
Union Church News

November/December 2008

Bloggers sign up to the Ten Commandments of Blogging



Evangelical Alliance Press Release 29 September 2008

Ten cyberspace commandments are to be posted online to give bloggers a moral edge in a virtual age.

Based loosely on the real Ten Commandments from the Old Testament, the revamped version for guidance in online communication emerged from an event reflecting on the ethics of today's most popular form of public comment.

The commandments are intended to cause bloggers to consider the social impact of their blogging.

1. You shall not put your blog before your integrity.
2. You shall not make an idol of your blog.
3. You shall not misuse your screen name by using your anonymity to sin.
4. Remember the Sabbath day by taking one day off a week from your blog.
5. Honour your fellow-bloggers above yourselves and do not give undue significance to their mistakes.
6. You shall not murder someone else's honour, reputation or feelings.
7. You shall not use the web to commit or permit adultery in your mind.
8. You shall not steal another person's content.
9. You shall not give false testimony against your fellow-blogger.
10. You shall not covet your neighbour's blog ranking. Be content with your own content.

Godblogs, a gathering held by the Evangelical Alliance on 23 September, was designed to give Christian bloggers an opportunity to network face-to-face and to think through a Christian approach to blogging. The group, aged from 18 to 87, reflected

on how to honour God with their blogs and in their relationships online.

Krish Kandiah, Churches in Mission Executive Director said: "During the Godblogs event, we discussed ideas about how to communicate a code of best practice to Evangelical bloggers. As we talked it through, the Evangelical Alliance decided to write a tongue in cheek set of commandments for the wider blogosphere, based on the original Ten Commandments God gave his people.

"Unlike the original, these commandments are virtual rather than set in stone, but are offered to the blogging community as a way to link the Ten Commandments with the art of blogging.

"In the ever-changing information age, what we need is wisdom for life, and God communicates wisdom to our culture through the Bible on every issue from social justice to social networking."

Rev Mark Meynell, Senior Associate Minister for All Souls Church, Langham Place said: "The internet is merely the latest step in the evolution of human communication - and so like any other new medium, it presents us with huge opportunities as well as challenges.

"It is essential that Christians make the most of it, not least because we believe we have good news that is as relevant to those in cyberspace as it is for those in real space."

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A Christmas message from Mark

In these days of monetary uncertainty, let's get our values right

Dear Friends,

This year, for some of us, Christmas is going to feel different. Despite the best efforts of the retail sector to get us to part with our hard-earned cash, the effects of the credit crunch will mean fewer people blowing crazy amounts of money on the festive season.

The amazing thing about the whole banking crisis and the effects on the real economy is that it is all about perceptions of value.

Broadly speaking, when the value of a company's assets are outweighed by its liabilities, it is said to have become insolvent. In the complex and sometimes contrary world of International Banking, the valuing of assets and liabilities are far removed from simple calculations because they are subject to the vagaries of the market. In addition to this, the value of a listed company is reflected in its share price: if the perception of the market is that a bank is 'unsound' it will decrease in value whilst its liabilities remain constant or increase. In this way, when confidence is undermined, financial institutions that seemed to be rock solid can be revealed as a house of cards ready collapse at the slightest hint of the cold wind of change.

An illustration of this is provided by the architecture of traditional branches of High Street banks. Behind imposing stone façades, often in the classical style with Doric columns supporting imposing porticoes, are often simple brick buildings. The façade says, "This institution is powerful and solid, built to last for millennia"; the reality behind the thin stone shell is normally quite different.

It's easy to join in the open season on bankers

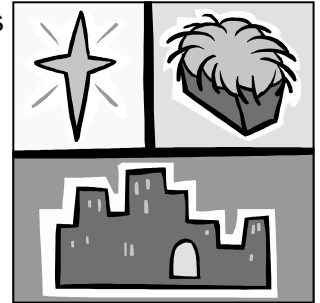
but most of them will be as much victims of the system as are the investors who will be losing out as their shares slump in value.

But what this shows us is that perceptions of value can be false and those things we think of as solid and dependable can be transient and fragile.

As Christmas approaches, those of us who are wealthy enough to have money in the stock market may not have as much disposable income to throw about as we previously had. If that is the case, we are still better off than most people. As a church we may also face a reduction in our income. But does the amount of money we expend determine the value of Christmas?

