

The Word on the Street

The newsletter of LivingStones Christian Centre



Architect's design for the new shop layout.

New Life for LivingStones

Transformation of old bookshop into a 21st Century community hub

After nearly two years of consulting and praying, we are delighted to introduce the new LivingStones:-

- Fully refurbished retail space with all new fixtures fittings and décor.
- New ground floor drop-in space where you can hang out and enjoy a hot drink
- Modern Kitchen/ Diner on our middle floor, for use in isolation or conjunction with community rooms.
- Business suite with 8 hot desks on the top floor.

- Fully refurbished community rooms with modern Audio/ Visual facilities.

- Modernised shop front.

These changes are a direct result of what you have asked for. In the summer of 2015 we ran a vision group with representatives of all of the Churches in our local area. We encouraged them all to pray into and bring ideas about how the space at LivingStones could best be used by the Christian community in Fleet.

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The results from this vision team were captured in an online survey. The Christians in Fleet then voted for what you wanted to happen. We have listened and the new LivingStones Christian Centre provides facilities and resources for everything you told us you wanted. In particular facilities to support :-

- Drop-in and Talk Space
- Children's Story Time
- A Hot-Desk Office Suite
- Youth Café
- Multi-Configuration Community Room with Multimedia Audio System
- Potential for a Town Centre Chaplaincy

The refurbishment starts at the beginning of January. The shop is anticipated to be closed for 5 weeks but we will be operating a telephone-based service for orders, during this period.

There is a meeting on December 5th at Church on the Heath at which the directors and management will show what the new building and facilities will look like. It will also highlight the arrangements that we will be following during the redevelopment period.

Invitations have already gone out. All are invited. Please make an effort to come along. It will be lovely to be able to share with you some of our excitement.

Meet the Team at LivingStones

In May, LivingStones welcomed Ruth Pentlow to the management team to work alongside Pippa Hearne.

Ruth worked for NFU Mutual in Basingstoke before joining LivingStones. She loves spending time in her garden and kitchen and enjoys baking and making jams and chutneys with her own produce. In her kitchen, she listens to her favourite Christian artists, Matt Redman, and Stuart Townend & Keith Getty.

Ruth says of her role, "I am really looking forward to meeting lots of new people and to seeing the shop flourish and go on for many more years to come".

Pippa has been at LivingStones just over 6 years and has worked in retail for over 30 years. She enjoys reading Christian fiction, particularly novels by Karen Kingsbury. Pippa likes many different kinds of music, but her favourite Christian artists are Darlene Zschech and Matthew West.



Pippa enjoys every aspect of working at LivingStones, especially working with the loyal group of volunteers. It can be a challenge, she says, trying to think about what to stock for the customers and not just for her!

LivingStones said goodbye to Charlotte in January following 9 years as our manager. She was a steady pair of hands leading the shop through a difficult time. We wish her every success with her new challenges.

So drop by and introduce yourself to Ruth and Pippa, the new face of LivingStones.

LivingStones Quenches Fleet's Festive Thirst

At the Fleet Food Festival this year LivingStones served up 300 cups of Traidcraft tea, Karuna coffee and squash to a steady stream of visitors and fellow stall holders. We kept freshly brewed coffee flowing from 8am until 4pm with the help of a wonderful team of volunteers.

The Fleet Food Festival is a community-focussed event occurring annually at the Views in Fleet. In 2016 there were over 7,000 visitors but there were insufficient



hot drink outlets resulting in queues of over 40 minutes. Therefore, after our success of providing 500 cups of tea and coffee at the 2016 Fleet Christmas Festivities, the organisers invited LivingStones to serve at the 2017 Festival.

Hot-News—As we go to press, we have just finished serving another 450 hot drinks at the 2017 Christmas Festivities!

Thank you to all who stepped up to help us bless our local community.



