



**CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS
THEME: NOT MY WILL**

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



*Not my Will
But Yours O Lord*



SEPTEMBER 2004 ISSUE 4.55

NOT MY WILL, BUT YOURS O LORD



Finding the will of God for our lives can often be elusive, confusing and difficult. It may be something as simple as, "Should I buy this car?" or it could be as life-altering as, "Should I take this job?" or "Should I go into the ministry?" God has a personal interest in our lives. He is concerned about our well being and our future. More importantly, He has a wonderful plan for our lives.

Although God is sovereign, he has given us a free will to accept or reject Him. This not only applies to salvation, it also applies to His plan for our lives. God has a "perfect will" or plan for us. However, because of sin and disobedience, most of us don't even come close to reaching that potential. The more we live in disobedience, the farther we move from God's perfect will.

**Before us is a future all
unknown, a path
untried;
Beside us a friend
well loved and known-
That friend is Jesus**

How does one find the will of God? It seems to be such a complicated and elusive question. For whatever reason, God usually keeps many things about our future a mystery. I can see some reasons why it would be advantageous not to know my whole future. However, it would be nice if He would show me more than a couple steps at a time. Nevertheless, God's ways are perfect. Therefore, we should not think we can improve on His methods but rather learn to walk in accordance with what He has shown us.

Simply put, God's will for us is to glorify Him. Thus, to glorify God should be our primary goal. This should be higher than everything else. If we make glorifying God our primary goal, then good works, will be the natural fruit. We should never make our ministry our primary goal. This is not glorifying to God.

Finding the will of God is a multifaceted subject and I won't pretend to do justice to it in this short article. However, there are some basic principles that can be very helpful which I shall touch briefly. In summary, finding God's will is a process of aligning your heart with God's. To truly know God's heart, you have to hear Him speak



. There are four basic ways God speaks to us. They are:

- 1) The written Word of God (Bible)
- 2) His soft quiet voice in our heart (Holy Spirit)
- 3) Circumstances in our lives
- 4) Experiences of other believers

It is important to point out that while God often uses circumstances and the experiences of others to communicate His intentions to us, the Bible is the final authority. Experiences or feelings that contradict the Bible are not the will of God.

A basic rule of thumb in finding God's will is to be obedient to what God has already revealed to you and grow where you are currently planted. Many Christians make the common mistake of expecting God to provide them more guidance even though they have not been obedient in what God has already shown them. These are often the small things such as being truthful with others, treating your mate with love and respect, obeying the laws of the land (such as traffic laws), maintaining a pure thought life, serving God with the abilities He has given you, etc.

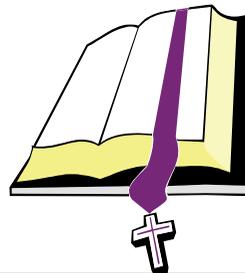
Another common mistake made by Christians is to view "success" from a human perspective instead of from an eternal one. Success, in human terms, is often measured by the size of a ministry, number of converts, and other tangible quantities. Success, from God's perspective, is a life that has followed God's plan. The body principle in 1 Cor. 12:12-31 clearly points out if God plans for you to be a seemingly insignificant toe, you are incredibly successful if you are a toe. A toe is not glorifying God if it tries to be a highly visible eye or mouth.

Dele Agbelusi

Memory Verse

So what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending His own Son, is there anything else He wouldn't gladly and freely do for us?

(The Message: Romans 8: 31,32)



TRY THIS FOR SEX EDUCATION



I was holding a notice from my 13-year-old son's school announcing a meeting to preview the new course in sexuality. Parents could examine the curriculum and take part in an actual lesson presented exactly as it would be given to the students.

Arriving at the school, I was surprised to discover only about a dozen parents gathered, waiting for the presentation. I picked up a teacher guide and thumbed through page after page of instructions in the prevention of pregnancy or disease. Abstinence was mentioned only in passing.

