

Off the Record

From **MAGOR BAPTIST CHURCH**

***Growing and sharing
in God's love***



"In this year of my Platinum Jubilee, it has given me pleasure to renew the promise I made in 1947, that my life will always be devoted in service"

SUMMER 2022

'Turn your Eyes Upon Jesus'

This hymn has been going over in my mind whilst reflecting on Matthew 14 and what I'm writing for the summer magazine.

Perhaps a reminder of the storms that we've faced in life recently. But an important thing that this story teaches; whatever is **over our head is under Jesus' feet**. Jesus coming and working in our lives always **defies nature and defines His power**. He's waiting to do this in our lives today.



Let me ask "**what do you think Jesus Christ is trying to do in your life**" and "**what you will let him do?**" dare to walk, dare to step out?

Peter answered, "**Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.**" **Jesus said, "Come."** Jesus is saying this to us today **COME!**



'Turn your Eyes Upon Jesus'

What's happening, what are you struggling with that's engulfing you that requires His presence, peace and power?

Jesus said, "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*" His authority embraces all of heaven and earth, the created order in space and time. All powers, principalities, thrones, dominions are all subject to Him. No power has been left out. **He has the final word.**



Imagine the power that controls creation! Did you know one inch of rainfall falling over one square mile means some 60,000 tonnes of water poured out so gently we don't notice!

The power that defeated death - that **same power** is ours.

Alan Hirsch said - *Imagine there is a power that lies hidden at the very heart of God's people. Suppose this capacity was built into the originating "stem cell" of the church by the Holy Spirit but was somehow buried and lost*

through centuries of neglect and disuse. Imagine that if rediscovered, this hidden power could unleash remarkable energies that could propel Christianity well into the twenty-second century—a missional equivalent to unlocking the power of the atom. Is this not something that we who love God, his people, and his cause would give just about anything to recover!

'Turn your Eyes Upon Jesus'

Turning his eyes back to Jesus, Peter realises that it's only Jesus that can save him. And Jesus does exactly that! **Jesus will, and does, save and keep us – all we have to do is focus on Him and believe.**

As we continue our faith journey may we rediscover that the Christian life is about God who is relentless in calling us to step out into the gaps, the unsure places. A God who is always calling us forward, beyond our fear, our brokenness, our storm. A God who promised, that even though we are warmly encouraged to let go and believe, **God will never let us go.**

'Turn your Eyes Upon Jesus'

God continues to invite us forward, to a continual change in our lives and not getting stuck in the boat or the "In-between-times".

Andrew Murray said... *God has no more precious gift to a church or an age than a man who lives as an embodiment of His will, and inspires those around him with the faith of what grace can do.*

As we embark on a new chapter in our lives including that of the church, our lives must be Christ-focused. Imagine God, bringing healing, peace, strength, hope, most importantly, release from the past and from fear, bringing light and healing to all the hidden hurting places in your life today.

Someone has said, ***"Never doubt in the darkness the things you know to be true in the light."***

The church - *"people with Jesus at the centre, travelling where Jesus takes them."* That is pioneering faith on a journey of becoming!

Today is a time to start again – know His transformation and to live it!

"Fixing our eyes on Jesus"

If we are to run the life of faith, we resist the distractions and look to Him
"Keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith" Heb 12



Ortberg writes, *"There is something – someone- inside us who tells us there is more to life than sitting in a boat.....Your boat is whatever you are tempted to put your trust in, especially when life gets a little stormy. Your boat is whatever keeps you so comfortable that you don't want to give it up, even if it's keeping you from joining Jesus on the waves. Your boat is whatever pulls you away from the high adventure of extreme discipleship"*

Jesus is saying this to us today **COME!**

Perhaps spend time listening to **'Turn your Eyes Upon Jesus'**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2tKVqZZiI4>

*Jesus, to You we lift our eyes
Jesus, our glory and our prize
We adore You, behold You, our Saviour ever true
Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to You*

God Bless You

Harry



Fellowship News from Val Jones



I trust you all enjoyed the Jubilee Celebrations. The village looked very festive with bunting and flowers for the Saturday street party. An open-air Pentecost service was planned on the Sunday in the square but unfortunately this was moved to St Mary's Church due to inclement weather. People were then invited to bring their own lunch and watch the Songs of Praise on the big screen in the chapel and return at 4pm to watch the pageant parade. The Queen is a wonderful lady and an example to us all.

