



CHRIST CHURCH  
CROUCH END HILL  
LONDON N8 8AX

**CROSSLINKS**

WHY ARE YOU WEEPING?

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



**PROVES IT**

APRIL 2009 ISSUE 9.106

## Vicar's five-minute reflection

### WHY ARE YOU WEEPING?



Easter begins with all things dark, with grief and emptiness, and uncertainty everywhere. That is where Easter has to begin, because that is where the Easter Gospel meets us. Easter does not seek to satisfy our curiosity as to how a dead body could begin to stir and move and stand up and push the rock away and walk out into Joseph's garden. It tells of the mystery and the grandeur of that deed by which the Father glorifies his Son, declaring him victor over death and all that brought him to the Cross and grave. Easter has to do with God's will to present his risen Son as the answer to our sin and our death-prone ways as people who live in a fallen world. Easter begins with God's action and grace through his Son - for the forgiveness of our sin. It presents us with a Lord on the way of his ascension to

**I don't know why you are weeping, what burden you carry, what grief might be weighing you down.**

his Father. You cannot but hear the reality in the words of Mary Magdalene: "I have seen the Lord." (John 20: 18). The Easter story is our story, too if we have "seen" Him! What is it that God is saying to us through this beautiful Easter event?

First of all, I believe God is saying this is real. It's not "made up." The last thing Mary expected when she went to the tomb that first Easter morning was to find the tomb empty. Surprise! I know you know the end of the story. But just for a moment, put yourself in Mary's place. Her first thought was not "Resurrection," it was "Desecration." Her first reaction was not "God at work," but "Grave robbers at work." Her first response was not "He Is Risen," it was "He is stolen." So she runs back across town, through the still silent streets to Peter and John (still in hiding, mind you, or still in bed perhaps!) and shouts, "They have taken away the Lord and I don't know where to find him." Even Peter and the other disciple who had been with Jesus from the beginning of his ministry were not prepared for what they found that morning.



"They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead." Surprise! Certainly the religious leaders, who put a guard on the tomb, did not do so because they expected a resurrection.

They did it to keep his disciples from stealing his body. Surprise. Surprise is the best word to describe that first Easter Sunday.

No one expected Jesus to rise from the dead. If you think the disciples made all this up, it just doesn't add up with the record. They were just as shocked as you and I would be if we went to the funeral of a loved one, and suddenly a person who had been dead for three days got up out of the casket and began to walk and talk. This story is true. It is not made up.

The second thing I believe God would say to us about this story is that you can't divorce the resurrection from the cross. Many people today are trying to do that. In fact, that is basically what much of the New Age movement is all about, though most of its adherents probably don't realize it. It is Christianity without the cross. We don't want the true story of Easter--the suffering, the sacrifice, the death and despair. We want the warm and fuzzy unreality of the Easter bunny instead.

**I do know that the Living Christ stands ready to call you by name. The eternal God stands by to give you hope and courage and faith once again.**

Mary did not recognize her Rabbi there in the garden because her heart was breaking. This beautiful man whose very life and nature was love had been crucified on a cross. He who had saved others could not save himself. How could life be so cruel?

Where was God in all of this? If you have not asked such questions in your own time of pain, you have been very fortunate. It's very simple. No cross, no resurrection. The resurrection validates everything Jesus said and everything Jesus did, including his death on Calvary. The resurrection is real. But we cannot separate it from the cross on which Christ died.

(concluded on page 14)

## Surviving a Financial Crisis

*Here's how two couples responded to money woes*



Jay and Mary had been married five years. When they had their first child, Mary quit her job to be a stay-at-home mom. They felt confident that Jay's job as a sales representative would bring in enough money to provide for their family. They were living their dream—until Jay's company took a financial dive and began to downsize. Mary knew something was wrong when Jay arrived home early one day. He told her the news: He'd been laid off his job with only a two-month severance package.

