

The Outlook

from Hope July/August 2004

Strangely Warmed

In a recent piece of research on the spirituality of those who don't belong to a church there are a number of fascinating observations.¹

In particular, the number of people who speak of having experiences that might be described as "spiritual" almost doubled in the 13 years leading up to 2000. So for example the percentage of those who have had a sense of the presence of God has risen from 27% -38% . Those conscious of a pattern in events has gone up from 29% -55% and 25% have sensed the presence of evil as against 12% in 1987.

The researchers were not sure whether more people are having such experiences or whether it is just that people are more willing to talk about them. Either way the net result is that we are increasingly aware that there is a mysterious side to our existence, a mystery that we cannot comprehend and which makes us aware of the spiritual dimension of life.

When did you last experience a sense of God's presence? In the last few months have you been aware of God's ordering the circumstances of your life? As we celebrate Pentecost at the end of May we thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit through whom we are meant to experience the presence and guidance of God in our lives. This is not meant to be a rare, occasional experience but a regular, life-long relationship.

There are two dangers in the Christian life when it comes to spiritual experiences. Some people get caught up with seeking such experiences and feel that if they don't actively sense God's presence then he is absent. Others have no expectation that they will encounter God in daily life and settle for a comfortable distance in their relationship with him. The healthy balance combines faith and expectation, trusting in the Lord's presence and care even when we don't actively sense it, expecting that there will be occasions when we do unexpectedly have our hearts strangely warmed by the touch of God. This Pentecost is a good time to ask yourself again: 'Is my experience of God up to date? Is it characterised by expectancy and trust?'

Andy Saunders

¹Understanding the Spirituality of People who don't go to Church: David Hay and Kate Hunt, August 2000, sponsored by Bible Society

The Perranporth Pacemakers (x2) and Promenaders

Once again at the end of May, a hardy group of walkers, rambles and shamblers from Hope (with friends from Plymstock and Penzance) assembled in Cornwall to walk sections of the south-west coastal path. It's a few years now since the "Wrinklies' Walk" was instigated, and our combined collection of dodgy knees, backs, ankles and hips would fill a fair-sized orthopaedic text book, not to mention the two pacemakers (medical not athletic) – see above. Even our redoubtable leader had a stress fracture of the foot.

We were based at Perranporth, and from there we walked between Porthtowan and Crantock. The weather was idyllic and the Cornish coastline at its beautiful best. A few hardy types walked every day. Others did half days, acted as transport, painted, practised golf or simply relaxed. We had breakfast and evening meal together, with the cabaret provided mainly by MH on the accordion. It is not generally known that this instrument can be played in the horizontal position (don't ask!)

Many people developed parking skills they didn't know they had, the hotel car park being only marginally larger than a postage stamp. There were several wet bottoms as we raced the tide around the rocks between Chapel Porth and Porthtowan. We would have left a bit earlier, but we were enjoying our "hedgehogs" – ice cream smothered in cream and hazelnuts.

After much discussion and puzzlement we worked out that our average age was 64 (cue for bad rendition of Beatles' hit) and while there may be some things we don't do so well any more, we do know how to have fun.

And we did. Many thanks to John Pinch for all the organisation involved.

One puzzle remains. A shop in Perranporth was selling "Family Body Boards". How on earth do you get a family onto a surfboard that size?!

Open House Trifle Tea

Why not join us for a trifle tea on Monday 19th July, at 2.15 in the church hall. Everyone is welcome to come along for an afternoon of fellowship, a summer quiz and various trifles and cakes, followed by tea or coffee. The suggested donation for the tea is £1.50 which will go to a charity named on the day.

Should you require a lift please call me, Pam Smith, on Plymouth 219844 to arrange a pick up time. We hope to see you there.

Our love and congratulations go to Thelma and Wilfred Smale, as they celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary on July 24th. We hope they have a day to remember and spend many more happy anniversaries together.

From everyone at Hope Baptist Church.

Prayer Focus

Give Thanks

We now have 10 Fellowship groups meeting regularly.

John and Judith's support of Alan and Christine, and for the care plan set up by Social Services to help with Christine's health management. The whole family needs continued prayer.

Pray for

Beryl and Peter as they cope with the ongoing health problems of Doris and Glendora.

Viola as she settles in her new home at Bethany. Also for healing of the sinus in her painful knee.

