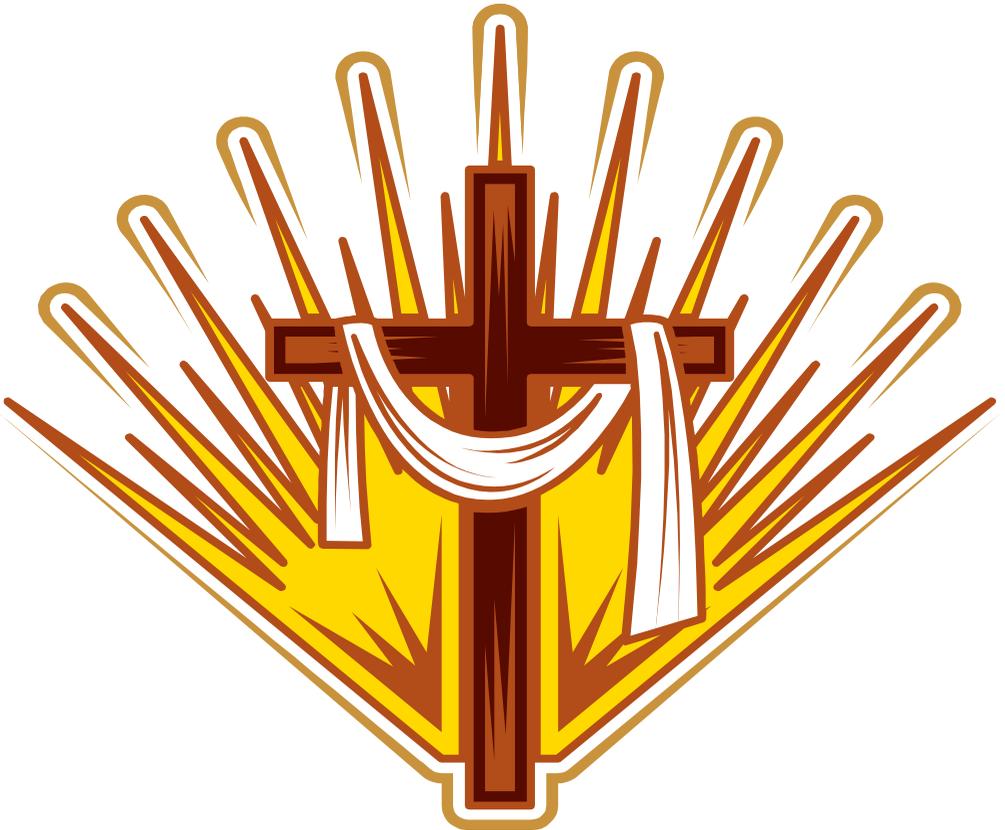




CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS

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A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



CHRIST IS RISEN

Vicar's ten-minute reflection

THE GREAT FINALE



I love reading comedies and cherish the excitement of reading the grand finale, the end of the story where truth triumphs over evil, and good over bad, where the mission begun at the beginning of the story unravels and is accomplished after many twists and turns.

We were witnesses to the story of the birth of Jesus Christ, as his birth is celebrated by all Marks and Spencers, Tesco and Sainsburys, Primark and Next...I am sorry if I left out your name. Christmas was a jolly period as we celebrated the invasion of the human world by God in human flesh! But that was just the beginning of the story. The man Jesus came for a purpose and unless you followed him through his life's journey, you will miss the thrust of the story of this Jesus.

The man Jesus came for a purpose and unless you followed him through his life's journey, you will miss the thrust of the story

Many expected Him to usher in a new kingdom of their own design. The Jews expected Jesus to overthrow the Roman government by his divine power and set them at the controls of a new regime. We, in the twentieth century expect Jesus to bring an end to the disasters which are now becoming the hallmark of our age. What about the terrorism fears, global economic melt-down, nuclear wars, inequalities on a large scale, and personal unfulfilled dreams. We are not alone.

The disciples of Jesus also lived on that side of Easter. Human history has a way of grinding on between promise and fulfilment. Can we trust God that he can make something holy and good of a world like ours? Can we trust God that He can transform and use undependable apprentices like Peter and the rest of the disciples? Yes. He can and Easter is the reason why.