Karuna Coffee Available from LivingStones

We have formed a relationship with the local poverty action charity [Karuna Action](#). Karuna has a novel way to support its projects, buying freshly roasted coffee sourced through its partner network, and sending all profits to its poverty relief projects in India, DR Congo, Mongolia and many other countries.

Karuna is passionate about the quality of its coffee and every part of the production process. Beans are ethically sourced, freshly roasted in its Aldershot-based premises and then shipped in freshness-guaranteeing packaging to customers throughout the country.

Typically, purchases have been fulfilled through postal delivery, but with the new LivingStones link-up, from February you will be able to order and collect at LivingStones. We will also be holding stock that you can pick up there and then. Or why not drop in to LivingStones and stay awhile enjoying a Karuna Coffee.

Current coffee blends available from Karuna are Brazilian, Colombian, Guatemalan, Honduran, Kenyan, Malawian, Peruvian, Rwandan as well as decaffeinated.

LivingStones has proudly sold FairTrade products since its early days and carries a wide range of Traidcraft products.



Ending Poverty through Compassion.

Christmas Books on Special Offer

Advent inspiration

Advent for Everyone

Tom Wright

Join Tom Wright on a journey with the apostles, as he explores the New Testament themes of thankfulness, patience, humility and joy. Within each of these themes, Wright offers daily readings and meditations for a week, ending with stimulating questions for personal reflection or group discussion. These sparkling reflections take you on a journey of spiritual enlightenment, guiding you towards the wonder and joy of Christmas.

RRP: £8.99 | 9780281078387



SAVE £3

£5.99

Joy Upon Joy

Charles Spurgeon

This advent devotional allows hassled Christians to daily redeem the busiest month of the year using seasonal reflections by the "Prince of Preachers," Charles Spurgeon. This all-new compilation of Spurgeon's works includes space for journaling and reflection. Experience the delight of loving December once again, and prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth alongside Spurgeon's thought-provoking words.

RRP: £8.50 | 9781629119588



SAVE £1.51

£6.99

Faithful

Adam Hamilton

From his beginnings as a humble carpenter to his all-important role as the earthly father of Jesus Christ, Joseph's place in the nativity story is sometimes overlooked. Join Adam Hamilton as he examines Christmas through the eyes of Joseph. Absent from much of the biblical narrative, Joseph never speaks a word, but his courageous actions were crucial to the birth of Christ and God's salvation plan for humanity.

RRP: £16.50 | 9781501814082



SAVE £3.51

£12.99

A Child is Born

Abby Guinness

A child is born. The impact on earth is like a stone dropped into water, making waves forwards and backwards through time. Explore the Scriptures through the eyes of those who encountered the majesty and mystery of the incarnation first hand. These 31 daily studies for individuals and groups consider the Christmas Bible texts, giving opportunity for seasonal thought, prayer and discussion.

RRP: £5.99 | 9781782597360



SAVE £1

£4.99

Book extract – *The One True Gift*



The One True Gift
Tim Chester



Christmas is meant to be full of joy and light; but all too often it is spoiled by grumbling and arguing. So this

year, prepare to encounter Christ afresh in a way that will make you a bearer of peace and goodwill all season long.

In these 24 short daily readings for Advent, Tim Chester peels back the layers on Philipians 2. Each day includes ideas for reflection, prayer and application, designed to excite you about the One True Gift – the Lord Jesus – in the run-up to Christmas Day.

This collection of inspiring readings also comes with hymns, carols and prayers to help you prepare your heart for Christmas.

RRP: £4.99 | 9781784982225

the good book
COMPANY

Day 11 - Born as the true man

"And being found in appearance as a man..."

Philipians 2 v 8

There may well be moments this Christmas when you feel as if no one understands. "The turkey is overcooked," someone says—without appreciating all the hard work you've put into preparing the meal. "I would have preferred it in blue," someone murmurs—without appreciating all the hours you spent struggling through the crowds of Christmas shoppers. "Having the house full of visitors drives me crazy," someone complains—but you'll be spending Christmas day on your own, grieving a relationship that was or a relationship that might have been.

