



Central
United Reformed Church
Hove



CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Sunday Youth Ministry

Mrs. A. Austen

Mrs C. Vaughan

Boys' Brigade
(Mondays)

Mr. C. Jukes

Girls' Club
(Tuesday)

Mrs. S. Hill

Tuesday Fellowship
(Alternate Tuesdays)

Mrs Celia Baines – Holmes

Men's Fellowship
(Third Wednesday)

Mr. P. Gear

Welcome Break
(Wednesdays)

Mrs. P. Macaulay

Bluebird Parent & under 3s Group

Mrs K. Hancox

Church Web Site

Mr John Brewster

Church Hall Tel: 01273 734162

Email: info@centralurchove.com

Dear Friends,

One of the activities our friends at Hounsom and Portslade have been involved in recently has been a course called 'Inside Out'. This was introduced to us by Wendy Young who spends part of her time working with Tearfund. As you probably know, Tearfund is a Christian development and relief agency working for the needs of the poor in the world. Tearfund has increasingly been trying to encourage local churches in the developing world to get involved in the needs of their own communities. There has been a growing realisation that this approach is relevant when applied to the developed world too.

What are the needs of our communities? That is the fundamental question we addressed in our discussions. The course involved conducting a survey, and although it was very limited, what seemed to emerge was the need for 'community' - a sense of belonging.

Now, this is something where I believe we at Central can have an impact by building on what we do well already, in and for the community. For example, Bluebird, Boys' Brigade, Girls' Club, Tuesday Fellowship, Welcome Break etc. Sometimes there is the need to adapt, as we have done for example with the change from Girls' Brigade to Girls' Club.

In another sense, we are already a community centre - a centre for the Christian Community - but also, our organisations do reach out to the needs of our neighbourhood. Additionally, our commercial lettings provide important facilities for the community, with a whole range of different interest and cultural activities. It must be admitted that as a church we have limited resources - some of us are not getting any younger - actually, none of us are!

However, we all have different gifts, and whatever our age, we each have our strengths and our own way of communicating with others, and also providing prayer support. We recall Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, recounting God's answer to his prayers: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12 v. 9).

Let's see what happens as we continue to serve the Lord in our locality!

May God bless us all,

Roger

ANNUAL REPORTS

A reminder to all organisations that their annual reports for 2013 should be with the Church Secretary (preferably as a Word (or .RTF) Document) **no later than 23rd February.** Thank you.

Sheena Ireland

The Social Activities Committee

Invite you to

A

COFFEE MORNING

On

Saturday, 15th February at 10.00 am

In aid of funds for the Spring Supper

Cake Stall

FAMILY NEWS FROM CENTRAL

In the December magazine we mentioned that **Celia Baines-Holmes** was undergoing treatment for her cancer. Unfortunately, the chemotherapy did not work and there was nothing more that the doctors could do. Celia died in the Martlets hospital on Wednesday, 15th January. With her passing all at Central have lost a very dear and deeply respected friend. Since joining us, Celia was faithful in her attendance at worship, frequently attending both morning and evening services. She was quietly supportive of many of the church's ventures but it was with the Tuesday Fellowship that she found her niche, ultimately becoming its President. In doing so, her calm efficiency was a great help both to the fortnightly meetings, programme organising and running of the Grocery Stall at church Fairs. It would be fair to say, that Celia, a very private person, never really understood the deep respect and appreciation for all her efforts, despite the pain she was often suffering, that we felt for her. With her sudden death, we have lost a good friend who eschewed the limelight but who worked and walked quietly with her Lord. We extend our sympathy and prayers to her husband, son and daughter and all her family.

We would also like to extend our shock and sympathy to all the members of the extended Mabbs family on the sudden death last week of **Daniel**, Alex's nephew. Unfortunately the family had a second death to contend with as Daniel's paternal grandfather also died. When a double tragedy hits a family, mere words seem inadequate. However, we hope they may gain some comfort and strength by knowing that they are being held in prayer by so many people. Please think particularly of Daniel's parents, **Tim and Fiona**, and his brother, **Jacob**.

