



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

OCTOBER 2009 ISSUE 10.111

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



LOVELINESS IN ACTION

## Vicar's three-minute reflection

### HAVE COMPASSION ON THEM



In the past three weeks, the main political parties have been singing a new 'reality-show' song, titled 'we are the best party to trust when it comes to doing the cutting job.' The competition has been so fierce between them that you wonder whether there is anything admirable in cutting down on services, on wages, on government subsidies for students' tuition etc. And to make bad matters worse, the frenzy of being with the political class in their new found vocabulary of 'cutting costs' seems to be permeating every stratum of the society. We are now cutting down on our family budget for food, holidays and clothing. And while it may be prudent to cut your cloth according to your size in various areas of life, there is an area where cutting is anathema— that is in the area of showing compassion. When a country is in economic depression, it is a time when hearts that have been touched by Jesus' love should be lavish with their show of compassion. It is a time to be good to our neighbours and those who have fallen by the wayside to the 'robbers' of recession, redundancy, despondency and hopelessness.

Two words that are often used for 'good' in New Testament Greek are *Agathos* and *kalos*. *Agathos* simply describes the moral quality of a thing as 'good'. *Kalos* means not only 'good', but 'winsome' and it is *kalos* that the New Testament uses again and again to describe the Christian goodness.

Compassion like goodness is a human emotion prompted by the pain of others. The feeling commonly gives rise to an active desire to alleviate another's suffering. If we affirm the principle that Jesus incarnates the word and wisdom of God, then we should affirm that he reveals to us the heart of God, which is full of compassion.

A missionary in India was talking to a group of people about Jesus Christ at an open air meeting



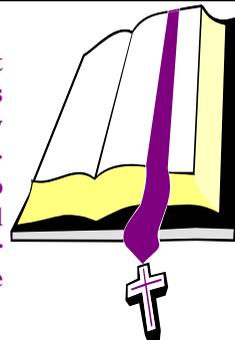
Some of the people listening had never heard of the Saviour before and as the missionary spoke about Jesus' characteristics and His love for men and women of all races, an elderly man shouted out: 'I know who you are talking about... he comes to our village every day.' The man he was referring to was a Christian doctor who visited the village and helped the people with their medical problems. This doctor had interpreted Christ to the villagers (EDWJ 30th March 09)

Jesus' compassion, however, went beyond just walking in the shoes of the other, it led him to act. According to John, Jesus was moved by his own grief and he chose to raise Lazarus from the dead and restore him to life. Another text that speaks to the way we might live out compassion is the parable of the Good Samaritan, in which the Samaritan – a person who was despised by most of the people in Jesus' audience – offered aid to a man who had been mugged. While this story illustrates what it means to be a good neighbor, it also serves to encourage us to act on our compassion (Lk. 10:25-37). The letter of James also speaks of the centrality of compassion to the life of faith. James defines true religion in terms of caring for orphans and widows who are in distress (James 1:27). James goes on to say that faith without works is dead– that is, without acts of compassion our faith is meaningless (James 2:14-17). God provides what we need to bless others, and takes care of the reward when our goal is to please Him, and to be used by Him to bless others who are disadvantaged.

Dele Agbelusi

### Memory Verse

**Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life (1 Timothy 6:17-19)**



## PEAKS VALLEYS AND RAILS

*Maybe married life isn't just about reaching the mountaintops and avoiding the dark times.*



Many of us, in marriage, long for mountaintop moments. Those times of shared success, satisfaction, and celebration. Times when the nail-biting drive of daily life is behind us for a while and forgotten, and all we can think about is the happiness of the moment. A honeymoon can be that kind of experience: the rush of shared sex, the joy of loving someone and being loved in return, the bright hopes for years of happiness together.

The birth of a child can be a mountaintop moment: the wonder of little eyes opening for the first time, the sacred squall of a newborn's first cry, the way an infant can bring parents and in-laws together. A dream vacation can be a mountaintop moment: time to relax and enjoy each other and a beautiful place, without worries, without work.

It's tempting to think of married life as a continual climb, looking for the next mountaintop. We may tell ourselves that most of life is lived in the valleys, but we hope we're on the road to another mountaintop experience, and that we'll get there before too long.

