

MAY 2010 – FORTHCOMING EVENTS						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Key to abbreviations : CPT = Child Protection Training DSRC = Divorce & Separation Recovery HC = Holy Communion HotS = Healing on the Streets HPM = Homegroup Pastor Meeting					LEF = Ladies' Evening Fellowship SoW = Service of the Word TES = The Evening Service MGMG = Music Group Monthly Get-together YB = Youth Band	
					1	2
					10am HotS	7.45am HC 10.30am Thanksgiving 7pm TES
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Bank Holiday</i>	9am Re:Fresh 12pm Restore 3.30pm Blend 6.45pm Elements Celebration 7.45pm LEF	9am Breakfast Alpha 10am Bumps & Babes 11am HC 8pm HPM	<i>General Election</i>	9am Re: Fresh	10am HotS 7pm Mix	7.45am HC 10.30am HC 7pm TES
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9am Powerhouse Special 4.45pm KIC Cell 8pm Powerhouse Special	9am Re:Fresh 12pm Restore 5pm Elements (Y7-9) Cells 7pm Elements (Y10-13) Cells 8pm CPT	9am Breakfast Alpha 10am Bumps & Babes 11am HC	9.30am & 11.15am Toddlers 5.30pm YB 7pm DSRC	9am Re: Fresh	10am HotS 11am Preaching Club 11.30am Closer	7.45am HC 10.30am Baptism 7pm TES (inc HC)
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9am Powerhouse prayers 4.45pm KIC Cell 8pm S&F	9am Re:Fresh 12pm Restore 3.30pm Blend 5pm Elements (Y7-9) Cells 7pm Elements (Y10-13) Cells 8pm Prayer Ministry Team	9am Breakfast Alpha 10am Bumps & Babes 11am HC	9.30am & 1.15am Toddlers 3.30pm Blend 5pm YB 7pm DSRC	9am Re: Fresh 8pm MGMG	10am HotS 11.30am Closer 7pm Mix	7.45am HC 10.30am SoW 7pm TES
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9am Powerhouse prayers 4.45pm KIC Cell 8pm PCC	9am Re:Fresh 12pm Restore 3.30pm Blend 5pm Elements (Y7-9) Cluster 7pm Elements (Y10-13) Cluster	9am Breakfast Alpha 10am Bumps & Babes 11am HC 8pm FLOW	9.30am & 1.15am Toddlers 12.45am Toddlers Praise 3.30pm Blend 5.30pm YB 7pm DSRC	9am Re: Fresh 8pm Men's Evening	9am Walking Group 10am HotS	7.45am HC 10.30am SoW 7pm TES
31	Plus some key dates for your diary: 7 June Powerhouse Day 12 June STEPS Fete 20 June Baptism by Immersion & Confirmation Services Join us every day in church for prayer - 9am on Mondays (45-60 mins) and 8.50am Tues-Fri (10 mins). Homegroups meet on: Tues 8pm, Wed 10am and 8pm, Thurs 8pm, Fri 9.30am (Woman to Woman). If you are interested in joining one of our homegroups, please contact the Church Office.					
<i>Bank Holiday</i>						

St Stephen's Church Office: 34d Quarry Hill Road, Tonbridge TN9 2RS
 Church office open 10am-4pm Monday to Friday. Tel/Fax 01732 771977
 Website www.ststephenstonbridge.org Email enquiries@ststephenstonbridge.org

SHAPING UP TITHE MONEY

At our Shaping Up celebration weekend, I gave some details of the projects and charities we have supported through the building project tithe, although I did not cover them all, and at the PCC meeting in March we agreed where the final tithe amount should be sent.

In the light of this, over the last six years the building project tithe has totalled £99,254, and if we add the offertory of £2004 given over the Shaping Up Celebration weekend in January for the House of Grace orphanage in Thailand, it means that we have given away an amazing total of £101,258, and this is on top of our regular giving to mission partners and to the diocese – as God has blessed us so it has been our pleasure to bless others.

The projects and charities we have supported through the building project tithe are as follows:

- £13,000 was used to help build a new TB ward at Berega Hospital, Tanzania.
- £6040 to Rochester Cathedral in response to an appeal to raise £10 million to create opportunities for mission, for welcome and to provide a cathedral for future generations.
- £10,000 to Burrswood, a Christian hospital and place of healing in Groombridge.
- £7000 to St Michael's, Breaston in Derbyshire, to develop an office and youth room.
- £2500 to help with building work at a mission centre in Cabanaconde, Peru.
- £10,000 to the House of Grace Child Foundation's building project, an orphanage in Thailand for children affected by Aids.
- £1000 to assist Christ Church, Tonbridge with the redevelopment of the front of their church.
- £500 to St Philip's, Tonbridge for their building project.
- £1500 to Emmanuel Church, Woodley, where John and Anna Honour were.
- £2000 to assist the redevelopment of St Jude's, Mildmay, a CPAS parish.
- £1150 to Woodgate Residential Home, in our parish, to assist people who cannot afford the care.
- £5000 for student accommodation at the Morogoro

Bible College, Tanzania, where our mission partners Bob and Jane Hurley are.