We were saddened to hear that God had called pastor Harry Place, our minister and Alice his wife into retirement. We thank God for the three years they have been with us, mostly ministering to us through the difficult period of Covid with zoom services and prayerful reflections encouraging us to keep in touch with one another through prayer and 'phone calls. We are pleased that we are now able to meet once again weekly in the chapel and also to still enjoy the company of those joining us on zoom. Harry and Alice will be leaving us in August. Please join us in prayer as we seek God's will for our future here in Magor Baptist. We thank Him for leading and guiding us for over 200 years and we know that He has a plan for us, but first we have to go through a period of seeking His will as he leads another minister to take up the role of shepherding his flock here in Magor. We pray for Harry and Alice as they too seek God's will for their future.

We welcome the Ukrainian family who have moved into the house next door to the chapel and pray that they will find work and settle well into their new home. They have already endured such sadness and we pray for their loved ones still in war torn Ukraine. Over 200 people have been given temporary accommodation at the Ty Hotel near the motorway in Magor. Some have found homes in Magor, Undy , Rogiet, Caldicot and the surrounding areas and others are patiently waiting to find new homes for the next few years. We are pleased that, through Tomi our Youth and Community Leader, we have been able to offer English classes on a weekly basis. We pray for peace in Ukraine and ask that God's love will sustain all those fleeing the war. We ask for a change of heart from the Russian leaders, that war will cease and peace will be achieved.

We think of those affected by the earthquake in Afghanistan, a country that has already been so badly affected by wars and dictatorship. We pray that humanitarian aid may get to the right people to help them in their hour of need.

We think of the ongoing need in our own country - with prices of food and fuel going up so rapidly. We pray for the ongoing work of Raven House Trust who are struggling to continue helping those in need. We pray for wisdom for the government that they may be able to find a way of ensuring the poor are fed and clothed.

We extend our deepest sympathy and love to the Fairbairn family following the death of their father Tom so quickly after the death of their mother, Celia. We ask for God's love to surround them and give them peace.

We pray for the family of Irene Bowen who passed away in June. Prior to Covid Irene was a regular member both of Munchies and Knit and Natter.

We pray too for the family of Mrs Webb of Sycamore Terrace who also passed away in June. Prior to Covid Mrs Webb was a regular member of Friday Coffee Morning coming for a drink, a scone and a chat.

We ask for peace and healing for all those members and friends of the fellowship who have been in hospital or have been sick or are in homes. May they know the peace which only God can give.

Congratulations to Netty and Ian Craggs who celebrate their Diamond Wedding (60 years) on 18th August and Pat and Ron Coleman who celebrate their Golden Wedding (50 years) on 19th August. What a milestone for each couple. We thank God for them and pray that they will have many more happy years together.

Elsie Taylor will be 90 years old on 5th July and we pray that she will spend a happy birthday with her family and friends.

We pray for ourselves that we may be the people God intended us to be as we seek to serve him.

It was wonderful to celebrate the marriage of our eldest granddaughter, Aimee to Dan Martin on Saturday, May 21st.

Rev Harry Place conducted a beautiful ceremony in his usual characteristic manner for which we, and the newly weds, are extremely grateful! We would all like to thank everyone who joined us at the Chapel and helped to witness this amazing, emotional occasion which also helped to boost the singing of the hymns!

Special thanks to Frank Miles and Gill Arnold, too for the parts they played in ensuring the whole service went smoothly.

