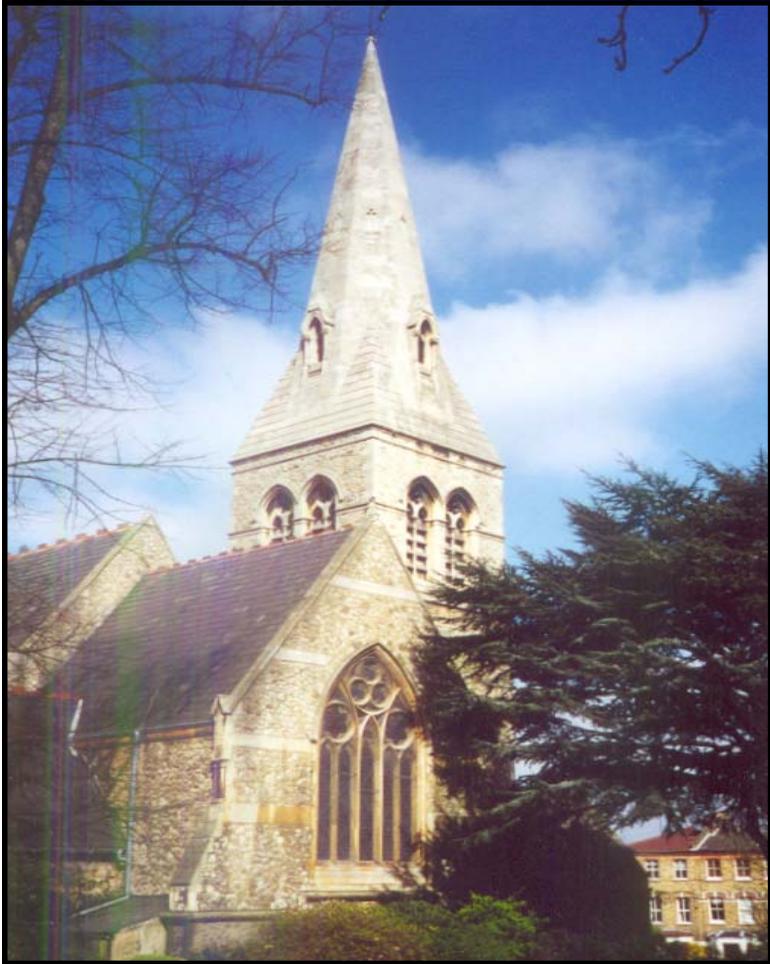




CHRIST CHURCH  
CROUCH END HILL  
LONDON N8 8AX  
**CROSSLINKS**

GOD HAS BEEN SO GOOD TO US

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



**MAY 2009    ISSUE 9.105**

## Vicar's three-minute reflection

### The Lord has been so good to us



We have every good reason to give thanks to the Lord for the great Gift of His Son. Through Him, we are able to say confidently, that because the Lord is our shepherd, we shall not lack any good thing. Truly, the Lord has been good to us.

As I was going through the church records last week, I was reminded of a great thanksgiving event that took place in Christ Church on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 1952 to mark the “restored, renovated and re-decorated Church.” Fifty seven years later, we are having another thanksgiving service! We have been able to restore the church’s inner fabric to its former glory! I feel really humbled when I remember that the seed of this idea started with a visit to a friend (name withheld) who challenged my wife and me that the renovation work could be done if we trust God to do it, in spite of the fact that we did not know where the funds would come from. Thank God for members of the PCC and the church family who bought the idea.

God rewarded our feeble effort to raise funds by using you to be part of this great assignment. The first phase is now concluded with little bits here and there to be done and we want to express our gratitude to God and to all of you for your generous donations. May the Lord be praised. And may he shower His blessings on you. Without your support, we would not be having a celebratory service on May 17th.

So, where do we go from here? We do not want our church building to be a club house for the benefit of a privileged few, but a place of refuge, a place of prayer for the Community it is called to serve—where Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected is preached. So, let us think through the following questions together: Is this church going to make an honest attempt to think out its message in the categories of the day in which it is speaking? Is it going to go on saying that something must be good and great because it has been used or done for the last one hundred or a thousand years? Is the church going to become more and more a “gathered” community for a comparatively small, and almost certainly dwindling community, or are its eyes going to be focussed on the millions who have lost touch with church altogether? Are we ready to give our all in the service of our Lord, Jesus Christ?



