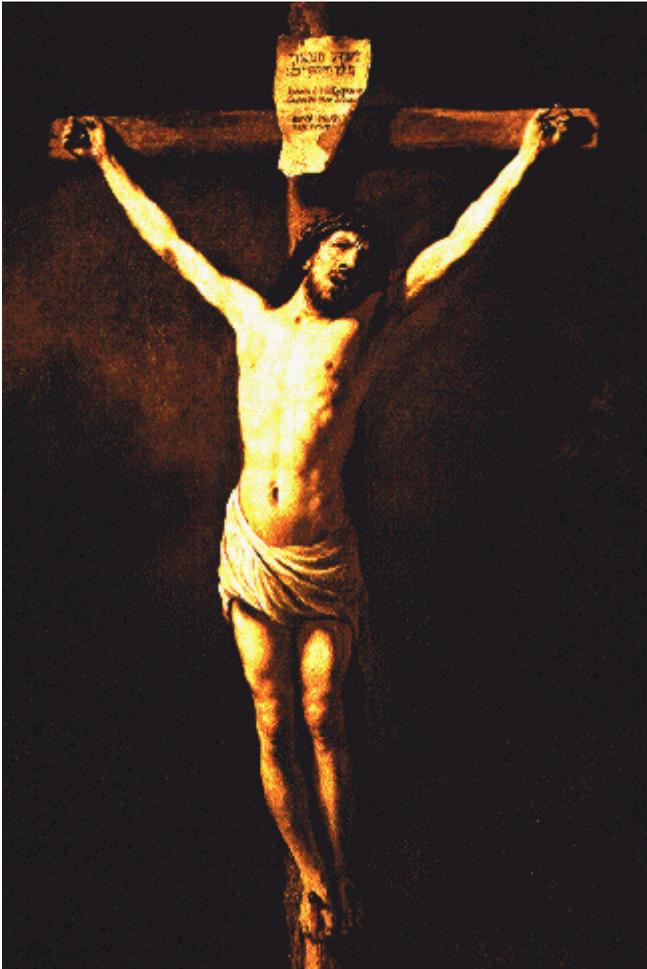




CHRIST CHURCH  
CROUCH END HILL  
LONDON N8 8AX  
**CROSSLINKS**

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**A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL**



**THE GREATEST SHOW OF GOD'S LOVE**

## Vicar's five-minute reflection

# THE LOVE OF GOD HOW MEASURELESS



One of the tragic effects of a fallen world is that most people see themselves as a composite of all their failures. When they look in the mirror, they may see only a divorced person, or someone who has lost his job, or someone who is in the grips of a bad habit. Even if many of us cannot see beyond our failures, that is not the way God looks at us. As a loving father, He looks beyond our failures. Can you imagine a loving father introducing his children by saying, "*This is my daughter, Gladys, who stained the carpet with grape juice when she was two*" or, "*this is my son, John, who broke a valuable vase last week*"? If loving fathers do not have a need to memorize their children's failures, you can rest assured our Heavenly Father has no use for such memories either.

**Can you imagine a loving father introducing his children by saying, "*This is my daughter, Gladys, who stained the carpet with grape juice when she was two*" or, "*this is my son, John, who broke a valuable vase last week*"?**

When we accept God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ, God forgives and forgets our failures. He looks at us and sees the what we are able to become through His grace. That was the experience of Peter the disciple of Jesus, who denied his knowledge of Jesus and even swore to buttress his claim, at a time when Jesus could do with a friend. Yet, Jesus said He had prayed for him and when he was restored he should help his brethren. Peter must have seen himself as a shaking reed but Jesus saw him as a rock. Jesus affirmed him when his spirit was really at a low ebb.

We all need affirmation and love, and the greatest show of love to humanity is the Cross of Christ. There, Jesus hung and died to set the sinner free from the consequences of their sins; sins of the past, present and future.



As long as I keep this wonderful truth and my experience of God's love and forgiveness in focus, I will not doubt His love. It is through this act of forgiveness in Christ Jesus, that I know that there is no condemnation for me and I have passed from death to life. Whenever we allow the world and its values, its issues, and other problems to press in so much upon us, God and His love become marginalized. But, we must learn that, when we lose God and His love we lose touch with reality.

God is utterly trustworthy in all He says and does, and this is the rock-bottom reality on which everything in the universe depends. In an age when so much unfaithfulness abounds, how good it is to lift our eyes to the heavens and realise that there, we have the One who will never let us down, never have to apologise for failing us, and never go back on His Word.

