



CHRIST CHURCH  
CROUCH END HILL  
LONDON N8 8AX

**CROSSLINKS**

ALONE IN THE GARDEN

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



**MARCH 2009    ISSUE 9.105**

**Vicar's three-minute reflection**  
**THE GARDEN OF PRAYER**



"Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples ... . 'Stay here and watch with Me' " (Matthew 26:36, 38).

We can never fully comprehend Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, but at least we don't have to misunderstand it. It is the agony of God and man in one Person, coming face to face with sin. Gethsemane and Calvary represent something totally unique—they are the gateway into life for us. It was here that Satan's final assault against our Lord as the Son of Man was unleashed. As Jesus fell on His face in the garden and prayed, His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. The weight of sin must have proved tremendous that Jesus distilled drops of blood.

Satan must have had a field day telling Jesus that He was alone. There may be sterner trials than this, but surely it is one of the worst to be utterly forsaken? "See," said Satan, "You do not have any friends! Your Father has shut up the bowels of his compassion against you. No angel from the throne of God will stretch out his hand to help you. See your companions with whom you have shared your life, what are they worth? Son of Mary, see there your beloved disciple John, and your bold apostle Peter, how the cowards sleep when you are in your pains! Lo! All hell is against you. I have sent my message throughout all regions summoning every prince of darkness to set upon you this night, and we will spare no arrows, we will use all our infernal might to overwhelm you: and what will you do, you solitary one?" Three times Jesus went to his disciples as if he sought some help from them but they were fast asleep.

Was it really true that all men had forsaken Him? However, He must have had some faint comfort from the thought that they were sleeping, not from treachery, but from sorrow, the spirit indeed was willing but the flesh was weak. What anguish must have filled the Saviour as he saw his friends so faithless! This was one bitter ingredient in his cup; but that cup is drained dry; let me not put another drop in it.

We have a lot to learn from our Saviour's prayer at Gethsemane. It was a lonely prayer where no ear hears but God's.



It was a humble prayer where only the glory of God was sought. Luke says he knelt, but another evangelist says he “fell on his face.”

It was a filial prayer. Jesus addressed God as Abba, Father. We have no rights as a subject because we forfeited such rights by our treason; but nothing can forfeit a child’s right to a father’s protection. Do not be afraid to say, “My Father, hear my cry.”

It was persevering prayer. Jesus prayed three times. Let us be like the importunate widow, whose continual coming earned what her first supplication could not win. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

Lastly, it was the prayer of resignation. “Not my will, however, but your will be done” (Luke 22: 42). Be content to leave your prayer in God’s hands, who knows when to give, and how to give, and what to give, and what to withhold. So pleading earnestly, importunately, yet with humility and resignation, you will surely prevail.

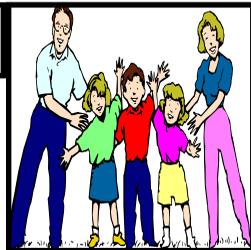
The Cross was not something that happened to Jesus—He came to die; the Cross was His purpose in coming. He is “the Lamb that was killed” (Revelation 13:8). The incarnation of Christ would have no meaning without the Cross. Because the purpose of the incarnation was redemption. God came in the flesh to take sin away, not to accomplish something for Himself. The Cross is the central event in time and eternity, and the answer to all the problems of both. The Cross was the place where God and sinful man merged with a tremendous collision and where the way to life was opened. But all the cost and pain of the collision was absorbed by the heart of God.

**The Cross is the central event in time and eternity, and the answer to all the problems of both.**

It is a sweet thought that Jesus Christ came with his Father’s permission, authority, consent, and assistance and anyone who knows the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit as he should know them, never sets one before another in his love; he sees them at Bethlehem, at Gethsemane, and on Calvary, all equally engaged in the work of salvation. He who knows Jesus the Christ and put his confidence in Him, and is fully united with Him must know that he is united with God the eternal One.

