

150 Years of Worship and Outreach

Central United Reformed Church Hove



March 2013

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Sunday Youth Ministry

3 years - 7 years

7 years - 11 years

TOGS 11 - 14 years Mrs. K. Hancox Mrs. A. Austen

Mrs C. Vaughan

Mrs F. Beacham

Boys' Brigade
(Mondays)Mr. C. JukesGirls' .Brigade
(Tuesday)Mrs. S. HillTuesday FellowshipMrs Celia Bair

(Alternate Tuesdays)

Men's Fellowship (Third Wednesday)

Welcome Break (Wednesdays)

Bluebird Parent & under 3s Group

Church Web Site

Church Hall Tel: 01273 734162

Mrs Celia Baines - Holmes

Mr. P. Gear

Mrs. P. Macaulay

Mrs K. Hancox

Mr John Brewster

Email: info@centralurchove.com

Dear Friends,

This season in the church calendar is known as Lent, not because it is to do with lending anything, but because the Old English word for Spring is 'lencten'. Lent is the period from Ash Wednesday to Easter Eve, which originally was the 40 weekdays of fasting and penitence recalling Christ's 40 days in the wilderness after his baptism. From the Gospels, we know that this was a particular time of temptation for Jesus as He battled in His mind about how to conduct His ministry. The temptation was to compromise, or to perform spectacular miracles - then people would believe Him! As with all temptation, it was to take the easy way.

Jesus was tempted throughout His ministry, and the most serious temptations hit Him as He struggled in the Garden of Gethsemane about the cross - did He really have to go through with it? He could ask legions of angels to come and step into the situation. As He sweated blood, although He prayed desperately for the "cup to be taken away", He finally submitted to God, "May Your will be done."

Through Lent we attempt to identify with Jesus as He sets His face towards Jerusalem and the destiny that awaits Him. It is a time for us to reflect, to share in our thoughts with Christ's suffering. If Easter was to end on Good Friday, what a tragedy! And what was good about it?

But Easter is not only about death on a cross, it is about Resurrection Day - salvation accomplished, and victory over death - for Him, and for us.

I can never understand those in the wider church who do not believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus. If the disciples did not know for a certainty that Christ was alive, there is no way that they could have gone out and turned the world upside down. Jesus had been nailed to the cross, but a dead Jesus would have been the final nail in the coffin! But gloriously, praise God, death couldn't hold Him, He arose!

May the Lord bless us in a special way this Easter time,



FAMILY NEWS FROM CENTRAL

The last Sunday of February, 24th, was surely a landmark one in this year. The morning service, led by our Elders was one of confidence, faith, reassurance and challenge. Hymns such as "And can it be" and "Who would true valour see" linked together the readings and prayers and stirred the souls and voices of the congregation. The two addresses reinforced the theme and left everyone with something to think about during the coming week. From the deeply appreciative comments afterwards many were leaving church uplifted and encouraged to face the coming week. We would like to thank the Elders for their leadership and guidance in leading our worship – every part of it touched someone.

In the evening we had the great pleasure of receiving into membership Bill Bruce, who was most appreciative of the warmth of his welcome. Bill

is a regular attendee of the Evening Services, so if you are more a "morning" person, his photograph is produced below – so don't pass him by in the street or at some church event, you should be able to recognise him!

March too begins on a high note of welcoming another new member. Joyce Kemp will be making her profession of faith at the morning service on 3rd March. We are so happy that these two friends have decided to join us as members.



May they find true fellowship and a deeper enhanced faith with us.

Last month the Girls' Brigade was the recipient of our congratulations; this month it is the Boys' Brigade's turn. It was so pleasing to see a shield sitting on the table at the front of the church, proof of the Company's success at the BB Swimming Gala. Well done to everyone who participated.

Our thoughts now turn to those who are perhaps not quite so fit and athletic. We were pleased to see Dale Marland back at church once more. Dale has had a rough time with his health over the past few months and has at least two more unpleasant lots of tests to endure. Please keep Dale in your prayers and thoughts that he soon may be able to genuinely say that he is feeling "fantastic" once more.

