



E-News



The General Conference of the New Church

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Rev'd Jack Dunion broadcasts his own online radio show every Sunday at 9am on Lomond Radio (formerly River Radio):
<https://lomondradio.co.uk/shows/rise-and-shine>

The link below allows you to catchup Rise & Shine programs:
www.mixcloud.com/RevJack/



Seaburn Dene 50th Anniversary Celebration

Lynne Griffiths Writes:

On 17th March 2024 over 50 people gathered at Seaburn Dene New Church to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our current building on Shields Road and what a lovely celebration it was!

The day started with a formal service led by Lynne Griffiths. We were delighted that the rainbows, brownies and guides leaders were in attendance with 1 rainbow valiantly carrying the flag down the aisle –

a lovely touch for our special day, cementing how important the church building is for our community.

The service started with an old hymn with a twist – ‘come and join the celebration’ had been re-written with lyrics reflecting Seaburn’s history and the special occasion – a joyous way to start in song!. What better way to start a celebration and get the brains working than some good-natured competition involving prizes of sweets! A quiz saw two teams battle it out and for those interested Lynne’s counting established approximately 2781 services had occurred over the last 50 years at Seaburn led by at least 71 different worship leaders.

Next we heard a little of the history of Seaburn Dene New Church and the importance and tenacity of Revd Goldsack in establishing a church in Sunderland from a room above a butchers shop, to his own home, to a small church and then in 1974 the opening of the current building – amazingly built and opened without a minister assigned to the church! The extension completed in 1990. This section was affectionately called “pantomime history” in Lynne’s notes for it involved audience participation (“oh yes it did!”).

A poignant and emotional moment in the service saw us reflect upon all 71 named worship leaders with their names read out above swirling orchestral music, remembering those no longer with us, thinking of those who could not be with us on the day and assembling in a group those present one by one till the photo attache

d was taken. We are so thankful for the blessing of each worship leader and for each person over the years who has worked so hard in the many roles needed in a church.

Lynne led us through her own personal reflections of her time at Seaburn as well as recognising it is not the bricks and mortar of a building that makes a church but the people and the activities offered that help form a community. How the Lord works through His church can and has changed lives at Seaburn and the contribution of Revd Bruce Jarvis over the many years of his service was recognised alongside the support that Seaburn has offered to many ordination students over the years. Seaburn has been blessed to see the Revd Becky Jarrett emerge after learning worship leading at Seaburn as well as Lynne Griffiths in her 2nd year currently of ordination training. This section concluded with a quote from Revd Leslie Chambers who had opened the church on 16th March 1974 in which he stated “I trust that it will be said of the church in Seaburn Dene that their banner could be seen, that there were people who were seeking what was right and true in the Lord’s name”. Here at Seaburn we can proudly say that we continue to fly our banner high with the increased number of community groups using the building, the community schemes we are able to support and run and the continuation of worship on a regular basis at the forefront of church life.

The service concluded with Margaret Cowie, Chairperson of the general conference, speaking to us about the hope she has for the future of the church if we allow to be led by the Lord and guided by the youth. Revd Jack Dunion, spiritual leader, then formally blessed the new 50th anniversary cushion now in place of the worship leaders chair and in his prayers sought a re-dedication of the building for the future. We were so grateful to have both Margaret and Jack join us for the day in formal capacities.

After the service it was time to plant the anniversary rose bush outside at the entrance to the church and Chris Chambers, son of Revd Leslie chambers who opened the church, did the honours of planting - a lovely moment of a link in history.

Next was an afternoon tea style buffet downstairs which was enjoyed by all, the decorations outside and inside the church also brining a sense of fun, joy and celebration with the number 50 featuring everywhere!. We then met upstairs for Revd Jarvis to cut the cake and lead us in raising our glasses to the future of Seaburn Dene New Church before rounding a lovely day off with singing accompanied by guitars and violin and then some good old country dancing before a final blessing.

Thank you so much to everybody who travelled from near and far to be part of our celebrations. It really made the day memorable. Thank you also to Nicky, Hazel and Heather and Lynne for all their hard work in preparing various elements of the day and to Revd Jarvis, Revd Jarratt and Jack R for the music. Now for the next 50 years and the next big announcement.....





