

Impressum

Klaus Bung: Church of England refuses to support war-mongers

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e: klaus.bung@rochdalewriters.org.uk

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**TECHNICAL NOTE
THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11**

Alternative titles:

- Church of England refuses to support war-mongers.
- English churches commemorate 11 September
- 11 September: English churches teach through silence
- Blackburn commemorates 11 September
- A multi-ethnic community remembers 11 September

A selection of illustrations of multi-ethnic Blackburn can be found at the end of the article.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

The Church of England refuses to support war-mongers. Blackburn is one hour north of Manchester, in the North West of England. 20% of its population is Muslim. There is also a small Hindu and Sikh community. Generally Blackburnians are calm and live together in harmony. There are even some very close friendships between Muslims and non-Muslims. Klaus Bung describes how Blackburnians commemorated 11 Sep at their Cathedral on the first anniversary of the event.

**Klaus Bung:
Church of England
refuses to support war-mongers**
One year after 9/11



Blackburn, Whalley Range,
Mosque and 19 cent. Church of St James
(Santiago, aka Matamoros)

On 11 Sep Filipinos can celebrate (if they wish) the birth of their one-time president and later dictator Ferdinand Marcos (1917–1989), Chileans and Americans (if they wish) can celebrate the crushing of the democratic, but left-wing, government of Salvador Allende in Chile (1908–1973) and the murder of President Allende by General Pinochet with the support of the American CIA. The non-white world has good reason to be grateful to democratic America.

When writing in 2002, I thought it was murder. Now I learn from Wikipedia:

On September 11, 1973, Salvador Allende, President of Chile, committed suicide during a coup d'état led by General Augusto Pinochet, commander-in-chief of the Chilean Army. After decades of suspicions that Allende might have been assassinated by the Chilean Armed Forces, a Chilean court authorized the exhumation and autopsy of Allende's remains, eventually confirming that the wounds were self-inflicted. - Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Salvador_Allende (last accessed 2025-03-28)



Blackburn Anglican Cathedral with statue of Queen Victoria (reigned 1837-1901, Blackburn's golden age)

In Blackburn Cathedral (North West England) the events on 11 Sep 2001 in Manhattan were remembered, the first anniversary.

Members of all religious communities had been invited. The Mayor and the usual crowd of normal English worshippers was there. Members of the emergency services (fire brigade, ambulance, police) were there in large numbers, in best uniform, all sitting together. A fire engine was symbolically parked next to the cathedral entrance. An Asian policeman directed visitors to the cathedral. This is Blackburn, 20% of our population is Muslim.

The Hindu contingent turned up as a group, the women conspicuously sari-clad. There were a handful of Muslim men (I noticed no women), say fifteen, recognisable by their beards and attire, scattered through the congregation.

There were readings from the Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, and Jewish scriptures.

The texts and prayers, carefully formulated, refrained from anti-terrorist rhetoric and talk about evil and were, by that restraint, implicitly critical of the bellicose politicians in the USA and the UK.

We each had a booklet containing all readings and prayers. The expression 'War on Terrorism' was always given in quotes. The understated sentences which stood out were:

1. We have come together ... to look to the future and to learn from the past.
2. We have seen terrible suffering and we have seen reactions that demean the stature of humankind.
3. The world is a small planet, which we can only inhabit together.
4. We must once again learn the lessons of history.
5. We remember all those who have subsequently lost their lives as a result of the 'War on Terrorism' and remember

those communities most affected, particularly the people of Afghanistan.


6. Our only response can be that of praying for, and dedicating ourselves to, peace and justice for all who live in God's world.
7. The tragic events of September 11th and its aftermath...
8. ... we pray for the people of Afghanistan...
9. ... **We ask that the causes of violence and hatred may be addressed.**

This last thought is one which is dangerously absent in the pronouncements of American and British leaders and their outraged supporters.

Only one hymn ('I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship', words by William Young Fullerton, 1857-1932, sung to the tune of Danny Boy) was ill-chosen. It ends with a triumphant vision of the Second Coming of Christ, when peace will reign on earth because 'At last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!' - peace because there is no alternative value system or religion left.

This is not easy to stomach for any non-Christian. It is equivalent to the Muslim dream that, in the fullness of time, the whole world is destined, by the will of Allah, to adhere to Islam, the only true religion, and that it is the duty of good Muslims now to do whatever is proper to bring the world nearer to that divine goal. Two religions which have such views at their core must necessarily be at each other's throats.