Readiness for God means that we are prepared to do the smallest or the largest thing—it makes no difference. It means whenever any duty presents itself, we hear God's voice as our Lord heard his Father's voice, and we are ready for it with the total readiness empowered by our love for Him. The Lord wants to do new things in our midst and it's my prayer that we all make ourselves available. In what capacities have you made yourself available to be used in this Church family? God is looking for willing hands and available people to move His agenda in Christ Church forward. Will you say, "here I am Lord, use me". Will you make available to Him, your time, talents, skill, money, etc...?

The gospel is there as God's word to challenge us to go forward. The Word of God isn't made to make us feel comfortable. The Lord needs to stir us up on a regular basis to confront our mediocrity. If you submit to the challenges that his Holy Spirit brings, whatever the cost, you will be transformed and it will be worth the experience. Our generations can't coast on former church glory. Every generation needs to experience God first hand. We need to set fires for change, for revival, especially for our young ones. Even to some adults, Christianity is only a "nice" story. We can't lean on yesterday's revival. We must have our own! God is calling mediocre Christians to step up their acts and become passionate.

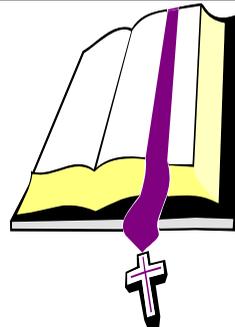
Where are you? That was God's searching question to Adam in the garden (Gen.3:9), and I believe God is asking you the same question. "Where are you?" This is not the time to give excuses or to hide as Adam did. It is the time to say "Here I am, Lord, send me" (Isaiah 6:8) as Isaiah did when asked by God: "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

Dele Agbelusi

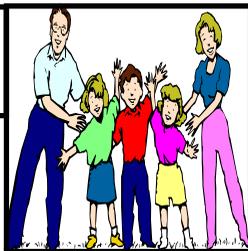
### Memory Verse

**"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house" says the Lord Almighty, "And in this place I will grant peace," declares the LORD Almighty."**

Haggai 2:9



## DOES YOUR MARRIAGE NEED A TUNE-UP?



What causes this once smooth-running machine to knock and sputter?

Couples generally enter marriage with engines revving, but sooner or later find their relationship "idling." The thrill is gone, arguments easily become overheated, and the pressure of jobs, kids and a mortgage is on. What causes this once smooth-running machine to knock and sputter?

### WARNING LIGHTS

The biggest culprits are dangerous patterns of thinking. When conflicts become habitual, it's not surprising that you begin to think far more negatively about your marital prospects. Here are a few of the warning lights. Any of these look familiar?

**Feeling bored** with your spouse. Before you were married, getting to know each other and establishing a deep commitment were welcome challenges. But now you've "been there...done that" on just about everything. Both of you sense the lack of excitement and because your life is so crowded it's easy to stop making the effort to learn more about each other.

**Focusing on differences.** The same opposite traits that you once found so charming are now simply annoying. I can't tell you how many times I've caught myself thinking: "We'd get so much more accomplished if Chris [my wife] would just do things my way."

**Fixating on a fantasy.** It's easy to fall into a habit of daydreaming about your "perfect spouse" as an escape from dealing with the real one. Some of this is natural—at times the fantasy is a lot simpler to handle. But you can take it too far, especially when you become disappointed because your spouse doesn't meet the impossible standards of your fantasy. Wake up! Dreams are just that—dreams.

**Avoiding your mate.** Setting aside a little time for yourself is healthy. But if you're avoiding contact with your spouse, or if the time you spend together feels like a chore, that's a clear warning that you need to spend even more time together.

**Pursuing individual goals.** Couples often get discouraged when they find it difficult to establish joint goals. When communication starts to break down, you're quick to think, "My spouse isn't going

## Does your marriage need a tune up?

to listen to me anyway. So I'll just go ahead and make this decision myself." Before you know it, you're focusing on what you want instead of what's best for both of you.

**Reaching the boiling point.** When everything your mate does seems to make you crazy, irritable and just plain mad, that's a clear signal that your attitudes are mired in negativity. But if you think back, you'll remember a time when your relationship was full of promise. What changed?

**Under the Hood.** If you can identify with some of the above warning signals, don't panic. The warning lights simply tell you when to stop and check things out. Here are some ways you can give your marriage the tune-up it needs.