Doreen Fookes and **Doreen Simmonds** still give cause for concern with their health, although both have tried hard to come occasionally to church. Doreen Simmonds was forbidden to travel by her doctor and spent Christmas in Hove instead of N. Ireland, thus missing her grandson's wedding. Both Doreens remain cheerful and still retain their bright smiles.

We have just learned this week that **Dale Marland** has suffered another fall and hurt his arm quite badly. His health is not good and we know that Dale will appreciate your prayers and friendly concern. **John Flack** also needs our prayerful support as he tries to come to terms with the loss of Elsie and his own increasing fragility. Another John, **John Gilson**, is now home from hospital but his health too is very poor.

Another friend who has suffered a really nasty fall is **Dorothy Gale**, who,

despite becoming 90 this month, has yet to learn that she should not attempt to reach articles in high cupboards with doors that open differently to the way she expected. We wish her a speedy recovery. **Kathy Dalley** after being in hospital and a nursing home is now making some progress and is hoping to return home in the near future.

Ann Austen's husband, **Keith**, has been in hospital for the past two weeks over concerns with his pacemaker and various infections. He has just returned home and will be going in next Tuesday to have new pacemaker fitted. Please hold Keith and Ann and the medical team working with him in your prayers.

This long wet winter is keeping many friends indoors and the grey days are long for them. Please continue to hold the following in prayer as an expression of your love and support for them:

Shirley & Clive Hamblin, Peggy McMillen, Tebello Sibanda.

Looking back, it was a good Christmas at Central. The Carols by Candlelight Service attracted a full congregation and was a wonderfully warm service with the congregation enjoying beautiful music and traditional readings and carols; the evening BB Enrolment Service also attracted a good crowd of parents and supporters; whilst the Girls' Club Service saw the presentation of two more Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards to **Abigail Smith and Hazel Childs**, who are going to St James's Palace on 10th February to receive their certificates. We hope they have a wonderful day.



Hazel Childs, and Abigail Smith with Pam Moody after receiving their Gold Awards

Christmas is not just about parties but about celebrating the birth of our

Saviour and demonstrating God's love for us by extending that love to others through our giving to charities. The Paraclete Ministry in particular was delighted to receive £990 – this is the final total - for its work in Zimbabwe. However, it was further touched and pleased to receive a cheque of £600 from the Boys' Brigade Company to purchase chairs and desks so that the college in Zimbabwe can become an examinations centre. Well Done, the Tenth, both on the gift and also on their shows of The Old time Music Hall, which entertained and amused so many! (A report on this is published elsewhere in the magazine.)

Further donations included £350 raised from the Christmas Card to the Beachy Head Chaplaincy; £308.59 from the Carols by Candlelight Service to the Martlets Hospice and the collection from the Midnight Communion Service on Christmas Eve gave £56.75 to Off the Fence.

We would like to thank everyone who organised events, rehearsed choirs, nativities and other Christmas celebrations.

Last month we congratulated Jinny Smith on her academic success: this month we extend our congratulations to Chip Dunn's daughter, Beth, on gaining her M.A. and Clare Popley's daughter, Jenny, on obtaining Grade One in her GTP to become a fully qualified teacher. A lot of hard study and work, especially whilst raising young families. (I would refrain from saying, "I told you so." But, I did.)

This is the year of the Noughties. (Not a spelling or typing error. Think about it!) In February, Alasdair Macaulay celebrates his 80th birthday on 7th of the month and our 'mountaineer', Dorothy Gale will be 90 on 24th. We congratulate them both and wish them each a very Happy Birthday.

In one of those "God-incidences," which happen every so often a, perhaps unintended, theme emerges from two totally different services led by two different preachers. It happened again in January. Lynda Hulcoop took the theme of the names of Jesus, which explains the insert in the middle of this magazine, and Naomi McBain had the members of the congregation describe and list the characteristics of Jesus, as they saw him. A long list of totally different descriptions soon appeared on the screen and there were few duplications. So, perhaps, God is trying to tell us something at the beginning of a New Year, the beginning of a new period in the life of this church and the Pastorate. Even the new Pope has got into this idea as he published a new article at the end of last year saying he wanted to concentrate on Jesus Christ rather than The Church.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE AGM

This year's AGM will be held following the Morning Service on Sunday, 16th March, so we are not looking too far ahead. Less than two months in fact.

