

# CONTACT



**CHISLEHURST METHODIST CHURCH**

**Easter 2016**

**[www.chislehurstmethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.chislehurstmethodistchurch.org.uk)**

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Front Cover Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother by Frank Roper (1914-2000)  
 from the Methodist Modern Art Collection, © TMCP, used with permission

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

## DEEP MYSTERY

I find Easter a difficult time to preach in the church. It is full of gory and harsh images; filled with blood, betrayal and death. It is a dark time, a time where the world, like the curtain in the temple, is torn in two. Finding a message that bridges the betrayal of the crucifixion with the hope of the resurrection is difficult. Even more difficult is to do this in a way that doesn't shirk from facing up to the questions that Easter raises.

For some, it is a time of superstitious nonsense. There are people for whom the questions surrounding Jesus' resurrection from the dead and the questions about eternal life are simply impossible to answer. They see these things as illogical, unscientific and are therefore best simply ignored.

For others, it is a time where their faith is challenged when faced with the same questions about resurrection and eternity. I do not think that there is any intellectually satisfying approach to the questions and the issues surrounding Easter, and this is as it should be.

It is a peculiar modern illness, this need to be able to quantify, to explain away, to empirically define. Not every question has, or even should have a scientific answer. The questions that Easter raises need to be asked, but the answers need to be found somewhere other than from science. These answers need to be sought in the same place as issues about courage, hope, empathy and love.

The questions of Easter take us to a different place. They challenge the conventional view of the world, they reinforce the super-natural nature of God and they defy convenient explanation, both by those within and without the church. They allow us to look further, to see beyond the horizons of our lives. They allow us a glimpse of the deep mystery of God.

It is in embracing the mystery of God, of allowing the unknown to remain unknowable that we are truly set free. Then the quality of our faith does not lie in the power of our intellect, nor in our ability to answer difficult questions. It lies in the capacity within us that enables us to marvel at the unknown. It is in embracing the mysteries of life (and God) that I believe we have a fuller, richer life. Embracing mystery makes 'space' within our beings for God to be present.

Shalom,  
Duncan

## 4TH CHISLEHURST GUIDES

### CHRISTMAS CAMP 11TH TO 13TH DECEMBER 2015

On the 11th December 2015, 11 Guides and 3 leaders arrived at Paxwood Campsite, for the 4th Chislehurst Guides Christmas Camp. We unpacked and the Guides sorted out where they were going to sleep. The Guides had 2 rooms. One room was perfectly tidy, the other, well let's just say, it looked like a suitcase had exploded.

My funniest moment was shortly after we arrived, one of the Guides noticed there was no television. "Where's the TV?" I was asked. "Don't worry." I said "You won't have time to watch TV." I was not asked again. They were too busy to miss the TV.

In the morning of the 12th, we explored the campsite and surrounding area. We found a Chapel in the woods, and a play area, which had an obstacle course, a huge swing and a slide. There was also a xylophone on the decked area. We then made finger puppets and play dough characters.



For lunch we made a huge camp fire, Roz used her expertise to get the damp wood alight, and the Guides cooked burgers and hotdogs.

For pudding we cooked giant marshmallows on sticks. In the afternoon, the weather was kind, so the Guides made dens as part of their Growing Up Wild Autumn badges. The

dens had to be made of only material that was found in the woods. The leaders had to then judge the dens as to what they were made of, their usability and creative flair. The dens were brilliant, and fun had by all, one even had a Christmas tree. Photos were taken of the dens and their creators.

Saturday evening was celebrated with a Christmas party, wonderfully cooked by Toni Hartwell. We had silly Christmas glasses, Christmas Crackers, balloons, and

not forgetting the Turkey, followed by cake and angel delight, whilst listening to Christmas music. The Guides washed and dried up and then spent the evening together in their rooms, after we had a talent competition.

Sunday morning, we were leaving at 11am, so we came down slightly too early for some of the Guides for breakfast. We had a yummy feast of croissants, cold turkey, ham cheese and fruit.

## **AND COOKIES!**

Whilst most of 4th Chislehurst Guides were skiing, the rest of us decided to keep warm and bake cookies. We chose chocolate chip over lemon cookies and started to bake. Despite the scales refusing to work, we weighed and measured and had bowls full of cookie dough. The cookies were hand squished into small balls, and then placed in the oven for 15 minutes.