John Stott comments, "Perhaps the transformation of the disciples of Jesus is the greatest evidence of all for the resurrection. It was the resurrection which transformed Peter's fear into courage and Thomas' doubt into faith. It was the resurrection which changed the Sabbath into Sunday and the Jewish remnants into the Christian Church. It was the resurrection which changed Saul the Pharisee into Paul the apostle and turned his persecuting into preaching."

Easter says, the purpose of life is not death but life, a life that triumphs over death forever. Celebrating Easter is the best thing that the church can do because it is a celebration of all that is good, all that is true, and all that is beautiful. Remember Jesus' final words on the cross? "It is finished." When the soldiers taking Jesus' body down from the cross stabbed him with a spear, "blood and water came out" (John 19:34). That rush of fluids revealed what was the actual final cause of death for Jesus — a burst aorta. Jesus died of a broken heart. The breaking of Jesus' heart was what "finished" Jesus' sacrifice. On Easter morning the great surprise is that, that sacrifice was not the end of Jesus' mission.

Easter says, the purpose of life is not death but life, a life that triumphs over death forever.

Out of Jesus' broken heart there emerged a new heart, a resurrected heart, an unbreakable, unstoppable heart. On Easter "It is finished" becomes "Now it begins."

The "beloved disciple" looked in at the abandoned grave clothes and "believed" that Jesus had risen. At that instant his

Easter heart started beating. Mary Magdalene heard her name called with her beloved Teacher's own voice, and she saw and believed that the risen Lord stood before her. It was at that moment Mary's Easter heart started beating.

Is this church full this morning with people whose heart are full of Easter? Do you have an Easter heart? Here are some ways you can tell.

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CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE ADVICE



Every Christian married couple can benefit from some basics as they seek to make the best of their relationship. Here are some tips.

Set aside time each day to pray with your spouse. Some couples find that the best time for this practice is very early in the morning while others prefer a time just before going to bed. It will be very difficult to have a protracted time of anger when you regularly hold hands together in God's presence.

Read Together: Set aside time each day, or at least once a week, to read the Bible together. This might also be described as a time of devotions. You could read to each other, either from the Bible or from a devotional book, and then spend a few minutes in prayer together. It is a good thing to discover together how spending time with God can enrich one's marital life.

Make Decisions Together: Those of you who attended our marriage seminar in February will remember that we touched on this topic. I'm not talking about deciding on what to eat for dinner. Major decisions, like financial ones, are best decided as a couple. One of the greatest areas of strain in a marriage is the sphere of finances. As a couple you should discuss your finances on a regular basis, even if one of you is better at handling the practical aspects, like paying the bills and balancing the cheque book. Keeping secrets about spending will drive a wedge between a couple faster than anything. If you agree to come to mutual decisions on how the finances are handled, this will strengthen trust between you and your partner. It also reduces the need to keep secrets from each other as you both commit to making all important family decisions together. This is one of the best ways to develop trust as a couple.

Christian Marriage Advice

Get involved in a church together: Find a place of worship where you and your spouse will not only attend together, but enjoy areas of mutual interest, such as serving in a ministry and making Christian friends together. The Bible says in Hebrews 10:24-25 that one of the best ways we can stir up love and encourage good deeds is by remaining faithful to the Body of Christ by meeting together regularly as believers.

Set aside special, regular times to continue developing your romance. Once married, couples often neglect the area of romance, especially after the kids come along. Continuing a dating life may take some strategic planning on your part as a couple, but it is vital to maintaining a secure and intimate marriage. Keeping the romance alive will also be a bold testimony to the strength of your Christian marriage.

Conclusion: The steps above require real, committed effort on your part. Falling in love may have seemed effortless, but keeping your Christian marriage strong will take ongoing work. The good news is—building a healthy marriage is not all that complicated or difficult if you're determined to follow a few basic principles.

Adapted from an article on marriage by Mary Fairchild



Well Pastor, I was all ready with my tithe cheque this morning, but you kept talking about my first fruits so I went and got them.