Claire Knight as she contemplates a possible change of employment.

Our missionaries Mark and Emily and family as the time is drawing near for their departure to South Central Asia.

Our young people having taken various exams, and for God's guidance in making decisions for their future. Protection for all those taking holidays in the next weeks, especially our Ministers and families.

James Bowman-Powell as his departure to Zambia draws near.

Others who have sought prayer support in recent weeks.

New telephone Number

Viola Woodward has moved to Bethany and her new telephone number is 666311

Flower Arrangements for Harvest Festival

On Sunday 26th September we will be celebrating Harvest Festival at our morning service.

As there has been a shortage of volunteers to help decorate the church recently, I thought it would be nice to try something that brought more response a few years ago. So, I am inviting YOU to adopt a windowsill in church, there are ten, to decorate. Either as an individual, house fellowship group, youth group, family, Parents and Toddlers, children's Sunday morning class, Open House, Women's Rendezvous or others. Flowers, Fruit, Vegetables, artwork or other materials can be used.

Please let me know if you would like to join us by signing the form at the back of church on or before Sunday 5th September.

Go for it! It's good fun and very rewarding!

Pam Smith.

Dear all,

As you know, I have been accepted to African Quest, which is very exciting, but I do need to raise lots of money. I have been encouraged to do a hair-raising event. To get to the 'root' of the problem I am going to do a sponsored head shave, my 'bald' step will be taken on Sunday 11th July during the morning service! As you know I really like my hair, it's crazy and seems to suit me! So the 'long and the short' of it is, please make it worth my while and give me a 'head' start with my fund raising by sponsoring me. So that no one will feel pressurised to give yet more, the form is at the back of the church for you to sign and give if you want to.

I hope all this talk of yet more fund raising will not make you want to 'curl' up and die. Just think you will be free of me for a while and maybe 'perm' anently if I like it in Africa.

James B-P

Sunday Rota for July

Aftercare

- 4 Lynda Henagulph & Nick Beard
- 11 Diane Catling &
- 18 Sandy Lashbrook & Louise Sumner
- 25 Family Service

Flowers

- 4 Mr Mike Holland. In loving memory of his wife Anne.
- 11 Flower Fund.
- 18 Miss Dorothy Camfield.
- 25 Mrs Ann Javan. Wedding Anniversary remembrance of her parents.

Crèche

- 4 Ray & Cindy Hedges
- 11 Linda Snell & Jackie May
- 18 Miranda Crowley & Jenny George
- 25 FAMILY SERVICE*

Coffee

- 04 Marion Brown and Sandra Brown
- 11 Claire Worrall and Beryl Brown
- 18 Mary-Jane and Pat Taylor
- 25 Debbie and Chris Houston

Communion

	<i>Set-up</i>	<i>Wash-up</i>
18	Ray and Cindy	Margaret Tripp

Sunday Rota for August

Aftercare

1 Karen Beard & Katherine Gardiner
8 Family Service
15 Ray & Cindy Hedges
22 Family Service
29 John & Judith Pinch

Flowers

1
8 Judith and John Pinch. In memory of Mrs Gwen Pidsley and to celebrate the 3rd wedding anniversary of Cheryl and Glenn Williams.
22
29 Mrs Pat Taylor.

Crèche

1 John Pinch & Sarah Aldersley
8 FAMILY SERVICE
15 Pat & Steven Dodd
22 FAMILY SERVICE
29 Ray & Cindy Hedges

Coffee

01 Rebekah Beard and Chris Mooney
08 Margaret Underdown and Nicky Hatherell
15 Nick Beard and Kate Hatherell
22 Judith and John Pinch
29 Annie Pearce and Tim

Communion

	<i>Set-up</i>	<i>Wash-up</i>
15	Ray and Cindy	Ray and Cindy

BMS Birthdays
02 Mrs Marion Brown
15 Mrs Cheryl Williams

THE MAGIC OF BELIEVING!

Peter McCahon is a member of the Magic Circle and is one of the stars of the Channel 5 Series, Monkey Magic, which is currently filming its second series. Peter has been a comedy magician, escapologist and creative communicator for the Christian faith for over 13 years, working in pubs, clubs, schools and colleges.

Peter is the guest entertainer at the Civil Service Club on Friday 24th September. The event is arranged by Hope in conjunction with other local churches and tickets will be on sale from the end of August. Book the date in your diary now to make sure you don't miss out.