Once cooked, the cookies were decorated, with blue icing, lemon icing and many varieties of sprinkles including popping candy, which was probably the favourite. Large amounts of cookies were eaten, with still a lot to take home and sample later. This was the first time we had cooked for a long time, and it was agreed that despite most blue uniforms becoming flour white, we had had a lot of fun and would cook again soon.

By Sarah Rees, 4<sup>th</sup> Chislehurst Guides



## RESURGAM

Roger Dawe

I was born in February 1941. A month later, with my father away in the RAF, my mother took me from our home in Bedfordshire to her parents in Saltash in Cornwall, just across the River Tamar from Plymouth. This was a kind of reverse evacuation to one of the most dangerous parts of the country, and the timing coincided almost exactly with the peak of blitz on Plymouth. I sometimes ask myself whether this was a preparation for the slaughter of the innocent!

The night of 20 March 1941 was the worst night of the blitz. Practically the whole of the centre of Plymouth was destroyed. That included the mother church of Plymouth, St Andrew's, which overnight was reduced to ruins. The following morning a local headteacher asked a carpenter to make a board with the word 'Resurgam' (i.e. 'I will rise again') written on it reflecting the Christian hope of new life. Without any publicity she immediately placed the board in the church ruins where the main door had been. And there it remained in the ruins for the rest of the war and became a symbol of hope for the devastated church and city.

After the war the city and the church were rebuilt from scratch. Over the entrance to the new church was carved the word 'Resurgam' which became a permanent reminder of the spirit of hope and new life even in the midst of the most difficult and depressing times. And that word became and remains a symbol for the city, for the church and even for the well known football team!

And it is that same spirit of hope transforming lives which most impresses me in the resurrection stories and beyond. The details of the resurrection stories vary between the gospels and do not appear at all in the original version of Mark. But what stands out for me is the amazing transformation of the disciples after the resurrection. They had been weak and had deserted Jesus when the going got tough before the crucifixion. But after their experience of the resurrection they certainly 'rose again', and went on to become the dynamic leaders of the early church and a crucial link in the history of Christianity for the following 2000 years.

Today I think it is that spirit of transformation and hope that the churches in this country need to rediscover. Across the world the church continues to expand. But in Great Britain there has been a sharp and continuous decline in numbers in the mainstream churches from the 1950s onwards and a large increase in average age. The decline has accelerated in recent years. In the Methodist Church over the last 10 years our membership has fallen from around 300,000 to around 200,000 – the lowest figure since 1819. At that rate the Methodist Church in Great Britain is unlikely to survive as a separate entity into the next generation. And the story of the Anglican Church is much the same. John Spence, the C of E's finance chief, said in February this year that the decline was expected to continue for another three decades, with today's figures of 18 people per 1,000 regularly attending church



falling to 10 per 1,000. An 81-year-old was eight times more likely to attend church than a 21-year-old.

There is a number of reasons for the decline but a major part is explained by economic and social trends and by changes in attitudes and practices in society at large which have seemed to leave the church stranded. And on top of that, the major publicity about the church in recent years has been mainly about the endless debates on issues like the position of women in the church, church attitudes on sexuality, and arguments over divisions between denominations. This must suggest to those outside the church that we live in a different world and in another age, do not understand the big issues they are facing, and are no longer relevant to their needs.

So how can we break out and change the world as the disciples did after the resurrection? The answer must be 'Resurgam' - to capture that spirit of new hope and life which comes with resurrection. The disciples had the advantage of first hand knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus. The Church today has the disadvantage of 2000 years of interpretation and doctrine, and detailed rules (over 700 pages in the Methodist 'rulebook') which can tie us down and divert us from our main purposes.

So how do we rise again and what is the way ahead for us? A few suggestions. First, we need to be clear about our purposes – why we are here. These are well set out in 'Our Calling' – worship, learning, mission, and service. Second, we need to get back to the central teachings of Jesus about loving God and our neighbour, and with the emphasis on the message of peace, mercy and justice – all of which are very relevant to the needs and concerns of today's world. Third, we need to be involved in and to relate to the world around us outside the church. And, fourth, we must be prepared to take difficult decisions. For example, in the Methodist Church we now have far more Districts, Circuits and Churches than we need for our current numbers with many people being overstretched as a result and with resources far too thinly spread. What all of this amounts to is the need to focus on our main purposes of worship, learning, mission and service in a spirit of new hope.