Love and blessings,

Kath and Steve Titlow xx



SOMETHING TO PONDER Be happy when God answers your prayer but be more thankful when he makes you the answer to someone else's prayers
Source unknown



Summer update from Tomi

Pentecost Family Service with St Mary's

We had a wonderful time celebrating the Church's birthday in St Mary's Church; packed with Christians of all ages and denominations, including some of our



Ukrainian friends. Using the image of a birthday cake, we remembered how the Holy Spirit came the first time with fire and wind and a multitude of languages to share the good news of Jesus' life, death and resurrection so that we could all be reconciled to God and have new life in Him!

Schools' work

After months of successful video assemblies, my team is relieved to hear that this week's will be the last one! I'm finally allowed back into schools in person, with both Magor and Undy inviting me to come on Thursdays from September! Indeed this term I've had the joy of meeting 100 children aged 4-6 at Undy Primary once a fortnight, picking up the story of Peter from his breakfast with Jesus on the beach through Pentecost to the angel rescuing him from prison. The children enjoy the interaction, and can now all recite "Jesus is alive. Jesus can do anything!". Here's praying they remember that throughout their lives!



I've also been invited in to Magor, Undy and Archbishop Rowan Williams schools to give out Scripture Union booklets "It's Your Move" to help Year 6 children with their move up to comp. They help children consider friendship and who to ask for help, as well as allowing me to explore Psalm 139 with the children and remember that God knows all about them and yet still loves them and is always on hand to help. I have extra copies, so if any of you know other children in Year 6 who would like one, please ask!

Sunbeams, our babies and toddler group, have also been considering these stories and the adults are now much more willing to participate which is great. We have been able to meet outside in the warmer weather and it's been lovely to see the children enjoying the garden



too! One family also joined us for our Father's Day service as we explored the story of the Prodigal Son and saw how much Father God loves us.

Our after school club, **Superheroes**, has been going from strength to strength! The children have enjoyed exploring these same stories, and learning how Jesus is still at work today through the Holy Spirit. Many are excited to be joining us with their parents for a Family



Camp in the church garden 15th-17th July so we can explore the Gospel together – and prepare the Family Service!



Family Fun

We joined in the Jubilee Celebrations with a Family Fun day on the theme of Kings and Queens, thinking about our Queen and how Jesus is her King, exploring what it means to make Jesus our King. We're planning to return to Water Fun and the Teddy Bear's picnic in the summer and maybe even a coach trip to Weston – watch this space!

Ukrainian English

We have also been able to support our Ukrainian friends staying in the Ty Hotel with English classes on a Thursday morning 10:30-12. Come and join us to find out more – and bring cake!

Praying you are able to spend some time in God's beautiful creation this summer, and find rest and joy in His presence!

Tomi



New Members

Andrew Leighton

I grew up in a small village in Hertfordshire and by the time I was 7, my three (older) siblings and I were all going to different schools. In my case my parents took me out of the village primary school and, even though they were not churchgoers, put me in a Church of England primary school 4 miles away; I had to go by bus.



I am not sure when I came to know Jesus as my saviour. While at that school I had at least one dramatic and immediate answer to a prayer for help; also I found myself moved to tears at some of the hymns we sang, even though I did not always know exactly what they meant! It was many years later, while in Coventry, during the first term of my polytechnic degree course, that in a state of extreme loneliness, and feeling that life was totally without purpose or meaning, I cried out to God again. Within a few weeks my life had been turned around and I had set out on the path of Christian growth, which I have been travelling ever since. It was while in Coventry that I was baptized.

After graduating, my first job brought me to London, where I maintained test equipment in a factory for valves – most of which were for military applications. It was very exciting work. I made lots of friends in both Coventry and London, many of whom I am still in touch with. Going on walking trips, to escape London for a few days, was one of the activities that brought us close together. Walking still gives me great enjoyment.

While in London I married Chris, and a year or so later we moved to a cottage near Chepstow, with me then working in Bristol. The world had become digital, and the excitement in work was giving way to perplexity! It was time to start a new career and eventually I ended up running my own business, offering consultancy services. Meanwhile our daughter Heather had arrived, and our second daughter, Natalya, had been still-born. Out of that still-birth a charity was born, though that had not been our initial intention. Natalya's Fund is still running today, now with Heather on the board of trustees.