This will be a great event to invite friends. Peter will communicate about the Christian faith but in a very entertaining and non-threatening way. As he says, 'Being wrapped in chains, leg irons and handcuffs etc, and then strapped to a chair placed over explosives may not be your normal method of evangelism, but as an attention getter it certainly works!'

By way of a taster here are some snippets from a recent interview:

Do you think the miracles of Jesus had anything in common with the magic tricks you do?

No, I think there's absolutely no connection whatsoever between magic tricks and the miracles of Jesus. There's no comparison. What we are doing is blatantly a magic trick and is nothing more than that.

From the moment we begin to the moment we finish, we're deceiving people, but deceiving them honestly. The magician, I think, is the most honest of people. The magician says, "Sit there, watch carefully, I'm about to trick you." And then he does. I mean, no one does that!

If you get conned in the street in some con game, they don't warn you what they're going to do, they just do it. If someone comes to your house and tries to sneak in and steal from you, he doesn't tell you he's coming. But the magician says, "Sit there. Are you comfortable? Are you watching properly? Now I'm going to do something that you're not going to believe." And then tricks you. So he's the most honest of all.

So what were the miracles of Jesus about, then?

When Jesus performed miracles and healed people, he wasn't entertaining the crowd or trying to up his publicity level. He wasn't looking for headlines. He healed people because they needed healing. He responded to people's needs. When the woman

touched the hem of his garment and was healed, it was more than she could ever have hoped for. When he healed someone's blindness, he was doing something more – he said, "Your sins are forgiven, too!"

The miracles and healings were about making whole people. They were an illustration of his whole reason for being. I believe Jesus came into the world to heal it, to create whole human beings.

Is there any connection between faith and magic?

Most magic tricks, when you find out how they're done, are really simple. And you just go, "Oh my goodness, how could I not know that?" And it changes the way you look at them for ever. Because now you know the answer. But when you don't know the answer, you sit there saying, "That's amazing!"

With Christianity, people look at it from the outside and they say, "I don't get it. It's impossible to understand. How can I ever understand that? How can I ever get to grips with understanding God, or being in a relationship with God? It's just too much for my brain to cope with."

But the reality is, it's so simple. God says, "All you have to do is ask."

You don't have to be in some special place. You don't have to be in some special clothes or using some special words. There are no secret symbols or anything like that – there are no codes – it's just you and God.

You can find the whole interview on www.rejesus.co.uk and more information about Peter and his ministry on www.mccahon.co.uk.

July and August Diary

July

Thu	01	10.00	Coffee Morning** Family Swim at JKCC
Sun	04	10.00	Prayer in the Lower Guildroom
		10.30	Morning Worship – Guest Service More Than a Game!
Tue	06	1.00	Parent and Toddler Groups* Fellowship Groups
Wed	07	10.00	Parent and Toddler Groups*
		1.00	Parent and Toddler Groups*
Sat	10		Teignmouth Outing
Sun	11	10.30	Morning Worship Neighbors from Hell Neh 4
Tue	13		Fellowship Socials
Sun	18	10.30	Morning Worship Home Front Neh 5
Sun	25	10.30	Family Service

August

Sun	01	10.30	Morning Worship Song Lines I
Sun	08	10.30	Family Service
Sun	15	10.30	Morning Worship Song Lines II
Sun	22	10.30	Family Service
Sun	29	10.30	Morning Worship Song Lines III

**These meetings are held weekly during term time only*

***These meetings meet weekly all through the year*

Fellowship groups now meet on various nights and in different weeks, so check with group leaders when yours is meeting

What's on:-

Sat 11 September

A New Heart for Plymouth. An evening of Prayer and

Worship at St Pancras 7.30pm

Sunday 12 September

BBQ at Cadover Bridge following the service

Friday 24 September

Peter McCahon Christian escapologist and magician at the Civil Service Club 7.30pm

The Outlook

This Outlook was compiled by Claire Worrall. The September edition of The Outlook will be put together by Nicky Hatherell who will be grateful for your articles or information by 15 August. If you would like to pass on anything by email Nicky's address is

Nickyhatherell@aol.com

Please note that if you do send it this way we will ALWAYS acknowledge receipt of it, so if you do not get a reply then we will not have received it – remember email is not always 100% reliable.