife Joy Davidman (SPCK, £19.99, ISBN 978-0281074273), and ***Filthy Rich***, by the *Evangelical Alliance's* Manoj Raithatha (Monarch, £8.99, ISBN 978-0857215901) which tells the

story of his Christian conversion following the collapse of his property development business in the 2008 financial crisis.

The children's list included no less than two separate titles by the master storyteller Bob Hartman.

The Book Fair included talks by other well known Christian writers. On the day I attended **Pam Rhodes** spoke about her books on hymns and her fiction series on church life. She has recently added a fourth title to her "*Fisher of Men*" series. In ***Saints and Sailors*** (Lion Fiction, £7.99, ISBN 978-1782641568) some of the characters go on a cruise around the coast of Britain visiting places of Celtic Christian interest.

Simon Parke gave a talk on crime fiction. His latest title is ***A (Very) Public School Murder*** (Marylebone House, £8.99, ISBN 978-1910674345) featuring the latest in a long line of clerical detectives, Abbot Peter.

You can obtain more information about the *Speaking Volumes* scheme from Paula Renouf, P.O. Box 1070, Whittlesford, Cambridgeshire, CB22 4WX. Web site www.speakingvolumes.org.uk

Information about the *Christian Resources Exhibition* is available from CRE, Trinity Business Centre, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon, SN5 7DG. Web site www.creonline.co.uk

TRUSTEE WANTED

The trustees of the *Christian Book Promotion Trust*, sponsors of the *Speaking Volumes* scheme and the *UK Christian Book Awards*, are interested in appointing an additional trustee. The ideal candidate might be someone currently working in the public or school library service and aware of current trends in the profession and book world.

The Trust is made up of people from all areas of the Christian book profession, such as bookselling, librarianship, publishing and printing. It is independent of any publisher and aims to represent the spectrum of Christian faith.

As a trustee there is no salary but all expenses are covered. The Trust meets three times a year and trustees are involved in approving budgets and communications from the Trust and other significant policy

or managerial decisions. An ability to provide input into the *Speaking Volumes* book list, and the shortlist for the book awards, is highly desirable.

If you are interested in becoming a trustee your name will be put forward at the next meeting. If you are invited to become a trustee you will need to provide personal references and a CV. You will then be invited to the next meeting to observe. After this you may decide if this is definitely your calling, and, if so, will be voted onto the Trust.

For further information please contact the Trust's Director, Paula Renouf, at the address above.

SHAKESPEARE ANNIVERSARY

Saturday 23 April 2016 was not only the date of the LCF/CLIS fortieth anniversary conference but also St. George's Day and the four hundredth anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare.

Actor **Lance Pierson**, a member of the *Arts Centre Group*, has been marking the Shakespeare anniversary by leading walking tours of London

which take in many of the sites associated with the famous playwright.

The tour visits the original sites of the *Globe* and *Blackfriars* theatres, two houses where the Bard lived, and the very spot where it is believed that ***Othello***, ***King Lear*** and ***Macbeth*** were written.

Further tours are to be held on **Saturday 24 September** and **Saturday 8 October 2016** and you can obtain more information from shows@lancepierson.org

Peter Berry, who has arranged past walking tours for members of LCF/CLIS, is leading a *Shakespeare in Oxford* tour each Friday afternoon until 28 October 2016. This will visit the places where Shakespeare stayed with his players, including the location where ***Hamlet*** was first performed. There will also be an opportunity to see the Elizabethan murals in the twelfth century inn frequented by Shakespeare.

You can obtain information about the Shakespeare tour, and Peter Berry's *Literary* and *Inklings* walking tours of Oxford, from *Blackwell's Bookshop*, tel. 01865 333602, or e-mail oxford@blackwells.co.uk

CURRENT AWARENESS

- Shakespeare Joined by Successors at Bloxham reports on the Bloxham Festival of Faith and Literature held from 19-21 February 2016.

The festival marked the four hundredth anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare. According to speaker Alison Shell it is difficult to pin down Shakespeare's own religious convictions. Some readers see him as profoundly religious while others view him as profoundly secular. The speaker sees him as a secular playwright who disliked religious arguments and was more comfortable with private religion than religion in the public sphere.

Salley Vickers read from her book *The Boy Who Could See Death* (Penguin, £8.99, ISBN 978-0241972465) which includes a short story based on William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*.

Novelist Kate Charles queried why crime novels with church backgrounds are enduringly popular. She thinks that it has something to do with the concept of sacred and profane as flipsides of the same coin. Crime novels continue to inhabit a moral universe and, in particular,

the enclosed world of cathedrals provides a rich breeding ground for murder.

Novelist Catherine Fox explained that she had pondered how to write as a Christian. "*Should you convert all your characters at the end? Are there subjects you shouldn't touch?*". However, she wants her books to hold their own in the secular market. Catherine is happy to be described as an Evangelical Christian but believes that the word Evangelical needs '*unpacking*' these days.

Later, Catherine Fox chaired a panel which discussed a forthcoming book of essays on prominent women writers who were Anglicans. These included Charlotte Bronte, Barbara Pym, Elizabeth Goudge and P.D. James.

Christian Librarian subscriber Canon David Winter was interviewed about *At the End of the Day* (Bible Reading Fellowship, £6.99, ISBN 978-0857460578), his book on old age, and spoke about acceptance of death and peace about what would come next.

The report, by Paul Handley, Pat Ashworth, and Madeleine Davies, appears in the *Church Times* for 26 February 2016, pp. 34-36.

- Further speculation on the religious beliefs of William Shakespeare appears in Christopher Jackson's *Shakespeare's Uncertain Voyage*.

Shakespeare was outwardly Protestant, but could have been a committed Protestant, a secret Catholic or an atheist. His plays are mostly non-committal about religious belief.

Shakespeare wrote at a time when the Reformation had overthrown many of the certainties of medieval Catholicism. His plays are full of old questions given new urgency: What is man? What is love? Should I fear death? The play *Hamlet* is set in a world where the universe is being so questioned that God's very existence is at issue.

There is, however, a change of emphasis in later plays such as *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* which stress reconciliation, forgiveness and the possibility of redemption.

The article appears in *Third Way*, April 2016, pp. 16-19.

- Katherine Swartz studies the lives and works of female Anglican novelists in *In Their Own Words*. She begins her survey with Jane Austen and the Bronte sisters, in each case the

daughters of Anglican clergy, before moving on to more recent writers.

Dorothy L. Sayers was another daughter of a clergyman and wrote on theology, education, and the integration of Christian doctrine with human creation. She is best known for her Lord Peter Wimsey detective novels and believed that the detective mystery, with its quest for truth, aligns closely with the great Christian mystery.

P.D. James was another writer of detective stories though her novel *The Children of Men* (Faber, £8.99, ISBN 978-0571253418), set in a dystopian future, is the most overtly Christian of her works.

Elizabeth Goudge's novel *The Rosemary Tree* (Hendrickson, £9.99, ISBN 978-1619706279) is, arguably, about the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Susan Howatch came to faith comparatively late in life and is well known for her *Starbridge* novels set in the Church of England.

The article appears in the *Church Times* for 12 February 2016, p. 18.

- There is a further

discussion of the works of Elizabeth Goudge in the article *A Novelist's Undervalued Gift* by Terence Handley McMath.

Born in 1900 Elizabeth Goudge had published some twenty-five books by 1959. Her best known title is probably the children's story ***The Little White Horse*** (Lion, £5.99, ISBN 978-0745945781), praised by J.K. Rowling as one of her favourite books and an inspiration for the ***Harry Potter*** stories.

