



CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS
THE ENCOURAGER

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



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Vicar's three minute reflection

PSALM 23- THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD



Psalm 23 is read by many people when they feel lost, helpless and alone and need reassurance. It could be at a time of sickness or hospitalization, or a time when you parted from a loved one, and felt pain so deep it seemed your life was being wrenched asunder. It may have been a dark night of doubt, or a spell of uncontrolled anxiety or fear. Saint or sinner, we have all been there. In all such experiences, it is common to feel utterly alone and cast off, to think that certainly the world cannot possibly know what we are going through. One of our needs is for someone to understand our fears. "The still waters" in the psalm are the spots where the shepherd can lead his sheep across the streams and rivers. Sheep are afraid of moving waters. A good shepherd does not command his flock to cross where their fears would bring panic. He leads them to the quiet waters where he gently stills their fears and helps them cross. Still another need is for renewal. All of us get tired, at times discouraged and need to be renewed. The Lord says: "Behold, I am making all things new," Revelation 21:5 NRSV). That's good news. Psalm 23 puts it in terms of restoration of life by God who over and over again provides the possibility of new beginnings for his people.

**"I know the psalm,
but he knows the
Shepherd."**

The message of this Psalm is that the shepherd is near at hand, even if we fail to sense it. And it might even be in the person of a shepherd...or a cab driver or a banker or a teacher or a nurse or a friend, a mom or a dad, or even the occasional preacher. Who knows? Keep your eyes open. The vision of a helping shepherd continues from the Old Testament into the New.

We read in the New Testament that Jesus Christ is "the great shepherd of the sheep"; that he is the caring shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine and sets out after the one who is lost; that he is the good shepherd, who knows his sheep and even lays down his life for them.



There is something precious in the fact that the exalted One who rules the universe as king, who encounters us in our private and dark desert nights, who offers cool water and a banquet of simple camp food, who watches over us in every circumstance is also our Shepherd.

A famous actor was once the guest of honour at a social gathering where he received many requests to recite favourite excerpts from various literary works. An old preacher who happened to be there asked the actor to recite the twenty-third Psalm. The actor agreed on the condition that the preacher would also recite it. The actor's recitation was beautifully intoned with great dramatic emphasis for which he received a lengthy applause. The preacher's voice was rough and broken from many years of preaching, and his diction was anything but polished. But when he finished there was not a dry eye in the room. When someone asked the actor what made the difference, he replied, "I know the psalm, but he knows the Shepherd."

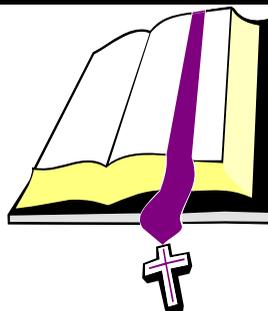
If you know the Shepherd as your Saviour and Lord, It makes a world of difference. You will enjoy his nearness and know that that he is nearby. You will know that he loves you; that he will come when you call to him in prayer, when you are frightened, or anxious, or in pain. And together with the Psalmist you can affirm, "The Lord is my shepherd...Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Dele Agbelusi

Memory Verse

However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, nor ear heard, no mind has conceived what god has prepared for those who love him."

(1 Corinthians 2:9)



WHAT IS THE FAMILY?



In this edition, we will examine Paul's letter to the Colossians, chapter 3:verse 18-21. Here Paul challenges us about family relationships. the passage reads:

"Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. "

Do you know what the key to that passage is? I doubt if you noted it, and that's okay. But it's crucial. The key is the conditional phrase at the close of verse 18: "as is fitting in the Lord." Paul centres his teaching about home - about marriage and family - in Christ. Unless you begin there, nothing, Paul says, makes sense. Relationships in the family which Paul is talking about are based on every family member being committed to Christ.