Honour the Lord from your wealth and from the first fruits of all your produce Proverbs 3:9

EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT

Josh McDowell entered university as a young man looking for a good time and searching for happiness and meaning in life. He tried going to church, but found religion unsatisfying. He ran for student leadership positions but was disappointed by how quickly the glamour wore off. He tried the party circuit, but he woke up Monday mornings feeling worse than ever.

He finally noticed a group of students engaged in Bible study, and he became intrigued by the radiance of one of the young ladies. He asked her a reason for it. She looked him straight in the eye, smiled, and said, "Jesus Christ."

"Oh, for heaven's sake," he retorted, "don't give me that garbage about religion." She replied, "I didn't say religion; I said Jesus Christ."

The students invited him to intellectually examine the claims of Jesus Christ and the evidence supporting Christianity. He accepted their challenge, and after much study and research, finally admitted that he couldn't refute the body of proof supporting Christianity. McDowell received Christ as his Saviour, and his research became the background for his book *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*.

One of the major factors in his conversion to Christianity was his inability to ignore the historical resurrection of Jesus Christ, a point he made later to a student at the University of Uruguay who asked him. "Professor McDowell, why can't you intellectually refute Christianity?"

"For a very simple reason," replied McDowell. "I am not able to explain away an event in history - the resurrection of Jesus Christ."



The Great Finale

(continued from page 3)

An Easter heart is full of new life. An Easter heart is full of a new mission. An Easter heart is full of new possibilities.

An Easter church that is filled with Easter hearts continues to offer signs of new life to the world. Strengthened by an Easter heart we can roll away despair, and reveal a path to hope.

We can roll away delusions — delusions which say, “If I was rich I’d be happy;” delusions like “All I need is one more drink, or smoke, or hit . . .;” delusions like “The next promotion will get me everything I want.”



The resurrection is a testimony to the adage, “He who laughs last laughs best.” The Sanhedrin thought they had the last laugh. The Roman authorities thought they had the last laugh. The cruel crowds and sadistic soldiers thought they had the last laugh. But the resurrection proved God has the last laugh. Those who thought they had triumphed over Jesus were soundly trumped by his triumph over death itself. Do you have an Easter heart and vision?

Dele Agbelusi

BECAUSE OF EASTER

- Because of Good Friday you can look back, and not be afraid.
- Because of Easter you can look ahead, and not be afraid.
- Because of Ascension Day you can look up, and not be afraid.
- Because of Pentecost you can look inward, and not be afraid.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Is God calling you to Youth work in Christ Church?

Do you love the Lord Jesus and are interested in working with young people; can spare Sundays and possibly one week-day? Let us meet and discuss the terms. Please contact the vicar on 02083401566 for a brief chat.

Stewardship Boxes

Envelope boxes for 2010/2011 stewardship are available. Members of the congregation who wish to join the stewardship scheme should please contact Vera Freeburne our Stewardship Secretary.

We encourage every tax paying member to join the Gift Aid scheme which enables the church to claim an additional 28p for every pound donated to the church at no extra cost to you.

Healing and Anointing Service—May 30

The theme for the next healing and anointing service is:

NO TRUCE FOR THE ENEMY.

You are invited to join us as we dig deep into God's word to discover what to do when the enemy takes what belongs to us.

ALPHA 2010 at Christ Church

A ten week Alpha Course will commence on 21 April 2010. The programme will start at 6:30pm with a meal and conclude at about 8:30pm.

There is also a plan to have a day-time Alpha run concurrently with the evening Alpha and this will commence at 2pm after tea and coffee and light refreshments.

Please contact Alpha Administrator on 02083401566 or write christchurchn8@aol.com to register.

NEWS AND EVENTS

'Christians being bullied out of public life'

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey is **calling Christians to stand up for their faith and avoid being bullied out of public life.**

Speaking at an event put on by the Christian Broadcasting Council he said there are strident campaigns in the name of political correctness that prevent believers living out their faith. Lord Carey said: "It is clear that we must stand up against the marginalising of faith. We must constantly remind society of its Christian roots and heritage."

And he warned Christians that if they "behave like door-mats" they will be treated as though they are. He also expressed concern over what he claimed was an aggressive campaign by atheists to banish faith from the public sphere. He said that since 9/11 "a new breed of atheists have moved into the public square arguing that Christianity, or any other faith, should have no role in public life".