While a teenager, with a passion for an ever-broadening range of music, I had signed up to folk guitar lessons. Over the years I gradually improved enough to perform one or two songs at a time, playing and/or singing in various ensembles to small audiences. Then came a gap of about 30 years

during which I hardly even picked up a guitar. However, after joining The Highway, an independent house-church based locally at Wilcrick, I occasionally started playing again to lead worship.

By now we were living in Redwick and eventually I sensed that God was calling me to join Chris in worship at Ebenezer, where I now enjoy a special blend of giving and receiving within the Body of Christ. Thank you for welcoming me into membership, and for the hospitality I have enjoyed over the years.

Sandra Williams

I was born at West End Farm in Undy and my grandfather was George Pritchard one of the founder members and Life Deacon at Magor. I regularly attended Sunday school and was baptised on Easter Sunday in 1968 and became a member of the church. During this time I was a Sunday school teacher in the primary department, a founder member of the "coffee bar" Youth Group and sang with the church choir. For a while I drove the coach bringing youngsters from Caldicot to Sunday school in Magor. Later I became a Deacon and organised Christmas dinners for the whole church. (Ed - many of us have very fond memories of those Christmas miracles!)



In 1993 I married Anthony Williams and moved to Gaerllwyd farm near Shirenewton, transferring my membership to Gaerllwyd Baptist church. After Tony's death I became a street pastor in Chepstow and continued to worship at Gaerllwyd. More recently after suffering a stroke and being unable to drive, I moved back to Caldicot to be near the rest of the family. Partly as a result of the support from the Fellowship following the deaths of Robin and my mother I realised that I needed to be a full part of the family that is Magor Baptist church.

My life seems to have been divided by many highs and lows eg. before stroke and after stroke. I was always very busy but God has a way of slowing us down; I just wish He hadn't done it so drastically! Psalm 46 is my 'go to' passage "*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble*".

Just a few words

from Hazel Lucas

Recently, our sister-in-law Pam died and Ernest had the job, along with other relatives, of ordering a gravestone for her and his brother Arthur who died several years ago, childless and both Christians all their lives. Very helpfully, Pam had written their inscriptions herself. These had to be very brief as you pay by the letter for carving in stone. She had written about her husband, '*Wise and kind. Forever with his Lord.*' And for herself '*Forgiven much, she loved much. Still singing.*'

These inscriptions are absolutely brilliant, and conjure up accurately a picture of them both. All achievements, activities, sins, relationships and mistakes summarised in 7 words!



I found this very relevant as a group of former school friends and I have been buying a garden seat in memory of one of our number who died not long ago, to be located in the Salvation Army garden in her home town, a cause she supported by serving Christmas lunch to the homeless every year. She was an extremely reticent lady who never did anything to draw attention to herself and I can imagine her up in heaven, looking down in horror on our efforts to design a plaque in her memory, when all her life she tried to be forgotten! Inspired by Pam's efforts, I suggested '*A dear friend and neighbour. She spent her life serving the Lord and everyone she met.*' This was agreed upon as an accurate summary of our friend's life. I was pleased it was accepted as not all our group are active Christians and I wanted it to be acknowledged publicly that her faith was the foundation of my friend's life. Who knows who may read the plaque and think about it?

It did make me wonder what on earth friends and relatives would say about me. I'm glad I don't know! But at my present age (79) I am quite keen on a good ending. I think of all the things I have ever done, I want to end my life in love and harmony with those around me. But finally, it's only the opinion of the Lord that counts. Have I used my talents as He wished? Have I obeyed Him when he told me to move house, yet again, and develop a new set of friendships and opportunities for service? Was I a good wife and mother? Did I teach my pupils well and help them enjoy my subject without treating them badly in any way? Certainly not, in every respect, but at the end, many mistakes are forgotten and forgiven, and the overall effect is what is remembered. He paid the price for me.

