

# CHRIST CHURCH NEWS

July 2013 Vol. 73 – No. 7 20p

[www.christchurchdartford.org.uk](http://www.christchurchdartford.org.uk)

## HOLIDAY CLUB

## STUDIO

## 5<sup>TH</sup> TO 9<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST

## SCHOOL YEARS R TO 6

youth 



£20 per child (discount for siblings)

Deadline for bookings: July 12th

To book provisionally or for more information contact  
Lynne: [youthbookings.christchurchdartford@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:youthbookings.christchurchdartford@hotmail.co.uk)

# Why I am a Christian: Part 5 – Church

*I love Church. It's just as well, really, since I'm employed by one! But it's not just a job. Church is a big reason why I am a Christian and I want to share why.*

The first is that it was through the Church, as a child, that I was introduced to the stories of Jesus and to the Bible, and that is true for most people, whatever age. We might have gleaned a little about the Christian message from our parents, or school, or the TV, or we might have dipped into the Bible and read a few passages, but, for most of us, it's only when we started coming to Church that we began to understand and respond to Christ's call.

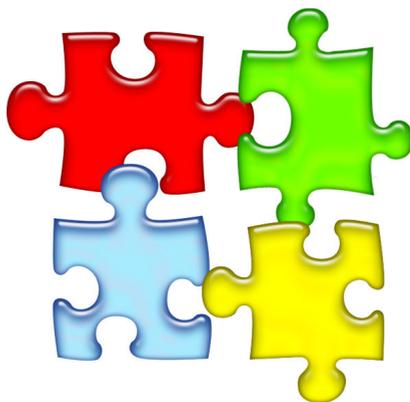
## Community

Secondly, in Church we see Christians living together in community. That's not just on Sunday but in the various groups and activities throughout the week where we seek to grow together and serve the wider community. Often that's when Christianity becomes real to us.

The Gospel is embodied in the Church, in the lives of the people. As we get to know the people, warts and all, we discover that they're not perfect, far from it, but they've experienced God's mercy and forgiveness and so are willing to bear with one another, and support one another in God's service.

Now my experience of Church, as I grew up, was positive. I liked the people. They really were 'the salt of the earth' – reliable, kind,

friendly, genuine people without show or pretention. Also, the way that the Bible was presented to me was, for the most part, relevant and stimulating – and accurate! It has to be said, a lot of people develop a distorted view of God because of bad experiences of Church, but that wasn't so in my case.



That's not to say that everything was laid out on a plate. I had many questions and issues some of which were addressed in Church and some not. So I had to find out more from other sources such as books, youth events, conferences and by visiting Christian friends at other Churches and youth groups.

One gap, for example, was that my Church knew little of the power of God through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, a foundation was put in place upon which such things could be built.

## A challenge for us

So, for me, Church helped me come to faith. But as I reflect upon the Church of my childhood, and then bring my mind back to the present, I find myself challenged:

– What impact does our Church, Christ Church, have on people thinking about the Christian faith?

– Do we demonstrate the power of God? Do we teach the Bible accurately and interestingly to ensure that people want to find out more?

– Do we serve the wider community effectively, to demonstrate Christ's compassion for the world?

If the Gospel message is embodied by the Church, what message are we embodying in the way we live together?

## So . . . do you love Church?

To finish, let's look beyond Christ Church, in the here and now, and look to the future:

– Imagine a Church where everyone feels valued and involved.

– Imagine a Church that is costly to be part of, but is rich in love, and rich in the things of God, where lives are being touched by God and transformed for the better.

– Imagine a Church that is valued throughout the community for the positive impact it is having.

We see glimmers of these things already, but let's fan the sparks into full flame by praying and working, and thirsting for God's Kingdom.

I ask again, do you love Church, all that it is and all that it *can be*?