The couple was devastated. They had no other income and little savings. They didn't have enough money to survive. Mary panicked, which caused Jay to react negatively. They became tense and argumentative. Jay felt as if he was letting down his family for not being able to provide financially for them. After one especially tense discussion, Mary went into their bedroom to pray and felt God tell her she needed to encourage Jay, to let him know she had complete confidence in him. Then she recalled the Bible verse: "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7). She realized her panic wasn't helping the situation; it was making it worse.

So Mary approached Jay and apologized for her reaction to their financial situation. The tension dissipated and together they were able to form a game plan. The first thing they decided to do was quit spending money. They realized it would be easy for them to go into a denial mode and continue spending, assuming Jay would find another job before the severance package ran out. Instead, they opted to spend only on their immediate needs such as diapers and food, and cut back on unnecessary expenditures such as going out to eat. They also agreed not to use their credit cards, knowing how easy it would be to run up the balance and deceive themselves into thinking they'd pay it off once Jay found another job.

Next, Jay and Mary made a list of what bills needed to be paid first and stuck to the list. They prioritized their bills into essential and nonessential categories.

## Surviving a Financial Crisis

They paid the essential, or survival, bills first—their mortgage payments, utilities, and food. Then they made their car payments ...With the remaining money, they concentrated on the non-essential bills—those that have no immediate consequences if paid late: credit cards...newspaper and magazine subscriptions... health club, and clothing. They discovered that by paying their survival bills first, they were able to stretch their money further.

The next step Jay and Mary took was to contact their creditors, including their mortgage and auto lenders, to update them on the situation. By communicating with their creditors, they discovered most were willing to work with them. They were able to establish a repayment plan they could afford, which allowed them to make partial payments and not be considered delinquent. To ensure their creditors were on the same page as they were, Jay and Mary took notes of each conversation, listing the date and person with whom they spoke. Then they asked for their agreement terms to be sent to them in writing before they sent any money.

Some creditors, however, were ruthless and sent their name to collection agencies, who called them at all hours making threats. Finally, Jay and Mary contacted the appropriate agency to get a copy of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. After reviewing their legal rights under this legislation, they realized many of these companies were violating the law, which prompted them to file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission. The FTC investigated the complaint, discovered that those collection agencies were in violation, and the agencies were ordered to stop harassing Jay and Mary.

Finally, they joined their church's special financial planning program, as well as a debt management company, which helped them reduce their payments and lower their interest rates. In the meantime, Jay continued aggressively seeking new employment. He was able to receive unemployment relief, and by the ninth month of being without work, Jay found a new job. Jay and Mary knew it was going to take time to catch up on their past due bills, but they were able to avoid bankruptcy.

Deborah McNaughton

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## LISTEN TO THE STREET PASTOR

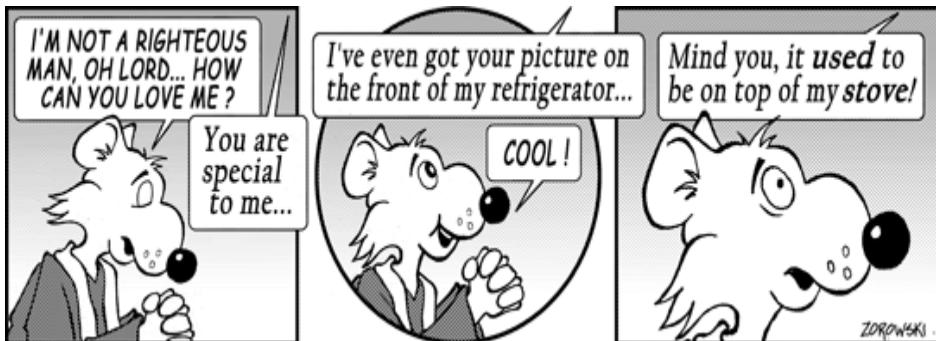
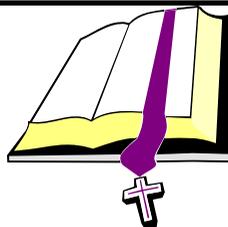
Gethsemane was the place where Jesus retreated to resolve the crisis He was facing. The cross was imminent with its accompanying emotional, spiritual, psychological, mental and physical torture. What else could have brought about bloody sweat drops? The disciples were miserable helpers to Jesus; they failed Him by sleeping instead of praying. We cannot resolve the crises we face by sleeping. The Bible says: "Watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation." Mk. 14:38. Jesus finally resolved His crisis when he said: **"Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."** Mk. 14:36. Most crises in our lives will be resolved when in agonizing prayer we surrender our will and accept God's will for our lives. May this Easter remind us to walk this path like Jesus Christ did. Amen!

