



SURFACE

Dear Friends

February 2010

LOVE IS...

The end of winter is getting closer...and what a winter!

As a result of the snow and ice, it was necessary to cancel some Christmas events. Consequently the puppeteers were unable to share Jesus at Staplehurst Market just before Christmas. It was far too cold and the ground was very dangerous. I understand they are well rehearsed for Christmas this year!

The Market Church team were also planning to sing Christmas Carols with a collection being made for Kenward Trust. It was good to still give them financial support and make a collection at our Carol service instead.

Other things did go ahead; the Merry Christmas banner was placed on the fence, with love from all at SFC. We also were able erect a Christmas tree...on our Station Road site...generously provided by Gary Brazil. Peter and Doreen Braganza were very kind to provide us with the electricity to power the lights. Unfortunately, Saturday 19th saw the temperature at 4 p.m. dip to -4 degrees, so regrettably for safety reasons, Christmas carolling at the site was cancelled.

Our wintry Christmas also made it difficult for many to make visits to friends and family to deliver seasonal gifts of love.

Talking of love, February brings us Valentine's Day; an occasion when we are encouraged to send a gift or a card to someone special.

When Mary and I visited Kate in Ecuador , we spent time visiting one of her friends, Orlando. He was encouraging growth and development in the local community by cultivating wonderful flowers for export. They were very beautiful, with heart shaped red leaves and each flower was quite large. They were being sold for just 50 cents. (A florist here was actually selling smaller flowers for £2.50!)

We too, will be provided with many different opportunities this year to express God's love for those around us. There is no doubt that some of these will be challenging for us, so let's keep our ears tuned in to Jesus...Jesus in the centre...the One whose life, death and resurrection shows us the true meaning of love. Our love has limits...God's love has none!

Please read on the next page, Rob Lacey's version of 1 Corinthians 13: 1-8..The Street Bible.

With love in Jesus,
Bob - on behalf of the leadership team.



Copy Deadline

March edition of the Surface will require any contributions to be in by 21st February 2010 at the latest. Contributions can be handed to Bev or Stephen Parsons or emailed to Stephen.55parsons@btinternet.com

1 Corinthians 13: 1-8..The Street Bible.

If I get supernatural talent to speak fluent Matabolese, or even Angelese, but I'm rusty on the language of love, then I'm just clattering round like a broken drum kit. If I've got access to the next month's news, or philosophy's big questions, if I know more than anyone, if I can shift a mountain range by will-power, but I forget how love fits in, I may as well not exist. If I donate my millions to charity, but my love-account's in the red, if I volunteer to be a martyr, but my love gland's dead, then I'm a waste of space.

What is love anyway? Not the tripe you've been fore-fed! No, love gives people space and time; it does people good. It's not jealous, loud-mouthed or cocky. It's not vulgar; it doesn't look after No. 1. It's not got a short fuse - it forgives and forgets. Love doesn't smile when dark stuff goes on, but throws a party when the truth gets out. It protects more than a blockbuster here; it trusts more than a toddler. It's always positive; it always hangs in there. Love doesn't let you down.

Men's Prayer

The next Men's prayer on Saturday 6th February will be held at Terence's house (42, Hurst Close) from 08.30 to 10.00am. All men welcome!



Haiti

I'm sure we have all been horrified by the images of the destruction and suffering in Haiti, following the recent earthquake.

If you missed the recent special offering, or are considering a further donation, the Disasters Emergency Committee will accept donations on line or over the phone. For details go to: http://www.dec.org.uk/donate_now/. Money donated in this way is distributed to 13 aid agencies working in Haiti. Included in this list are Christian Aid and Tear Fund.

CEDARS

Please note that the next meeting of Cedars will take place at 3pm on Thursday 18th Feb at Beryl's house, 13 Little Field, Marden Road, (01580 892933)

The topic for the meeting will be confirmed nearer to the date.



The total of the building fund at the end of December was£496,560.22.

Thank you for your continued giving.

SFC 2010 Calendar

Several copies of the above were acquired and one was sent to a Pastor (there are more than one at the Central Baptist Church in Sydney, Australia!) Steve and, his wife, Jan.

In their reply, it was pleasing to note that it was received before Christmas but, I share with you their comments.....

"Greetings to you in our Lord's name.

It was a joy and, pleasure, to receive your letter and, calendar, just prior to Christmas. How special this was to me! Thank you for thinking of us!

Your calendar is a beauty! I think the Church family has done a splendid job on it! It takes pride of place in my office and, I view the photos every day! Pass on my greetings to your Church family!"

Steve then goes on to say that they, as a City Church, are growing and, that they are considering enlarging their Church building over their Car Park and, notes that there are "so many different and differing opinions!.....Still the Lord blesses us with some special folk who bring much encouragement to us!

Thank you again for your thoughtfulness and Christmas greetings. May the Lord keep you warm in your cold winter and may He be a great blessing to you!"