Moreover the fervent belief in the imminent Second Coming of Christ, as held by a large number of right-wing Christians ('evangelicals') in the USA, leads them to side unconditionally with anything the Israelis may do to crush the resistance of the Palestinians (known as 'Philistines' in the Bible) and, in combination with the large Jewish lobby, makes it impossible for any democratic American government to rein in the Israelis. Since the **brutal Israeli actions in Palestine fuel the Arab hatred against Israel and its sponsor, America**, the literal belief in the prophecies about the second coming of Christ has substantially contributed to the Manhattan attacks of 11 Sep 2001 and anti-American sentiment in general.

	<p>The Taleban had destroyed, in the name of their invisible god, the ancient Buddhist statues in Afghanistan.</p>
<p>Buddhist statues destroyed by Taliban, Afghanistan</p>	

In Blackburn religious fanaticism was subtly criticised, by analogy, in a passage by Simone Weil (1909-1943): The Romans had conquered Greece in 146 BC and removed the statues of their gods from their temples to take them to Rome as secular booty. They could not understand the religious and cultural importance of the statues to the Greeks. The Greeks pleaded with them -- in vain, even though they might have known that the Roman mind was incapable of understanding their values. 'There is a duty to understand and weigh the system of other people's values with our own, on the same balance ...' (Simone Weil). It is difficult to determine who, in the present clash of cultures and values, is more at fault in this respect, whose mind, which side, is more firmly closed to alternative perspectives! Each of us will say the others are at fault. Peace will come nearer when each community searches for its own short-comings.

It is gratifying to see that the Church of England will not succumb to the terrorism hysteria among politicians and ordinary people.

=== end of article ===

ILLUSTRATIONS:
PEACEFUL LIVING TOGETHER IN MULTI-CULTURAL BLACKBURN



Apostolic Church Evangelical and Pentecostal, Blackburn, Whalley Range



Rosetta Stone, Multi-lingual Blackburn: English, Urdu, Gujarati



Gospel Hall, Blackburn, no longer viable. Surplus goods sale



Gospel Hall, Blackburn, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life' (Romans 6:23)



Blackburn Anglican Cathedral
with statue of Queen Victoria
(reigned 1837-1901,
Blackburn's golden age)



Blackburn Anglican Cathedral
from train and coach station



Blackburn Anglican Cathedral,
front



Blackburn, Whalley Range:
Mosque overlooking Muslim
houses



Blackburn, Two mosques
overlooking the Whalley Range



Blackburn, Whalley Range,
Mosque and 19 cent. Church of
St James (Santiago, aka
Matamoros)



Blackburn, Whalley Range:
Mosque in residential street

DOCUMENTATION

The article refers to the following texts. They are **not** intended for publication, but any Editor is of course free to publish, or quote from, them if he sees fit.

FROM: SIMONE WEIL: 'GRAVITY AND GRACE'

Good and evil. Reality. That which gives more reality to beings and things is good, that which takes from them is evil.

The Romans did evil by robbing the Greek towns of their statues, because the towns, the temples and the life of the Greeks had less reality without the statues, and because the statues could not have as much reality in Rome as in Greece.

The desperate, humble supplication of the Greeks to be allowed to keep some of their statues - a desperate attempt to make their own notion of value pass into the minds of others. Understood thus, there is nothing base in their behaviour. But it was almost bound to be ineffectual. There is a duty to understand and weigh the system of other people's values with our own, on the same balance - to forge the balance.

HYMN

Words by William Young Fullerton (1857-1932)

Tune: Danny Boy

1 I cannot tell why he whom angels worship
should set his love upon the human race,
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the wanderers
to bring them back, within the fold of grace.
But this I know, that he was born of Mary
when Bethlehem's manger was his only home
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.

2 I cannot tell how silently he suffered,
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,
the crown of pain to three-and-thirty years.
But this I know, he heals the broken-hearted,
and stays our sin, and calms our lurking fear,
and lifts the burden from the heavy-laden,
for yet the Saviour. Saviour of the world, is here.

3 I cannot tell how he will win the nations,
how he will claim his earthly heritage,
how satisfy the needs and aspirations
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.
But this I know, all flesh shall see his glory
and he shall reap the harvest he has sown,
and some glad day his sun shall shine in splendour,
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the world is known.

4 I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,
when, at his bidding, every storm is stilled
or who can say how great the jubilation
when all the hearts on earth with love are filled.
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,
and myriad, myriad human voices sing,
and earth to heaven, and heaven to earth, will answer:
"At last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!"

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