Sunday and Grace Bwanhot

### Memory Verse

**God has raised this Jesus to life,  
and we are all witnesses of the  
fact.**

**ACTS 2:32**



**From death to life at Jesus expense!**

## YOUR NEWS FROM A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

### **Father Replaced on IVF baby birth certificates**

Single women using IVF treatment will soon be able to name whoever they like as the second parent on a birth certificate.

The new rules, which stems from the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act, are set to come into force next month. From April 6th a friend or female partner can be named as a second parent, with the only restrictions being close blood relatives or if the second person does not agree.

However critics fear the role of the father is being undermined.

Family Matters Institute Chief Executive Matt Buttery says it is liberal policy gone mad. "For me it's a crazy situation where we're not telling the truth on a birth certificate," he says.

"We are able in a sense to fabricate who your parents are. And I think we've just gone too far and we are not going to know the consequences of these changes for probably 15, 16 years, when children whose fathers aren't named grow up and tell us how that feels. I think it's just a huge shame and a hugely dangerous social experiment."

March 2, 2009 – Premier .org

## **Our Nation needs prayers**

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7: 14

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### Update on Church Renovation Appeal

We praise the Lord for the first part of our Church renovation work which has been completed. We were able to worship in the Church on Mothering Sunday, 22nd March 2009. Thanks to the response of volunteers in the church who came out in large numbers to help clean the church. We have set apart 18th May as a day of thanksgiving and also our first Guest service this year! We will be having the Archdeacon of Hampstead, Ven. Michael Lawson as our guest preacher. It will be nice to have you worship with us if you can.

Our next focus is the media system in the church. We want to provide audio-visual facilities that would enhance the participation of carers in our crèche, and those who have difficulty in hearing but can read well. The system will also aid our sermon presentation and worship. We are counting on your generous donation.

### 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 April-June 09

We are 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.

### Stewardship Boxes 2009/2010

Envelope boxes for 2009/2010 stewardship are available. Members of the congregation who wishes 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.

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### CHURCH'S GIFT TO CHARITIES IN 2008

Your money goes far beyond the four walls of Christ Church in terms of ministry and mission. We have learnt to be our brother's keeper in the use of God's funds.

The list of beneficiaries to the Church's donations to Charities is given below:

	£ :00
CMS	50
Caris Haringey	200
Children's Society	100
Gideons International	100
Mission Aviation Fellowship	150
British Legion	50
Morris House Resident's Amenities	50
St. Luke's Hospital for the Clergy,	150
Radio Bible Class (Our Daily Bread)	100
Scripture Union	100
School for the Handicapped (Diocese of Ibadan)	250
Bishop's Lent Appeal	50.69
North London Hospice	50
St. Mungos Homeless Appeal	100
YMCA Homeless Appeal	100
Rurcon	100

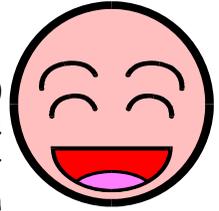
### Charles Murphy

At the recently concluded Annual meeting of the church, Charles Murphy was elected Churchwarden Emeritus of Christ Church Crouch End. Charles was Church Warden at Christ Church from 1982-1989 and from 2006-2009. He is currently the Lay Vice chairman of the PCC, and the Choir co-ordinator. Charles is one of the longest serving members of the church and he is still going strong. It is a great honour to a well deserving Christian gentleman whom we believe will continue to discharge his responsibilities to God and His Church. Congratulations Charles.