Election of Elders

As always, one of the most important items at the AGM will be the election of Elders. This year we will lose just one Serving Elder, Chris Hill, who will be standing down after eight years' service. This will leave us with only four, against the maximum twelve approved by Church Meeting – and this at a time when Alex Mabbs' going means an increased work load.

It is therefore highly desirable that the number of Serving Elders is increased and Members are asked to give prayerful thought as to whom they might ask to stand. But please remember that the most important thing is to find suitable and willing applicants to be ordained as Elders, not just to fill the vacancies.

If you are approached to stand and would like more information about what is involved, please speak to Sheena Ireland or Roger Wood.

You will find nomination forms for Eldership in the Upper Vestibule. These should be completed and handed to Sheena Ireland no later than Sunday, 9th March.

Church Treasurer

Chris Hill has expressed a desire to stand down as Treasurer. If you feel you might be interested in taking on this important role, please speak to Chris, who will explain what is involved. Chris is more than willing to give a new Treasurer all the training and support that is needed.

Officer and Representatives.

As far as other Officers and Representatives are concerned, it will be assumed that everyone is willing to stand again unless Sheena Ireland is notified of any changes by 28th February; by individuals or, in the case of Committees, by Chairman. You will find an up to date list of Officers and Representatives as presently approved by Church Meeting, on the notice board in the New Hall.

10th Boys' Brigade Company

7th Old Time Music Hall.



It is a truth universally acknowledged that the male of the species loves old corny jokes and puns. Nowhere is this more evident than in the BB Old Time Music Hall. The amazing thing is that every time they come up with a new set of and a new theme for jokes. Two years ago, if memory serves, although one does try to forget the pain, it was Knock Knock jokes. This time it was, "I say, I say, what do you call a man who.....?"

Q. What do you call a man who wears a spade on his head?

A. Doug.

Q. What do you call a man who does not have a spade on his head?

A. Douglas.

Q. What do you call a man who has two coats on his head?

A. Max

Lest it was just me who groaned, I tried these in a conversation with someone who has no connection with our church/ BB. HE roared and exclaimed, "Sounds great." Seriously!

With age should come wisdom, one would hope. Evidently not when it comes to jokes. Pastor Pete, a great believer in the BB ethic of teamwork continued the puns by picking up from where the Junior Section finished their singing of "Supercalafragalistic-----etc." with a joke which ended with the punch line, " Supercauliflowerandcheeseggswarequiteatrocious."

So the tried an true format of previous Music Hall traditions is maintained by the BB Company, although one wonders what Dick Dench made of the Drill enacted by some of the Company section.

Lots of laughs and groans and then those unexpected, unplanned and uncharted moments when the Anchors steal the show. No one now knows better than Sam Clarkson the truth of the adage, " Never work with dogs or children" His magic act was totally upstaged by his Anchor boy "helpers", whom he was attempting to vanish. Add to this melting adhesive on his beard and moustache and the verbal diarrhoea he encountered from the Anchors on Saturday night it was the savoir faire he gained from previous Music Hall experiences that enabled him to continue. The audience loved every moment.

The audience were entertained on a slightly higher level by Peter Cook and his violin only to be stunned by the Anchors again. On Saturday evening someone got the wrong ghost sheet and kept stumbling over the over long material. Fits of giggles from his fellow anchors which in turn set off the audience. Total collapse of everyone, including Pam Stringer.

If this all sounds slightly chaotic, then that is an incorrect assumption. The whole show proceeded slickly from act to act and every Section got through changes of costume, were ready for their cues and performed with zest and enthusiasm. It is a tribute to the way in which the Leaders build up the boys' confidence that each member of the Juniors was prepared to sing solo lines during their number. The old hands of the Company section enjoyed themselves and their enjoyment and energy came across and infected the audience too.