*Richard*

## Ellenor Lions Hospice Open Gardens 2013 Sundays, 2 – 5pm



**14 JULY: 47 Marling Way  
Gravesend, DA12 4DW**

Adult: £3.00; Child: 50p

A small, attractive garden with a lawn area, rockery, shrubs including acer trees, Japanese ornaments and a small water feature. A 60's rock and roll group will entertain visitors. Tea and cakes will be on sale. Bring a chair and enjoy the music!

**21 JULY: Pencroft & Blenhard,  
Pencroft Drive, DA1 2PB**

Adult: £3.50; Child: £1.00

Children's admission price includes Mythical Hunt entry

**Pencroft** has maze-like paths in a garden half-designed and half-evolved for colour and wildlife. Children will discover dragons and giant dragon-flies, pigs, goblins and squirrels in hidden corners and dells on this mythical hunt and win their prize.

**Blenhard** offers a variety of plants and shrubs and children will be delighted to meet the koi carp! Sylvia Mann will play hits from the 1920's to the 1980's.

**28 JULY: Wychwood  
29 Parsonage Lane, Sidcup,  
DA14 5EZ**

Adult: £3.50; Child: 50p

An acre of miniature park in a quiet rural setting, including two very different ponds, a 'secret room', and a picnic area. There is plenty of shade if it's very hot. The Greenwich Concert Band will be entertaining us. Bring a fold-up chair (or blanket, if dry). Dogs on leads are welcome.

## Sea Sunday

*Piracy, shipwreck, abandonment and separation from loved ones are just a few of the problems merchant seafarers face.*



### The Mission to Seafarers

provides help and support to the 1.3 million men and women who face danger every day to keep our global economy afloat. It works in 250 ports caring for seafarers of all ranks, nationalities and beliefs. Through its global network of chaplains, staff and volunteers it offers practical, emotional and spiritual support to seafarers through ship visits, drop-in centres and a range of welfare and emergency support services.

*Over 13,000 men and women work in the*



*UK's most dangerous peacetime occupation: deep sea fishing. On land, many face insecurity and debt.*

Life for the 50,000 retired fishermen and their dependants is no better, with debt, inadequate pensions and scant savings meaning no respite from hardship once the fishing's over.

### The Fishermen's Mission

fights poverty and despair in our fishing communities by providing emergency and welfare support to fishermen and their families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

The Mission provides material, emotional and pastoral support as well as providing expert guidance through the Benefits system and sourcing long term grants.

The Fishermen's Mission is influenced by its principles rooted in the Christian faith, which is reflected in a genuine motivation to serve others and to share the love and care shown by Jesus in His life here on earth.

Whilst many people who work or volunteer for the Mission have a Christian faith, its ethos also welcomes people of other faiths (or of no faith) to participate in Mission activities, to volunteer for the Mission, or to seek employment with the Mission.

On Sea Sunday Churches around the world come together to remember seafarers and pray for them, their families and those who support them. Sea Sunday 2013 will be held on 14 July, but it can also be celebrated on another convenient date.

[www.missiontoseafarers.org](http://www.missiontoseafarers.org)  
[www.seasunday.org](http://www.seasunday.org)  
[www.fishermensmission.org.uk](http://www.fishermensmission.org.uk)

### PARISH REGISTER – May

**Baptism** – *We welcome into the family of Christ Church:*

5th Freddie Burton of Bevis Close  
 Kaitlin and William Lowrie of  
 Havelock Road

Cameron and Amelia Tuffin of  
 Hallford Way

12th Pippa Salmon of Churchfield and  
 Riley Sibun of Ruby Court, Princes  
 Road

**Thanksgiving** – *We give thanks for the birth of:*

5th Thomas Keehne of McCudden  
 Road

**Marriage** – *Our congratulations and best wishes for the future to:*

2nd Michael Cooper and Sarah Seeley  
 of Ashen Drive

## NEXT GENERATION by our Youth Worker, Lynne Parkinson

*As I sit here writing, I have a group of young people volunteering in the church for their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award. What have they been doing behind the scenes for the past couple of months?*

Well, they've been dusting in the church, doing little bits of gardening, litter picking, chopping all the fete flyers all 2,000 of them!) and sorting out cupboards. They chose to partner with the Church for their placement and have had fun as well as having been a huge help to the day to day running of the Church.