Dele Agbelusi

# STAGES OF MARRIAGE



(continued from February 2009 issue)

## **Stage III** : Knowledge, Awareness and Transformation:

This is the stage in which you not only recognize that your relationship can be more than what it is, but also that you have the power to make real changes... And you do that best by taking charge of your own behaviour. You start intentionally learning how to become the right partner.

In this stage you gain new information and insights about yourself, about your partner, and about the nature of marriage or relationship. You learn and practice new tools and skills to help you move forward.

### **Where do you get this information and skills?**

- 1) Find a couple who has been happily married for 30 or more years and ask them the secrets of their happiness and what they did to get through the rough times.
- 2) Obtain private lessons, counselling or coaching from our Family Enrichment Resources. Contact the Vicar on 02083401566.
- 3) Focus on your OWN behaviour. Look at some of the things you do that are not helpful to the relationship. What are you putting into the relationship climate? Does it cultivate the relationship or pollute it? Then begin taking one step at a time to change those things that don't cultivate it.
- 4) Read books that give Christian insight into Relationships, marriages etc.

## **Stage IV:** Transformation

In this stage you practice the skills you are learning about communication, stretching into new behaviours, creating emotional safety, etc. You become partners in the healing and growth of the relationship. You hold in your mind and heart the vision of the

## Stages of Marriage

relationship you want and you work each day to make it a reality. You also find that you are realizing your potential more in other parts of your life.

### **Stage V: Real Love**

This is the stage of deep respect and cherishing of one another as separate and unique individuals. It is a stage of joy, passion, intimacy, happiness and having fun together. It is the stage of living out the vision of true partnership, unconditional love and safety, and of coming to see your partner as your best friend. It is the stage of moving toward the spiritual potential of committed relationship -- the journey toward wholeness, the love in which you taste Divine Love .

Know that this Real Love is possible for you if you are both willing to do the work it requires. It never 'just happens by itself.' If you need help, get it! Don't throw away your relationship because it feels uncomfortable or looks difficult. You will most likely only repeat the process in the next relationship. (Certainly, if you are in a physically abusive relationship, you need to protect yourself and your children and there are many groups that can help you.) But remember, most divorces and break-ups of committed relationships do not need to happen. You can make marriage or your committed relationship a gift for yourself, your partner, and your children. What a legacy to leave them and your world! If you need help to take your next steps, call, e-mail us, at [christchurchn8@aol.com](mailto:christchurchn8@aol.com) or call +44 (2083401566), attention Marriage Enrichment Co-ordinator.

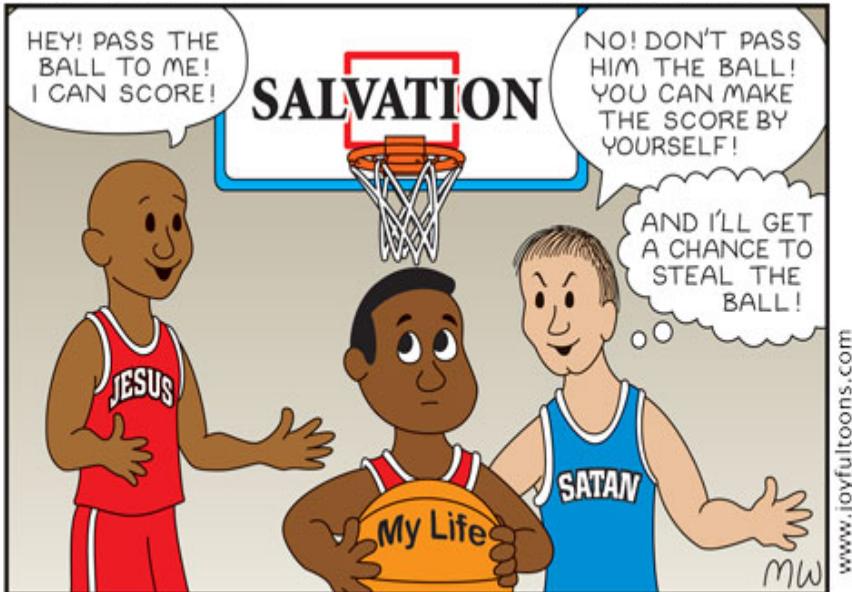
### **THE KEY**

I'm not saying that you couldn't fall in love with someone else. You could. And **temporarily** you'd feel better. But you would be in the same situation a few years later. Why? Because the key to succeeding in marriage is not finding the right person; it is learning to love the person you found.

