



CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS

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A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



*The light shines in the darkness,
but the darkness has not understood it.
John Ch 1 vs 5*

JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE CHRISTMAS EVENT

Vicar's five-minute reflection

JESUS-THE LIGHT OF GOD



During the days of the prophet Isaiah, darkness covered the face of the earth - the darkness of human despair as an invading army walked over the cities of God's chosen people. Imagine if you will, families separated, people uprooted from their homes, young men killed attempting to defend their homeland. And while it might be explained that the collapse of their world was the result of their impiety, the cause no longer mattered. Now they were overwhelmed by a deep darkness – a darkness that brought despair and crushed all hope.

I wonder if we, too, sometimes feel as if a deep darkness has covered the face of our world. Tyrants walk the earth, masquerading as angels of light, all the while exploiting the weakest and frailest amongst us. There is hardly any average family which has not felt the effects of the downturn of the economy. We are compelled to tighten our belts in the face of our dwindling resources to the point that we are almost being suffocated to death. Our streets are unsafe. Our politicians have betrayed our trust. Godlessness is being entrenched as our national religion. How we long for a time when we could feel the heartbeat of God again in every sphere of our beloved country!

The people of ancient Israel felt this way, but Isaiah brought them a message – a message about a new day dawning, a new light shining. He told those who lived under the cloud of deep darkness - in a land in which the light of goodness had long been absent - that they shall see a great light (Isaiah 9:2).

That is essentially the message that was given to the shepherds in the fields that dark Christmas night: "Do not be afraid; I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). That is the message given to us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined" (Isaiah 9:2).

Our society makes it difficult to appreciate the coming of the Son of righteousness because it denies our darkness and deep longings by the glitter of artificial lights and the narcotics of business and commerce.



But after the shopping is done and the work is over, we gather in the quiet. We gather in the dark cold of the winter of our world and the winter of our lives, with our Advent longings: "O come, O come, Immanuel..." We gather in the darkness and wait for the light.

It was true then and it is true now. The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. As Christian people, we know that the light of the world is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As Christian people we know that the light has shone in the darkness and the darkness has never been able to overcome it. We know that the light of Christ is the light that shone in creation and is the light of all human beings. 'The statement that God is Light,' says one commentator, 'might sound commonplace to us now, but that is only because Jesus made that statement possible.' Whatever spots of darkness might seem to cloud the Deity as a consequence of our inability to perceive Him as He is, Jesus Christ reveals Him to be a God who is light with 'no darkness at all.' Jesus is the light of hope whatever our circumstance is—in pain, in tears, in sorrows, in joy.

The light of hope (the source of hope and the reason for hope) shines brightest in despair. It is the hope for the present and for the future. Isaiah called the light a "great light." But it was not that great in the beginning. Very few people even noticed it at first. Isaiah tells us what it is: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given." The light would shine in the face of a child.

The light of hope will enable you to find your way. This light of hope will shine on the road you travel. Whatever darkness surrounds you, there is a light that shines in the darkness, and that light can shine on you. That light is Jesus Christ. It will enable you to find your way.

The light of hope can be shared by you. Not only can you find your way, you can share this light so that others can find the way too. You can be a witness of this light by living the meaning of it, by being a person of hope, by reflecting the light of Christ, by sharing the warmth of it in your daily life, by inviting other people to come into this lighthouse (the assembly of God's people) to learn of the light and feel the warmth of it. In this light, they will find hope.

Whatever your situation , I wish you a joyful Christmas because of what Christ can do to brighten your day. Dele Agbelusi

THE CHRISTMAS STORY



It was a snowy Christmas Eve. Inside the warm house, the Christmas tree was cheerfully ablaze with lights and surrounded by dozens of presents.

The man's wife and children were dressed and ready to leave for church. "Come with us," they urged, for they loved him. "Not me," he snapped. "I don't believe all that religion garbage."

For many years the man's wife had been trying to tell him about Jesus Christ and the salvation he offers. How God's Son had become a human being in order to show us the way to heaven.



"Nonsense," the man always said.

The family left for church and the man was all alone in his cosy country home. He glanced out the window at the cold snowy scene outside. He turned to warm himself by the fire.



But as he turned, his eyes caught a movement in the snow outside. He looked. Cats! Three young cats walking slowly past his window.

"The fools," he thought. "They'll freeze for sure!" The man put on his hat and coat and opened the door. A blast of wintry air sent a shiver through his body.

"Come here, cats! Come inside where there's warmth and food. You'll die out there." But the cats ran away, frightened by the stranger at the door. He walked outside. "Come back! Don't be afraid, I want to save you."