Recently I've been reading 2 Corinthians in my daily Bible study. The apostle Paul wrote letters to his converts, from prison, because he loved them and really cared that they were growing as Christians and understood and obeyed God's Word in every aspect of their lives. He was in prison because he wouldn't compromise the truth of the gospel, and couldn't be defeated in argument by his opponents. He argued with the Corinthians, from a distance, because of the compromise with the sins of the society around them, in their lives. He had faced a horrendous catalogue of sufferings in his service to Christ. (2 Cor. 11:20 - 29). After his death, he must have brought millions of people to Christ over the last 20 centuries through his writing. He would be amazed – probably is! But what a legacy. How on earth could you summarise his life in a few words? *'Faithful to his Lord until the end, he finished the race well. Still winning people for Christ.'* Our legacy cannot possibly be as world-changing as his, but it can still be the best that we can manage, whatever our age and talents. God alone knows what the impact of our lives will be, but whatever the outcome, our lives matter. We can all aim at the same thing – be faithful to the Lord until the end (without compromise) and finish our own races well!



QUEENHOOD: A Poem for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee



I

An old-fashioned word, coined in a bygone world.
It is a taking hold and a letting go,
girlhood left behind like a favourite toy,
irreversible step over invisible brink.
A new frock will be made, which is a country
hemmed with the white lace of its shores,
and here is a vast garden of weald and wold,
mountain and fell, lake, loch, cwm.
It is constancy and it is change:
the age of clockwork morphs into digital days,
but the song of the blackbird remains the same.

II

Queenhood: a long winding procession
from the abbey door to the abbey door.
Queenhood: vows taken among bibles and blades,
beneath braided banners and heralding horns;
the anointment of hand, breast, head, with oil

of cinnamon, orange, musk and rose; promises
sworn in secret under tented gold
so daylight won't frighten the magic away,
too sacred by far for the camera to see.
It is an undressing first then a dressing up,
a shedding of plain white cloth then the putting on
of a linen gown and the supertunica – dazzling gold foil
lined with crimson silk. Man will walk
on the moon, great elms will fail and fall.
But a knife's still a knife. A fork's still a fork.

III

So the emblems and signs of royalty are produced:
the gilded spurs; the blued steel sword – like a sliver
of deep space drawn from the scabbard of night –
to punish and protect; bracelets to each wrist,
sincerity and wisdom – both armour and bond.
Love is still love is still love, and war is war.

IV

And indestructible towers will atomise in a blink.
The God particle will be flushed from its hiding place.
The sound barrier will twang with passenger planes.
Civilisation will graft its collected thoughts
onto silicon wafers, laureates will pass through court . . .
But Taurus, the bull, on its heavenly tour,
will breach the same horizon at the given hour.

V

Queenhood: it is the skies, it is also the soil
of the land. It is life behind glass walls
and fortified stones. Robe and stole are lifted
onto your shoulders – both shield and yoke.

Motherhood and womanhood will be taken as read.
'Multitasking' will be canonised as a new word.

VI

It is an honouring, but also an honour.
In the flare and blur of an old film
ghostly knights and chess-piece bishops deliver
the unearthly orb, with its pearled equator
and polished realms, into your open palm;
and pass you the sceptre and rod of mercy
and justice, one bearing the cross, one plumed
with a white dove; and load your fourth finger
with a ring that makes you the nation's bride;
and offer the white kid glove with its scrollwork tattoo
of thistles and shamrocks, oak leaves and acorns;
then finally furnish your head with the crown –
jewelled with history, dense with glory –
both owned and loaned at the same time.

Do those burnished relics still hold
the fingerprints of a twenty-seven-year-old?

VIII

A priceless freight for a young woman to bear,
but, draped and adorned, a monarch walks forward
into the sideways weather of oncoming years.
And the heavy cargoes of church and state
lighten with each step, syrupy old gold
transmuted to platinum, alchemy redefined.
Queenhood: it is law and lore, the dream life
and the documentary, a truthful fantasy.
For generations we will not know such majesty.