D.A.

WHOEVER WANTS TO SAVE HIS LIFE WILL LOSE IT

## PASS THE BALL



For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

- MATTHEW 16:25 NIV

## THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

This month we pray for members of our church family whose surnames begin with R, S, T, V, W

Randall Harold; Redman Byron; Stockwell Muriel, Topping Roger and Constance, Tucker Diana; Turner Carol, Van-Anderson Redman Dolores, Karel and Shireen; Walters, Viola; Watson Granville, Wharton Nikki, Wheeler Sheila.

YOUR NEWS FROM A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE:  
FEBRUARY 12th, 2009

**Schoolgirl told not to talk about Jesus**

It's reported a five year old girl's been told off by a teacher for telling a friend about Jesus.

Jasmine Cain was said to have been left in tears at Landscore Primary School in Devon after being taken aside during a class. But her mother, Jennie Cain, a receptionist at the school now faces an investigation after sending an email to friends asking them to pray for the situation.

The Christian Institute is supporting the family. Spokesman Simon Calvert tells Premier he can't believe action's being taken over such a small matter: "As for why the school is doing it, it's anyone's guess. It may be personal agendas against Christians. More likely it's that you have equality and diversity requirements that are rammed down our throats day in day out and they are creating a climate that is neither equal nor diverse."

Mrs Cain sought support from close friends at her church asking them to pray but the email was picked up by the school's headmaster, Gary Read. The mother of two was disciplined after being told she had behaved unprofessionally for making claims against the school and staff members. But the 38-year-old says she feels angry at the way the school has treated her and she is not the kind of person to force her faith on others.

Mrs Cain found out about what had happened to her daughter on January the twenty second but waited until she wasn't working to discuss the issue with the teacher involved, Sharon Gottelier. She was called into Mr Read's office because the headteacher was unhappy over her discussing her faith.

The news comes as a number of incidents have emerged concerning Christians being discriminated against.. Last week, nurse Caroline Petrie was told she would be allowed to return to work after she had been suspended from her job for offering to pray for a patient.

Mr Calvert from the Christian Institute added: "Case after case is demonstrating that it is Christians that are coming off worse under the so called equality and diversity regime."

Culled from [news@email.premier.org.uk](mailto:news@email.premier.org.uk)

# NEWS AND EVENTS

## **Update on Church Renovation Appeal**

Work on the Church renovation and redecoration has moved to its advanced stages. The scaffolding has been removed and general cleaning will soon commence. Our main Sunday worship still takes place in the parish hall while 8 am Holy Communion Service and 5 pm Evening Worship take place in the West Chapel. We hope to use the Church for our Mothering Sunday Service on March 22. We still require your financial support in order to complete the rest of the works.

## **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.

## **Sermon Themes for the 2nd Quarter**

We will be focussing on the Theme: Encounters with Jesus. It will take us through the four gospels of Matthew, Mark Luke and John and Acts of the Apostles. This is the first time in a long while that we are using the same theme for our morning and evening services. We will be glad if you can join us in any of these worship times.

## **Healing and Anointing Service**

Our next Healing and Anointing Service will take place on 31 May at the 10.30 service. The theme is "Power to be."

## **Stewardship Boxes 2009/2010**

Envelope boxes for 2009/2010 stewardship giving are now 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 additional 28p for every pound donated to the church at no extra cost to you.

## **Annual General Meeting**

29th March after the 10.30am worship. Please be there as we review the past year and look into the future by faith. There will be refreshment after the meeting.

