



# LINK



*The magazine for Hove Methodist Church*  
Issue No 151 *March 2009*



# HOVE METHODIST CHURCH

Portland Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 5DR

**Registered Charity No 1127826**

(Pay Phone : (01273) 774726)

Our Mission Statement : ***” To share the love of God, as revealed by Christ, through the Holy Spirit.”***

## **MINISTER**

**Rev. Keith Edwards**

Telephone : (01273) 732536

email : edwards425@btinternet.com

## **'LINK' EDITOR**

**Mr. Terry Pomfrey**

Telephone: (01273) 439477

Email : terry@tpmpomfrey.fsnet.co.uk

## **CHURCH TREASURER**

**Mr. Michael Hill**

Telephone : (01273) 779432

email : Hill.michael4@sky.com

## **CHURCH STEWARDS:**

Mrs Stella Goddard\*, Mr John Symes,  
Mrs Kathlyn Taylor\* and Mr Barry Wilson.

\* = Joint senior stewards

## **CHURCH OFFICE**

Telephone and fax : (01273) 324600

email : hmc.hove@tiscali.co.uk

## **WEBSITE**

[www.hovemethodistchurch.co.uk](http://www.hovemethodistchurch.co.uk)

# Rev Keith Edwards



Dear Friends,

I like to fix things in my spare time – mobile phones, PDAs, computers and printers. I have fixed plenty of printers and remember one that I acquired which didn't print. I took it apart and found that the print heads were clogged with semi-dried up gungy ink – not uncommon these days. It took me ages to clean them and unfortunately when I put them back into the printer it still didn't print. So I took the printer apart completely and discovered that within the printer there was a hidden blockage. A tube that carries away waste ink was completely blocked and was stopping the whole printer from working. It took me a while to find the hidden blockage but once I found it I cleaned the tube and everything worked the way it should.

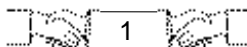
We are in the season of Lent, a time when we should be reflecting on our lives and how God has a plan for us all, our purpose. How Jesus has taken our sinful lives and turned them upside down by forgiving us no matter what we have done, no matter how clogged up with sin and gunge we were. I rejoice in the fact that Jesus sets us free from sin and death and gives us a clean start, but I wonder how many of us may have a hidden blockage?

You know what I mean: we have the outward appearance of being clean, of functioning correctly, of fulfilling God's plan for our lives, but there is something holding us back, something stopping us from submitting wholly to Jesus – a hidden blockage. The blockage may take many forms. Jesus once identified several people with hidden blockages, the rich man in Matthew 19:16 who couldn't face letting go of his love for money and riches. In Luke 14:15-23, we see people come up with various excuses for not committing their lives to Jesus, "*I've just bought a field I want to look at*", "*I've just bought some oxen that I want to test*", "*I've just got married*". All of these were perfectly valid things to do, yet I can't help thinking that there were some hidden blockages that really prevented these people from giving of themselves to God.

So as we journey through Lent and towards Easter, I encourage you to deepen your relationship with Jesus, to study the bible, perhaps join one of the study groups looking at the resurrection. I also encourage you to spend time in reflecting on your journey with Christ and ask Him to help you not just to clean away the surface grime, but to search deeply and find any hidden blockages in your life that are stopping you from truly being the person that He has called you to be.

Grace and peace to you.

*Keith Edwards*





### Pray, Plan, Do, Review

The news on the TV and radio in the first few weeks of 2009 has been all doom and gloom. I heard about the effects of the deepening credit crisis, the fighting between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and the collapse of the Zimbabwean power sharing negotiations, and I wonder what does God make of it all?

If you add to all this, global warming as well, we do seem to be in a pretty good old mess.

What can we do to change things? First off we can all pray, and personally I don't do enough praying.

Next we can plan to do something which will make a difference here, where we are.

Then do it, and get others to help you. Lastly, when you have done it, review what you have done, not to criticise but in order to do it better next time.

If we all do this, we will all be very busy in 2009 and perhaps our corner of the world will be changed a little for the better.

### One Hundred years ago:

The Rev Earnest J. B. Kirtlan, Minister of Hove from 1908-1912, was a famous open air preacher and a popular and gifted lecturer. In 1909 there was still a deficit of £60 which persisted from the time of the new Church building, and the Rev. Kirtlan offered to give a series of six lectures at the Town Hall to help raise funds. The lectures were a great success, making a profit of £11 which was a large sum of money.

### Fifty years ago:

3rd Feb.1959: Buddy Holly, 22, Jiles P Richardson - known as the Big Bopper - 28, and Ritchie Valens, 17, died in a crash shortly after take-off from Clear Lake, Iowa.

### Thirty years ago:

1st Feb.1979: Exiled religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini made a triumphant return to Iran after 14 years in exile.

Up to five million people lined the streets of the nation's capital, Tehran, to witness the homecoming of the Shia Muslim imam.

