

Holyhead Road United Reformed Church

Sunday 20 September 2020



We are planning to open the building for worship on the morning of September 27th. Please refer to the information sheet distributed last week, or to the church website.

Ministers: Revd Debbie Brown 024 7659 6433; brown_debbie@sky.com
Revd Bill Young 024 7671 7223; bill@morvern.com

Lectionary readings this week: Jonah 3: 10-4: 11; Psalm 145: 1-8; Philippians 1: 21-30;
Matthew 20: 1-16

Communicating and Worshipping:

Please contact the Ministers or Elders with any concerns or prayer requests.

A 'Podcast' service uploaded every Saturday by **Revd Bill Young** is available to listen to at revdbill.uk/worship-material. The podcast link also allows for downloading a service transcript.

Revd Debbie Brown will lead phone-in worship every Sunday morning at 11:15. You can join on any telephone by calling the number **0330 606 0403** and listening to the instructions. When you are asked for it, enter the following access code on your phone pad: **442786#**.

Further details regarding the reopening of church have previously been distributed on a separate information sheet and via the church website – please let your Elder know if you have not received this or cannot access it. Worship will begin at 10.30, but due to the need for hygiene precautions etc., you are advised to arrive in good time.

A message from Debbie:

Dear Friends

you may have heard a lot about the rise of domestic abuse during lockdown and the importance of raising awareness and for people experiencing abuse to seek help. This applies to all forms of abuse as human trafficking has been on the rise. Many of you know that at the end of last year I spent my Sabbatical working with people and organisations who raise awareness of human trafficking, support those who have been affected and who look to try to eradicate this abuse. My report is on the following page.

Let us continue to stay alert, support where we can and pray for all entrapped.

God bless.

Love, Debbie



SABBATICAL REPORT (November 2019 - February 2020)

Human trafficking organisation's research has shown there are more slaves in the world today than at any other point in human history with an estimated 27 million in bondage across the globe. Men, women and children are being exploited for manual and sexual labour against their will. I am very passionate about working towards trying to eradicate human trafficking however this is not enough as passion is limited if we are not willing to learn and change by raising awareness and looking at ways in which to tackle human trafficking.

In order to be equipped physically, emotionally and spiritually in training and working with organisations I began my sabbatical in November with a retreat on 'Encountering the Kingdom' followed by a leader's conference on 'Refreshing Your Ministry: Walking in the Spirit.' Up until the end of January I then spent time visiting, working and training with human trafficking groups (including those that have safe houses), border force, and attending meetings and conferences with some time to read and worship at different churches.

When thinking about what human trafficking looks like and how it affects our communities most of the research time was spent with Stop the Traffik in Liverpool, London and Amsterdam. A statistics findings and other information has been presented to my churches and the Synod. The gathering of information and data plus looking at the different types of trafficking that exist put together in a presentation helps to raise awareness and educate people on what is happening on our own doorsteps and around the world.

Stop the Traffik is a global movement fighting to prevent, protect and prosecute on behalf of trafficked people all around the world. Intelligence-led prevention is part of Stop the Traffik's work and they now have an app which is the first of its kind in combining community empowerment, big data management and anti-trafficking expertise to disrupt, combat and prevent the global issues of human trafficking, modern slavery and exploitation.

We need to raise our voices and work to end this horrific trade. Trade is not really the word that should be used because trade suggests a dignified worthy job. This is an atrocity of the worst kind and needs to stop. Wherever slavery exists, for the love of humanity, we should work to stamp it out.

"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

"Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice (Isaiah 1:17)

*"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."
(James 1:27)*

Rev'd D. Brown (REVEREND DEBBIE BROWN)

STOP THE TRAFFIK

Stop the Traffik's story began in India when Phil worked at a day centre for vulnerable children in Mumbai, India. Despite an economic boom and thriving garment industry absolute poverty affects huge numbers of people living in India. In Mumbai the Thane train station acts as a housing for hundreds of families and the day centre offers refuge to children and young people living on the station and neighbouring slums.

Back in 2,000 a 7- & 9-year-old brother and sister who lived with their parents on Thane Station started visiting the centre. After a few months they stopped attending. Becoming concerned Phil went to the station to ask the children's father if they children were alright. The children had been sold to a nice man offering work, said the father, for the equivalent of \$20. The children have never been seen since. Nobody knows what happened to them.

In that area of Mumbai children often disappeared. They are kidnapped or sold into prostitution, forced labour, adoption or even child sacrifices. Phil was so deeply affected by what had happened that he knew he had to do all he could to prevent it happening to others. At the same time a number of UK organisations wanted to work together to commemorate the 2007 Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

Stories and passions from around the world merged together and S.T.T. was born. Initially S.T.T. was set up as a 2-year campaign to: Host Freedom Day and to petition. In 2007 over 1.5 million people had signed the declaration and got involved. Instead of ending with a following of 1.5 million activists S.T.T. became an independent international charity. Steve Chalke, chair of S.T.T, was appointed UN Special Advisor on Community Action Against Trafficking. S.T.T. whilst not a Christian Organisation began with Christians involves people of all faiths and none. It is a global movement of over 1,000 organisations working through local communities in over fifty countries to prevent human trafficking, prosecute the traffickers and protect the victims.

S.T.T. emphasizes that human trafficking begins in communities and can be stopped by communities. It aims to inform and equip the communities, to raise awareness and ensure action to tackle human trafficking worldwide. Is looking to raise awareness in schools, workplaces and communities so that more is done to stop it and prevent people from being tricked or forced into modern day slavery. Men, women and children are trafficked within their own countries and across international borders. Trafficking affects every continent and every country. S.T.T. asks for individuals and society to see this crime, listen for it, talk about it and take action to disrupt this global system. Liverpool's group are looking to make Liverpool a traffic free city e.g. Taxi Drivers stickers - S.T.T. (Many forms of trafficking: sex, slavery, production)

With our help S.T.T. will grow and reach those at risk as well as inspire people to become voices against trafficking. Trafficking is the World's fastest growing global crime. Due to the hidden and illegal nature of human trafficking it is difficult to gather statistics. These figures may represent an underestimation but are the most credible and frequently quoted.

UNICEF - 1.2 million children trafficked every year. UN OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME - Fastest growing international crime and one of the largest sources of income for organized crime. US DEPARTMENT OF STATE IN PERSON'S REPORT 2007 - 600,00-800,000 men, women and children are trafficked across international borders each year. At least 20.9 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide (2012 Global Estimates of Forced Labour). There are even reports that some traffic groups are switching their cargo from drugs to human beings in search of high profits at lower risk. UN OFFICE. This has to stop.