Goudge was also an able theologian and was commended as "a writer of immensely popular romances which are at the same time fundamentally religious". She did not aim to preach but wove the love of God, the power of prayer, and the Kingdom of the Spirit into the fabric of her stories.

Goudge wrote both historical fiction - such as ***The White Witch*** (Hodder, 1958), a tale of the conflict between good and evil featuring witches, folk religion and herbal lore – and contemporary novels. The latter include ***The Scent of Water*** (Hendrickson, £8.99, ISBN 978-1598568417), the title of which is an allusion to the Book of Job.

The article appears in the ***Church Times*** for 18 March 2016, pp. 27-28.

- *The Woman Who Turned Risen Into a Novel* profiles the work of Angela Hunt, who recently wrote a novelisation of the film ***Risen***.

Risen, shown in cinemas before Easter, told the story of a sceptical Roman officer ordered by Pilate to investigate the disappearance of the body of Jesus. His investigations led him to the conclusion that Jesus had truly risen from the dead.

Basing her novel on the original screenplay Angela Hunt added material and characters to add substance to the original storyline.

Risen is published by Bethany House, £8.99, ISBN 978-0764218842. The article appears in the ***Church of England Newspaper***, 1 April 2016, p. 16.

- Alister McGrath explains the importance of story-telling in *Narnia: why stories matter* claiming that most people would prefer to listen to a well-crafted story than a long and complicated argument.

There has been a change in our culture away from the rational analysis of texts and towards reflecting on images and stories. C.S. Lewis anticipated this trend, decades ago, when he wrote his

popular ***Chronicles of Narnia*** series for children.

Lewis decided to re-tell the Christian story in a way that would use the imagination as a gateway to the soul. In conventional apologetics the method was the opposite: to show that Christianity was true, and then persuade people that it was relevant.

The article appears in the April/May 2016 issue of ***Premier Childrenswork***, pp. 16-19.

- Dawn Sinclair's article *The History of William Collins* provides an account of a well established publishing house.

The original William Collins founded the company in 1819 in Glasgow. Its first author was Thomas Chalmers, a leading churchman of the day. In the early years the company published hymn and prayer books and religious tracts. In 1839 Collins acquired a licence to publish the Bible.

William Collins himself was not only a shrewd business man but a philanthropist, a founder of Sunday schools, and a leading figure in the temperance movement.

The company expanded over the following decades

moving into other fields of publishing, including education, and establishing itself as an international publisher.

In the 1950s Collins acquired the publisher Geoffrey Bles, thus securing the publishing rights to books by William Barclay, Teilhard de Chardin, and C.S. Lewis.

Lady Pierre Collins was an important figure in the company from the 1950s – 1970s and ensured that religious publishing remained strong. The Fontana imprint was launched under her guidance in 1954 and was later succeeded by the Fount imprint for religious titles.

In 2016 William Collins is an imprint of *HarperCollins Publishers* along with *Thomas Nelson* and *Zondervan*.

The article appears in ***Together***, May/June 2016, pp. 30-31.

- The March/April issue of the book trade magazine ***Together*** includes two articles on Christian fiction.

In *Excellent Christian Fiction* (pp. 26-27) our past speaker Tony Collins explains that fiction by Christians can make a contribution by “sowing the seed” of the Christian faith.

Good fiction, however, cannot be dogmatic or doctrinaire. The truth it conveys is more profound than stances or principles.

Fifty novels have been published since the launch of the *Lion Fiction* imprint in 2013. Notable titles include Mel Starr's medieval whodunits and Penelope Wilcock's ***The Hawk and the Dove*** series, set in a Yorkshire monastery.

Carole Burrow, in *Classy, Churchy, Chick-Lit* (p.17) encourages Christian booksellers to consider stocking some 'secular' fiction alongside Christian novels. The article mentions contemporary authors such as Kate Charles, Fiona Veitch Smith, Catherine Fox, Pam Rhodes and Donna Fletcher Crow as well as classic writers like Dorothy L. Sayers, G.K. Chesterton and Lloyd C. Douglas.

In the same issue CLIS President and "closet librarian" Eddie Olliffe contributes *A Glance at the Library Crisis ... and those pesky bestseller charts* (p. 48) He considers current threats to the public library service noting that library funding was reduced in 2015 by £50m. and that one hundred and six libraries were closed in the financial year ending April 2015. The second part of the article considers difficulties experienced in compiling accurate best-seller

lists for Christian books.

- Recent BBC research on public libraries makes sobering reading.

This reveals that during the past six years some 343 libraries in England have closed. A further 111 closures are planned for this year. The number of paid staff in libraries fell from 31,977 in 2010 to 24,044 now, a drop of 25%. A further 174 libraries have been transferred to community groups, while fifty have been handed to external organisations.

You can read the BBC report at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-35707956>

EBSCO PUBLISHING

Christians in Library and Information Services has an electronic licensing relationship with *EBSCO Publishing*, "the world's most prolific aggregator of full text journals, magazines and other sources". The full texts of our two main publications - the **E-Newsletter** and **Christian Librarian** - are available on *EBSCO Publishing's* databases. Subscribers are able to retrieve articles from our publications and CLIS will receive a small commission for each article.

FORTY YEARS AND COUNTING

DIANA GUTHRIE reports on the CLIS Annual Conference held on Saturday 23 April 2016, at the *Salvation Army's* Regent Hall, London

Those of you who weren't able to join us at the Annual Conference missed a most enjoyable occasion, with exceptionally interesting talks in a pleasant venue, and the opportunity of catching up with old friends.

The day began with a settling of our thoughts as Karen Hans led a time of worship, with readings from the Psalms and the Epistle to the Romans, and the enthusiastic singing of some popular Christian songs, accompanied by Robert Foster on the keyboard.

The rest of the formal part of the Conference consisted of two talks, the first being '*Doing God: ten years and counting*' – a fascinating presentation by Nick Spencer of *Theos*, the Christian think-tank which has been researching and publishing information about the place of religion in public life for the last ten years.

Nick showed us some surprising statistics which challenged received views about religion in the UK. We need to distinguish between church affiliation and church attendance, and one of *Theos'* conclusions is that more people are now claiming '*no religious affiliation*', rather than settling for '*C of E*' as in previous centuries. The rather depressing UK statistics on church attendance tend to be based on Anglicanism, but it has long been known that other expressions of Christianity are growing, often at the expense of the established church. But whatever the statistics, religion cannot be sidelined as moribund, as immigration

and globalisation are bringing in strong, though not necessarily Christian, religious influences.

Many people who wouldn't consider themselves 'religious' have some sort of belief system, often very ill-defined; many people occasionally pray. But this is much less of a communal activity than in the past. They don't want to commit themselves, even though commitment might give them greater purpose in life and the sense of being part of a community. Many distrust institutions, although two-thirds of people surveyed would trust their neighbours. Similarly, many distrust formal expressions of Christianity, but would trust individual Christians.

Nick finished by listing six responses to the role played by religion in the UK today:

- Empirical – knowing what role religion plays in public life
- Historical – much of public life has grown out

of religious beliefs, and the Bible has been the single most influential document

Normative – human values are deeply rooted in Christianity

Legal – society is being increasingly governed by law

Theological – if we engage in public life we must take our faith in with us

Practical – action is the *lingua franca*.

After lunch it was the turn of Will Morris to speak to us; his day job is with *General Electric*, but he is also part of the clergy team at *St Martin-in-the-Fields* in Trafalgar Square, and he spoke to us on 'What does it really mean to be a Christian in the workplace?'