He was imprisoned by the Shah in 1963 for his opposition to reforms and was expelled the following year, to Iraq - via Turkey. He spent the last few months of his exile in France, near Paris, from where he co-ordinated the revolution in January that forced the Shah of Iran to go into hiding. The title Ayatollah means Sign of God.

## ***A Free Lunch***

That's what our Church gave to about 80 guests and another ten people in their own homes on Christmas Day. About thirty volunteers had a free meal too, though they earned it by giving their time to prepare and cook, meet and greet, wait and serve, host and entertain, wash and clear-up, etc. And then there were the forty, or so, drivers who gave their time and petrol to bring and fetch the guests, or deliver the take-outs. If you then add in those who decorated and laid out the halls, cooked and sliced the turkeys, sourced and provided the funds, bought the shopping, wrapped the presents, wrote in the cards and did all the administration and office work, over several months, you could argue that it did come at a cost.

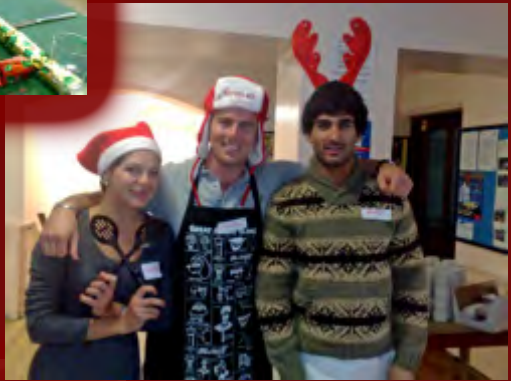
Somehow, however, the impression left by our Christmas Lunch is one of generosity and happiness more than outweighing worry and work. That view was shared by our Mayor, his wife and daughter, the Peltzer-Dunn family, who joined in the day – not just as dignitaries but as volunteers alongside the rest of us. They said it was a privilege to be able to join us in providing for those who would otherwise have been lonely on Christmas Day.

It was indeed a privilege for the Searchers Home Group to have hosted the event this year and we would like to place on record our gratitude to Felicity in our Office for handling all the mailings, correspondence emails and phone calls. Also we were greatly indebted to Terry Pomfrey for helping us get started and for publicising the event. We learned as we progressed and, together with the Office, can pass on a good portfolio to our successors. While some of us will be able to help in some ways this year, we will be looking to hand on the coordination to another group during the year. It worked well having a group to share the load and help each other, so we would commend each small group in the church to consider doing it for a year and then passing it on, and any of us would be happy to discuss what it involves.

Meanwhile, overleaf are a few photographs taken by a Muslim visitor, who was greatly impressed by our 'Christianity in action'. We, in turn, were impressed to know that amongst our drivers were at least one Jew and one Buddhist, who actively supported what we were doing and worked alongside us.

At so many levels, this was a blessed day, if not entirely free.

*Geoffrey Farrar, Jonathan & Charlotte Gravestock, Mark & Alison Gregory,  
Elin Star, Jane Tanner, Chris & Anna Walsh.*



## ***Introduction to the Bible - Passover and the Last Supper***

Passover (Pesach in Hebrew) is the major feast of the Jewish year. The Jews remember how God secured their release from slavery in Egypt. In one night he slew the first-born of every Egyptian family, but 'passed over' the families of the Hebrews. Jews have celebrated Passover since about 1300 BC, (following the rules in Exodus 13).

The festival is held on the 14th day of the month of Nisan. Traditionally, lambs for every household were sacrificed in the Temple in the late afternoon. They were roasted and eaten at a family meal that evening, which is now 15th Nisan, as the next day begins at sunset.

Before the meal begins, all hands are ceremonially washed, grace is said, and the bread broken. The Passover food includes bitter herbs, which are dipped in sauce and distributed, and unleavened bread. The original Passover bread was unleavened because it was made in haste, with no time for the yeast to raise the dough.

Every part of the meal is symbolic, the bitter herbs are a reminder of the bitterness of slavery. During the meal, the head of the house retells the story of the Passover. The family celebrates God's goodness in rescuing his people from slavery and making them his own nation. It is no accident that the death of Jesus took place in Jerusalem at Passover. His self-offering and death was the fulfilment of this great festival of deliverance. Jesus was the perfect lamb of God, who gave his life to atone for the sin of the world. Because of his death, the judgment of God now 'passes over' all who turn to him. His rescue is from slavery, sin and death, His freedom is eternal life with God.

For the Last Supper, Jesus had arranged to borrow a room in Jerusalem. This is the 'upper room', where he was to celebrate the Passover with his disciples.

This is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread - the day before the lambs were killed in the Temple. Jesus, aware that his arrest was imminent, decided to share the Passover meal with his disciples a day early. This being the case, there would have been no roast lamb (but the true Lamb of God is with them).

During the meal, Jesus tells the disciples that one of them will betray him. They are shocked, and protest. When Judas asks if it is him, he calls Jesus 'Rabbi' ('teacher'), rather than Lord. Jesus responds that Judas is indeed the one. Judas is fulfilling a prophecy of betrayal by a close friend (Psalm 41:9).