Every Old Time Music Hall introduces fresh ideas and technological wizardry. This year was no exception, for example, The Brewster Brothers bravely took us down memory lane with "mug" shots from their joint past.

Having had the "privilege" of seeing some of the earlier rehearsals and then watching the final productions, it is difficult to describe the amount of hard work, fun, laughter and joy that is put into a BB Old Time Music Hall. We are so grateful to all the Boys and Staff and back stage helpers, who made this year's show such a success. Adrian Ball expressed our appreciation and gratitude when, on Friday night, in front of a full house he accepted a cheque for £600 which the Company had raised from the show's proceeds for the work of Paraclete Ministry in Zimbabwe.

During the penultimate song of the show there is a line, " We could have been anything that we wanted to be....." This epitomises the confidence of the Boys of the Tenth in entertaining us so well.

They were; they are and they will be.



DRILL—as never seen in the BB



The Anchors are back



Brewster Brothers



The “Super....” Juniors



THE TENTH



Oh, doctor, we're in trouble!

We are trouble!



Central at Christmas

We have so many people to thank for helping make the Christmas Celebrations so good.

Many contributions meant that we could once again have Trees outside the Church.

Adrian, Graham and Chris for keeping up with leaflets and posters.

The Girls Club decorated the Halls in time for the Fair, which was great.

Hilary and Adrian worked their magic on the tree in the Church. Did you count the Teddies on the tree? It kept the Bluebird children quiet for quite a while!

Under Rosemary's guidance, inspiration and hard work the team made the Church glow with Christmas flowers and greenery. Thanks to all who contributed, especially Stephen for foliage.

Our Ministers who guided us Spiritually throughout the Seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Alan Ireland and the choir for the wonderful and varied music at the Carol Service.

The Social Activities Committee, who provided more earthly refreshment. And many others who made coffee, manned stalls, greeted visitors and many other jobs.

Aggar who keeps the buildings so clean and fresh week after week.

Finally the Boys Brigade who took down the decorations.

Many hands did indeed make Light work.

Keren.



CHURCH CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

SUN 2	Family Service – Holy Communion Naomi McBain & Keren Hancox Evening Worship – The Junction	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Mon 3	Ladies Prayer Group	8.00 pm
Tue 4	Funeral service of Celia Baines- Holmes Committal at Woodvale Crematorium	2.00 pm 3.30 pm
SUN 9	Family Service Rev Peter Elliott Evening Worship Rev. Lynda Hulcoop	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Tue 11	Tuesday Fellowship – Bring & Buy	2.30 pm
Wed 12	Joint Elders’ Meeting at Central	7.30 pm
Sat 15	Coffee Morning – Social Activities Committee	10.00 am
SUN 16	Family Service Rev Roger Wood Church Meeting Evening Worship Rev Roger Wood	10.30 am 12.00 noon 6.30 pm
Wed 19	Men’s Fellowship – Bible Study	7.45 pm
SUN 23	Family Service – Parade Rev Roger Wood Evening Worship – Holy Communion Rev. Peter Elliott	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Mon 24	Christian Book Club “ Salmon Fishing in the Yemen” (Sheena Ireland)	8.00 pm

Tue 25	Tuesday Fellowship – Ron Graves Constable Country	2.30 pm
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MARCH

SUN 2	Family Service – Holy Communion Rev Roger Wood The Junction	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Mon 3	Ladies' Prayer Group	8.00 pm
Fri 7	WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER Holland Road Baptist Church Service prepared by the Christian Women of Egypt	10.30 am

- All contributions for the **FEBRUARY** edition of the magazine must be handed in no later than **SUNDAY 16TH FEBRUARY.**
- 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 FEBRUARY

2 nd	Ros Ayling – in memory of Maurice
9 th	Available
16 th	Kathleen Dalley
23 rd	The Girls' Club

Sunday, 22nd December was Alex Mabbs last service with us before he departed to Brighthelm. To mark the occasion and express our appreciation some presentations were made to Alex and Louise. Sheena Ireland gave Alex a card signed by many members,;Tony Clark gave Louise a plant and Chris Hill presented Alex with a token.

