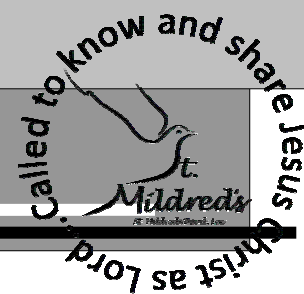


Dec-Jan 2010/11

St. Mildred's Church Newsletter



HAPPY CHRISTMAS?

The call of God on our lives at St. Mildred's is to make and equip disciples of Jesus Christ locally and globally in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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**In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God ...**

So runs the Christmas Gospel! Familiar words that ring with truth ...

- The baby Jesus in the manger ... was the Word of God who spoke and brought galaxies into being.
- The boy Jesus in the temple at Jerusalem ... was the Word of God who had actually been with God from all time.
- The man Jesus healing the sick and teaching the crowds ... was the Word of God showing us exactly what God is like.
- The man Jesus praying in Gethsemane and the man Jesus hanging on the cross ... was the Word of God speaking God's forgiveness in actions for you and me.

The man Jesus breaking out of the tomb ... was the Word of God, God alive again after death, bringing hope to a hopeless world.

Jesus is the Word of God, God's speech - the living God living amongst us; the invisible God, visible with us; the transcendent God walking in our timed world; the all-powerful God choosing the way of weakness rather than power; the God beyond description making himself known in a way that we can understand.

Born in weakness in the stable, and raised to life from the grave in power, he is now Lord of all and everything. The baby born at Bethlehem is now a man in heaven.

Go to the spiritual heart of this created universe and you will find a man! Go to the place where angels bow who never fell, and you will find a man! Go to the very centre of the manifested glory of the invisible God, and you will find a man: true human nature, one of our own race, mediating the glory of God. (Quotation from "The Glory of Christ" by Peter Lewis)

The man Jesus, Son of God, Lord of all still speaks today. He stills calls people to follow him.

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Articles should be received by Wednesday 26 January for the February issue, which will be published on Sunday 6 February 2011.

So what will you make of Christmas? The way we misinterpret Christmas is vividly portrayed in C. S Lewis's article elsewhere in this newsletter: Xmas and Christmas.

Just a time to be merry, to give and receive presents, and to have a good time?

Or a time to receive the Word of God, Jesus Christ, into our lives and live as he would want us to live, with his Holy Spirit at the core of our lives – the life of God, born at Bethlehem, now born in us.

*O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!*

Have a very happy Christmas!

FOR ALL THE PEOPLE

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them. And they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid. I bring you good news, of great joy, that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord.”

(Luke tells it- Chapter 2 ver 8-11)

Good phrase that - “for all the people”



Christmas at St Mildred's

- ★ **Thursday 16 December** Carols at Lee station – from 7.30 am onwards
- ★ **Friday 17 December** The St Mildred's Snowball – 7.00 – 11.00pm
- ★ **Sunday 20 December** 10.00 am – Holy Communion
6.30 pm – Carol Service
- ★ **Christmas Eve** 11.30 pm – Midnight Service of Holy Communion
- ★ **Christmas Day** 10.00 am – Service for Christmas Day
- ★ **Sunday 26 December** 10.00 am – Morning Worship
No evening service
- ★ **Sunday 2 January** 10.00 am – Holy Communion
No evening service

“For to us is a Saviour is born!”



NOTICES

THE ST MILDRED'S CHRISTMAS CARD

Please sign the St Mildred's Christmas Card. We don't send cards to each other at church. Rather, we sign the church card (which will be printed and given to everybody) and make a donation which will go to support David's Shestakov's family in Uzbekistan.

Update on David Shestakov ...

Marina Shestakov's husband, Pastor Dmitry, was arrested for illegal religious activities in January 2007 and sentenced to four years in Navol labour camp. International appeals for Pastor Dmitry's early release have so far not been honoured and he still faces more than a year in prison. He is aware, however, of all the efforts being made on his behalf. The family is grateful for the support they receive from Christians around the world.

Pastor Dmitry is reported to be well respected in the prison. He is not allowed to pray openly, or to read a Bible. "He tries not to pay too much attention to what is going on around him," says Marina. "He focuses on Jesus and says, 'Jesus you are with me'."