John Gilson has finally returned to his home after several weeks in hospital. We are pleased to learn this and pray that he will soon have a

care "package" established so that he can enjoy better health. With John in the RSCH, although in a different ward, was Jan Owen who after a very nasty fall has had to stay in hospital for some weeks. Please hold Jan and Sheila in prayer as Jan's future care is being planned. We do hope that we will be able to welcome these two dear friends back in our midst soon.

We were sorry to learn that Ann & Keith Austen's Christmas plans were more than upset when Keith was rushed into hospital with viral pneumonia. However, Keith's hospitalisation has proved to be a mixed blessing, as in the course of his treatment the doctors discovered that he had heart trouble, which had hitherto been unknown. Following subsequent tests, Keith is now awaiting a by- pass operation. Both Ann and Keith will appreciate the strength of your prayers and love over the coming weeks.

Two friends have suffered bereavement in recent weeks. We extend our sincere sympathy to Wendy Blackburn on the death of her father and Pam Macaulay on the death of her sister. Wendy is also recovering from a hip replacement operation. May both Wendy and Pam feel comforted by our love and sympathy and the knowledge that they are surrounded by our prayers.

And these do get answered. We are delighted – but not more than Jill – to learn that her son, Graham, is now recovered sufficiently to return to work, initially part-time and gradually back to normal. We give thanks to God that such progress has been made.

The Book Club has read *Pilgrim's Progress*; the congregation sang, *Who would true Valour see*; and on Palm Sunday our Easter celebrations and meditations begin with the Lantern Theatre's presentation of "A Difficult Journey", which is John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* re-written for a modern audience by Susie Pottinger with original music by Paul Field. We have really been both impressed and moved by previous productions of the Lantern Company at our church. Do, please, come along at 6.30 pm - you will not be disappointed.

As we approach Easter at the end of this month, may the love and sacrifice of Jesus, the promise and the hope of our salvation be reflected in our lives and in our church.

Fellowship of Prayer: Clive & Shirley Hamlin, John & Elsie Flack, Hugh & Peggy McMillen, Jane Ramirez, Tebello Sibanda,, Helen Brown.



<u>10th Brighton (Hove) Boys' Brigade</u> <u>Company</u>

We are pleased to report that the Company enjoyed some very pleasing success at the recent BB Swimming Gala. Overall the Company came second, losing out to

2nd Burgess Hill Company by just two points.

Thanks to Zac, Simon and Henry we won the Medley Relay. Simon Reason and Henry Touray won individual medals for their respective age groups.

Well done to all who participated: Henry, Jay, Jordan, Peter, Simon and Zac.

Currently everyone is working hard preparing for our Awards Evening on Monday 29th April to which you are all warmly invited. It will be held upstairs in the church so please book the date in your diaries. We .look forward to seeing you there.

John Brewster



BB SWIMMING TEAM

From left: Henry, Peter, Jay, Simon, Zac & Jordan



Henry Touray

Simon Reason

Winners of Individual Medals



Medley Relay Team -Henry, Simon & Zac



DANGEROUS

One man running. Running for his life. Running to escape Destruction. Running to win his prize: Eternal life in the Golden City.

CENTRAL UNITED REFORM CHURCH VENTNOR VILLAS, HOVE SUNDAY 24th MARCH

> **6.30 pm** Admission free



OURNEY

WRAY HOUSE

30 Lyndhurst Road, Hove.

A small one- bedroom flat will become available at the end of April.

Single occupancy only.

Suitable to rent as a starter home with the idea of moving on after TWO years.

If you are interested or know of someone who might be interested, please contact:

The Secretary, St Cuthbert's Housing Association, Church Office Central United Reformed Church Ventnor Villas HOVE BN3 3YF



CHRISTIAN BOOK CLUB

Never let it be said that the members of the Book Club do not like a challenge! From the easy read of January's book choice, in February we took it upon ourselves to read "Pilgrim's Progress" by John Bunyan. A book about which we had all heard; with which we felt we were acquainted and whose characters had been referred to in various sermons by different preachers. BUT which none of us had actually sat down and read.

