

CONTACT



CHISLEHURST METHODIST CHURCH

Easter 2015

www.chislehurstmethodistchurch.org.uk

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Contact is available on our website, where the photos are in colour.

The next issue of Contact will be published in early September.

NOT PERFECT BUT GOOD ENOUGH? HOW DO WE ASSESS OURSELVES AS CHRISTIANS, AS A MINISTER AS A CHURCH?

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.
Romans 12.2:

Every morning in term time our church hall is full of the happy sounds of young children playing. Most days the nursery children have outdoor play too on the patio behind our church. I can hear them from the Manse garden and they all seem to be having a fine time. But apparently it isn't all just about having fun; even at nursery age there are targets to be met. Over the years criteria have been set and inspections introduced. It is all very different from the playgroup that my children used to go to which was run by us mothers. So like schools, nurseries these days have Ofsted inspections. I notice when walking past the Village Nursery next to Redhill School that they have been awarded an Ofsted 'outstanding' rating. As I walk along I have wondered to myself what that would mean in terms of a church. What would it take for our church to be awarded 'outstanding', or 'good', or 'satisfactory'...or...(heaven forbid) in 'special measures'. What criteria would we use to assess our church?

The same question can be asked of ministers. Indeed, this was the subject addressed at our annual ministerial synod recently. How do we make an assessment of ourselves as ministers? First we need to be able to define the criteria on which to make an assessment and it is not easy to define the work of a minister. Often I will be asked to fill in a box on a form stating my profession. What is my profession? I could describe it as being something like a 'counsellor', but not really. I'm more a 'teacher', but not in a formal sense. I would definitely say I'm a preacher but that isn't widely understood in the secular world, and that I am interested in change and transformation, but not like anyone else. It is not easy to define our unique professional competence. Church ministry does not conform in many ways to how we define and evaluate work in modern culture. As ministers we do not have tangible outcomes, clear boundaries or clear career structures. So how do we make an assessment?

As I write this it is the day before Mothering Sunday. Reflecting on the role of being a mother I can see that there are parallels between mothering and being a minister. As a young mother looking after a new born baby you can get to the end of the day feeling exhausted but also thinking that you haven't done anything...there are no tangible outcomes. As the child grows you have to learn to let go, to encourage the child to take risks, to explore the world but at the same time to learn certain boundaries. Mothering is a relationship and an activity, it brings together being and doing. It is about having responsibility for another. I have always found the metaphor of roots and wings helpful as a mother. We seek to give our children strong roots but also wings. I can see a parallel here with the role of a minister. Through worship, prayer, fellowship together we seek to establish strong roots in the church. And through the inspiration of God's spirit we seek new vision of God's leading...wings to take us forward. But how do we make an assessment of our role in implementing this?

As Methodists we may feel that the goal posts of our Christian journey were set impossibly high by John Wesley. Wesley spoke and wrote frequently about the doctrine of Christian perfection. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says, *'Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.'* (Matthew 5.48) This seems an impossible goal. However perfection can either define the state of perfection or the journey to perfection. Wesley's understanding was that the goal of perfection is a progressive work of grace, a journey we are on rather than a goal to be achieved. A state of perfection implies a finished and completed state of being and that can never be the case for us or our church. If assessed as perfect (or perhaps in Ofsted vocabulary whatever comes after 'outstanding') we would be a finished product. We wouldn't then be able to continue to grow, to learn, to dream and to aspire to something which is better than we are now, to seek transformation. So we can breathe a sigh of relief – we are not perfect!

But are we 'good enough'? And that is the question we can ask about our church, or our ministers or ourselves as Christians? We are not perfect but are we good enough?

Well, thankfully Ofsted is not going to make an inspection of Chislehurst Methodist Church. Though week by week in our worship we ask God to. Clearly we have come a long way together in the last seven years and equally clearly an exciting journey lies ahead. What can I say at the end of my time here? For me and David, Chislehurst is the longest we have lived anywhere. We have been very happy here and I have loved being a minister of this church. Thank you to everyone who has befriended us and supported us along the way. Leaving will be difficult but it is time to take to the wing...

Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
Gentle as is the dove,
Teach us the truth and help us believe,
Show us the Saviour's love.'



Barbara Calvert March 2015

LENT IN AN ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

What have you given up for lent this year? Chocolate? Sweets? Salt? Coffee? Wine? Facebook? Twitter? Well every year a lot of Christians give up one or two things for lent for 40 days as it is one way of remembering the time Jesus fasted in the desert and is a test of self-discipline.

In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (In fact, in the majority of Orthodox Christians in the world!) there are many foods that Christians do not eat in Lent, such as meat, fat, eggs, and all dairy products. Christians from the age of 7 years old are expected to fast for 40 working days, which is around 55 days in total.

The purpose of Lent is to prepare the faithful to not only to remember, but to enter into the passion and Resurrection of Jesus. The totality of the Orthodox life centres around the Resurrection. Lent is intended to be a "workshop" where the character of the believer is spiritually uplifted and strengthened; where his/her life is rededicated to the principles and ideals of the Gospel; where fasting and prayer culminate in deep conviction of life; where apathy and disinterest turn into vigorous activities of faith and good works.

Lent is not for the sake of Lent itself, as fasting is not for the sake of fasting. Rather, these are means by which and for which the individual believer prepares himself to reach for, accept and attain the calling of his Saviour.

Lent is a time to self-discipline and focus on our belief in Jesus. However, it is not easy with modern life for the adult let alone for children to fast from the age of 7 years. Naomi (11 years old) has attempted to fast for a week in a couple of occasions, but has been unsuccessful merely due to the love of chocolate and meats. She will continue to persist until she is self-disciplined enough to handle it.

The point is lent is about sacrificing the things we love to show how much we appreciate the 40 days and 40 nights Jesus went without any food or drink. One can either do the Orthodox way where everyone follows the same way of fasting or make it individual in choosing what to give up.

Tsion Gebreegziabher

COMPASS COURSE

Compass is a short course that introduces the Christian faith to those who wish to explore its meaning. Like any compass it relates to a particular map and the one intended is Christian discipleship in the Methodist Church.

It looks not just to the foundation stones of Christian faith, but also to the experience of our Methodist heritage which has shaped our present understanding.

*"**Compass** gave me the chance to refresh the basics of my Christian faith and to share convictions and questions with others."*

"Particularly welcome were the Methodist Emphasis sections, appreciated not only by those new to Methodism but also by those with a much longer association. All in all, an excellent and timely resource that suited us well and which we will use again."

"It was good to link what I thought I knew about Methodism to a broader understanding of Christian beliefs."