At the level of our own Circuit it is good that we are now looking at our future strategy in 'Where to Lord'. That may call for tough decisions at Circuit level which we will need to face. At our own church in Chislehurst we have been fortunate in recent years in having a resurgence in the spirit of 'Resurgam'. We now have a falling average age as younger families have joined us, greater diversity, a good spirit around and all within our excellent refurbished premises used by many and varied community groups. Looking ahead, we can build on that in a spirit of hope.

Finally, the Easter message of 'Resurgam' is important too for all of us in our individual lives. We will have periods when we shall have health, family, work or

other issues which can worry us, get us down, and make us feel isolated or hopeless. In those times we can feel like the citizens of Plymouth as the bombs fell destroying their city. But it is in those times too that the spirit of new life and hope symbolised in 'Resurgam' – 'I will rise again' can be so important. And that, I think, is a key Easter message for all of us.

## PLANT SALE

Over the years our popular Plant Sale raised thousands of pounds for the church, but , as no one came forward to organise it, there will be no Plant Sale this year. If you think you can step forward for next year, please call in at the office or see Gillian Beecher Bryant.

## CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Is from Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May and to launch this week, on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>** in the church hall there will be a social evening, at which a guest speaker from Christian Aid will show us some DVDs and there will be the first Chislehurst Mocktail Evening!

Starting at 6pm

£3 per adult, £1 for children Non alcoholic cocktails on sale and Hors d'oeuvres

Funds raised donated to Christian Aid



Our work for Christian Aid is now led by Paul and Rachael Baird. Please do give them your support as they carry out this vital role.





## FOODBANK

The members of the church and others who use the premises have given a great deal of food to the Bromley Foodbank. The vast majority of gifts are wonderful, but the Foodbank is having a problem with some gifts they receive as they do not comply with their guidelines.

The Foodbank has told us:

The packs of food we give to clients comply with a specific list from the Trussell Trust. The contents of the packs have been put together by a nutritionist and are 3 to 4 days supply. Every item of food donated that is not on the list is considered an "extra".

**These include things like sauces (brown or tomato), stock cubes, flour, super noodles, crisps, nuts, fruit or herbal teas, etc.**

Our pack for a single person usually fills 3 bags so you can imagine how many bags a large family has. Most clients come to our Centres on public transport so adding extras isn't always an option. We have recently sorted 26 boxes and 15 Ikea bags of "extras" that were donated at Harvest last year.



As lovely and useful as these things are, we would prefer not to receive any more for the time being. Storage is quite a problem for us and we would rather use the limited space we have for the items we need for every pack than the non essentials.

**Foodbanks provide a minimum of three days' nutritionally balanced, non-perishable tinned and dried foods that have been donated by the local community.**

We have worked with nutritionists to develop a food parcel that contains sufficient nutrition for adults and children, for at least three days of healthy, balanced meals for individuals and families.

**So, what the Foodbank needs from us**

**NOT**

Cereal		Sauces (brown or tomato)	
Soup		Stock cubes	
Pasta		Flour	
Rice		Super noodles	
Pasta sauce		Crisps	
Beans		Nuts	
Tinned meat		Fruit	
Tinned vegetables		Herbal teas	
Tea/coffee			
Sugar			
Biscuits			

## A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

### IMPROVEMENTS SCHEDULED FOR JULY/AUGUST 2016

#### **Eradicate damp in the Wesley Room – replace atrium windows and replace the hall roof**

##### **Funding earmarked:**

Approval has been given to eradicate the damp, by re-rendering the external walls of the Wesley Room and complete the original refurbishment, by installing new atrium windows in the Inner Foyer (kitchen concourse area). Quotations received - the Finance and Property Committee to decide upon contractors at their next meeting. The anticipated cost of these projects will be in the region of £9,000. It has also been agreed to resurface the car park but recently some of the holes have been patched, which may enable us to defer this job for a while. However there will be a cost in the region of £15,000 – maybe more in the foreseeable future.



##### **Funding not earmarked:**

We knew another **major job** would be the **replacement of the hall roof**, but thought we had a margin of about four years before the work became essential. More recently we learned we do not have the luxury of time to build up reserves following the aforementioned tasks which are also urgent.

The roof is over 50 years old, so has given good service. However, there are now frequent leaks through the zinc cladding, which has also penetrated the underlying wooden structures of the roof. We are informed that the roof's condition is far less stable than we thought, resulting in the need to act not immediately, but more quickly than previously anticipated. The replacement roofing will include insulation, so at the same time we will decrease our energy consumption and improve our carbon footprint.