Well, we have now! At least the majority of us have, but everyone had made a serious effort to come to tackle the book. It is not easily read by someone from the twenty-first century. The language and the Biblical cross-referencing do not sit easily with those who are more used to our smoother and more instantly understandable styles. To do this book more justice we would have had to spend a lot of time in serious study of the Bible, John Bunyan's life and period and "Pilgrim's Progress" itself. As it was we summoned up PERSEVERANCE and kept going.

Were we pleased we had done so? The overwhelming opinion was in the affirmative. We learned so much; had so many of the lessons, which have been hammered into us over the years, reinforced, e.g., "Keep to the straight and narrow path." And while we may not have liked the rhyming couplets of his little verses – some of which were pretty dire – we could at least appreciate their mnemonic qualities

"Better, tho' difficult, the right way to go, Than wrong, tho' easy, where the end is woe."

Some of us found Bunyan's characters being given abstract nouns for names of characters or places rather unusual but appreciated that for a Puritan like Bunyan - this was in keeping with the puritan mindset of his day and also, of course, depicted instantly the virtues or vices of the character. For example, Discretion, Piety, Charity and Prudence would accompany Christian, our hero, down to the valley of Humiliation or there was Mr Valiant-for-the-Truth (what a soubriquet!)

Constantly, throughout our reading, we recognised the situations and people of the allegory were still applicable today and many of the references came instantly to our minds, for example, when Christian sees the armour, the sword, shield, helmet and ALLPRAYER|, we knew exactly what John Bunyan meant.

We could identify with many of the situations Christian found himself in,

especially his lapses, but were encouraged that he kept trying and keeping on striving to complete his journey. That he could do so, was also helped by the encouragement and friendship of the good people he met on his journey. We felt this was so true of anyone trying to live a Christian life.

Overall we found "Pilgrim's Progress" challenging, intriguing and thought provoking and well worth reading. We were full of admiration for John Bunyan, who, we were amazed to learn, had had very little schooling and who had followed his father's trade as a tinker. After serving in the Parliamentary army he became a deacon in the Baptist church and began preaching only to eventually be imprisoned for preaching without a license. For this offence he served 12 years in prison, eventually was freed only to be harassed by being imprisoned again to be let out once more -a sort of cat and mouse game with the authorities, until they gave up.

Having read just this one of his books, we concluded we would have loved to hear him preach! His message and understanding still holds a powerful sway even today – just one site on the web on "Pilgrim's Progress" had 25,736 hits! The most difficult thing about really reading this book is making the time to do it justice.

Our next meeting will be held at Clare Popley's home, 5 Fairlawns, 159 Kingsway, on Monday 25th March at 8,00 pm. The book of choice is, "How to be a Bad Christian and a Better Human Being."

John Bunyan on Prayer

- Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God and a scourge for Satan.
- When you pray, rather let your heart be without words than your words without heart
- Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer

EASTER AT CENTRAL

Sunday 24th March	PALM SUNDAY	
	Family Service - Parade Rev Alex Mabbs	10.30 am
	Dangerous Journey	6.30 pm
	based on "Pilgrim's Progress" Presented by Lantern Theatre (Company
Thursday 28th March	MAUNDY THURSDAY	
5	Tenebrae	8.00 pm
	Rev Roger Wood	
Friday 29th March GOOD FRIDAY		
2	Service	10.00 am
	Rev Alex Mabbs	11.00
	Walk of Witness From St John's Palmeira to	11.00 am George Street
	Tioni St sonn s Tunnenu to	George Street
Sunday 31st March	EASTER SUNDAY	
	Seafront Service	8.00 pm
	(Bottom Grand Avenue Easter Breakfast	9.00 am
	Ventnor Halls	9.00 am
	Family Service	10.30 am
	Rev Alex Mabbs Evening Worship	6.30 pm
	with Holy Communion	0.50 pm
	Rev Roger Wood	

