

Triangle



The quarterly magazine of the
Methodist Churches of
Springdale and Wombourne

Spring 2016

Perfect timing

David Hotchkiss, editor



Hello and welcome. Oh dear. A last-minute scan of the proofs of the spring Triangle, before sitting down to write this, revealed that my wobbly arthritic hands had allowed the spell-checker to change Chris's former workplace from KPMG to KGB (see opposite). That would have livened things up, wouldn't it. It was corrected "in the nick of time", a phrase that had cropped up earlier.

When James Peterson, senior steward at Springdale, emailed his challenging report (starting on Page 10), I replied that it was "in the nick of time", adding a comment to the effect that I didn't actually know what that meant. It obviously set him thinking, because a few hours later he sent another email.

"I've been pondering this all evening," he wrote, "and I reckon the nick of time may have something to do with the legal term 'scintilla temporis' (vague recollection from a law degree I got in 1998), meaning a spark/flash (as in scintillating) or a tiny slice of time which has to pass between two events. If you're in the nick (as in groove, notch) of time, then you are at just the right moment for whatever that slice of time signifies."

A quick search on Google suggests the "nick" element may be connected to the notion of precision. They used to use nicks in wood as a security measure in financial deals. So we're talking "exactly the right time".

What's this got to do with the price of fish? Well, it's Easter, when we mark the cosmic upheaval of Jesus's death and resurrection, his years on earth having been a notch in eternity, either side of which lie doom and salvation. But why then? Why did God choose a dusty, occupied Middle Eastern land, 2,000 years ago? Why didn't He set the drama in modern Europe, wait for mass media, the internet and personal communication? We could have filmed miracles on our mobiles, watched the feeding of the five thousand live on News at Ten, followed the Messiah's tweets. It would have been so easy to believe . . . wouldn't it? But as D. Elwyn Davies says on the last page of this magazine, "Better is faith without seeing."

No, God doesn't make mistakes. He sent Jesus in the nick of time. Happy Easter.

The deadline for the next edition of Triangle is

May 15th

Articles can be given to me or your stewards, sent by post to David

Hotchkiss, or emailed to [triangle\[at\]springdalechurch.org.uk](mailto:triangle@springdalechurch.org.uk)

The church has left the building . . .

The Reverend Christopher Collins



. . . **or the tomb!** In a previous life I worked for KPMG, the firm of accountants. As I left for the last time, I handed in my security pass and walked through the door as the guard declared to his control room in a most resonating tone “Chris Collins has left the building”! Joking aside, this idea of leaving the building has been mulling around the recesses of my mind recently and I desperately want to encourage the church to “leave the building”.

Now I’m not referring to the age-old argument about the Methodist Church having too many buildings – a fact that everyone is content to acknowledge as long as it’s not our church that has to close. But I am referring to what many have observed as the two states of Christ’s church on earth – the church gathered and the church dispersed. In other words, church is church when we gather to worship and we are still the church when we go back to our homes, places of work and schools. Church reaches beyond our wood and stone, as Marty Haugen described it.

So if we are to be the church, then we need to be the church in both “modes”. We need to gather for worship, fellowship and teaching but we also still need to be the church when we disperse – doing everything that church should do: telling others of the good news, responding to human need by loving service, transforming unjust structures, challenging violence and protecting creation.

Now if we are really honest, how well do we do that, or do we like to hide in the safety of our walls? I found it interesting and challenging to stand outside the Co-Op on Warstones Road before Christmas to try to engage people in conversation about the place of the church in their community. We tried to give them a free chocolate coin. Most people were cynical that we weren’t really after their money. I wonder if that is because the only time we “leave the building” we go collecting money for this or that – as important as that is of course. I found it challenging that when we offered our neighbours around Springdale free mince pies at Christmas, there was a look of confusion and bewilderment.

I wonder how we can give the gift of God’s love, so radically and extravagantly shown on the cross, if we can’t give away chocolate coins or mince pies. Perhaps it’s because our communities have become used to the silence of our voices beyond our walls because we have lost confidence that the risen Christ can make a difference in our neighbourhoods today. Yet we have this incredible gift to tell people about, to show people and to encourage people to explore. The gift that couldn’t be kept in a sealed tomb; the gift that people ran to tell others of; the gift that Jesus sent his disciples out to spread beyond themselves.