Paul has often been criticized about being down on women. The truth is he presented a radically new view of marriage and family which elevated women and children to a hitherto unthinkable level of equality. The Hebrew and Greek understanding of marriage reduced women to "things" to be used and enjoyed, not loved and cherished. Women were seen as totally subservient to men, not only in society, but in the home. It was a man's world in every way.

Before Paul, Jesus' attitude toward women and marriage was revolutionary. He saw and treated women as persons of worth, not playthings for sexual gratification, or merely agents of procreation. And Paul built on those teachings.

In Ephesians 5 and 6, where he deals with this same issue, Paul says to men: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her." Paul founded his teaching on the fact that the person in Christ has a new center of

What is the family?

reference, a new Lord of life, and thus operates out of a totally new understanding of reality. People are brothers and sisters, all recipients of grace, and in the eyes of the Lord there is no distinction in worth between male and female.

That's the kind of community the Holy Spirit creates -- in our homes, and in the church -- a family of mutual love, respect, appreciation, commitment, and service to one another. And the sacrament of Holy Communion is the dramatic acting out of our oneness with Christ and with each other. This is the heavenly banquet, hosted by Christ, in which all barriers are broken down. Every person is pronounced a special guest, and the gift of love and forgiveness serve not for a limited time only, but as the continuous offer of grace.

DADDY, DADDY

I recently read some funny descriptions of life as a dad. They made me laugh, so I thought I'd share them with you:

"Having one child makes you a parent; having two makes you a referee." – David Frost.

"Everyone who has ever walked barefoot into his child's room late at night hates Lego." – Tony Kornheiser.

"By the time a man realises that maybe his father was right, he usually has a son who thinks he's wrong." –

Charles Wadsworth.

"Children seldom misquote you. In fact, they usually repeat word for word what you shouldn't have said." Rob Parsons.

FROM OUR READERS

A Poem to Commemorate 200 Years Anniversary of the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

Dear Ancestors, I thank you. I feel so proud
you gave wealth to the world.
You took bruises and shed tears
on the plantation from dawn to sunset.
But, you gave me your strength.

Dear Ancestors. So beautiful,
kind and fragile like a Dove,
your patience and future was
that hope that kept you going
so I can be here today.

Dear Ancestors where princesses are sunset
you said prayers for a change.
Today your great-granddaughter Jean
honours all of you with heartfelt gratitude.
All my kindness, cheerfulness and patience
come from you. Also my smile and looks.

Dear Ancestors. I pray today. I looked in
the mirror and see all of you in me -
A loving mother to my children. Thank you
Ancestors. I love all of you, judgment Day soon come.
God bless.

© Jean Ju-Pierre (2007).

MEMORIAL BENCH

On 14th September 2007, a memorial bench was unveiled in Hornsey Lane in honour of two residents - the late Mrs Liz Murchie (Church Warden of Christ Church from 1995 to 2004) and Ms Maeve McAllister. They were founder members of the Hornsey Lane Association and had worked hard to make a difference to their community. The bench was donated to the residents' group by Thames Water as a goodwill gesture to the community.

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NOTICES

Saturday, 24th November 2007

Quiz Nite at the parish hall. Tickets are now available at £10:00 each, Concession £5:00 to cover food, fruit juice etc. Please contact Grace Macauley, Vera Freeburne, Jim Jenks or the Vicar for tickets.

Sunday, 25th November 2007

Confirmation Service at 10.30 am

Opportunity to Grow in the Word of God

Good news from Dr Luke during our morning services and Words of hope from Isaiah at the **evening worship**. We also learn more about the greatness and sovereignty of God in Daniel during our **mid-week (Wednesday) bible study**. **You are all invited to join us in this faith adventure.**

Memorial Bench

Hornsey Lane had been closed for five months due to work on the pipe network. The bench is made of wrought iron and renewable stewardship wood. This means as a tree is used another is planted. The Murchie family were represented by her son Nickolas, daughter Alison and granddaughter Hope.