Olave Snelling from the CBC tells Premier the situation is getting worse: "In society we have to look at trends and I would say that if we look at what has happened and what is happening now we could see accurately that there is increasing hostility towards Christians in public office and in the market place.

"So we have to say something, we can't remain silent and if we do remain silent then we deserve everything we get."

Lord Carey's comments come as many Christians have expressed a growing hostility towards public declarations of faith. Last month Archbishop of York Dr John Sentamu said that Christianity was being pushed out of public life in a 'ferocious and insidious' manner.

-news@email.premier.org.uk

LAUGHTER LINES

I am fine

Farmer Joe decided his injuries from the accident were serious enough to take the trucking company (responsible for the accident) to court.



In court, the trucking company's fancy lawyer was questioning farmer Joe. "Didn't you say, at the scene of the accident, 'I'm fine'?" said the lawyer.

Farmer Joe responded, "Well, I'll tell you what happened. I had just loaded my favourite mule Bessie into the....."

"I didn't ask for any details," the lawyer interrupted, "just answer the question. Did you not say, at the scene of the accident, 'I'm fine!'"

Farmer Joe said, "Well, I had just got Bessie into the trailer and I was driving down the road..."

The lawyer interrupted again and said, "Judge, I am trying to establish the fact that, at the scene of the accident, this man told the Highway Patrolman on the scene that he was just fine. Now several weeks after the accident he is trying to sue my client. I believe he is a fraud. Please tell him to simply answer the question."

By this time the Judge was fairly interested in Farmer Joe's answer and said to the lawyer, "I'd like to hear what he has to say about his favourite mule Bessie."

Joe thanked the Judge and proceeded, "Well, as I was saying, I had just loaded Bessie, my favourite mule, into the trailer and was driving her down the highway when this huge semi-truck and trailer ran the stop sign and smacked my truck right in the side. I was thrown into one ditch and Bessie was thrown into the other. I was hurting real bad and didn't want to move. However, I could hear ole Bessie moaning and groaning. I knew she was in terrible shape just by her groans. Shortly after the accident a Highway Patrolman came on the scene. He could hear Bessie moaning and groaning so he went over to her. After he looked at her he took out his gun and shot her between the eyes. Then the Patrolman came across the road with his gun in his hand and looked at me. If I did not say 'I am fine' I may not be here today. I rest my case. "

Laughter Lines

Money for the Pastor

A little boy was given a five dollar bill to put in the collection plate. When the offering came around, he wouldn't put it in. But after the end of the service, when he went to shake the pastor's hand, he pulled out the five dollar bill and gave it to the pastor. The pastor asked him, *"Why are you giving me this money? Why didn't you put it in the offering plate?"*

The boy answered, *"Because my mommy told me you're the poorest pastor we've ever had!"*

Digging Whales

We had recently moved from Tennessee to Mississippi. Our four-year old son, Jeep, came home from church one Sunday, excited about the Sunday school lesson. "My teacher taught us all about the whales," he announced.

"You mean Jonah and the whale?" my wife asked.

"No," he said, "Jacob and the whales."

"I think it was Jonah," my wife corrected. "He was swallowed by a whale in the ocean."

But Jeep knew his lesson. "No, it was Jacob. He moved out into the desert and when he got thirsty, he dug some whales."

—Pat Apel, Hazlehurst, Mississippi. Christian Reader, "Kids of the Kingdom."

Mistaken Identity

One day, one of my first-grade students, Taylor, asked his grandmother if he was a child of God. "Why, of course you are, Taylor," she replied. He looked puzzled, then responded, "Well I better get home and tell Mom and Dad—they think I'm theirs!"

—Mary De Guzman, Greenville, SC. Today's Christian Woman, "Heart to Heart."

WHY DID THE CHEERING STOP?

When Jesus emerged on the public scene he was an overnight sensation. He would try to go off to be alone and the people would still follow him. The masses lined the streets as he came into town. On Palm Sunday palm leaves were spread before him and there were shouts of Hosanna.