Below is Chris's speech:

We do have a gift for Alex but I cannot miss this opportunity to say a few words first, and partly from a personal point of view.

I have been an Elder and the Church Treasurer for getting on 8 years now, the thick end of a decade, and that pretty much coincided with Alex coming to minister at Central in the Pastorate. I have to say that it has been a pleasure and an honour to serve and work alongside Alex in his ministry here during that time. Whether that has simply been as the duty Elder on a Sunday or working together, and as part of a team, on various church activities - producing things like the early Praise services, in recent years, The Junction, being involved and taking part in various ways in Alex's services (often from a technical perspective), going on Away days (both Central and Pastorate), our Ashburnham weekends, Carol singing in George Street..... **even** going to Southern URC Synod District Meetings in Crawley together has been....erm.... 'interesting'! The evening services, led by Alex and Roger, have developed an interesting and eclectic clientele, with lots of interaction and great theological themes; and in addition to that we have The Junction, a break from tradition (amongst several over the years) – and to be honest it's fair to say that our monthly planning meetings round the kitchen table have been at least as much fun as the services themselves !

There is much, much more over the last 7 years, but all of Alex's ministry, of whatever form, takes huge amounts of work and dedication, and Alex has really given his All in ministering to us here Central - he gets everywhere, he leads and supports so many church activities, and of course, we are but one of three churches under Alex's wing, and we must recognise that he has given the same devotion to his ministries at Hounsom and Portslade as well!

But, as Sheena said, Alex is moving to Brighthelm where his heart, where God, is calling him; and that is simply the right thing to do. So we wish him, and Louise and the children, God's blessing in all that he undertakes at Brighthelm, in that community in the centre of this fantastic and vibrant city. We will, without doubt, miss Alex - his commitment and

dedication to the work and God's witness at Central, his spiritual and intellectual gifts and his musical talents (my new year's resolution may be to have some guitar lessons), and so we thank him and we thank God for all that Alex has done for us and our Pastorate in his years of service here.

And so as a token, we have a token, to give you of our thanks from us all here at Central, which we're sure you will be able to put to very good use.

A picture of Alex on this occasion may be found on Page 25



08 January 2014

Dear Pam,

Donation to Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team

I am writing to thank you and the church family of Central United Reformed Church for the donation raised by your congregation giving money instead of Christmas cards, of £350 for the work of the Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team.

Every donation we receive directly benefits the work of the Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team in helping us to be equipped, trained and present on duty to help us find and assist those in distress at Beachy Head. It is because of this that we greatly appreciate your gift.

Thank you for helping us to continue in this vital work.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Gail Whittington

Administrator

Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

The week of Prayer for Christian Unity began on Saturday, 18th January with English mass at St Mary & St Abraam Coptic Church, a setting and service that could hardly be more different to our Sunday worship. The church is adorned with numerous representations of Christ, Mary and Saints and the priest and his assistants dress in white robes. Candles and incense were used as an integral part of the service which was conducted almost entirely in chants, in English but with the words projected on a screen in English and Arabic.

This is the third time I've shared worship at the Coptic Church and this visit only served to reinforce my opinion that this is one of the friendliest and most welcoming Churches I know. Not just because of the warm greetings you get as you arrive and farewells as you leave but also because of the way you are treated during the service. The norm is for the men to sit on the left and the women on the right but they do not insist visitors adhere to this and are quite happy for them to sit together. (Though I suspect they prefer the visiting man and woman to sit on the male side rather than the female.) Although we could not partake of the Mass itself, baskets of bread were brought round and offered to visitors so they could feel part of it. One of the visitors was asked to join with the priest to share the closing prayers and, on leaving, each visitor was presented with almond cakes as a sign of welcome and sharing.

On Sunday evening we were at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church for a United Service for Unity which seemed to be based on one of their standard forms of service but very much tailored to make it ecumenical. Visiting ministers helped to lead the service, including our own Roger Wood who preached the sermon. One feature I've not come across before was the Apostles' Creed in verse form which is reproduced at the end of this article.