Dmitry has recently suffered some health problems due to high blood pressure. His main prayer request is for spiritual and physical health.

Marina and her daughters, **Masha**, **Sasha** and **Verochka** visit Dmitry as often as they are permitted. Marina frequently receives letters from all over the world which are a great support to her. Personal cards for the daughters are also much appreciated, as they give the girls the assurance that they are not forgotten.



(From the Open Doors website)

http://www.opendoorsuk.org/resources/letter/dmitry_uzbekistan.php

THE SNOW BALL

December 17 2010

7-11pm

CAMERA WANTED

Do you have a spare working digital camera that you would like to donate to the church for the youth and children's work?

If so please speak to Lizzie.

NOTICES

Older Youth Weekend Away 2011

**When?
25-27th February**

**Who?
School years 9 upwards**

**Where?
Zion Centre, Chelwood
Gate, West Sussex**

CARD/BOOKSTALL

Thank you to everyone who has bought a card from the stall.

For the time being all monies are going towards our much needed church funds.

All cards are only 50p each and if we are not around the payment should be put directly into the church safe in the wall in the entrance lobby of the church.

Thank you to everyone who has donated their unwanted cards as every 50p made helps to raise more for the church funds.

Iris Gibbs and Sylvia Scott

X-Stream Fridays

Christmas Showcase

Friday 10th December
6.30-8pm

St Mildred's Church

Join as we celebrate the gifts and talents of X-Stream,
and get a taste of what X-Stream is all about.

Journey of Faith—Laura Arnold

Laura was born in Bromley in 1950 and has an older sister who lives in Swindon with her family. She left school at 18 to work for a publishing company for many years until she married her husband in 1986 and then found employment nearer her home. She has four daughters, Kathryn, Suzannah, Sarah and Joanna following in quick succession. Now they are all teenagers and Laura works a few hours a week for a charity called Deaf Access in Bromley.

As a child Laura did go to Sunday School at St Mark's, Bromley and was confirmed at 13 but had no idea what it meant to be a Christian and have a personal relationship with God. However she went to Hayes Secondary School and in the Fifth year she met a girl named Sarah who told her what it really meant to become a Christian. That took about a year whilst Laura asked lots of questions and started attending the school's Christian Union. Then she really understood that she needed to be born again in order to have that relationship with God.

Then one day she was in the Churchill Library in Bromley and found that someone had left a Christian tract on top of a book. She took it home with her, read it then prayed the prayer at the end of the tract, asking God to forgive her sins and to become her Saviour. She was 16 at the time.

She said she didn't feel different straight away but she read her Bible regularly and also prayer constantly as well and was later filled with the Holy Spirit.

In February 1981 she started attending South Lee Christian Fellowship with her friend Sarah and her teacher who ran the Christian Union at school. At first it was a culture shock for it was so very different from

St Mark's where she had spent her younger years. She finally moved on to St Mildred's where she very happily settled and all her four daughters joined Guides, Brownies or Rainbows and obviously attended Sunday School.

Since becoming a Christian Laura has really had some

dark times in her life but she said God has always been there alongside her, whether she felt it or not. He has always been faithful and brought her through.

She told me she has been at St Mildred's for 14 years and it has all been great. She went on to say she thinks that the welcomers on the door every Sunday have a huge impact on everybody who worships in the fellowship and also on visitors who come to church at St Mildred's for the first time.

Doris Parker



David & Sue Wright

MAKING TRACKS

On 8 December we will be moving to Warwickshire to be nearer to the main office of Global Connections in Leamington Spa where David will be working. We will sadly miss all the wonderful friends we have made at St Mildred's over the years but we hope to remain part of the extended family. We will cherish all that we have learned from being part of such a loving fellowship and hope that we can take it forward with us as we continue in our journey with Christ. We will be back to visit and we hope that you will pop in to see us if you are in the area. We will be able to provide excellent B&B hospitality!

Our new address is:

Cherry Trees, School Lane, Ladbroke, SOUTHAM, Warwickshire CV47 2BU.

Although we don't have a telephone number yet you can contact us on our mobile numbers David 07940 413707 and Sue 07768 333675, or email dwright@globalconnections.co.uk or suewright21@gmail.com.