But the cats were gone. It was too late.

"Well, I did everything I could for them," the man muttered to himself. "What more could I do? I'd have to become a cat myself in order to reach them and save them. If I became a cat, I could tell them and show them. They would have to believe me then, unless they were fools."

Continued on page 5

5 WAYS TO VALUE YOUR CHILD

1. **Validate them.** Children can tell whether you think they are important or not by how seriously you take them. If they come to you with a problem, give them your full attention while they talk to you, no matter how small you think the matter is.
2. **Avoid comparisons.** Don't compare them with their friends or siblings. It can undermine their confidence and knock their self-esteem. Instead, affirm something that is unique about them.
3. **Listen to them.** Remember to look at them while they talk – listen with your eyes.
4. **Understand the power of praise.** Catch them doing something right and tell them. To a child, praise can be like rain in a desert.
5. **Enter into their world.** Talk about what interests them. Spending time with a child tells them you value them. Join in their games. Watch their choice of TV show together. Give them the opportunity to teach you – you may be surprised at what you learn.

The Christmas Story (Continued from page 4)

Just as he reached the door, the church bells rang in the distance. The man paused for a second and listened. Then he went in by the fire, got down on his knees, and wept.

And that is what the Christmas story is all about. The Creator of the universe loved us so much that he came to earth to show us how to be saved. And if we listen to him and follow him, we will not perish, but instead will be given everlasting life. (John 3:16; Philippians 2:6-8)

JESUS CALLED THE OTHER DAY

Author Doug Mendenhall shares a brief parable that should cause all of us to pause and reflect:

Jesus called the other day to say he was passing through and [wondered if] he could spend a day or two with us. I said, "Sure. Love to see you. When will you hit town?" I mean, it's Jesus, you know, and it's not every day you get the chance to have him visit you. It's not like it's your in-laws and you have to stop and decide whether the advantages outweigh your having to move to the sleeper sofa.

That's when Jesus told me he was actually at a convenience store out by the High Street. I must have gotten that Bambi-in-headlights look, because my wife hissed, "What is it? What's wrong? Who is that?"

So I covered the receiver and told her Jesus was going to arrive in eight minutes, and she ran out of the room and started giving guidance to the kids—in that effective way that Marine drill instructors give guidance to recruits. ...

My mind was already racing with what needed to be done in the next eight—no seven—minutes so Jesus wouldn't think we were reprobate loser slobs. I turned off the TV in the den, which was blaring some weird scary movie I'd been half watching. But I could still hear screams from our bedroom, so I turned off the reality show it was tuned to...

My wife had already thinned out the magazines that had been accumulating on the coffee table. She put *Christianity Today* on top for a good first impression. Five minutes to go.

I looked out the front window, but the yard actually looked great thanks to my long, hard work, so I let it go. What could I improve in four minutes anyway? I did notice the mail had come, so I ran out to grab it. Mostly it was Netflix envelopes and a bunch of catalogues tied into recent purchases, so I stuffed it back in the box.

Continued on page 7

Jesus called the other day

Jesus doesn't need to get the wrong idea—three minutes from now—about how much on-line shopping we do.

I plumped up sofa pillows, my wife tossed dishes into the sink, I scolded the kids, and she shooed the dog. With one minute left I realized something important: Getting ready for a visit from Jesus is not an eight-minute job.

Then the doorbell rang.

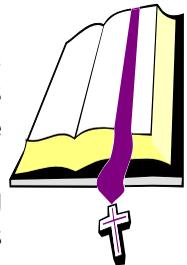
Doug Mendenhall, "Getting Prepared for the Arrival of Jesus,"

SPREAD THE NEWS— THERE IS JOY IN JESUS

I was told about a Christian man who was experiencing severe depression. Medications seemed to have failed and he seemed to be losing his faith. However, he met a young woman whose prognosis was worse than his. She was on the verge of committing suicide and this young man led her to Christ. The woman's conversion brought about a change in her outlook to life. But that was not all. The man found a new joy too. When we create joy in others we create joy in ourselves. So, go out and be joyful and infect others with the joy you have in Jesus.

Memory Verse

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light...For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. **(Isaiah 9: 1, 2-7)**



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

As we get older we often find ourselves remembering the days of our youth, and enjoy sharing memories with others of our own age. Our memories are part of who we are, and many who struggle to recall what happened last week can vividly bring to mind what they did in the last war. For a number of years reminiscence sessions have been run at Morriss House residential home, Coolhurst Road, Crouch End. Residents are encouraged to talk about the past, and many have great pleasure in remembering, for example, their schooldays. In running these sessions, I have been fascinated to learn about the girl whose flute teacher was the composer Gustav Holst; the frail little lady who drove a truck during the war; the tea-planter; the pub landlady; the concert pianist who was ostracised at school because she was 'different'; the Australian who became a professor at the Royal College of Music; the Harrods mannequin; the farmer's daughter with twelve brothers and sisters who went to school barefoot – and much more. Everyone has a story to tell, everyone has lived a unique and interesting life.