Our Church and the work we do couldn't run without volunteers!

Within the youth and children's team our volunteers are excellent but we can always do with more. We need more help at our youth club and we need more help with Junior Church to name just two areas!



Volunteering isn't just about what you can give to the organisation or people you work with; you gain too! You can gain new friends, skills and confidence. You can gain a different perspective, something for your CV and a sense of achievement.

'I don't have time' is one reason people give for not volunteering but it needn't be herculean tasks you take on. It could be as little as 30 minutes a week. There are many things that need doing for the Church or other organisations. Within the youth and children's work there are plenty of tasks which don't involve working with, or even ever speaking to a youth, if that is something which terrifies you!

**If you want to know more about how you can volunteer at Church**, or specifically within the youth and children's work then please get in contact by e-mailing: [youthworker.christchurchdartford@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:youthworker.christchurchdartford@hotmail.co.uk) or by ringing the Church office **01322 221 589** (see also back page and the Church notice sheet).

Please note, posts involving children, youth or vulnerable adults are subject to recruitment procedures in line with the Diocesan Safeguarding policy.

## Haven Family Storehouse



Donations for this Foodbank can be brought to Christ Church, or directly to Haven on Tuesdays, 10am – 12pm and Thursdays, 3pm – 5pm.

### Items needed:

Razors	Tinned food
Toilet roll	Sauces and soups
Deodorant	Pasta, rice & noodles
Shower gel	Long life milk
Soap & shampoo	Nappies & baby wipes
Tea, coffee, sugar	Formula milk
Cereals	

**To volunteer, or make financial contributions to this work, please contact: Gateway Vineyard Church: 24 Market Street, Dartford, DA1 1EZ; Tel: 221717; [dvcf@btconnect.com](mailto:dvcf@btconnect.com)**

## The Persecuted Church: our family's involvement – and yours?

*Whilst at college I studied German reunification, at that time still a distant hope; the fall of the Iron Curtain was more than a decade away.*

In 1970, whilst on a visit to Germany, our school party visited the East German border for a day, and the snow-covered minefields, barbed-wire fences and watchtowers left a lasting impression. Against this backcloth, I was privileged to visit and encourage fellow believers in Romania in 1974, and to deliver Christian books.

Later in life, I started attending a prayer meeting at my Church for persecuted Christians; this group receives updates from UK charities about persecuted Christians. We each felt a burden to pray for particular needs: our host couple regularly visit oppressed believers in Peru; one lady has a special concern for children; another spends a lot of her week writing to her MP and MEP.

I often found myself praying for those working in the offices of such groups, who could potentially come across harrowing information on a daily basis . . .

### Moving on

My elder son had accompanied me on a demonstration outside a London embassy in support of such Christians. My husband also attended a demonstration in London in protest against the horrific killings in Orrissa.

In 2009 my elder son finished his course in Moving Image Design at Ravensbourne College, and subsequently noticed an

advertisement for a designer at the Barnabas Fund, one of the UK charities that support persecuted Christians.

He was called for interview:

Had he got a packed lunch with him? Would his younger brother be OK living alone if he relocated so far away?

You could see that there was a very caring aspect to the organisation.

I understand that specialist staff deal with personnel matters and accounts, and skilled writers produce the web and magazine copy. A number of people are responsible for administrating projects.

The founders, Patrick and Rosemary Sookhdeo, have a vast knowledge base on the context of persecution and have, over time, released a lot of material on the subject [see: <http://patricksookhdeo.com/category/book-reviews/> for more details].

Even though Patrick prays that there will be no further need for the existence of the Barnabas Fund, sadly it is an expanding venture. Over the years, the Lord has provided practically in order for the Fund to continue.