*"The **Compass** course gave me the structure to examine my faith and the companionship to discuss issues of faith in an encouraging setting."*

*"I found **Compass** very inspiring,*

Do come – we are hoping for a group of 6 – 8 people and it will be led by the minister. Each session will be at 8pm finishing at 9.30pm at the latest... on Wednesdays in the Wesley Room on the following dates:

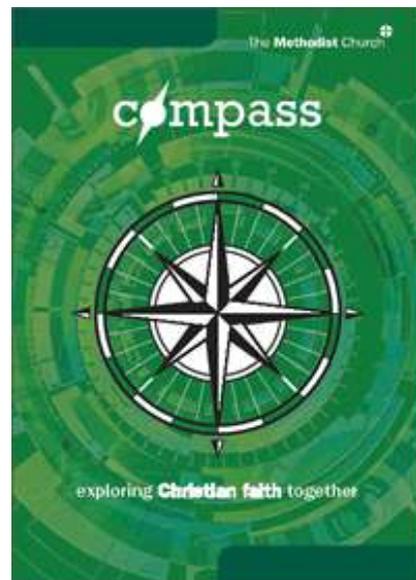
8pm Weds 6th May
8pm Weds 13th May

Then 2 weeks holiday!

8pm Weds 3rd June
8pm Weds 10th June
8pm Weds 17th June

8pm Weds 24th June

Barbara Calvert



CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE

You may be wondering how the small group of nine members at our church is developing. Its purpose is to pray for and write to Christians who are in prisons or persecuted for their faith in other ways. Murder, the destruction of churches and homes, imprisonment and general harassment are some of the forms this persecution takes. It is claimed that Christianity is the most widely persecuted religion at present. On the evening of March 10th members of the group sent nearly 50 Easter cards to people who are being persecuted. Please pray for the work we are trying to do.

CSW, founded by Baroness Cox in the early eighties, is a well founded and respected organisation. The work of research, advocacy, lobbying and publicity keeps the thirty full time headquarters staff at New Malden at full stretch. Their effectiveness has gained attention from members of the Westminster and European parliaments and of the United Nations in New York.

Mervyn Thomas, the chief executive, has just been appointed to the Foreign Office's advisory committee on freedom of religion or belief, in recognition of the importance of CSW's voice on religious freedom. Debates on these issues are taking place in the House of Commons, in which the Chislehurst M.P., Bob Neill, has spoken. Mervyn Thomas comments, "The last twelve months have seen religious freedom issues hit the headlines in a way we've never experienced before." The public has responded. For example Meriam Ibrahim has been released from jail in South Sudan after 60,000 people campaigned for her release. Eighty four% of M.P.s have been contacted by CSW supporters and 1,400 people receive the weekly prayer suggestions by e mail.

Members of CSW's team do not confine their reports to Christians. For example, aggressive Buddhists are persecuting Muslims in Burma. These reports are sent to our Parliament and the European Parliament and also to the United Nations, where they are well received. CSW has small offices in Brussels and New York. The annual conference is a centre piece of the work in the U.K. This year it will be held on April 25th at The Emmanuel Centre in Marsham Street, which one can reach easily by a 5-10 minute walk from Westminster underground station. In the past some 400 people have attended from all over the U.K. The day takes the form of modern style worship and talks sometimes with films from people whom CSW brings to London from places where persecution is occurring. Two years ago, for example we heard from Pastor Irani who had been on death row in Iran. Those of us who were attending were sworn to secrecy in the morning about his appearance as government agents may have followed him to London. He arrived in the afternoon with two "Giant" body guards! Not all the presentations are as dramatic but all, being first- hand accounts, are full of interest. I shall be attending the conference again this April, and I am happy to give directions to the Emmanuel centre. One can take a packed lunch, but food is available at the centre or in nearby cafes.

Why not try the conference or one of their prayer meetings for a specific country. Best, of all why not join our church prayer group?

John Sennett (Convener)

www.csw.org.uk 0845 456 5464

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, P.O.Box 99 New Malden Surrey KT3 3YF

DAVID TEMPLE

Many of us will remember with fondness, David who died earlier this year. Those who don't remember him may well have heard others talk of him. The following is an extract from a tribute at his Service of Thanksgiving in February, near Sheffield.

David took words seriously, he knew that words hold power and meaning and life and he used words with care and clarity and so whatever words he used, in writing or in speech those words were considered, weighed, crafted and had all the more significance.

David took people seriously. This did not mean that David was always serious himself, you only have to listen to the grandchildren to know that was not so. The reading about the laughter of God, reflects the humour, the joy of life and living which David enjoyed and shared with so many of us. But David took people seriously, he took an interest in other people's lives, in what made them tick. He and Judith exercised the gifts of generous hospitality in many places and at many times, for which countless people across the globe have benefitted.

David had that ability to make you feel taller, you knew that there was a depth to the encounter, there was value, worth and significance in what was shared. David took people seriously, because David took God seriously. His faith and belief in God was what shaped him, gave him depth, insight, grace and an earthed reality of what it means to be human in this world. As a leader of worship and preacher, David looked to and pointed to God. In his writing, especially of prayers he crafted images of God glimpsed within this enigmatic world.

As a member of the congregation his focus was on worship of the living God, he appreciated silence, space and the chance to breathe deeply of God's grace.

David was the youngest of four sons of missionaries who worked in China. David was born in Hong Kong 91 years ago, and six weeks after he was born the family returned to this country. His father became the General Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, later to become the Bible Society.

With a Grandfather, Father and two of his brothers, as Methodist ministers, David was asked more than once whether he had a call to ministry. The answer was positive. Yes David had a call of which he was convinced and one he lived out every day of his life. His call, and he understood it as such, was to be a lay person.

David was educated at the Methodist Leys school in Cambridge and then he read English and History at the University. During the war David was a conscientious objector. He had to appear before the panel to explain his decision and was given an unconditional permission to be an objector. This meant that he was not directed what he had to do but could choose. He went to Donald Soper to seek his advice about what he could do. The advice was to become the best teacher that he could be. That advice, together with the profound belief in pacificism shaped David's life and ministry.

David and Judith met at Cambridge and their love grew and deepened through 66 years of marriage. Theirs was a marriage of depth and happiness which spilled over to the family and many friends who passed through the open house, with generous hospitality. In more recent years with Judith's greater dependency, David became her main carer, he relished

the things he had never done before, he loved the cooking, and was reluctant to hand the wheelchair over to others.

It was not so easy to find work if you were a conscientious objector, but David did get a job teaching at Bradford Grammar School. When his brother Mervyn returned home from Africa where he was serving as a missionary he said to David 'You are needed in Northern Rhodesia'. And so with two small children, the family moved to a new and rich experience of life. David was teaching teachers, they spent 16 years there in two different settings. The work in an international context with very diverse church leaders was challenging but David with his quiet diplomatic and people skills welded them together. David's heart found a home there.

In those days it was not done that wives earned money on the mission field. However, David and Judith broke the mould. Judith's own sense of call, encouraged by David, was lived out as the college bursar and as a tutor in social studies. David and Judith respected each other's sense of call. This reflected their mutuality in their relationship.

David was reluctant to send the three children, Richard, Liz and Chris to boarding school back home. David and Judith returned to the UK when the children went to University.

David's work in Mission House, focussing on the West Indies and West Africa, his pivotal work in leading the Christians Abroad organisation, which encouraged and supported lay people to live out their calling to serve overseas, enabled him to live out his passions for working ecumenically, developing international relationships, and affirming the vital role of lay people at the fore front of mission.