Or, after too many years on the switchbacks, we can lose hope that we'll ever see another mountaintop. Some couples sink into dreary stagnation: "Our marriage is what it is. Not bad enough to end, but we're not finding any mountaintops." But is marriage best seen as a series of mountaintop and valley experiences? Mountaintops that never last long enough, and valleys that seem endless? "Why does life have to be a series of ups and downs?" one young woman put it. "Why can't I just go from one mountaintop to another, from one up to an upper up?"

I understand her attitude, and I've shared it. The only difference is that I told myself, "I'm realistic enough to know you have to go down before you can go up again." But I still kept looking for the peak experiences, even if I was willing to wait a bit.

But what if peaks and valleys aren't the best way to describe your married life? What if God didn't intend us just to endure down times so we could enjoy an occasional up?

## Peaks Valleys And Rails

Rick Warren, pastor and author of *The Purpose-Driven Life*, made an observation a couple years ago that seems to describe the terrain of marriage- **A side-by-side view** . In a single year when his book reached the top of the best-seller lists, his wife was diagnosed with cancer. A mountaintop? A deep valley? Or something else?

"This past year has been the greatest year of my life," wrote Rick, "but also the toughest, with my wife, Kay, getting cancer. I used to think that life was hills and valleys—you go through a dark time, then you go to the mountaintop, back and forth. "I don't believe that anymore. Rather than life being hills and valleys, I believe that it's kind of like two rails on a railroad track, and at all times you have something good and something bad in your life."

**Likewise, as a marriage matures, we begin to notice that joy and difficulty aren't either/or. They coexist constantly.**

For a train to make progress, it's always in contact with both rails. Life rides parallel rails of blessing and adversity. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death," writes David in Psalm 23, "I will fear no evil, for you are with me." This songwriter of the Bible is describing a comfort and relationship that emerges only in the difficult times. In fact, the closeness of that relationship develops in the difficult times.

Likewise, as a marriage matures, we begin to notice that joy and difficulty aren't either/or. They coexist constantly. "No matter how good things are in your life," writes Warren, "there is always something bad that needs to be worked on. And no matter how bad things are in your life, there is always something good you can thank God for." It maybe the purpose of marriage isn't about always looking for the next mountaintop. Joy and difficulty are an odd combination, but much of life is lived seeking one and avoiding the other. I used to think they came one at a time, like alternating currents. Now I realize they're both present, all the time.

I'm developing eyes to see both simultaneously - A peaceful coexistence. Marshall Shelley (To be concluded in November Issue)

## THE BEST IS STILL AHEAD

We make a variety of choices every day and we must admit that sometimes we make the wrong choices or settle for something that is good when we could have received something better. God told the Israelites that He would free them from slavery in Egypt and settle them in Canaan—a land flowing with milk and honey.

The Promised land laid on the west-side of the River Jordan. Two and a half tribes of the Israelites saw that the land east of the Jordan was good for their cattle so they chose that over the better land God had prepared for them.

We do pretty much the same today. Heaven is our Promised land - a land flowing with holiness, righteousness, everlasting life and joy, but a lot of us want to stay here on the other side of heaven (earth). We think this is a good place and we like it down here.

Heaven is by far better and you cannot even begin to compare. "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (1Corth 2:9). We can trust God and his promises and refuse to pitch permanent tents here on earth. We must keep on living as pilgrims until we get to the land that God promised us which is not this physical world. Keep moving Pilgrim, the best is still ahead. Sunday and Grace Bwanhot

### **Story of the month—Oliver** ( continued from page 7)

There's a lot of truth in the old saying, "A person who is nice to you, but not nice to others, is not a nice person." That's one of the reasons why Jesus pointed to the outcasts of the world- those who were poor, those who were in prison, those who were considered "the least"—and said, in effect, "Those people are just like me. If you love me, then you will also love them." (See Matthew 25:31-46.) Anyone can love the healthy, the successful, and the glamorous. But God calls us to a higher standard—to love just as he does.

## STORY OF THE MONTH- OLIVER

Chris deVinck had a brother named Oliver who was severely handicapped. He was blind and bedridden. No one was sure whether Oliver was aware of the world around him, although he did eat when he was fed. He lived to be over 30 but feeding him was like feeding an eight-month-old child. He required 24-hour care, which his mother gave him until the day he died. Chris remembers...