**God has a picture  
of you on His  
dresser**

A woman who had lived a riotous life was dying of AIDS after she had made peace with God by accepting Jesus as her Saviour. A priest was summoned. He attempted to comfort her, but to no avail. "I am lost," she said. "I have ruined my life and every life around me. Now I'm going painfully to hell. There is no hope for me." The priest saw a framed picture of a pretty girl on the dresser. "Who is this?" he asked. The woman brightened. "She's my daughter, the one beautiful thing in my life."

"And would you help her if she was in trouble, or made a mistake and she comes to you repentant? Would you forgive her? Would you still love her?" "Of course I would!" cried the woman. "I would do anything for her! Why do you ask such a question?" "Because I wanted you to know," said the priest, "that God has a picture of you on His dresser." The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ made this possible. God gives you the righteousness of His Son as He takes away your failures, guilt and shame.

## FROM PRESSED GRAPES TO WINE



Can you imagine what it would be like to be one of those grapes? Can you imagine what it would be like to be plucked, pushed, crushed, pressed, skinned, and fermented? OUCH! The pain! What's the point of it all? A lot of people feel that way about the pain they experience in their marriage. "Why am I doing this? Where is this relationship going?" But just as a grape goes through a difficult process before it becomes a fine wine, sometimes our marriage has to go through a painful process before it matures.

The people who have the best marriages are NOT people who grew up well-adjusted, have healthy adult lives, and normal parents. People like that usually have OKAY marriages. The BEST marriages are with couples who were crushed, who went through a painful process, and who built their relationship from the ruins of broken hearts. These are people who have been touched by the love of Christ and can now give this same love to others. I am not in any way suggesting that those who do not belong to Christ cannot have good marriages, but it is often an uphill task, and the best marriages are often experienced when God is at the centre of the relationship.

There's an ancient song by King David, "Those who sow in tears will reap a harvest in glad song." And so it is that pain is often the preview to pleasure. Any woman who has experienced child birth can testify to this truth. Oftentimes, the turning point in a marriage is when a couple hits rock bottom. But the turnaround in a marriage is NOT automatic. Just because you hit the bottom, does NOT mean you'll bounce back. If you don't make it happen, you'll just crash.

In order to turn your marriage around, you have to take RESPONSIBILITY.

(Continued on page 7)

## GRACEFUL AGEING

Remember, Old Folks are worth a fortune:  
With silver in their hair, gold in their teeth  
Fur in their veins, stones in their kidneys  
Gas in their stomachs, iron in their blood and  
Lead in their feet.

I have become a frivolous old gal  
I am seeing five gentlemen every day.

As soon as I wake up **Will Power** helps me out of bed,  
then I go see **Loo** then **Phlem** comes along.  
When he is here he takes up a lot of my time and attention.

When he leaves **Arthur Ritis** shows up and stays the rest of  
the day.  
He doesn't like to stay in one place very long,  
so he takes me from joint to joint.

After such a busy day I'm really tired  
And glad to go to bed with **Ben Gay**  
What A life!

Oh yes I'm also flirting with **Al Zymer**

P.S.

The preacher came to call the other day  
He said at my age I should be thinking about the "Hereafter"  
I told him Oh, I do all the time.  
No matter where I am  
in the parlour, upstairs,  
In the kitchen or down in the basement  
I ask myself, "now ... what am I here after?"

Submitted by Adrian Ogilvie Arendse (an octogenarian)

## THE FATHER'S ANGUISHING DECISION

After a few of the usual Sunday evening hymns, the church's pastor once again slowly stood up, walked over to the pulpit, and gave a very brief introduction of his childhood friend. With that, an elderly man stepped up to the pulpit to speak. "A father, his son, and a friend of his son were sailing off the Pacific Coast," he began, "when a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to shore. The waves were so high, that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright, and the three were swept into the ocean."

The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers who were, for the first time since the service began, looking somewhat interested in his story. He continued, "Grabbing a rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his life...to which boy he would throw the other end of the line. He only had seconds to make the decision. The father knew that his son was a Christian, and he also knew that his son's friend was not. The agony of his decision could not be matched by the torrent of waves. As the father yelled out, 'I love you, son! He threw the line to his son's friend. By the time he pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beyond the raging swells into the black of the night. His body was never recovered."