If you feel you would like to help at these sessions (once a fortnight for an hour on a weekday morning), or help with other activities at Morriss House, we could always do with more volunteers. Speak to me or ring me on 0208 883 2735.

Sheila Wheeler

PRAISE THE LORD

Praise the Lord! At long last, our audio-visual system became operational on Advent Sunday, 29 November 2009. We give God the glory and thank all of you who contributed generously to make this milestone a reality. May God continue to bless you. And I want to remind those who pledged and are yet to renew their pledges that the door is not shut yet to receive your donations.



CELEBRATION OF LOVE AND
RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE VOWS

Saturday 6th FEBRUARY 2010
An Event to Spice up Your Marriage

There will be a service of the renewal of marriage commitment (vows) and to celebrate God's love in marriage. This event is for you irrespective of your denomination, church affiliation and state of marriage. The first of its kind at Christ Church was held in 2000 and participants (over 40 couples) wished we could have this programme on a regular basis. We opted to have it every five years and the last one was in 2005. 2010 has come so soon you think 2005 was just yesterday!



The programme will commence at 11am with two or three seminars on marriage. The seminars will focus on some issues in marriage after which there would be a service of renewal of marriage commitment. What a wonderful way to enrich your relationship!

There will be refreshments after the service.

Can you help by passing this good news around?



Any couple married for less than 100 years is very welcome!

Please register your interest, using the format below and send it to Celebration of Love Committee, Christ Church Vicarage, 32 Crescent

Road London N8 8AX (on or before 31st January 2010) or e-mail christchurchN8@aol.com, attention Celebration of Love Committee. **You will be glad you did.**

.....
Registration format.

We intend to attend the Celebration of love programme on Saturday 6th February 2010.

Names of couple

Contact address

E-mail address.....

LAUGHTER LINES

WHAT HAS CHRISTIANITY GOT TO DO WITH CHRISTMAS!!!



Christmas is celebrated the world over, but millions who celebrate the day are ignorant of its meaning.

A young woman went into a local bookshop and was looking through the Christmas cards. Suddenly she threw down the one she held in her hand and said to her friend as she stamped out of the shop, "Imagine bringing religion into Christmas!"

Two women were viewing the window of a departmental store in which there was a display of Christmas gifts and in the centre a painting of the 'young child', Jesus. One remarked to the other, "I suppose those religious fanatics are going to try to cram Christianity into Christmas and spoil our fun."

From the collections of A. Naismith

WHAT A REMEDY

My problem is that I keep stealing things when I go Christmas shopping. Can you give me something for it!

Doctor: Try this medicine...and if it doesn't work come back and bring me a new video camera.

UNWANTED VISITOR

A man, down on his luck, went into a church which catered to the "uppity". Spotting the man's dirty clothes a deacon, worried about the church's image, went to the man and asked him if he needed help. The man said, "I was praying and the Lord told me to come to this church."

The deacon suggested that the man go pray some more and possibly he might get a different answer. The next Sunday the man returned. The deacon asked, "Did you get a different answer?"

The man replied, "Yes I did. I told the Lord that they don't want me in that church and the Lord said, 'Don't worry about it son; I've been trying to get into that church for years and haven't made it yet.'"

LAUGHTER LINES

HEAVEN CAN WAIT

My five-year-old daughter, Kayse, grew more and more excited about her first day of kindergarten, and her three-year-old sister, Jayme, watched her with great fascination. On the Sunday before the first day of school, Kayse fell and skinned her knee.

Tears began to flow, and Jayme, seeing the blood on her big sister's knee, tried to comfort her by saying: "Don't worry, Kayse, if you die, you'll go to heaven." But Kayse wailed even more. "I don't want to go to heaven," she said. "I want to go to kindergarten!"

—Hugh Poland, *"Kids of the Kingdom," Today's Christian (July/August 2005)*

EXPENSIVE TOYS

In my son's church, a father reprimanded his five-year-old boy when the child wanted to play with miniature cars during worship. In the same congregation were two men who regularly videotaped the services.