David & Sue Wright

A Little Tribute

To say that St Mildred's will miss David and Sue Wright when they move will be like saying there is a lot of water in the ocean. It is an undeniable truth. And to go into a symphony of praise about how wonderful they are and what they have contributed to St Mildred's is redundant because I'm sure lots of people will do that. And to go on about how Sue opened my eyes even further to the wonders of culinary perfection and how David opened my ears to the unexpected delights of music will be over egging the pudding, if not losing the rhythm of this tribute. And there is not much point in weeping and wailing as things change, life moves on and in any case they are not wandering off to the other side of the world.

So what is there to say? Well of the manifold things I value them for, here are two that impress forcibly in my mind. One is their faith which exemplifies St Paul's desire that all Christians should strain towards the goal, to stick with it through the ups and downs of life and there sometimes have been huge ups and downs in their life. A faith that is tested and comes through is a faith that inspires others. Me for one. Also they have been great encouragers. Good people to run things by. You always get good sense from talking to them about something, not judgmental but wise and helpful and as mentioned, always encouraging. Things like that will always be missed if not at hand.

So thanks David and Sue for being who you are and.....see you down the Buck and Bell soon!

Vaya con Dios.
Henry

Diary ~ Dec-Jan 2010/11

Day	Date	Event
Sunday	5-Dec	10 am - Holy Communion <i>Viv Golding, Paul Nicolson & Jean Hems on back of house</i> 6.30 pm - Evening Praise 6.30 pm - Nameless Group (Youth Bible Study) meets at 45 Rayford Avenue
Monday	6-Dec	9.30 am - Morning Prayer in church 7 pm - The Grid (11-16s youth Group)
Wednesday	8-Dec	9.30 am - Midweek Communion 8 pm - Prayer meeting in church
Thursday	9-Dec	9.15 am - Baring Road school rehearsal in church 7.45 pm - Alpha Course (12) at 68 Guibal Road
Friday	10-Dec	10,30 am - Horizon Group meets in church 6.30-8.30 pm - X-Stream Friday - Christmas Showcase
Sunday	12-Dec	10 am - Parade Service <i>Margaret Gill, Iris Gibbs and Barbara Hawgood on back of house</i> 6.30 pm - Holy Communion 6.30 pm - Nameless Group (Youth Bible Study) meets at 45 Rayford Avenue
Monday	13-Dec	9.30 am - Morning Prayer in church 7.45 pm - The Grid Leader's meeting Homegroups meet
Tuesday	14-Dec	12 - 2.30 pm - Parent & Toddler's Christmas Party Homegroups meet
Wednesday	15-Dec	9.30 am - Midweek Communion 10.15 am - Baring Road school rehearsal in church Homegroups meet
Thursday	16-Dec	7.30 - 9 am - Carols at Lee Station 10.15 am - Baring Road school rehearsal in church 1.30 pm - Baring Road school performance in church Homegroups meet
Friday	17-Dec	7 pm - St Mildred's Snow Ball (until 11 pm)

Diary ~ Dec-Jan 2010/11

Day	Date	Event
Sunday	19-Dec	10 am - Holy Communion <i>Sheila Samuels, Adam Bland and Kat Bland on back of house</i> 6.30 pm - Carols by Candlelight
Monday	20-Dec	Sofa Christmas Social - tbc
Tuesday	21-Dec	2-4 pm - Mayfield Hostel's Christmas Party
Wednesday	22-Dec	9.30 am - Midweek Communion
Friday	24-Dec	11.30 pm - Christmas Eve Midnight Communion service
Saturday	25-Dec	10 am - Christmas Day service
Sunday	26-Dec	10 am - Morning Worship <i>No evening service</i>
Sunday	2-Jan	10 am - Holy Communion <i>Henry/Adam's homegroup on back of house</i> <i>No evening service</i>
Wednesday	5-Jan	9.30 am - Midweek Communion
Friday	7-Jan	6.30 pm - X-Stream Leader's meeting
Sunday	9-Jan	10 am - Parade Service <i>Jose Fernandez, Annette Beckford and Joyce Heelan on back of house</i> 6.30 pm - Holy Communion 6.30 pm - Nameless Group (Youth Bible Study) meets at 45 Rayford Avenue
Monday	10-Jan	9.30 am - Morning Prayer in church 7 pm - Sofa Club Homegroups meet
Tuesday	11-Jan	Homegroups meet
Wednesday	12-Jan	9.30 am - Midweek Communion Homegroups meet
Thursday	13-Jan	Homegroups meet
Friday	14-Jan	6.30-8.30 pm - X-Stream Friday - in church (7-11 year olds)
Saturday	15-Jan	Horizon Group Pantomime trip

