



# SURFACE

Dear Friends

January 2010

We all give thanks for the joys of the Christmas season and the events of 2009 despite the trials interspersed with those times of joy and delight. For some of us the last year has held tragedy and sadness, strains and stresses of one kind or another as well as good times and real times of rejoicing.

Now here we stand at the threshold of a New Year with all that it holds for each one of us, but let's be honest, mostly we are totally unaware of what we are to face as the days flow into weeks and months. We are in a place where we all hope things will go well, but are never quite sure what might lie around the corner. With the hymn writer we can say, "We may not know the future but we know **Who** holds the future in His hands." So it is that each day in prayer we commit our activities and those we meet and have concern for into His hands, trusting that though we may be unaware of what might happen we long for His purpose to be fulfilled through us.

The disciples of Jesus were keen to know what was going to happen too but when they questioned Him, His response was, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses..." (Acts 1:7-8). Jesus was really saying, "Although the future is unknown, continue day by day to live under the anointing of My Holy Spirit and by your lifestyle and words, be My followers and witness for Me wherever you go."

The last recorded words of Jesus were, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19) This was His master plan for the salvation of the world, brilliant in its simplicity but so often ignored by much of the modern church. His disciples were to make other disciples over and over again. Can you imagine, He has a purpose to use every one of us no matter our background or upbringing to bring His good news to the broken world in which we live?!

A disciple is a follower of Jesus Christ committed to living Christ's life personally while sharing and imparting Christ's life to others. The verb "To disciple", describes the process by which we encourage another person to be a follower of Jesus which enables them to grow in maturity in order that they feel confident to disciple someone else.

Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2 encourages his disciple Timothy to share "the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrusting them to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."

It is with these thoughts in mind that the leadership team felt it would be good to devote the teaching times on Sunday mornings (other than family services) over the next six months to looking at the subject of discipleship and what it means for us as a church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It might also be helpful as appropriate to look at similar teaching material in the homegroups so that we are helped to "earth" the teaching in our day by day Christian experience at home, study, work or leisure.

You may remember that some time ago I was gripped by a phrase of Mark Greene's quoted in the Navigators material we studied as leaders, "Intentional disciple", that is one who makes a conscious decision and has every intent to grow as a follower of Jesus. I know I have been a Christian since 1968 but I am aware that I still need to grow and develop and we invite you to spend time along with us as we discover anew or for the first time, areas of our lives that Jesus is wanting us to change in and to grow in. It should be an exciting time.

May we work and live together in such a way that we are equipped to do those works of service required of us, "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:13)

Yours together for the Kingdom

Clive (on behalf of the leadership team)



### Men's Prayer

The Next Men's Prayer time will be held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 @ 08.30 @ Fishers Farm, Fishers Road (Nigel & Kate's house).



### **NEW ARRIVAL**

The Editors are delighted to announce the safe arrival of Philip and Camilla Parsons' son, Henry Philip George who was born at 11.32am on Wednesday 30 January 2009.

Henry weighed in at 7lb 8oz and mother, baby and father are doing well!

We thank God for His wonderful gift.



### **Prayer Weekend**

As you may remember it is our intention as a church to hold several prayer weekends during the year to draw us together as we seek God's purposes for us as a church. The next of these weekends will be held over the weekend 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> January. Please see the schedule below and try to share with us when you are able.

#### **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January**

8:00pm Prayer time at the home of Clive and Lynne, 38 Iden Crescent.

#### **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January**

8:30am Men's prayer time at the home of Kate and Nigel, Fishers Farm, Fishers Road

Ladies prayer time at the home of Mary and Bob, Brambleside, Lime Trees

8:00pm Prayer for the nation at the home of Don, 45 Slaney Road

#### **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January**

10:30am Prayer, worship and communion at the school. Speaker Clive Jones

6:30pm Contemplative prayer, meditation and music led by Bev Stainsby at the URC

## Parables in 2010

Beginning on 17<sup>th</sup> January, the new teaching series for our Family Services is based on the parables of Jesus. In Sunday School I was taught that a parable is 'an earthly story with a heavenly meaning': Jesus took a situation that would be familiar to his listeners and used it to teach them something about the Kingdom of Heaven. I've realised that this is something that I also do frequently. I find I need to explain one thing in terms of another that I understand better and the parables I use relate to the things I am familiar with or particularly interested in – maybe to do with gardening, science or just day-to-day life. The other day our girls were talking about whether Christians should avoid going to places like night clubs or is that where Jesus would be going? Up popped a quick parable about the salt pig sitting by our hob: if the salt sits in the pig 'being salt' it is of no use in the cooking but if it gets mixed in with the things that are cooking it does what it is meant to do and effects the flavour of the food .....

**So here's a challenge for you.** We will be looking at parables right through until the end of May 2010. Wouldn't it be good if we could back this up with some home-grown parables printed in Surface each month? If you have a simple illustration of some Godly principle that has helped you in your Christian walk, why not share it with the rest of the church? We could learn so much from each other in this way. Just pass a copy of your personal parable to either Steve Parsons or me.

If you find parables a helpful way of learning you might like to read the book "**Redeeming Love**" by **Francine Rivers**. It is based on the book of Hosea, which is itself a parable, and tells the story of Michael Hosea and his relationship with the prostitute Angel. It is a powerful story giving a clear picture of God's unconditional and unfailing love for sinful people.

Corinne



Please see attached the latest newsletter from the **Demirgils**

## SUNDAYS IN JANUARY 2010

### Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January

10.30am Family Service led by Clive Jones  
6.30pm Evening worship and communion at the URC. Clive Jones

### Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January

10.30am Worship and communion  
6.30pm Evening worship with contemplative prayer and music led by Bev Stainsby at the URC.

### Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January

10.30am Family Service led by Ian MacDonald – The Prodigal Son  
6.30pm Evening worship and communion at the URC. Clive Jones

### Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January

10:30am Worship and communion Clive Jones  
6.30pm United service for Christian Unity at All Saints

### Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January

10.30am Family communion service  
6.30pm Evening worship at the URC

## 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 4<sup>th</sup> January

8.00pm Leaders meeting

### Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January

10.30am Prayer Fellowship , 3 Hurst Close.

### Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January

Prayer Weekend – see details on page 2

### Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January

7.00pm Outreach youth club

### Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January

8:00pm Building review group meeting

### Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January

6.30pm Youth cell group at Victoria Cottage

### Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January

10.30am Prayer fellowship TBA

### Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January

8.00pm Leaders meeting

### Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January

8.30am Prayer meeting at Brambleside, 13 Lime Trees

### Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January

6.30pm Initiative at the URC

### Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January

10.30am Prayer fellowship TBA  
8.00pm Church business meeting at the URC

### Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January

9.00am Ps'arms Puppets at Staplehurst Primary school

### Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January

7.00pm Outreach youth club

### Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> January

8.30am Prayer meeting at Brambleside, 13 Lime Trees

### Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January

6.30pm Youth cell group at Victoria Cottage

February edition of the Surface will require any contributions to be in by Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January at the latest. Contributions can be handed to Bev or Stephen Parsons or emailed to Stephen.55parsons@btinternet.com

## Leadership Team

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