When I was in my early 20s, I met a girl, and I fell in love. After a few months I brought her home for dinner to meet my family. After the introductions and some small talk, my mother went to the kitchen to check the meal, and I asked the girl, "Would you like to see Oliver?" for I had, of course, told her about my brother.

"No," she answered. She did not want to see him. It was as if she slapped me in the face. In response I mumbled something polite and walked to the dining room.

Soon after, I met Rosemary—a dark-haired, dark-eyed, lovely girl. She asked me the names of my brothers and sisters. She bought me a copy of *The Little Prince*. She loved children. I thought she was wonderful. I brought her home after a few months to meet my family. After the introductions and the small talk, we ate dinner; then it was time for me to feed Oliver. I walked into the kitchen, reached for the red bowl and the egg, cereal, milk, and banana and prepared Oliver's meal.

Then, I remember, I sheepishly asked Rosemary if she'd like to come upstairs and see Oliver. "Sure," she said, and up the stairs we went. I sat on Oliver's bed as Rosemary stood and watched over my shoulder. I gave him his first spoonful, then his second. "Can I do that?" she asked with ease, with freedom, with compassion. So I gave her the bowl, and she fed Oliver one spoonful at a time.

Which girl would you marry? Today Roe and I have three children. (continued on page 6)

## NEWS NOTICES AND EVENTS

### **PCC NEWS**

The church Council met on Thursday 10th September 2009:

#### **External Examiner**

It ratified the gracious offer of Ms. Judith Bennett to act as the external examiner of our Church accounts for 2009. We are very grateful to Ms. Judith Bennett

#### **Common Fund**

Christ Church has agreed to pay the sum of £44,292 as our contribution to the Diocesan Central Fund in 2010. This is a faith venture and we are trusting that the Lord will use you towards our meeting this pledge. Many people think that the Church of England is funded by the State. No! We have to raise every penny that the Church uses to pay clergy salaries, pensions, support schools, train clergy, support missions, etc.

#### **Christmas Carol Services**

Christingle Service will be on 13th December while Carol Service and Christmas lunch will take place on 20th December.

#### **Charity Commission**

Christ Church Crouch End is now a registered Charity with the Charities Commission.

### **DORIS RANDALL TURNS 90**

We rejoice with Doris Randall, a one time secretary of our Church Council (she is still a supporter of the Church) as she gives thanks to God on her 90th Birthday. We pray for God's blessing on her and pray that she remains faithful to her calling as a believer in Christ.

### **SOMEBODY SAID**

"When we preach Christ crucified, we have no reason to stammer, or stutter, or hesitate, or apologize; there is nothing in the gospel of which we have any cause to be ashamed." (C.H. Spurgeon)

## NEWS NOTICES AND EVENTS

### INSTALLATION OF AUDIO VISUAL AIDS

I am sure that many of you will be wondering what has happened to our plans to install audio-visual aids in the church. The delay has been partly due to finance and partly due to obtaining the necessary approvals from the Diocese since our Church is a listed Building.

We are glad to say that the approval stage has been scaled and we should be commencing the project very soon. The project is expected to take about three weeks. We are praying for God's help especially for those who made pledges that they will be able to redeem them, bearing in mind the uncertain economic climate we all experience.

### VOICES OF MARTYRS

President Asif Ali Zardari has said his Government is keen to solve the problem of Pakistan's blasphemy laws in a move welcomed by Christians.

At a meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams in London, President Zardari said he was very conscious of the need 'to urgently address the issue... with a view to preventing the misuse of the blasphemy law in future'. Mr Zardari acknowledged that the blasphemy laws – section 295/C of Pakistan's Penal Code – have been exploited by extremists to attack religious minorities...

The president's promise comes in the wake of extremist attacks on Gojra and Korian villages in Punjab after Christians there were accused of blasphemy...Prayer Alert reported on September 22 that Falish Masih from Punjab was found hanged in his cell just hours after he was detained on blasphemy charges.