Diary ~ Dec-Jan 2010/11

Saturday	15-Jan	Horizon Group Pantomime trip
Sunday	16-Jan	10 am - Holy Communion <i>Sue Giles, Chris Bates & Jenny Phillips on back of house</i> 6.30 pm - Evening Praise
Monday	17-Jan	9.30 am - Morning Prayer in church
Tuesday	18-Jan	8 pm - PCC meets in church
Wednesday	19-Jan	9.30 am - Midweek Communion 8 pm - Prayer meeting in church
Friday	21-Jan	6.30-8.30 pm - X-Stream Friday - in church (7-11 year olds) <i>Sofa Club weekend away</i>
Sunday	23-Jan	10 am - Morning Worship <i>Dot Eadon, Adam Bland & Kat Bland on back of house</i> 6.30 pm - Evening Worship 6.30 pm - Nameless Group (Youth Bible Study) meets at 45 Rayford Avenue
Monday	24-Jan	9.30 am - Morning Prayer in church 7 pm - Sofa Club Homegroups meet
Tuesday	25-Jan	Homegroups meet
Wednesday	26-Jan	9.30 am - Midweek Communion Homegroups meet
Thursday	27-Jan	Homegroups meet
Friday	28-Jan	6.30-8.30 pm - X-Stream Friday - in church (7-11 year olds)
Sunday	30-Jan	10 am - Service of Baptism <i>Sheila Samuels, Lee Willis & Sarah Hudson-Davies on back of house</i> <i>No evening service</i> 6.30 pm - Nameless Group (Youth Bible Study) meets at 45 Rayford Avenue
Monday	31-Jan	9.30 am - Morning Prayer in church
Wednesday	2-Feb	9.30 am - Midweek Communion 8 pm - Prayer meeting in church
Friday	4-Feb	6.30-8.30 pm - X-Stream Friday - in church (7-11 year olds)
Sunday	6-Feb	10 am - Holy Communion <i>Margaret Gill, Iris Gibbs and Barbara Hawgood on back of house</i> 6.30 pm - Service led by young people

FAMILY LIFE

Home groups at St Mildred's

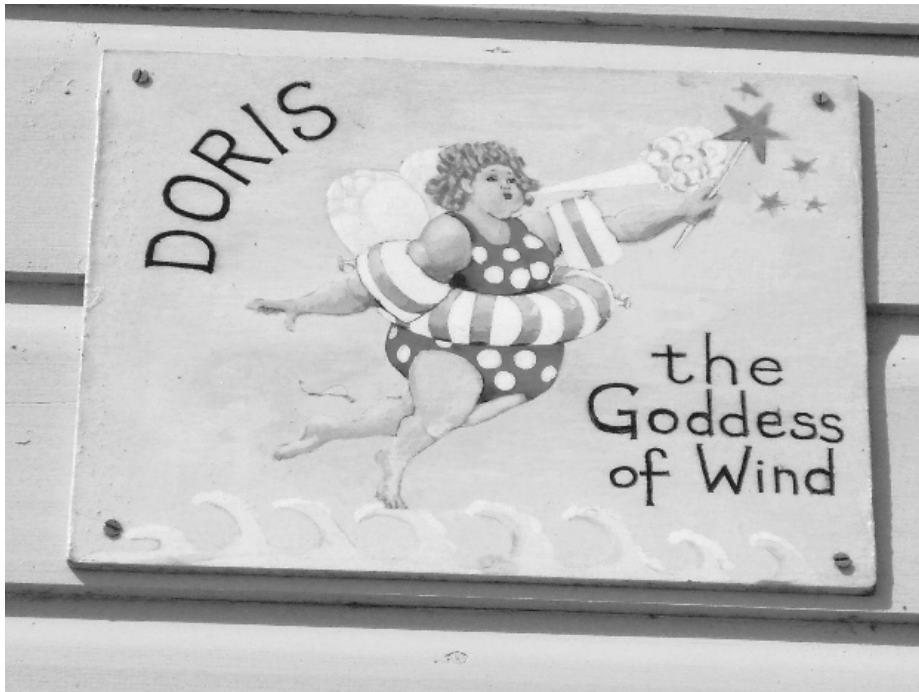
Are you in a Home group?