When the teacher arrived with the school nurse, she asked if there were any questions. I asked why abstinence did not play a noticeable part in the material. What happened next shocked me. Speaking over a great deal of laughter, someone suggested that if I thought abstinence had any merit, I should go back to burying my head in the sand. The teacher and the nurse said nothing as I drowned in a sea of embarrassment. My mind had gone blank, and I could think of nothing to say. The teacher explained to me that the job of the school was to teach facts; the home was responsible for moral training. I sat in silence for the next 20 minutes as she explained the course to parents who seemed to give their unqualified support to the materials.

“The handshake in this case represents intimacy. So the two people you had contact with now have the disease.”

“Donuts at the back,” announced the teacher during the break. “I’d like you to put on the name tags we’ve prepared—they’re right by the donuts—and mingle with the other parents.” Everyone moved to the back of the room. As I watched them affixing their name tags and shaking hands, I sat deep in thought. I was ashamed that I had not been able to convince them to include a serious discussion of abstinence in the materials. I uttered a silent prayer for guidance. My thoughts were interrupted by the teacher’s hand on my shoulder. “Won’t you join the others, Mr. Daniels?” The nurse smiled sweetly at me. “The donuts are good.”

(continued on page 5)

(from page 4)

"Thank you, no," I replied. "Well then, how about a name tag? I'm sure the others would like to meet you." "Somehow I doubt that," I replied.

"Won't you please join them?" she coaxed.

Then I heard a still, small voice whisper, "Don't go." The instruction was unmistakable. "Don't go!"

"I'll just wait here," I said.

The teacher called the class back to order and, looking around the long table, thanked everyone for putting on name tags. She ignored me. "Now we're going to give you the same lesson we'll be giving your children," she began. "Everyone, please peel off your name tags." I watched in silence as the tags came off. "Now then, on the back of one of the tags, I drew a tiny flower. Who has it, please?"

The gentleman across from me held it up. "Here it is!"

"All right," she said. "The flower represents disease. Do you recall with whom you shook hands?" He pointed to a couple of people. "Very good," she replied. "The handshake in this case represents intimacy. So the two people you had contact with now have the disease." That produced another round of laughter and witty comments.

"And with whom did the two of you shake hands?" the teacher continued. She had made her point. "This demonstrates for students how quickly disease is spread. Since we all shook hands, we all have the disease."

At that moment I heard again the still, small voice. "Speak now," it said, "but be humble." Noting wryly the latter admonition, I rose from my chair and apologized for any upset I might have caused earlier. I then congratulated the teacher on an excellent lesson that would impress the youth, and concluded by saying I had only one small point I wished to make.

"Not all of us here were infected." I said. "one of us...abstained." I hope we will be bold enough to include abstinence as one of the options of preventing diseases.

FROM THE MOUTH OF BABES

Is it not a sad thing that we should think it wonderful for God to hear prayer? A little boy in one of the schools in Edinburgh, who had attended a prayer meeting, had much better faith. He said to his teacher who had conducted the prayer meeting, "Teacher, I wish my sister could be made to read the Bible. She never reads it."

"Why should your sister read the Bible, Johnny?"

"Because if she should once read it, I am sure it would do her good, and she would be converted and be saved."

"Do you think so, Johnny?"

"Yes, I do, sir, and I wish the next time there's a prayer meeting you would ask the people to pray for my sister that she may begin to read the Bible."

"Well, it shall be done, John."

So the teacher mentioned that a little boy was very anxious that prayer should be offered that his sister might begin to read the Bible.

John was observed to get up and go out. The teacher thought it very rude of the boy to disturb the people in a crowded room, and so the next day when the lad came, he said, "John, I thought it was very rude of you to get up in the prayer meeting and go out. You ought not to have done so."

"But sir," said the boy, "I did not mean to be rude. I thought I would just go home and see my sister reading her Bible for the first time."

In the same way we ought to believe and watch with expectation for answers to our prayer. Do not say, "Lord, turn my darkness into light," and then go out with your candle as though you expected to find it dark. After asking the Lord to appear for you, expect him to do so, for according to your faith he will answer. -- Charles Haddon Spurgeon,

The Quotable Spurgeon, (Wheaton: Harold Shaw Publishers, Inc, 1990)



Have you come to the Red Sea place in your life where, in spite of all you can do, there is no way out, there is no way back; there is no other way but through? At such times I would rather walk with God in the dark or through the sea than go alone in the light or on dry ground.