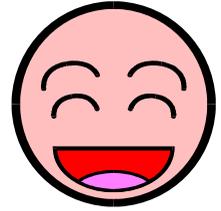
**Pray** that politicians will act fast now to repeal or amend the blasphemy laws and remember Christian prisoners such as Sandal Gulsher accused of blasphemy. **Pray** that such a law will not rear its head in the United Kingdom.

(From Release International)

# LAUGHTER LINES

## ARE YOU TELLING THE TRUTH?

The church was conducting its annual fund drive. One member of the congregation said, "I give ten dollars." Just then, a piece of plaster fell from the ceiling and landed on his head. He spoke up again quickly. "I give a thousand dollars!" The minister said, "Lord, hit him again!"



## FEELING SICK

A little nine year old girl was in church with her mother when she started feeling ill. "Mommy" she said "Can we leave now?" "No" her mother replied. "Well, I think I have to throw up!" "Then go out the front door and around to the back of the church and throw up behind a bush."

In about two minutes the little girl returned to her seat. "Did you throw up?" her mother asked. "Yes" the little girl replied. "Well, how could you have gone all the way to the back of the church and returned so quickly?"

"I didn't have to go out of the church, Mommy" the little girl replied, "They have a box next to the front door that says 'for the sick'."

## BIBLE HUMOUR

Q. Where is the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible?

A. When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.

Q. What kind of motor vehicles are in the Bible?

A. Honda...because the apostles were all in one Accord.

Q. Which servant of Jehovah was the most flagrant lawbreaker in the Bible?

A. Moses. Because he broke all 10 commandments; at once.

# LAUGHTER LINES

## TWO OF THE SAME KIND

Two priests were going to Hawaii on vacation and decided that they would make this a real vacation by not wearing anything that would identify them as clergy. As soon as the plane landed, they headed for a store and bought some really outrageous shorts and Aloha shirts, sandals, sunglasses, etc.

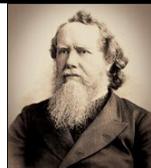
The next morning, they went to the beach, dressed in their "tourist" garb and were sitting on beach chairs, enjoying MaiTais, the sunshine and the scenery when a drop dead gorgeous redhead in a tiny bikini came walking straight toward them. They couldn't help but stare and when she passed them she turned to them, smiled and said, "Good morning Father Murphy. Good Morning Father O'Toole," nodding and addressing each of them individually, then passed on by. They were both stunned. How in the world did she recognize them as priests?

The next day they went back to the store, bought even more outrageous outfits. These outfits were so loud, you could hear them before you even saw them. Again, they settled on the beach in their chairs to enjoy the sunshine, etc. After a while, the same gorgeous redhead, wearing a string bikini this time, came walking toward them again. (They were glad they had sunglasses, because their eyes were about to pop out of their heads).

Again, she approached them and greeted them individually, "Good Morning Father Murphy. Good Morning Father O'Toole," and started to walk away. One of the priests couldn't stand it and said, "Just a minute young lady. Yes we are priests, and proud of it, but I have to know, how in the world did you know?" "Oh Father, don't you recognize me? I'm Sister Kathryn!"

# HUDSON TAYLOR

*Faith missionary to China*



Taylor was born to James and Amelia Taylor, a Methodist couple who were fascinated with the Far East and had prayed for their newborn, "Grant o Lord that he may work for you in China." Years later, a teenage Hudson experienced a spiritual birth during an intense time of prayer as he lay stretched, as he later put it, "before Him with unspeakable awe and unspeakable joy." He spent the next years in frantic preparation, learning the rudiments of medicine, studying Mandarin, and immersing himself ever deeper into the Bible and prayer.

His ship arrived in Shanghai, one of five "treaty ports" China had opened to foreigners following its first Opium War with England. Almost immediately Taylor made a radical decision. He decided to dress in Chinese clothes and grow a pigtail (as Chinese men did). His fellow Protestants were either incredulous or critical.

Taylor, for his part, was not happy with most missionaries he saw: he believed they were "worldly" and spent too much time with English businessmen and diplomats who needed their services as translators. Instead, Taylor wanted the Christian faith taken to the interior of China. So within months of arriving, and the native language still a challenge, Taylor, along with Joseph Edkins, set off for the interior, setting sail down the Huangpu River distributing Chinese Bibles and tracts.