"No one appreciates me; no one understands," we think. But this verse tells us that isn't true.

Jesus was "found in appearance as a man," says verse 8. At a time when many people doubted Christ's humanity, Paul's point was that Jesus was recognised to be a man.

Consider what Luke says about the childhood of Jesus: "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2 v 52). Although the divine nature of Jesus continued to be all-knowing, in some mysterious way his human nature gained wisdom.

And Jesus grew in size. Perhaps Joseph and Mary measured the growth of their children with notches on the doorpost. There's one mark labelled "Jesus, aged 5". Then a few inches up, "Jesus, aged 8". Growing limbs and muscles is a hard trick to pull off if you're only pretending to be human!

When his family hear what Jesus is saying and doing in Mark 3 v20-21, they assume he's gone crazy. And that's not the conclusion you come to if you think someone was never truly human. For 30 years Jesus had eaten with them, worked with them, played with them, slept with them, joked with them. As a result, although his family had doubts about whether he was the Messiah, they never doubted he was human.

Jesus knows what it's like to be human because he was human and still is human—as human as you are. The only difference is that now his humanity is enlarged by his glory. Now by the Spirit he can sympathise with every one of us everywhere. And that means we can "approach God's throne of grace with confidence" (Hebrews 4 v 16). When it feels as if no one else understands us, we can come to one who truly does. When we feel alone in our weariness and weakness, we can come to God's throne of grace in prayer. When our hearts ache for what we have lost, we can bring that emotion to the one who has felt it too.

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Books for Life with Pete Greig

In the Books for Life interviews, leading Christians talk about books that have had a strong influence on their Christian life.

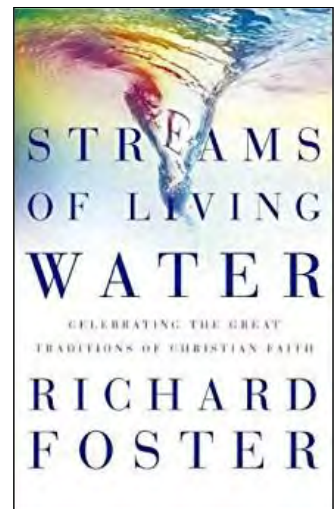


Pete Greig is the founder of the 24/7 prayer movement

“One of the most important books for me as I was starting out really in Christian leadership was this one by Richard Foster called *Streams of Living Water*. It’s not his best known book but I think it’s seminal because what he does is he traces all the different types of church down the ages – the liberation stream, the charismatic stream, the evangelical stream, the liturgical stream. And he shows how each one of them has an essential message, an essential contribution, to the whole that is the body of Christ.

And then what he does, and I think this is brilliant, is he says, if this tradition, this stream, doesn’t interface with the other streams this is where it goes wrong, evangelicalism becomes pharisaism, the liberation stream just becomes dead religion – social justice without any personal salvation and so on. And so this is a brilliant summary of why as Christians we need to celebrate our differences, work together and enjoy the diversity of the church rather than feeling we’ve got to apologise for it.

So this was incredibly important in setting the DNA as 24-7 was beginning. We’re working with everyone from the Salvation Army to the Catholics right around the world. And as I go and interact with other Christians more and more I try to think not what’s wrong with them but what’s right with them, what can I learn from them. This book taught me to do that.”



Book review by Mark Mabin

Should I Apologize for my Faith?

The obvious answer is “No”, but the right answer is “Yes”. Of course it is a trick question and if we dig a little deeper into the meaning of the English word “apologize” we find that it has a second meaning, that is, “to offer defensive argument”. Apologize comes from the Greek word *apologia* which means to reply to charges levelled against a defendant.