The hall is the most heavily used part of our premises. Without it we cannot operate efficiently. As the summer school holidays are the time with lowest footfall, it has been agreed by the Church Council that this job will be carried out during the early part of those school holidays.

The Finance and Property Committee have looked at various options, received opinions from professionals and at their next meeting will consider the quotations, which range between £30,000 and £50,000.

## **The question is where are we going to find the money?**

We will need to engage in fund-raising.

Paul Baird has offered to help in leading a fund raising group.

At their recent meeting the stewards talked about fund raising activities which contribute as much to the social aspects of the church as raising money for the roof.

These will be helpful, though we will need to look elsewhere too.

We will explore what grants may be available from external sources.

We will seek support from the local community and users of our premises.

We anticipate the Gift Day element of the Church Anniversary 2016 will be used to meet some of the cost.

But the account will have to be settled before October. So how do we bridge the gap?

There is a way: Last year the church received a legacy from a former church member (£36,500). The money is in a Trust Fund. At the Annual Church Meeting, we agreed that at the next Church Council a proposal will be put to submit application for us to use those funds temporarily. The effect will be equivalent to an interest free loan. The commitment will be that in due course we replenish the Trust Fund by a sum equal to that withdrawn. In the first instance this can be achieved by reimbursing to the Trust Fund the donations received on Gift Day – which is 9 October and at a later date the Gift Aid which we will be able to claim on those contributions.

There are no short-cuts. All the work is needed to ensure the property remains a welcoming space for its mission and ministry.

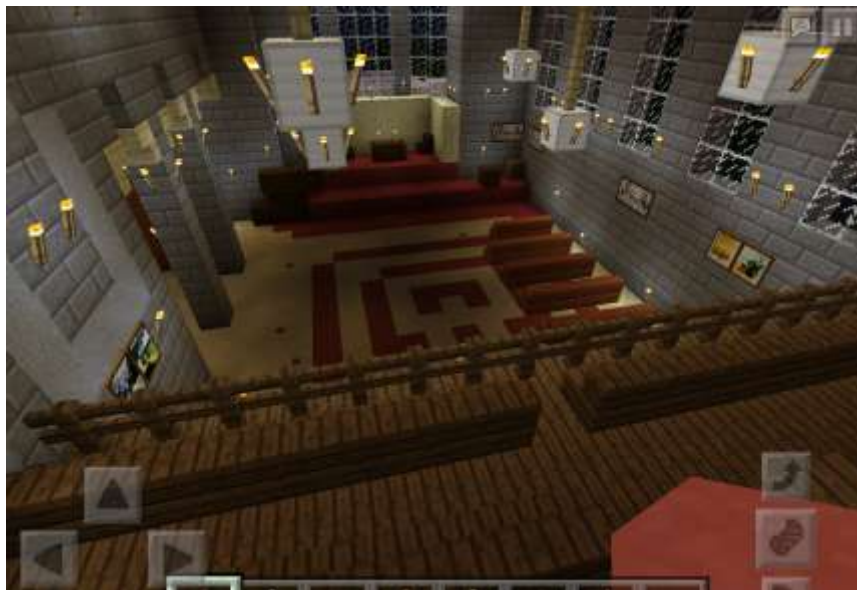
Over the coming weeks, through church notices and other bulletins there will be further “press releases”, to update everyone on decisions taken and progress made. We do hope that when the time comes you will give as generously as you are able, and in anticipation express our appreciation.

Joan Mayes

# CHISLEHURST METHODIST CHURCH FEATURES IN MINECRAFT - COURTESY OF BOYS BRIGADE

## The Minecraft Church

When someone mentions computer games to an adult the first reaction is usually a blank look followed by a shrug intimating 'what a waste of time'. However computer games don't have to be a waste of time and can be a lot of fun. They are often very educational. One such game we have been enjoying in Boys Brigade is called Minecraft. This is the digital version of Lego.