Obviously not: we come to celebrate the birth of the one who said about himself, "The son of man has nowhere to lay his head." Unlike us, Jesus had no money to invest, he was economically insignificant; yet he had more effect on more people than all the emperors of the Roman empire and all the bankers of our globalized economy. He was fragile and vulnerable, he played no power games but became a servant. He was, in the words of Isaiah, despised and rejected by men. He was, to use market terminology, grossly undervalued.

Yet an investment in Jesus and in the coming kingdom, whether personal or corporate, can never rust, decay or be spoiled. So this Christmas, some two millennia after the fragile servant king came into the world and left it, let's get our values right. Let's remember that those things that seem to be reliable and dependable



can be transient and passing. And those things that seem ethereal or difficult to grasp can be enduring and constant. As we come to worship Jesus, we come to the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and end; we come to one who was and is and is to come. Banks and markets may pass away but the Word of the Lord endures forever.

Wishing you a Christ-centered Christmas.

Mark

Finance report - October 2008

I am pleased to advise that, as at 30 September 2008, income exceeded expenditure by £2,502. My thanks to everyone who has contributed and continues to contribute to the finances of the church. I am currently preparing the budget for next year, for presentation at the Church Meeting in November.

Gift Aid

Gift Aid reclaimed continues to have a significant effect on our income (with just over £6,500 having been reclaimed for the tax year ended March 2008). Anyone paying UK income tax is eligible to donate in this way, at no additional cost to themselves. If you have not completed a Gift Aid Declaration and would like to do so, please let me know.

If you only pay a small amount of income tax and are unsure whether you are eligible to complete a form, I am very happy to discuss this with you. If you have already signed a form but the amount of income tax you pay has recently reduced, please let me know.

The Lord bless.

Christine

Flower Rota



November 2nd	Mrs M Wells
November 9th	Mrs F Newman
November 16th	Mrs E Banks
November 23rd	Mrs L Green
November 30th	Mrs R Dimsdale
December 7th	Miss J Knight
December 14th	Mrs E Tachauer
December 21st	Christmas
December 28th	Arrangement
January 4th	Mrs M Dodd

News in brief

Union Book Group



Our next meeting is on Thursday 13th November when we will be meeting at The Curry Inn, Station Road, to enjoy a meal together and discuss 'The Lighthouse' by PD James and 'No Time for Goodbye' by Linwood Barclay. Telephone Julie Baxter on 868799 for more information (or to book a place for the meal) or for a copy of the next book.

Union Church News on the internet



Don't forget, all editions of Union Church News are available to read on the Activities and Events page of the church website: www.unionchurch.co.uk

A Christmas Prayer

Loving God, giver of life and creator of love, we pray for those who have no gifts to open this Christmas, for parents who will struggle even to feed their children, for children who will have little reason to smile. May we who celebrate Christmas, become agents of Good News for them. We pray for those who do not look forward to this time of year, because of family circumstances, difficult memories and loneliness.

Lord Jesus, who came into our world, be close to them. May we who celebrate Christmas, truly represent you to those on our own doorstep. We thank you for the reminders of Christmas, for the truth that you have made yourself thoroughly at home in our midst, that we may call you Emmanuel, God with us. Keep us conscious of your loving and living presence, and make us channels of your grace, not just on Christmas Day, but every day. May we and the church in which we worship become ever more truly God's gift to the world.

Amen

www.baptist.org.uk

Sunday Club and Sunday Special

Sunday Special has got off to a good start this term with several new children joining us - some of whom already know the church from the Wednesday toddler group. Now that some of the secondary school young people no longer come to Sunday Special it is interesting to watch some of the younger ones taking on the leadership roles as team leaders, and helping the younger children to participate happily in all the activities we do.



Sunday Club is also settled into its routine now. The two younger classes seem to be working out effectively and the Architects - now an even larger group - have agreed a set of rules and code of behaviour with their leaders so that all will have the best opportunities for learning and building good relationships.

Our Love-in-a-Box project is well underway now and we hope to be able to report another good result in the next issue of Union Church News. Many thanks to all who have contributed money, gifts or filled boxes so far.