Tuesday morning we welcomed visitors from the other churches to a Prayer Service at Central, led by Roger Wood. This was a very gentle and reflective service that included some prayers read by Roger and others by the congregation from various sources.

Wednesday morning we shared Eucharist at All Saints Church. The normal C of E form of service was used but the sharing was none the less moving for that. I feel that occasionally taking Mass according to different traditions makes you think of it afresh.

The final service of the week was one of Meditation and Eucharist with Healing at St John's. Again, the normal C of E form of service was used but this time tailored to include a ten minute period of meditation, accompanied by recorded words and music, and the laying on of hands and prayers of healing for those who wanted to receive them.

Worshipping in other Churches strengthens my personal belief that having different denominations within Christianity, and even "high" and "low" church variations within denominations, is to be welcomed as it means that everyone can find a form of worship that suits them. So how I stand on Christian Unity depends on how that is interpreted. I could not agree with those people who seem to think it means everyone worshipping in the same way as them. The idea of Christian Unity that I wholeheartedly support means recognising that all Christians are united in the basic tenets of our shared faith and the things that seem to divide us are of minor importance, that we all recognise the right of fellow Christians to worship in whatever form best suits them, that we work closer together on both ecumenical and community matters and that we all welcome members of other Churches into our Church as equal brothers and sisters in Christ.

Tony Clark

Apostles' Creed

We believe in God the father,
God almighty, by whose plan
earth and heaven sprang to being,
all created things began.
We believe in Christ the Saviour,
Son of God in human frame,
virgin born, the child of Mary
upon whom the Spirit came.
Christ, who on the cross forsaken,
like a lamb to slaughter led,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
he descended to the dead.

We believe in Jesus risen,
heaven's king to rule and reign
to the father's side ascended,
till as judge he comes again.
We believe in God the Spirit;
In one Church, below, above:
saints of God in one communion
one in holiness and love.
So by faith, our sins forgiven,
Christ our Saviour, Lord and
Friend,
we shall rise with him in glory
to the life that knows no end

MEN ARE FROM MARS

WOMEN ARE FROM VENUS

But what happens if they are all from Central?

Well, in this case, you compare/contrast the Ladies' Night, which took place before Christmas, with the Men's Fellowship New Year Party. And the answer is much the same as if you looked at the way women view a barbecue in contrast to how the men view one.

Actually, it all comes down to one thing – chocolate.

The Ladies' Night required days of preparation and planning: invitations, flowers, lists, meetings, discussions about food, a certain amount of decoration, (although thanks to the Girls' Club most of it had been done for us!) music, a quick search for something glittery to wear and a photo booth.

The Men's Fellowship used computers and texting to ascertain who was coming. That decided, they were each told to bring a plate of something. Sweet or savoury. Catering sorted.

The men obviously had a strong belief in a good result and that there would be enough for everyone. There was. And in true Central fashion more than sufficient.

The women like to be certain and in control. Once again there was plenty.

Both enjoy quizzes and games. As it was the Advent season, the Ladies' quizzes were seasonal and Christmas oriented. The men really like to test themselves and their memories by being a little tougher. The basic question arose – **WHO?** Some of us are less acquainted with celebrities than others. The men are more likely to have active games than the women and to be more competitive about winning them, but the ladies are more creative and get prizes.

These evenings give one an unusual insight into hitherto hidden talents of our friends. For example, who* won the charades for her team by miming Fifty Shades of Grey? And who** is unbeatably knowledgeable about the music of the sixties? (Not Alan Ireland!)

The Ladies' photo booth was enormously popular, even if some of the results were startling. Speak to Keren Hancox, if you haven't seen them

Both evenings had in common a great deal of fun and laughter; of teasing and banter; of friendship, enjoyment and tolerance of each other's idiosyncrasies.

But, as I said, the difference in the two evenings was chocolate. A chocolate fountain at which the ladies gave up all pretensions to healthy eating or dignity.

Sincere appreciation and thanks for two great nights to the organisers of both.

