

**CLIS** Christians in  
Library and  
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Services



**FOUNDED IN 1976 AS THE LIBRARIANS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

*Affiliated to: Evangelical Alliance; Transform Work UK; Universities' & Colleges' Christian Fellowship. Web Site: [www.christianlis.org.uk](http://www.christianlis.org.uk)*

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***E-NEWSLETTER, No. 83, EASTER 2019***

***PUBLISHERS AND ROBOTS***

Although we have held several of our public lectures in Oxford, **Saturday 6 April 2019** marked our first visit to the city of dreaming spires for our annual conference. The conference was hosted by our friends from the **Universities' and Colleges' Christian Fellowship** who allowed us to use their premises free of charge as a *'thank you'* for the work of several CLIS working parties spent cataloguing and organising the Fellowship's archives and book collections. There was an opportunity for conference delegates to inspect the work of the CLIS volunteers during the afternoon programme.

The main conference programme included two contrasting addresses from our guest speakers. During the morning session **Manoj Raithatha** gave us a thought-provoking talk on our mission and calling as Christians, in working life and elsewhere, before giving a brief account of **Instant Apostle**, the Christian publishing house that he founded some time after his conversion to Christian faith from a Hindu background. During the afternoon session Dr. **Nigel Crook**

explored the question of artificial intelligence and robotics with special emphasis on whether it is possible, or desirable, to create machines that can make informed and genuine moral choices. This drew on Dr. Crook's research at **Oxford Brookes University** and led to a wide ranging discussion on the issues raised in the talk.



A full report of the conference will appear in the next issue of **Christian Librarian**. Our photograph (taken by John Wickenden) shows our two conference speakers, with Manoj Raithatha on the left.

### ***BRITISH MUSEUM TOUR AND ANNUAL LECTURE***

There is still time to book a place on our guided tour of the **British Museum** on **Wednesday 15 May 2019**, beginning 2.00. p.m. This is to be led on our behalf by Ben Virgo of **Christian Heritage London** and will take in many of

the exhibits from the ancient world that provide a background to the narratives of the Old and New Testaments.

The cost of the tour is £15.00 per person and if you would like to book a place or places please send your booking and payment to Janice Paine, 22 Queensgate Gardens, 396 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, London, SW15 6JN. Some members who can arrive in central London in time may wish to have lunch together in a local restaurant prior to the beginning of the tour. If you would like to join the lunch party, please let Janice know.

Our annual public lecture will return on **Saturday afternoon 19 October 2019** when we will be meeting in the **Manvers Street Baptist Church** in Bath and our speaker will be the well known children's writer and master storyteller **Bob Hartman**. More details will follow but please book the date now and plan to attend. When we last met in Bath a number of our members chose to spend a weekend in this historic city where places of interest include the Roman baths, the eighteenth century Pump Room, and the Jane Austen Centre. Some members may wish to spend a similar weekend in Bath this October. Will we see you there?

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

One of the recent books mentioned by Manoj Raithatha during his conference address was Elizabeth Mednick's **Jesus in Town** (Instant Apostle, RRP £8.99, ISBN 978-1912726078) which tells the '*remarkable story*' of what happened when the churches of Barking and Dagenham came together in a community ministry which provides an advice and information centre in a major shopping precinct in Barking and a night shelter for homeless people housed in local church premises. I have a certain interest in this book as the author is a former member of my own church and it was at my suggestion that she approached Instant Apostle as a possible publisher for her book.

Such community initiatives, of course, are not restricted to Barking and Dagenham and **The Test Room** by Alex Gyasi (CreateSpace, £10.00, ISBN 978-1500544782) tells the story of a similar shelter for homeless people provided by the **Highway of Holiness Church** in the Tottenham area of

London. You can read my recent review of this 2014 publication on the **Evangelical Alliance** web site at <https://www.eauk.org/news-and-views/the-test-room-a-real-life-story-of-passing-the-test-of-love>

## ***PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NEWS***

Our committee member **Andrew Parker** is playing the part of a member of the Sanhedrin in the **New Malden Passion Play** to be performed in the **Blagdon Road Recreation Ground**, New Malden, Surrey, on **Saturday 13 April 2019**. There will be performances at 1.00. p.m. and 3.00. p.m. and we are told that the production will go ahead whatever the weather! The play is sponsored by **Churches Together in New Malden** and is suitable for people of all ages. You can find more information on the web site [www.nmpassionplay.com](http://www.nmpassionplay.com)

**Ben Virgo** and **Melvyn Bragg** took part in a discussion on the Bible translator William Tyndale on **Premier Christian Radio's Unbelievable** programme on Saturday 30 March 2019. This looked at the spiritual results of Tyndale's work and his influence on English language and literature which, according to Melvyn Bragg, was even greater than that of William Shakespeare. Ben Virgo leads walking tours for **Christian Heritage London** while Melvyn Bragg is a well known writer and broadcaster and the author of **William Tyndale: a Very Brief History** (SPCK, RRP £12.99, ISBN 978-0281077137).

