

All Saints Alive

TEAM VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



The Good Book

Dear friends,

News came out recently that a distinguished philosopher, A C Grayling, has published a Good Book, which attempts to take the moral advice found in the Bible and in other writings, and present them to us without any mention of God.

You can read more about it and watch a video at www.channel4.com/news/bible-for-atheists-like-alcohol-without-the-lager

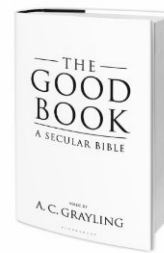
Grayling refers to it as 'a distillation of the best that has been thought and said by people who've experienced life, and thought about it', but with 'not one occurrence of the word God, or afterlife, or anything like that'. Philosophers from ancient Greece rub shoulders with Confucian sages and medieval poets, as Grayling takes 'secular' texts from western and eastern traditions and weaves together their insights about how 'the good life' should be lived.

This secular alternative to the Bible consciously mimics the design of Bibles with short chapters divided into verses. Organised in fourteen sections, it begins with Genesis and ends with The Good, taking in Wisdom, Parables, Lamentations, Songs, Histories, Proverbs, and Epistles along the way. Grayling's version of the Ten Commandments is: 'Love well, seek the good in all things, harm no others, think for yourself, take responsibility, respect nature, do your utmost, be informed, be kind, be courageous: at least, sincerely try' (The Good 8:11).

Perhaps imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

You may know that I am attempting to read the Bible in a year, from beginning to end,

and you can follow my journey at <http://uncoolchristian.blogspot.com>.



So what do I think about Grayling's moral guide? I don't know, because I haven't read it, but as Channel 4 described it as "alcohol-free lager," I might well decide there is something important missing.

If we take God out of the Bible, then we take away the one who connects the story from beginning to end. So, a 'secular' Bible can have laws, but no redemption; it can have wisdom, but no God who calls us to live wisely in his world; it can have lamentation, but no hope of restoration from the one whose mercies are new every morning.

For us Christians, the Bible tells not a story about a god, but *the* story of *the* God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who will make good on his promise to Abraham to bless all nations. As such, the Bible is not merely a collection of writings, so much as a guarantee that God will honour his promises. It doesn't simply *tell* the story of God's covenant with his people, but *is itself* the covenant document, the ratification of his promise and of our relationship with him - a good book indeed.

I'm enjoying the real thing, so why would I want to swap it for an imitation?

With love,

Nick

Team Vicar, Holy Trinity, Hertford Heath

View from the Pew

I would like to put on record the congregation's very grateful thanks for all the work Dorothy put in as churchwarden over the last 3 years, she has worked tirelessly and unselfishly for All Saints and we will all miss her great energy. It is also the end of the Toyn era as Richard preceded her and put in an incredible 5 years due the interregnum. Thank you both very much for all your efforts.

Very many thanks to all the people who turned up a few weeks back to pick litter - I hope you have seen the picture at the back of church of yourselves. Similarly thank you to all who put in several hours of hard work cleaning the church on 16 April.

Janet Bird has written later on this page about the Sunday afternoon teas that we will be providing for the more elderly members of the parish, **starting on Sunday May 29 in St. Johns Hall**. If you have friends who you would appreciate an invitation then please see me or Janet. I would reiterate her plea for helpers, particularly drivers. Please do all you are able to make this tea party a real success and outreaching into the community in the parish.

By the time you read this Easter will have passed. Again we have distributed cards around the parish and this would not have happened if it were not for the work that Geoff put in organising the printing and the distribution – which has all gone very smoothly – thank you Geoff.

Now that spring has sprung – at least with a few days beautiful sunshine – those walkers among you should get out your walking boots in preparation for the **Christian Aid Walk on Saturday May 7** – this year it starts from St. Johns Hall. If you are not able to walk then possibly you could act as a marshal and/or sponsor your friends who are walking – all enquires to either Rosemary Bolton or Martin Bird.

Don't forget our grand **Coffee Morning and Plant Sale on Saturday 21 May**; subject to the weather being favourable it is the intention to try and hold as much of it as possible outside

on the pathway – again trying to outreach more into the community.

Some of you may have heard that Bill Kemm was returning one Sunday during Jo's sabbatical – well unfortunately that did not come about but he will be coming to visit us on Sunday 26 June – please make a note of that in your diaries.

Love,
Andrew (Povey-Richards)

Seniors' Tea and Thanksgiving



As part of our continuing outreach to the people of Hertford and "in reach" to the people of All Saints we are planning to hold regular times of fellowship with afternoon tea for the more senior members of our congregation and for other parishioners who might like to join us.

The plan is to hold afternoon tea in St John's Hall followed by a short period of worship and praise.

The first tea is planned for 29th May from 4pm until 6pm and subsequently on 31st July and 30th October (i.e. each month when there is a 5th Sunday).

We already have a number of volunteers but would welcome more, as well as offers to bake cakes and scones.

We also need to be able to offer transport to bring the guests to and from their homes and would welcome offers from people who could drive, either on a one off basis or for all three events this year.

If you feel that you would like to be involved, either as a guest or helping in some capacity please contact either me (01992 587544) or Andrew (01992 587125) so that we can begin to send out invitations.

Love,
Janet (Bird)