* Hilary Ball

** Roger Wood



LADIES' NIGHT

CHRISTIAN BOOK CLUB

Our first meeting of 2014 was well attended and this may be because the members actually liked/enjoyed the book of choice, “Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand” by Helen Simonson. Not only had they enjoyed the book but they urged that some of the blurb on the cover be quoted because, for once, it was found to be accurate.

SO: *“That love can overcome cultural barriers is no new theme, but it is presented here with great sensitivity and delicacy... Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand is refreshing in its optimism and its faith in the transformational powers of courtesy and kindness.”*

At first glance Major Pettigrew and Mrs Ali, a shop keeper, would appear to have little in common except for their loneliness, although they each have family. However they do have standards and values which seem out of touch with those around them. It is sad that even we were slightly at fault at first and assumed that Major Pettigrew was much older than he actually was simply because of his courtesy, his sense of what is honourable and what is not and his willingness to abide by his high standards. We assumed that he was from a bygone age when, in fact, he was of the same decade as some of our members.

The clash between cultures may seem apparent but the book shows that prejudice is not confined to one culture but that it rears its ugliness within each. The moral message is applied lightly yet accurately but is easily understood by the reader.

It is this lightness of touch, which is one of the attractions of the book. It is a gentle read which, for the most part, maintains a steady pace, although it was felt that this slowed somewhat towards the end, when some of the descriptions became overlong and were therefore skipped. The author has the ability to depict a character in just a few lines and this was one of the attractions – that we felt we could actually see the characters in our mind’s eye.

“ Her genuine delight in all the colour seemed incongruous, thought the major, in a woman who preferred mushroom brown tweeds. Today’s dull burgundy and black blouse and dark green stockings would have rendered her invisible in any mildly wet woodland.”

This is not a soporifically romantic love story. There are key questions posed, for example how do people come into a relationship? How can members of one family have such opposing values and desires?

And there is humour, which prevents anyone from feeling they are being lectured into aggressive political correctness. People who are genuinely kind and loving do not need this they live it. At times some members confessed they had laughed out loud with the underlying joy of some of the conversations.

“ Look it is all very tidy and convenient to see the world in black and white,” said the Major, trying to soften his tone slightly. “It’s a particular passion of young men eager to sweep away their dusty elders. However philosophical rigidity is usually combined with a complete lack of education or real world experience, and is often augmented with strange haircuts and an aversion to bathing. Not in your case, of course, you are very neat.”

Since it is St Valentine’s Day this month, I leave you with two quotations to ponder.

“ I must ask you, do you really understand what it means to be in love with an unsuitable woman?”

“My dear boy,” said the major. “Is there really any other kind?”

And for the more romantically inclined, “ He would have preferred to stay in this room forever and gaze at this face which wore love like a smile above the eyes, but it was not possible.....

‘Mrs Ali, shall we go forth and get married?’”

A book of gentleness, humour and grace.

The next book we are reading by 24th February is “Salmon Fishing in the Yemen”. Those of us who have already read it strongly recommend it but we shall see how others react. We also suggest that you read the book before watching the film or DVD of it. The book wins.

We will meet at the home of Alan and Sheena Ireland, at 8.00 p.m.

BE WEB AWARE!

Our church website, www.centralurchove.com has lots of photographs of events for which there just is not enough space in the magazine. You can also read the magazine on the website and enlarge the print, making it an easier read.

EGYPT

& WWDP.

You will know that Egypt was the country to which God sent Mary. Joseph and Jesus to escape Herod's slaughter of the innocents.

Did you know that the churches in Egypt were participating in Women's World day of Prayer before those in the UK? Egypt joined in 1922.

Did you know that some of the oldest monasteries in the world are to be found in Egypt and that Egypt is generally credited with founding the monastic movement of Christianity?

Did you know that St Mark founded the first Christian Church and first school of theology in Egypt?

The Christian Church in Egypt goes back centuries and it is the Christian women of Egypt from all denominations who have written the Women's World day of Prayer service for this year.

The service was written over two years ago at a time when Egyptians were full of hope and enthusiasm after the overthrow of President Mubarak. Unfortunately, the situation there has degenerated drastically, as you may have seen on your television screens, and Christians have increasingly come under attack.