Vera Freeburne

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

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

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

BIBLE STUDY ON THE BOOK OF JOEL

Have you read the book of Joel lately? As is the case with most of the prophets of God in the Old Testament, it's doubtful Joel won the hearts of very many people. His message is terse and is delivered with a minimal amount of verbiage. How about this for an opening line, "Hear this, you old men, and give ear, all you inhabitants of the land." Now that's an attention getter! Joel then begins to describe a scenario of drought and famine that has been unparalleled in all of Israel's history. Look at the rest of verse 2, "Has this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?" In other words, he says that things have been bad before, but you haven't seen anything compared to what you're about to see. From that point, Joel begins to vividly describe a dreadful scene of land and crops and livestock that are quickly being destroyed because of the present drought conditions. He calls upon the priests to lament and for the ministers of the altar to howl, (i.e. to mourn with great weeping).

Why such a word to the religious community of his day? Verse 13 tells us..."...for the grain offering and the drink offering are withheld from the house of our God?" To put it simply, God's people had forsaken genuine worship. They had adopted hollow religious attitudes that neglected the primary reason for their existence...to worship the Lord their God! No sacrifice, no giving, and the result was inevitable. Verse 16 spells it out: "Is not meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?"

Their relationship with God was replaced by religious form. Many had lost interest in Godly things and soon found other activities to occupy their time. It's no wonder that Joel calls on the priest and the ministers of the house of God and for "all the inhabitants of the land" to come into a solemn assembly and cry unto the Lord. These people needed to come to terms with areas of dire neglect. If I could somehow leave this ancient account of God's people tucked away in the

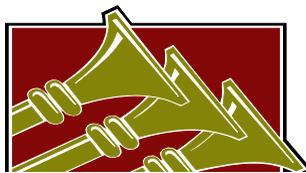
The Book of Joel

annals of history, we would all be a little more comfortable, but you and I know that it is a story that is as relevant as this morning's newspaper.

Many church-going people today are no different from those of Joel's day. They will attend some religious services, but rarely, if ever, do they engage in heartfelt worship directed toward the Living God. For many, joy and gladness has long been a missing element in their relationship with Christ. A continual neglect of true worship has brought on drought conditions in their souls. The things of God hold little, if any, interest in their daily experience. There is no longer any sacrifice, only substitutes. No genuine worship, only dry religious form, which entertains the soul and leaves the spirit dry.

Though Joel's words may sting a little, they were not written to tear his listeners down, but rather to call them back to the Lord their God. God is the only One who is able to restore a drought stricken land and a drought stricken people. Chapter 2 verse 25 offers some words of grace, for God says. "I will restore to you the years that the locust have eaten." It's not too late to come back, for our God is full of grace and rich in mercy, and He is ever ready to put the living water of His presence back into a dry, drought stricken life. Joel's words are still relevant today. They still urge us to come back to the Lord and to cry unto Him to pour out the refreshing rain of His presence onto our dry and barren lives. If that describes your life lately, begin asking the Lord to send a flood.

D.A.



**Because Jesus lives, I
can face tomorrow.**

LAUGHTER LINES

YOU KNOW IT'S A 'BAD' DAY AS A PASTOR WHEN...

... you finally remember the name of that person you promised to visit in the hospital--while reading the obituaries.

... you can't find Obadiah while leading a Bible study.

... the groundskeeper accidentally waters your study along with the flower bed.

... in the pulpit you notice your sermon notes this week are for last week's sermon.

... the youth pastor urgently asks you about the church's liability insurance.

... your church treasurer sends you a post card from Geneva.

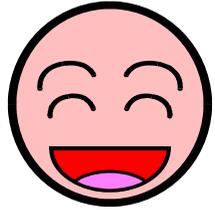
... the vicarage's redecoration committee gets "a good deal" on used carpet and furniture.

... you are informed that the youth group used steel wool sponges for their car wash.