But by Thursday of that week, crowds of people had begun to cry out against Jesus. His loyal followers gathered with him on Thursday evening for his Last Supper with them, and one of those followers would betray him with a kiss so that he might be seized by the authorities and be accused of perverting the nation. Another of those most loyal followers would later deny even knowing him. By Friday of that week, the crowds seem to have completely turned against him. He heard their bitter shouts of "Crucify, crucify." And crucify him they did! It was a difficult week for Jesus. **Before the week that began so gloriously would end even more gloriously, Jesus would have to sweat blood, be forsaken by his followers, stand trial, be ridiculed, and be crucified.**

Why did the masses so radically turn against him? How did the shouts of Hosanna on Sunday transform into the shouts of crucify him on Friday? I am not just talking about the immediate events that may have brought it about, but the deeper root causes. What were the underlying issues? In five days it all fell apart. Why? Why did the cheering stop?

One reason why the cheering stopped is that Jesus began to talk more and more about commitment. To a rich young ruler who came enthusiastically asking for what to do to inherit the kingdom of God, Jesus says: Go and sell all that you have and give it to the poor and then come follow me. The masses were stunned.. They had been raised to believe that God had specially blessed rich men. Yet, here is Jesus turning the big money away. I wonder how many churches would do that today. We think that people who are wealthy and prominent are individuals who need to be recruited and retained at all costs. We think their success in the world will

Why did the cheering stop?

lead to our success in the church. It bothered them to see Jesus turn away a rich man.

When the 5,000 were hungry he fed them. When they brought their sick to him, he healed them. When a woman was caught in adultery and was about to be stoned, it was Jesus who came to her rescue and saved her. The message of his ministry was one of grace upon grace, not works

But now he seems to be saying, "The time for miracles is over. The time for commitment is now." It is interesting to note that in all four Gospels after Jesus enters Jerusalem to the shouts of Hosanna and palm branches there is not another miracle recorded, except the healing of the High priest's servant.

Secondly, I think that **the cheering began to stop when Jesus goes to the temple and drives the money-changers out.** After the temple has been emptied, however, he then invites in the lame, the poor, the sick, the outcasts of society (in Matthew). He dares to bring into the church those whom we would refer to today as those homeless street people. Jesus opened the doors of the church to everyone, and restated that His Father's house is supposed to be a house of prayer not for merchandise.. It angered some people then, and let me tell you, it will anger some people today. The battle lines were already drawn.

Finally, I would suggest to you that the cheering stopped because Jesus began to talk more and more about a cross. In the early part of his ministry Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God. That was an interesting subject, especially as they misunderstood this kingdom to be a restoration of Israel to the days of King David's glory. But increasingly Jesus began to talk about sacrifice-even giving up your life. The crowd did not buy into a Messiah who was going to die.

(concluded on page 14)

Why did the cheering stop?

Of what use was Christ's death to their agenda? So the cheering stopped and they cried, "Away with this man who had everything going for him but wasted it away. Who wants a Messiah who could not even save himself from the hands of the hated Romans? And so the cheering stopped and the shouts, "Crucify him." rent the air.

Are you like the crowd? You sing Hosanna to Jesus when the going is good, when your dreams are turning to reality. But as soon as the tide of life turns against you, your feet slip and you are ready to turn to other gods of your own making.

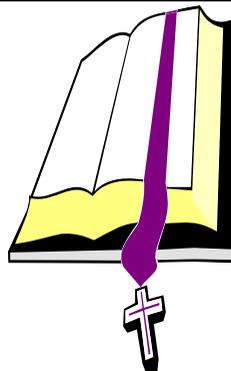
The Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had their period of highs when they were promoted from obscurity to ministers in the courts of Nebuchadnezzar. But their song and cheering for their Lord did not change even when they were thrown into the fiery furnace.

They said "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." (Daniel 3: 16-18). That is faith. That is commitment. That's what God calls every Christian to do. The cheering must never stop.