# LAUGHTER LINES

## Afraid of Resurrection!

A man, his wife and her mother (who has heart problems) travel to the Holy Land on holiday. A few days into the holiday the mother's heart fails and she passes away. At the undertakers' the husband and wife are told they can bury her right there in the Holy Land for \$500 or fly her home for \$5000. The husband weighs up his options and tells the undertaker they'll be flying her home. The undertaker asks the husband "Are you sure sir? We do a very nice funeral for \$500". The husband replies and said "No thank you. I heard about the guy they buried here 2000 or so years ago. After 3 days he rose from the grave. I'm sorry but I'm just not willing to take that chance."



## The Angry Atheist

The story is told of the Atheist who accosted a preacher. "Do you believe in eternal life?" The preacher has no time to reply. "Well its a load of rubbish!" shouted the Atheist. "I believe in science, evolution, survival of the fittest, and when we die, that's it! No eternal life, no great judgement, and no God!" The Atheist continues his assault against the preacher repetitiously and tirelessly. "Eternal life! Eternal life! Ha! "Its all pie in the sky when you die." When I die that's it, the end, no eternal life, no nothing. He continues, until he reaches his climax, "I will be buried six feet under when I die and that's it! Nothing! Caput! When I die I am utterly convinced that that will be the end of me!" "Well thank God for that" replies the preacher!

## The Creation of Wives

At Sunday School they were teaching how God created everything, including human beings. Little Johnny seemed especially intent when they told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny, what is the matter?" Little Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

# LAUGHTER LINES

## Can You be Trusted?

Little Rodney, 4 years old, walked down the beach, and as he did, he spied a matronly woman sitting under a beach umbrella on the sand. He walked up to her and asked, "Are you a Christian?"

"Yes," she replied.

"Do you read your Bible every day?"

She nodded her head, "Yes."

"Do you pray often?" the boy asked next, and again she answered, "Yes."

With that he asked his final question, "Will you hold my sweets while I go swimming?"

(Source: Andy Chap's The Funnies, via [www.qcfl.com](http://www.qcfl.com))

## 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.

## THE GREAT BAIL-OUT BY JESUS

Murmurs rippled through the congregation when Reverend George Thomas placed a rusty old bird cage on the pulpit. The church members weren't used to their pastor using props in his sermons—especially not on Easter Sunday. Sensing the congregation's confusion, Reverend Thomas explained how he had obtained the cage. The day before, he had been walking through town when he noticed a young boy carelessly swinging the cage around. Thomas noticed that there were three obviously frightened little birds inside the cage.

The pastor stopped the youngster and asked, "What have you got there, son?" "Just some old birds," came the reply. "And what are you going to do with them," he asked. "Take 'em home and have some fun with 'em," the boy said. "I'm gonna poke 'em and pull out their feathers and watch 'em fight. I'm gonna have a real good time."

"But those birds don't belong to you," said the pastor. "They do now," the boy responded. "I found 'em and I can do anything I want with 'em." "But you'll get tired of playing with those birds, son. What will you do with them then?"

"Oh, I've got some cats," grinned the boy. "They like birds. I'll give 'em to my cats." The pastor was silent for a moment. Then he asked, "How much do you want for those birds, son?" "You don't want these birds, mister," said the boy. "They're just plain old field birds. They don't sing. They ain't even pretty."

"How much?"

The boy sized up the pastor as if he were crazy and said, "Ten bucks." The pastor reached into his pocket and took out a ten dollar bill. He placed it in the boy's hand. In a flash, the boy was gone. The pastor set the cage down, opened the door, and gently coaxed the birds out, setting them free. The congregation listened quietly as the pastor told of his encounter with the boy. Then he told them another story.