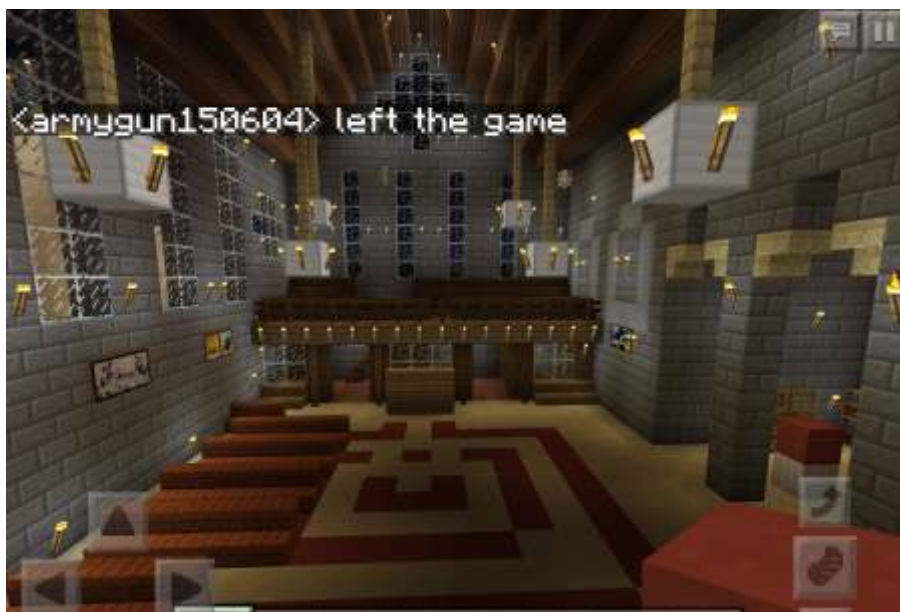


The game is played by using cubed blocks of different materials to build Lego style or to blend together on what the game calls a crafting table, to create tools and other things.

For example working in a 3 x 3 grid of squares, to create a torch, you would place coal in the top centre grid box and a wooden stick in the boxes directly underneath. You then store these torches to light up underground when digging or to light the insides of houses, in a quite medieval looking way.

By 'digging' you uncover, earth, granite, sand, diamonds and ore and sometimes magma!

By storing these 'finds' (but not the magma!) you are able to create everything you need.





Seeds can be planted to grow trees and food.

There are also animals for food, though we have noticed the children often like to build a fenced area and keep them as pets.

There are a few odd things called creepers, the occasional skeleton and sometimes a nasty spider, or two but killing these can produce treats to put in your storeroom.



Thomas and the Junior Section boys have really enjoyed this game which allows them to work together on a server but one different tablets and iphones all at the same time to further explore our relationship with the building that is our Church space.

Apart from being great fun It encourages creativity, perseverance and teamwork, building our own model of the church within the game so they now know how the building is put together.

The boys set about laying out the land, planting trees, building the roads, and building the church and halls. They then modelled the gardens, interiors and furniture. Using cubed blocks the boys have built the whole model.

Our Boys have been in the real church and also built their own digital version of it plus had lots of creative fun modelling it

Jacqui Hicks.



## CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN NORTH CYPRUS

Following the division of Cyprus in 1974, North Cyprus has been a nominally Muslim country. The Christians who used to live there moved south to (Greek) Cyprus, where the predominate religious buildings are Greek Orthodox. The mosques in the north of Cyprus are sometimes formerly Christian churches. The former Christian Cathedrals of Famagusta and Nicosia now have minarets and each has a mihrab for worship on the side, but the Christian Gothic architecture remains.

In May 2015 we holidayed in North Cyprus and visited a few churches that remain. Elsewhere we visited the ruins (largely destroyed in the past by earthquakes) of churches which were built in the early years of the Christian era. Some of these churches, or basilicas, were large. Cyprus was visited by Paul, Barnabas and other disciples, as described in Acts.

On the east coast are the extensive ruins of Salamis, a major Greek/Roman city. Paul preached in the Jewish Synagogues there, and later Christian churches were established. Just north of Salamis is the church and monastery of St. Barnabas, who was born in Cyprus and like Paul, was a Jew. He was educated in Jerusalem and returned to Cyprus in 45 A.D. with his nephew Mark. After his journeys with Saint Paul he returned to Salamis preaching Christianity. Because of these activities, Barnabas was killed by some Jews and his body dumped in the sea. His body was subsequently rescued and buried. The whereabouts of the tomb was not known for hundreds of years. Later a body was found, reburied, and in due course a Mausoleum was erected. Nearby a monastery and church were established, which we visited.



Mausoleum of St. Barnabas

Following the schism with the south of Cyprus the remaining monks moved south. The church with its icons & hangings however remain. Nearer the sea is the small Mausoleum, with a few Icons and a spiral staircase down to the crypt and tomb. A flat plain of sandy soil links the sites. Both sites are beautifully peaceful and remind us of the early days of Christianity.