This Easter gift can speak into the hearts and lives of our communities to bring hope, healing and resurrection. But only if the church disperses to fulfil its task so that this gift is offered whenever and wherever. The Easter gift is seen when we ►

◀ challenge injustice such as marching against Trident; when we talk to our neighbours about giving food to the foodbank (and invite them to do likewise); the gift is found when we tell the story of when God has brought us through the valley of the shadow of death.

You see, the resurrection of Christ is good news. Good news that we need to bear witness to as we leave our buildings and seep into the lives of our communities. The question for all of us is whether we are willing to be God's messenger so the risen Christ stays beyond the tomb.

Are you ready this Easter to be the church that has left the building?

With Easter greetings,

Rev'd Chris

Send us not despairing home

Wombourne Leadership Team look at parking issues

In the days when our near neighbour was The Swan, there was a lovely irony that a Methodist Church should have developed a good relationship with a public house which enabled us to use their car park at will and, who knows, to partake of their offerings on a regular basis.

The demise of the pub and the advent of private housing have caused us logistical difficulties. On weekdays parking in front of the church is limited to 30 minutes, although, thanks to the determination of Paul Anderson and John Pike, we are very hopeful that parking regulations will be altered to allow two hours in the near future.

This does not alter the fact that on Sunday mornings in particular parking is at a premium and you need to be at church good and early to park in front of the building. There are other parking opportunities a little further away and The Bede offers ample space.

It has become apparent that several of our congregation, for whom this longer walk is difficult, are struggling to park close enough to the building to allow them to access the church easily. We talked through this issue at our last leadership team meeting and wondered whether we could ask everyone to be sensitive about where they park. If you are able to walk a bit further, perhaps you would not mind parking in front of the shops or round the corner at the Bede, leaving space for others who would be very grateful.

Walking in the footsteps of the prophets

Lesley and Bryan Cook's sponsored walk at Lake Galilee

We had so looked forward to our second visit to our second visit to Israel/Palestine and we weren't disappointed. There were 91 of us, most of whom had either led or been on McCabes Pilgrimages to the Holy Land before. We jetted in from four airports around the UK. (One lady had been 126 times!)



Bryan and Lesley on their sponsored walk, next to Lake Galilee

Bryan and I were so excited to find we were met by the same guide as we had when we went in 2014 with John Howard and Ivor Sperring – a Palestinian Christian from Jerusalem called Bassam. We were not so excited by the cold and wet weather – it was late January, of course. We also returned to the Ron Beach Hotel, on the lakeside at Galilee, where the fantastic food made up for the rather dismal view.

The rain continued as we drove through upper Galilee to Acre, Haifa and Mt Carmel the following day. It was amazing to be on the mountain where Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal.



Lesley kneels at the famous Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem

The following day, the day of our walk, dawned bright and sunny. What a gorgeous day for walking around the northern edge of Lake Galilee. We spotted rock hyraxes, cormorants, egrets, herons and kingfishers.

At the end of our walk we had a lovely meal in a kibbutz followed by a sail across the lake to our hotel. The lake was like a millpond and we sang "Be still for the presence of the Lord". The Lord indeed was very close. ►



Left, a steaming dish of Maqluba (upside-down rice). Below, Bryan drinking tea in Fawda Cafe, Bethlehem. (Yes we know it's just a couple of plastic chairs and an old coffee table!)



◀ We moved on then to stop in Manger Square hotel in Bethlehem. In the following days we were able to visit quite a few places I hadn't been to before, including the Mar Saba Monastery in the Judaeen Desert (actually only the men could go in, so I walked down the 330 steps to the Kidron valley and back instead).

Other highlights were visiting Al-Shurooq School for Blind Children and the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation in Bethlehem, which are supported by the McCabe Educational Trust. So we were able to meet the Palestinian Christians who run these places and the children too. These and the Jeel Al Amal Boys Home in Bethany are where your generous donations will be going.

Another highlight for 20 of us was to visit Aida Refugee Camp in Bethlehem, next to the Separation Barrier, where three lovely ladies taught us how to prepare salad, Zataar bread and chicken with Maqluba (upside down rice). They have formed a co-operative to raise money to help their disabled children. Unfortunately, after a walk round the camp, we could only manage some bread before we were taken back to the hotel! (It had been agreed that the food be donated back to their families.) So many other wonderful memories – too many to mention them all.

● *I would like to thank everyone who was kind enough to support this fund raising effort. So far we have raised more than £1,300. Our Just Giving site is still open – just look for Lesley Cook or Bryan Cook.*

Wombourne pastoral news

Pauline Hotchkiss, pastoral secretary

As I put pen to paper, or move my fingers over a temperamental keyboard, we are almost through Lent and the gardens, hedgerows and roadsides are ablaze with daffodils. A lot of rain but very mild weather in general. Easter is early, which may mean we have a very long summer!