One day Jesus and the devil were having a conversation. Satan had just come from the Garden of Eden, grinning and boasting. "I just caught me a bunch of people down there. Set me a trap! Used bait I knew they couldn't resist! Got 'em all!"

## The great bail-out by Jesus

"What are you going to do with them?" Jesus asked.

"Oh, I'm going to have fun with them. I'm going to teach them how to hurt and abuse each other. I'll teach them how to marry and divorce each other, lie to each other, and kill each other. Oh, I'm gonna really have a good time!" "But those people don't belong to you," said Jesus. "They do now! I can do anything I want with them."

"And what will you do when you get through with them?" asked Jesus. "I'll kill them."

"How much do you want for them?" "Oh, you don't want these people," said the devil. "They're no good. You may love them, sure, but they'll just hate you back. They'll spit on you, curse you, and kill you. You don't want these people."

"How much?" Jesus asked. Satan sized up Jesus as if he were crazy and said, "Your life."

The pastor ended his story this way: "Jesus paid the price. And on that first Easter Sunday morning, he picked up the cage, opened the door, and set us free." "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5: 1).

Youth Specialties Hot Illustration

### THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

We give thanks to the Lord for:

- a successful Annual General Meeting.
- The completion of Phase one of our renovation and up-grade of Church facilities
- The freedom to preach God's Word

We pray for :

- A Fresh anointing of God's Spirit to be His living witnesses
- Men and Women who will be burdened to pray for our Church and the Nation
- Mrs. M.Y. who is critically ill.

## Why are you weeping (from page 3)

Standing beside an open grave which has taken away our loved one, standing beside an open pain which has sapped our strength, standing beside the tomb of broken dreams and failed hopes, standing beside a broken world that seems bent on its own destruction—a world of too many crosses, too much brutality and war, hunger and strife, a world full of weeping. Like Mary, we stand by weeping, because we simply don't know what else to do and we don't have a clue as to where to go. Then the question is asked a second time by one she assumes to be the gardener: "Woman, why are you weeping?" "Oh," she says, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have laid him and I will come and take him away." Then it happens. Jesus said to her, "Mary." It has been called "the greatest recognition scene in literature."

I don't know why you are weeping, what burden you carry, what grief might be weighing you down, what fear or despair might be hidden under your Easter bonnet. But I do know that the Living Christ stands ready to call you by name. The eternal God stands by to give you hope and courage and faith once again. The redeeming Saviour who has been, literally, to hell and back for your sake offers his loving word and healing embrace. Mary, John, Peter; Johanna, Dele, Kayode, Bolu, Kemi, Sope, Shirene; Tolu, Iyabo, William; Barbara, Brandon. He calls us by name. He heals us in his grace. He offers us new life.

I believe God would have us know that the power of the risen Christ is still loose in our world today. He is not dead. He is alive. If wild applause was ever in order in the church, Easter is the time. It is a day for Christians to cheerfully celebrate Christ's victory over death. It is a day for bringing out the band, clapping hands and singing, "Hallelujah!"

Dele Agbelusi

# HEAVENLY CORRESPONDENCE

**E-MAIL FROM GOD (8)**

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From: **GOD, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER**

To: **YOU, MY BELOVED CHILD,**

You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble  
and surround me with songs of deliverance.  
Psalm 32: 7

Subject: **Let me be your tree house**

My beloved child,

Is there a special place you go to get away from everything and everybody? Some people like to climb a tree. Others hide away in a corner of their backyard. Concealing yourself in a physical place helps when people and circumstances are just too much for you.

But where can you hide from your emotions and fears? Let Me be your hiding place. When things get rough, run to Me and when you need shelter from your life. Pray and read My words in the Bible. Then listen. Not only will I shelter you, I will surround you with encouraging songs. I will sing you back to peace. Come away with Me to our secret place. I'll meet you there.

Your shelter  
God.

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**
- Prayer meetings –6th, 20th April, 4th May. (**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**
  - Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.00 pm**)

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

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**Vicar:** Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

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**YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME**

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