**1. Get intentional.** Create a positive experience for you and your spouse—on purpose. Blow a wad on a great date night or a surprise for your mate. Then do it again in a few weeks.

**2. Study your spouse.** What kinds of things does he or she get excited about? What are your mate's dreams? What does your spouse think would make his or her life more fulfilling? One way to make your partner feel appreciated is to express genuine interest. Even better, you'll both experience joy as you help make your spouse's life more satisfying.

**3. Sort through the negatives.** Which problems are negligible—things you can live with—and which ones are important and must be resolved? As you sort them out, you may be surprised at how few "biggies" there really are. Also, as you tackle one or two problems together, the next one that comes along won't seem so insurmountable.

**4. Set mutual goals.** Offset the tendency to focus on yourself by finding one or more areas that you can purposefully work on together.

**5. Don't let feelings fester.** Find the time and energy to resolve disagreements as they come up—even if it requires a "late-nighter." Long-term resentments can use up more energy than a few hours of wrestling through a problem.

(concluded on page 6)

# QUOTABLE QUOTES

## THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE

The Bible is a harp with a thousand strings. Play on one to the exclusion of its relationship to the others, and you will develop discord. Play on all of them, keeping them in their places in the divine scale, and you will hear heavenly music all the time.

-William P. White

## ANXIETY

Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strength.

- C.H. Spurgeon

## Does your marriage need a tune up?

(continued from page 5)

**6. Focus on reality.** Guess what? The grass is *browner* on the other side of the fence. The perfect spouse doesn't exist—anywhere. So look for what you love and appreciate about the one you've chosen.

**7. Be a servant.** This is how Christ won over the multitudes. So make your mate the target of some good deeds this week. Serving your spouse will actually make *you* feel better.

**8. Seek excellence.** Work as hard to maintain your marriage as you do to advance in your career or to excel in raising your kids. What areas need extra attention? How will you know if you've met your goals? Generate new energy and creativity and apply them to your marriage.

**9. Do not allow the challenges of the road to throw you off track. A positive relationship is a destination worth pursuing—together.**

Michael Lace

## A CALL TO REVIVAL

### "AND WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?" (Luke 10:29b)

Jesus' answer to the above question in Luke 10:30-37 defines 'neighbour' so clearly that all that is left for us to do is to choose to act as good neighbours or not. Your neighbour, as Jesus explains it, is anyone whose path crosses yours and especially if that person has a need that you can clearly identify and can do something - little or much about it. When you walk away from that neighbour of yours without having pity on him, you have effectively broken the command to love your neighbour as yourself. You cannot use excuses like: I am in a hurry to go to Church; I don't have much to help out; I do not know this person; It was his foolishness; I will be risking too much, etc. Jesus did not leave room for any such excuses. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Look out for new neighbours God may bring your way today and ask Jesus what you should do for them.

Sunday and Grace Bwanhot

### THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SON (Luke 15:11-32)

Nearly everyone that reads the story of the prodigal son comes away despising and condemning him for such irresponsible behaviour. How could he ask for his inheritance before his father's death and why will he waste it like that? Before we cast the death stones on our prodigal brother, let us examine our own actions also. We have individually received '**inheritance**' from God - broadly: **Time**, **Talent** and **Treasure**. We are squandering our **Time** on ourselves, wasting our **Talents** by not fully serving the Lord with them and lavishing our **Treasure** on ourselves rather than as tools to win others to Christ. The prodigal son can be credited for making a U-turn sooner than many of us are willing to do today. Some of us will only realize on our death beds that we have wasted our Father's wealth and there will not be any opportunity to redeem anything as the Prodigal son did. If the prodigal son was bad, are you any better? Make a U-turn today if needed!

Sunday and Grace Bwanhot

# NEWS AND EVENTS

## Update on Church Renovation Appeal

On May 17th, there will be a thanksgiving service to commemorate the completion of the first phase of the church's renovation work and upgrade of facilities. Ingoing works are still progressing on loose tiles in the church and the public toilet. The Venerable Michael Lawson, Archdeacon of Hampstead will bring the message.

It is our desire to commence on the installation of an audio visual system in the next phase. This will enhance our worship and will especially boost the participation of the parents and their wards who are partially cut off in the church crèche as well as those whose hearing is impaired. Through your prayers and donation, we were able to complete the first phase. We trust that you will not grow weary in well-doing.