On a personal note, may I take the opportunity to say a big 'thankyou' to Kate for her dedication and, commitment to this work and, pray that as, with Nigel, they deal with "life's challenges" in their lives.

Let us always remember that we serve a big, big, God!

Yours in Him,

John A.

Staplehurst Free Church: Discipleship teaching theme

January to March

As Clive mentioned in his letter on the front of January's Surface, the leaders have been planning a new teaching theme looking at the subject of discipleship. The theme is planned to run from the end of January through to July, with sessions being led by Clive, Ryan and other 'inside' or visiting speakers. The following list gives an overview of the areas that we will be looking at on Sunday mornings. We hope that you will be inspired by this subject and want to look into it further in your own time. We are attempting to gather together a list of possible resources that you may find useful in your search to become 'intentional disciples' of Jesus. We will put more details in the next issue of Surface. If you are keen to get learning before March, please speak to one of the leaders. Alternatively, if you have a resource that you think others may find helpful, either pass the details to one of the leaders or put a review in the next issue of Surface.

1. Key disciples of the Old Testament. Characteristics of people God chose to use. How did they demonstrate God's plan?
2. Why did Jesus call THESE disciples? Characteristics of disciples and their "ordinariness" – an encouragement to us.
3. Modelling and observing Jesus part 1. What can we learn from how Jesus disciplined His disciples?
4. Modelling and observing Jesus part 2. Failing is acceptable in order to learn.
5. Continuum of discipleship: followers of Jesus teaching others how to be followers of Jesus.
6. Commitment to and trust in God's purpose.
7. Servant heart. Having the right attitude.
8. "Disciples in prayer"
9. Love not law. Ensuring we don't fall into the traps.
10. Relationships: with the world and/or fellow believers.
11. All of us are disciples.

Funds for Ecuador

We are delighted to report that the 5p bottle has now raised £120 for Ecuador.

New art Classes,

Commencing March, six week courses, to include: painting, drawing, collage and sculpture. The classes are suitable for beginners and those with some experience. The emphasis in the class will be personal experimentation, creativity and fun.

Wednesday 1-3pm adults only (Maidstone)

Thursdays 6- 7.30pm ages 10+ and 8-10pm adults only (**Staplehurst** URC School room) **Friday** 1-3pm adults only (**Staplehurst** Village South Hall)

Prices from £7.50 per session, bookable in advance as six week courses.

contact Joanne Weaver for further information

<http://www.joanneweaver-artworks.com>

TEL: 01580 893 829

Outreach Youth Club

The Outreach Youth Club operates alternate Fridays in term time in the Village Youth Club building from 7 – 8.30pm. New members always welcome. Young people need to be aged 9 (school year 5) or over. Subs are 50p a session. Dates for the rest of the term as follows

Friday 5th and 26th Feb, Friday 12th and 26th March. Helpers always welcome! Please see Kate M.

Spring Harvest

A party from church are visiting Spring Harvest at Butlins at Minehead from the 13th – 18th April. There is still a wide range of accommodation available if anyone would like to join us at this incredible Christian conference. Full details available from Kate M.

For those already booked, can you ensure that Beryl has received your final payments? Many thanks.

Ps'arms Puppets

Due to Kate M. being unable to take part in assemblies in the autumn, the Ps'arms team had to cancel all their bookings for that term. However Mary, Sue P, Susie and new recruit, Kate Henry have recently embarked on a new string of engagements at local schools for this term. The remaining dates are as follows:

Feb 3rd – St Mary's, Lamberhurst

Feb 4th – Tenterden Junior School

Feb 8th – Marden Primary

Feb 10th – Molehill Copse Primary

Feb 25th - Westborough Primary

Feb 26th – Bower Grove

March 17th – John Mayne, Biddenden

March 22nd – Benenden

March 24th – Greenfields Primary

Please pray for them as they take God's word out to the children.



EMMA'S Newsletter

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I hope 2010 is treating you well so far. It is going to bring some interesting changes for me!

Holmsted Manor has been going through a lot of transition over the last few months. We have new base leaders who arrived in October and have been setting new direction and vision for the base. We have also had a huge staff turn-over as many staff have left and many new staff have arrived, or will be arriving soon. So things have been quite unsettled for a while, but it is starting to settle down to a new routine with a new DTS starting next week.

This has caused me to consider whether God is calling me to stay at Holmsted for this new season. Having been serving at Holmsted for 3 years now, in several different roles, I feel like I have learnt so much and been blessed by so many people and opportunities.

But I really see Holmsted as a training base which equips people to go out into missions, whether that is abroad, or in their home countries. And that is what I think God is saying to me now. I have had amazing opportunities to serve God in YWAM, but after praying about what's next, I really think it is the right time for me to move on to new things. It will be really sad and strange to move away from Holmsted, but it is also exciting to see what God has next.