Home groups are a chance to get together in an informal way to pray, look at the Bible and get to know and support each other, which may not sound captivating but as a help on the Christian road we all travel people do find it helpful, for indeed lots of folk in St Mildred's belong to one. You don't need to be a saint or a scholar but someone who wants to get to know our God better.

Home groups restart after Christmas in the week beginning 9 January 2011 and every fortnight after that.

If you want to join one please have a word with one of our esteemed homegroup co-ordinators; Alison Coutts, Paul Nicolson and Andrew Rogers.

"Home groups – come to receive, come to give"



This plaque was seen by a member of the congregation on the side of a seaside beach hut and out of deep affection to our most regular correspondent we publish it here so everyone can admire it.

This Month's Editor

XMAS AND CHRISTMAS
By C. S. Lewis
A Lost Chapter from Herodotus

And beyond this there lies in the ocean, turned towards the west and north, the distant island of **Niatirb** which Hecataeus indeed declares to be the same size and shape as Sicily, but it is larger, though in calling it triangular a man would not miss the mark. It is densely inhabited by men who wear clothes not very different from the other barbarians who occupy the north-western parts of Europe though they do not agree with them in language. These islanders, surpassing all the men of whom we know in patience and endurance, use the following customs.

In the middle of winter when fogs and rains most abound they have a great festival which they call **Exmas**, and for fifty days they prepare for it in the fashion I shall describe. First of all, every citizen is obliged to send to each of his friends and relations a square piece of hard paper stamped with a picture, which in their speech is called an Exmas-card. But the pictures represent birds sitting on branches, or trees with a dark green prickly leaf, or else men in such garments as the Niatirbians believe that their ancestors wore two hundred years ago riding in coaches such as their ancestors used or houses with snow on their roofs. And the Niatirbians are unwilling to say what these pictures have to do with the festival, guarding (as I suppose) some sacred mystery. And because all men must send these cards the market-place is filled with the crowd of those buying them, so that there is great labour and weariness.

But having bought as many as they suppose to be sufficient, they return to their houses and find there the like cards which others have sent to them. And when they find cards from any to whom they also have sent cards, they throw them away and give thanks to the gods that this labour at least is over for another year. But when they find cards from any to whom they have not sent, then they beat their breasts and wail and utter curses against the sender; and, having sufficiently lamented their misfortune, they put on their boots again and go out into the fog and rain and buy a card for him also. And let this account suffice about Exmas-cards.

They also send gifts to one another, suffering the same things about the gifts as about the cards, or even worse. For every citizen has to guess the value of the gift which every friend will send to him so that he may send one of equal value, whether he can afford it or not. And they buy as gifts for one another such things as no man ever bought for himself. For the sellers, understanding the custom, put forth all kinds of trumpery, and whatever, being useless and ridiculous, they have been unable to sell throughout the year they now sell as an Exmas gift. And though the Niatirbians profess themselves to lack sufficient necessary things, such as metal, leather, wood and paper, yet an incredible quantity of these things is wasted every year, being made into the gifts.

But during these fifty days the oldest, poorest and most miserable of the citizens put on false beards and red robes and walk about the market-place; being disguised (in my opinion) as Cronos. And the sellers of gifts no less than the purchasers become pale and weary, because of the crowds and the fog, so that any man who came into a Niatirbian city at this season would think some great public calamity had fallen on Niatirb. This fifty days of preparation is called in their barbarian speech the Exmas Rush.

But when the day of the festival comes, then most of the citizens, being exhausted with the Rush, lie in bed till noon. But in the evening they eat five times as much supper as on other days and, crowning themselves with crowns of paper, they become intoxicated. And on the

day after Exmas they are very grave, being internally disordered by the supper and the drinking and reckoning how much they have spent on gifts and on the wine. For wine is so dear among the Nia-tirbians that a man must swallow the worth of a talent before he is well intoxicated.