Jesus, as the host, takes the unleavened bread and blesses God and breaks the bread. The traditional prayer is: `Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who bringest forth bread from the earth.' At this point Jesus departs from the Passover tradition and gives a new meaning to the bread. He says to his disciples, `Take and eat; this is my body.' This is a stunning reinterpretation of the broken bread. It becomes a symbol of the broken body of Jesus - the central focus of the Holy Communion, or Eucharist, in the Christian church.

Then as now, Passover followed a fairly standard pattern, a prayer and the first cup of wine, after the breaking of bread comes the sharing of the second cup of wine. There are four special cups of wine at a Passover meal, and when it is time for the third cup, Jesus takes the cup, gives thanks to God and offers it to his disciples. He declares that this is his blood, which is poured out for many. This pouring-out was predicted by the prophet Isaiah in his description of the suffering servant (Isaiah 53:12). The life of Jesus, poured out on the cross, will seal a new covenant between God and humankind.

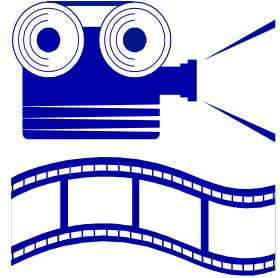
The old covenant was sealed with the blood of a bull sprinkled over the people (Exodus 24:8). It was a covenant that depended on the keeping of the law, and it was broken almost immediately. Now Jesus is making a new covenant, which is a covenant of forgiveness. This forgiveness is secured by offering his own life as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

The fourth cup of wine at the Passover meal looks forward to the Messiah's banquet in the kingdom of God. Jesus says he won't drink it until that great day comes. Having finished the meal, they sing a hymn - the last part of the Hallel (Psalms 115-118). Leaving the upper room, Jesus and the disciples walk together to the Mount of Olives.

*Terry Pomfrey*

## Film Nights

Over the past year, I've been really lucky in being invited to various film festivals around the world to represent the documentary about the band I play in and organise ('Heavy Load'). My favourite part of these has been sitting in bars afterwards talking about what I've just seen with other festival goers and film makers. As a result, I've met new friends from faraway places. I'm no film buff (and rarely get to go to the pictures, having four kids) but it's been a wonderful experience. I haven't enjoyed everything I've seen, I've also been disturbed, bored senseless and confused but having the opportunity to talk about the films afterwards has allowed me a greater insight in to what the films might be trying to say and how other people have been affected by them.



This has prompted me to start monthly 'Film Nights' partly for us to share thought - provoking films with each other but also as a place for us to share time together and invite friends or new visitors to the church. The atmosphere will be informal and I'm hoping that you're all going to be able to help by suggesting films to be shown, and coming along. The films may well not have an overtly Christian theme but will hopefully have a message which resonates with us or challenges us in some way and also help us to think about how we as a church engage with modern culture and society. (Which rules out Mama Mia – sorry Rachel!) But above all the aim is for us to meet each other, talk and develop friendships.

I'll also be planning some extra children's screenings at more family friendly times in the future.

The nights will be on the first Thursday of the month at 8pm in the church (entrance is free and there will be refreshments.)

If you want to know any more please get in touch.

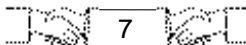
*Paul Richards*

## I say...

“Never let yourself be limited by your own imagination. Just go for it.”

*Natalie Du Toit,*

*(Olympic gold medallist & world recorder holder swimmer, who swam in Beijing in both able body & paraplegic events.)*



# *Notable prayers, Richard of Chichester*

*Rev. Margaret Wallwork*

***Thanks be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits which you hast given me, for all the pains and insults which you have borne for me.  
O merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly.***

This prayer was written by Richard of Chichester, who died at Dover on 3rd April 1253 at the age of 56. He was one of the most loved and respected bishops of his time. His father was a prosperous farmer in Worcestershire, and although Richard began life as a plough boy, he later studied at the universities of Oxford, and Paris. When he returned to England he was made Chancellor of Oxford University. He was over 40 when he became a priest, but within a couple of years he had been elected Bishop of Chichester. There were many abuses in the church in the thirteenth century, and although Richard set himself to reform them, such was his care for his people and so humble was he, that he was greatly loved by all.

The prayer is unusual for two reasons. One is that it begins on a note of thanksgiving. The other is that it is addressed to Jesus. We thank our Lord Jesus Christ for all the good things he has given us, but most especially for all the benefits of his passion. The pains and insults he endured were borne for us. 'Because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the stripes he received' (*Isaiah 53.5*). By his cross he has broken the power of sin and set us free.

'This then is a prayer to be said beneath the cross of Jesus, and to be said not only with gratitude, but with humility and penitence. It is the prayer of a sinner who acknowledges his eternal indebtedness to Jesus Christ: who knows that he has been bought with a price.' (Frank Colquhoun)

The first sentence of the prayer comes from Richard himself – the words were spoken on his deathbed. The rest was added later, probably in the early twentieth century, to reflect his spirit and influence.

