

SUNDAY 26th January 2025



Local ...
Lively ...
Loving

Killing Time

On Friday afternoon, I found myself sat in a coffee shop in Chipping Sodbury whilst my car was in the garage for some attention – just killing time whilst waiting for the work to complete, playing with my phone.

It is a strange phrase that, and one that I use quite frequently. According to a quick search on the phone, I discovered that the first documented use of the phrase derives from a book written by Francis Rabelais in 1694: “Pantegrue’s voyage to the oracle of the bottle”. It is used as part of a description of what a group of sailors were doing whilst their ship had become becalmed in the middle of the ocean without any wind, i.e. finding things to do whilst not having anything that they really had to do.

It struck me whilst investigating that phrase that we are all apt to kill time on occasions, and another phrase then sprang to mind: “The devil makes work for idle hands”. Rather than randomly trawling the internet on my phone during this down-time, I probably would have been better off doing something more useful. Probably should have been reading the Bible or praying!

“Take time to be holy, speak oft with the Lord; Abide in him always, and feed on his Word” [The Song Book of The Salvation Army, No. 790]

Paul Heath

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People

There are a number of people who are poorly, recovering from surgery and are or have been in hospital. Francis has been moved from Southmead to Skylarks in Yate, Kay and Becky are recovering from knee operations, and Mary from a shoulder operation. There are a couple of families supporting family members who are poorly, including Mary & Nick and Heather & Paul, along with those in our fellowship who are poorly. This includes Nicola who after two weeks of battling through illness finally succumbed and is taking some time to rest and recover. Please remember our friends mentioned and who you know who are poorly in your prayers.

This week Mary, Jen, Beryl, Linda and myself (Colin) attended a service of celebration for the life Ruth Rounsley, a member of our lunch club. During the service, as part of their tribute, the family acknowledged the valuable contribution that our Lunch Club had made to Ruth's life. In particular, they highlighted the telephone calls that were made to Ruth by the Lunch Club 'team' during COVID. Thanks to the 'team' for this and all that they do each week. This highlighted to me the huge impact that a simple phone call can make. Maybe you could take time to phone or contact a member or former member of the church over this coming week to assure them of our thoughts and prayers. You will never know what impact that it will make.

Calling all soldiers

International Headquarters are undertaking a survey about the soldier's covenant and would like to know what you think. If you are a soldier, please email Nicola for a QR code to access the survey, thank you.

Friendly Voices

Last week I [Colin] led worship at the United Reform Church in Mangotsfield, and they asked me to advertise their *Friendly Voices* initiative, which is:

- A singing group for people with dementia and their carers

Held at:

- Mangotsfield and Castle Green United Reform Church
Cossham Street
Bristol
BS16 9EP

On:

- Every 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month from 10.30am - 12pm

I will place a 'flyer' on the noticeboard, which gives details of who to contact if you need any further information.

Flowers

We would like to thank Jenny Andrew for the flowers today, given in memory of her mother Yvonne.

Chinese New Year

With a number of families formerly from Hong Kong in our fellowship, we thank Revd Tim Yau for sharing this article on the Church of England Diocese of Norwich website.

I was delighted to see Chinese New Year adverts in a supermarket promoting food from East Asia. Some might see this as a marketing strategy, but to me, it's a sign of how far Britain has come in recognising cultures from around the world.



Chinese New Year, also known as Lunar New Year or Spring Festival, is celebrated by hundreds of millions worldwide. It begins with the first new moon of the Lunar Calendar and ends with the full moon, marking the end of winter. The holiday follows a twelve-year cycle, with each year represented by an animal. On 29th January 2025, we enter the year of the Snake.

The focus of the Lunar New Year is to honour the past, celebrate family, and welcome a fresh start—much like our Western New Year traditions. It's a time to return home and be with loved ones. However, for 144,500 Hong Kongers who have moved to the UK since 2021, it's a bittersweet time. Following the 2014 pro-democracy 'Yellow Umbrella' protests, many sought political freedom and safety here, but now feel unable to return home.

As Christians, we are called to enact the biblical mandate: "The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God." (Leviticus 19:34).

This applies not only to Hong Kongers but to all those who now call our parishes home. For racial justice and equity, we must go beyond just recognition and show love. How can you love your neighbours this Lunar New Year?

The Week Ahead

TODAY - Sunday 26th January:

10am All Age Worship – *led by Major Colin*
'Returning to 1 Corinthians': [1 Corinthians 8](#)
11:30am-12:15pm Children's & Youth Activities

Monday 27th January:

8pm CAMEO Craft Group
8pm Mission Council Meeting

Tuesday 28th January:

No Employment Plus today
10am-2pm Open Doors (*soup lunch available at 12:30pm*)
10am-11am Fitness Club
11am-12noon Extra Slice Group (leader: Kelvin) *at the hall*
From 6:30pm YP Band Practice and Singing Company Practice
8pm Songster Practice

Wednesday 29th January:

9:30am-11am Tots on the Hill
3:30pm-4:30pm Extra Slice Group (leader: Gerry) *online*
8pm-9pm Extra Slice Group (leader: Linda) *at Kelvin & Linda's*
8:15pm-9:15pm Extra Slice Group (leader: Beth) *online*

Thursday 30th January:

10am-12noon Open Doors
11:15am Thursday Church
12:30pm Lunch Club - *booking essential*
8pm-9pm Extra Slice Group *at Colin & Nicola's*
8pm-9pm Extra Slice Group (leader: Bethany) *at Bev & Jon's*
8:15pm-9:15pm Extra Slice Group (leaders: Ian & Rachel) *online*

Friday 31st January:

7:30am-12noon Slimming World Groups
10am-12noon Open Doors
4pm Cleaning Hall

Next Weekend

Sunday 2nd February:

10am All Age Worship – *led by Majors Colin & Nicola*
'Returning to 1 Corinthians': [1 Corinthians 10](#)

11:30am-12:15pm Children's & Youth Activities

Dates for the Diary

Here are some other dates that are coming up soon:

Sunday 9 th February	Messy Church
Saturday 15 th February	Coffee Morning
Sunday 16 th February	Pulse Youth Event
Thursday 20 th February	Thursday Church
Monday 24 th February	CAMEO Craft Group
Friday 7 th March	World Day of Prayer
Sunday 9 th March	Generous Discipleship Pulse Youth Event