CHURCH CALENDAR

MARCH

SUN 3	Family Service – Holy Communion Rev Alex Mabbs	10.30 am
	The Junction	6.30 pm
Mon 4	Ladies Prayer Group	8.00 pm
Fri 8	The Victorious Tealeaf	2.00 pm
	Presented by St Christopher's School	
SUN 10	Family Service	10.30 am
	Rev Peter Elliott Evening Worship – Job (Part 2) Words from the Whirlwind – God's speeches Rev. Alex Mabbs	6.30 pm
Tue 12	Tuesday Fellowship Mercy Ships UK	2.30 pm
Wed 13	Elders' Meeting	7.30 pm
Sat 16	Cake Stall Coffee Morning	10.00 am
SUN 17	Family Service Rev Roger Wood	10.30 am
	Church A.G.M. Evening Worship – Job (Part 3) Answering the questions and questioning the answers Rev. Alex Mabbs	12 noon 6.30 pm
Wed 20	Men's Fellowship Bible Study with Roger Wood	7.45 pm
SUN 24	PALM SUNDAY	
	Family Service - Parade Service	10.30 am
	Rev Alex Mabbs Dangerous Journey (Based on Pilgrims' Progress by John Bunyan) Lantern Theatre Company	6.30 pm

Mon 25	Christian Book Club How to be a Bad Christian and a Better Human Being	8.00 pm
Tue 26	Tuesday Fellowship	2.30 pm
	Beachy Head Chaplaincy	
Thu 28	MAUNDY THURSDAY	
	Tenebrae Rev. Roger Wood	8.00 pm
Fri 29	GOOD FRIDAY	
	Service Rev Alex Mabbs Walk of Witness	10.00 am 11.00 am
	(from St John's Palmeira to George Street)	

CLOCKS GO FORWARD

SUN 31 EASTER SUNDAY

Seafront Service	8.00 am
(at the bottom of Grand Avenue)	
Easter Breakfast in halls	9.00 am
Family Service	10.30 am
Rev Alex Mabbs	
Easter Evening Worship – Holy Communion	6.30 pm
Rev Roger Wood	

APRIL

SUN 7	Family Service – Holy Communion	10.30 am
	The Gideons	
	The Junction	6.30 pm

- All contributions for the **APRIL** edition of the magazine must be handed in no later than **<u>SUNDAY 24TH MARCH.</u>**
- Please inform Mrs Sheena Ireland by Wednesday of the preceding week of any calendar changes so that the calendar on the Order of Service may be altered.

FLOWERS FOR MARCH

- 3rd Miss Ruth Shepherd
- Mrs Barbara Woolvett in memory of her husbandMiss Dorothy Welsh in memory of her parents
- 17th Mrs Dorothy Gale
- 24th Mr Alastair Sharp in memory of Margaret
- 31st EASTER FLOWERS
- Any and all contributions towards the cost of Easter Flowers for the church will be gratefully received by Ann Throup (Betty Matthew's daughter) who sits in the back row of the congregation OR Rosemary Brice.
- Any donations of foliage for Easter may be left in the flower room on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday.
- Anyone willing to help in decorating the church for Easter will be more than welcome on Saturday 30th from 9.30 am onwards.





Just as Christian came up to the cross, his burden loosed from his shoulders, fell off from his back, and began to tumble down the hill, and so it continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre. There it fell and I saw it no more.

John Bunyan "Pilgrim's Progress."

SPRING SUPPER Saturday 27th April 6.30 p.m. Ventnor Hall Enjoy good food, good company and great entertainment.

Tickets: $\pounds 8$ - [under 12s $\pounds 4$]

Available from 14th April from members of the Social Activities Committee

Easter Thoughts

Firstly that journey to Jerusalem with palm branches strewn in the path of Jesus and his disciples by an expectant crowd, and the very visible tension in the air at the Last Supper as Jesus reveals that one of those sat by him would betray him. Then the betrayal by one of those whom Jesus had trusted and loved and the trial, which had only one certain outcome because that was the politically correct one to make. Follow that with accusations; the beating and whipping at the hands of the soldiers; crucifixion as chief priests, teachers of the law and elders looked on; and now the climax as Jesus is revealed alive and risen from the dead.

Without Easter there would be no Christianity. Without Jesus' suffering, his execution and subsequent resurrection there would be no Christianity, for however terrible the suffering was, it was part of God's plan for the salvation of humankind.

