



The Gospel of John

with

The Very Revd Dr Jeffrey John Dean of St Albans

Saturday 20 February 2010 10.00am to 1.00pm

Venue: St Andrews Church, Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK40 2PF

£15.00 (waged) £12.00 (unwaged)

To book a place on these Courses, please contact the **BELIEF** office c/o Priory Methodist Church, Newnham Avenue, Bedford MK41 9QJ
Tel: 01234 293688 E-mail: office@beliefbeds.org.uk
www.beliefbeds.org.uk

Together Newsletter Please include parts of this, or the complete newsletter in your church magazines.

From the Secretary

I have received a few items for this copy of Together and have passed on several pieces of news and information.



It is disappointing when so few remember to send in news or articles for the Newsletter. It would be good if we could encourage each other with reports on some of the ventures or projects undertaken and also with information of future events.

Unless there are any drastic changes in the future I would hope to prepare and issue four copies a year, in January, April, July and October - so please let me have any information for inclusion during the first week of each of these months.

Thank you

Jocelyn Harper

FEEDBACK is welcomed

Tel: 01234 406969 E-mail: jos.harpy@ntlworld.com

35 Berry Drive Bromham Bedford MK43 8QA



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BEDFORDSHIRE

TOGETHER



Please copy and distribute widely

JANUARY 2010

From Bishop Richard

On the Sunday during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, I had the privilege of preaching at Northall Baptist Church which despite just being over the border into Buckinghamshire is part of Churches Together in the Eaton Bray and Dagnall area. It was a lovely occasion with representatives from a good number of different churches. These occasions give people the experience of worshipping in a different way from usual, and there is always something to gain for use within our own tradition. I hope wherever you were that week also was a positive occasion.

About the same time as you read this, CT groups and LEPs in Bedfordshire, along with all the Church Leaders, will be receiving the Consultation Document and draft Job Description for a new County Ecumenical Development Officer (CEDO) for their consideration and comment. These documents have been seen by our area officer for Churches Together in England, amended following his advice, and approved by BEC at its meeting in January. We await with interest the approval and /or comments from you all.

While the consultation is in train, we shall begin to work out a possible timetable for the advertising, interviewing and appointment of a new CEDO.

I'm glad to say that plans are afoot for a 'new look' Forum this May. The structure will be significantly different. There will be food from 6.30pm, more opportunity for interaction, and plenty of information available as well as an address from The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad, the URC Moderator, and a very short business meeting. I do hope the date (Wednesday 19th May) is firmly in your diary.

With best wishes and prayers,

+Richard

Annual Forum

Members of the Committee are working hard to make some changes to the format and running of the Forum in order to encourage more to attend.



Please advertise this year's Forum as early as you can, in church magazines, notices, word of mouth - we are really trying to make this a more 'user friendly' evening! The meeting is for anyone and everyone who would like to attend.

- When? Wednesday 19 May 2010
(date changed to avoid the clash with Christian Aid Week)
- Where? The Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Pope Close,
Flitwick MK45 1JP
- Speaker? Revd Dr Andrew Prasad, Moderator of the Thames North
Synod of The United Reformed Church

We plan to hold a running buffet meal from 6.30pm onwards to enable people to come as early as they wish without missing a meal.

The church will be set out informally in groups of tables and chairs to encourage people to chat, look at and discuss some of the resources we plan to have available.

The speaker will begin at 7.30pm followed by a time of discussion and questions to the speaker.

The AGM will begin at 8.30pm followed by drinks and biscuits before leaving.

Posters and more details will be sent out in good time.

October 31st

Remembering 100 years (time to be confirmed)
If any reader has a contribution that they would like to make to this event, please contact Mrs Pat Cox on the number below

Further details on any of the above, and tickets where needed, are available from Mrs Pat Cox Tel: 01234 402475

Amphill and District Churches Together Choir



The local choir under the direction of Angie Woodcraft is preparing to perform this work at six venues, two are in our area.
You could see this at -

Bunyan Meeting Church, Mill Street, Bedford on Sunday 9 May at 6.30pm.

Amphill Methodist Church on Sunday 16 May at 6.30pm.

Elstow Bunyan Christian Fellowship (Churches Together in South Bedford)



The Bunyan chapel in Elstow was formerly a Branch of Bunyan Meeting Church in Bedford. In January 2005, after several months of discussion and planning, the Branch became an independent church with its new name. This year the Fellowship celebrates the Centenary, since the original church building, known as Bunyan Memorial Hall, was opened in 1910.