Apart from the daily creative challenges, my son has always said what a mentally stimulating environment it is to work in; they are blessed with some very talented, well-travelled and experienced staff, of quite a few nationalities.

Approximately seven months after my son started working with the Barnabas Fund, my husband went to be with the Lord

suddenly. Through God's providence, my younger son, now a student of print design, was baptised the following year.

### Joining the Team

Another vacancy then arose in the studio and, having already completed several work experience placements at the Barnabas Fund office, my younger son was also taken on.

I was able to attend a Barnabas Fund Supporters' Day at Swindon's Freshbrook Evangelical Church in June 2011, so found out a bit more about the Fund's work. A sea of grey heads stretched out in front of our party – clearly, younger supporters are needed!

Please remember to pray for our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters, as well as for those who work to support them.

There are resources on the Barnabas Fund web site\*, including details for the up and coming Suffering Church Action Week, for which the theme is: Children of courage, Raising tomorrow's church.

\*[www.barnabasfund.org/UK](http://www.barnabasfund.org/UK)

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### Finding out more:

Christian Solidarity Worldwide:  
[www.csw.org.uk/home.htm](http://www.csw.org.uk/home.htm)

Open Doors:  
[www.opendoorsuk.org](http://www.opendoorsuk.org)

Release International:  
[www.releaseinternational.org](http://www.releaseinternational.org)



The mission of the Barnabas Fund is to support Christians where they are in a minority and suffer discrimination, oppression and persecution as a consequence of their faith.

Our goal is to strengthen Christian individuals, churches and their communities by providing material and spiritual support in response to needs identified by local Christian leaders.

We do this by making their needs known to Christians around the world, by encouraging prayer and financial giving in support of these brothers and sisters in Christ, working with existing local Christian organisations, and by speaking on their behalf.

The Fund channels this aid from donors to the needy recipients with minimum overheads. All gifts are monitored to ensure they are used in line with the stated need.

In accordance with Biblical teaching, we believe that Christians should treat all people of all faiths with love and compassion, even those who persecute them."

*"...let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."*

Galatians 6 v10

## News from our Mission Partners

*We hope you will share in our joy that five of our Afghan friends have been baptised. They have all been on different journeys, both physical and spiritual, but they are all Afghan asylum seekers and refugees from Muslim backgrounds who, through the ministry of mission workers in Glasgow, have come to saving faith in Christ.*

Three of those baptised are good friends, T, M and F, for whom we had asked you to pray. T and F made professions of faith back in late 2011 and attended baptism preparation classes with our friends and co-workers from the Free Church of Scotland. In these classes they were led through Christian doctrine in their own language and at their own pace in a way which was (hopefully!) relevant to their cultural and religious background.

During the course of these baptism classes, T, M and F were joined by B, who had been attending the Sunday contextual worship services we are involved in along with our Free Church friends. Later R, another regular attendee of these services, and N, who had been playing football with us on Friday nights for over a year and who had only very recently started attending the services, also joined.

The classes were originally intended to be for T, M and F as we knew they had made commitments to Christ, but we weren't going to turn away people who were willing to hear the Christian faith expounded week by week, so our number grew. This was buoyed no doubt by the excellent samosas

our friends from the Free Church churned out week after week. After six months of classes (more than originally anticipated!), T, M, F, B and R were ready to be baptised. It was our great pleasure to see them baptised by our friends at the Free Church.

Now the duty of helping our brothers to grow in Christ lies ahead. Please pray for us all – including our friends and co-workers from other Churches and organisations who know T, M, F and R, as we try to be faithful examples and loving and wise brothers and sisters to them.

### God at work

God has been amazingly at work in the lives of other Afghan acquaintances of ours as well, which it's a delight to report – even though it often has nothing to do with anything we've done!