Such, then, are their customs about the Exmas. But the few among the Niatirbians have also a festival, separate and to themselves, called **Crissmas**, which is on the same day as Exmas. And those who keep Crissmas, doing the opposite to the majority of the Niatirbians, rise early on that day with shining faces and go before sunrise to certain temples where they partake of a sacred feast. And in most of the temples they set out images of a fair woman with a newborn Child on her knees and certain animals and shepherds adoring the Child. (The reason of these images is given in a certain sacred story which I know but do not repeat.)

But I myself conversed with a priest in one of these temples and asked him why they kept Crissmas on the same day as Exmas; for it appeared to me inconvenient. But the priest replied, It is not lawful, O Stranger, for us to change the date of Crissmas, but would that Zeus would put it into the minds of the Niatirbians to keep Exmas at some other time or not to keep it at all. For Exmas and the Rush distract the minds even of the few from sacred things. And we indeed are glad that men should make merry at Crissmas; but in Exmas there is no merriment left. And when I asked him why they endured the Rush, he replied, It is, O Stranger, a racket; using (as I suppose) the words of some oracle and speaking unintelligibly to me (for a racket is an instrument which the barbarians use in a game called tennis).

But what Hecataeus says, that Exmas and Crissmas are the same, is not credible. For first, the pictures which are stamped on the Exmas-cards have nothing to do with the sacred story which the priests tell about Crissmas. And secondly, the most part of the Niatirbians, not believing the religion of the few, nevertheless send the gifts and cards and participate in the Rush and drink, wearing paper caps. But it is not likely that men, even being barbarians, should suffer so many and great things in honour of a god they do not believe in. And now, enough about Niatirb.

This article by C S Lewis first appeared in
Time and Tide, vol xxxv (4th December 1954),
and was reprinted in Undeceptions, London, 1971, p.250



**The Sofa Club
Weekend Away 2011
21st - 23rd January**

What?

For those of you who have been before you will know the deal but if you haven't the youth weekend away is time for us all to get away from our day to day lives to get to know each other and God better.

Expect games, discussions, jokes, challenges, country air, worship, forests, space, teaching, laughter, bunk beds, questions and mud.

Who?

Members of the Sofa Club, others at church who are in school years 7-9, and there are a few spare spaces for friends. If you would like to invite a friend please speak to Lizzie. Plus leaders Mike Chung, Lizzie Peto, Dan and Helen Robinson.

Where?

St Bartz Youth Centre, Barcombe which is near Lewes in East Sussex (it's about 55 miles from Lee)

Here is a link to the webpage if you want to go on a virtual tour
<http://www.yesonthenet.org.uk/stbartz/>

When?

Friday 21st January arrive between 6.30 and 7pm to Sunday 23rd January picked up at 3pm.

How much?

£35

I am too old to go what can I do?

Please be praying for this weekend, that....

Young people would be able to make it

Lasting friendships would form

Safety, weather, food etc etc

But mostly that each person who goes would encounter God and grow closer to him over the weekend.

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH HAPPY CHRISTMAS?

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS CHRISTMAS
THE PERSECUTED CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD.**



CHINA: Alimujiang Yimiti

Alimujiang was working as a project manager for a British company, Jirehouse, when it was targeted in a series of closures of foreign businesses belonging to Christians in Xinjiang in September 2007. Alim was detained in February 2008 and sentenced to fifteen years in prison in April 2009 in a court case that did not follow due procedure

COLOMBIA: Pastor Isaias Prasca

Pastor Isaias Prasca and his family have received death threats from armed groups operating in their area. He continues to minister in areas hard hit by the violence and works with particularly vulnerable communities.



COLOMBIA: Idia Miranda Reyes

Idia's husband, Pastor William Reyes, was abducted and 'disappeared' in September 2008. She and her three children have come under threat since then and had to be relocated to another part of the country.

CUBA: Dr Oscar Elias Biscet

Roman Catholic Dr Biscet is serving a 25-year sentence for his activities promoting respect for human rights.



CUBA: Dagoberto Valdez

Dagoberto Valdez is a Catholic lay leader who has been the target of threats and harassment because of his activities in independent civil society, including working on independent Christian publications.



CONGO: Pastor Fernando Kutino

Evangelical church leader Fernando Kutino was arrested in May 2006 and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment for the illegal possession of fire-arms, criminal conspiracy and attempted murder. The charges were introduced after the trial was underway, and the trial itself was summary.