He travelled widely as an educational consultant, visiting all the Methodist Schools in Africa and the West Indies; we had a taste of that at our Caribbean evening here when David sent an account of one of his visits to Jamaica.

David was a well organised person with good people skills. He was able to facilitate and get stuff done, he has been described as an ecclesiastical civil servant, working as the treasurer at Mission House. In the local circuit and the churches of Petts Wood and Chislehurst, he preached, he worked hard to encourage the local churches to do mission together; getting an ecumenical covenant signed between the churches, helping to set up and run an ecumenical charity shop where all the money raised went overseas, raising over £1m. David was the undercover boss. His gentle approach, full of grace, diplomacy and reconciliatory manner, together with a determination to get things done and to not lose focus.

He and Judith trained Local preachers, he was a circuit steward, always busy, but never too busy for people. In his quiet way David influenced many, many people. He was keen to keep his faith growing and encouraged others to do so too, by leading small groups, Lent Groups etc.

The move to Fairthorn, might have been seen as the opportunity to sit back and look at the beautiful view of the hills from the lounge window. He did enjoy the view, but in his own style David quietly, behind the scenes developed his own ministry of care, getting alongside people, living out his faith in natural relaxed ways, but which reflected the deep love and grace of God which oozed from him.

Earlier at the Crematorium we heard from Grandchildren and nieces and nephews about their special relationship with David. He was fun, his long legs could keep footballs out of the goal, and they would walk and talk and talk and walk. David took being a grandparent and uncle very seriously, but with much fun and laughter, games, biscuits and cakes.

David received life as a gift. Full of wonder, mystery, and depth. He shared his life with others with generosity and a twinkle in his eye which opened doors and windows so that encounters and conversations and relationships were fruitful and encouraging with people of all faith traditions and none.

And so we return to the beginning. Giving thanks for David who revealed the reality of God in his words, and actions, who lived out God's grace in generous open friendship with so many, and who always began with God, lived with and for God in others and is now with God.

Amen.

EASTER DAFFODILS There will be a box in the Welcome Area for the remaining Sundays before Easter for any donations you may like to make towards the cost of flowers for Easter Sunday. Thank you.



PLANT SALE – SATURDAY 9th MAY 2015 Spring does seem to be here now, so there should be lots of garden activity. Please split and pot up herbaceous plants as they come through, plant seeds if you are good at that, especially vegetables, pot on those cuttings you took last year etc. and sort out the garden bric a brac for the sale. The stock comes entirely from what people kindly grow and give.

We will also need cakes to sell with refreshments and on a cake stall, so if you don't grow plants, could you grow some cakes perhaps? The sale also needs a lot of manpower on the morning, so do think about that as well. More information in the Notices as the weeks go on or in the meantime from Gillian Beecher Bryant (020 8467 6906) Thank you



Here's one we did last year

Monday Focus : New leader required

The Monday Focus is an established and successful church organisation, committed to the provision of mission, outreach and fun. We are currently undergoing an exciting expansion to provide for a wider range of people who are free to attend on a Monday afternoon . As part of this expansion we are seeking a new leader from this September to help us evolve into an even more successful group.

If you have relevant leadership skills and are committed to growth and outreach with a sunny personality and seeking a fresh challenge and would like to find out more then we are keen to hear from you.

Monica Faux monicafaux@btinternet.com 020 8467 1163

DRONES QUILT

Residents of Chislehurst and surrounding areas have an opportunity to see a fascinating symbol for peace during Lent, when a patchwork quilt, 40 feet long and 6 feet high will be on display in our church. Each square of the quilt commemorates someone killed by a missile from a drone. A photo of it in our church is on the front cover on [Contact](#).

What was once the stuff of science fiction and nightmares – remote controlled machines (Drones) dropping bombs onto targets thousands of miles away – is now taking place on an almost daily basis. Someone in a cabin in Nebraska can drop a bomb in Afghanistan. They reduce human beings to dots on a screen; spots of light in the control room of an army base.

The Drones Quilt is the Fellowship of Reconciliation's advocacy project designed to raise awareness about drones and remind the government that mostly, the victims of drone attacks are civilians: people who, like us, would never ask to be involved in conflict. Each square of the quilt is made by a member of the public, who writes the name of a civilian victim together with their own name, on a square of fabric. Sown together, they create a stunning visual petition. Thankfully we have a wall long enough to display it in its full glory.

Having been displayed at, amongst other places, Coventry Cathedral and Iona Abbey, the quilt will be on display here during lent **between 10 and 2 Tuesday to Friday**.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation is a Christian peace charity. It was formed in 1914 to support people who held a belief that war and its preparation is morally wrong. Today FoR works to support grassroots peacemakers in areas of conflict through its International Peacemakers' Fund and equips its members to campaign, act and pray for peace.

There is a good connection here to the FoR, as Barbara Calvert's daughter, Hilary, is vice-chair, and several members of the church are members. A slightly more distant connection is that Anthony Faulkner's father was the Organising Secretary of the FoR for about 10 years from 1946, and led peace missions abroad including to the Soviet Union.

NEW CHURCH SERVICE
AN EVENSONG IN DECEMBER 2020

Pastor: Praise the Lord!
Congregation: The Lord's name be praised

Hymn

Pastor: Please turn on your tablet, pc, Ipad, smart phone or kindle Bibles and turn to 1Corinthians 13 verse 13

And please switch on your Bluetooth to download the sermon.

Pastor: Now let us pray committing this week into God's hands....
open your Apps, BBM, Twitter or Facebook to talk to God.

silence for personal meditation

Pastor: Please have your debit and credit cards ready as we take the offering.
You can log onto the church Wi-Fi using the password Lord 123909

Stewards pass mobile card swipe machines amongst the worshippers:

Pastor: Those who prefer to make electronic fund transfers are directed to the computers and laptops at the rear of the church.

Those who prefer telephone banking can use their mobile phones to transfer your contribution to the church account.

Closing blessing and final announcements:

Pastor: This week's ministry cell-meetings will be held on their various Facebook group pages....please log in and don't miss out.

Thursday's Bible study will be held live on Skype at 1900hrs GMT. Please don't miss this as we discuss the troubles of Job.

You can follow your Pastor on Twitter this weekend for counselling and prayers

God bless you

BOYS BRIGADE BATTALION PARADE AND WORSHIP



On the 10th May this year the annual Boys Brigade Battalion Parade and Worship will take place. This parade has been held for many years around Bromley and I understand at one time three parades a year were held. Nowadays we have one annual

parade; each BB Company in the Battalion takes it in turn to host and this year it will be our turn in Chislehurst. The parade will form up in the playground of Edgebury Primary School and boys from Juniors upwards will march through the streets following the band of the 3rd Bromley Company from Orpington. Last year there were over 100 boys and officers in attendance. We will attend the morning service at our church led by our own minister as our Company BB Chaplain. We look forward to welcoming Companies from around the Battalion to our church and sharing this wonderful event with you all.