Jesus is addressed by three wonderful titles - Redeemer, Friend and Brother. As Redeemer, Jesus is the one who has rescued us from slavery to sin, and this thought links up with the beginning of the prayer. When we remember our redemption, let us also remember what it cost Jesus - he gave his life for the sin of the world. He knew not only the agony of physical suffering, but also the agony of feeling himself abandoned by his Father.

But he is not only our Saviour, he is also our Friend. The word is not used of Jesus in the New Testament, but the idea is there. The foundation of friendship is a love that is deep and strong and true - such love as Christ has for us. More than that, Jesus said, 'I have called you friends' (*John 15.15*), and if we are his friends then surely we may call him ours, so long as we remain true to him, and do what he commands (*John 15.14*).

## *Pencil Christian*

One Sunday service, Rev. Keith Edwards explained that Jesus often used ordinary every day objects to describe ways of being more “God like”.

Keith then challenged us by giving all a pencil, then asking each of us to think how a pencil can show us how to be “good Christians”.

Here are just a few of the replies:-

- : Several different things come together to make one useful object.
- : The wood reminds us of the cross
- : The point reminds us of the nails and the crown of thorns.
- : The point may be worn out but can be made sharp again and therefore useful.
- : Pencils may look the same, but each one is unique.
- : Each pencil is full of potential.
- : Each pencil is waiting to be used.
- : Each pencil can be a witness, as they can be used to record events.
- : Some pencils are hard and some are soft.
- : Pencils can be all colourful, brightening the world.

In which way are we like a pencil?

Some times we may feel that life has worn us down and we have no point, but we can always look to Christ who will sharpen and renew us.

*Sandy Pomfrey*

## *Heard at Hove*

“God meets us in bread and wine, which sustances and holds us for all eternity”.

*Rev. Kathleen Allen. (02.05.04)*

“Jesus talks to people personally. He comes into their lives and this makes all the difference”.

*Mrs Cynthia Tudor, (Local preacher from the Brighton & Hove Circuit).  
First Sunday in Advent 28.11.04*

“St Paul advises, that the gifts we are given are to be used in the community so they remain the gift of God”

*Frances Timpson (Local preacher from the Brighton & Hove Circuit) 28/08/2005*

“It is amazing, God chose us ordinary people to do his work”

*Rev. Keith Edwards 07/10/2007*

## *View from the Pew... A spiritual springclean*

Very many years ago, about this time of year, my mother would begin her annual three act drama of Spring Cleaning. Act One Scene One saw dust sheets spread over most of the downstairs furniture; that took care of Sunday evening. Scene Two was the dawn arrival of the chimney sweep while the rest of Monday was Scene Three, clearing up after him. Tuesday took up the whole of Act Two and was devoted to windows. The heavy winter curtains came down, later to be washed, ironed and put away. Then all the windows were cleaned, inside and out. During the war, window cleaners were not a reserved occupation and as a race seemed to have disappeared. Finally the summer curtains were hung and mother called it a day.

Act Three took up the rest of the week. Every nook, cranny and surface was 'hoovered', swept or polished at the end of which the whole house was pungent with furniture polish and my bedroom, normally a comfortable muddle, was so tidy I could not find a thing - certainly not a collar stud. You have to be very ancient to remember detachable collars, braces and bowler hats. Throughout this drama catering became somewhat haphazard and father was happier than normal to go to work; doubtless he felt safer among his steaming boilers and roaring turbines. On the seventh day, mother laboured not, nor did our man servant, or maid servant. Nor our cattle nor the stranger within our gates.

We are now in the time of Lent. For the majority of people, including many who regard themselves as Christians, it goes virtually unnoticed, True some make a particular sacrifice, some go to study groups or devotional classes but in the main many do nothing, more concerned with giving the lawn its first mow and booking the continental holiday. Now it is common knowledge I am no theologian and I might well be accused of 'cribbing' the thoughts which came out of 'Forty Days'. But should we not regard Lent as a time and opportunity for a spiritual spring clean, stand back from ourselves and ask searching questions? How regular is our Bible study, how strong is our prayer life, how outward and obvious our Christian witness ? Having just asked myself these same questions it is clear to me that the spiritual broom and duster are urgently needed.

*Malcolm McSorley*

*I am most grateful to those who have sent kind messages about my literary offerings.*

*I have a 'writer's block' about the next edition. Helpful suggestions welcome, or perhaps pack up.*

# 40 DAYS OF PURPOSE

## Extracts from The purpose Driven life

The way you're "wired" is not an accident. God didn't give you your abilities for selfish purposes. They were given to benefit others, just as others were given abilities for your benefit.

Worship has nothing to do with the style or volume or speed of a song. God loves all kinds of music because he invented it all fast and slow, loud and soft, old and new. You probably don't like it all, but God does! If it is offered to God in spirit and truth, it is an act of worship.