PAKISTAN: Qamar David, Younis Masih, Abdul Hameed

They have all been arrested or convicted under section 295B & C of Pakistan's penal code – the notorious blasphemy laws – which makes defilement of the Qur'an and insults against the prophet Mohammed punishable by life imprisonment and death respectively. Pakistanis of all faiths are falsely accused using these laws but a disproportionately high number of Christians are killed extra-judicially after the accusation.



VIETNAM: Mr Nguyen Van Dai and Ms Le Thi Cong Nhan

Mr Dai and Ms Nhan are both prominent Christian human rights lawyers who have been imprisoned for "disseminating slanderous and libellous information against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam". They were sentenced to five and four years respectively. Ms Nhan has completed her four year sentence but remains under house arrest.

NIGERIA The Most Rev. Dr Benjamin Argak Kwashi

The Most Rev. Dr Benjamin Argak Kwashi, Anglican Archbishop of Jos, is a prominent and eloquent advocate for the persecuted Christians of northern and central Nigeria. His family was subjected to two brutal attacks in recent years, but has made a full recovery. Still in need of prayer for their safety, and strength in the midst of ongoing tensions in northern and central Nigeria.



Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide (www.csw.org.uk)

To discover more about how you can support these and other brothers and sisters in Christ go to:

<http://www.csw.org.uk/connectandencourage.htm>

God and Money (Part 3)

Just a few years ago, a British evangelist was leading an amazing ministry week-end at a church in Denmark. During that time people were caught up in worship, were set free from bondages and spiritual strong-holds, from physical, emotional and mental sickness. Many words of knowledge were given prophetically and people met with God in powerful ways.. Such was their encounter that some fell to the floor, some rolled around, some wept and some laughed. Things got hot and very noisy!

During this time of encounter, the pastor of the church had a vision of himself sitting on God's lap - in fact, in this vision, he was sitting on one knee and his wife was sitting on the other. The Father was speaking to both of them, blessing their ministry - especially their ministry to married people, and then He said:"...and by the way , I'm not anxious about the church's 900,000 Krone overdraft" (that's about £105,000 in Sterling terms).

After an amazing week-end, on the Monday morning, the pastor went into his office to see what appointments he had. To his horror he found that his secretary had booked two older ladies to see him, one at 9.30 and one at 10.30. These two ladies were the two most difficult ladies in his church and he has left standing instructions that he can never see these two ladies on the same day - he just did not believe that he had sufficient grace for more than one of them on any one day! And here is his secretary booking them both on the same morning, one after the other! His first thought is to sack his secretary, his second thought comes close to murder!

Well it's too late now and the first lady arrives. She is the widow of the previous pastor, she has always been critical of the present pastor's ministry

and preaching. She is keen on tradition and must have found the week-end very difficult - this is going to be tough! BUT, she sits down and pours out her heart, "Pastor, please forgive me. God has been dealing with me this week-end. I have been negative, bitter and critical towards you, I have been rebellious, and besides all that I have withheld tithes and offerings and God has convicted me. Please will you forgive me and accept this gift as a token of my repentance?" and she handed him a cheque for 500,000 Krone! The pastor was amazed, but not so speechless that he didn't receive her apology, and forgave her from his heart. From that point on, their relationship was transformed.

After a while the first lady leaves and the second lady arrives. She is of similar age as the first lady, she also loves tradition, she also has been resistant to the pastor's ministry. What does she have to say? It's very similar to the first lady. She confesses that she has been negative and critical, she has failed to support him in his ministry, she also has withheld tithes and offerings, God has convicted her of her rebellious heart-attitude and she asks the pastor to forgive her and accept a cheque (this time for 400,000 Krone) as a sign of her repentance! Again the pastor forgives her, they are fully reconciled and she departs. The pastor is astounded, by mid-morning the church's overdraft of 900,000 Krone has been wiped out, God's promise has been fulfilled and the two most difficult people in the church have become his best friends! Praise God!

PS. The local newspaper ran the following headline; "Eccentric English Evangelist visits - Financial miracle follows!"

PPS. The secretary kept her job.