Icon of St. Mamas

By contrast far to the west in North Cyprus, in the small town of Guzelyurt is the church of the St. Mamas Monastery. It appears to be an active Greek Orthodox church, with some visitors crossing at special times from the south. There are many icons, hangings and dark wood iconostasis. With pews remaining, it is an oasis of calm. St. Mamas is a popular Cypriot saint, with 13 other churches on the island named after him. He earned the respect of the Cypriot peasants in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, since he refused to pay his poll tax. The story goes that he arrived at the court where he was to be tried, astride a wild lion. The result was

he was exempted from taxes for life! He is also considered a healer of the deaf and those with hearing problems.

Alice Sennett

## CIRCUIT PRAYERS

The circuit produces a quarterly prayer leaflet so that all churches can pray for a specific church on a delegated Sunday.

To make it relevant and personal to each church the person writing the prayer each quarter has to know what's going on in their own church such as projects both building and spiritual; Messy, Junior, youth and adult church; house groups and so on.

Susan Cope is the contact point for Chislehurst. She can be contacted on one of 3 ways:

e-mail to [glsm@talktalk.net](mailto:glsm@talktalk.net) subject heading **Circuit Prayer** OR text to 07557100902 or write a note **marked Circuit Prayer**

## THE OLD CHAPEL - A NEW HOME FOR THE CHISLEHURST SOCIETY

If you walk down Queens Passage between Cafe Nero and Go Travel you will see the stunningly restored Old Chapel. The building was formerly known as Webbs Works and some may remember the printing works and bathroom showroom that operated from there. The building actually dates from 1856 when it was a Chapel of Ease, in use before the Church of The Annunciation was built (1870). It became a church school and a Liberal Club; The Salvation Army used the hall for five short years from 1898. Despite bomb damage in 1942 it had an interesting life as Ebcot Scientific Glassware factory from 1949 until 1988, manufacturing research apparatus for hospitals.

Charles Dunn, a former Chislehurst Society committee member left the residue of his estate to the Society in 2009 with the explicit purpose of acquiring its own property. It took some years before a suitable building was found for this purpose and then a considerable time to renovate it, but this wonderful legacy has enabled the society to put the building back into use for the benefit of the Chislehurst community, for which it was originally intended. The old chapel's life has come full circle. 'We are extremely grateful for Charles Dunn's generosity towards the village he loved so much' says Tony Allen, Chairman of The Chislehurst Society.

The Old Chapel consists of a ground floor community hall which can seat 60 people; it has kitchen, accessible toilets and nappy changing facilities and high spec audio visual equipment, including a hearing loop. The society offices are adjacent to the hall and there is a separate office space upstairs which is rented to a local business, Owen Dwelly Design.

The Community Hall on the ground floor of the Old Chapel is now available for hire. New enterprises running yoga and pilates classes have already taken up weekly sessions. All the Arts drama group is using the space as well as the May Queen Society.

Local partners in the community, The Trustees of the Commons, Friends of Scadbury and the Chislehurst Business Group hold their meetings at the Old Chapel but there is still room for other groups to hire the space.



The Hall is available to local groups throughout the year, seven days a week, between the hours of 9am and 10pm. You can submit the online booking form or make enquiries by phone or email.

Want to look around? Following the official opening by Bob Neill MP on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 12.30pm there will be an Open Day on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March from 10 – 4. Everyone is welcome, come along for a drink and biscuits and take it all in.

We are planning to hold coffee mornings every Wednesday from April 6<sup>th</sup> 9.45 – 11.30, there will be talks from time to time, information and history displays, and always good cake provided by April's Kitchen. We hope visitors, young and old will come together, share the space and make new friends. There are also embryonic plans to run a film club and put on some evening events which will be new ventures for the society.

Naturally enough this whole project has not been without problems, it might have been easier to knock the whole thing down and rebuild it but as heritage, planning and the environment are all part of our objects we are proud to have restored an old building whilst making an architectural statement at the same time. We have a building that will be an asset to the community and create a focal point for the Chislehurst Society into the next generation. We are a charity, run by volunteers and whilst we are enthusiastic we always need knowledgeable support. The Old Chapel is run by a small committee and we welcome volunteers to join us.

Do get in touch 0208 467 0900 [www.chislehurst-society.org.uk](http://www.chislehurst-society.org.uk) [email@chislehurst-society.org.uk](mailto:email@chislehurst-society.org.uk)

Joanna Friel  
Vice Chair  
The Chislehurst Society

**MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING:** the date set for the World's Biggest Coffee Morning this year is Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September, the last Friday in the month and we will once again be hosting a Coffee Morning in the church. More details in the coming months, but please note the date in your diaries.