He began by describing his journey from a quiet, lifelong belief in Jesus to a reluctant acceptance of God's call to be first a (lay) reader then an ordained minister in the Anglican church. His 'light-bulb' moment came when he heard

someone talking about integrating one's faith with one's life and then helping others do the same. Eventually he found himself at *St Martin-in-the-Fields* in a part-time post focusing on faith and workplace issues, a role he's still in.

God is interested in all of his creation, and he created the world of work. We're told in the Bible that at the end of time, everything will be made perfect, not just our spiritual lives – '*a new heaven and a new earth*'. We are called to work with God towards the perfect creation, and that includes the world of work. It may be a struggle to find God in some jobs, but it is necessary to find something that will push the work towards the perfection of creation. Witnessing can be as much about doing or not doing as about speaking, and even a hostile workplace can offer space for acts of kindness. Churches should be enabling people to work towards this, but if their focus is on the form of worship or the building, that gets in the way of bringing God to those

outside.

How do we Christians find answers to, for instance, ethical challenges at work? Nick suggests that we work out for ourselves which are our core beliefs, and what we are prepared to negotiate on; we can witness by being prepared to absorb pettiness. We can usually let people know our beliefs in an unobtrusive way.

At this point we broke up for tea and a lovely cake, made especially for LCF/CLIS' fortieth birthday and which displayed our new logo. We then gathered again for a questions and comments session.

In reply to a question about compartmentalised Christianity (where our beliefs are kept in our private lives) and finding support in the wider world, Will said that support systems have greatly changed, there being lots of new ways of keeping in touch with fellow Christians through IT. But face-to-face contact still plays an important role, especially for older people.

In reply to a comment

that some Christian organisations foster the notion that working for money is somehow less worthy by their use of poor employment policies, Will replied that we can make something sacramental of our work whoever we work for, but Christian organisations should treat their workers properly and pay a decent living-wage – people need spiritual and physical food!

Striking, or insisting on the right to wear a cross – are these rather futile stands? Will replied that one can make a stand, but it is almost always better to sort out differences before the legal profession is called in, as once a case goes to court only one party can win. And whatever the outcome, who is the real winner? Is it Christianity? Righteousness can tip into self-righteousness. There should be grace in all things.

One member of the audience remarked that a building he'd worked in seemed to become a much

better place to work in after some Christians had prayed for each part of the building.

Elizabeth Barber, one of the LCF's founding members, gave the vote of thanks not only to the two speakers but also to the many people who'd been involved in organising such an enjoyable Conference; she felt that we were all wearing the same armour and standing together for the Lord.

Diana Guthrie, MA, serves on the executive committee of *Christians in Library and Information Services* as Treasurer.

CLIS

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Minutes of the Meeting
held on Saturday 23
April 2016 at the Regent
Hall, 275 Oxford Street,
London W1C 2DJ**

The meeting was chaired by the CLIS Life Vice-President, Margaret Keeling, in the absence of the President due to illness.

Fortieth anniversary greetings were read from representatives of library and Christian organisations including the *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals* and the *Evangelical Alliance*.

Apologies for absence were received from Mary Barker, Derek Fawcett,

Gordon Harris, Anne MacRitchie, Eddie Olliffe Elizabeth Pool, Daniel Olorunkosebi (who sent greetings from Nigeria) and John Wickenden.

Acceptance of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 19 April 2015 was proposed by Janice Paine, seconded by Robert Foster and agreed by the meeting with no matters arising

Robert Foster presented an annual report for 2015-16 on behalf of the Chair and Secretary.

The Secretary, Graham Hedges, had been in hospital early in the year and had subsequently been unable to attend meetings. This had led the executive committee to deliberate on the future role of the Secretary.

Major events during the year had included the annual conference in Leicester and the annual lecture in Salisbury. Visits had been organised to *Book Aid, Spurgeon's College* library and the library of *Sarum College*.

The report concluded with a prayer of thanksgiving for a member, Pamela Jackson, who had died in early 2016.

Diana Guthrie presented annual accounts for the years 2014 and 2015.

It was reported that, in 2014, income had amounted to £6006.54 and total expenditure had been £7343.01, leaving a deficit on the year of £1336.47. A balance of £6802.07 had been brought forward from 2013, leaving a closing balance on 31 December 2014 of £5465.60.

A large deficit had been expected in 2014 as additional funds had been needed to re-launch the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship as Christians in Library and Information Services*. There had been a generous donation of £1000 towards these expenses.

In 2015 total income had been £4537.87 and total expenditure had been £4801.11, leaving a deficit of

£263.24. The balance brought forward from 2014 had been £5465.60 leaving a closing balance on 31 December 2015 of £5202.36.

Diana explained that a change of Treasurer in 2015 had been fraught with problems including the loss of some supporting documentation. It had been impossible to be as accurate as she would have liked, particularly in regard to the 2014 figures, and there was a discrepancy between the closing balances (according to the ledgers) and the total assets known to be held. Fortunately, the real situation was slightly more favourable than the paper one. Solving this puzzle would be one of the Treasurer's tasks in 2016.

Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Richard Waller, seconded by Sylvia Allaway, and agreed by the meeting. Thanks were expressed to Diana and other members of the committee.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Since there was only one candidate for each committee position no election was held but the following candidates were declared to have been appointed.

President: Eddie Olliffe
Proposed by: Executive Committee

Publications Editor: Graham Hedges
Proposed by: Janet Danels and Kim Walker

Membership Secretary: Janice Paine
Proposed by Annabel Haycraft and Andrew Parker

Scottish Secretary: Anne MacRitchie
Proposed by Myrtle Anderson-Smith and Moira Mitchell

Prayer Secretary: Karen Hans
Proposed by: Diana Guthrie and Mary Wood.

It was noted that no nominations had been received for the position of

Committee Secretary. Graham Hedges would continue in his present role until the next committee meeting, when the matter would be discussed further. It was possible that he would continue as Secretary if other members took over responsibility for organising major events.

Vacancies currently existed for an Events Manager, Recruitment Secretary and two Members Without Portfolio.

Philip Hayworth suggested that the committee might consider inviting the Rev. Clifford Hill to speak at a future meeting and that the Rev. Robert Crompton might be invited to make a return appearance.

Graham Hedges announced a number of forthcoming activities planned for the remainder of the year.

There was no further business and the Annual General Meeting was declared closed.

UCCF

UNCOVERED

DEREK JOWETT reports on a recent visit by CLIS members to *UCCF: The Christian Unions*

On Friday 20th May 2016 six members of CLIS met in Oxford, a city we are now familiar with, to visit the headquarters of UCCF, the *Universities' and Colleges' Christian Fellowship*. We first had our usual excellent lunch in the *Mitre* Hotel (we ought to qualify for a discount as one of their regular patrons!), joined by two of our hosts from UCCF, Kat Luke and Brian Weaver.

We then proceeded to Blue Boar House, the headquarters of UCCF and also of IFES, the *International Fellowship of Evangelical Students*. The building is partly recent and partly historic, that part being formerly the '*Sherriff's House*'

belonging to *Oxford City Council*, although very little of the original could be seen on the inside. The accommodation certainly provided a bright and modern environment for the offices and meeting rooms of the organisations. UCCF and IFES in fact only moved to Oxford in 2012, having formerly been lodged for many years in Leicester, and before that in Bedford Square, London.

Many members of CLIS will be acquainted with UCCF from membership of Christian Unions in their student days, although for most of us it was then called IVF, the *Inter-Varsity Fellowship*! After its beginnings in 1919, IVF was formally constituted in 1928, the main founding members being the Oxford and Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Unions, although the earliest known Christian Union was Aberdeen in 1755!