The key to friendship with God, he said, is not changing what you do, but changing your attitude toward what you do. What you normally do for yourself you begin doing for God, whether it is eating, bathing, working, relaxing, or taking out the trash.

We are often challenged to do "great things" for God. Actually, God is more pleased when we do small things for him out of loving obedience. They may be unnoticed by others, but God notices them and considers them acts of worship. Great opportunities may come once in a lifetime, but small opportunities surround us every day.

God wants you to be a living sacrifice. He wants you to live for him! However, the problem with a living sacrifice is that it can crawl off the altar, and we often do that. We sing, "Onward, Christian Soldiers" on Sunday, then go AWOL on Monday.

When you give someone your time, you are giving them a portion of your life that you'll never get back.

God wants you to love real people, not ideal people. You can spend a lifetime searching for the perfect church, but you will never find it. You are called to love imperfect sinners, just as God does.

Many believers are more faithful to reading their daily newspaper than their Bibles. It's no wonder we don't grow. We can't watch television for three hours, then read the Bible for three minutes and expect to grow.

Even temptation becomes a steppingstone rather than a stumbling block when you realize that it is just as much an occasion to do the right thing. Temptation simply provides the choice.

God never wastes anything. He would not give you abilities, interests, talents, gifts, personality, and life experiences unless he intended to use them for his glory.

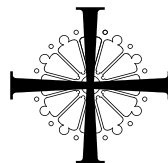
Servants finish their tasks, fulfill their responsibilities, keep their promises, and complete their commitments. They don't leave a job half undone, and they don't quit when they get discouraged.

When you think of the limitation in your life, you may be tempted to conclude, "God could never use me." But God is never limited by our limitations.

So much of what we waste our energy on will not matter even a year from now, much less for eternity.

Neither past nor future generations can serve God's purpose in this generation. Only we can.

## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



Since the last issue of Link we have the following to report.

**Birth** : Congratulations **Marianne** and **Mike Brand** on the safe arrival of their second child **Harry Robert William** born 20/01/2009 weighing 8 lb 13.5 oz, a brother for Charlie. A second grand child for Sue and David Sawyer.

**Baptism** : our best wishes to the friends and families of **Elenor Mead** and **Domenico Lorenza Nappi** who were recently baptised at the Church.

### **Called to Glory** :

It is with sadness that we report the deaths of **Andrew Freeman, John Humphrey** (father of Charlotte Gravestock) and **Gladys Lindup** who was a member of the Church.

We extend our love and sympathy to the families and friends of the aforementioned.

### **Thank you** :

To all who went carol singing, raising £600 for **Action for Children**. and to all who have supported "Action for children" throughout 2008.

To all who helped with the annual Christmas Day Lunch, and those who provided transport on the day.

To all who supported collections at our Christmas services, Gift Day Service, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, raising a total of £440.91 for **Methodist Relief and Development Fund**.

To Liz Richards Easen, who with the help of her pupils and friends organised a musical concert, raising funds for the **Nazareth Project**.

To all who took part in **Christigle Service** and those who supported it raising £39.66 for **Tevor Mann Special Care Baby Unit**.

### **Congratulations** :

To **Rob** and **Joy Hole** who recently celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary.

**Barry Wilson** who celebrated his sixtieth birthday on the 20th December 2008

## *General church news*

### **Who Does What in our Church - updates**

In the December edition of Link we issued a list of Who Does What in our Church. It has been brought to my attention that there were some notable omissions and these are as follows:

**Roger Straker** who administers the Envelope System,

**Ian Stone** who is our Christian Aid organiser

**Peter Bowles** who is the Assistant Church Treasurer.

It is worth noting that Peter does most of the week by week cashiering, book-keeping and accounting for the church and this is a substantial undertaking done most willingly by Peter. Our financial operation is the same level as a small/medium business.

*("if there are any more omissions please let me know" ED.)*

May I take this opportunity on behalf of the entire congregation, to thank all those who fill the many roles that are required for day to day running of our church.

P.S. if you are willing to help in any way, but are unsure what you can do, please talk to any steward and we will find a way of using your talents.

### **AquaBox**

As you know, in 2008 we managed to fill eight AquaBoxes, which have been dispatched, and are believed to be in use in Maldives or Ghana.

The aim for 2009 is to fill another eight AquaBoxes. Look out for more information in the weekly news notes soon.

### **Polka Tots Christmas Party**

A "full house" of toddlers and parents enjoyed the Polka Tots' Christmas party on 19th December. Vera Miles produced her usual wonderful spread of food and Father Christmas made his annual visit with lots of gifts for the children.

There was an opportunity to thank our core staff when Father Christmas had gifts for Rose Bateman, Vera Miles, Barry Wilson, and Elizabeth Wilson.

### **Christian Aid Week**

Just a reminder that Christian Aid Week is from the 10th to 17th May. If you can help in any way or require more information, please contact Ian Stone via the church office.

### **Teddy Edward Service**

I am pleased to announce that the ten minute Service for under fives, will be resuming on the first Friday of each month commencing from 6th March at 1.50 pm.