When the Chinese Evangelization Society, which had sponsored Taylor, proved incapable of paying its missionaries in 1857, Taylor resigned and became an independent missionary; trusting God to meet his needs. The same year, he married Maria Dyer, daughter of missionaries stationed in China. He continued to pour himself into his work, and his small church in Ningpo grew to 21 members. But by 1861, he became seriously ill (probably with hepatitis) and was forced to return to England to recover.

In England, the restless Taylor continued translating the Bible into Chinese (a work he'd begun in China), studied to become a midwife, and recruited more missionaries. Taylor became convinced that a special organization was needed to evangelize the interior of China. He made plans to recruit 24 missionaries: continued on p.13)

## Hudson Taylor

two for each of the 11 unreached inland provinces and two for Mongolia.

It was a visionary plan that would have left veteran recruiters breathless: it would increase the number of China missionaries by 25 percent.

Taylor himself was wracked with doubt: he worried about sending men and women unprotected into the interior; at the same time, he despaired for the millions of Chinese who were dying without the hope of the gospel. In 1865 he wrote in his diary, "For two or three months, intense conflict ... Thought I should lose my mind." A friend invited him to the south coast of England, to Brighton, for a break. And it was there, while walking along the beach, that Taylor's gloom lifted: "There the Lord conquered my unbelief, and I surrendered myself to God for this service. I told him that all responsibility as to the issues and consequences must rest with him; that as his servant it was mine to obey and to follow him."

His new mission, which he called the China Inland Mission (CIM), had a number of distinctive features, including this: its missionaries would have no guaranteed salaries nor could they appeal for funds; they would simply trust God to supply their needs; furthermore, its missionaries would adopt Chinese dress and then press the gospel into the China interior.

Within a year of his breakthrough, Taylor, his wife and four children, and 16 young missionaries sailed from London to join five others already in China working under Taylor's direction.

Taylor continued to make enormous demands upon himself (he saw more than 200 patients daily when he first returned) and on CIM missionaries, some of whom balked. Lewis Nicol, who accused Taylor of tyranny, had to be dismissed. But Taylor's boldness knew no bounds. In 1881, he asked God for another 70 missionaries by the close of 1884: he got 76. In late 1886, Taylor prayed for another 100 within a year: by November 1887, he announced 102 candidates had been accepted for service.

Taylor's gruelling work pace, both in China and abroad (to England, the United States, and Canada on speaking engagements and to recruit), was carried on despite Taylor's poor health and bouts with depression.

(concluded on page 14)

## GREAT THOUGHTS ABOUT HEAVEN

Heaven is not only real because His humanity is there, not merely glorious because His greatness is there. It is dear because His love is there--the love which filled His earthly life, the love of the miracle and of the wayside teaching and of the cross. The nearness and the glory might be there, and yet heaven does not lay hold of our hearts. We might be well content to stand far off and gaze. We might not want to go there. We might not listen for messages, nor send our feeble voices forth in prayer. But now our Christ is there, our Savior, no wonder if the earth a thousand times seems dull and wearisome, and always gets its best brightness from that other world in which He is, of which this is the vestibule!

-Phillips Brooks

"A man may go to heaven without health, without riches, without honours, without learning, without friends; but he can never go there without Christ."

--John Dyer

A little girl was walking with her father in the country. As she looked up into the star-studded sky, her eyes were filled with wonder. Turning to her father she asked, "Daddy, if the wrong side of heaven is so beautiful, what do you think the right side will be like?" Facing Death and the Life After, Billy Graham, 1987, p. 237