A tour of the building revealed that many of the rooms are named after well-known figures in the history of UCCF. Appropriately the kitchen and eating area is known as *Grubb's* - after

Norman Grubb of course! The library is called *Uncle John's*, and a nearby office is *The Doctor's Office*; those who know their evangelical writers will recognise the familiar names of John Stott and Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

Perhaps not surprisingly the group spent a considerable amount of time in the library; this is a joint library owned by UCCF and IFES, and by Brian's own admission, as well as the groups' casting a quick professional eye, is in need of some care and organisation. The library is quite well stocked, particularly of course with IVP publications (IVP being formerly the publishing arm of UCCF, now independent and in partnership with SPCK), but had no organised cataloguing or borrowing system - not a computer in sight! The group was able to make several impromptu suggestions, and we offered more formal help if required. We also looked at the archives, which comprised just about everything from individual CU minute books to photographs of conferences and events,

also in need of some organisation and cataloguing.

Over a welcome cup of tea, we then heard about some of UCCF's recent initiatives. One of the most successful is '*Uncover*', a version of John's Gospel in the NIV with comments and questions for thought and discussion; many students use this individually with enquiring friends, as well as its being a basis for seeker Bible studies. It has been translated into twenty languages, and we saw a copy of the Chinese version which has proved extremely valuable in opening up the Christian message for students from China. Another useful series is the '*bethinking*' series of booklets on difficult questions, and we were given copies of veteran author Michael Green's ***Jesus for Sceptics*** in that series.

'*Forum*', the regular training event for CU leaders at the *Quinta Centre* in Shropshire, now has an attendance of over a thousand, and caters for those in a wide variety of leadership and planning roles

in Christian Unions. UCCF is now planning to develop training resources for fourteen to eighteen year olds, so that they are prepared for life as a Christian when they come to further education.

We had some discussion on opportunities and challenges facing Christian students today, often a different world from the one we remember as students! Many of us use the UCCF prayer calendar to ensure we pray regularly for witness in universities and colleges, and we were able to give feedback and useful suggestions to Grace Kinneard who oversees that publication.

We were encouraged to hear that things have moved on from the situation a few years ago when several CUs were disaffiliated by their parent Student Unions because of their perceived '*exclusiveness*'. Now Christian Unions often win awards for being the best society for welcoming newcomers. There seems to be more tolerance in listening to different viewpoints, and

this can work in favour of students being open to enquire about and investigate the claims of Christianity. CUs can provide a '*safe space*' for students of other faiths and none, in particular those from Muslim countries, to find out exactly what the Christian gospel is about.

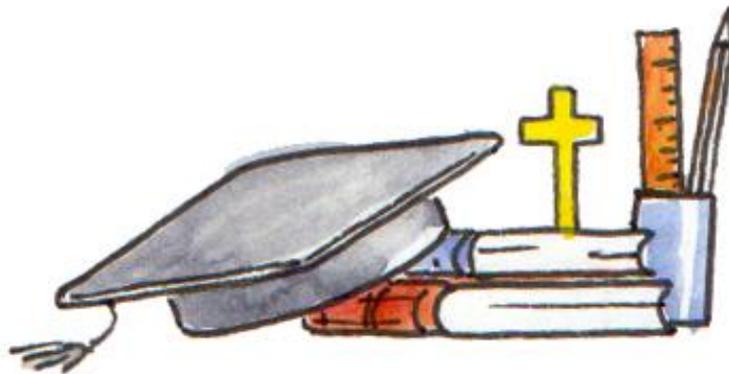
The afternoon proved extremely informative, and we are very grateful to our hosts, Kat, Grace and Brian for their welcome, and giving us a better insight into how we can support Christian students today in their fellowship and witness.

Derek Jowett, BA, is a retired librarian living in Stroud, Gloucestershire.

OBITUARY

GRAHAM HEDGES pays tribute to a leading figure in the early and later history of the Librarians' Christian Fellowship (now CLIS)

DR. JOHN ANDREWS REMEMBERED



We are sorry to announce the passing of our Life Vice-President, **John S. Andrews**, MA, PHD, MCLIP, who died on Thursday 19 May 2016, aged eighty-nine, after a short illness.

John was the second (and longest serving) President of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* (as we were) and served in this role from 1982-1997. Prior to his election as President he had been a Vice-President, and he became a Life Vice-President after retiring from the presidential role.

Before, during and after his presidency John wrote many articles for our magazines and I remember that on occasions when I was short of material an unexpected article from John would arrive suddenly in the post, thus filling a large gap in the next issue. He chaired many of our annual conferences and annual lectures and played a major role in preparing and leading the services of thanksgiving that we organised for many years as part of the conferences of the *Library Association* (now CILIP).

John joined our Fellowship at a very early stage and was present at our first Conference in 1976. He took a great interest in our Fellowship and attended many meetings, usually with his wife Penelope, often staying overnight in order to do so. He spoke to our 1979 conference on the life of the scholar and librarian Sir Frederic Kenyon and to our 1982 Scottish conference on the social responsibility of the Christian librarian. He was a great source of encouragement and inspiration.

Before his retirement John served as Sub-Librarian of the *University of Lancaster* from 1968-1989. Prior to that he had been Assistant Librarian at the *Brotherton Library* in Leeds (1954-1963) and Sub-Librarian in charge of the *Institute of Education Library* (1963-68).

Highlights of John's career at Lancaster included building up a special collection of Quaker materials and selecting books from the collection of the late Rev. Alec Vidler, a leading Anglo-Catholic theologian.

John's PhD thesis on German hymns formed the basis of his book ***A Study of German Hymns in Current English Hymnals*** (Peter Lang, 1981). He had spent some time in Germany during two years of National Service and he was later

to return to that country as *British Council* Librarian (1971-1973) on secondment from Lancaster.

John was for many years a well known member of the Christian Brethren, although in later years he attended a local Baptist Church. His thanksgiving service was held at the *Lancaster Baptist Church* on Tuesday 31 May 2016. He was a man of wide sympathies and interests and his circle of acquaintances and friends included such people as the late New Testament scholar, Professor F.F. Bruce, who gave our annual lecture in 1982. He contributed to various books including the first edition of the Lion Handbook *The History of Christianity* where he wrote on church music.

Readers will wish to pray for Penelope Andrews and other members of his family at this sad time of loss. He had a son, Brian, six grand-daughters, and two great-grandsons.

I am sure that we would all echo a tribute to John by his friend and university colleague Graham Rand: "*John will be fondly remembered by ex-colleagues and former students for the depth and breadth of his knowledge, his gentle humour and his humanity. He will be greatly missed*". I am grateful to Graham for some of the information included in this obituary tribute.

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

ARTICLES

LOUIS HEMMINGS recalls a visit to the former *St. Deiniol's Library* (now re-named *Gladstone's Library*) to carry out two diverse research projects

A BAPTIST BIBLIOPHILE AND A QUEST FOR OLD BELIEVERS



I was working for the revived *Association for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge* St Ann's Book Centre, in St Ann's (Anglican) Church in Dublin. One of my key customers was Leslie Harris, a retired Baptist pastor, and book collector. I envied the books he ordered: Puritan biographies, Early Church History, Baptist history and some Irish historical and political interest titles also.

Before Leslie came in to collect and pay for his special orders, I would often quickly browse through his interesting books. As we became friends, I was regularly invited for tea, on Sunday afternoons. I admired his home-made library, housed in a garage, complete with naive

catalogue and numbering / subject system. When I went his home, more times than not, I left with a loaned book or two, recently sold by me to him ...