- £11,000 to build a new hall at Charis, a community project in Romania.
- £11,849 to the Good News Revival Centre Project in Malawi.
- £5000 to help pay for a worship and training centre in Calmette, Cambodia.
- £8000 to assist in a building of a church in Tarija, Bolivia.



'Hunger' painted by Jenny Cooper

And at this last PCC meeting, we also agreed to send:

- £2465 to The Matthew Rusike Children's Home, an orphanage in Zimbabwe, with which Graham and Lynda Jones have a connection and where they will be spending four weeks helping out in the summer.
- £750 to help develop a youth project at a church in Garelochhead, Scotland, where Isabel Plimmer's parents (who played at the Reel Celebration) worship.
- £500 to Rock UK to help fund bursaries at Carrotty Wood Adventure Centre, various members of the staff there being members of St Stephen's.

As you can see St Stephen's has supported a mixture of God's work in Britain and overseas, of churches and hospitals, for the young and the elderly, the sick and the healthy. God's generosity to us is never ending, his blessings far reaching; he is a God of diversity caring for all. We have received many letters and emails thanking St Stephen's for their generosity in helping support these projects and charities, so thank you for your generosity. It is to the credit to all who have given to the projects at our church that our generosity has mirrored that of our heavenly Father.

Mark Barker

MAY 2010

WHO'S WHO

Clare and Andy Page

Andy: I grew up in the Hampshire village of Headley Down and came to Tonbridge in November 2007 when I started working for Carrotty Wood, part of the Christian adventure charity Rock UK. In May 2008, invited by a colleague, I joined a St Stephen's home group and soon began attending the Sunday services. Since worshipping here, I have become a part of the youth ministry and, along with Ian Kemp, lead the home group I first went to until we merged with Matt and Mel Bedford's group.

Clare: I have been coming to St Stephen's since I was 14, when I was introduced to Bedrock (now Elements) by a friend (the daughter of the vicar of St Peter and Paul where I used to worship with my family). I then brought my brother Matt along, then sister Bex and finally brother Jono. I've grown up in Tonbridge and went to Weald of Kent Grammar School.

On leaving school, I started working for RMB, a South African bank. I was made redundant at 18 but went to set up their South Africa office in Pretoria. On coming back to the UK, I started at J.P. Morgan in the city and I'm still there, four years on. You may see me helping out at Elements, the Mix and Little Stars.

We met in May 2008 when Andy joined Clare's home group with a mutual friend. We started going out together and were engaged last May whilst holidaying with Andy's family in Spain. We married on 1 May in St Stephen's and flew out to spend our honeymoon in Orlando. We'd like to thank everyone (and that's a lot of you) who have contributed to making our day so special in the run up and the day itself. We feel very fortunate to be in such a caring and generous community.'



WEST KENT COLLEGE

Sue Brooks



I'm Sue Brooks, a Deacon and the Anglican Chaplain at West Kent College, Brook Street. I see my role as being here to welcome and support both students and staff of all faiths and none. As a resource for them, their questions, hopes and dreams.

Along with my pastoral care, I'm also part of the Dyslexia team, which is an advantage as we screen every student when they first come to college, so I get to meet them very early on in their college life. I use this opportunity to let them know I'm available if they want to talk, to pray or just to have some space and a listening ear in total confidence, as well as where the worship room and its facilities are. This is always kept open for people to go and pray or just sit quietly. It is also used occasionally for services and meetings. Many of our students live locally but we also have students from other countries. This can present a challenge as we have students from a wide range of nationalities and faiths – last year there were 42 languages spoken on site.

We are currently looking forward to moving into our new building in the next couple of weeks with its bright, clean, light and spacious rooms. This will have challenges as well, as we get used to new ways of working, and how to make the most of our new facilities and opportunities in the 21st century.

The worship room is currently in one of the buildings to be demolished so that is moving too. In the second phase of the building, to be completed by the end of 2011, there is a permanent worship room which will be much more central and we are looking forward to being more visible and having more opportunities to raise the importance of faith and spirituality, as well as learning from the beliefs we share while respecting our differences.

Sue lives and worships in Snodland.

The book reminds you how awesome God is and how amazing it is that the creator of the universe loves and cares for you, then helps you think about how to respond. It's not an easy read, but is highly recommended.

Who should read this? Anyone who attends church and calls themselves a Christian, especially those who have been a Christian for a while and for whom churchgoing may have become a habit, and anyone who has read the parable of the sower and believes they are 'good soil.'

Quotes from the book: 'The world needs Christians who don't tolerate the complacency of their own lives... how will you answer the King when He says, "What did you do with what I gave you?"'

Crazy Love by Francis Chan. Published by David C Cook 2008. ISBN 978-1-4347-6851-3.