By this time, the two teenagers were sitting straighter in the pew, waiting for the next words to come out of the old man's mouth. "The father," he continued, "knew his son would step into eternity with Jesus, and he could not bear the thought of his son's friend stepping into an eternity without Jesus. Therefore, he sacrificed his son. How great is the love of God that He should do the same for us." With that, the old man turned and sat back down in his chair as silence filled the room.

(Continued on next page)

## The Father's anguishing decision

(Continued from page 6)

Within minutes after the service ended, the two teenagers were at the old man's side. "That was a nice story," politely started one of the boys," but I don't think it was very realistic for a father to give up his son's life in hopes that the other boy would become a Christian."

"Well, you've got a point there," the old man replied, glancing down at his worn Bible. A big smile broadened his narrow face, and he once again looked up at the boys and said, "It sure isn't very realistic, is it? But I'm standing here today to tell you that that story gives me a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up his Son for me. You see...I was the son's friend."

Carla Muir

## From pressed grapes to wine

(Continued from page 4)

A person who is responsible has the ABILITY to RESPOND. In other words, if you take response-ability for your marriage, then your marriage is not determined solely by what happens; it's also determined by how you RESPOND to what happens.

A responsible person is not a victim of their circumstances. They are the master of their fate. How you respond to your marital circumstances today WILL determine your marital circumstances tomorrow. YOUR actions create your marriage. You can turn sour grapes into a fine wine. If you know how to do this, then do it now. If you need help, feel free to ask for help. I will be glad to help.

Dele Agbelusi

## NEWS, PEOPLE AND EVENTS



**Dr Nazir-Ali** was Bishop of Rochester until March 2009, when he retired. He still lives in Kent with his wife and two children and now ministers to persecuted Christian minorities abroad.

He was born in Karachi, Pakistan to a Shia Muslim family in August 1949, when Pakistan was only two years old as a sovereign nation. No one, including Michael Nazir-Ali's parents could have imagined then that their baby boy would one day sit in the prestigious House of Lords. Nor that he would become a prominent Anglican bishop and an eminent Christian thinker. A teenage convert from Islam, Dr Nazir-Ali is profoundly knowledgeable about the Islamic faith.

Read some of the utterances of Dr. Nazir-Ali from *The Catholic Herald*.

"Christians in this country are becoming aware of the persecutions of Christians abroad. I think partly because they are experiencing something of it themselves, ..."

"I think that vacuum is now giving way to a hostility to the Judaeo-Christian worldview. I am pursuing a twin track on this: on the one hand you have to uphold the Judaeo-Christian tradition as a basis for making the most important moral decisions that need to be made..... At same time, I am conscious that if present trends continue, we need another strategy..... [as] in the last Dark Age, when Christian communities preserved the Gospel learning....., so that there were lights in the darkness. I think it would be wise for the churches also to build strong moral and spiritual communities that can survive and flourish in the darkness, and indeed attract other people to themselves. That's the way I have begun to think."

When asked how he feels the EU is helping to move us toward this "new Dark Age" he replies, "**The EU is the source of much legislation in this country which refuses to respect Christian conscience, which has weakened a public doctrine of marriage, [and] which has compromised the dignity of the human person.....** A lot of this has its origins in European directives, and we haven't seen the last of it either."

## NEWS, PEOPLE AND EVENTS

In 2008 Dr Nazir-Ali hit the headlines when he spoke frankly about Britain's immigration problems, saying that **immigrants "should be willing to adapt to living in a context shaped by traditional British values, which have been largely derived from the Judaeo-Christian tradition"**. Of this episode, he says: "One has to speak the truth whatever the circumstances..... My concern is with what attitude [immigrants] have to British society, and British values. Britain has never asked these questions. Ever."

As someone who spent the past 10 years in the House of Lords, he knows a thing or two about the influence of the EU on British law. "One of the things I've discovered is that most legislation in this country is an attempt to domesticate an EU directive..... un-elected bodies issue these directives. The feeling one gets with the EU is they will get their way whatever the will of the people.

As to the future of European Christianity, and suggestions that France and Holland may be majority Islamic by 2050 or 2060, he says: "That's a combination of the falling away of Christian belief, a decreasing indigenous population, and an increasing Muslim population. So I think there is going to be more tension about this, because these are the two great missionary religions in the world, which is why I think it is very important for Christians and Muslims to come to some common view about how to live together."

Dr Nazir-Ali has sometimes been characterised as a stern figure but when you meet him you will discover he is warm, humble and softly spoken. We are grateful to God for people like Dr. Nazir-Ali and his passion for the cause of the gospel of Christ.