Another reason to be with us on this particular day is that our Company in its present form will be 50 years old this year and we look forward to celebrating this anniversary with you all. After the service the parade will reform and we will march back through the streets to the School. Anchor Boys do not parade for safety reasons but are welcome to walk alongside the route on the pavement with their parents.

Thank you on behalf of all our boys and staff for all your support in the past. We look forward to seeing you on the 10th May.

Jacqui Hicks Officer in Charge of 11th Company The Boys Brigade.

MESSY CHURCH DATES 2015

16 May

6 June

12 September

10 October

14 November

12 December

There is no Messy Church in April, July or August



WHAT IS MESSY CHURCH?

A relaxed and informal church with a warm welcome for the whole family with crafts, songs, food - and plenty of opportunity to have fun and make a mess!

- Children - a place to meet new friends and learn new things
- Mums, dads, grandads, grandmas, carers - a place to spend quality time with your children and grandchildren and make links with other families

For more information contact the Messy Church Team,
email: messychurchbr7@yahoo.co.uk or tel:020 8468 7695

#GROWINGGUIDINGGLK – WHAT AN OPPORTUNITY!



Do you want to be part of something huge, to meet new people, to have a positive impact locally, to try new things, to challenge yourself? Girlguiding awaits!

Girlguiding is divided into four sections: Rainbows (5 – 7), Brownies (7 -10), Guides (10 – 14) and Senior Section (14 – 25). All of these groups meet here at Chislehurst Methodist

Church, as well as in many other venues in the area. Each section follows its own girl-led programme, facilitated by trained volunteers. We are actively looking for more volunteers to help with existing units and to help open new units to get potential members off 'waiting-to-join' lists and into units! We have local venues poised to host units; we have girls wanting to join; what we need is more volunteers.

What is Girlguiding? Girlguiding is a progressive voluntary organisation for all girls and young women. We give girls a voice; we give girls a safe space; we change as the lives of girls change. Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK. Thanks to the dedication and support of 100,000 amazing volunteers, we are active in every part of the UK, giving girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference to their lives and their communities. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good.

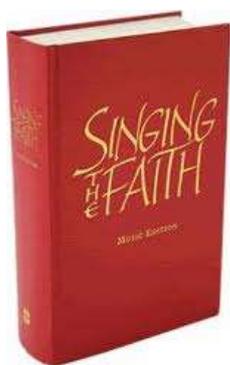
Girlguiding is part of a global movement, a community spanning 146 countries, with 10 million members! Girlguiding is unique; we care for the individual; we facilitate a girl-led, balanced and varied programme; we encourage self-government and decision-making; we share a commitment to a common standard through making a promise which is relevant to all members & wearing uniform; we work together in small groups to enable every member to contribute and be valued for who she is.

In the last year or so, units in our Division have raised funds for charities; been on adventure holidays; been to the House of Lords for a debate; achieved badges and challenges; planned their own community projects; cooked outdoors; been ice-skating; learnt about campaigning; searched for the Northern Lights in Iceland; met up with Girl Scouts from the USA in London; been on Channel 4 News in a series called 'Britain's New Activists'; taken over a swimming centre; been to Girlguiding's members-only pop concert.

Being a volunteer Leader in Girlguiding presents a unique opportunity to positively influence girls and young women and help them reach their potential. Would you consider getting involved with the amazing adventure which is Girlguiding? We are in particular need of Leaders to run Rainbow units.

Please visit www.girlguiding.org.uk for more details about Girlguiding and if you are interested in having an informal chat about the opportunities, contact me and I'd be very happy to tell you more about what it involves.

Helen Beecher Bryant
Growing Guiding Co-ordinator, Girlguiding Chislehurst Division
chislehurstdivisiongrowguiding@gmail.com
www.GrowingGuidingChislehurstDivision.blogspot.com
07748 503689
Twitter: @Helen_B_B
#GrowingGuidingGLK



SINGING THE FAITH: Thursday 26th March, 8 pm in the the Welcome Area. Come along for an interesting, energising and useful sing-a-long Singing the Faith run by the Herriot Housegroup. Anyone reading this is warmly invited. Prompt start, tea and biscuits afterwards and out by 10pm. Any more information from Gillian Beecher Bryant 020 8467 6906

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING - last year's national event raised in excess of £25 million, a remarkable amount of money. We raised over £500 here. We hope to do it all again here at the end of September. More information nearer the time



WORKING AT WHITECHAPEL MISSION

One of the joys of preaching around the circuit is that you get to see what makes other churches tick along. Petts Wood Methodist church were looking for people to join their 'Breakfast Team Challenge' one Sunday when I was there.....

So it was that at 5am on a Saturday I was picked up by the other 3 members of the team and driven to Whitechapel.

On arrival we see the clients waiting for the mission to open. We are met by Ramesh one of the full time workers who cheerfully receives any donations of clothing, towels, toothpaste and brushes, disposable razors and men's socks we have taken. Ramesh looks after the volunteers in the kitchen and dining room and organises people to clean the toilets and showers. He is so dedicated that on his day off he takes his hair clippers and offers haircuts to the homeless men.

The screen tells us who else in volunteering that day. Often there are community service workers and people from workplaces in the City doing their charity day.

We are given the quick kitchen hygiene and rules routine by another member of staff and then we set to work no later than 6.30am. 10 loaves of bread buttered.... More toasted.

200 sausages to fry and 9 kilos of bacon too. 360 eggs, mushrooms, tomatoes, beans and hash browns all to cook before 8.30am. *More statistics on www.whitechapel.org.uk*



The church just before Christmas

Meanwhile we serve the early birds with tea, coffee or chocolate and give out the toiletries people need.

This is the bit I like the best because sometimes they chat...."Please will you clean out my flask and fill it with tea"... "You got a flask!" I say. "Yes I found it yesterday and it will be so useful....it's a shame I didn't find the cup to it though!" and we laugh.

"I'll have the orange one" says a Croatian, pointing at the razors..."No two...I need two" as he indicates his tough beard growth. Each person has his preference and we are asked to respect this, because this is the only place on earth homeless people are allowed to choose anything at all.

Usually one person is assigned to charge up the mobile phones in a special place for charging lots of them together. The back room is full of fridges, freezers, washing machines and shelves holding boxes of toiletries of all kinds donated by kind people.

A Nigerian man with a nice hat comes along.... David lives nearby and comes to chat to the homeless men. He spends most of his income buying breakfast for those who are not organised yet; those who don't know they can bulk buy breakfast on benefit days and then have each one scored off the card. They are charged 75p for a large breakfast a payment which keeps them from feeling like charity cases and keeps them in touch with the real world of payment for goods... not that you can buy an egg for 10p these days.

We serve until 10.30am when the hatch comes down usually with a few faces getting lower and lower as the gap decreases. People who want...or need...or are simply too late. Usually the late-comers are the drunkards and sometimes they fight verbally and square up to each other but we are protected from that by the counter and Ramesh who sorts it out.