By Simon Armitage, Poet Laureate

ROCKET 2 Kings 4:39

One of the Arabic names for herbs in the Bible, includes the generic name for rocket. It is a field weed in parts of the Mediterranean, North Africa and Israel, but used as a vegetable. The seeds have a sharp taste, as do the leaves.

ONION Numbers 11:5

The onion we know is unlike its primitive predecessor. The onion which was originally cultivated was probably the Egyptian onion, which produced several small onions with a thick stalk.

LEEK Numbers 11:5

The origin of the leek is unknown as it was unrecognised in the wild. Leeks of the Bible (probably more like onions) have developed into what we might recognize, through cultivation and cross fertilization.

GARLIC Numbers 11:5

Still very popular in the diets of the Mediterranean and many other countries today, the ever popular garlic was widely cultivated in Egypt during Moses' time.

CAPERS Ecclesiastes 12:5 (Mentioned in some translations.)

This plant grows well in dry stony ground and is widespread in the Mediterranean. Large fragrant flowers give way to the fruits we know which are pickled in vinegar.

References D Smit Plants of the Bible

FN Hepper Planting a Bible Garden

June 1972

More and more children were coming to the Sunday School, exacerbating the accommodation problem.

A rounders knock-out competition was to be held in the orchard at the rear of the church, by kind permission of Mr George Williams. Costing 10p to enter, there would also be a collection from spectators in aid of the Extension Fund. However, the July magazine noted that bad weather caused it to be cancelled.

July

The treasurer of the Extension Fund reported that the May sausage sizzle at Magor seawall had been attended by over 50 people and raised £11.21. There would be another sausage sizzle in August.

Sunday trading – the May church meeting had decided to discontinue selling books & greeting cards on Sundays. The June meeting was anxious to ascertain whether members would object to the display of such items, without any sales.

Proposed Caldicot Baptist church – residents of Neddern Way were opposing the establishment of a Baptist church at the end of their road. On the advice of the county planning department, questionnaires were sent to local residents. Of the 21 replies, seven were in favour and 14 against. Their chief objection was the increase in traffic along Neddern Way and the danger to children. Councillor Wheeler said that the church was badly needed in Caldicot saying, "it does a lot of good work, particularly where children are concerned". Councillor Thomas asked, "are the residents aware that their area is going to be developed anyway? There will automatically be an increase in traffic then". Chepstow Rural District Housing Committee decided to press for the site on behalf of the Baptist church.

There was an article about the 42-year-old astronaut James Irwin of Apollo 15, who was pulling out of the space programme to become an evangelist. He was the first Baptist to fly in space and, after his return, went on a goodwill tour of Europe, including visits into Eastern Europe, taking Bibles in Hungarian and Polish as gifts.

The 'Wheel Get You There' fund, organized by the Young People's Bible Class, reported meagre support during the past year. The minibus,

purchased by the fund, was getting old; it had been inspected by Magor Engineers who said it should be possible to run it until the end of June 1973, giving the church 12 months to consider buying another one. The minibus brought many people into the church and was also a powerful witness throughout the district. They have only ever had one donation from church funds (three years ago), but recently the Monmouthshire English Baptist Association gave £50, enabling the brakes to be re-lined and a new clutch and flywheel to be installed. It would cost another £50 to insure it and then there was still the cost of running it. They acknowledged that it was hard to have fundraising events as there were so many for the Extension Fund. Nonetheless, the August magazine advertised three events - a mystery coach trip (tickets 50p) with a picnic supper (available to purchase), a coffee morning, and a sponsored hymn singing (the previous one raised over £50).

AUGUST

The Sunday School outing to Rest Bay and Coney Beach, Porthcawl, attracted c.170 people.

Magor may no longer be a village but in 1972 it came second in the Magor & St Mellons Rural District 'Best Kept Village' competition for villages of over 400. They received a prize of £5.