One Sunday as this boy watched the men, positioning their camcorders and gadgets, he passed on his father's advice: "You shouldn't bring your toys to church." —Bob Chambers, *Scottsdale, Penn.*

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

Shortly after our family began having nightly devotions—which isn't easy with a precocious four-year-old daughter and an impish two-year-old son—my daughter asked, "Mommy, when are we gonna get together with Daddy and Austin to talk about God and have family commotions?"

—Carla Crumley—*Today's Christian Woman*

STOLEN GOOSE

Confessor: I have stolen a fat goose from a poultry yard!

Priest: That is very wrong.

Confessor: Would you like to accept it, Father?

Priest: Certainly not—return it to the man whom you stole it from.

Confessor: But I have offered it to him and he won't have it.

Priest: In that case you may keep it yourself.

Confessor: Thank you, Father.

The Priest arrived home to find one of his geese had been stolen...

WHY IS JESUS BETTER THAN SANTA CLAUS?

Santa Claus lives at the North Pole...

JESUS is everywhere.

Santa Claus rides in a sleigh...

JESUS rides on the wind and walks on the water.

Santa Claus comes but once a year...

JESUS is an ever present help.

Santa Claus fills your stockings with goodies...

JESUS supplies all your needs.

Santa Claus comes down your chimney uninvited... JESUS stands at your door and knocks, and then enters your heart when invited.

You have to wait in line to see Santa Claus...

JESUS is as close as the mention of His name.

Santa Claus lets you sit on his lap...

JESUS lets you rest in His arms.

Santa Claus doesn't know your name, all he can say is "Hi little boy (or girl,) what's your name?"...

JESUS knew our name before we did. Not only does He know our name, He knows our address too. He knows our history and future and He even knows how many hairs are on our heads.

Santa Claus has a belly like a bowl full of jelly...

JESUS has a heart full of love.

All Santa Claus can offer is HO HO HO...

JESUS offers health, help and hope.

Santa Claus says "You better not cry"...

JESUS says "Cast all your cares on me for I care for you."

Santa's little helpers make toys...

JESUS makes new life, mends wounded hearts, repairs broken homes and builds mansions.

Santa Claus is a "jolly old fellow"...

JESUS is the King of Kings.

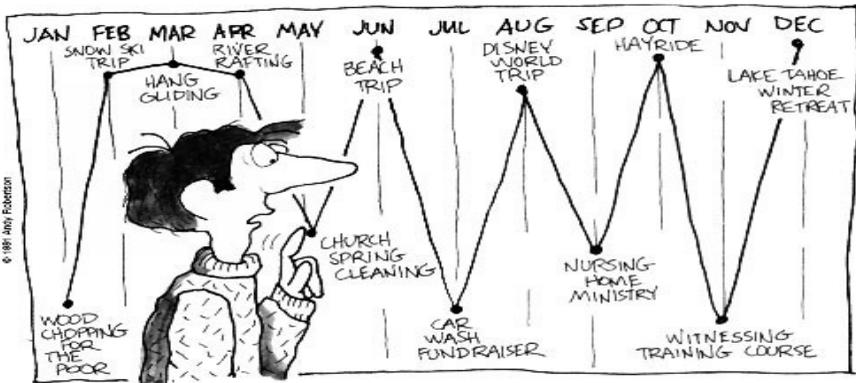
Santa Claus may make you chuckle but...

JESUS gives you joy that is your strength.

While Santa Claus puts gifts under your tree...

JESUS became our gift and died on a tree.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



It wasn't until Max Simmons charted his youth group's attendance that he noticed the pattern.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REST OF OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christingle Service (13th Dec.) -	10.30am
Carols and Nine Lessons (20th December) followed by Christmas lunch -	10.30am
Christmas Eve Holy Communion -	11.00pm
Christmas Day Holy Communion -	10.30am
New Year's Eve Praise and Prayers-	11.00pm

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

Here is a young man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter's shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He did none of those things we usually associate with greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While he was still a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed tomb through the pity of a friend. Twenty centuries have come and gone, and to-day he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of humanity upon this earth as has that one solitary life. Anon