Easter reminds us that each time we deny you, Lord, another nail is sharpened; and each time we defy you, Lord, into your hand it's hammered. When faith is weak, temptation strong and courage fails, forgive us, Lord and once again become that risen presence within our hearts. Amen



We are often not the Easter People that we should be, living in the certain knowledge of your great mercy and love. Distracted by the world around us we fail to hear your voice, or hide when faith is challenged as we wander off the path. Forgive us, we pray; restore the love that we first had, a faith that can endure. We will keep our eyes fixed on you, Lord, and with you at our right hand we shall not be shaken



YOUR LETTERS

Celia and Peter are so grateful for all your thoughts and prayers over the last two years for our daughter Sally and her family.

We have just returned from France and found her like her old self again. She does not have to drained at the moment, which is a great relief. She is swimming and walking, decorating, planning a new bathroom and at last dealing with Thierry's things.

At least we now have a diagnosis and they are treating it with cortisone tablets, all the while keeping a close eye on her progress every month.

So, from Sally and the both of us, a very big thank you. It is so good to be part of such a supportive church.

Yours in the love of Christ,

Celia and Peter.

In last month's magazine we featured the work of the Paraclete Ministry in Benidorm and Zimbabwe but the Prayer Centre in Nagaland was also mentioned. We are much more familiar with the work of the first two centres, so we thought it might be of interest to learn more about this practically unknown part of the world.

Where on earth is Nagaland?

Nagaland is a state in North East India, bordering on Burma to the East and Assam to the West. Although part of India since 1947, Nagaland is ethnically, culturally, economically and spiritually different from the rest of the country. The Naga people bear Mongolian features and are divided into 16 main tribal groups, some living in the few main towns and the majority living in the 800+ small, isolated rural villages, surviving mainly on agriculture and animal rearing. In such places, the infrastructure is very inadequate and there is limited funding from the Government. The country is very isolated with very little tourism since it is a Restricted Area requiring visitors to gain special permits before entering the country. There are poor roads, limited electricity and running water, poor telecommunications and lack of educational and medical facilities. Despite all this, the people are extremely warm, hospitable and generous with a deep Christian faith.

Why do we go there?

Alemla Twiss, who is a member of Lynda Hulcoop's church in Southwick, comes from Nagaland. She has lived in the UK for more than 30 years but continues to have a passion for her homeland and the plight of her people, especially the rural poor whose lives are so disadvantaged. We have felt led to work alongside Alemla and her family in seeking to help the rural community of Akumen develop economically, educationally, medically and spiritually.

Akumen Village: What's it like?

Akumen village is a small, isolated village surrounded by beautiful jungle with 400 adults and approximately 70 children close to the Assam border. The village has received electricity but there is still no running water and only a narrow dirt access road dug by the villagers. The nearest bus is 3 km away. The Village infrastructure is very simple but orderly, overseen by the village chief and a council of 8 men. The village has a

small school for the youngest children, a village hall and a church providing the focus of the community.

The villagers live in simple cane, wood and bamboo houses. The majority are involved in subsistence agriculture – growing tea, rice, vegetables and fruit and small scale animal rearing for their own needs and thus have little or no income. Prior to our involvement, the village had no medical facilities whatsoever, a serious lack in a community which has a wide range of health needs associated with living in a poor, rural environment.

What projects have we achieved so far?

Over the past 5 years, 4 different teams have visited Nagaland working alongside the villagers and offering their different skills to help in a number of development projects as follows:

1. Building projects:

- Extension of the village church
- Rebuilding of 2 main bridges into the village
- Land clearance and the building and equipping of a craft training centre

2. Medical Projects:

- Establishment of a medical centre with a doctor visiting monthly
- Basic health and hygiene training for the villagers
- Provision of a small van to be used primarily for medical emergencies (sponsored by the BESOM, London)

3. Educational Projects:

- Establishment of an educational sponsorship scheme for village children
- Sponsorship of one teacher to teach and head up the sports project
- Equipping of the school including books, visual aids, uniforms

- Establishment of a small garden area for teaching purposes for children.
- Establishment of an educational resource centre with a reading zone, an educational games zone, an English language zone, a sports zone, a visual media zone (with DVD and television)
- Provision of sports equipment to stimulate sports activities including cricket, football, table tennis, badminton and volleyball.