The back cover had this photo of Miss Ada Somerville Reeves at the organ on her 87th birthday:

Ada, daughter of John & Matilda Reeves, was born on 24 June 1885 at Shirenewton, but the 1891 and 1901 censuses show her living at Caerleon with her great aunt and aunt, Ann Jones and Martha Barnaby. After her great aunt Ann died, Martha and Ada are shown still living in the same house on the 1911 and 1921 censuses. In 1934 a local directory listed the property (7 Castle Street, next to the Baptist Chapel) as The Manse, with Martha the householder. On the 1939 Register it was listed as the Baptist Manse and was empty. Martha & Ada had moved to Wern Deg, Undy, where they both lived until they died: Martha on 11 February 1954, and Ada on 5 September 1973.

Local press reports show that Ada passed various Trinity College senior music exams between 1900 and 1906. She also accompanied the Baptist Choir (of 70-80 voices) at their rehearsals and performances. There is a press report in December 1907 of their performance, in Caerleon's former Industrial School's dining hall, of George Root's Cantata *Daniel*, with words by Fanny Crosby (who wrote many hymns, including *To God be the Glory*). Another press report records her playing for a wedding at Caerleon Baptist Church in 1912. Living next door, she was probably their regular organist. When Ada moved to Undy, she became our organist. She is remembered as a very quiet and unassuming lady who played the organ beautifully. She was an Associate of Trinity College London, and taught many people to play the piano. Perhaps she taught you?

By an amazing coincidence, that organ which Ada played in Caerleon is now not far from Magor. When the Caerleon chapel closed in the early 1980s, the organ was saved and installed in St Michael's Church, Abertillery, whilst their organ was being rebuilt. It was then stored, in bits, in the tower at Christchurch, Aberbeeg, from where Mark Lewis bought it in 1992. After storage in his father's garage at Caldicot, he sold it to St Thomas' church, Redwick, where he then installed it and where it remains to this day! The organ was made by William Sweetland of Bath (1822-1910). Look out for further events at Redwick in September to celebrate the bicentenary of Sweetland's birth.

Greetings from Peter Kasozi in Uganda

Dear John, allow me to congratulate you and Ebenezer Baptist Church on your 206th anniversary. Your testimony to the world for all that time has made huge impact on the community and a harvest for the kingdom. Since we got to know you we have seen Richard, Linda and Harry as the pastors who have been special gifts to you.

Richard introduced us to Magor and he led a team to visit us. This consolidated our friendship and we have been blessed in so many ways. God bless Magor.

(Ed:since 2006 Magor has been able to send nearly £200,000 for the work in Uganda)

Turning guns into garden tools in the DRC - from Tearfund

How melting guns into garden tools has created a much-needed message of peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



At the heart of the event was a prophetic demonstration of death to life. Metal from decommissioned guns was melted down into garden tools in order to promote a much-needed message of peace. The garden tools will be used in an agricultural programme run by our local partner, Peace Lives Centre, where young people who were involved in violence are rehabilitated.

The inspiration for the demonstration came from the following Bible verse from the book of Isaiah: *'They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.'* (Isaiah 2:4)

'The event was a wonderful harmony of joy and solemnity; of people from all walks of life coming together to prophetically declare peace for the nation of the DRC,' shares Poppy Anguandia, Tearfund's Deputy Country Director for the DRC.

'We heard powerful testimonies from child soldiers who have escaped the violence of armed groups. Everyone had an opportunity to beat decommissioned guns, and then to plant a tree using the garden tool made from the gun, in order to prophesy new life.'

More information from www.tearfund.org



My Hope is Built on Nothing Less

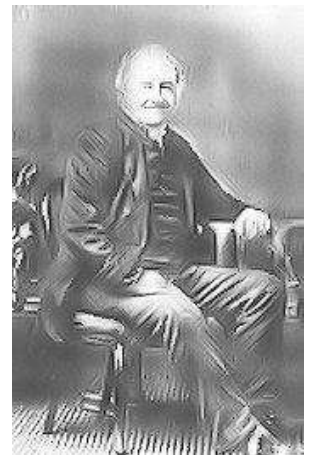
At the beginning of the brief history of

"REHOBOTH" BAPTIST CHAPEL, NEW STREET,
HORSHAM 1834 - 1984

are the details of how they called their first Minister.