NOTICE BOARD

ALPHA PROGRAMME REUNION

There will be a reunion meal on **14th September 2004** for those who completed the Alpha Programme recently. Those intending to participate in a new course commencing 28th September are also welcome.

ALPHA PROGRAMME @ CHRIST CHURCH

Starts 28th September 2004.

Please collect your registration form from the Vicar.

CONFIRMATION DATE - 21st NOVEMBER 2004

Confirmation classes commence on 18th September (young people) and 19th September (adults). Please fill in the application sheet if you wish to be confirmed.

CHRIST CHURCH AWAY DAY

2nd October.10am—3pm

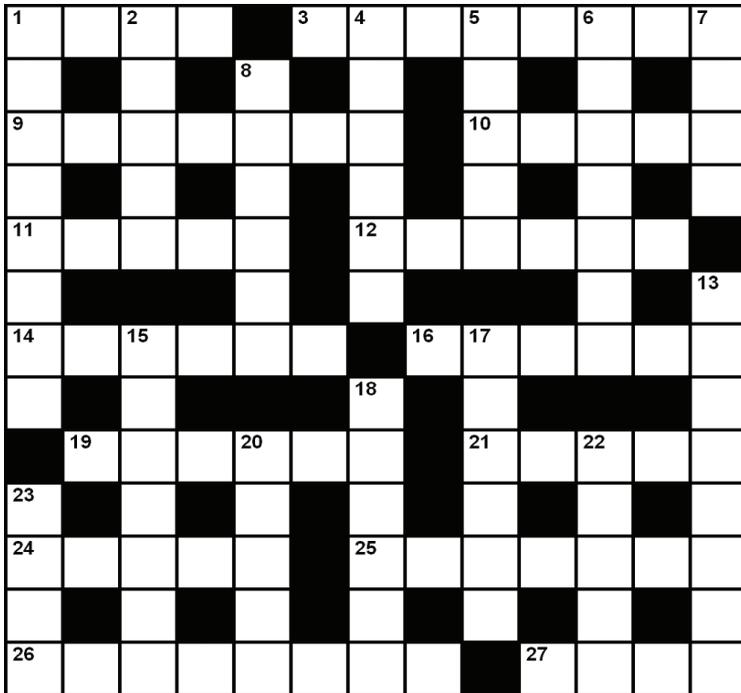
Please keep this date free in your diaries.

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

- Thank God for those who participated in the last Alpha programme.
- Thank God for His protection and love during the summer holidays.
- Pray for the Weekday fellowship and Alpha which begin this month .
- Pray for peace in Northern Ireland—that those who are called by the name of Christ will live according to their calling.
- Pray that God will fill us afresh with His Holy Spirit.
- Pray for the Murchies that God will comfort them over the transition of Liz..
- This month we pray for members on our electoral roll and their families whose surnames begin with A&B:

Abdulai Janet; Adeneye Lolade; Agbelusi Tolu, Bolurin, Sope and Iyabo; Aiyegbusi Funke; Alvis Daisy; Anand Luke; Angus George; Arulanantharajah Emmanuel & Grace; Banfield Fiona; Banfield-Nwachi Joy; Becessar Devin; Beckford Glen; Bentham Mervin and Anita; Billot Natasha; Botterill Allan and Patricia ; Burrell Cecil; Byron Barbara .

CROSSWORD



Clues Across

- 1 Contributions to aid the poor (4)
- 3 Robber freed instead of Jesus Christ (8)
- 9 Impregnable city assaulted by Sennacherib (7)
- 10 Leniency or compassion (5)
- 11 A valley near Jericho, meaning trouble (5)
- 12 A diplomatic representative of the Pope having ambassadorial status (6)
- 14 Small houses built of wood (6)
- 16 A food prepared from the pressed curd of milk (6)
- 19 First of the three sons of Caleb by Azubah (6)
- 21 The lion of God (5)
- 24 Tangled mass of prickly plants (5)
- 25 Home of Lazarus and his sisters (7)
- 26 Son and successor of Solomon (8)
- 27 A song of praise (4)