Last August the Bible Society book shops were attacked and burned down.

72 churches were attacked and burned in one day.

Last October, 38 churches were attacked. Four people were killed while taking Communion.

Hundreds have been killed and thousands injured. We see only what is happening in the big cities but the situation in the countryside is worse. The churches in the cities have drawn together for support and security but those in the country are smaller and more isolated.

With persecution has come a rise in prayer movement and a renewal in spiritual life along with more outreach than ever before.

Please come along to this year's Women's World Day of Prayer for the people of Egypt. Help show your support for Christians, particularly the women. We sometimes fail to appreciate how fortunate we are to worship as we please.

✠ 'Streams in the Desert' ✠

**Friday
7th March**
Women's
World Day
of Prayer
All are welcome



Praying for Egypt

**HOLLAND ROAD
BAPTIST CHURCH**

10.30 a.m.

**Nearest bus stop is
Palmeira Square.**

www.wwdp-natcomm.org Registered Charity Number 233242

Alex Mabbs
Farewell
presentation



YOUR LETTERS

Dear Friends,

Thank you all very much for the lovely church flowers, visits, telephone calls and good wishes I have received during my present course of chemotherapy.

I am particularly grateful for your prayers, which have encouraged and strengthened me throughout my treatment over the past five years.

May God richly bless you all.

Jenny Flint

Dear Friends,

Thank you very much for your generous gifts on the occasion of our leaving. We haven't spent them yet, but we shall enjoy doing so! Thank you, too, for all the messages in the card. As I said before, it was a privilege to be your minister, and we wish you every blessing on your continuing journey.

Love from

Alex and Louise Mabbs.

CENTRAL'S OOOOOOS' PARTY.

Do you gain an O this year?

Perhaps you know someone who does?

If so please tell Keren.

We are having a Church party on 5th July to celebrate all Central's Os in 2014. So far we know of ten ranging from
40 to 90

So it should be a great time, but more would be good.

It will be held at Rev. Michael Maine's house in Ditchling. So we can be in the garden as well.

Don't forget to book the date. Details to follow.



CENTRAL'S COPYRIGHT LICENCES

This is key standard information, like telephone numbers - don't forget what you have to do if you're:

(a)reproducing (by typing) song words (eg in notices, separate song sheets or for the overhead projector) you need to include at the foot of each song the following details:

Author, © Year, © Owner, CCL licence number 12011

...and **inform** Chris Hill for the records. If you don't have some of the information, try Chris or Sheena, they may be able to help !

(b).....photocopying words out of a book then you have to acknowledge at the foot of the photocopy the following details:

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PROM PRAISE

This year's concert is in the Royal Albert Hall on 26th April and will be led by the All Souls Choir, conducted by Tredinnick and featuring guest artists Graham Kendrick, Paul Baloche and Martin Smithis.

This is supported by a "mass gathered choir" from across the U.K. leading the singing of hymns and songs and performing a couple of choir items. There is also a wide range of classical music interspersing items, thus creating a vibrant event which is non-denominational and has a simple Gospel message. A great event to take friends to.

I am responsible for gathering a choir from all churches in the Brighton/Worthing area to take part. We start rehearsing on 1st march at All Saints Patcham Centre 4.00 – 6.00 p.m., except for Easter Weekend.

A chartered bus will take us to and from London. Cost is estimated at £15 coach and £15 for music and a meal at the Albert Hall.

Ability to read music and hold a part is preferable.

Contact Mary Lockyer fallow47@aol.com confirming vocal part, name and contact details.

Phone Btn 710823 for further details.

CENTRAL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HOVE

Corner of Ventnor Villas and Blatchington Road, Hove

Church Hall Telephone: 01273 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

10.30 a.m.

MORNING WORSHIP

with Youth and Children's Ministry

6.30 p.m.

EVENING WORSHIP

HOLY COMMUNION

First Sunday of the month at 10.30 a.m.

Third Sunday of the month at 6.30 p.m.