Sue Mumford

YClub730

September got the new term underway. We always take the opportunity at the start of each term to ask the young people what events they would like to do in the coming year. Sue and I then meet to put together a programme. There are some quite adventurous events planned, especially as we move into 2009.

So far this year we've enjoyed games evenings in the hall a couple of times, and on 12th October went to an N:Vision concert at Haywards Heath. Sophie picks up the story:

"The N:Vision concert on 12 October was really fun! YFriday, the band, were really great. Mark Ritchie, the speaker, was inspiring in his stories and they were funny too! It was really great and we got interviewed afterwards, which they might show on the N:Vision website [www.nvision.uk.net] or at other events."

We've a busy programme leading up to Christmas; we are planning the following events:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 9th November | LaserQuest |
| 23rd November | Hall - games evening |
| 7th December | Cinema |
| 21st December | Christmas Party |

Please check the church website for photos taken at some of these events.

Sean

TM TM, our Sunday evening group for sixth formers and above, continues to meet on alternate Sunday evenings to YClub730. They also attended the N:Vision concert at Haywards Heath.

Originally TM was an opportunity for the young people to meet socially but they have now decided that they would like it to become more structured, incorporating social time with Bible study and group discussion. Sean and I are looking forward to some

"lively" debates on Sunday evenings.

It was great to have Matt Scott and Andrew Benson join us over the summer whilst they were home from University, and we wish them well, along with Helen and Catherine Miller as they embark on another year. We feel that it is good to have something in place for these young adults to return to during their holidays, sending out the message that, as a church family, we value them whether they are at home or away.

Sue



Sunday Club and Sunday Special attendance prizes

3 August	Leyla	Sunday Special	15 stars
17 August	Maddie	Starlet	15 stars
5 October	Thomas	Starlet	30 stars
	Thea	Sunday Special	15 stars
	Sam	Sunday Special	5 stars

Kids' Bits

Can you find 30 books of the Bible hidden in this text? (Some of them do go over the ends of lines - or paragraphs!)

"There are 30 books of the Bible in this text. Can you find them?"

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends.

One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves.

There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph.

During a recent fund raising event which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi

lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal.

A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus; there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this text waiting to be found.

God Bless."

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If you get really stuck, the 30 books are listed on page 6!

Sudoku Challenge

						6		
			1		6	7		
		8		5		1		
		9			2			
8				9	3		4	
	3	1			7			9
2				3	9			
	4		7				8	
								5

A Time for Celebration
Council for World Mission
30 Years of Partnership

Saturday 6 December 2008
 2.00pm - 4.30pm
 Christchurch and Upton Chapel,
 Kennington Road, London
 (opposite Lambeth North
 Underground Station)

The South East Area of the Congregational Federation and the Thames North Synod and Southern Synod of the United Reformed Church are celebrating 30 years of partnership with churches around the world through the Council for World Mission.

Worship will include a focus on the Christingle in our global situation. The ribbon in different colours will feature the Environment and Climate Change, Justice and Peace and other issues.

Refreshments available.

If you would like to attend,
 please contact Christine Thomas
 or Norah Fletcher as soon as possible.

**Hidden Bible book names from page 5
 (in Bible, not puzzle, order):**

Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Judges, Ruth,
 Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Esther, Job,
 Lamentations, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos,
 Nahum, Malachi, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John,
 Acts, Romans, Timothy, Titus, Philemon,
 Hebrews, James, Peter, Revelation

**Advent Hope Concert
 – Christian Aid**

You are warmly invited to a very special Advent Hope concert – Carols by Candlelight – accompanied by Brighton and Hove City Brass Band on Thursday 4 December 2008 at 7.30pm in Lancing College Chapel, Lancing, West Sussex. Tickets cost £10 and include a complimentary glass of mulled wine.

All proceeds go to Christian Aid.