REACHING OUT

Our ministry continues to both the Maltings and Himley Mill. In March at the Maltings we celebrated Easter with cup cakes and cards and small gifts of chocolate. We were delighted to welcome a new member who recently moved in.

GOOD NEWS

Margaret Shadlock celebrated her 90th birthday and it was wonderful that she was able to come to worship that morning. She is our oldest member. And of course we always celebrate Nell Piper's birthday at the Wives Group and she was presented with flowers. Louise Wright's granddaughter, Millie, made her a cake.

We had two more special birthdays in February. Betty Crossfield and Rhiannon (nee Beaumont) celebrating on the 29th. Once every four years, so very special!

THE YOUNG PEOPLE (AND NOT-SO-YOUNG)

I was able to attend the marriage ceremony of David Baldwin and Sarah Clarke on March 5th at our church. It was the first wedding of a former Junior Church member I have been able to attend. Congratulations and may God bless you both.

PRAYERS

The prayer circle continues to meet every two months to up-date our prayer cards and to pray for all those who are listed. We remember especially at this time Mrs Pam Rogers who is in Russells Hall Hospital. We ask God to send his healing power to her and all those who need your healing.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I am just finishing off my report on Palm Sunday – unable to go to church because I have been nursing a nasty cold. However I realise that I can worship anywhere, at any time, and in my PJs! May I wish you all a very happy Easter.



Margaret Shadlock: 90th candles



Nell Piper: gift of flowers

Inspirational songwriter Garth returns

Lesley Cook and Brenda Shuttleworth

Some of you may remember Garth Hewitt coming to Beckminster a number of years ago. Well, the Springdale and Wombourne Justice and Peace Group have invited him to be with us again. He will be in concert at Springdale Methodist Church on Friday, April 15th at 7.30pm.

Garth Hewitt is the founder and former director of the human rights charity The Amos Trust.

An Anglican priest and singer-songwriter, Garth released his first album "The Lion and the Lamb" in 1973, and his latest, "Something for the Soul", in August 2014.

Garth has travelled widely to areas of poverty, conflict, deprivation and disaster, prioritizing friendships with local people and bringing them encouragement, always returning home with personal stories bringing to life media headlines.

Under his direction the Amos Trust has developed strong links with projects in Nicaragua, South Africa and the Holy Land. In his books and music Garth challenges us to do justice and his concert entitled "Strange Weapons" will surely give us the inspiration to do so.

On this tour Garth will be revisiting some of his earlier material – still surprisingly relevant. The title of the evening is taken from a song on the well known "Scars"

amos  trust presents www.amostrust.org



STRANGE WEAPONS

AN EVENING WITH GARTH HEWITT

Drawing on his extensive catalogue of songs old and new, Garth sings songs of struggle and hope, regrets and homecomings

Friday 15th April 2016
7.30pm

Springdale Methodist Church, Warstones Road,
Wolverhampton, WV4 4LE

tickets from 01902 330614 or 01902 895585
or jandp.info@gmail.com

Tickets: £7.50 Under 16s: £5.00

GingerDag RECORDS
www.gingerdagrecords.com





Picture: Amos Trust / Bex Morton

album, and Garth will be telling the story behind this song and others, leading us on a journey to countries as far apart as South Africa, India, the Holy Land and Latin America.

Garth has been inspired to look again at these songs from years ago by the great interest shown in the recent rereleasing of his classic albums, which his record company, GingerDog Records, has recently made available in download or CD form and which have been much in demand.

Garth Hewitt in performance: a voice for untold stories

Telling the stories of how he came to write the songs, the journeys that led to them, and the people that inspired them, Garth as always will be trying to reflect the spirituality that he has learned from Amos Trust's partners around the world, a spirituality that is warm and inspiring – and challenging.

Songs from Garth's recent "Something for the Soul" album will no doubt appear too – "Tell 'em About the Dream Martin" has already been described as a classic!

Garth Hewitt has been writing and singing songs of peace and justice for 40 years. He established Amos Trust in 1985 to give voice to the untold stories of the forgotten communities he met during his singing and speaking engagements around the world and to pursue his commitment to justice and peace. His songs reflect the spirituality and prayer that underpin Amos.