## 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 you spare Sundays and possibly one week-day? Let us meet and discuss the terms. Please contact the vicar on 02083401566 for a brief chat.

## Christianity explored

Our Christianity explored course is a wonderful experience at teasing out Christian basics from the perspective of one of the Gospels. Mark. The course has begun and we are still able to accommodate new comers. Our Confirmation candidates are also taking part in this programme. We meet on Thursdays at 7:30 pm in the West Chapel.

## Confirmation Service

This year's confirmation service will take place on 14th June at 10:30am. The Rt. Rev Peter Wheatley, Bishop of Edmonton will preside at the service. You are cordially invited. As this will be the tenth year of the Bishop's call to the Episcopacy, he desires to meet with all those who have been confirmed by him in the past ten years. Please pray for God's outpouring of His Spirit on us all.

## Morriss House garden party

This annual event will take place on Saturday 6th June from 2:30-4:30 pm. Please do come and support.

## BUILDING WORKS IN PICTURES

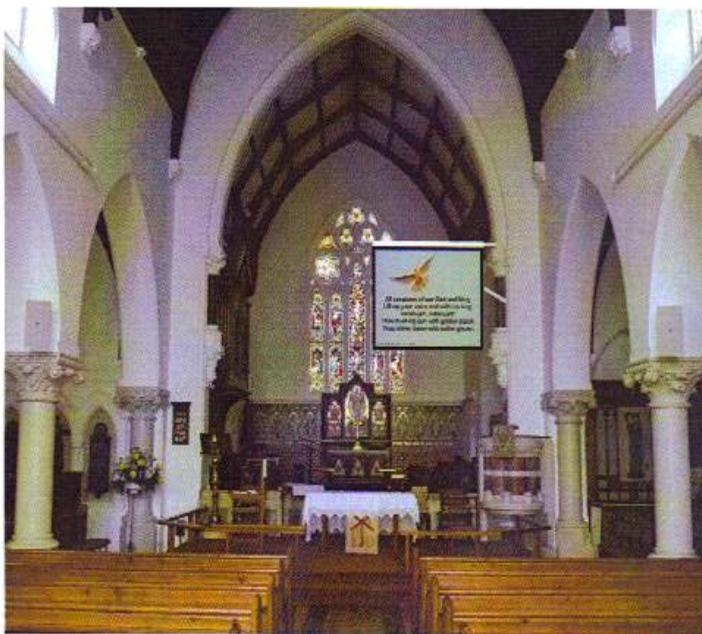


**West Nave of the Church before Renovation Works commenced. Picture shows the state of disrepair of the walls and the poor lighting as a result of the faded paintwork**