When Leslie heard that I intended a weekend visit to *St Deiniol's Residential Library*, he took note. That almost-secret library was left to the English nation by Gladstone, Victorian British Prime Minister, complete with building and bequest. It is situated in the Gladstone model estate village of Hawarden, near Chester.

Leslie asked, would I mind looking up items relating to the Cromwellian Dublin Baptists, who worshipped in Swift's Alley, Dublin. I agreed to do this, even though the aims of my visit were theologically quite very different. The purpose of my visit, originally had been to read up on the fascinating and stubborn sect called, *Russian Old Believers*, or Old Ritualists.

Old Believers eccentrically separated from the official *Russian Orthodox Church* having protested against trivial church reforms introduced by Patriarch Nikon of Moscow in the mid 1600s. They were hounded, many murdered, by the blood-thirsty Tsars and then, in turn, by the Soviet leaders.

Leslie intended to write a history of the Baptists in Dublin but died before that was accomplished. Nevertheless, our joint primary research was accessed by historian Kevin Herlihy, editor of ***The Irish Dissenting Tradition, 1650-1750***.

At *St. Deiniols* there are over 250,000 printed items on the open shelves. Much of what I wanted to read was archived in the gargantuan accordion-rail shelving system. What lent great appeal to this spurious, autodidactic “*scholar*” were its many nooks and crannies, old fashioned shelving and carels. Books could be read lit by green shaded lights.

After a few initial hours reading about the Old Believers, I decided to deal with Leslie Harris' Baptist history research request. Afterwards, I would then get back to the primary aim of my visit. Needless to say one piece of research led to another.... before I knew it, the whole long weekend had passed, and I was soon due to return to Dublin. It was frustrating not to have accomplished my own particular research purposes. However, I got generously refunded for all my expenses, by Leslie.

That unfinished library quest took place thirty-five years ago. I have

read up a bit more about the Old Believers since and watched a few *YouTube* television documentaries.

Much to my surprise, a recently befriended young Lithuanian granny, Tatjana Popova, turned out to be a cultural Old Believer. She could trace her Old Believer lineage back to Russia three hundred years previously. I was very impressed. When she heard that here in Ireland, was someone who actually knew about the Old Believers, she was equally impressed. We had personal meetings for language exchange: English for Tatjana, and Russian for me. Tatjana had the greater need, so the bias was on teaching her English.

Tatjana said that God must have sent me to her. She became one of my best friends. This secret Slav appreciated the fact that she was my only Russian friend in Ireland. We often talked about Old Believer customs and culture. Now I was learning about the Old Believers...from a direct descendant! She was a living, laughing book to this amateur historian and autodidact....

Old Believer and Firm New Friend

your Slavic-accented English sweet,
your grasp of grammar.....incomplete!
we have good fun every time we meet
- Old Believer and firm new friend....

Louis Hemmings is a poet and bookseller and the founder and proprietor of *Samovar Books*. *Gladstone's Library* is located at Church Lane, Hawarden, Flintshire, CH5 3PF – see www.gladstoneslibrary.org

The twentieth century was the most theologically fruitful since the sixteenth seeking to address a wide range of issues, both systematic and ethical. Such diversity of approach and topic presents the librarian with a peculiar set of challenges whose resolution is vital to non-academics seeking to broaden and deepen their Christian faith. KEVIN CAREY considers

THE ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIBRARIAN IN A THEOLOGICALLY TURBULENT AGE

The Christians in Library and Information Services Annual Public Lecture held on Saturday 17 October 2015 in the Gallery, First Floor, Salisbury Library, Market Place, Salisbury, SP1 1BL.

Introduction

"Never" to parody Winston Churchill on the Battle of Britain seventy years ago, "*have there been so many theologians writing so much for so few*" as there were in the twentieth century which was the most theologically productive century since the 16th Century Reformation.

Without giving comprehensive lists, but just a flavour from my particular theological interests, if the Roman Catholic Church had only produced any two of Maritainⁱ, de Lubacⁱⁱ, Rahnerⁱⁱⁱ, von Balthasar^{iv}, Kung^v, de Chardin^{vi} and Lonergan^{vii} during the twentieth century it should have thought itself lucky except, of course, that the Papacy had chronic problems with any theologian who was not at least a neo-Thomist. The Protestant and reformed sphere is dominated for entirely different reasons by the monumental Barthes^{viii} and the martyr Bonhoeffer^{ix} but then we also

have Tillich^x, Niebuhr^{xi} and Gunton^{xii}. There are, in addition, feminist theologians such as Tanner^{xiii}, Soskice^{xiv} and Soelle^{xv} and liberation theologians such as Boff^{xvi}. Then, of course, we have a whole class of theologians who span the spectrum from the esoteric to the populist such as N.T. (Tom) Wright^{xvii}, Nicholas Lash^{xviii}, Stanley Hauerwas^{xix}, Richard Burridge^{xx}, Paula Gooder^{xxi}, Gerard O'Collins^{xxii}, not to mention a succession of Archbishops of Canterbury, culminating with Rowan Williams^{xxiii}, one of the most productive and searching theologians of any age. The matter of numbers, of the "few" is only tangential to my topic as I don't measure the health of the Christian enterprise in terms of numbers, largely because I have a deep suspicion that the Holy Spirit doesn't. Indeed, if we believe that we are physical agents of Christ motivated by the Holy Spirit, it's an insult to the deity to talk in terms of decline, or growth, for that matter, as we are simply God's broken creatures, deliberately made so.

Outside our supposed decline, much of which is an expression of lazy, materialist wishful thinking, the only thing we are really known for is our obsession with sexual conduct or, to put it more forensically, genital conduct. We are, of course, partly to blame for this because ever since the arrival in Europe in the early 16th Century of sexually transmitted disease, which coincided with the Reformation and Counter Reformation, we have, for a variety of reasons, concentrated on private moral behaviour in general and genital behaviour in particular while largely ignoring public behaviour in general and economic behaviour in particular. We have concentrated too much on Pope Paul VI's *Humanae Vitae*^{xxiv} and not enough on Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the 21st Century*^{xxv}.

Even now, the Archbishop of Canterbury is planning a meeting of the Primates of the collapsing Anglican Communion this January^{xxvi} which will focus on human sexuality (primarily homosexuality) with additional items on religiously motivated violence, the protection of children and vulnerable adults (another issue raised by Western misbehaviour and the environment; nothing on the ownership of wealth and the distribution of income or the broader framework of social justice which might inform the debate on the refugee crisis which, incidentally, is their crisis, not ours. Meanwhile, although the Papacy has the corpus of Catholic Social Teaching to support its stance on justice, highlighted most sharply by Pope Francis^{xxvii}, it is still mired in the sterile - no pun intended - debates about the gender of clergy and whether they may marry. The Christian churches would be better off opting out of pronouncements on sexual/genital issues altogether as it largely did, in spite of Saint Augustine^{xxviii}, up until the Reformation. The use of private confession and

the clerical supervision of private morality was a strange bi-product, according to Garry Wills^{xxix}, of the power conferred on priests by their power of transubstantiation. But as there is no chance that the men will give up the power, we will have to wait for women to take over Western Christianity, as they surely will, recognising that all the ills of the Christian churches can be traced back, in one form or another, to the exercise of inordinate power.