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### Mothing Sunday

Mothing Sunday will be observed at Christ Church on 22 March at our 10.30am service. Our women will lead the services and feed us with the Word of God. Afterwards, the men (including the boys) will provide lunch in appreciation to God for giving us such wonderful people who have played the role of mothers in our lives. You are warmly invited. Gate is Free.

### Grace leaves to grace Sierra Leone

With effect from 1st April 2009, we shall lose the services of Ms. Grace Macauley. She has been the Church's Administrator for about eight years and one of the editors of Crosslinks. She was also an honorary Treasurer for the Church and we can boldly say that our money was very safe with her. Grace has taken up an appointment in Sierra Leone from 1st April. We thank Grace for her immense contribution to the growth of Christ Church and the profile of Crosslinks. Let us endeavour to pray for her as she resumes at her new place of service to the Lord.

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## EVERY LITTLE HELPS

Have you heard of Carbon Fast? Tearfund writes about some key themes to reflect on: -

"Love does no harm to its neighbour" (Romans 13:10) - climate change can mean our neighbours go hungry because of drought ... There are many things we can do ... to change the way our lives impact poor communities.'

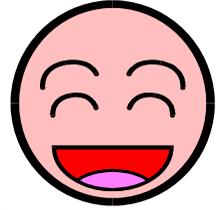
Reducing our emissions and changing the way we live are not just things we do in Lent - they need to be forever! Let's make changes which have the most benefit and which we can sustain well after Easter! And here are three food-related highlights, based on Tearfund's menu:

Let's give up bottled water - even when we're on the move, we can fill a bottle from the tap. De-frosting the fridge and freezer (unless they're auto-defrost) improves their efficiency, reduces emissions - and is good for our own health. Can we buy un-wrapped food, e.g. fruit and vegetable, and save on packaging and landfill use?

## LAUGHTER LINES

### Well, if it's that obvious to a child...

A man had a habit of grumbling at the food his wife placed before him at family meals. Then he would ask the blessing.



One day after his usual combination complaint-prayer, his little girl asked, "Daddy, does God hear us when we pray?"

"Why, of course," he replied. "He hears us every time we pray." She pauses on this a moment, and asked, "Does he hear everything we say the rest of the time?"

"Yes, dear, every word," he replied, encouraged that he had inspired his daughter to be curious about spiritual matters. However, his pride was quickly turned to humility...

"Then which does God believe?"

### A Special Hymn

A preacher was completing a temperance sermon; with great expression he said, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river."

With even greater emphasis he said, "And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river."

And then finally, he said, "And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river."

He sat down.

The song leader then stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, "For our closing song, let us sing Hymn # 365: "Shall We Gather at the River."

# LAUGHTER LINES

## Walking the Dog

A Minister was walking down the street when he came upon a group of about a dozen boys, all of them between 10 and 12 years of age. The group had surrounded a dog. Concerned lest the boys were hurting the dog, he went over and asked "What are you doing with that dog?"

One of the boys replied, "This dog is just an old neighbourhood stray. We all want him, but only one of us can take him home. So we've decided that whichever one of us can tell the biggest lie will get to keep the dog."

Of course, the reverend was taken aback. "You boys shouldn't be having a contest telling lies!" he exclaimed. He then launched into a ten minute sermon against lying, beginning, "Don't you boys know it's a sin to lie," and ending with, "Why, when I was your age, I never told a lie."

There was dead silence for about a minute. Just as the reverend was beginning to think he'd gotten through to them, the smallest boy gave a deep sigh and said,

"All right, give the Pastor the dog." He's won.

From Christian Jokes

## Children's bloopers: Remember Lot's Wife

The Hebrew school teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little David interrupted. "My Mommy looked back once while she was DRIVING," he announced triumphantly, "and she turned into a telephone pole!"

## THE MINISTER IN GETHSEMANE

It is a sobering thought as we ponder the agony of Jesus Christ at Gethsemane and His burden on the Cross at Calvary. In Gethsemane, the Son of Man was subject to the forces which have discouraged and destroyed many both in the pews and on the pulpit. If there is any group of people who are daily exposed to the lurking grips of discouragement, ministers will top the list.