Read the full story about Dr. Nazir Ali in *The Catholic Herald* of March 7 2010

### ALPHA COURSE 2010

**Venue:** CHRIST CHURCH CROUCH END HILL

**Start Date:** Wednesday 21st April 2010 for 10 weeks

**Time:** 6.30pm for supper, with a 7.15pm start, every Wednesday

**To register please contact the Alpha Administrator**

**Write:** Alpha Administrator, 32 Crescent Road London N8 8AX or

**E-mail:** christchurchn8@aol.com; or **Telephone:** 02083401566

**Everyone is welcome. Come and explore the meaning of life.**

# LAUGHTER LINES

## Save Our Siblings

A third-grade Sunday school teacher was giving a Bible lesson on the commandment, honour thy father and thy mother. "Now, does anyone know a commandment for brothers and sisters?"

One sharp girl raised her hand and said, "'Thou shalt not kill.'"



Jack Seberry

## Ring Bear

At a wedding our pastor recently performed, the little boy who was the ring bearer marched deliberately down the aisle, letting out a loud "Grrr" with each step. As he passed, everyone smiled and wondered what the boy was doing. After the ceremony, curiosity got the better of our pastor, who asked him, "Why were you making those loud 'Grrrs' as you came down the aisle?" "Oh, those were growls," the boy answered. "I wanted people to know I was the ring bear."

—Theresa J. Cleary, Cincinnati, OH. Today's Christian Woman, "Heart to Heart"

## Your Time is Up

A Bishop was coming to stay at a vicar's house for the night. The vicar had an eight year old son, who was very excited about the important guest and begged his father to allow him to take the bishop his tea in the morning.

Eventually, the vicar agreed, but told his son that he must knock on the door and say, 'It's the boy, my Lord. It's time to get up.'

On the way upstairs the nervous boy was clutching the cup and saucer and practising the words his father had given him. He knocked at the door and the bishop asked, 'Who is it?' The boy replied at the top of his voice, '**It's the Lord, my boy. Your time is up!**'

Murray Watts - Children on the Loose.

# LAUGHTER LINES

## WHAT KIDS REALLY THINK ABOUT MUM

### Why did God make mothers?

- She's the only one who knows where the scotch tape is.
- Think about it, it was the best way to get more people - mostly to clean the house.
- To help us out of there when we were getting born.

### Why did God give you your mother and not some other mum?

- We're related.
- God knew she likes me a lot more than other people's mums like me.

### What kind of little girl was your mum?

- My mum has always been my mum and none of that other stuff.
- I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess would be pretty bossy.
- They say she used to be nice.

### What's the difference between mums and dads?

- Mums work at work and work at home, and dads just go to work at work.
- Mums know how to talk to teachers without scaring them.
- Dads are taller and stronger, but mums have all the real power 'cause that's who you gotta ask if you want to sleep over at your friend's.

## HOW THE FAST OF LENT GAVE US EASTER EGGS

**A**s the feast of Easter developed in Christian tradition, so did the festival's preparatory period, known as Lent. This involved fasting and later abstinence from certain foods, including eggs. The festal letter of Athanasius in 330 shows that the early church was practising a 40-day fast prior to Easter (also indicated in Canon V of the first Nicene Council). The fifth-century church historian Socrates Scholasticus noted, "Some abstain from eggs ..." Canon LVI of the Council in Trullo, 692, enjoined such abstinence: "It seems good therefore that the whole Church of God which is in all the world should follow one rule and keep the fast perfectly, and as they abstain from everything which is killed, so also should they from eggs and cheese, which are the fruit and produce of those animals from which we abstain."

By the time of the medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-74), eggs, milk, and meat were all forbidden during Lent: "Eggs and milk foods are forbidden to those who fast, for as much as they originate from animals that provide us with flesh ..... Again the Lenten fast is the most solemn of all, both because it is kept in imitation of Christ, and because it disposes us to celebrate devoutly the mysteries of our redemption. For this reason the eating of flesh meat is forbidden in every fast, while the Lenten fast lays a general prohibition even on eggs and milk foods."

**By the time of the medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas, eggs, milk, and meat were all forbidden during Lent: "Eggs and milk foods are forbidden to those who fast, for as much as they originate from animals that provide us with flesh ..."**

In pre-refrigeration days, it would be difficult to preserve milk and meat products until Easter, but the same was not true of eggs. Eggs, which unlike other foods do not perish quickly, were therefore a natural way to *break* the fast on Easter Sunday.