For tickets and further information call 01273 470504 or email southeast@christian-aid.org

**Strictly
 ‘T’
 Dancing**



at Union Church Hall
 Station Road, Heathfield

First Thursday of each month

2.00 pm to 4.00 pm

Fun, friendship and fitness

Price £2.00 donation

For more information contact

Les on 01435 862935

Union Church regular events

Monday	10.00am - 2.00pm 12.00noon - 1.30pm	Open Door - tea and coffee in the Coffee Lounge Open Door - lunches in the Church Hall
Tuesday	12.00noon (fortnightly - check diary on page 8) 6.00pm (term time only) 7.30pm (third Tuesday of each month)	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club Beavers in the Church Hall Prayer Meeting
Wednesday	1.30pm - 3.00pm (term time only) 4.30pm (term time only) 5.45pm (term time only) 7.00pm (term time only)	Parent & Toddler Group in the Church Hall Rainbows in the Church Hall Brownies in the Church Hall Guides in the Church Hall
Thursday	10.00am - 4.00pm 6.30pm (term time only)	Do Pop Inn - teas, coffees and light lunches in the Coffee Lounge Cubs in the Church Hall
Friday	2.30pm (first Friday of each month) 7.30pm (term time only) 7.30pm	Women's Fellowship Scouts in the Church Hall Street Pastors' Prayer Team in the Coffee Lounge
Saturday	8.30am	Prayer Meeting in the Coffee Lounge
Sunday	7.30pm (alternate fortnights) 7.30pm (alternate fortnights)	YClub730 - for Year 6 and above TM - Youth Fellowship for Year 11 and above

Book Review - John Glover

Cover to Cover

Authors: Selwyn Hughes
Trevor J Partridge

Publisher: CWR

ISBN: 978-1853454332



Selwyn Hughes will be known to many of you as the author of the Bible Reading notes 'Every Day With Jesus'.

In this book he and Trevor Partridge provide an overall introduction to the Bible in the form of a reading for every day of the year. Rather than read a snippet here or there, here is an opportunity to get an overview of Scripture and to build the foundation that will strengthen anyone's understanding of the faith.


"The Congregationalist" Magazine

From time to time you may see excerpts from this publication included in Union Church News. "The Congregationalist" is produced by the Congregational Federation, one of the two denominations we are affiliated to, and it is a very good read!

If you would like to read a copy or add your name to the list of people who currently subscribe to this publication, please speak to Christine Thomas.

The magazine is published bi-monthly and the cost of the annual subscription for 2009 has been held at the 2008 price of £12.60.

Church diary

November	Sunday 2	9.00am	Sunday Special		
		10.30am	Rev. Tony Powell		
		6.30pm	Window on the World		
	Tuesday 4	7.30pm	Deacons' Meeting		
	Friday 7	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship		
	Remembrance Sunday	Sunday 9	10.30am		Rev. Mark Welch (Holy communion)
			6.30pm		"Meeting God through Matthew" - please request a study guide from Mark if you don't already have one
		Tuesday 11	12 noon		Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
	Bible Sunday	Sunday 16	10.30am		Rev. Mark Welch
			6.30pm		Holy communion
Tuesday 18		7.30pm	Prayer Meeting		
Sunday 23		10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch		
		6.30pm	To be announced		
		Tuesday 25	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club	
Advent Sunday		7.30pm	Church Members' Meeting in the Coffee Lounge		
	Sunday 30	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch		
		6.30pm	alltogether@advent at Welcome Baptist Church - speaker Rev. David Coffey		
December	Tuesday 2	7.30pm	Deacons' Meeting		
	Friday 5	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship		
	Sunday 7	9.00am	Sunday Special		
		10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch		
		6.30pm	Window on the World		
	Tuesday 9	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club		
	Friday 12	7.30pm	Rotary Club Carol Service		
	Sunday 14	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch (Holy communion)		
		6.30pm	"Meeting God through Matthew" - please request a study guide from Mark if you don't already have one		
	Tuesday 16	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting		
	Sunday 21	10.30am	Christmas Family Special - Rev. Mark Welch		
		6.30pm	Holy communion		
	Christmas Eve	Wednesday 24	4.00pm	Family Christingle Service	
	Christmas Day	Thursday 25	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch	
Sunday 28		10.30am	Rev. John Glover Please note: No evening programme tonight		
January	Sunday 4	10.00am	Sunday Special - Holiday mode (no breakfast)		
		10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch		
		6.30pm	Rev. Mark Welch		

Union Church, Heathfield

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January/February issue due out **Sunday 21st December 2008**; copy to Editor by **Sunday 7th December 2008**.

Items included subject to suitability and space.