There are various things that discourage ministers of which the following are very prominent: Unreachable Goals, Uncomfortable Situations, Unbearable Problems and Unmanageable Schedules.

Spurgeon, in his book *"Lecture To My Students"* lists several reasons for discouragement in ministry, including:

- We are humans and, as such, compassed with infirmity and heirs of sorrow
- Most of us are in some way or the other physically unsound.
- Our work, when earnestly undertaken, lays us open to attacks in the direction of depression. Who can bear the weight of souls without sometimes sinking to the dust?
- Our position in the church gives a sense of loneliness and isolation
- There can be little doubt that sedentary habits have a tendency to create despondency

Spurgeon continues and says "Come fair or come foul, the pulpit is our watchtower and the ministry our warfare; be it ours, when we cannot see the face of our God, to trust under the shadow of His wings"

Read about the way our beloved brother Paul expressed his anguish:

Do your best to come to me quickly, for Demas, because he loved the world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.

## The Minister in Gethsemane

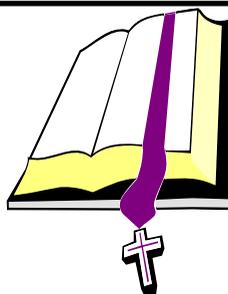
Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry...Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm...You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message. At my defence, no-one came to my support, but everyone deserted me...(2 Tim 4:9-18)

The Son of God had a bitter taste of loneliness, desertion, betrayal, isolation, pain, and sorrow in His earthly ministry. These, including the Cross were all the paths to victory on Easter day. One image of Christ that surpasses all the rest is Jesus Christ on the cross. This is the focal point of the Christian faith. That's where the deity, humanity, work, and suffering of Christ is most clearly seen. 1 Peter 2:21-25 shows that the suffering of Jesus had three great effects: it allowed Him to serve as our example, substitute, and shepherd. The suffering of Christ sets the standard for the suffering of Christians.

God rarely allows His servants to see how much good they are doing, so we have to work by faith and leave the results to Him. We will receive the report and the reward when we stand before our Lord in glory. Meanwhile, we must not allow our frustrations to add to our burdens and rob us of the joy and power in our ministry. D.A.

### Memory Verse

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Isaiah 53:3



# SUNDRY CONTRIBUTIONS

## GOODWILL

If any little word of mine  
Can make a heart the lighter  
If any little song of mine  
Can make a life the brighter.  
Lord let me speak that little word  
And take my bit of singing.  
And drop it in some lonely vale  
And set the echoes ringing.