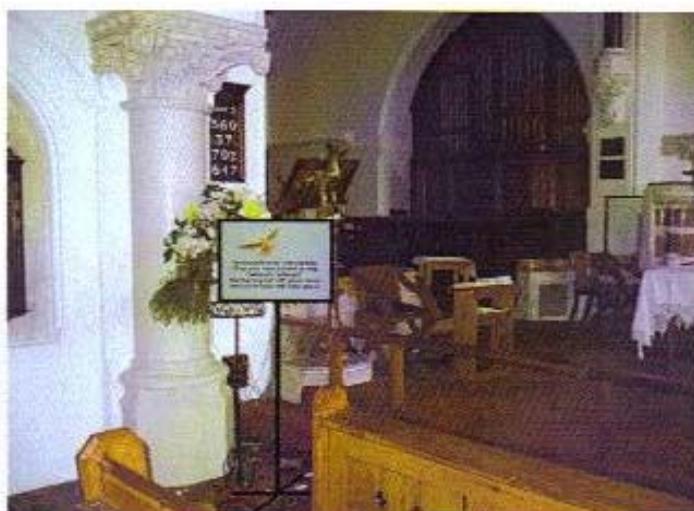
## BUILDING WORKS IN PROGRESS



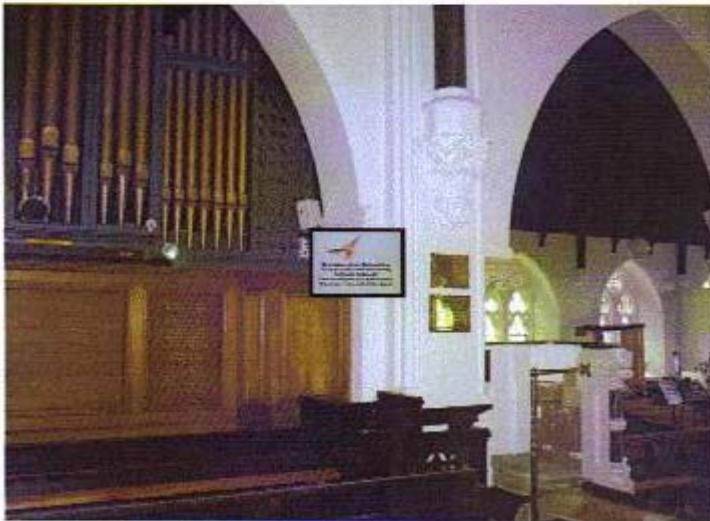
## BUILDING WORKS IN PROGRESS



## FINISHED RESTORATION WORKS WITH PROPOSED MULTI-MEDIA SCREEN



FINISHED RESTORATION WORKS  
WITH PROPOSED MULTI-MEDIA SCREEN



## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The Bible makes it clear that God cares not only about people in general, but about you *personally*—what makes you laugh and cry, what you fear, and what you dream about. And he provides answers to those secret inner questions you'd never voice to anybody else. So treat the Bible as your personal counsellor—its wisdom will assure you of God's love for you, and help you become a better person

### *How can I learn to set priorities?*

- ***Put God first always.*** There is a lot to learn from the experience of Abraham in Genesis 22:1-9. Abraham was willing to sacrifice his covenant son as a proof of his commitment and love for God.
- ***Share the Lord's priority.*** Seek for the glory of God in all that you do.
- ***Make time to spend with God,*** no matter how busy you think you are. You will be surprised at how the day runs smoothly when you begin it in the presence of God.
- ***Do not put work ahead of your love*** for God. It is a good thing to attend church service but more important to be in God's service. The church in Ephesus was rebuked because it had forsaken its first love in spite of its many deeds. (Rev. 2:1-7)

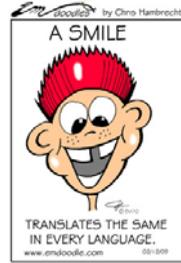
### *When a poor decision on my part has damaged my reputation as a Christian, what can I do?*

- ***Return to God with all your heart.*** (Joel 2:12-17).
- ***Remember, God is a God of second chances.*** You will benefit from the experience of Jonah. (Jonah 2:3)
- ***Realise that you can't change the past,*** but you can change the present, which will inevitably affect the future.
- ***Let God's forgiveness help you start afresh.***
- ***Learn to serve others.*** This planet does not exist to revolve round you and your interest.
- ***Realise that God can use even your failures for His good purposes.***

# LAUGHTER LINES

## Love and Peace

A true-life giggle; a big-time preacher of yester-year told the true story of meeting a few "ordinary" parishioners after what he considered to be yet another one of his fabulous sermons. All, eager to please, praised him to his face... ah the dangers of constant flattery.



On the way out an older and wiser lady said to him "Well sir, I think generally your sermon today reminded me of the love and peace of God."

"Oh thank you so much" replied the preacher "one of the nicest things anyone has said to me".

"Yes," said the lady "Love because it lasteth forever and peace because it passeth understanding" ...hey! ho! ... The big-time preacher had received an important sermon himself (he said later).

## The Sermon

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

## The Boasting Boys

Three boys are in the schoolyard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50."

The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100."

The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon. And it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

# LAUGHTER LINES

## Church Announcement

There is the story of a preacher who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets."

## 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?"

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

## ALLEN'S ALLEY *by Jay Allen*



## BE A DONKEY FOR JESUS

### **Let us do bible study (Matthew 21:1-11)**

In the passages above it's easy to get swept up in the celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. For once, all the people around Jesus seem to be supportive. For once people appear excited about his presence. For once the crowds are confident in his abilities. This does not in any way erase the people's ignorance of the true identity of Jesus. He was called by them, "Son of David," "the one who comes in the name of the Lord," and "prophet." By citing the royal acclamations from Zechariah 9:9, Matthew brings all the expectations of the Messianic king to this dramatic scene.