Events have been arranged for each month of the year. These include the following gatherings at Elstow Bunyan, High Street, Elstow, (unless otherwise stated):

April 10 th	7.00pm	Fish and Chip Supper Followed by a Beetle Drive Tickets to be bought in advance
June 3 rd to 6 th		Flower Festival and Historical Display Open from 10.00am to 3.00pm daily
June 6 th	11.00am	Centenary Celebration Service Led by Revd. Dr. Janet Wootton
August 29 th		'Brass on the Grass' with a local band and friends from Elstow Abbey To be held on the Green near the Moot Hall (In the Abbey if wet!) Time to be confirmed
September 5 th	3:00pm	'Songs of Praise' Songs chosen by local Congregational Churches. All invited to join us
October 2 nd	7.00pm	Harvest Supper Tickets to be purchased in advance
October 3 rd	11:00am	Harvest Thanksgiving Service All welcome



NEWS FROM BEDFORD STREET ANGELS

A word in your ear from the Project Coordinator

Dear friends, Welcome to my update in 2010 as Project Coordinator of Bedford Street Angels. In recent weeks when I have been invited to speak at various local churches, I have been reflecting on who Christ is and how we are called to serve him today. At all times, but especially at Christmas, we celebrate Jesus coming into the world as Lord and Saviour. But this was a life saturated with irony. Jesus shocked his followers into re-examining basic human prejudices, awakened them to new experiences and provoked action that changed lives and made a difference. Christianity is primarily about a community of liberating action, rooted firmly in the love of God shown in his actions for the world. The Church is not 'chatty little Christianity' brooding in its own corner and kept to itself. The community of liberating action, of which we are a part, comes down, mucks in together, as God did that first Christmas in Bethlehem, sending his Son, Jesus, and it is a Gospel command that we continue to do the same in our own time today.

As we give thanks to God for establishing the work of Bedford Street Angels in 2009, and the blessings which that has brought to so many people in various different ways, let us be challenged to commit ourselves afresh to be part of communities of liberating actions. On New Year's Eve, it was announced that Paul Blakey, the National founder of Street Angels based in Halifax had been awarded an MBE by Her Majesty the Queen for his service to the community. It was Paul's vision, with support from his wife, Jean, to establish the Street Angels model in 2005.

Whilst on annual leave, I was able to see Paul and Jean for coffee, so I passed our congratulations and assurances of prayers for him. There is a piece about his award in the Halifax Courier with the web ink below - <http://www.halifaxcourier.co.uk/news/Paul-the-Angel-is-an.5948275.jp>
As Paul made clear during our coffee, this is not an achievement simply for him but also for the number of Street Angels projects which are now operating throughout the country. This is recognition of the work that

Christians have to play in the night time economy through street ministry work.

We are looking forward to welcoming Paul and Jean to our celebration on Saturday 6th March 2010.

Please be assured of my continued thoughts and prayers for each of you.

Please also do remember the work of the project, and particularly for me as I seek to be a worthy servant for our work.

Every Blessing, Adam

Bedford's Street Angels Need More Volunteers

Could one of your (late) New Year Resolutions be - to become a Bedford Street Angel?

Bedford's Street Angels are appealing for more volunteers. The Street Angels are a reassuring presence on the streets of Bedford. They help members of the public who have drunk too much and help keep them safe, which allows the Police to tackle serious incidents where their presence is required.

Adam May, Project Co-ordinator here in Bedford said, "We need a new drive for volunteer recruitment to enable the Bedford Street Angels to continue working with the Safer Neighbourhood Policing and Bed:safe Team. We want to continue the great work that we do together in looking after the public in the town centre every weekend."

Cllr Will Hunt, Bedford Borough Portfolio Holder for Community Safety said: "I came across the Bedford Street Angels for the first time on the 5th September last year when members of the Licensing Committee had a visit to Bedford Town Centre to view the night-time economy in action. I was very impressed with them and could see immediately what a difference they could potentially make in avoiding tragedy. I believe that there is a tremendous value in working with other agencies and the Bedford Street Angels are a good example of this. I wish them every success in all they are doing."

Keep up the good work!"

Anyone who is interested in joining the Bedford Street Angels can contact by:

Tel: 07532 371 311 e-mail: adam@bedfordstreetangels.org.uk

Website: www.bedfordstreetangels.org.uk

Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre

Churches Together in Cumbria have drawn attention to the detention of children in such centres as Yarl's Wood which is the main removal centre in the UK, holding women and children. Every year over 1,000 children are detained in the UK for purposes of immigration control. The impact of detention can be devastating, causing lasting trauma in these young lives.

An interesting and enlightening performance/meeting entitled 'Motherland' was held at the Civic Theatre in Bedford on 14 January when a packed hall heard a dramatised reading, giving a verbatim report from some who had been held in Yarl's Wood.

Local Members of Parliament, Patrick Hall and Alistair Burt were present and were able to answer questions posed by members of the audience. We are all invited to sign the petition to end child detention:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/NoChildDetention>

LENT 2010 begins 17 February

Dare to make a difference

in your *life*
In your *community*
In your *world*

By living the words of Jesus

- Read a verse from the Bible each day in Lent
- LEARN it PRAY it and then
- DO something to make a difference
- Share what you have learned and what you have done



This is the CHALLENGE to the people, schools and churches of the Diocese of St Albans

For more details see: www.challenge2010.org