Springdale vestry news

James Peterson, senior steward

The Senior Steward's report is usually a recap of what we have been doing, so in a break with tradition I thought it would be good to share a few things that are up-and-coming! A couple of dates for your diary to start though: the Summer Fair will be on June 18th. The Family Fun Day this year will be on July 10th. Please spread the word that it is a fun day, for families (and those without) – not just for the “church family” as some mistakenly thought this year.

Phillippa is stepping down as steward this year and we have made good progress recruiting a replacement. If you can think of anyone suitable, yourself included, either old hands or new faces – please don't wait to be asked, just let one of us know. Wouldn't it be good to have a queue of people waiting to serve?

As well as some of the more mundane but necessary matters of dates, rotas, staffing and feedback, the stewards have been looking at “the Practice of Radical Hospitality”. This is taken from a chapter in Robert Schnase's influential book “Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations” which comes highly recommended from churches across the Methodist Connexion. “Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” says Paul in Romans 15:7.



You may have noticed at the start of services that the stewards have not been giving their traditional “warm welcome to Springdale today, and to whoever is leading our worship today”. Instead we have been trying to find something to say which expresses God's welcome to us all, as well as a welcome to the place where we worship, and a welcome to the preacher.

We stewards think we do sincere and warm welcomes pretty well at Springdale. There's certainly nothing wrong with what we're doing. The number of people who are regularly joining us for worship over the last 12 months (be that Sunday morning, Hotpot or one of the other activities) is testament our ability. Hospitality, however, means much more than a warm welcome for newcomers, photos of stewards on the board and some visitor spaces in the car park. There are plenty of suggestions of techniques and strategies in the book, and in testimonies of those who have joined churches but we haven't made any decisions yet. What works in one place may not work in another, and we should first be clear about the fundamental purpose of Christian hospitality.

Schnase says: “Hospitality is a quality of spiritual initiative, the practice of an active and genuine love, a graciousness unaffected by self-interest, an opening of ourselves and our faith community to receive others. When the spirit of Christ's hospitality pervades a congregation then every [church group] regularly asks itself

'how are we doing at inviting others and supporting newcomers into our part of the church family? And how can we improve?'" So here's something to ponder and pray about – and take action on: how can we take our hospitality up to the next level? (And we haven't even started to look at the word radical!)

Thanks finally for your prayers and support during my year as Senior Steward – it has come from all quarters and has been really appreciated.

Springdale pastoral news

Jane Rawlings, pastoral secretary

Spring is upon us – well it is in my garden, with the crocus and daffodils in full bloom and new buds forming. What a glorious time of year, a time to see and be amazed at the wonders of God's creation all around us.

Flowers are not the only things flourishing. We here at Springdale started the year off with the safe arrival of Henry Harrison on January 20th, a son for Sarah and John Harrison and an extra member in the Partridge family, which is growing every year. What a joy to see a family grow with us and continue to grow as they move out into the world.

Continuing on the baby theme, on January 24th we celebrated the baptism of twins Harrison and Emelia. A glorious occasion for everyone concerned, with family and friends there to witness Harrison and Emelia welcomed into the church. May they grow in the knowledge of all the love around them and that God is with them every step of the way.

We remember and pray for anyone who is not finding life easy at the moment, those undergoing operations or hospital treatment. We especially remember Audrey Grainger, currently in hospital following a fall. We pray that the Lord's healing hand will offer them comfort, healing and the strength they require to get through these difficult times.

Congratulations to anyone who has celebrated a birthday or anniversary recently or has one coming up in the near future. Special congratulations go to Geoff Race, who had his 97th birthday in February. I will have to get some tips from him on how to lead such a full and long life.

Well that's all from me. As the year moves on (quicker the older I get) don't forget to look around you at God's amazing creation and count your blessings as there is always someone with a greater need than us, you only have to watch the news to realise this.

God Bless . . .

Proof that Fair Trade really works

Brenda Shuttleworth on a fortnight of sharing and a new start



Fair Trade Fortnight has been particularly busy this year. The theme was “Sit down for breakfast, stand up for farmers”, a reminder, in the words of Martin Luther King, that we will have depended on more than half the world when we have finished breakfast. Churches were invited to interpret the theme as they wished and we have been delighted with the response!

We began the fortnight with a circuit service at St John’s Methodist Church, which was well supported and where the circuit choir added depth to our singing. There have been other fair trade themed services during the fortnight. Our circuit staff made their monthly breakfast meeting a fair trade one, at Wombourne we joined the URC for their monthly coffee morning where fair trade snacks were available and the toddler groups at both Springdale and Wombourne offered fair trade spreads and bananas to their young visitors.