Another Afghan – let's call him Rm – has been coming regularly to our Friday night football and also recently got a place in our 11-a-side team in the Churches League which plays on Saturdays. Rm has never come to any Bible studies or to the Sunday morning contextual service, and not seemed much interested in faith before now, so the team leader was surprised to hear him say that he couldn't make a football match as he was going on the Alpha Course weekend away. Rm explained that he had been going to the Alpha Course at our local Baptist Church and had made a decision to follow Christ. He was regularly attending the Baptist Church, which a large number of Iranians attend.

We have been surprised by how opportunities to minister pastorally have arisen whilst teaching English as a second lan-

guage in a city-centre further education college. As many of the students are asylum seekers it has been possible to support them, in similar ways to the help given to others through Churches – writing references and supporting letters for asylum claims and appeals, helping with e-mails and applications, orientating them to life in the UK and showing compassion in difficult times which has hopefully spoken a little of the love of Christ to them.

It has also been encouraging to be able to share a little of the Christian faith with colleagues at the college, confirming that secular work is indeed ministry, and not just a means of financing 'real ministry'.

### Sharing our faith

As well as teaching at regular evening classes, other ad-hoc teaching hours have continued to help with perennially tight finances. There has been less interpreting work than usual, but this allows for more consistent work as a volunteer advisor at the Well Multi-Cultural Advice Centre.

The clients at the Centre come from Slovakia to Somalia, Afghanistan to India and from Pakistan to Poland. Help is provided in the form of assistance with job applications, benefits, utility bills and bank accounts and the occasional tutorial on how to use mobile phones or the internet. On there is a craft group with women which provides the time for good conversation.

We have been really amazed by how God has opened doors for spiritual conversations with Muslims whilst at the Well. As an Iranian, the first question to answer usually is, 'Are you Muslim?'. There have been

good conversations over several weeks and we pray that the Holy Spirit is at work.

On one particular occasion there was a conversation with a lady who was planning to convert from Sunni Islam to Shia Islam – a bit like crossing the divide from Protestant to Catholic. This change is quite unusual and intriguing. The lady said that she had grown up Sunni but had read and watched TV and found out more information and, now she knew more, she wanted to be Shia. This provided an opportunity to explain that, having grown up Shia, knowing more information about Jesus had led to knowing Him as the way and the truth.

### Continue praying!

Please pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to provide more chances to sow seeds and talk about faith and that those seeds would find good soil and not be stolen away by the enemy.

The downside to the busyness of life has been the difficulty of keeping up relationships and visiting Afghan friends as much as we would like. Please pray for the ability to balance priorities and demands on time and make the most of every opportunity. We hope that in the summer when college is in recess there will be time and space for visits, trips and renewing friendships.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

*If you wish to receive our Mission Partners' Link Letter, please e-mail Jonathan Self: [jonathan.self@cms-uk.org](mailto:jonathan.self@cms-uk.org) or Tel: 01865 787527*

## EVERY WEEK

### SUNDAYS

8am (BCP) Holy Communion  
 10am Morning Service; see 'This month'  
*All welcome to stay for refreshments afterwards*  
**Junior Church:**  
 JAM (Jesus and Me) for school Years R-5; and  
 Footfinders for Years 6-13 meet during the 10am  
 service every Sunday, except for the first Sunday  
 in the month (Family Service) and during school  
 holidays.  
 Younger children are welcome to remain in the  
 service (there are toys and books at the back of  
 church, if needed) or you can drop them off at the  
 creche, if you prefer.