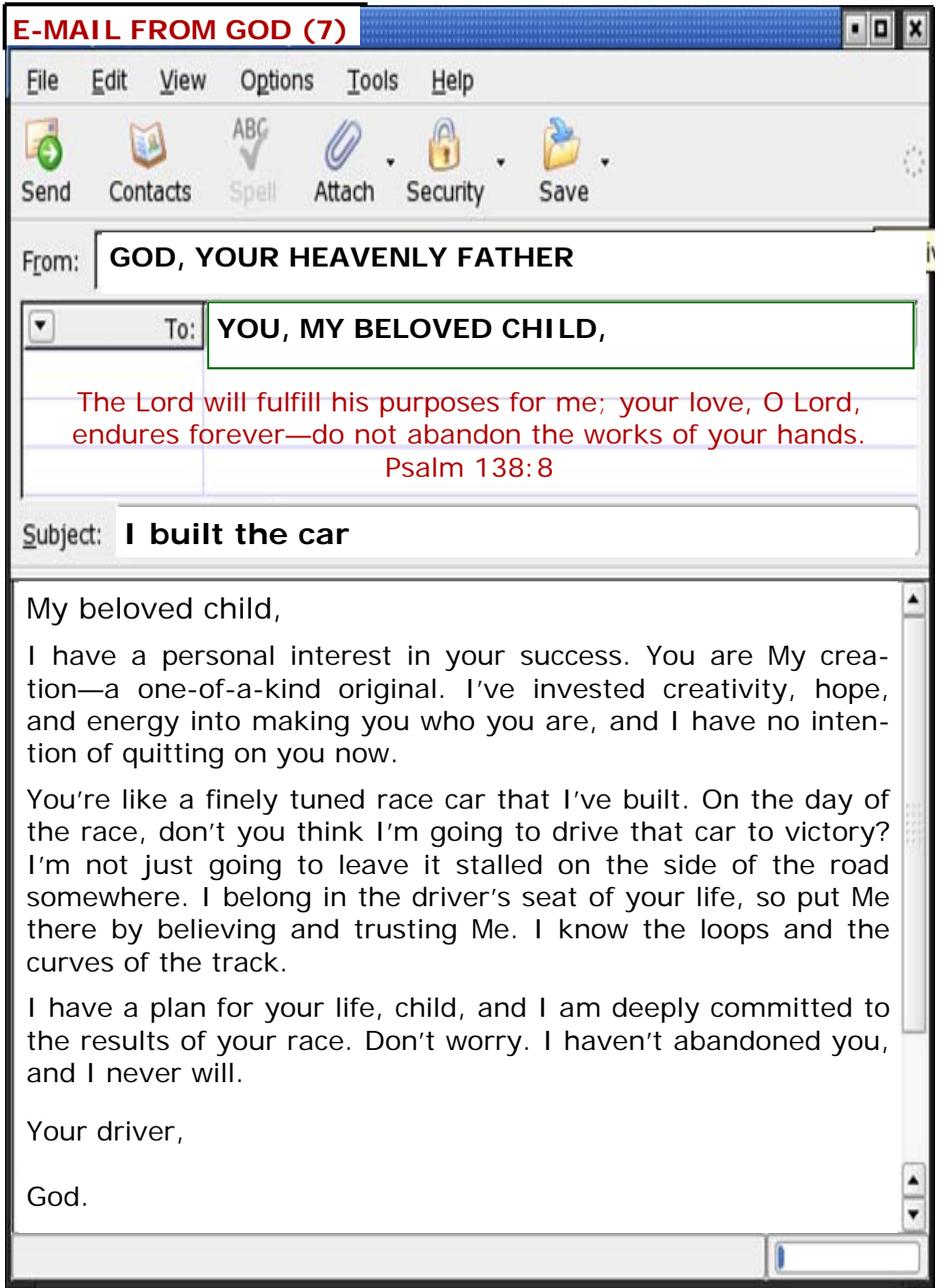
Sue Ogilvie-Arendse  
(1927-2008)

## HOW TRUSTING ARE YOU?

"Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." "I am willing", he said. "Be clean." Luke 5:12,13. The leper in this conversation had a general knowledge about what Jesus could do but in addition he had a personal faith in Jesus' ability to heal him of his chronic leprosy. His only concern was that Jesus be willing to do that for him. Jesus responded instantly by touching the leper and assuring him of his willingness to heal him. This leper had what many of us Christians living today do not have. We have knowledge about Jesus as he did. We know that "with God all things are possible"; "For nothing is impossible with God"; yet we lack the faith that He had which moved him to plead passionately with Jesus for healing. We have no reason today to doubt Jesus' willingness to meet our needs as his response to the leper shows us. Knowledge is useless if it does not move us to demonstrate faith in God's power and willingness to meet us at each point of our need. It does not matter what 'leprosy' you are dealing with right now, the question is: are you trusting in God's power or your other options?

Sunday & Grace Bwanhot

# 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 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.
- **6.00pm.** Evening worship

### ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday - Choir practice in church (**9.30 am**)
- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group and Brownies *meetings in church suspended due to renovation works.*
- Prayer meetings – 6th,20th April-West Chapel(**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 (**6.30 pm**) - *Scout meetings in church suspended due to renovation works.*
  - Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.30 pm**)

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

**Editorial Board:** Iyabo Agbelusi, Grace Macauley, Dele Agbelusi

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**Vicar:** Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

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

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

**Assistant Organist:** Pavla Bockova

**YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME**

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