My Plans for 2010

Initially I will be moving back with my parents in Ashford and looking for a temporary job as I transition out of YWAM. However my long term vision is to be trained in counseling and use this in ministry in the future. During the last 3 years I have really enjoyed the discipling and mentoring that I have been involved in. I would really like to develop this in the future, and expand it so I can serve non-Christians, just as much as Christians.

I want to thank you for your support during my time at Holmsted Manor. It has been such an encouragement to me to know that people have been praying for me and sharing in the work I have been doing. I have felt really blessed having the opportunity to serve full time as a missionary, and I feel like I have gained more than I have given! So thank you again for being part of making that possible.

I hope you have a great 2010 and I would love to hear from you so please keep in touch!

My highlights in YWAM have included...

- Taking part in missions in Albania, Romania, Spain, Bulgaria and Germany
- Seeing 160 students complete their Discipleship Training Schools and have their first experience of missions
- Graduating from School of Worship in 2008 and stepping out in worship leading and song-writing
- Mentoring students who have gone on to long-term missions
- Living in a community and meeting some amazing people

My new address will be:

64 The Street
Great Chart
Ashford
TN23 3 AP

Tel: 01233 639844

SUNDAYS IN FEBRUARY 2010

Sunday 7th February

10.30am Family Service led by the Martin Family:
The Parable of the Talents
6.30pm Worship and communion at the URC.
Clive Jones

Sunday 14th February

10.30am Worship and Communion. Speaker:
Mike Townsend from Torch Trust
6.30pm Prayer and healing service. Clive Jones

Sunday 21st February

10.30am Family Service led by Carl Hynes. The
parable of the unforgiving servant
3.30pm Iden Manor visit
6.30pm Worship and communion at the URC.
Speaker Clive Jones

Sunday 28th February

10.30am Worship and communion. Speaker: Clive
Jones Modelling and observing Jesus, Part 1
6.30pm Evening worship at the URC. Speaker
Ryan Ahern

SFC Housegroup information

Mondays-"Know your Bible" housegroup
10:30am at 51 Surrenden Road, Group leader Marie
Martin (01622 890114)

Tuesdays

1) 9:45am for details of venue please contact
Maggie Martin (01580 890248) or Carole Leckie
(01580 892732)
2) 7:30pm at the home of Beryl Mitchell 13 Little
Field, Marden Road, (01580 892933)

Wednesdays

18:00pm at the home of Richard and Sophie
Hawkes, Crossway, Five Ash Lane (01580 895106)
2) 8:00pm —Brambleside, Lime Trees. Leaders
Bob and Mary Howse (01580 892507)

All regular attenders at the church are welcome to
join a housegroup but please check with Clive Jones
first before attending (01580 890644)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 1st February

8.00pm Leaders' meeting at Victoria Cottage

Tuesday 2nd February

6.30pm Initiative at the URC

Tuesday 2nd to Thursday 3rd February

Clive at "Christian Friends of Israel" board retreat at
Glyndley Manor, Eastbourne. Clive has been the pastoral
board member of this organisation since 1985

Wednesday 3rd February

10.30am Prayer Fellowship, 3 Hurst Close.

Friday 5th February

9.30am Leaders' away day at Highgrove

4:30pm Prayer at Angley School

7.00pm Outreach youth club

Saturday 6th February

8.30am Men's prayer fellowship at Fishers Farmhouse

8:30am Ladies prayer fellowship at Brambleside, 13 Lime
Trees

Tuesday 9th February

6.30pm Youth Cell group at Victoria Cottage

Wednesday 10th February

10.30am Prayer Fellowship at 6 Hanmer Way

Saturday 13th February

8.30am Prayer Fellowship at Brambleside, 13 Lime Trees

Monday 15th February

8.30pm Leaders' meeting

Wednesday 17th February

10:30am Ash Wednesday communion service and prayer at
38 Iden Crescent

Saturday 20th February

8.30am Prayer Fellowship at Brambleside, 13 Lime Trees

Tuesday 23rd February

6.30pm Initiative at the URC

Wednesday 24th February

10.30am Prayer fellowship TBA

Friday 26th February

7.00pm Outreach youth club

Saturday 27th February

8.30am Prayer Fellowship at Brambleside, 13 Lime Trees

Leadership Team

Clive Jones	Pastoral Elder	01580 890644	clivelynnej@btinternet.com
Beryl Mitchell	Treasurer	01580 892933	mitchellberyl@btinternet.com
Bob Howse	Fabric Deacon	01580 892507	bob.1951@live.co.uk
Ryan Ahern	Deacon	01580 890129(Ex Dir)	ryan.ahern@virgin.net
Corinne Laming	Deacon	01580 891481(Ex Dir)	corinne@beanbagcafe.co.uk
Nigel Minett	Deacon	01580 891936	nigelpminett@btinternet.com
Darren Hart	Deacon	01580 893138(Ex Dir)	darrenkh@btinternet.com