So we, as Christian librarians (incidentally, I am a theologian who runs a church library, so presume to speak for both professions) will have to explain how things are because one of our jobs is to explain or at least find explanations we can recommend; but I think that the reason why Christianity is in numerical and influencing decline arises from three inter-related factors which I want to discuss in this lecture;

1. The misuse of metaphor
2. The decline of conversation
3. The flight from the collective

I then want to go on to consider how these three factors play into the concept of

4. God's purpose in creation

And the way these factors have come together in Christianity's catastrophic failure to understand:

5. Theodicy

I will then conclude, you will be relieved to hear, by making some positive suggestions about:

6. The use of language
7. The transition from stories to theology

The Misuse of Metaphor

To use the language of physics to represent a theological proposition is to make a fatally false claim: false because theology is not concerned with observable, empirical phenomena but with matters of faith whose object is a mystery, fatal because the categorical mistake involved, discredits our enterprise altogether. Much as we might quarrel with the massive freight of symbolism which Patristic and Medieval theologians loaded onto the Scriptural texts, at least they were extremely conscious of mystery and limitation. The major claims made for theology by Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas^{xxx} were underpinned by deep humility. Ever since the supposed '*enlightenment*' the humility has evaporated. Biblical studies, in particular, and notably on the so-called '*evangelical*' wing of Christianity has increasingly made claims based on Biblical texts as if they were in the same category as physics. Let me outline one fairly trivial and one massive claim.

The fairly trivial claim is to derive a doctrine of "*male headship*" on the basis of etiological commentary in Genesis 3.16. The passage is not prescriptive, it simply describes how things have become what they are; but even if you take it as prescriptive, it can only apply to the private circumstances of marriage; it simply can't be extrapolated, particularly if you think of the text literally, to mean the way that men and women behave in society, let alone in a church; the words simply are not strong enough to carry that meaning.

The much more substantive claim is that which refers to the way in which the death of Jesus was salvific. Saint Anselm's^{xxxi} speculations about penal substitution have, for some, become the only way of understanding the mystery of Christ's death, shutting the door to further discussion. I will return to this topic because it seems to me that if we could spend less energy discussing the mechanics of salvation we might have more energy to preach its benefits to a sceptical world.

Another consequence of this supposedly empirical approach to Biblical text is that material which is not empirically derived from it is rejected. Not long ago when I was discussing the Lectionary for August with a Priest I asked whether he preferred the Readings for the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady into heaven or the ordinary readings for that Sunday after Trinity. "*The ordinary*," was the reply. "*The Assumption isn't in the Bible, is it?*" Well, no it isn't in the Bible but it is a classically '*received*', organic, '*bottom up*' piece of doctrine recognised both in

Chartres Cathedral and the Cathedral in the Kremlin. The paradoxically *Sola Scriptura* argument can only be sustained if the readings are not confined to the literal, to the text as physics. The combination of *Sola Scriptura* and the empirical approach stultifies any notion of mystery but, much more problematic, it involves paring back much of the theological development of the last two millennia and asks the question: what's left? Nobody really committed to this approach could accept the Nicene^{xxxii} or the Athanasian^{xxxiii} Creeds.

But for the librarian, the issue isn't so much the theological inconsistency but the problem with language. You simply can't say to a punter, "*here's a book which will explain the Crucifixion*" in the way that you can say "*here's a book that explains gravity*". The category distinction is, except by faith, unbridgeable.

But to go further, it is precisely the empirical approach which puts us onto a sticky wicket with atheists. They may laugh us to scorn when we invoke mystery but when we don't they wipe the floor with us intellectually.

It is, then, bad enough getting horribly confused over "*male headship*" but getting into a muddle over salvation is catastrophic. Nowhere have we to be more careful with language than when we talk about the birth, death and Resurrection of Jesus and about the gift of his Sacraments. At both extremes of the Christian spectrum from Evangelical to Catholic, the claims are both unsustainable and outrageous in the way they are put. You cannot take the sum total of individual faiths and distil them into a general proposition; neither can you promulgate your particular proposition and impose it on the faith of others. The purpose of theological proposition is to find ways in human language to discuss the mystery of God so that we can mutually support each other in building the kingdom. Fundamentally for the Christian, the purpose of free speech, for language, is constructive. Its purpose is to expand dialogue and to include more people and more ideas. But to do that, the language has to make only modest claims; language, like everything else, is always deeply vulnerable to the sin of pride. Further, we might recall the incompleteness theorem of the greatest mathematician of the twentieth century, Kurt Gödel^{xxxiv}: the more complete a theorem the less universally applicable it is.

The argument over "*male headship*" has been almost farcical and although it has done some damage, the muddle over salvation has been much more damaging for Christ's mission because it has transformed the

Good News into an ethics code primarily concerned with genital activity. I will return to this in another guise later.

The Decline of Conversation

It may seem paradoxical to a generation like mine brought up under the rule of silence in libraries that the role of the librarian as a trusted intermediary is, like that of the theologian, not only to promote enquiry but also conversation. Nowhere is this more graphically illustrated than by the recent debate over the consecration of women as bishops where the key questions for both sides should have been the procedures for and the limits of organic theological development implicitly accepted by the Medieval Catholic Church and Protestant reformers. The very act of Reformation, although it claimed, like all great reforms, simply to restore what had been the ancient regime, was an organic theological development but there was surely some legitimacy in its claim that the Roman Catholic Church, not least over the presenting issue of Papal indulgences, had gone too far.

While Evangelicals claimed in the recent debate that the claim for women in the episcopate had taken that development too far, they never answered the question of what the limits of such development might be. Conversely, on the other side of the argument, there were no processes clearly set out for the legitimacy of evolution. Instead of the adherence to two, fixed, opposing, apparently incompatible propositions, there should have been room for dialogue, again, taking into account the limits of both positions imposed by the nature of theology itself which I mentioned earlier. There was also a third question which commanded insufficient attention, namely, the extent to which the Church of Christ must accept propositions of uniformity and the converse extent to which diversity is viable, not permissible, note, but viable. This particular question was reduced to the far less fruitful question of whether female consecration was a *'first'* or *'second order'* issue. The inference here is that *'first order'* issues were non-negotiable whereas *'second order'* issues were negotiable. Saint Paul would not have understood the question because he thought that unity was the predominant issue. This would not have been an issue were it not for the obvious fact that clergy, far from being servants, have evolved over time to hold positions of power. This was, fundamentally, an issue about power not service again, a point which would have left Saint Paul frothing at the mouth.

It is going too far to say that a conversational approach would have resolved the differences; the best it might have done might have been to work out a *Modus Vivendi* but, time and again, in all Christian denominations, the issue has too often been one of conformity which, in turn, is based on a theory of power. The more respectable way of looking at the disagreement is to say that the issue turned on the question of who has authority to determine the meaning of Scripture. Paradoxically, the Protestant and reformed tradition in the sixteenth century began with the proposition that it is for the individual to determine what Scripture means but this proved to be unsustainable in an authoritarian ecology. The notion that the meaning of Scripture was so clear that there could be no disagreement soon broke down but, here, surely, it was a case of not being able to see the wood of love for the doctrinal trees. It could be argued that the rot impregnated into Christianity by its adoption by the Emperor Constantine^{xxxv} reached its culmination in the 16th Century when secular princes established erastian settlements under the guise of theocratic piety.

In our society that tendency to withdraw from dialogue into mere assertion is plain for all to see and instead of being counter culturally generous, we have tended to buy into the culture, or lack of culture, of assertion. Nowhere is imagination more in demand than in the discussion of theological issues, not only imagining the position of the other but also in developing positions which have not yet been articulated. The theologian should be like an athlete testing the body to its limits so that if she is not out of breath when the tape is breasted, she hasn't run hard enough. The Greek obsession with dichotomy is strangling us as we struggle and fail to listen. Ultimately, theology is not a set of propositions mathematical, empirical or dogmatic, it is a language, a way of talking about things humbly, constructively and in a knowingly inadequate way. Again, we have been guilty of the sin of pride. Christianity must make room for enquiry but it is not an intellectual pursuit; as you know, it is enquiry in the context of faith which distinguishes theology from the philosophy of religion; and there is some irony, given how his text has been used since, that that formulation came from Saint Anselm of Canterbury.