... the couple you married a year ago calls to ask about a warranty.

... you are elected Pastor Emeritus--and you're only twenty-eight.

-- James D. Berkley, *Leadership*, Vol. 4, no. 1



A GROOM BY ANY OTHER NAME

Two ministers were discussing the advisability of writing down the names of brides and grooms to aid their memory at the ceremony. One man said, "I once called the groom by the wrong name." The other man said, "I once started a ceremony and realized I couldn't remember whether the groom was John or James. I whispered to the groom, 'Is your name James or John?' 'James,' he replied. Then the bride nudged the groom and said, 'Your name is John.'"

-- Edward C. Boland in *Leadership*. "Rolling Down the Aisle," *Christian Reader*.

LAUGHTER LINES

SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME

Shortly after my daughter's wedding, I turned happily to the groom's mother and said, "It's such a relief to know Devri has someone to take care of her now."

With a startled look, she replied, "That's funny--I was just thinking how glad I am Phillip has someone to take care of him!"

-- Janell W., Christian Reader, "Rolling Down the Aisle."

SHH!, SHH! BE QUIET

Probably you've heard of the group who were supposed to have arrived in heaven and were met by St. Peter. In a beautiful meadow they saw some people assembled and asked Peter who they were. Peter replied, "They are ANGLICANS." They walked on a distance to a beautiful brook, and one asked, "Who are the people gathered over there?" And Peter answered, "They are PRESBYTERIANS." Then they came to a tremendously high wall and one asked, "Whose are the voices we hear behind that wall?" "Shh!" said Peter. "Please be quiet!" Then he whispered the name of that denomination and said, "They think they are the only ones up in this place, and we don't want to disillusion them. If they find out that others have made it up here too, how will they feel?"

- Stories for preachers and Teachers

THANK GOD FOR THE BIBLE!

During the Second World War, a native South Islander proudly showed his tattered Bible to an American soldier. And looking down his nose, the soldier said, 'We've grown out of that sort of thing buddy. This Bible stuff is no longer relevant.' The islander simply smiled back at him and said, 'It's a good thing we haven't. Because if it weren't for this book you would have been my lunch by now.'

STORY OF THE MONTH

THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE PIANO

A little girl wanted to become a great pianist, but all she could play on the piano was the simple little tune, "Chopsticks." No matter how hard she tried, that was the best she could do. Her parents decided after some time to arrange for a great maestro to teach her to play properly. Of course, the little girl was delighted. When the little girl and her parents arrived at the maestro's mansion for the first lesson, they were escorted by the butler into the living room, where they saw a beautiful concert grand piano. Immediately, the little girl dashed over to the piano and began playing "Chopsticks." Her embarrassed parents started across the room to tell her to stop, but as she played, the maestro entered the room and encouraged the little girl to continue.



The maestro then took a seat on the piano bench next to the little girl, listening to her play. After a moment he began to play along with her, adding chords, runs, and arpeggios. The little girl continued to play "Chopsticks." The parents couldn't believe their ears. They were hearing a beautiful piano duet, played by their daughter and the maestro, and amazingly enough, the central theme of it was still "Chopsticks."

At times you may feel like you're a nobody, that God can't use you to do great things. But think of that little girl. All she could play was "Chopsticks." Nobody wanted to hear "Chopsticks." It was an embarrassment to her parents and annoying to everyone else. Yet the maestro encouraged her to keep on playing.

God knows what you can do. He created you with gifts and talents. Sure, compared to some people's abilities, your gifts and talents may seem like "Chopsticks"—not very original and not very spectacular. But God says, "Keep on playing—and make some room on the piano bench for me." God is able to take the little that we are able to do and turn it into something beautiful for him.

A SHORT COURSE IN HUMAN RELATIONS

The six most important words:

I admit that I was wrong.

The five most important words:

You did a great job.

The four most important words:

What do you think?

The three most important words:

Could you please...