(Continued next page)

## How the fast of lent gave us Easter Eggs

Presenting gifts of eggs at Easter has a long and culturally diverse lineage. Practicality was one factor: Given that hens would be laying eggs throughout Lent, a surplus would exist by Easter, probably at lower prices. (Notably, the Jewish Passover Seder meal includes a hard-boiled egg symbolising the sacrifice at, and subsequently the destruction of, the Jerusalem temple. Whether this had any influence on the development of Easter eggs in their initial form cannot be determined.)

Anthony McRoy (Lecturer, Wales Evangelical School of Theology, U.K.)

### **EASTER AND HOLY WEEK AT CHRIST CHURCH**

#### **Palm Sunday 28th March**

**8.00 am: Holy Communion (BCP)**

**10.30 am: Holy Communion Service**

**5.00 pm: Service of Lessons  
and Passiontide Music**

#### **Maundy Thursday 1st April**

**7.30 pm: The Last Supper (Holy Communion)**

#### **Good Friday 2nd April**

**12.00 – 1.00 pm: Open Witness at The Broadway**

**1.30 – 3.00 pm: Good Friday Meditation**

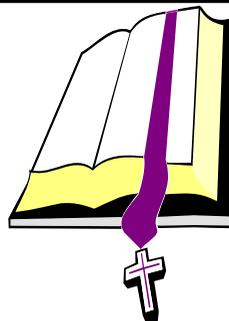
#### **Easter Day 4th April**

**8.00 am: Holy Communion (BCP)**

**10.30 am: Easter Day Parish Communion**

### **Memory Verse**

**The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.     John 10:10,11**



## EXCERPTS FROM CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT JANUARY-DECEMBER 2009

### **Church Attendance**

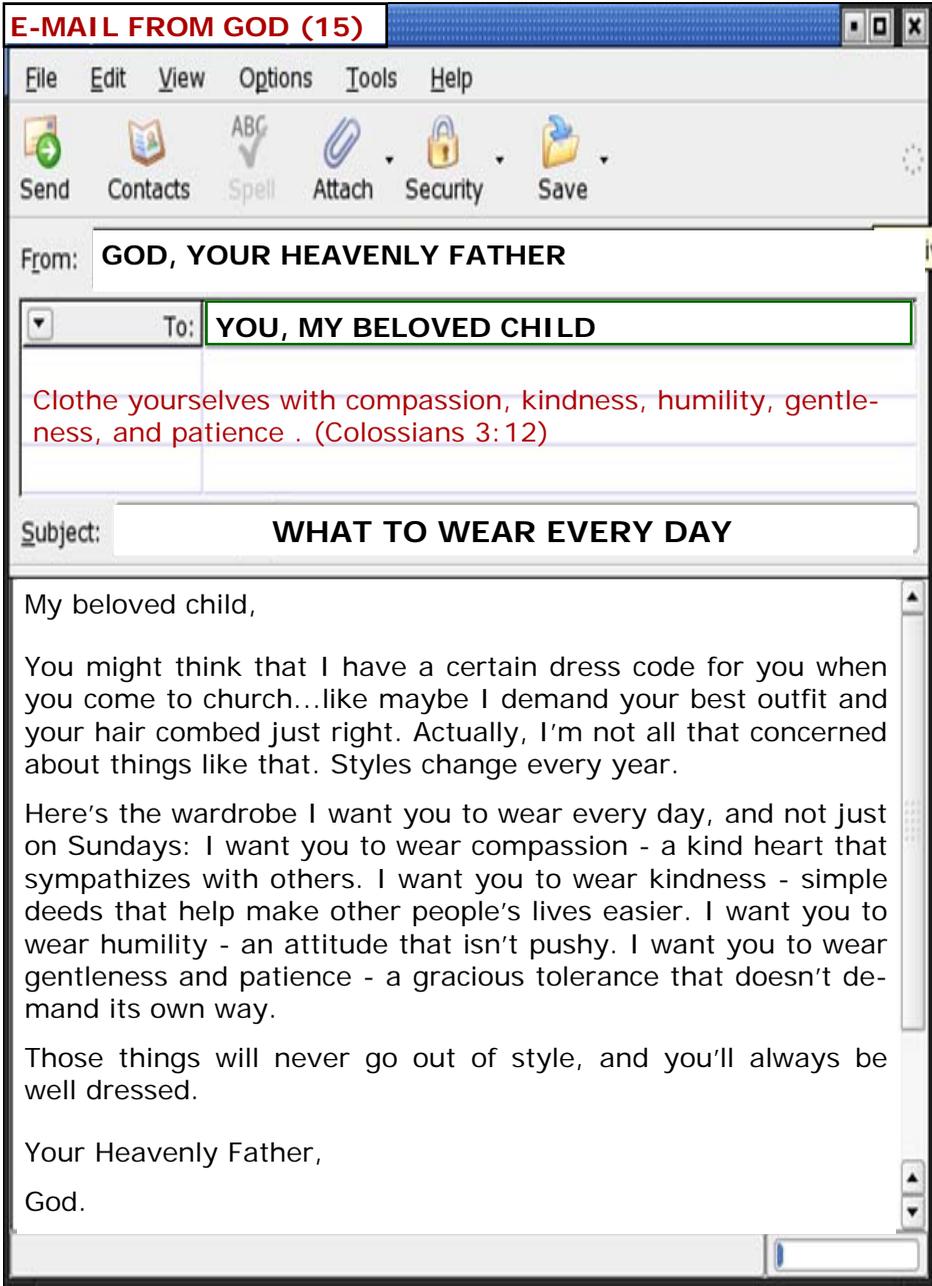
There were 97 parishioners on the Church Electoral roll as at December 2009. 4 people were confirmed and 5 were baptised. The average weekly attendance, counted during October was 81. There was 1 wedding service.