A real highlight of the fortnight was the visit of Sheena Biju to Beckminster. The Fairtrade Foundation invited Sheena to visit our region to raise awareness of how fair trade benefits farmers in the developing world and we were privileged to have a slot in her busy schedule. There is no doubt that the fair trade premium has transformed the lives of farmers in Sheena’s co-operative. They are able to sell their coffee and spices more competitively and enjoy better health care and education for their children. Fair trade really works!

Wolverhampton Fair Trade CIC

We are back! Almost exactly two years after the fire devastated the fair trade shop and all of the ancillary buildings at Darlington Street were fire damaged, Wolverhampton Fair Trade is open for business at the Methodist Centre. The Phoenix has risen from the ashes, albeit with slightly singed feathers as we overcome the problems that have inevitably arisen as the centre gets back on its feet again.

We now occupy the former Guild Room with its kitchen. The additional space has enabled us to expand our range of goods (we have some delicious varieties of chocolate) and we are looking at new suppliers to bring interesting new craft goods, jewellery and toys.

This is all very much a work in progress as we adapt to our new space. We had hoped to have our coffee bar open as soon as we moved but must be patient while things settle down in the centre as a whole.

At the City Fair Trade Partnership AGM David Fulljames, our shop manager, was presented with the Dennis Turner award for achievement in fair trade in the city. This was a well-deserved accolade. David had supported Mavis McManus in the

shop for several years before taking over as manager just over 10 years ago. It was due to his tenacity that the shop opened in Salop Street just six weeks after the fire and his determination to be open for our customers during Fair Trade Fortnight this year that enabled the move back to happen swiftly and efficiently. David has announced that he will retire from the shop this summer, something that the volunteers look forward to with trepidation as we know just how much the shop has depended on his dedication and ability.

Do come and visit us, especially if you are looking for unusual gifts.

A reminder of our opening hours:

Tuesdays	10am – 4pm
Wednesdays	10am – 5.45pm
Thursdays	10am – 4pm
Fridays	10am – 4pm
Saturdays	9am – 1pm

Soon serving fair trade coffees, teas and snacks. We stock the largest range of fairly traded goods in Wolverhampton.

Tel: 01902 471475

Email: [shop\[at\]wolvesfairraid.org.uk](mailto:shop[at]wolvesfairraid.org.uk)

Web: www.wolvesfairraid.org.uk

An extra T for the TTT crowd

Carole Walker

During Fair Trade Fortnight, mums, grans, dads and toddlers were pleased to accept the offer of Traidcraft jams accompanying their usual Traidcraft coffee and tea. Strawberry jam won hands down with those attending the Toddlers, Tea & Toast group at Wombourne.

On March 16th, Rev'd Chris followed the usual Wednesday morning TTT with a short Easter Praise event in the church. This was a very lively time enjoyed by all. We had two songs with actions and Chris illustrated the new life of Easter by asking the toddlers to plant sunflower seeds in pots, which they then took home together with an Easter egg.

Our grateful thanks continues for all who help with these weekly meetings.

An unexpected discovery

Jackie Neilson finds herself in the village of Wroxeter

Driving on a winter's day down a lane in Shropshire we arrived by chance at the village of Wroxeter, not far from Atcham on the A5. Here is a vineyard and hotel, a small community and a church. Just outside the village is the Roman site of Wroxeter, run by English Heritage and well worth a visit.

We parked opposite the church, on the road. Although dry and with some sun it was very windy and cold. The impressive iron gates to the church were closed so we climbed half a dozen stone steps at the side of the gatepost into the churchyard. Oh, what a wonderful view over the fields around, with the River Severn in the distance.



The calm of Wroxeter Church

The big, square-towered church, looked after by The Redundant Church Trust, has some lovely stained glass windows and memorials, and a font made from a Roman column. The table memorials with figures reclining have wonderful colouring on them still. It's a large church but with only a few houses and farms around, it is only used on certain days of the year for worship. A sense of peace is felt in the church and the churchyard. Timeless really, quite a calming and reflective place. Those gate posts, by the way, are Roman pillars. Recycling is not new.

Wombourne vestry news

Brenda Shuttleworth, senior steward

January to March can be a quiet quarter, a chance to draw breath after the busyness of Christmas, but already we are once more in that waiting time – Lent has come early this year and as I write, we are just over halfway through our journey with Christ to Jerusalem where we will rehearse the events of that first Easter weekend, our mood changing from quiet reflection to noisy jubilation.