The two most important words:

Thank you.

The most important word:

We.

The least important word:

I.



THANK YOU ALL

Dear Rev. Dele and fellow Christians in Christ Church,

I wish to thank everyone for their good wishes, get well cards, prayers, visitations in hospital and at home, telephoning and thinking about me in general. Psalm 100, a Psalm of thanksgiving, says it all for me.

May the God almighty bless you all and give you the power and strength to extend this good spirit to everyone who needs it in our church and elsewhere.

Always,
Mama Thembi.

* A thank offering accompanied this note.

GREAT HYMNS INSPIRED BY SORROW AND TRIALS

ROCK OF AGES, CLEFT FOR ME

This hymn was written by Augustus Montague Toplady. He was born in Farnham, Surrey in England on November 4, 1740. He was educated at Westminster school, London and at the Trinity college, Dublin. He became a Christian after hearing the sermon of a Methodist lay-preacher, James Morris. He later received the call into the ministry and in 1762 was ordained in the Church of England. He pastored in the two towns of Blagdon and Falliey, and also worked as a vicar in Broadhembury and Devonshire, He was an ardent Calvinist and a strong critic of Charles Wesley. He wrote many poems, hymns and psalms for public and private worship during his short life span.

One day, while pastoring a church in Blagdon in Somerset, Rev Toplady was taking an evening stroll. He was about two or three miles away from home when he got caught in a raging storm on an open field with no shelter. After battling against the storm, almost to the point of exhaustion Toplady sighted a rock some distance away, He then struggled until he reached it and took refuge in a cleft (an opening) in the rock.

That experience gave Rev. Toplady the inspiration for this great hymn "Rock of ages, cleft for me." The first stanza was written on a playing card which he found on the ground in the cleft of the rock. He wrote the other stanzas later. The playing card on which the hymn was first written is still preserved in a library in America till today. The hymn made a great impact on the English speaking world and the pamphlets of the hymn were found in almost every British home. Both clergy and laity have used it in private and church worship. Rev S. M. Leigh

ROCK OF AGES, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure.

(continued on next page)

THE BLESSING OF A STORM

How different are summer storms from winter ones! In winter they rush over the earth with their violence; and if any poor remnants of foliage or flowers have lingered behind, these are swept along at one gust. Nothing is left but desolation; and long after the rain has ceased, pools of water and mud bear tokens of what has been. But when the clouds have poured out their torrents in summer, when the winds have spent their fury, and the sun breaks forth again in glory, all things seem to rise with renewed loveliness from their refreshing bath. The flowers, glistening with rainbows, smell sweeter than before; the grass seems to have gained another brighter shade of green; and the young plants which had hardly come into sight have taken their place among their fellows in the borders, so quickly have they sprung up from the showers. The air, too, which may previously have been oppressive, has become clear, and soft, and fresh.

Such, too, is the difference when the storms of affliction fall on hearts un-renewed by Christian faith, and on those who abide in Christ. In the former they bring out the dreariness and desolation which may before have been unapparent. The gloom is not relieved by the prospect of any cheering ray to follow it or of any flowers or fruits to show its beneficence. But for the true Christian soul, "though weeping may endure for a night, joy comes in the morning." A sweet smile of hope and love follows every tear; and tribulation itself is turned into the chief of blessings.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Rock of Ages

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

Motto /Text for the year
"I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES
ME STRENGTH" *PHIL. 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

- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group (**10.00 am to 12 noon**) -Term time only
- Brownies meeting in Church (**5.30 pm**)
- Next Prayer Meetings 15th October, 5th & 19th November (**8pm**)
- Wednesday - Bible Fellowship in the Hall (**7:45pm**)
- Friday - Home Group at Flat 10, 3 Waverley Road, N8 (**2.30 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in church and hall (**6.00 pm**)

Enquiry/Counselling - please phone 020 8340 1566

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YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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