But over against all the hoopla and hosannas, the gospel writer is careful to emphasize the special instructions which Jesus gives to his disciples. Jesus specifically instructs two disciples to appropriate for him a very particular mount, a colt. Matthew's text even carefully notes the colt's mother, a donkey, and includes her in the procession. Matthew doesn't want anyone to misread the identity of Jesus' mount and suppose that this colt was some young, high-spirited horse, a far more obvious noble steed. No, Matthew wants readers to be perfectly aware of the incongruity between the crowd's shouts, the royal processional, and the humble, simple beast of burden upon which Jesus rode.

Donkeys were work horses. Donkeys were the common pack animals used by hard working labourers, landowners, and merchants alike. More exotic, long distance travel and rich transport caravans employed the more demanding, expensive, and haughty camel to carry big loads. The donkey was a much simpler, less impressive worker. It accomplished the most mundane of daily tasks in small villages and inside the big cities as well. Gray, substantial, and subservient, donkeys were a necessary, but unexceptional part of first-century life.

The donkey is clearly Jesus' own choice of mount for his entrance into Jerusalem. Riding on that humble beast, Jesus both inhabited the words of Zechariah's prophecy and illustrated the dual nature of his messianic identity. He was King of Kings and Lord of Lords. But Jesus is also servant of servants; a work-horse; helper of helpers. While he was ushered into Jerusalem with a royal processional, he rode on the steed of the simplest peasant.

## Be a donkey for Jesus

**The back of a donkey doesn't put one up above the heads of others. In fact, sitting on the short-legged beasts puts the rider pretty much at face-to-face level with a standing crowd.** Jesus couldn't impressively ride through a crowd mounted on a donkey. He could only ride in the midst of the crowd, being as much a part of the crush as were all the others.

The donkey still remains far beyond the pale of glory. Little girls don't dream of riding across summer fields on a little donkey. And everyone from Shakespeare to Pinocchio knows that fools and dolts are depicted as donkeys. **Yet if the mission of the church is to carry Christ into the world, then each of us is called to be a donkey. There's no particular glory in being a donkey. There are only long trails, steep roads, heavy loads, and little or no recognition for a completed job.** But look at what we're carrying. The King of Kings. The Prince of Peace. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

You and I are called to be a donkey. Donkeys are known for strong backs and sure feet. Donkeys carry a lot of burdens, and they carry their loads along pathways that are too treacherous for others to walk. Of course, donkeys are known for one other characteristic: they can be stubborn, obstinate, stiff-necked. From the days of the Hebrews in the wilderness, God's people themselves have often been identified as stiff-necked (Exodus 32:9; 34:9).  
(concluded on page 18)

### THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

- Thank God for the completion of the first phase of our redecoration.
- Pray for Venerable Michael Lawson as he brings the good news at our May 17th Guest Service.
- Pray for Revival in our churches and a return.
- Remember those who are sick. Pray especially for Mercy, Joel, Harold, Carol, Jenny, Betty, Anne.
- Pray for married couples going through difficulties.

## LET US BE GRATEFUL

A harried waitress approached the table where a young girl was sitting by herself. She quickly asked the girl what she wanted. "How much is an ice cream sundae?" the little girl inquired. The waitress snapped, "A dollar seventy-five." The girl looked at her fistful of change and then asked, "How much is a dish of just plain ice cream?" "One-fifty," retorted the waitress. "Then I'll take the plain ice cream, please," said the young customer. The waitress returned with the bowl of ice cream but delivered it in rude silence. After the little girl finished her ice cream and left, the waitress went to clean off the table. To her shame, she found two dimes and five pennies. Her tip was the exact amount the little girl needed to get a sundae rather than just plain ice cream. In each of our lives, others have made sacrifices for our wellbeing. May we be grateful for even the smallest gesture of kindness we receive.