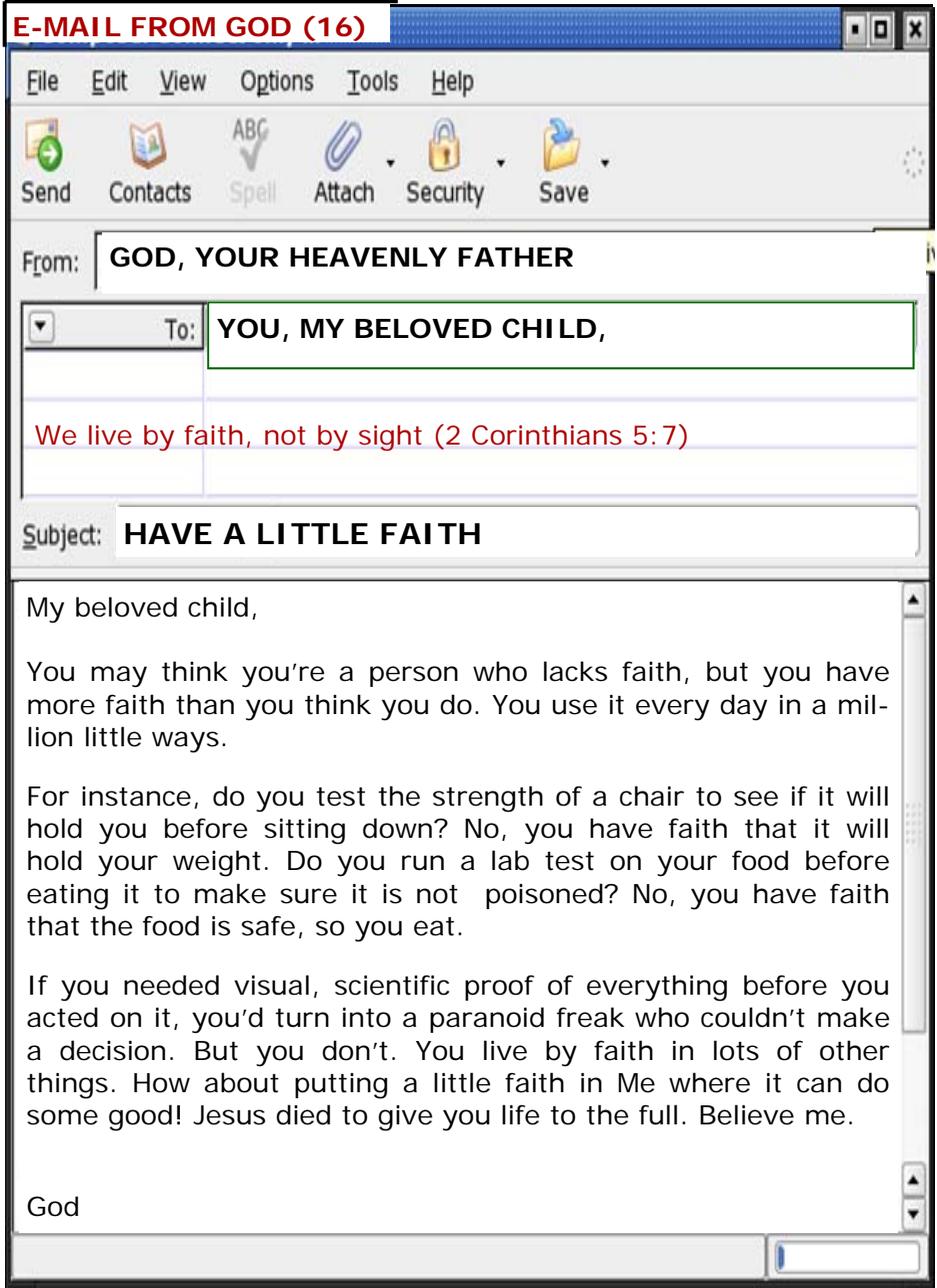
Memory Verse

He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"

Luke 24:25-26



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: 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 resource 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.
- **6.00pm.** Evening worship

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 meetings –5th, 19th April, 3rd May. (**8 pm**)
- Wednesday - Evening Alpha in church - (**6.30 pm - 8.30pm**)
- Friday - Daytime Alpha in church - West Chapel (**2.00 pm-3.30pm**)
- Scouts meeting in hall and church(**6.30 pm**) -
 - Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.00 pm**)
- Enquiry/Counselling/Prayer Lifeline - please phone 020 8340 1566

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YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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