Community service people work downstairs underground in the clothing store sorting out the sacks of donations and putting clothes on racks and cutting up old towels into face cloth size. It's a massive organisation managed by Lay-worker and Local Preacher Tony Millar and his wife Sue for many years; indeed they have brought up a family there and their boys know exactly how important mission is for the community.

On my breakfast break I was shown the church upstairs. A plain building with stepped grey breeze block walls striped with black.

"Interesting decoration" I say thinking of our beautiful stained glass.

"Oh those are the sleeping bags... we can have any colour of sleeping bag as long as we put it in a black bag," said Tony and continued "And on the nights when the temperature goes down to zero we have to open the doors and let the men and women in to sleep here and we find them a meal too.... Are you ever free on a cold snowy night? It's tiring when there's a few cold nights together and we still do breakfast and all the other events in the week"

I look at the alter surrounded not by beautiful oak and sculpture but by DFS sofas and I think how honourable this is to the one who said

"When I was hungry, naked or imprisoned, what did you do for me?"

Humbled, I returned downstairs to wash the cooker... made extraordinarily dirty by someone getting her own back for having to be there cooking eggs on her last day of community service! Such is life!

Part 2 – 6 months later

Deloittes (financial services company) have been this week and there is a brand new set of mugs in the cupboard and stackable bowls for the porridge.

The place looks really clean possibly because there are 4 young community service people around who seem to be good with a pan scrubby. The tall one seems to think its good fun to use the large coffee tin's plastic lid as a frisbee.... but once a teacher always a teacher. The lid lands at my feet and I step on it. The girl it was aimed at picks it up and I take it off her and put it in my pocket.... Not a word spoken.... The "teacher" action was just fine.

Times seemed to have changed since I was last in Whitechapel Mission. The language skills of the clients don't seem to extend to please and thank you. Today we had ex-service men bringing their white tickets for their free breakfasts. (What sort of a country are we when our soldiers are made redundant and homeless at the same time and without the possibility of a home to buy?)

The men and women come in around 6.30 and there doesn't seem to be many and Ramesh tells me there are more hostels around these days. Nevertheless we still cook 360 eggs 9 kilos bacon, 200 hundred sausages, 10 packs of hash browns and thanks to the harvest festivals 60 tins each of beans, mushrooms, tomatoes. Still 4 kilos of margarine used on 16 loaves.

Today we are visited by a man with a hired van. CITY HARVEST is his business and sourcing all food about to be ditched from supermarkets and market stalls and cafés. He simply uses his phone to network to find out where the food is and goes to pick it up. Then he takes it around all of the homeless centres. Brilliant idea!

"God is blessing me." He says "Because I started with a £5000 grant and months later I still have half of it left." The people who want rid of the goods pay him a donation and those who take the food also pay a donation if they can.

"I reckon" says Mark "That God did me a favour by making me 'a minger' (*ugly person*)".

"I reckon" says the manageress "That you were born in side out....." Think about it, lots of people who are so very beautiful/pretty are absolutely awful selfish people.... born pretty on the outside and ugly on the inside.

The men are fighting and the biggest workers/volunteers go to sort them out.... Leaving a tap flowing into a jug.... And overflowing onto the floor....luckily I spotted that one.

Peace reigns for a while and breakfast is served steadily by 3 people for 2 hours before I can go home to carol sing. You can find out more about Whitechapel Mission what it does and its people by going to www.whitechapel.org.uk



Photo: Petts Wood organist filling a plate

Sharon cooking eggs



MEETING LOCAL NEPALI PEOPLE WITH A VISION, AS THEY HELP PEOPLE TO HELP THEMSELVES.

To witness sunrise over the Himalayas is something special. From this introduction, you are correct to surmise I recently visited Nepal. I pondered, wondering whether to go trekking or visit fair trade projects - the later won.

Nepal is very much a developing country – landlocked, establishing meaningful trade with the outside world is challenging. Transportation by air is costly, the alternative - a long journey by road to Kolkata (Calcutta in India) and onward by boat to the intended destination, frequently Japan and South Korea. And the roads! Our driver on the Nepali section of this route skilfully guided our vehicle around every conceivable obstacle from huge potholes to wandering animals. And sometimes we couldn't reach our destination without walking, for the vehicle wasn't designed to cope with dried up river-beds and sandy roads. Despite the inevitable discomfort of this sort of travel, further exasperated by diesel fumes and dust, there were breathtaking vistas to behold at every twist and turn of the switch-back roads as we ascended and descended.

Visits to various temples, and an ancient town in the hills, reminded us that this is an ancient land, with a wealth of history stretching back to antiquity. Hinduism and Buddhism have mingled into a complex blend where in Kathmandu, spectacular Buddhist and Hindu temples stand side by side.

Some of the people we met were inspirational in their desire to better the opportunities for women and children, whilst focussing on the aspirations of fair trade. In this context, we visited Get Paper Industries, who supply hand-made paper products to Traid Craft, though during our visit the women were working on a large order for Body Shop who they've supplied in excess of 25 years. The women were engaged in a labour intensive occupation of making beautiful boxes, using hand made paper. They were excellent – but my thoughts were sad ones. These ladies are working so hard to produce a lovely item, which as soon as the box is opened and contents extracted will be thrown away.

What a challenge for us. Far away, people make attractive packaging, given the colours, pale shades of yellow, green and pink suggest the Easter trade, to be transported, flat-pack to England, to provide eye catching packaging, tempting us to buy - next destination the recycle box for destruction – yet creating employment opportunities for those who would otherwise be without income.

This organisation wasn't only providing employment opportunities for women, but from the profits, was having an impact on the immediate community and beyond. Right next door there was a school for the poorest children in the neighbourhood. As in other parts of the world, when income is low, children, especially girls do not go to school, so a condition of employment is that the employee's children attend school – there was nursery too for the little ones. This influences those slightly better off, for when they see poorer children attending school they decide to send their children too. The founder was also keen to ensure his staff remained healthy, by providing a clean water supply and a suitably equipped kitchen for meal preparation. Realising the benefits of not falling ill, the women quickly change their practices at home, such as boiling water to ensure it is safe to drink.

And what about the raw product – trees? There is also a sustainable policy of planting trees.

Further afield, he has a concern for the poorest people, whose sole source of meagre income is from breaking stones, obtained from the river-beds - back-breaking, debilitating and unrewarding. He is working toward providing more meaningful occupations, currently making products from felt. This project was embryonic, the women still learning their craft and as such having some way to go before becoming commercially viable.

The visit which had greatest impact for me was another in which he is involved. This was a remote location along the afore-mentioned bumpy, sandy track, not too far from the India border. Projects here focus on preventing girls being trafficked. Apparently fathers are easily swayed into selling their daughter for Rupees 3,000 – 5,000 (R150 to £1) – to sustain their drink or drug habit. The daughters are promised a wonderful future of marriage or glamour, but all too soon find they have been recruited into the sex industry in Delhi, Mumbai or the Middle East. The projects are mostly agricultural, especially goats, which is a valuable meat used only at festival time. The girls rear the goats, from which a good income can be secured, thus deterring fathers from ‘selling’ their girls to strangers.