THE HORIZON GROUP MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Louise has asked me to write a report for the December newsletter re: the meeting on 12 November when our own dear friend Janice Nash entertained us with her wonderful harp. Janice is a professional harpist and began to learn to play the harp at a very early age. She also plays the organ, piano and keyboards.

We had approximately 40 people attending the group, quite a few coming for the first time. All having been welcome so lovingly by the team and having been served with a cup of tea or coffee Janice began to play several beautiful pieces and with each she told about the composers from different parts of the world. All eyes were on her fingers and feet, just amazed at her skills.

Then she stood up and gave us a history of the harp, taking us to various parts of the Bible. In the Old Testament where it is mentioned it was a very small affair, only with seven strings. Obviously over the years since the Bible days it has improved so much to become the wonderful instruments we see today, very large and costly and hard to move around. It now has 47 strings of various colours and seven foot pedals which alter the sound of the strings. Janice's harp is a German one, over 26 years old. It was most interesting to learn about her instrument.

She gave us time to ask questions and many people did ask so we all improved our knowledge as a result. After the discussion she went on to play more items, finally finishing with two verses of the nation's favourite hymn *How Great Thou Art*. I would like to thank Janice for her wonderful music.

Stella Mitchell then gave a thoughtful reflection on the Psalms and King David and how singing helps us in so many ways. We were then given printed copies of various psalms to take home. It was a wonderful morning.

In conclusion I would like to add a big thank you to Louise and her team for all their kindness and efforts. Also to say how sorry we were not to have Sue Wright with us due to a foot problem. We did miss you Sue and are going to miss you and David as you move in December. We pray God's blessing on you and David and pray our God will direct your paths as you settle in your new home and church

Doris Parker



HORIZON GROUP NOTICE

The Horizon Group celebrates Christmas on Friday 10 December from 10.30am

Hear Baring Road School sing carols

Please note there will be no meeting of the Horizon group in January

Who to Contact in St Mildred's

Vicar

Rob Shimwell 020-8857-5205
(day off Friday)

Honorary Curate

Marion Barber 020-8690-6035

Readers

Stella Mitchell 020-8463-0198
David Nicholls 020-8851-9227
Kay Nicholls 020-8851-9227

Youth and Children's Worker

Lizzie Peto 07834-807305
(day off Thursday)

Churchwardens

Charlie Green 020-8461-0416
Jenny Shirley 020-8464-9627

PCC Secretary

Helen Robinson 020-88857-7227

Prayer, Healing Ministry

Pauline Leslie 020-8697-3962

Keyboard/Band

Marion Barber 020-8690-6035
Stella Mitchell 020-8463-0198
Janice Nash 020-8857-5141
Dan Robinson (Band) 020-8857-7227

Homegroup Co-ordinators

Andrew Rogers 020-8265-9432
Alison Coutts 020-8698-8495
Paul Nicolson 020-8302-6541

20s and 30s

Jo Beckford 020-8425-2025

Parents & Toddlers

Kay Nicholls 020-8851-9227

PCC Treasurer

Janet Lynch 020-8698-0723

Covenants etc

Chris Coutts 020-8698-8495

Koolkidz

Barbara Page 020-8778-8842
Angela Hedges 020-8516-3170

Hot Totz

Carol Bates 020-8857-0465

Fair Trade

Lesley Cooper 020-8319-3165

Guides

Alison Glenn 020-8300-2908

Brownies

Denise Stone 01689-869-308

Rainbows

Karon Fowler 020-8318-4270

Scouts

Martin Butcher 020-8698-6139

Cubs

David Brooks 020-8852-8359
or 07785-117570

Beavers

Sally Henry 07747-086 918

Directory Amendments

Pat Hutchins 020-8473-4579

Parish SafeGuarding Officers

Marion Barber 020-8690-6035
Iris Gibbs 020-8297-0758
Di Shimwell(CRB checks) 020-8857-5205

KEEPING PROMISES

Lewisham East MP, Heidi Alexander, made a special visit to St Mildred's Church in Lee to play her part in the "I Promise" Challenge.

Organised by a coalition of UK churches, the "I Promise" Challenge asked people to think, pray and then make a promise about something they can do individually to end global poverty. These promises are collected together and sent to their local MP, asking them to make a promise to use their voice to make sure that the promises made in the form of the Millennium Development Goals are met.

