

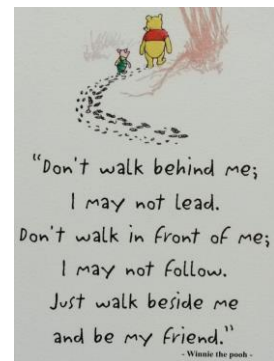
But there is a friend

May 2019



**A person with unfaithful friends soon comes to ruin.
But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
Proverbs 18:24 (NirV)**

Friends. We all need them and most of us have them, just one or maybe more. Pete and I are blessed with always having been surrounded by good friends, those whose company we enjoy, people with whom we laugh, share concerns, sometimes weep together and at times give or receive words of gentle rebuke spoken in love. Just the other day we had a brief visit from a friend whom Christine has known since the age of 4; we hadn't seen her and her husband since the summer of 2017 but it could just as easily have been yesterday as we picked up effortlessly on previous conversations and shared history.



Friends. Some people have no friends or they have so-called friends who frequently disappoint, upset or even reject them. For people with learning disabilities whose social circle may be extremely limited this can be their experience and, as a result, they may feel lonely and isolated. Most readers will know that we are keen for churches to be more welcoming and accessible to everyone, especially those with learning disabilities, in main services and where possible in smaller groups too. Perhaps your church isn't able or ready to run such a group but had you thought instead about offering a safe place for a couple of hours a week, a comfortable room on church premises where people with learning disabilities can come for a tea or coffee (biscuits or cakes would be appreciated too!) and a chat? This is a project that will draw people from the margins into the warmth of the church family, helping your church to be a friendship hub where all are welcome. Just one word of caution though, be sure that such an activity meets the approval of your church's Safeguarding Officer. For guidelines,

see <https://thirtyoneeight.org/> or your church/denomination's Safeguarding policy (ours is <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/safeguarding/>) for plenty of useful advice.



Thank you for your prayers and support over the past month. We had a good week at Word Alive in North Wales, seeing our guests engaging with the main learning points of 2 Timothy (as in the main morning Bible readings). At the first mealtime we noticed a family with two daughters with Downs Syndrome, one of whom was dancing around. Not knowing their ages, we suggested to the mum that they might enjoy our Count Everyone celebrations and so it was that at every celebration their lively, delightful teenager would arrive, supported one-to-one because of her complex needs by Mum or elder sister. The daughter's face was a joy to behold as she joined in with the varied programme of each session. On the final day, the mum expressed her relief at not feeling the need to apologise for her daughter and that we had made Word Alive "work" for them. We think they'll be back!

Here are some of our ...

April highlights:

- The Reading Prospects groups' Easter celebration with its poignant re-enactment of the events of that first Easter weekend
- Pete preached on 'Caring for people with learning disabilities', as part of a series on caring, at our old church in St Albans and we both took part in the Prospects meeting later on. It was encouraging to see new people as well as old friends.
- The opportunity to speak about what we do and why at Hook Life Church – such a warm welcome and some incisive questions such as, "What do you do to relax?"
- We called in at the Allsorts Easter craft and games evening at Hope Church, Oswestry. Good to catch up with friends and supporters, as well as playing the 'flying' game! That was a new one for us.
- Word Alive, good attendance and response despite a difficult subject; thankful for the return visit of folk from local day services and they have already asked for next year's dates!
- Good Friday service of reflection at St Nic's
- Prom Praise at the Royal Albert Hall with the All Souls Orchestra, massed choirs and special guests – what an uplifting evening!

Friends with Count Everyone In

It was not our original intention to build a network of CEI groups but, in response to requests, we have a 'Friends with CEI' scheme up and running. It does not preclude any church or group from partnerships with other organisations but it does provide direct access to Count Everyone In which, for England and Wales, we believe to be the only nationwide Christian learning disability ministry support organisation. There is no set fee but we ask you to consider donations on an annual or monthly basis. As time goes on there will be more benefits to being 'friends with CEI' (such as branded clothing and access to a members-only section of the website) but, for the moment, we offer direct access for advice, specific prayer, a personal relationship with churches and groups, plus visits as appropriate to preach, speak etc. Please contact us if you are interested.





Volunteering with Count Everyone In

Thank you to everyone who responded to our request for volunteers for Creation Fest in Cornwall this summer. If you are still interested, please have a conversation with us before registering at https://creationfestuk.brushfire.com/2019/449265?mc_cid=683c383632&mc_eid=ef29acea99 See <http://www.creationfest.org.uk/> for more details about the event itself.

We are grateful for offers of help at other events too. In general, we ask that volunteers should have attended one of our Know & Grow training days (Day 1 minimum). Our greatest need is for worship leaders and musicians, also for men, but those categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive!

Greetings cards

Here's your monthly reminder about the wide range of well-priced greetings cards available from <https://www.flamingopaperie.co.uk/web/tuaphelps-jones>. Go to the Customer Club tab where you will find more details and can sign up. There are special offers from time to time and you will receive a small gift with your first order. Delivery is £3.50 but **free** for orders of £30 or over. Thank you Tia for supporting CEI from your sales!