January was a quiet month, the highlight being our annual covenant service when we were challenged once again to commit ourselves to ever deeper discipleship. We also celebrated the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with our friends across the denominations, with daily prayers culminating in worship together at St Benedict's on Sunday evening.

We have had one baptism service and rejoice that our church was full to overflowing. It is a while since we have had so many young children worshipping with us on a Sunday morning and they were kept busy making Christingles (and munching the sweeties as they did so!) In February we held a parade service,

during which our workers with children and young people rededicated themselves to their work. This offered us the opportunity to see just how many people are involved with our uniformed organisations and with Toddlers, Tea and Toast.

We began a new Bible study course, "Compass", in January and members have enjoyed the opportunity both for study and conversation. We will complete the course after Easter. Lent has provided a further opportunity for us to meet with other Christians in the village, both at our lunchtime reflections and the study evenings at the URC.

In February Wombourne Music Makers held a fundraising concert with supper, raising almost £450 to be divided between Jorjia's fund for her Cuboree and the ramp fund. We look forward to our church AGM at the beginning of May and our church anniversary in June, but more of that next time.

A Yorkshire obituary

Thanks to Bob Hughes (not a Yorkshireman)

A couple had been happily married for 50 years when the wife died. Following the sad event the husband contacted the newspaper regarding an obituary.

When informed of the cost, the man uttered, in true Yorkshire fashion: "How Much?!"

He reluctantly produced his wallet. "I want summat simple," he explained.

"My Gladys was a good-hearted and hard-working Yorkshire lass, but she wunt ave wanted owt swanky."

"Perhaps a small poem?" suggested the woman at the desk.

"Nay," he said, "she wunt 'ave wanted anything la-di-da. Just put: 'Gladys Braithwaite's died'."

"You need to say when," he was told by the receptionist.

"Do I? Well, put: 'Died 17th March, 2015'. That'll do."

"It is usual for the bereaved to add some meaningful phrase about the dearly departed."

The man considered for a moment. "Well, put in: 'Sadly missed'," he said.

"You can have another four words," the woman explained.

"No, no!" he cried. "She wouldn't 'ave wanted me to splash out."

"The words are included in the price," the woman informed him.

"Are they? You mean I've paid for 'em?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Well, if I've paid for 'em," exclaimed the man, "I'm 'avin' 'em."

The obituary was duly printed as follows:

*Gladys Braithwaite. Died 17th
March 2015. Sadly missed.
Also, tractor for sale.*

Self-service with angels

With thanks to Doreen Pike

I was walking down life's highway many years ago.
One day I saw a sign that read, "**Heaven's Grocery Store**".

As I got a little closer
the door came open wide,
and when I came back to myself
I was standing right inside.

I saw a host of **Angels** –
they were standing everywhere.
One handed me a basket
and said, "My child, shop with care".

Everything a Christian needs
was in that grocery store.
And if you couldn't carry it
you could come next day for more.

First I got some **Patience**;
Love was in the same row.
Further down was **Understanding** –
you need that wherever you go.

I got a box or two of **Wisdom**;
a bag or two of **Faith**.
I couldn't miss the **Holy Ghost** –
it was all around the place.

I stopped to get some **Strength**
and **Courage** to run the race.
And with my basket getting full
I remembered I needed **Grace**.

I didn't forget **Salvation**,
"on special" it was free,
so I tried to get enough of it
to save both you and me.

Then I headed for the counter
to pay my grocery bill,
for I thought I'd loaded everything
to do the **Master's** will.

Further up the aisle, though,
I saw **Prayer** and put that in,
for I knew when I stepped outside
I'd soon run into sin.

Peace and **Joy** were plentiful;
they were last upon the shelf.
Song and **Praise** were hanging near,
so I just helped myself.

And then I asked the angel,
"Now, how much do I owe?"
He smiled and said, "Just take them
with you everywhere you go."

Full of doubt I asked again,
"What do I really owe?"
"**Jesus** paid your bill," he said,
"a long, long time ago."

Anon

Jesus and Thomas

With thanks to Jackie Neilson

*Thomas was doubtful, and then may have feared,
When he heard that Jesus had appeared;
A convincing proof he strictly demanded –
The marks of the nails, and side where wounded.
A few days later when they were together,
Jesus came, and gave proof to the Doubter.
"My Lord, my God," confessed Thomas, believing;
"Better," said Jesus, "is faith without seeing."*

John 20: 24-29

D. Elwyn Davies