### TUESDAYS

9.30 – 11am Toddler Group, Church Centre

### WEDNESDAYS

2-4.00pm Pop-In

### THURSDAYS

8.00pm Worship Team practice

### FRIDAYS

Day of rest for Vicar

### SATURDAYS

Day of rest for Youth Worker (or Friday if there  
 is a young people's event)

## THIS MONTH

### SUNDAYS

**Prayer Meeting: 9.15am**

**7th 6th Sunday after Trinity  
 Junior Church Service**

10.00am Family Communion  
*Theme:* Holy Spirit and Fruit – Galatians  
 5 v22-26; Matthew 5 v43-48

**14th 7th Sunday after Trinity**

10.00am Holy Communion  
*Theme:* Holy Spirit and Worship –  
 1 Corinthians 14 v26-33a;  
 John 4 v1-26

7pm Sustain (informal evening service)

**21st 8th Sunday after Trinity  
 11am Service in the Park – with  
 Dartford Churches**  
*followed by a picnic*

**28th 9th Sunday after Trinity**

10.00am Morning Worship  
*Theme:* Holy Spirit and boldness –  
 Acts 4 v23-31; Matthew 10 v17-20

**Items for weekly Church Notice Sheet:**  
[christchurchdartford@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:christchurchdartford@hotmail.co.uk)

### MONDAYS

**8th**  
 8.00pm 'Questioning Faith',  
 Church Centre 

### TUESDAYS

**2nd**  
 8pm Prayer in the Church Centre

### WEDNESDAYS

**10th**  
 7.30pm Hot Shots Club for 10-14 year olds

### THURSDAYS

**4th**  
 9.30am Holy Communion, Church Centre

### SATURDAYS

**6th**  
**3pm Torch Trust for the Blind and  
 Partially Sighted, Church Hall:  
 Gravesend Crusade Choir**

**13th**  
 8.00am Men's Breakfast, Church Centre

**27th**  
 9.45am Prayer Walking from Church Centre

# AND FINALLY

## THANK YOU

- to all those who gave their support and made contributions during Christian Aid Week in May. The street collection raised £2338.54; the collection at Dartford Station: £63.33; the 'hunger lunch' £150.56 and the quiz, £54.50.
- to everyone who contributed to the recent retiring collection for the Dartford Food Bank, which raised £150. Thank you also for your continuing support by donating goods (see also page 5).



## UNWANTED BOOKS?

Christian Aid is now collecting second-hand, **non-fiction** books to sell on the internet. They should be in good condition with bar codes on the cover. Please put them in the cardboard box at the back of Christ Church. For further details contact Lorna and John Neale.



## CHRISTIAN AID STALL, DARTFORD FESTIVAL

Please contact John Neale if you can help (20-21 July).

## PLEASE PRAY . . .

for Simeon who is in Rukungiri, Uganda from 6 – 21 July with *Mission Direct*. The team will be helping to build a school for disabled children as well as spending time with the local community and seeing a very different way of life. [www.missiondirect.org/countries/uganda-rukungiri](http://www.missiondirect.org/countries/uganda-rukungiri)

## LOOKING AHEAD

### Christian Bookshop Open Evening

Thursday 4 July, meet at Christ Church, 6.45pm  
 The Christian book shop in Pratts Bottom is opening in the evening for us. The idea is that we can have a coffee and buy anything of interest from the shop. If you are interested, speak to Rachael Sheen.

### elevate: Contemporary Dance Performance

Thursday 4 July, 7.30pm, Christ Church, Orpington, BR6 9EP  
 An opportunity to see the Apprentices of Springs Dance Company on tour. Tickets: £4 Adults; £2 Children; £10 Families (2 Adults and up to 3 children). Contact Liesel Stanbridge: 01689 871601; e-mail: [liesel.stanbridge@ntlworld.com](mailto:liesel.stanbridge@ntlworld.com)  
[www.springsdancecompany.org.uk](http://www.springsdancecompany.org.uk)



### The Concert in the Park

Saturday 13 July, 10.45am, Dartford Central Park  
 This will be a free music festival organised by Highfield Road Baptist Church. At the event there will be fun activities throughout the day, including bouncy castles and stalls. Footballer, Linvoy Primus, will be talking about life in the Premiership. [www.theconcertinthepark.co.uk](http://www.theconcertinthepark.co.uk)

### Summer Social

Thursday 18 July, 7.30pm, Christ Church Centre  
 See Church Notice sheet for further details or contact Christine Wood.