*"Having been provided with a building of their own, the Church felt that it was the Lord's will for them to seek for a minister who would take the oversight as Pastor. Several men occupied the pulpit, but none stayed very long until the year 1848, when **Edward Mote** accepted the Pastorate. Pastor Mote's preaching was accompanied by Divine Power and considerable blessing rested upon his labours. The Church also adopted the selection of hymns by him."*

Edward Mote was possibly an unlikely candidate to become the church's minister. He had grown up in a public house with parents who completely rejected anything to do with Christianity. When he started work, he was apprenticed to a cabinetmaker who encouraged him to attend the local church and at the age of 18 he was baptised. Edward Mote became a skilled cabinetmaker and ran his own very successful business until, in his early 50's, he became a Baptist minister, and was called to Horsham, where he ministered for 26 years.



Following his conversion and baptism Edward Mote gradually became a poet and hymn writer. The letter he wrote to the Gospel Herald paper explained the background to writing of his most famous hymn "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less" -

"One morning it came into my mind as I went to labour, to write an hymn on the 'Gracious Experience of a Christian.' As I went up Holborn I had the chorus,

*'On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.'*

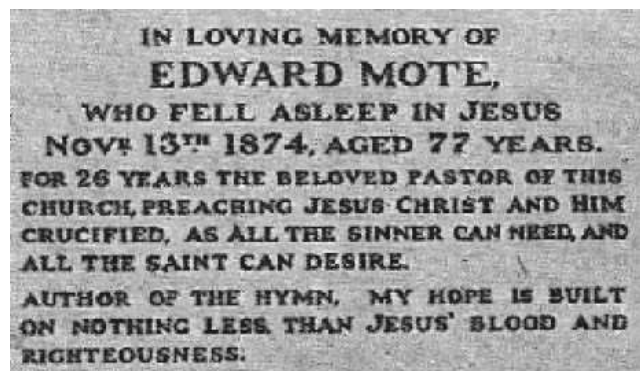
In the day I had four first verses complete, and wrote them off. On the Sabbath following I met brother King as I came out of Lisle Street Meeting . . . who informed me that his wife was very ill, and asked me to call and see her. I had an early tea, and called afterwards. He said that it was his usual

custom to sing a hymn, read a portion, and engage in prayer, before he went to meeting. He looked for his hymnbook but could find it nowhere. I said, 'I have some verses in my pocket; if he liked, we would sing them.' We did; and his wife enjoyed them so much, that after service he asked me, as a favour, to leave a copy of them for his wife. I went home, and by the fireside composed the last two verses, wrote the whole off, and took them to sister King. . . As these verses so met the dying woman's case, my attention to them was the more arrested, and I had a thousand printed for distribution."

Edward Mote in the course of his life wrote over 100 hymns and published a number of books and pamphlets of hymns.

Nearly 140 years after Edward's death **Hillsong** led worship in Stockholm, not long after the deadly massacre in Norway in 2011 (77 were killed). They were seeking out words and tunes to comfort and reassure people in shock, fear, uncertainty and grief. The outcome was the song we know and sing as *Cornerstone*. They constructed a new melody and chorus around the strong words of Edward Mote's testimony: *"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' love and righteousness."* This certainty, from the hymn, spoke to their hearts as they restructured the melody for the verses and wrote a chorus.

A fitting tribute to Edward Mote's hymn is the memorial tablet inside Rehoboth Baptist church which includes the first lines of his most famous hymn.



The church history reports-

"The beloved Pastor of the Church, Mr. Edward Mote, after an illness of about three months, sweetly fell asleep in Jesus on November 13th, 1874, aged 77 years and nearly 10 months. His dying lips gave utterance to the words: 'Precious blood, precious blood, that makes peace with God.'"

We thank God that we have gained so much by being able to worship using the words that both Edward Mote wrote and how Hillsong have used them in a modern presentation.

Christine Miles

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