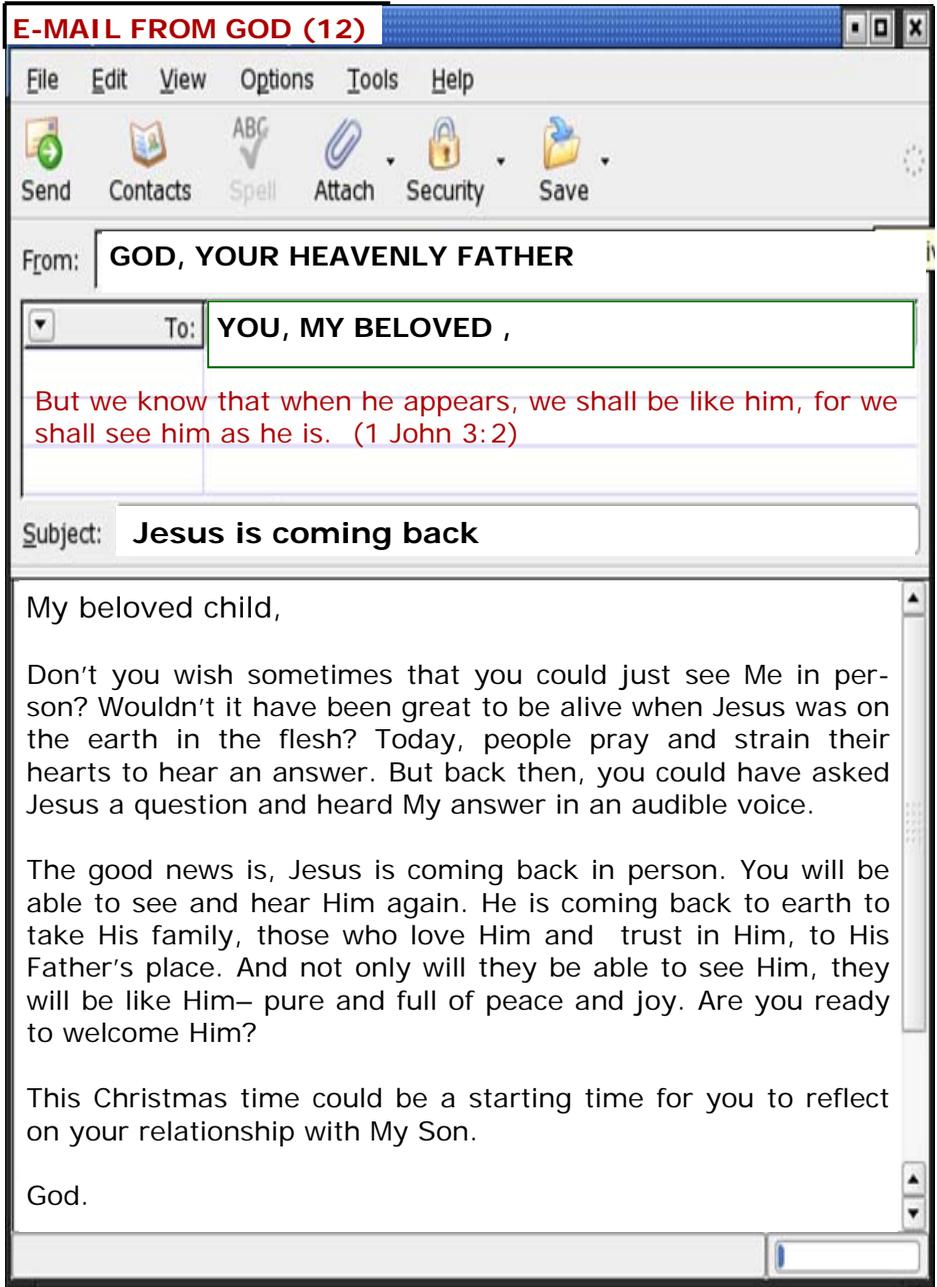
This is no other person than Jesus Christ. If He is at the centre of your life things will hold together. I believe it because I have experienced it. Jesus is God's Gift to you. Receive Him today.

WATCH OUT FOR FAKES

The controversy over the nature of Christ rages now as it did in the past. A number of theologians throughout the ages have tried to explain away the incarnation. But wherever there has been a diminished emphasis on Jesus, there has been decline; wherever there has been a renewed emphasis upon Jesus, there has been revival.

The exact details of false teaching will change but if we want to spot a deceiver, if we want to identify someone who will lead us away from the truth then let us pay attention to what they say about Jesus and what they say about the Bible. These are the central features to look out for.

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 trying 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.
- **5.00pm.** Evening worship

ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday - Choir practice in church (**9.30 am**)
- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group and Brownies - *meetings in church*
- Prayer meetings -21st December and 18th January(**8 pm**)
- Wednesday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**7:45 pm for 8.00pm start**)
- Friday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**2.00 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in hall and church(**6.30 pm**) -
 - Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.30 pm**)

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

Editorial Board: Iyabo Agbelusi, Sheila Wheeler, 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

**PLEASE WRITE TO THE EDITOR, CROSSLINKS,
THE VICARAGE, 32 CRESCENT ROAD, LONDON, N8 8AX
E-MAIL: christchurchN8@aol.com**