4. Crafts Project

- Development of a small scale creative arts cottage industry programme providing training in weaving, sewing, card making, bamboo and cane work, woodwork
- Establishment of the craft training centre to engage in craft production for marketing locally, in India and overseas via brochures and our website.

5. Farm Project:

- Purchase of livestock for animal rearing chickens, pigs
- Start of small agricultural plot growing pineapples and bananas

6. Water Provision project: (generously sponsored by Operation Agri and The Rotary Club of Hove, West Sussex)

- The development of a water harvesting project collecting water off the village church roof and storing it in large tanks located strategically around the village.
- The piping of water from a waterfall just on the perimeter of the village down into the village. This project is still in progress. The pipes need to be dug in and a settlement tank needs to be built. (completion expected late 2009)

7. Prayer and Discipleship Centre In Dimapur, the main town

- Construction of a small prayer centre in Irali Bill, Dimapur
- The commissioning and sponsorship of a prayer ministry team
- Work among children
- Discipleship training for local people





Village school





Medical Centre





Village scenes

Hands!



A basketball in my hands is worth about \$19. A basketball in Michael Jordan's hands is worth about \$33 million. It depends whose hands it's in.

A baseball in my hands is worth about \$6. A baseball in Roger Clemens' hands is worth \$475 million. It depends on whose hands it's in.





A tennis racquet is useless in my hands. A tennis racquet in Roger Federer's hands is worth millions. It depends whose hands it's in.

A rod in my hands will keep away an angry dog. A rod in Moses' hands will part the mighty sea. It depends whose hands it's in.



A slingshot in my hands is a kid's toy. A slingshot in David's hand is a mighty weapon. It depends whose hands it's in.





Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in my hands is a couple of fish sandwiches. Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in Jesus' hands will feed thousands. It depends whose hands it's in.

Nails in my hands might produce a birdhouse. Nails in Jesus Christ's hands will Produce salvation for the entire world. It depends whose hands it's in.

As you see now, it depends whose hands it's in.



So put your concerns, your worries, your fears, your hopes, your dreams, your families and your relationships in God's hands because...

It depends whose hands it's in.

This message is now in YOUR hands. What will YOU do with it?

THE VICTORIOUS TEA LEAF

St Christopher's School are delighted to present Years 2 and 3 in a Victorian musical play

> FRIDAY MARCH 8TH 2PM-3.30PM

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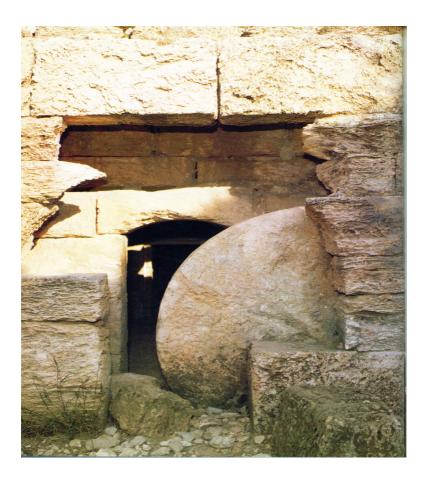
A Day

DONATE

ST CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL PERFORMING AT

United Reformed Church Hove

CENTRAL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH CHURCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Sunday 17th March 12 noon Be there!



CENTRAL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HOVE

Corner of Ventnor Villas and Blatchington Road, Hove Church Hall Telephone: Brighton 734162 www.centralurchove.com

MINISTER

Rev. Alex Mabbs

(Day off: Friday)

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Rev. Roger Wood

(Day off: Thursday)

SECRETARY

Mrs. S. Ireland

TREASURER

Mr. C. Hill

COVENANT & FREEWILL OFFERING SECRETARY

Refer: Secretary/Treasurer

ORGANIST & CHOIR MASTER

Dr. A. Ireland

BUILDING HALL(S) HIRE Mrs Celia Elliott

MAGAZINE EDITOR

Mrs. R. Brice

SUNDAY SERVICES

MORNING WORSHIP with Youth and Children's Ministry

6.30 p.m. HOLY COMMUNION EVENING WORSHIP First Sunday of the month at 10.30 a.m.

Third Sunday of the month at 6.30 p.m.