## WESTBOURNE WARD CHURCHES.....CAR PARKING

Below are the minutes of a meeting to give voice to problems churches in Hove face with regards to the current parking restrictions that was held on 7th February 2009 at St. Philips Church New Church Road:

Subject of meeting: problems regarding the parking of cars by church users.

Those present were: Town Council Officers Carol Rogers.....traffic regulator and Steve Parish of N.C.P. Parking Policy Enforcer. Also, Westbourne Ward Councillors Brian Oxley and Denis Cobb.

The main stream churches in the Ward were all represented bar one. Three representatives from our own church were present: Peter Bowles, Kathleen Taylor and Rose Bateman.

Father Stephens of St Phillips explained the purpose of the meeting, which was to discuss problems that all churches in the area are having with car parking and for suggestions to be given to improve the situation.

Council representatives then made it clear that they were in no position to make changes, but were at the meeting to listen to what was said and to pass this on to the appropriate people in the Council.

Most of the points raised were about the lack of parking spaces available, the inadequate amount of time available i.e. 4 hours, the cost of parking for voluntary workers, loss of income to churches which survive on 'free giving'. Also, the 7 day a week, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. regime, which applies across all of the area (R zone) Other zones have free parking on Sundays and restrictions finish at 6pm.

Apart from planning issues, I felt it necessary to express the feeling of intimidation felt by those of us who frequently fall foul of the present Warden Patrol system, and I had a brief chance to give some examples.

Suggestions were for Free Parking on Sundays, or, what is known as the 'light touch' be put in place, (i.e. 3 hours free parking on Sundays ) or a voucher system, such as residents can buy.

St. Patricks Road was mentioned as being almost free of main access to the houses and with no access to the main road and therefore more than adequate for cars to park without causing problems. Christ the King Church has problems which are peculiar to where they are and had specific suggestions.

We were assured that we would be informed of the council meeting at which our complaints and suggestions would be brought up. It will be an Open Meeting, so it will be an opportunity for everyone to take part in the democratic process.

*Rose Bateman*

## *Lent Home Groups*

The six weeks leading up to Easter are a valuable period for reflection on our faith and sharing gifts and insights. As there will be no ecumenical groups in our area this year, Lent offers a good opportunity to build on the spiritual growth achieved through our Forty Days of Purpose. Many of us found that experience of meeting weekly for consecutive weeks enabled God to help us grow closer and deeper fellowship and understanding.

Our Church plans to offer study material, produced by some of our own members, to facilitate home group meetings during the first four weeks of lent, the fifth week being set aside for socialising together and the sixth for joint Holy Week events.

Our existing home groups are encouraged to arrange weekly meetings during Lent, which are open to people from other, or no, groups who wish to join in. Study material will be circulated to group leaders, to use as they and their groups see fit, on the theme of 'Resurrection'.

Please join in and/or pray that we may draw nearer to God and each other through this time of devotion.

Thank you all.

*Jonathan Gravestock  
Small Group Coordinator*

## *News in Brief*

Morgan Tsvangirai, Leader of Zimbabwe's opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change, was sworn in as the country's Prime Minister today (11/02/2009).

The signing of the agreement is the culmination of months of strained negotiations over power-sharing, following the violent election last year.

Robert Mugabe, who has led Zimbabwe since its independence in 1980, remains as president and the two men will have to work together to try to end the dire situation which Zimbabwe is in. Many of its problems have been blamed on the mismanagement of Zanu-PF.



*TV and radio reports 3th Feb 2009*

# *In our area... East Sussex Association for blind and partially sighted people*

Charity no. 209535

**East Sussex Association for blind and partially sighted people (ESAB)** aims to enhance the lives of people with sight loss by offering a range of support and services. These include help in adjusting to sight loss, promoting independence, preventing social isolation, empowering people with sight loss and maximising opportunity for people with sight loss.

There is a Resource Centre at the headquarters in Herstmonceux, with displays of various aids and equipment for people to try for themselves. The products are designed to make everyday tasks easier and help people maintain their independence. The centre is open Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm. Home visits and group visits to the centre can also be arranged.

There are 14 local social groups throughout East Sussex that meet regularly with transport provided where possible. The help of volunteer drivers is always welcome to collect our members from the surrounding area so that they are able to attend their social group. Mileage expenses are paid at 40p/mile and training on safe guiding skills is provided. If you are interested in attending the group or becoming a volunteer please contact us for further information.

When a person first becomes visually impaired or their eye condition worsens, we can arrange a visit to their home to offer support and information on local and national services that are available, including advice on how to access benefits.

Training courses are also provided to help promote independence and build confidence. These cover a range of subjects including Cookery, IT and Enhanced Living Skills - help with everyday tasks. We also offer Vision Awareness Training for relatives, carers and paid workers to help understand the needs of people with sight loss.

Our members receive a free regular newsletter in large print, on cassette tape or by email and there is an audio and visual library providing audio books and audio described videos free through the post. Through British Wireless for the Blind we can provide, on loan, radio, tape and CD equipment to people who are registered blind or partially sighted.