## ***LIBRARIES IN A DIGITAL WORLD***

**Libraries Week** is a celebration of the nation's libraries. 2018 focused on well being with thousands of libraries across the country showcasing how they bring communities together, combat loneliness, provide a space for reading and creativity, and support people with their mental health.

**Libraries Week 2019** will take place from **7-12 October 2019** and will celebrate the role of libraries in the digital age, exploring how libraries are engaging communities through technology, building digital skills and confidence, encouraging digital participation and inclusion, supporting health, well being and education and supporting local business and enterprise.

Library staff and supporters can register to take part on the web site [www.librariesweek.org.uk](http://www.librariesweek.org.uk) and stay up to date as more details are released. How will **you** be supporting **Libraries Week** this year, whether in your library, community or local church? Perhaps you could write a short article on libraries for your church newsletter or contribute a brief '*library spot*' to a Sunday or mid-week meeting. This might include a prayer of thanksgiving for our rich heritage of books, libraries, and digital materials, or an encouragement to use libraries as a source of Christian publications.

## ***NARRATIVE BIBLE***

Some of our readers will remember our 2003 annual lecture, in Bath, at which our guest speaker, Keith White, spoke on William Tyndale and Bible translations.

Keith, who heads up the **Mill Grove** family centre in Woodford, Essex, has recently published a second edition of **The Bible (Narrative)** which combines an Anglicised text of the **New International Readers' Version** with striking full colour illustrations and helpful marginal notes. This version of the Bible makes full use of contemporary principles of layout and design and uses short words and sentences which can be easily understood by everyone including people who know English as a second language. The end result is described as a Bible for everyone and it is suitable for distribution to people with little or no prior knowledge of the Scriptures.

This edition of the Bible is available in flexiback and paperback editions and is available at the introductory prices of £12.99 and £10.99 respectively with discounts available for multiple copies. A free full colour electronic version is also available with every purchase. You can order copies from <https://www.10ofthose.com.uk> or by 'phoning 0330 22 33 423.

## ***RESOURCES FOR WORKING LIFE***

**Routed** is the title of a new course developed by the **London Institute for Contemporary Christianity**, in co-operation with the student organisation **Fusion**, which is intended to help Christian students make the transition from college or university to the world of work. Over four sessions participants will discover that all of life matters to God, that we should be faithful in our work, that we should choose work wisely, and navigate change well. You can find more information on the web site [www.licc.org.uk](http://www.licc.org.uk)

**Thank God it's Monday** by Mark Greene, (Muddy Pearl, RRP £9.99, ISBN 978-1910012574), has been published in a revised fifth edition. The author is LICC's Executive Director and this is a classic text on Christian faith in the workplace which is recommended as essential reading for all members of CLIS and other Christian professional groups.

## ***TOLKIEN ON THE SILVER SCREEN***

**Tolkien** is a forthcoming cinema release exploring the formative years of the author of **The Hobbit** and the **Lord of the Rings** as he finds friendship, love and artistic inspiration among a group of fellow outcasts at school. The film will also feature Tolkien's military service during the First World War during which he fought in the Battle of the Somme.

The film features Nicholas Hoult as J. R. R. Tolkien and Lily Collins (daughter of the rock star Phil Collins) as Edith Bratt, Tolkien's future wife, and the inspiration for Luthien Tinuviel in **The Silmarillion** and other works. Other members of the cast include Derek Jacobi and Colin Meaney. **Tolkien** is due for release in the United Kingdom in early May 2019 and should find a ready audience among Tolkien fans and enthusiasts for the **Inklings**, the informal group of Christian writers that also included C. S. Lewis and Charles Williams.

## **LIMITED EDITION NARNIA**

A number of newspapers and web sites have reported that award winning writer Francis Spufford has written a new addition to C. S. Lewis' **Chronicles of Narnia** series but is unable to publish it unless he is able to obtain permission from the Lewis estate.

Spufford's book is entitled **The Stone Table** and features a return visit to Narnia by Lewis' characters Digory and Polly. The narrative fills in some of the gaps between **The Magician's Nephew** and **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe** and explains the origins of the stone table and the four thrones of Cair Paravel featured in the series.

**The Stone Table** was originally written for the author's young daughter but a limited edition of seventy-five copies has been distributed to the writer's friends and fellow writers. The book has received lavish praise from those who have read it and there are hopes that it will be possible to publish it before the copyright in Lewis' works expires in 2033.



**This issue of the E-Newsletter comes with best wishes and Christian greetings for Holy Week and Easter from the officers and executive committee of Christians in Library and Information Services.**

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