Now available from the church bookstall.

DIVORCE AND SEPARATION

Recovery Course

Relationship breakdown is a major issue in our society. Almost everyone reading this will be affected, either directly or in the lives of family or friends, by divorce or separation. You will know the anguish and sadness which can result.

It is a sad fact that those who go through the pain and devastation of divorce do not instinctively turn to the church for help. Yet we know that Jesus is close to the broken-hearted and calls us to minister to those in need. We are going to run the Divorce and Separation Recovery Course at St Stephen's this term. The vision is to draw alongside those going through the agony of breakdown; to bring hope and restoration and to stem the ripple effect.

It runs much like Alpha, with a meal, some teaching and discussion in small groups. At the heart of the course is teaching on forgiveness but plenty of other practical issues are addressed. It is open to all, whether churchgoers or not. I see the course as more than a response to the need of certain individuals; it is a public message of grace. By running it we say: The church is not out of touch with reality – in other words it recognises that divorce and separation happen; The church cares; The church welcomes you, whoever you are. The church welcomes you on an unconditional basis. Jesus cares about the broken-hearted and his love is unconditional. So is ours.

The course will be run over six weeks on Thursday evenings, starting 13 May. If you are interested in committing to pray for the course, or in coming as a guest or being part of our team, please contact me: 01622 873233 or helen@adamfam.co.uk.

Helen Adam

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Special rights for all

As a society, we seem to be getting into a huge muddle over minority rights. The law, quite rightly, says that vulnerable groups shouldn't be trampled on because they can't stand up for themselves. But where do you draw the line between those whose rights need safeguarding and those who don't?

In recent years, faith groups have been thought to need protection – a trend that worries comedians like Rowan Atkinson who fear they won't be allowed to tell religious jokes. But how do you define faith group? Last year the courts ruled that a manager at the property firm, Grainger, could sue his employers for sacking him on the basis of his 'philosophical belief' in climate change. Now groups as diverse as vegans and atheists are demanding the same protection for their beliefs as religious groups supposedly enjoy.

Where will it end? Laws to ban discrimination against Flat Earthers, Moonies, body-builders, bald people, ferret breeders, Millwall supporters, save-the-toad campaigners...?

GLYNIS HUBBLE

Reflections on the last six years.

As she prepares to step down, Glynis Hubble shares a few special memories of her time as Churchwarden:

Seven years ago I hadn't thought about what a churchwarden was or did. Then one Sunday in January 2004 (during the interregnum), I was listening to Graham Jones preaching and the thought popped into my head that becoming a churchwarden



was something I could consider – when I retired. After the service Kathleen approached me and said, 'Don't say no straight away, but think about taking over from Pauline Challis as churchwarden in April!' My reply was something like: 'Wow, God doesn't waste time, does he!'

After much prayer and discussion with Pauline about what the job entailed and discussion with Geoff about whether he was happy to be my 'consort' as he called it, I took up the post in April 2004, just after Mark arrived. The Best Bits:

My three wonderful co-wardens: Jim, who initiated me into the intricacies of the Terrier and Log Book; David, who showed me the value of prayer and wisdom; and Row, whose practical skills and knowledge of ohms leave me flabbergasted! I have loved working as a team member in a variety of teams. I shall miss the regular meetings with Mark and Row, Leadership Support, PCC and even Standing and Finance. Columns of numbers are not my thing but those meetings were never boring or a chore.

I have enjoyed meeting new members and getting to know a large proportion of the congregation, building a team of Assistant Wardens and Welcomers, interviewing people for jobs, seeing the vision come to fruition with the completion of Phase 2... I could go on, there are so many things to thank God for. Last, but not least, the privilege of working alongside Mark. It has been exciting, rewarding, sometimes challenging, but lots of fun.

So what next? I am looking forward to having Monday evenings without a meeting and spending more time with Geoff. It will be nice to get back home at a reasonable time after a morning service and even invite people to lunch again. I shall still be part of the welcome team but, apart from that, let's wait and see what God has in store!

The fact is we're all special cases, all a minority of one with oddities and absurdities all of our own. So here's a radical thought. Instead of listing more and more special groups and drawing up laws to protect each one, let's treat *everyone* with dignity and respect.

Then we'd just need one law: 'Do to others as you'd have them do to you.' On the other hand (see Luke 6:31), it seems someone else has got there first.

Graham Jones

BOOKSHELF

Crazy Love by Francis Chan

What the book says: Does something deep inside your heart long to break free from the status quo? Are you hungry for an authentic faith that addresses the problems of our world with tangible, even radical solutions? God is calling you to a passionate love relationship with Himself. Because the answer to religious complacency isn't working harder at a list of dos and don'ts – it's falling in love with God. And once you encounter his love, as Francis describes it, you will never be the same.

What we say: There are two ways to read this – skim through it or read it slowly, thoughtfully and follow the author's instructions, which include at times telling you to put down the book and pray and/or read the Bible.