Gillian Beecher Bryant



## THE GENERATIONS

We've all done the 'mewling and puking' bit, and we've all 'crept like snail unwillingly to school'. Some of us have reached the 'lean and slippered pantaloons' stage, or even, our friends might argue, our 'second childishness'. In the twentieth century, though, we came to think in terms of five stages of life rather than Shakespeare's full seven. There's childhood and adolescence, which taken together we understand as growing up. Then there's young adulthood, which all too quickly and imperceptibly becomes middle age. And finally, there's growing old.

Now, though, any life story based on this sequence is creaking at the seams as it struggles against the realities of our twenty-first century experience. For one thing, it seems really difficult these days to become a grown-up. What does being an adult imply? A brief list of essentials might include having somewhere of your own to live, having a job or source of income, and being able to support a family. If you need all this before you can make the transition into adulthood, then today you must surely feel doomed to eternal adolescence. For it all seems increasingly unattainable, continually disappearing over the horizon however hard you work and save.

Home is frequently still the hotel of Mum and Dad, as property prices and rents continue to climb even in a period of near-zero inflation. Jobs are insecure and poorly paid, and that's if you can get one. Of those aged 18-24, over three times the national average are unemployed. And as for bringing children into the world, who'd be foolish enough to do that when you've nowhere to house them and you're part of that new insecure social class 'the precariat'. Perhaps it's so hard to become an adult these days that we need to insert another stage into the sequence between adolescence and young adulthood: 'Eternal Internship', or some such.

And what about the other end of the scale? The Bard's lean and slippered pantaloons are today's intrepid world travellers or runners of charity marathons, when they can spare the time from their U3A studies. Indeed, they seem to positively revel in the acronym SKINs (Spend Kids' Inheritance Now). They are certainly not 'slipping gently into that dark night'. Their parents would have been astonished, for they spent *their* few years of retirement sitting in their armchairs watching the telly, or looking out of the window waiting for their children or grandchildren to visit. Both men and women in the UK now live on average for well over thirty years after retirement. Part of this increased life expectancy, of course, is due to medical advances; traditional old age still exists, it's just that it's postponed. So in sum there's obviously a case for talking about two life stages after we've finished work, not just one. Perhaps we should be honest with ourselves and call them, respectively, Second Adolescence and Second Childhood!

The young, then, seem to be having a hard time of it relative to their grandparents. The middle-aged may feel a bit fraught, what with being the Bank and Hotel of Mum

and Dad and at the same time making sure that their own parents don't do anything too silly. But the latter are having a fine old time of it. And the so-called Age of Austerity has only increased this divide between the young and the old. Our state pensions are now 'triple-locked', so that they won't increase at below 2.5 percent per annum whatever happens. We all get our freedom passes and our television licenses for free, even though many of us don't need this provision. In the meantime, poorer students have lost their maintenance grants, and those under 25 will not be paid the new 'national living wage'. State spending relating to childhood has fallen from £40 billion in 2009/10 to £36 billion in 2014/5; expenditure on pensions has risen from £94 billion to £103 billion in the same period.

At least since the Second World War, there has been an understanding between the generations, at the family and at the national level, that everyone who needs it will be looked after. Basically, those who are earning look after those who are not, be they children, or those suffering misfortune, or the retired. They do so as citizens through their taxes, and as human beings through their feelings of empathy and responsibility. The result has been a confidence both on the part of the young, that they will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and their dreams, and the old, that they will be supported in return for their support of others earlier in their lives.

But here's the thing: are we currently in danger of breaking this social contract between the generations? Are we giving the young such a hard time that they opt out of the unspoken deal? Will they balk at producing a next generation who will find life more difficult in an uncertain world? Will they sign a blank cheque to maintain the previous generation for ever longer in the style to which they have become accustomed? Easter is about regeneration at the personal level, to be sure. But let's not ignore the regeneration of our society.

Peter Herriot

**SINGING THE FAITH** there are about 20 full music books in the hymn book cupboard hardly used – what a shame. If you think about how we learn to read, *seeing* words whilst *hearing* them, it's broadly the same with reading music. Please don't be shy about taking the music books on a Sunday. If you look at the notation of hymns you know, you would pick up the some basic pointers to help with less familiar music. It would be wonderful to see the books dog-eared and worn out with use..... Gillian Beecher Bryant

## WINTER WARMER

I'm a big fan of coffee. It started with instant but more recently I took a swing towards buying beans, grinding them and experimenting with different ways of making great coffee at home. That in turn has affected the shops I buy take away coffee from and has lead Rachael and I to have many a conversation about the kind of taste certain machines might make when we're out. It's becoming a shared passion. I've started to look at a coffee (latte in my case) as a treat rather than a drink.