We are always happy to provide information and advice for visually impaired people and their families. Please do not hesitate to contact us on 01323 832252 or visit our website [www.eastsussexblind.org](http://www.eastsussexblind.org)

# MAF in the Sudan

## Restoring sight in Southern Sudan



Africa's largest country Sudan is never far from our television screens and newspapers.

Regular news focuses on Darfur as well as on the problems in the south following two decades of civil war.

Cataracts are one of the major causes of unnecessary blindness in southern Sudan, with many people living in darkness. Many sufferers can have cataracts reversed by a simple operation. Christian Blind Mission (CBM) teams regularly fly with MAF to remote areas where people have been unable to receive eye care. There, they spend up to two weeks working continuously to try to meet the needs.

'I can see. I can see! Imagine. I came to Aweil and now I can see' This was the shout of one woman as she looked at her arms and counted her fingers after her bandages were removed following surgery in Aweil. The woman had been blind for ten years.

When the CBM team landed at Aweil, Dr Sture Nyholm described it an 'gloomy, worn out, dusty and depressing.' Aweil is a major town surrounded by swamps and was a stronghold of the north during the civil war. Consequently, there has been little development, and most houses and buildings are falling apart. There was limited access to the outside world until the signing of the peace agreement in 2005.

This was the first visit of the team. Dr Nyholm writes, 'What we see when we approach the hospital compound exceeds our most vivid expectations. Hundreds of patients camping all over, and it is going to get worse. In the middle of our outreach, the culmination of the patient attendance and the number of patients sleeping and sitting all over the hospital is estimated to be 1,500-2,000.'

By the end of their 12 days, they had run out of supplies but had examined 742 patients and operated on 335 people. One two-year-old child had been hit by the horn of a cow and his eye had been badly sutured. The team was able to remove the sutures and repair his eye. Thankfully, there was no permanent damage.

Dr Nyholm shares, 'We are so grateful for what could be achieved in Aweil. Many eyes have been opened, vision has been restored.' The team plans to return in April to continue its work.

## Behind the Hymn

Frances Havergal

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879), poet and hymn-writer, was the youngest child of William Henry Havergal, by his first wife, Jane. Frances was born December 14th, 1836 at her father's rectory at Astley, Worcestershire. From her early years she showed exceptional intellectual power, but owing to her delicate health, systematic study was discouraged. In 1852 she accompanied her father and his second wife to Germany. Frances studied for more than a year in the Louisenschule at Düsseldorf and with the family of a German pastor at Obercassel, and returned to England in December 1853.

Frances wrote verses from the age of seven with remarkable fluency, and her poems were soon admitted into '*Good Words*' and other religious periodicals. In 1865-6 she returned to Germany, and sought the opinion of the musician Hiller on her musical talents. Hiller saw talent in her melodies, and highly praised her harmonies.

Throughout her life, she energetically engaged in religious and philanthropic work. Miss Havergal published collections of her poems and hymns in many separate volumes; the earliest is dated 1870. Among them were '*The Ministry of Song*,' published probably in 1870, 5th edition, 1874; '*Under the Surface*,' 1874; '*Loyal Responses*,' 1878; '*Life Chords*,' 1880; '*Life Echoes*,' 1883; '*Coming to the King*,' 1886. These were finally reissued by her sister, M. V. G. Havergal, in two volumes of '*Poetical Works*,' 1884.

Miss Havergal also wrote many small devotional tracts and narratives in prose, all marked by the same earnest and practical piety. Her religious poetry became exceedingly popular in evangelical circles, and her hymns are to be found in all collections.

When her father died suddenly in 1870, she prepared for the press a new edition of his '*Psalms*.' When her mother died in 1878, she moved from Leamington to South Wales, near the Mumbles, where she remained until her death on June 3rd 1879.

Though some may say that her poetry may lack concentration, and has a great deal of meaningless repetition, some of her hymns are of the highest standard, deserving a place in many of today's hymn books. You can find four of her hymns in *Hymns and Psalms* they are:

- 535 Master, speak! thy servant heareth.
- 553 Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
- 705 Take my life and let it be
- 722 Who is on the Lord's side?

# REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Here are some of the regular activities occurring at Hove Methodist Church:

## **Monday:**

- 2.30pm Monday Guild  
Fellowship and friendship. Contact Kathlyn Taylor through the Church Office for details.
- 6.15pm Junior Youth Club (ages 5-11)  
Children's activities. Contact Terry Pomfrey or Maggie Symes through the Church Office for details.

## **Tuesday:**

- 8.00pm Wives Club fortnightly Speakers and demonstrations, chat and friendship

## **Thursday:**

- 10.00am Holy Communion
- 10.30am Coffee and Chat at the Church

## **Friday:**

- 2.00pm Polka Tots (ages 0-5)  
Parent and Toddlers' Group
- 7.30-10.30pm Mens' Social Club.