This Greek word is used in [1 Peter 3:15](#) (NIV2011): “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer (*apologia*) to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

Therefore the defence of our faith (*apologia*) is not optional but a command to always be ready to provide a reasoned defence for what we believe. From this command has emerged the discipline of Christian Apologetics which seeks to help us to formulate answers to the questions that we will undoubtedly be asked.

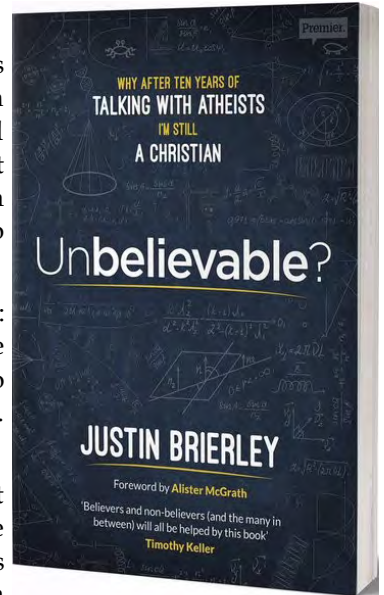
“...so easy to dip into (especially while lying around a swimming pool)”

Premier Christian Radio broadcasts a show called *Unbelievable* in which Justin Brierley invites leading Christian and non-Christian thinkers to discuss issues of faith. After 500 episodes of the show, Brierley has written a book reflecting on these conversations (including insights from Richard Dawkins, Philip Pullman, NT Wright and Justin Welby). Brierley explains why he still finds Christianity the most compelling answer to life, the universe and everything.

I took the opportunity of a summer holiday to read Justin’s book as well as a similar book by Tim Keller, *The Reason for God*. Both books address similar questions but approach their answers from different perspectives. Brierley’s book presents the views of leading unbelievers and contrasts these with the views of his Christian guests.

Keller’s writings are a more academic treatment (of often the same questions) and typically delve deeper and wider. I personally enjoyed Brierley’s book because it was so easy to dip into (especially while lying around a swimming pool). Keller’s book was also excellent, but I would suggest you need to study it rather than dip into it.

The study of Christian Apologetics is a wonderful faith-affirming opportunity to explore answers to your own questions as well as provide support in forming your answers to “the reasons for the hope that you have”.

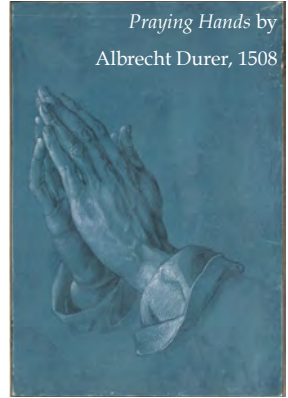


The Back Page

My favourite prayer

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.*

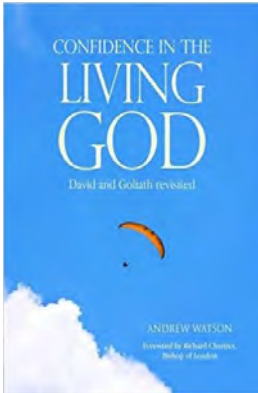
The 'Jesus Prayer', as this is known, is my favourite prayer because at the times when I can't pray, I can pray this. It is simple, but contains all that I need; it acknowledges Jesus as my Lord, that my way is lost and asks for His help. You can breathe in during the first half and then exhale to finish the prayer. It is very old and comes from the Eastern Church.



Andrew Cullingford

Read more at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

LivingStones Book of the Month Club



Join the Book of the Month Club this December as they discuss *Confidence in the Living God* by Andrew Watson.

For further information ring Heather Rawlings on 01252 617142 or email hgr310@gmail.com.

*"If you're too busy to read a book
then you probably are too busy"* Pete Greig

Please feel free to contact us about anything in the newsletter. We are interested in receiving news stories, book reviews and favourite prayers for the next edition. Everything will be read and a selection may be published. Contributions may be edited.

Mark Mabin

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