I recently travelled to a place in London that I was unfamiliar with. I was delighted to see what I thought would be a shop which would be able to sell me a great coffee. All the signs were good and I walked out pleased with my decision.

Within three minutes my latte was in the hands of a homeless man.

Not something I do often, but I felt compelled and I'm not 100% sure why. What makes us act in this way? I watched 10 minutes of a programme the night before about homelessness, by Professor Green, a rapper who I struggle to listen to musically but a personality who I greatly respect. St Mungo's estimate the number of people sleeping rough has increase in England by around 30% in the last 12 months. Around 3,500 people on any one night.

However, even these numbers are likely flawed - that's taken by counting people on the street and doesn't include the hidden homeless, people out of sight, crashing on sofa's and in hostels and temporary accommodation. Who know's what the real figure is? Does it really matter?

So maybe I felt sorry for the homeless guy. Maybe I felt guilty. Maybe I thought I lack the ability to do much more, like open up my home to him. But at that point, at that moment in time I felt a small connection to him.

In one way or another we both left feeling a little bit warmer. Maybe that's enough for now.

Paul Baird



**LENT/EASTER APPEAL 2016** Each year we focus on a specific aspect during Lent. This year the stewards decided upon health and more specifically mental health. Statistically one in four people throughout Britain will experience some type of mental health problem during the year, demonstrating this is a hidden illness which affects many people.

As a resource, we are drawing upon Lent Course materials published by the London District – Social Responsibility Group. During the coming weeks each service will have a different focus.

We invite you to support two charities – 'Mind' a mental health charity in this country and the Methodist Church Nigeria, for their social welfare and health care programmes (NHCP).

**Donations will be received on Easter Day – please give generously**

**NHCP** <http://www.nhcp.org.uk/> In the rural areas of Nigeria live some of the poorest people in the world, and in 1992, the Wesley Guild decided that it should seek to re-establish the task of supporting primary health care within Nigeria as it had originally done in its early years at Ilesha in 1912. Since then support has grown within the Guild movement, the wider church, Christian Guild Holidays, other organisations and from individuals.



nursing and midwifery.

Today they are financially supporting three centres for mentally ill people in addition to other hospitals and health centres. NHCP is also committed to assist in the training and education of health workers; supporting a College of Health Technology, which trains community health workers and they are actively involved in promoting a school of



**MIND** <http://www.mind.org.uk/>



Mind provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding, and won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets support and respect.

*They say "Every year, one in four of us will experience a mental health problem. But hundreds of thousands of people are still struggling. We believe no-one should have to face a mental health problem alone. We'll listen, give you support and advice, and fight your corner."*



**ALUMINIUM FOIL** I sold several bags full recently and gave the cash to Messy Church - about £20 gathered over about 6 months – useful if not empire building. The sale price is a bit down as the metals market fluctuates. It is all wonderfully clean for which many thanks – please practise flattening it a bit more: standing on it works a treat. Gillian Beecher Bryant

# **SERVICES AT CHISLEHURST METHODIST CHURCH**

## **STARTING AT 1030AM**

### **PREACHERS**

Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Mrs Joan Mayes
Easter Day	
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Holy Communion
	Rev'd Duncan MacBean
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	Mrs Maggie Ayres
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> April	All Age Service
	Rev'd Duncan MacBean
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> April	Mr John Sennett
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> May	Holy Communion
	Rev'd Duncan MacBean
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Mr Chris Price
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> May	All Age Parade Service
	Rev'd Duncan MacBean
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Mrs Julie Gardner
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> May	Worship Leaders

### **Midweek Services**

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



# Celebrate Easter 2016 at...

## **Palm Sunday**

10.30am 20<sup>th</sup> March

## **Maundy Thursday**

12.45pm 24<sup>th</sup> March

Holy Communion

“The Last Supper”



## **Good Friday**

9.30am 25<sup>th</sup> March

Walk of Witness

Starts from Methodist  
Church



## **Easter Day Service**

10.30am

# **Chislehurst Methodist Church**



Chislehurst Methodist Church  
Prince Imperial Road  
Chislehurst  
Kent  
BR7 5LX

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