**Church Renovation and Repairs:** As a part of the implementation of its Mission Plan till 2012, the PCC completed the renovation and redecoration of the internal spaces of the church and upgraded its audio-visual facilities to include a drop-down screen, central projection and camera. The sum of £57,269.68 was spent in 2009. Further details are available in the church 2009 financial report. The asphalt overlay to the East-end entrance to the church was redone in December as part of the general maintenance of the church fabric.

**Response to 2009 financial crisis:** Christ Church was not immune to the global financial crisis which left a trail of woes on its path in the UK. Some of our members needed financial assistance and in the spirit of *Christian* fellowship and love (*koinonia*), the PCC authorised financial assistance totalling £2100 to various recipients within the Church family £2,000 of which came from the fund set up in 2008.

**Donations to Charities:** It is the tradition of the PCC to dispense a tenth of the stewardship giving, set aside for this purpose from the previous accounting year, to charities that are supported by the Church. In 2009, donations amounting to £2,435 were disbursed to various charities among which were: Caris Haringey, Tear Fund, Mission Aviation Fellowship, CMS., Radio Bible Class (Our Daily Bread), Scripture Union, Gideons International, School for the handicapped (Diocese of Ibadan), North London Hospice, Rural Development Counsellors for Christian Churches in Africa (Rurcon), St. Mungos Homeless Fund, Bishop's lent appeal, British Legion. £2,908 has been set aside in these accounts for disbursement in 2010.

# HEAVENLY CORRESPONDENCE



Adapted from 'e-mail from God for Teens' - Clonigers

## MOTTO/TEXT FOR THE YEAR

**“I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH” PHILIPPIANS 4:13**

### FINDING OUT ABOUT...CHRIST CHURCH?

Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are resolved to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ.

As a body of believers, we offer to all who come regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resources in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities. You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

#### Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:

- Sunday**
- **8.00am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
  - **10.30am.** Main service with Crèche facilities
- There is family/parade service once every month - usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.
- **5.00pm.** Evening worship (6pm from 11th April)

#### ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday - Choir practice in church (**9.30am**)
- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group *meeting in church* (**9.30-11.30am**)
- Brownies *meeting in church* (**5.30pm**)
  - Prayer meeting in church - 15th March, 5th and 19th April. (**8pm**)
- Wednesday - Lent Course in church - (**7:45pm for 8pm start**)
- Friday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**2.00 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in hall and church (**6.30pm**)
  - Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.00pm**)

Enquiry/Counselling/Prayer Lifeline - please phone 020 8340 1566

**Editorial Board:** Sheila Wheeler, Iyabo Agbelusi, Dele Agbelusi

**Voice Edition:** Sheila Wheeler, Peter Green, Dele Agbelusi

**Vicar:** Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

**Church Wardens:** Peter Green, Mervin Bentham, Charles Murphy

**Lay Preachers:** Richard Mercer, Iyabo Agbelusi

**Organist:** Pavla Bockova

**YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME**

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