Givaway

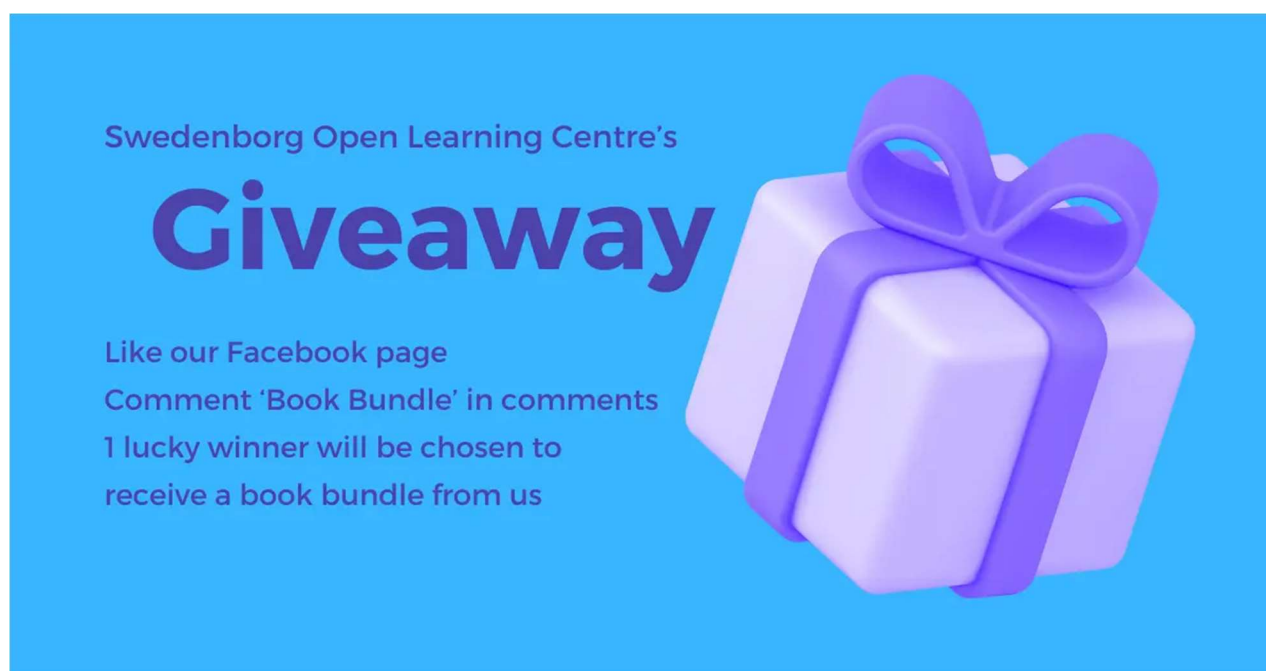
Melanie Bennett Writes:

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CALLING BUSY PEOPLE! COULD YOU.....?

If you want to get something done, ask a busy person... so the saying goes ...

And it's probably not far from the truth; that means Members of Conference are likely to be thinking of busy people who might be willing to serve as a Trustee of the General Conference.

For all the light-hearted tone of the above introduction, it's actually a serious question. Our constitution provides for there to be a Chairperson and Vice-chair, along with six Trustees, who form Conference Council. The Council, of course, is assisted by non-voting officers: our Spiritual Leader, the Secretary of the Ministers' Committee, the Company Secretary, and the Company Accountant. The current President of New Church College attends by invitation, and other people attend from time to time.

Please will you give serious thought to whether you might be willing to serve the Conference as a Trustee? Or encourage potential candidates? For too many years our Conference Council has not had a full membership. At the moment, there are just four Trustees. One of these is likely to retire at the 2024 Annual Meeting. Another's term of office finishes this year, as does the Vice-Chair's. Fortunately, these two are likely to stand for re-election.

If you're willing but not quite sure, why not contact the Chairperson (Margaret Cowie) or the Company Secretary (Natalie Welch) and ask to come along to a Council meeting. Most of the meetings are held on Zoom, but there is a residential meeting at Purley Chase in May.

Alternatively, you might like to come along to a Meet the Trustees Zoom session at 7.00pm on Thursday, 25th April to have a chat with some of us, and ask any questions you have in mind. Please contact Margaret Cowie (tel: 0141 328 0467, email: margaret.cowie@generalconference.org.uk), and she will send you a link.

Like all national bodies, there are duties that Trustees must carry out, but that is balanced by the other side of the work which is to care for our employed staff, and all our volunteers, all done with a sense that it is the Lord that we are serving. It is the good news of His Second Coming that we are endeavouring to place before people.

Yes, it's challenging, and requires dedication. But what better than to work with a group of people all of whom share that vision, and offer themselves to the Lord and His Church. Does it all sound rather serious? Well, we do take our work seriously. But there is plenty of fun and laughter, and we all greatly appreciate the friendship and fellowship we gain from working together for our beloved Church.

Please will you think seriously about this matter. The Lord is calling, the Church is calling. Will you see if you can help? Please!

In optimism from the current Trustees.