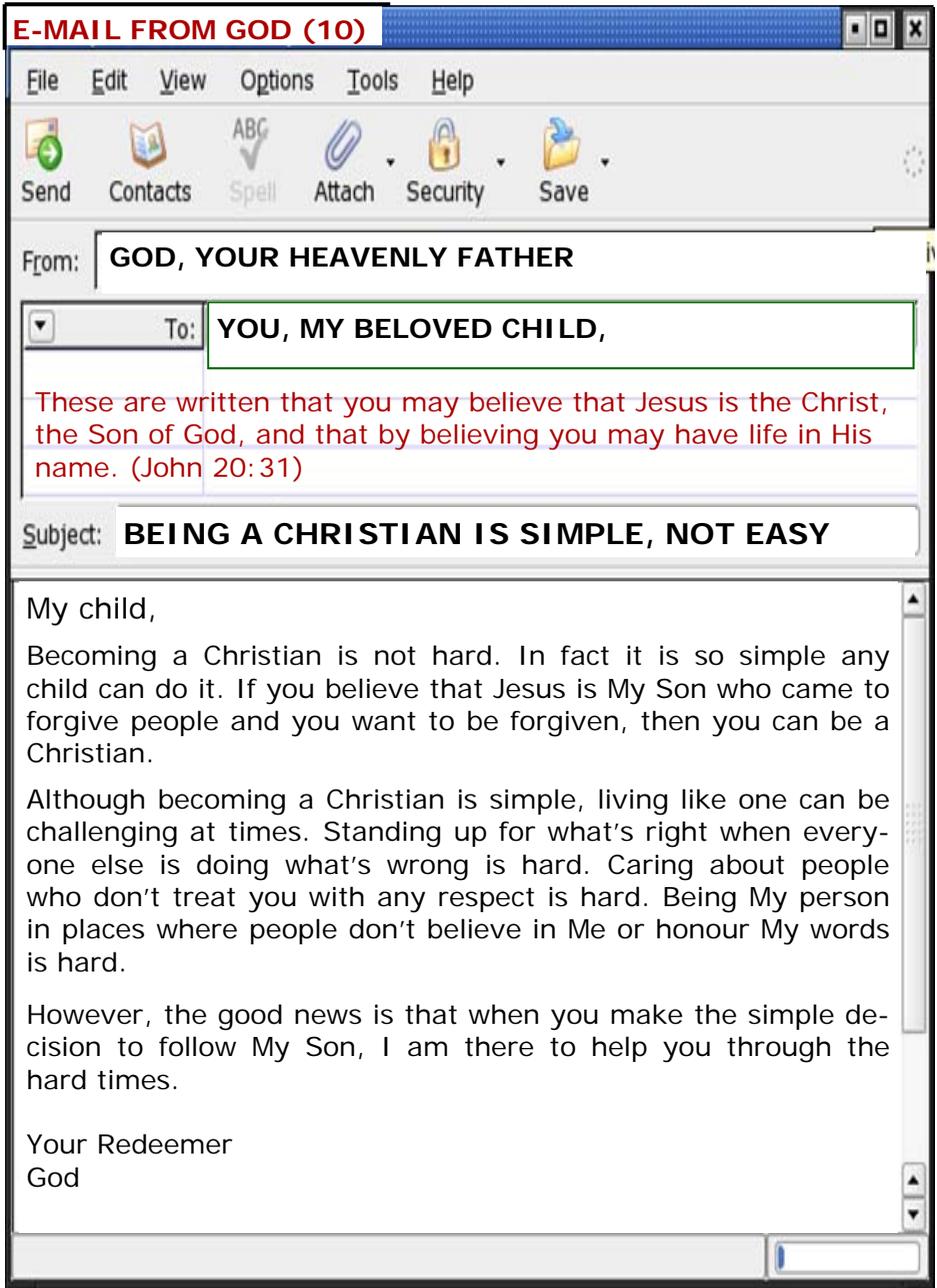
### **Hudson Taylor** (from page 13)

In 1900 it became too much, and he had complete physical and mental breakdown. The personal cost of Taylor's vision was high on his family as well: his wife Maria died at age 33, and four of eight of their children died before they reached the age of 10. (Taylor eventually married Jennie Faulding, a CIM missionary.)

Between his work ethic and his absolute trust in God (despite never soliciting funds, his CIM grew and prospered), he inspired thousands to forsake the comforts of the West to bring the Christian message to the vast and unknown interior of China. Though mission work in China was interrupted by the communist takeover in 1949, the CIM continues to this day under the name Overseas Missionary Fellowship (International).

Copyright ©2009 ChristianityToday.com, Christianity Today International. Printed with permission.

# 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 (5pm from 25th October)

#### ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday - Choir practice in church (**9.30 am**)  
Monday - Baby n' Toddlers Group and Brownies - **meetings in church**  
- Prayer meetings -19th October, 2nd and 16th November (**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**