I might also add here that although there are a mass of fascinating ecclesiological, ethical and systematic theological issues, they all need to be servants of the primary question to which we must always turn back: what must we do to establish the Kingdom on Earth as it is in Heaven? And, again, I will return to this but I need to make a slight diversion in the meantime.

The reason that the Creeds are, at best, incomplete, is that they were designed to answer questions that presented at the time, sometimes from people within the Church but often from outsiders. If, for example, we compare the key issues in the Creed with the key issues in the teaching of Jesus, we will see that the two hardly correspond. But because of their status, the Creeds have become non negotiable; it would take centuries to amend the Creeds if it could be done at all. What this leads us to, however, is a language of non negotiable proposition, made yet more rigid by the denial of its metaphorical nature. It was this kind of rigidity which caused the Great Schism of 1054^{xxxvi} because the Greek Church stuck to the formulation from the Council of Nicea^{xxxvii} that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father, whereas the Western Church, almost accidentally, slipped into the procession being from the Father and the Son. Now, I don't know about you, but I'm pretty relaxed about the mode of the '*procession*' of the Spirit if, indeed it was a procession at all. I wouldn't have engineered a schism for either position. I have illustrated the metaphor point already but, in this context, what I am arguing for is our ability to create our own propositional language, for ourselves, now, and for enquirers. I frequently wonder what a casual visitor to a Christian church on a Sunday morning would glean from the experience. We have trapped ourselves in an esoteric cocoon.

The proposition that the meaning of Scripture is at least problematic is nowhere better demonstrated than in the realm of Kingdom building where the response ranges from Christian socialism on the one hand to an extreme form of Evangelical economic liberalism on the other; and it is to this I now wish to turn.

The Flight from The Collective

One of the implicit themes in my presentation so far has been the evolution of Christianity from collective to individual concerns. We have seen this in the consideration of human behaviour where the emphasis on public sin in the Gospels and the writings of Saint Paul has given way, via the tariff system adopted in association with the Sacrament of Penance, or Reconciliation, to emphasis on private morality.

When I was growing up in a Roman Catholic convent school before Vatican II, I was almost suffocated by the emphasis on private morality, imposed through an ecology of guilt, whereas, at the same time, the

Roman Catholic Church was frightened almost to death by collectivist enterprises because they were identified with Stalinist, anti-religious "*Communism*" which had stretched its tentacles into Western Europe so that it clawed at the gates of the Vatican through the Communist party of Italy. Of course there were Christian Socialists and the history of the *Labour Party* bears witness to that, but such alignments were the exception to the rule. For all its merits, Vatican II was weak on the issue of social and economic justice for the poor; and the *Roman Catholic Church* only has itself to blame for the inconvenience, as it then saw it, of '*Liberation Theology*'. On the other hand, whether or not you buy the Weber^{xxxviii}/Tawney^{xxxix}/Fanfani^{xl} thesis of the relationship between Calvinism and capitalism or not, there has been little theoretical work in the Protestant and reformed tradition on the issues of social and economic justice and with the renewed vigour of church groups such as HTB^{xli} there has been a new economic conservative stimulus added to the *Church of England's* lazy conservatism. Yes, there was "*Faith in the City*"^{xlii} but one brave swallow doesn't make for a Summer of social and economic justice.

Not only the poor, but also institutional Christianity has paid a high price for this reticence. Our own emphasis on the individual and the private, as opposed to the collective and the public, has given atheists the legitimacy to propose that religion itself is simply the exercise of a private preference. This, in turn, has led to a new kind of '*Protestantism*' or '*Congregationalism*' based on private preference. My worry about this might seem to contradict my suspicion of imposed orthodoxy but the two positions are false for the same reason which is the obvious one that the opposite of orthodoxy and the opposite of private preference is the primacy of the linguistic, and even more so, the listening act. Again, and I do not apologise for repeating myself, this leads us to the core purpose of librarianship. When the motor car had just been invented, Henry Ford articulated the now famous proposition that if you had asked people at the end of the nineteenth century what they wanted by way of transport they would have asked for faster horses. Our job is to point out, in our own sphere, what the possibilities might be which people should consider outside their field of knowledge or their comfort zone. At the beginning of this lecture I noted the names of some of the twentieth century's great and/or populist theologians and I want to cite some instances of discovery that have informed my study, just to point up the possibilities:

- Henri de Lubac'sⁱⁱ re-formulation of the Body of Christ as being the People of God, an idea familiar in Saint Paul, to conform with that of Saint Augustine and to act as a counterweight to Aquinas's idea that the consecrated elements are the body of Christ, has given me a

critical insight into both the Church and the Eucharist

- Douglas Campbell's book on Romans taught me to see it as a dialogue between Paul and an adversary rather than a monologue which has revolutionised my understanding of it
- Tom Wright's careful but powerful language has focused me on the idea of "The Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven"
- Karl Rahner has opened the question of who is "saved"

Thus, my life in theology has become dynamic rather than static: I have left the Eucharistic comfort zone of Thomas Aquinas; come to terms with Romans; brought my Christian concern down to earth; and have begun to wonder whether all might be "saved".

Of all these subjects the one with which I am most engaged is the third, as my inclination, I admit, my temperament, you might say, or my propensity, has always been towards the collective. This has been reinforced by research which I undertook for my book: ***The Judas Church: An Obsession with Sex***^{xliii}, which demonstrates how much more concerned the Bible is with socio-economic justice than it is with genital matters. There is an instinctive secular suspicion that we have not done what we should in the public domain. In spite of the atheist tendency to want to relegate what we do to the private, and because of growing awareness, as the result of public sector cuts and the refugee crisis, Christianity has an obligation to be extrovert.

God's Purpose in Creation

Even a hermit who drinks from a well and gathers wild berries is subject to the depredations of our teeming world, if only because of air pollution. The idea that religion, in our case Christianity, can be separated from politics is preposterous, if not far-fetched but to make any sense of a social proposition we need to articulate the nature and reality of the "*good news*."

I am going to consider this theme briefly before looking at the train crash which has wrecked our chances of being good evangelists.

For any '*middle of the road*', average Christian, as opposed to those

on the wilder fringes, God is love; and God created the world in love; and God created us in love so that we could worship and love God and love each other freely. We were, Jesus said, to express this love in action not judgement. Indeed, on that last point when people ask "*what would Jesus do*", by which they almost always mean "*how would Jesus react*", the default answer is that he would have done nothing, which rather puts a damper on the judgement theme which is so prominent in some forms of Christianity which sound more like orthodox Judaism. But, anyway, the point is that the teaching of Jesus and the writers of the Epistles is characterised by uncalculated, non-contractual social action which is even more generous than the most generous provisions on gleaning and the Jubilee in the Book of Deuteronomy because it is non-contractual. In building the Kingdom on earth in love we are to be child-like, even, one might say, naive; we are goaded, if that is the right word, by the lilies of the field that neither toil nor spin and we are haunted - or at least I am - by my own possessions; every time I buy a new CD I wince; but I still buy it.

So, we have set out before us the clear, simple purposes of creation based on worship and love.

This is the shortest section of my talk because it's theoretically the simplest, but I now have to go on to the complication of theodicy.