Clues Down

- 1 An agreement between nations or groups (8)
- 2 A prophet, the son of Mephibosheth (5)
- 4 Home of the altar to an unknown god (6)
- 5 Son of Lot (5)
- 6 Wife of Herod (7)
- 7 Speaks (4)
- 8 Brook which flows through the Valley of Jehoshaphat (6)
- 13 A follower of John Wesley (8)
- 15 A mark or flaw (7)
- 17 An area near a fireplace (6)
- 18 Land between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf (6)
- 20 Mountain range containing Sinai (5)
- 22 Country of Rome (5)
- 23 Founder of the Hebrew race (4)

IN MEMORY OF LIZ MURCHIE

Elizabeth Murchie, our erstwhile church warden went into glory on July 17 2004.

Liz was a remarkable person I never ceased to admire since we met about six years ago. At Christ Church, she kept the social and ecumenical heartbeats of the church always pumping with her constant reminders to us of our responsibilities to the wider church family - this list includes the Churches Together in Hornsey, The Women's World Day Of Prayer, Deanery Synod etc. She ensured we did not turn a blind eye to prisoners being tortured, unfair wages and the need to cut skyrocketing debts to developing nations of the world. On these fronts, Liz was very relentless in her crusade and she would not be silenced until she has had her say, and many times, her way. She was very active as one of our church wardens, a position she held from 1995 to July 2004. We will miss Liz.

Liz was an organiser who brought her training and love of drama into her ministry. Liz usually took no time to translate some of my amateurish attempts at writing drama pieces into something professional. In the past three years, Liz was my anchor person to read my review of the previous year at the New Year's Eve service. I always tried to write the script like a journalist but Liz always read it with feeling like a professional news caster. I will miss Liz.

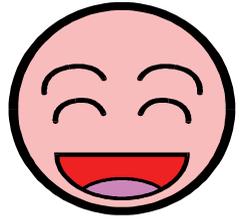
I will miss her sense of determination which at times could be an irritant but one which made you think that there could be other ways of doing things and other views beside the widely accepted.

I saw a more reflective and perceptive side of Liz after her mild stroke a few months ago. Liz the organiser almost turned Liz the preacher. She talked endlessly about her faith in the Lord and how this helped her to pull through while in the hospital. She had a remarkable recovery and we all thought Liz would be with us forever. But her Shepherd had a better plan. He removed the sting of death for her and Liz is now free. Free to behold the face of our Saviour who died for her. Liz, hope to see you some day when the beloved in Christ shall gather to part no more. Farewell Liz.

The Reverend Dele Agbelusi.
Vicar of Christ Church

LAUGHTER LINES

While checking his bags at the airport, a man became indignant with the employee who handled luggage. For several minutes he belittled the young man and criticized his every move. Surprisingly, the curbside porter didn't seem troubled by this man's verbal abuse. After the angry man entered the airport, a woman approached the luggage handler and asked, "How do you put up with such injustice?" The young man said, "It's easy. That guy's going to New York, but I'm sending his bags to Brazil."



Injoy Life Club, John Maxwell, March 1993

A tavern was being built in a town that had previously been dry. In opposition to the tavern, a group of Christians began an all night prayer meeting and asked God to intervene. Lightning struck the tavern and burned it down. The owner then brought a lawsuit against the church and held them responsible. The Christians hired a lawyer and denied responsibility. In response to this unusual scenario, the judge said, "No matter how this case comes out, one thing is clear. The tavern owner believes in prayer, and the Christians do not."

* Illustrations for Biblical Preaching, Michael Green

Everyone can sympathise with the desperate and doomed prayer of the schoolboy emerging from a geography exam: "Dear God, please, please, make Paris the capital of Turkey."

A mother was entertaining guests when her five-year old son began talking to a fly. "Do you know that God loves you, little fly? He asked gently. Everyone was deeply touched by this. "And do you love God, little fly? Said the budding St Francis. The boy's mother had tears in her eyes. "Would you like to go to God, little fly? The boy persisted. The guests looked at him in admiration. "Then go to God, little fly! " said the boy and squashed it. From children on the loose by Murray Watts

LAUGHTER LINES

He was a Saint!