Around the time of puberty, the girls are organised into self-help groups. We met one of the groups who, as well as going to school, were supporting their families, by earning an income from goats, chickens or making clothes. They were not only gaining confidence but also having an impact on the community in which they live by raising awareness, not only of resistance to being enticed by false promises, but also of HIV/Aids, which is quite prevalent in the region.

In Pokhara we met Ram Kali Khadka, who as long ago as 1975 established the Women’s Skills Development Project. Currently there are 435 members, of whom 35 have a disability, including sight impairment. Mostly they work at home, doing back-strap weaving, from which the distinctive Nepali bags and other products are crafted to a high standard. Many of the products are sold to tourists, at two outlets in town. Clearly she is a woman of vision, but very conscious of the need to diversify, she indicated her awareness that changes are necessary to ensure the project remains viable in a fast changing world. On site, we observed the bales of wool from India being processed, first spun and then dyed in readiness for the weavers. Again every aspect, using very basic equipment was labour intensive.

We also visited Mahaguthi a fair trade organisation, which markets a diverse range of Nepalese crafts to a high standard for both the local and overseas trade. They were about to move into new premises, where every aspect of their work has been designed to be environmentally friendly, including solar energy - a valuable alternative in a country where there are frequent power cuts (in hotels there were notices telling guests the times when there would be no electricity.) Many of the 1,000 people sustained by this organisation work in remote mountainous parts of the country, engaged in traditional skills such as paper-making from the bark of the Lokta tree, These grow at elevations of 2,500 to 3,000 meters and regenerate within 6 – 7 years. This paper has been used for generations, originally developed by Buddhist monks in Tibet, who used it for their manuscripts.

Nowadays it generates an income which permits families to have a better standard of living and opportunities for children to attend school.

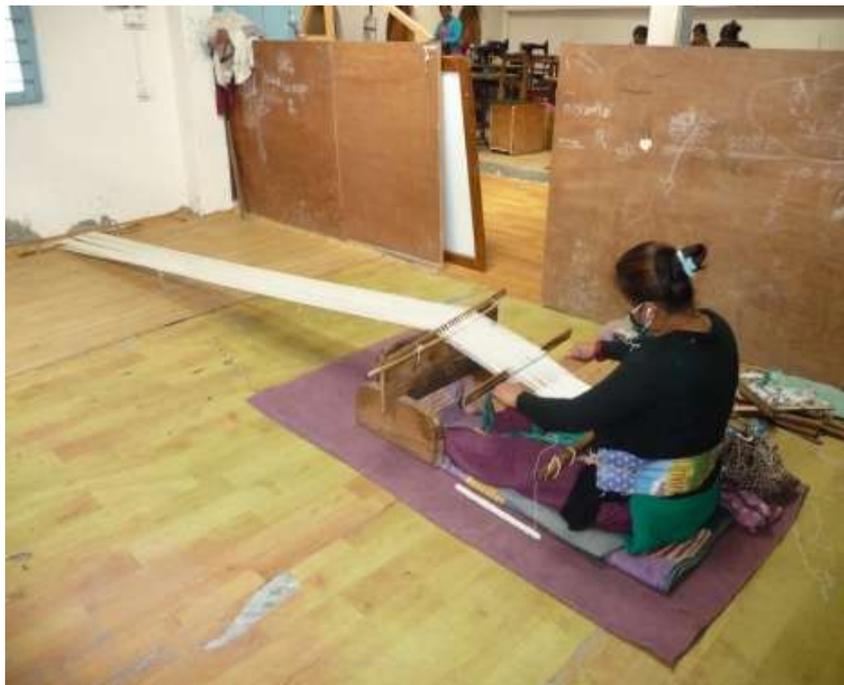
It was a privilege to meet indigenous men and women with a passion to help people in their country gain a foot hold into the cash economy, affording opportunity for better health and education.

Joan Mayes

Sunrise over the Himalayas



Lady learning back-strap weaving



ELECTION HUSTINGS
AT
CHISLEHURST METHODIST CHURCH

Wed 29 April at 8pm here in the church.

Churches Together in Chislehurst and Bickley will be chairing a “Question Time” style Hustings for the main candidates in this constituency.

Conservatives	Bob Neill
Greens	Roisin Robertson
Labour	John Courtneidge
Liberal Democrats	Sam Webber
UKIP	Emmett Jenner

A Hustings is a meeting where election candidates debate policies and answer questions from an audience. It provides voters with an opportunity to hear the views of candidates.

Do come along and ask a question and see what the candidates are all about.

Your vote matters, so use it wisely and from an informed base.



‘Vote for what you believe in’ is a project run by the Christian think tank **Ekklesia**. It aims to encourage voters to take a principled approach to voting. “We want voters to think about the values and principles we need to create a fair and equal society and to encourage them to pledge to consider those values and principles when voting.”

On this site you will be able to find further details about the ‘Vote for what you believe’ in project. You can pledge to vote for what you believe in and find links to resources and information from Ekklesia that will help inform your vote. You can also participate in ‘Platform Politics’ – a new way to engage with voters in your local community. www.ekklesia.co.uk

CHRISTIANS AND THE GENERAL ELECTION

With the General Election only a matter of weeks away it is a good moment to reflect on our faith and our politics. So here are three reflections.

We should be involved in the political debate

It is tempting, especially when faced with negative campaigning or the latest stories about dubious activities by some MPs, for us to say 'a plague on both your houses', or perhaps, this time, a plague on all your houses. But that would run clean counter to Jesus's teaching and action best summed up by 'love God and love your neighbour'. As Christians we are called upon to make the world a better place for all with peace, justice and love as our manifesto. And that is what politics is also all about or should be, and why we as Christians should be fully involved in political debate.

The importance Jesus attached to Christian involvement and action is indicated in his story about the sheep and the goats. The point of the story is that we are not judged by our adherence to religious laws or doctrines nor by the details of our beliefs. But we are judged by our actions in relation to other people, and especially to those who most need our love and care. 'Truly I tell you that if you did not do it to one of the least of these you did not do it to me'.

So we should all be involved in the political debate and always with a view to making the world a better place for all. That includes the debate on the economy, on public services like health and care and education, welfare reform, immigration, Europe, foreign policy and overseas aid, and defence.

But this does not mean we all support and vote for the same party.

In some countries and there would be a clear conflict between Christian values and voting for particular political parties. That would be the case, for example, with Fascist, Stalinist Communist and racist parties. But that is not generally the case with the parties in this country at the General Election.

I know that in our congregation, as in all congregations, there are people with strong political views. But they will be voting in different directions for different parties - the Conservative party, the Labour Party and the Liberal Party. And no doubt there will be many thousands of Christians across the country who will be voting for the 'new' parties - the Greens, UKIP and the Nationalist Parties.