Newsletter, Nov. 1992, p. 1

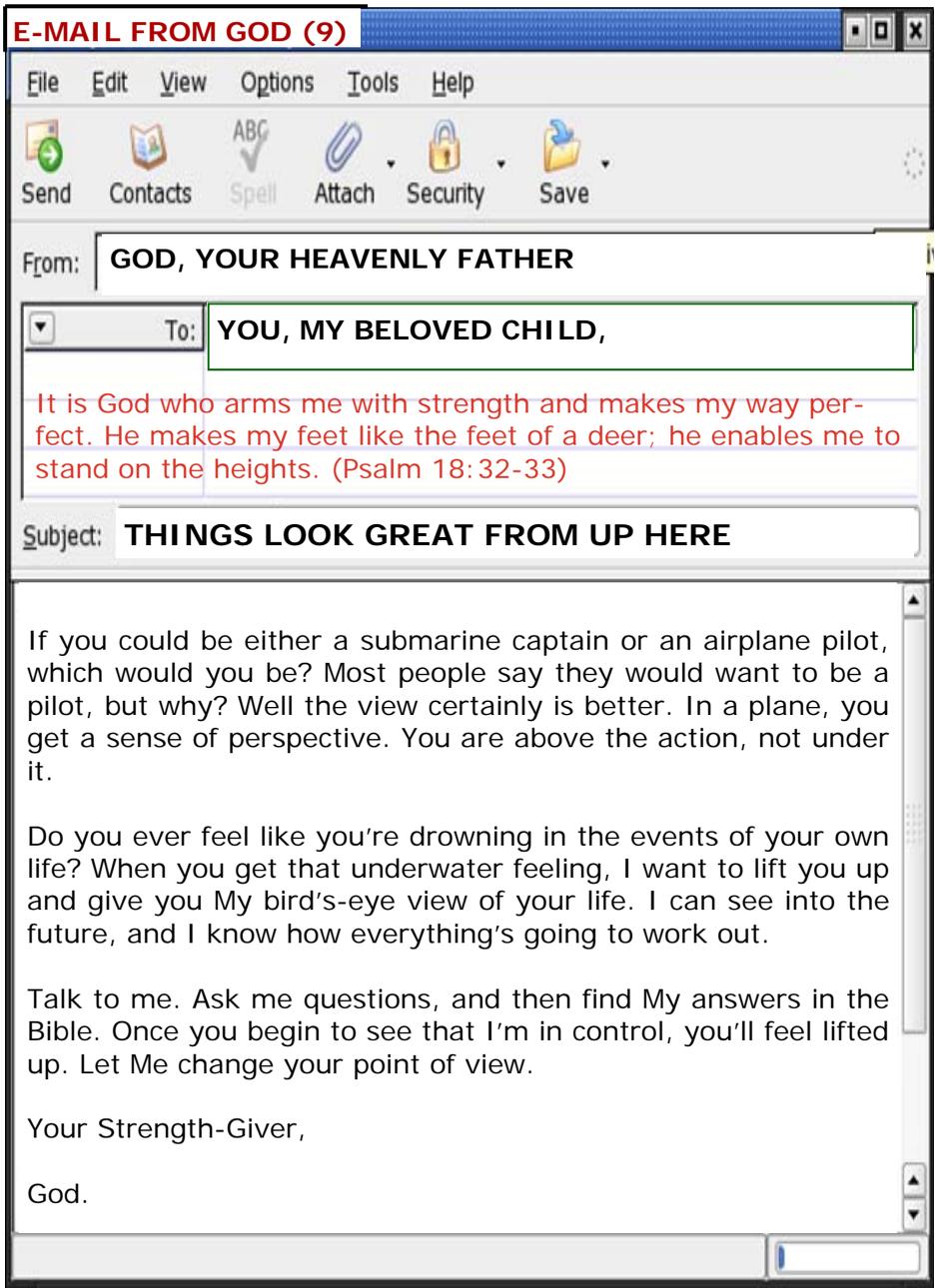
### **Be a Donkey for Jesus**

(continued from page 17)

Perhaps this same stiff-necked quality added to Jesus' choice of the donkey - a stubborn little steed with a mind of its own, even though it would work hard and long. Sound familiar?

So I end with this question: Will you be a donkey for Jesus? Will you carry Christ? Wherever he goes? However he goes? Will you be His donkey? Will you walk cliffs? Will you not be afraid of the edges and the extremes? Will you be cliff-walkers who journey the edges between this world and the next, between hate and love, between war and peace? And do not forget one fact; because the donkey under reference carried Jesus to his triumphal entry to Jerusalem, it will never be forgotten in history, just as that ordinary manger become one that history never forgets. When you are willing to be used by the Lord Jesus for his work, in his service, your labour is never forgotten. That is why Paul admonished us to "... stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain." (1 Corinth. 15:58)

# 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.
- **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 - 18th May, 1st June, 18th June (**8 pm**)
- Wednesday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**7:45 pm for 8.00pm start**)
- Thursday - Christianity Explored - West Chapel (**7:30pm**)
- 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 (**6.30 pm**)

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

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

**Vicar:** Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

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

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

**Organist:** Pavla Bockova

**YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME**

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