Two brothers had terrorized a small town for decades. They were unfaithful to their wives, abusive to their children, and dishonest in business. The younger brother died unexpectedly. The surviving brother went to the pastor of the local church. "I'd like you to conduct my brother's funeral," he said, "but it's important to me that during the service, you tell everyone my brother was a saint."

"But he was far from that," the minister countered. The wealthy brother pulled out his checkbook. "Reverend, I'm prepared to give \$100,000 to your church. All I'm asking is that you publicly state that my brother was a saint." On the day of the funeral, the pastor began his eulogy this way. "Everyone here knows that the deceased was a wicked man, a womanizer, and a drunk. He terrorized his employees and cheated on his taxes." Then he paused. "But as evil and sinful as this man was, compared to his older brother, he was a saint!"

Greg Asimakoupoulos Naperville, Illinois. Leadership, Vol. 16, no. 4.

Solution to Crossword

Across:

1-Alms, 3-Barabbas, 9-Lachish, 10-Mercy, 1-Achor,
12-Nuncio, 14-Cabins, 16-Cheese, 19-Jeshu, 21-Ariel,
24-Brier, 25-Bethany, 26-Rehoboam, 27-Hymn

Down:

1-Alliance, 2-Micah, 4-Athens, 5-Ammon, 6-Bernice,
7-Says, 8-Kidron, 13-Wesleyan, 15-Blemish, 17-Hearth,
18-Arabia, 20-Horeb, 22-Italy, 23-Eber

GOD, HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME?

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him, and every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming. Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect him from the elements, and to store his few possessions.

But then one day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky. The worst had happened; everything was lost. He was stung with grief and anger. "God, how could you do this to me!" he cried.

Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the sound of a ship that was approaching the island. It had come to rescue him.

"How did you know I was here?" asked the weary man of his rescuers. "We saw your smoke signal," they replied.

It is easy to get discouraged when things are going bad. But we shouldn't lose heart, because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of pain and suffering. Paul wrote, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want" (Philippians 4:12). Paul had confidence that good would come out of everything (Romans 8:28), so he learned to be thankful, not bitter, even when he was suffering. Who knows? Remember next time your little hut is burning to the ground—it just may be a smoke signal that summons the grace of God.

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GOD'S MOUNTAINS

There are certain mountains only God can climb. It's not that you aren't welcome to try, it's just that you aren't able. If the word saviour is in your job description, it's because you put it there. Your role is to help the world, not save it. Mount Messiah is one mountain you weren't made to climb.

Nor is Mount Self –Sufficient. You aren't able to run the world, nor are you able to sustain it. Some of you think you can. You are self-made. You don't bow your knees, you just roll up your sleeves and put in another twelve -hour day, which may be enough when it comes to making a living or building a business. But when you face your own grave or your own guilt, your power will not do the trick.

PRAYING... NOT MY WILL, LORD!

Praying that God's will be done is a serious prayer for those who sincerely seek God's guidance. But at times, His will may differ from your desires. Jesus knew that. He prayed this prayer and was indeed killed for accepting to do the Father's will. Hear his words from Matthew 26:39, "Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.'"

The prayer of submission means we allow God to have his way in our lives. We find it in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Of course we often cruise through this prayer with little thought for what we are actually saying to the Father of the Universe. In order for his will to be done on earth as in heaven, we must submit our own will to his. This phrase in the Lord's Prayer intends such submission, but do we?

Notice that Jesus did express his preference. He told the Father he would prefer not to go through with dying. Yet in the end, after much struggle in prayer, he submitted. He laid down his own will and took up the Father's.

We are called to the same path. We can express our own preferences. We can even struggle in prayer over our own will. But in the end, we do well to make the same choice, the path of submission. That may bring death for us, or a new job we didn't choose, or a new place to live. But always remember that living outside of God's will proves a fate worse than death.