And that is not new. In the nineteenth century Christian Tories, like Lord Shaftesbury and the Christian Jew, Disraeli, were very much in the front line in leading social reform; the Liberal Gladstone was very much driven by his Christian beliefs; and it has been said that the Labour Party grew as much out of Methodism as Marxism. In the twentieth century two radicals at each end of the political spectrum – Margaret Thatcher and Michael Foot – came from strong Methodist homes with fathers who were local preachers and prominent in both Methodism and politics. And today Members of Parliament with strong Christian convictions can be found in all the main parties – Frank Field, Stephen Timms and Alex Cunningham in the Labour Party; the Cabinet Ministers Teresa May, Iain Duncan Smith and Sally Morgan in the Conservative Party; and Tim Farron and Alan Beith in the Liberal Party. And I am sure that they would all say that their Christian beliefs have led them to where they are in politics today.

So there is plenty of scope for Christians, driven by our criteria of love, peace and justice, to arrive at different political positions. And that means there is room for differences of opinion and healthy debate between us. Our key calling is to ensure that the Christian voice is heard in and across all parties, and not to retreat into a church ivory tower.

And as Christians we need to handle ‘hot potatoes’ with care

But just as politicians are sometimes accused of over simplifying and not looking at the evidence, we too need to be careful how we handle big and controversial issues.

Some time ago David Deeks, who for many years was head of the then Division of Social Responsibility of the Methodist Church, wrote an article entitled ‘Handling hot potatoes’. He had long experience of handling difficult political and social issues within the Methodist Church, and many of them will feature in this year’s Election. I summarise below three key points which he made.

- Controversial issues of all kinds should be thoroughly and sensitively explored.

We should acknowledge that there are areas of public life where there can be contradictory convictions flowing from the gospel with different Christians holding different views. And we need to show respect to people with opinions and attitudes which conflict with our own, and be sensitive to major mood changes on these difficult themes. He gives as examples of such issues abortion, gay and lesbian sexuality, and war and peace. So we need to grapple ourselves with such issues, become well informed about them and recognise that other Christians may come to very different conclusions from ourselves about them.

- Beware of oversimplifying

We should recognise the complexity of political, social, and economic issues. We need to be well informed on issues of contemporary debate, taking seriously a wide range of responsible opinion. We should avoid giving gratuitous offence to particular groups. But, of course we should always strive to seek as much clarity and committed action as possible in the light of the gospel. This rings a bell with me from my time in Government Departments working on employment and education issues where on occasion it seemed to me that church leaders did not take fully into account the complexity of the issues governments of all colours have to handle.

- Beware of sloganising

We should avoid becoming an extension of the tabloid press on the right or on the left. David Deeks warns us against naive sloganising and gives as examples of this ‘business is always a bad thing’ or ‘the USA is always in the wrong’. And he warns against demonising groups of people and gives as examples ‘young people/binge drinkers, bankers, immigrants, Muslim fundamentalists, the IMF, the World Bank and Nestle’.

So on to the General Election

So as we move on to this unusually uncertain and exciting General Election we as Christians should be involved in the big issues which will feature in the campaigns. And it is excellent that we shall be providing the venue for the CTC hustings with local candidates on 29 April.

Let me give David Deeks the final word:

‘Don’t shy away from direct reflection on the political and social issues of the day. The gospel is never detached from the life of the world. Social justice and personal righteousness are as much part of the Methodist DNA as evangelism and mission.’

Roger Dawe



IMPERIAL PLAYERS

The Imperial Players will be staging a comedy ‘My Friend Miss Flint’ in the Church Hall on the evenings of Thursday 23rd, Friday 24th and Saturday 25th April at 8.00pm. Once again the Thursday performance will incorporate a fish and chip supper while the Friday performance will be followed by adjudication in connection with the Bromley Theatre Guild Festival. Tickets cost £7.50 for Friday and Saturday and £13.50 for Thursday (including fish and chips) and can be purchased on 01732 852 440 and 07831 197 512.

And if you have at some point been a member of the Imps, watch out for details of the 50th Anniversary to be celebrated on 27 June this summer.

Paul Crowther

EDITOR’S NOTE: The “Imps” production next month will be shortly after the 50th anniversary of the building of the church hall. When the hall was built, the views of the Imps were taken into consideration in the design.

The Imps logo (above) features the masks of tragedy and comedy and a bee which was the emblem of The Prince Imperial, son of Napoleon III (who had lived in exile at the end of the road). The Imps motto is ‘Nocte Illa Bene Erit’ – ‘It’ll be alright on the night’.

TRIBUTE TO JOY LAWRENSON

Joy Lawrenson, a long time member of our Church Family died last December. What follows is an edited version of her daughter, Deborah's, tribute from the Service of Thanksgiving. It gives a lovely insight into Joy.

Some people - perhaps most people - want to seem more than they are. Very few people are content being more than they seem, but Joy was one of them.

She had a deep faith, and a rich inner life that was more important to her than material possessions or outward trappings. She made many good friends in this church and it made her very sad in recent years that she was physically unable to attend as much as she would have liked. For nearly thirty years she marched here with her purposeful stride, always beautifully turned out with a splash of cheering colour. She walked wherever she could but even when the going got harder she would never hear of using a walking stick. 'Those,' she would say witheringly, 'are for the elderly.'

She would have been 87 this month [January], a long and interesting life. Her family lived in South London. The family was always close, and they faced their share of hardships. Her handsome father Charles returned deaf from the First World War. In the Second World War, the family home in New Cross was destroyed in a direct hit from a V2 flying bomb. Luckily it was a Saturday morning and everyone was out, but of earthy possessions they lost very nearly everything.

At the start of the war Joy had been about to take up her scholarship to Haberdasher Aske's school in south London when she was evacuated to Brighton at the age of eleven. It wasn't a happy experience. One of her billets was so dreadful that she ran away back to London. Eventually she was sent away to safety again, this time to Farnham, where she was taken in by a kind widow and her daughter. She and the daughter Lily became lifelong friends. Along the way, Joy had swapped schools in the general muddle, and was taking classes with the girls of Greycoat Hospital School, normally at Westminster. There she met another two lifelong friends – Joy had a gift for friendship – Dab and Daphne. Daphne's daughters Mandy and Laura are here.

This quiet determination to go her own way was key to Joy's personality. Joy was always a great reader with a keen intelligence. She would have loved to have gone to university but she felt she had no option but to train as a secretary and start earning. So she studied at evening classes, perfecting her fluency in German at Goldsmith's College and in Austria, where she loved the mountains.

One of her first jobs was in the film industry at Gainsborough Studios in West London where Margaret Lockwood was the in-house star of romantic melodramas like *The Wicked Lady*. Stewart Granger, too, though Joy was distinctly unimpressed. "Very pleased with himself" was her verdict. Joy almost got her chance to be on screen when she was spotted and asked to appear in a cinema advert, but the unions put paid to that.

Joy had many boyfriends and many more admirers. There were plenty of proposals but she decided she wasn't interested in marriage. What she wanted to do was travel. In her late twenties she read what she described as "a most beautifully written newspaper

advertisement". It was for a job and she answered it because she was intrigued – intrigue was always a good thing in her book.