Theodicy

If there is one subject, more than any other, more than Christian corruption, collusion with the rich, indifference to the poor, schism, torture and murder, smugness or arrogance - all the sins of which a human institution is capable - which has brought us low it is the issue of theodicy: why, we are continually asked, does a God whom we claim as love creating in love, allow infants to die of cancer, the innocent to suffer and the wicked to triumph? If we cannot answer this question coherently, at least in public perception terms, we are fatally handicapped in prosecuting Christ's mission.

You may well think that an excursion into this territory is slightly off my main theme but it is my contention that unless we find a way of talking about things that go wrong, to put it no more dramatically than that, we simply don't have a credible narrative.

It all goes back, as it must do, to the serpent in the garden tempting Eve as she stood before the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If we think that this story is reportage, then we have a narrative which says that evil somehow got into creation to subvert the good, which leaves us with the problem of where evil came from in the first place. Even if we define evil as an absence of God, rather than as a propulsive force, we still have the problem of where it came from. The idea of a "*war in heaven*" just won't do.

On the other hand, if we think that the story of the serpent is etiological, that it explains how things are what they are, then we have a much better chance of making sense of our world. I, somewhat heretically, think that if there was a serpent at all then God was speaking through it.

The reason for this apparently radical stance is that we can't love unless we have free will and we can't have free will in a perfect world; so human imperfection is intrinsic to the act of worshipping and loving freely. We are creatures, one might say, imprisoned by chronic choice; we can never get out of it.

Here is the beginning of the explanation of why things go wrong. As a Reader in my Parish I provide light touch supervision over those who lead the "*Prayers of the Faithful*" and it says a lot that almost all of these good people fall into calling these prayers "*intercessions*"; and my greatest problem is getting these people to stop asking God to do things 'he' has given us the equipment to do ourselves. For the past few weeks I have had to say: "*Until we do something constructive about the refugee crisis we really can't ask God to fix it; we can only ask him to give us the strength to fix it*". So the first part of the answer to those who ask why God allows bad things to happen is that many of the bad things are our fault.

That disposes of a great deal of misery but then there is the case of the infant who dies of cancer. This is slightly more difficult but we can still be coherent. We can, and I think we should, say that the world was not created to be perfect according to human ideas of perfection. As well as exercising socio-economic free will we also need to exercise the free will of compassion and empathy. This actually makes sufferers so special in the eyes of God because they perform a sacred function. But the difficult part of this argument is to explain that to suffer is not the sin but, rather, the sin is to cause or to be indifferent to suffering. So the question for the sceptics should not really be: "*Why does God allow bad things to happen*" but, rather, "*Why do we allow bad things to happen or why are we indifferent to them*".

Then, finally, there's the volcano which kills thousands of innocent people. It isn't very different from the suffering child; it's part of the imperfect world we live in. You might say that such tragedies are the grit that forms the pearl or you might say that a world of flawless, perfect smoothness would simply be bland or, to use a more theological word, angelic.

The underlying point, however, is that unless we come to terms with the necessity of human imperfection and retain an implausible line on the nature of evil, we will be ill equipped to face a hostile world.

At root, what the world wants and what it too often finds in what we say, is a sequence: it starts with a God who is a failed magician who cannot fix what is going wrong; and, worse still, if he's such a good magician, things wouldn't go wrong in the first place; and if he could have stopped them going wrong but hasn't done so, then he is a cruel God rather than a failed magician

But what is at stake here is not so much suffering as our human identity. This is why the really massive fracture in Christian perception, already clear in Paul, is the issue of free will and divine omniscience; and when you say to people: "*what about non interventionist omniscience?*" they just look blank.

Anyway, the point here, in conclusion, is that hell has disappeared, the devil is in serious disrepute, and we have to find language to talk about things going wrong which is based in our own identity rather than resulting from some cosmic struggle.

The Use of Language

Which leads, improbably, you may think, into my last two subjects, the first of which is to re-visit the discussion about language; and here, having done quite enough analysis, I simply want to make some positive suggestions about how we might go forward, based on what I have already said:

- First, we need to be modest in our claims for what we are doing by emphasising the metaphorical nature of any discussion about God.

Even if we believe that every word of the Bible was dictated verbatim by the Holy Spirit, it still ended up in human language; but we also then have to go on to explain that the Bible we read in English is a translation from various languages, that some of it can't be properly translated and some of it is syntactically incoherent; so let us be careful, on many counts, about the claims we make.

- Secondly, because of the nature of metaphor we require language, as we would in discussing literary metaphor, in order to strengthen each other in our understanding.. It is not enough to hold a doctrine of free speech, we also need to understand the purposes of free speech. The Bible in particular but Christian language in general has, for too long, been used as a form of weapon, a bit like a cluster bomb, exploding and sending bomblets of misery all over the place. Firing explosives to proclaim the good news is more than a little paradoxical.
- Thirdly, the result of metaphor is diversity; we will not all agree on what the metaphors mean and we will, if we are creative, construct some new metaphors. One of the most interesting discussions in the twentieth century about the nature of God has been the idea that God is not impassive but was, for example, in the gas chambers with the murdered Jews.
- Fourthly, there may come a point where the use of constructive language produces a consensual thesis which we might call a doctrine, or a creedal statement; but we must be careful that any such statements are provisional, the best paradigm we've got at the moment.
- Finally, even as fine theologians, or librarians, or literary critics, we are servants of those who seek our assistance. This is, I suspect, less of a problem for librarians than it is for theologians; but, never mind. We all know what we need to do.

From Stories to Theology

Many years ago I met a man in a wine bar who told me that he had just finished building a beautiful bridge over the River Shannon. I asked him how he had reached that position and he went back to his Meccano set, recounted the exams he had taken, graduating in engineering from university and making his way up through a series of ever more challenging projects.

I often think of him when I am faced with a congregation, many of whom have not graduated from the Bible stories, mostly told in pictures, which they encountered before they left primary school. If, I say to them, you are as serious about Jesus as you say you are, why don't you take Jesus as seriously as you take your job?

Now there is, of course, a neat answer to this which I have given myself which is that Christianity is a community of faith, not a never-ending seminar; but that does not free those who have the skills to broaden and deepen the kind of language they can use towards each other and themselves in order to be more deeply enfolded into the mystery of God.

I'm all in favour of simple faith for the simple but I'm not in favour of the intellectual and perceptive equivalent of meteorologists waving a wetted finger in the air and making their pronouncements. So there is the final task of the librarian which is to enrich the impoverished. As I pointed out right at the beginning, there's no shortage of contemporary material from the esoteric to the populist and popular. I suspect our problem is that we have frightened so many people off because of the over claiming I talked about earlier because it is precisely that over claiming which has led to conflict; and people don't want any part of it. The average congregation knows little and cares less about the tensions at its Diocesan Church House, let alone the growlings at the General Synod of the *Church of England* or the ructions inside the Vatican but it suspects intrigue and bad faith and stays away; and the problem is that the politics of bad faith have come to tarnish what is loosely thought of as theology even though almost all of it is open minded and open hearted, constructive and encouraging, sceptical and uncertain. But, like the media's chronic misinterpretation of scientific processes and statistics, the pure realm of theology is interpreted by partisans in an unfavourable way. We have to understand enough of the initial sources to explain to possible enquirers what they are in for. It is a statement of the obvious but one that I think bears repeating: everybody is better than they think they are; it just

requires some persistence to discover it.

God is not easy and ought not to be; to think or say otherwise is to mislead - and there has been quite enough of that through the two millennia of Christianity - but the complexity has to be put into perspective. We are, after all, theologians and librarians alike, simply the mats on which people wipe their feet before they kneel to pray.

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