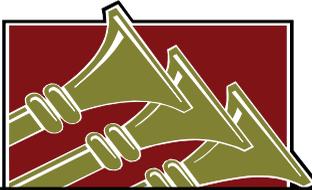
I grew up in the rolling hills of bluegrass in Lexington, Kentucky, enjoying riding my horse in my leisure hours. Now I live in an urban neighbourhood with a blacktop backyard. Though I often yearn for grass and horses, I'd rather live in the city and in God's will, than bask in the grass without his approval. Some people have both, but I would not.

Sometimes it's not the big picture, but the small details. We find ourselves in the middle of a difficult situation, and wonder how God could allow such a thing. Submitting requires trust. We must be convinced that God really knows what we need. Hear these words from Jeanne Guyon, written in *Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ*:

(Continued on page 14)

GAZING INTO THE FUTURE

If we think it all through, we shall agree that it is better that the future be hidden from our view. What little child would have the heart to begin the alphabet if, before he did so, his teacher put clearly before him all the school and college work of which the alphabet is the beginning? The poor little thing would give up at once. And so it is that Providence, kindly and gradually bringing things into our lives day by day, wiles us onward, still keeping hope and heart through the trials and cares of life. Knowledge of the future would certainly be the death-knell of hope, for why hope if we could know? Hope, wonderful element of human happiness which is based on our trust that our Lord has the future in his hands though we may be in ignorance of the future.



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

(from page 13)

Praying...Not my will, Lord!

"You must utterly believe that the circumstances of your life, that is, every minute of your life, as well as the whole course of your life -- anything, yes, everything, that happens -- have all come to you by His will and by His permission. You must utterly believe that everything that has happened to you is from God and is exactly what you need".

Such acceptance proves difficult. We tend to kick against the pricks, to believe that somehow we weren't supposed to be sick, or insulted, or unemployed. Of course we must steer a careful middle course. God is not the author of evil. Yet he does draw lines around our lives of what he allows to happen.

Regardless of what we may think, he knows best what we can handle and what will create our character in the shape that he intends. Guyon goes on to talk of God as an artist and us as his canvas. If the canvas is unsteady, the picture will be blurred. Guyon says, "Every movement of the self produces error." Our job is to be still and let God paint. "Yet not as I will, but as you will." Try living dangerously.

Kathy Callahan-Howell (From Leadership Weekly)

QUOTES ON GOD'S GUIDANCE

A deeply spiritual (though misinformed) missionary I know used to pray for special guidance about the most trivial matters. She would even try to decide whether it was God's will that she wash her hair on a given evening. She was right in understanding that God is interested in the mundane affairs of life, but she was wrong in believing that she always needed a special sign. Obviously she was a mental wreck. She did not realize that the will of God is simply living in obedience to whatever lies ahead. His guidance is not mysterious. In short, if your hair needs washing, wash it!

Erwin W. Lutzer (1941-)

God calls each of us in secret to make certain sacrifices which always involve a risk, even though it may differ from person to person. God speaks to the crowd, but his call comes to individuals, and through their personal obedience he acts. He does not promise them success, or even final victory in this life. The goal of the adventure to which he commits them is in heaven. God does not promise that he will protect them from trials, from material cares, from sickness, from physical or moral suffering. He promises only that he will be with them in all these trials, and that he will sustain them if they remain faithful to him.

Paul Tournier (1898-1986)

God wants to bring us beyond the point where we need signs to discern his guiding hand. Satan cannot counterfeit the peace of God or the love of God dwelling in us. When Christ's abiding presence becomes our guide, then guidance becomes an almost unconscious response to the gentle moving of his Holy Spirit within us.

Bob Mumford

Motto /Text for the year

“I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES
ME STRENGTH” *PHIL. 4:13*

FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?

We are a congregation 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**)
- Prayer meeting 4th & 18th October (**8pm**)
- Tuesday - Alpha Programme and Mid-Week Fellowship in the Hall (**7:30pm**)
- Wednesday - Enquiry/Counselling hour
Church office (**6.30 pm-7.30 pm**)
- Thursday - Home Group 17 Coleridge Road N8 8EH (**9:30 am**)
- Friday - Home Group at Flat 10, 3 Waverley Road, N8 (**2.30 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in church and hall (**6.00 pm**)

Editorial Board: Iyabo Agbelusi, Grace Macauley, Dele Agbelusi

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YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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