She was summoned and passed the tests with flying colours for the Foreign Office, as it turned out. It was the beginning of a thirty year adventure moving around the world, from The Hague, to Moscow (where she – rather unexpectedly - met her future husband, Stan), to Kuwait, on to Mao Tse Tung's revolutionary China, to Belgium (twice), Luxembourg and Singapore. My sister and I grew up around the globe, and the stories our parents told us about pulling bugging devices out of the walls and ceilings in Moscow, and being trailed by the KGB, were part of our childhood. Even as children we knew that if you wanted to have a private word or argument, you had to go into the bathroom and turn on all the taps first.

In her last year Joy finally did more than hint about what she did at the British Embassy in Moscow at the height of the Cold War (though even then, she was careful not to speak of any actual secrets). It turned out, under close questioning, that she was "one of the four who knew all the secrets" in Moscow in the late 1950s, and had her introduction to that world in The Hague.

Joy was a wonderful wife, mother and later, grandmother. She was cerebral and a great solver of cryptic crosswords, ideally with a cup of strong coffee by her side. She was creative, too, enjoying painting and drawing. But most of all she loved to make highly individual garments at her sewing machine and with her busy knitting needles. She didn't make a song and dance about caring for others, she just got on with it with quiet kindness. She was a dedicated church visitor for many years. Even when she was in hospital a few months ago she was still knitting squares to be sewn into blankets for the Romanian orphanage.

She was a great friend: loyal and compassionate, a good listener and always acutely perceptive. The phrase "still waters run deep" could have been coined for her. Of her final illness, she never complained. The most she would allow was "It's all such a nuisance."

And as you all know, she had a great sense of humour, enjoying the absurd with a poignant cut of home truth. Towards the end we spoke about the send-off she wanted here, and the hymns she liked. I said that I didn't know her favourite, *Hushed was the evening hymn* and asked whether people would be able to sing it without a choir. She laughed, and said: 'Give 'em a challenge.'

[And so, we did]

SAINT RAPHAEL'S

Sadly St. Raphael's, the MHA care home is closing on March 27th. A number of church goers have asked me why, so I contacted MHA and the article below is based on the reply John & I have received from the Regional Director. John & I have been doing some volunteering at St. Raphael's since 2012, so the notice of the closure came to us as a great surprise.

In October 2011 MHA, who had been asked to take over a number of care homes previously run by Southern Cross, took over the lease. The home had accommodation for 58 residents, many of them who had been there a very long time, and were in need of a great deal of care. MHA subsequently spent a great deal of money updating the décor, furnishings and furniture and appointed a chaplain and a volunteers' organiser. In 2013 they purchased the freehold and have since considered what best to do, as much of the building is unsatisfactory as a care/ nursing home. Part of the building has been closed to residents for some time.

It was decided that bearing in mind the best needs of the residents, their relatives and the staff, it was not possible to redevelop the site while residents were in situ. They wrote that the configuration of the building of different periods and different heights is not suitable for amending. They regret that the whole has to be knocked down and a fresh start made. MHA has closed homes elsewhere, in order to provide the care which is needed now, and how best to proceed.

The plans, subject to planning permission from the London Borough of Bromley, are to redevelop the site creating a new retired living development consisting of about 80 Retirement Living with Care apartments, which will provide accommodation, care and support for older people. With an ageing population more old people want to be able to keep as much independence as possible.

MHA is obviously committed to helping current residents and their families find alternative accommodation. Within 10 days we found that many of the residents, possibly self-funding, had already moved out. Some others already knew to where they were moving. On the day I visited there were three social workers from the London Borough of Bromley helping residents make decisions about their move. We found that the residents seemed mostly reconciled to their move.

The staff are being offered either alternative work or help in finding new work locally or in other MHA homes. It is obviously difficult for staff who have worked there for a long time not to be saddened by the closure.

MHA has a great reputation in its care for older people, and when the new development is completed, there will be better facilities and more appropriate care for the 21st century.

Alice Sennett



We are responsible for a Christian Aid collection at Sainsbury's on Saturday 16th May. We need hourly collectors from at least 10.00am to 4pm.

Please sign up on the list on the blue notice board (from 1 May).

David will supervise: provide the authority, the tins, and the money counting.

Afraid, alone, in pain



Be the answer to Loko's prayer this Christian Aid Week.

This Christian Aid Week, you can help transform the lives of women like Loko.

From 10-16 May, churches the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland will come together to pray, campaign and raise money to improve the lives of people like Loko.

Every year, 100,000 volunteers demonstrate God's love for the poor by taking part in house-to-house collections for Christian Aid.

This fantastic witness is a chance to take the mission of the church into your community.

Loko's choice in life is simple: 'If I can't collect firewood, my children will die.'

Four times a week, in a remote corner of Ethiopia, Loko makes a back-breaking eight-hour trip to gather wood. It's a task she dreads, but she steels herself to do it because if she doesn't her children will starve.

She prays to God as she walks. 'I ask him to change my life and lead us out of this,' she says.

Just £5 could give Loko a loan to start her own business buying and selling tea and coffee, freeing her from her desperate task and allowing her to spend more time caring for her family.

Find out how you can play your part at www.caweek.org



ANNUAL PLANT SALE

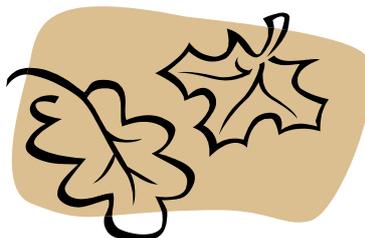


Saturday 9th May
10 a.m. - 12 noon

Chislehurst
Methodist Church
Prince Imperial Road



Refreshments
All Welcome



SERVICES AT CHISLEHURST METHODIST CHURCH

STARTING AT 1030AM

PREACHERS

Sunday 29 th March Palm Sunday	Rev'd Barbara Calvert
Sunday 5 th April Easter Day	11am Holy Communion Rev'd Barbara Calvert
Sunday 12 th April	Mr Roger Dawe
Sunday 19 th April	Mrs Pat Woodison
Sunday 26 th April	Holy Communion Rev'd Barbara Calvert
Sunday 3 rd May	Mrs Joan Mayes
Sunday 10 th May	All Age Service Parade Service incorporating Boys Brigade Battalion Service Rev'd Barbara Calvert
Sunday 17 th May	Helen and Arend van Teutem
Sunday 24 th May	Mr John Sennett
Sunday 31 st May	Mrs Sue Cope

Midweek Services

An informal 30 minute service is held in the Wesley Room at 12.45 on Thursdays, followed by a light lunch. All are welcome



Celebrate Easter 2015 at...

Palm Sunday

10.30am 29th March

Maundy Thursday

12.45pm 2nd April

The Last Supper



Good Friday

10am 3rd April

Walk of Witness

Starts from Methodist Church



Easter Day

11am



Chislehurst Methodist Church