## **Saturday:**

- 08:30-11am Community breakfast is normally on the last Saturday of every month. Full English Breakfast/newspapers/free refills.

## **Sunday:**

- 10.30am Morning service  
For details of special and evening services see the weekly newsnotes

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*Up-to-date information about other activities is detailed in the Sunday **NEWSNOTES** and the names and telephone numbers of people to contact can be found in the "Guide to Church Activities" leaflet available at church*

## *Final thought...*

### *Food in the house of prayer, Reflections*

**By MARCUS TORCHON**

An act of public and corporate worship is one of the Church's points of encounter and reference as it interfaces and serves the community. Worship, therefore, should be Gospel incarnate, Holy Spirit filled and a life-transforming encounter. Since it is designed to edify all, at all times, in all places, it must be diversified in form and format.

To worship the Lord using one format-is a misrepresentation of our God who shows diversity in the creation of his world and of each one of us. For instance, a traditional hymn-sandwich worship is quite satisfying and inspirational to some worshippers, but does not meet the spiritual needs of others. To keep food in the house for all demands that some of us, worshippers, die to our preferences in favour of letting other persons meet their own spiritual need.

Similarly, one form of innovative act of worship should not brush away other forms, as the new is bound to become the old very quickly. It is spiritually nutritious to have a well-balanced diet in the life of the Church in its effort to remain a beacon placed on a mountain, a missionary movement. To keep various kinds of bread (spiritual food) in the house of prayer is an evangelistic enterprise, fulfilling the will of the Lord.

Ensuring great and diversified provision of spiritual food in the house of prayer is the work of the Holy Spirit who together with the Church aims to be all to all. little wonder the Lord is making all things new, even our act and understanding of worship. Traditionalism, however, stands always in the way of redeeming change. Happily, when the Lord is making all things new, he does not need the approval but the co-operation of the Church executive body. In his wisdom, he chooses the time to renew, recreate, construct, reconstruct and transform the Church's ministries and worship life. He is inviting the Church now to join in with him in making all things new. Would your church come along? Your church simply needs to proactively and prayerfully wait upon him, learn daily how he does mission, maximise the moment and understand that God is making all things new even as you read this reflection (Revelation 21. 5).

• The Rev Marcus Torchon is minister of the Little Neston, Bromborough and Neston churches, in the South Wirral circuit. He is an overseas partner in the World Church in Britain Partnership (WCBP).

*Published in the METHODIST RECORDER, 'Reflections' 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2009*

## COMING UP *Some key events in the next three months*

### March

#### Sundays

1st	10.30 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Holy Communion
	6.30 pm	Healing and Wholeness
8th	10.30 am	Ian George
	6.30 pm	Revd. Keith Edwards
15th	8.00 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Holy Communion
	10.30 am	Dawn Edwards
22nd	10.30 am	Ken Smith - Worship Together, Mothering Sunday
	6.30 pm	Revd. Keith Edwards - Holy Communion
29th	10.30 am	Revd. Keith Edwards
	6.30 pm	Circuit Service at Patcham
Thurs.5th	8.00 pm	Film night
Fri. 6th	11.00 am	Women's World Day of Prayer at Hounsom URC, Nevil Road Hove
Thurs.12th	8.00 pm	Church Council meeting
Sat. 28th	8.30 am	Community Breakfast

### April

#### Sundays

5th	10.30 am	Revd. Dr. John Tudor - Palm Sunday
12th	10.30 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Worship Together, Holy Communion, Easter Day
	6.30 pm	Revd. Keith Edwards - Sector Service
19th	10.30 am	Alan Saunders
	6.30 pm	Revd. Lin Francis - Healing and Wholeness and Holy Communion
26th	8.00 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Holy Communion
	10.30 am	David Bircham
Thurs.4th	5.00 pm	Sector Service at Patcham
Fri. 10th	10.00 am	Good Friday service
Thurs.2nd	8.00 pm	Film night
Sat. 25th	8.30 am	Community Breakfast

### May

#### Sundays

3rd	10.30 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Holy Communion ( <i>articles for Link due</i> )
10th	10.30 am	Cynthia Tudor
	6.30 pm	Revd. Keith Edwards - Holy Communion
17th	8.00 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Holy Communion
	10.30 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Worship Together
24th	10.30 am	Frances Timpson
31st	8.00 am	Revd. Keith Edwards - Ditchling Beacon, Pentecost
	10.30 pm	Revd. Dr. John Tudor
	6.30 pm	Revd. Keith Edwards - Praise Service
Thurs.7th	8.00 pm	Film night
Fri. 22nd	8.00 pm	Finance and property committee meeting
Sat. 30th	8.30 am	Community Breakfast
10th-17th		<b>Christian Aid Week</b>

*The next edition of Link will be the first week in June 2009.*

*Please contact the editor or church office with articles and events that you wish to be included. All dates were correct when going to print but are shown only as a guide to church activities and may be subject to change.*

*Please refer to the weekly NEWSNOTES for up-to-date information.*



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