Know and Grow training

We have 'Know and Grow' basic training days coming up in Plymouth, Yateley (Hampshire) and Newbury, followed later in the year by the advanced day at Farnham in Surrey and also at Crowborough, East Sussex in the New Year. If you are interested in attending one of these or, indeed, in arranging a training day at your own church, please get in touch. Our training is intended for individuals and churches interested in ministry for people with learning disabilities in the context of the local church and at Christian festivals but is also helpful for those wishing generally to improve their understanding and communication with people with such disabilities.

GDPR

We are legally required to keep on top of GDPR and our understanding is that we are holding your contact details at your own request for the purpose of sending you this newsletter. We also hold details relating to those who volunteer at events or attend training days. If you have any questions about this, or you wish to be removed from mailing lists etc, please let us know.

Accessible Bible reminder:

The New International Readers Version (NIRV) – accessible edition (New Testament only) is available at remarkably reasonable prices:

- Softback costs £7.99
- Hardback £9.99
- Mark's Gospel (softback) £2.00

Go to <https://www.biblicaeurope.com/bible-resources/category/new-testaments>

If you order a whole New Testament in either hardback or softback you can support Count Everyone In by entering PW in the discount box. Remember, if you are looking for the whole Bible in the NIRV it is available in smaller print online or from Christian bookshops.

Prayer points

- Thank God for Word Alive, our team and the guests, a great venue, helpful stewards and attentive techies, also the growing relationship with Word Alive leadership
- For inspiration (without too much perspiration!) as we put together programmes, meeting plans and teaching for upcoming festivals and events
- The ability to focus on present demands whilst planning for the future
- For the CEI team to expand so that we can make an inroad into the needs across the country for this ministry
- For a team to come together for Meet Monday, starting at our church in the autumn but with training booked for 13th July

May dates - correct at time of publication *:

Thursday 2nd

Churches for All meeting, Walsall

Saturday 4th

Coffee with former Prospects colleagues in Reading

Tuesday 7th

Recording local radio interview

Wednesday 8th

Eastleigh Churches Together ministers' fraternal – speaking on accessibility in the church

Thursday 9th

Herts, Beds & Cambs Prayer & Encouragement meeting in Cambridge

Thursday 16th

Meeting with co-workers

Saturday 18th

Travel to Worthing

Sunday 19th

Speaking at 15th anniversary of Shine group, Worthing Baptist Church 3pm

Thursday 23rd

Surrey Prayer & Encouragement meeting in Guildford

Tuesday 28th

Travel to Upminster and set up for 2-day event at Cranham Baptist Church

Wednesday 29th

Friends of Jesus – day 1

Thursday 30th

Friends of Jesus – day 2

Friday 31st

Final preparations for Spring Harvest holiday week
– we leave on Saturday

*Please note that we try to take Mondays off, especially following weekends when we have been working.

Future events to October 2019

Mon 3 – Mon 10 June

Holiday week in France, Le Pas
Opton <https://www.springharvestholidays.com/feature-weeks/everyone/>

Sat 22 June

Celebration Day, St Martins, 127 Suez Rd, Cambridge
CB13QD cacole2607@gmail.com

Sat 29 June

Know & Grow 1, Crownhill Methodist Church, Plymouth PL6
5AG claire_j_harris2003@yahoo.com

Sat 6 July

Know & Grow 1, St Peter's Church, Oaklands, Yateley GU46 7LR

Sat 13 July

Know & Grow 1, St Nicolas, West Mills, Newbury RG14
5HG counteveryonein@gmail.com

Sat 20 – Fri 26 July

Keswick Convention, St Herbert's School,
Keswick counteveryonein@gmail.com

Sat 3 – Fri 9 August

Creation Fest, Wadebridge,
Cornwall <http://www.creationfest.org.uk/>

Thurs 22 – Sun 25 August

Westpoint (Newfrontiers), Westpoint, Exeter
<https://www.commission-together.org/westpoint/>

Sat 5 Oct

Portsmouth Area Celebration Day, King's Church, Somers Rd,
Portsmouth PO5 4QA Janneke@thekings.church

Sat 12 Oct

Know & Grow 2, Farnham Baptist Church, The Hart, Farnham, GU9
7HA mbennett@evoraglobal.com

Tues 15-Thurs 17 Oct

Christian Resources Exhibition, Sandown Park,
Portsmouth Rd, Esher KT10 9AJ

Sat 19 Oct

Alive Together Celebration, Kings Centre, Chessington KT9 2GZ



All our ministry is self-financed so, if you wish to support, you can give directly to us or online via **give.net**

Simply use the link below on your PC, phone or tablet and you will be taken to our **give.net** page, then follow the instructions. www.give.net/20043120

Thank you for your prayers and support. Please feel free to get in touch and do let us know if we can pray for you.

Please be assured that your data is not passed to any third parties. You receive these newsletters because you have requested them but please free to unsubscribe (below) at any time, should you wish.

Social media - See www.counteveryonein.org.uk and you can also keep up with us on Facebook and Twitter. Please follow, like and share.

Love and blessings,

Pete & Christine