

# HTC News

## Messy Church starts

Over 30 people of all ages had great fun at the first Messy Church on Thursday 5 June. The theme was Jesus' saying 'I am the true vine' so



the crafts featured grapes in a big way: making grapes, dipping grapes, drawing grapes, painting grapes (with feet dipped in purple paint) and, of course, eating grapes. The children and their parents / carers finished with vine-themed worship and a great meal together.

July / August 2008

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and a great deal more to  
keep you in touch with life  
at Holy Trinity

### Our vision is:

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- *more followers of Jesus*
- *deeper followers of Jesus*
- *closer followers of Jesus*

Holy Trinity Claygate  
*Following Jesus Together*

# Letter from the Vicar

Dear friends,

'And now live to north-west China, and our mission partners Gerard and Sarah Charles.' I always fancied being a news anchor and this was my chance.

It was during the 10am service on 1 June and via the wonderful technology of Skype we were speaking to the Charles family who are missionaries we support in the Muslim-majority city of Qinghai. It was a bit tense setting it up (and I was only watching those connecting the cables!) and there was the odd glitch in the connection, but it was wonderful to see Gerard and Sarah from thousands of miles away and hear about how things are for them sharing the gospel in that tough part of the world.

Two things have stayed with me since that interview.

First, the difference faith makes to what appears like an impossible task. Gerard and Sarah spoke about what Hebrews 11 means to them, how they walk by faith, believing that God is at work even though the number of believers in the city is still low. They testified how faith enables them to look to the future, and especially the heavenly city that awaits all who believe in Jesus. That hope changes the way they see the present.

I think that this is something we also are learning as a church in our study of Hebrews 11. The task before us, in terms of launching new services, is much less daunting than that facing the Charles family, but it still requires faith to do what God is calling us to.

The second thing that has stayed with me since the interview has been the privilege and joy of being part of a world-wide, diverse Christian family. It is easy in Claygate to focus just on ourselves and our local needs, but that interview was a great reminder of how God is at work in the rest of the world, and how we can be involved in that through prayer and financial support.

We are members of a worldwide family of followers of Jesus. That is something which I hope will be increasingly important to us as we move forward as a church. It lies behind the plans for the Ukraine mission outlined on the next page and our growing links with the churches there.

One of the things I always enjoy when going on holiday abroad is going to church and meeting believers from different cultures and languages, and yet being reminded that we are all one in Christ - perhaps something to try this summer if you have never done it before.

With my love and prayers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. P.', written in a cursive style.

# Countdown to Ukraine

25 July - 4 August

Since 2003 members of Holy Trinity Claygate have been visiting Akli, Uj Akli and Gyula in Western Ukraine each summer and working with the local churches there in various types of mission. Earlier this year in February (following the objective of a "year-round" mission) Kim Cross, Barry Wakefield and Stuart Sadler braved the snow to support the elders there with a "mini Alpha" style men's course which was very well received.



The summer visit will consist of about 55 people (35 from the UK, 10 Hungarian medical translators and 10 Ukrainian translators) and will be concentrated in three areas:

**Medical and Dental Mission** - led by Michael Webb-Peploe, four doctors from the UK and one from Hungary will be supported by other specialists including a palliative-care nurse who will be visiting villagers in their own homes. There will be two complete dental teams focusing on education and prevention as well as both restorative and emergency treatment.

**School Mission** - led by Clair Sadler, we will be running a holiday club at the school in Gyula for up to 180 children over the week.

**Mothers and Toddlers Group** - as a new initiative we will be running a mothers and toddlers club in two villages over the week with a prime aim of reaching out to those who do not normally go to church.

We also plan to work with the ministers in holding film nights, socials and a village day-out as well as visiting villagers who request this.

Please pray for Stuart Sadler as he leads the trip and for all aspects of the mission. Please also pray for the refurbishment of the old and currently out-of-use medical centre, which we are supporting financially, to be completed by the time we arrive. However, of utmost important is to ask God to ensure that we are genuinely able to work in partnership with the communities and villagers, and to serve well together with members of the URC in Petersfield ,who have supported this work with us since the outset.

Finally, please do drop off signed greetings cards in the church office by Sunday 20 July - hopefully with a personal message. We will be giving these out in the usual way to people we meet in their homes. They are so much appreciated!

Stuart Sadler & Andrew Tarcy

# Seniors House Party at Pilgrim Hall - 2-6 June 2008

Held at a lovely country house in Sussex at the foot of the South Downs, HTC's Seniors House Party took place again this year, in the glorious warmth and sunshine of early June. Sharing cars, everyone sets off after lunch on the Monday, with the holiday beginning in earnest with tea at a certain café near the end of the journey.

At Pilgrim Hall we spend the next couple of hours checking that nothing has changed since our last visit – sure enough, everything is as attractive and welcoming as ever! Philip arrives in time for dinner. With coffee over it is time for our brief evening worship led by Jem Salter who tries to make the point that "togetherness" is the motto of the House Party but everyone knows this already!



Everyone is welcomed, especially those who haven't been on the holiday before. Then a relaxing evening follows – a few of us had a respectably early night!



The next three days are an amalgam of great meals, worship to start the morning (after breakfast), free-time activities and optional trips to some of the huge variety of wonderful places to visit in Sussex.

Valerie, with Tom, Linda and Philip, who all visited this year, each take some of the teaching at our worship services – which this year is based around 'Stories Jesus

told - Parables of Faith'. Each day there is real encouragement from Jesus' words in the Bible, to help us live by faith, enjoy the present and look forward to the future!

Free-time activities are both inside and outside (it doesn't rain during the day at Pilgrim Hall!) and include swimming, putting, table tennis, reading, personal hobbies and so on... Unfortunately, on Tuesday Philip was thwarted from his croquet (Sussex rules) challenge to Diana, Valerie and Jim by a water-logged pitch, and

## We asked some of the guests what they liked about Pilgrim Hall:

"The people. The weather's been divine. And the fellowship." *Angela Havelock*

"Almost everything. Atmosphere, grounds. I've been here over twenty times!" *Sam Ryder*

"The gorgeous grounds. The very pleasant staff. The fact that we all get together outside church. And I think we enjoy being fed!" *Jean Southwood*

"The thing I find difficult to cope with is 3 cooked meals a day. I try not to have seconds!" *Colin Wheatley*

"The friendliness and the wonderful peaceful, happy atmosphere you feel as soon as you arrive. It's just such a beautiful spot." *Nora Guilding*

"The friendly atmosphere, good food, the worship, the outings and the incredible organisation, especially by Jem, Rosemary and Valerie." *Jim Brown*

"Relaxation, friendship, warmth. It's very well run, very friendly. A special atmosphere. Your worries drop away when we get here." *Mary Waller*

Mary Waller's bird-watching was seriously hampered by a lack of objects!



After lunch most of us leave Pilgrim Hall for the afternoon to visit one of the great many attractions in that part of Sussex. Four or so choices of destination are recommended each day and Rosemary has the interesting task of matching choices with drivers.

Inevitably, cream tea establishments are located on the return journey and a swim back at base is a popular way of concluding the afternoon's activities.



After a short but meaningful time of evening worship together, it's a different kind of relaxing – optional games with rules never experienced before (but which always seem to produce a winner!), or a music quiz (punctuated this year by Sam's humorous song – returning by popular demand as a reprise from the Church Weekend Away).

Individual quiz sheets of various kinds are really popular, with our last evening on Thursday seeing the comparison of everyone's answers with the correct ones!

After Friday breakfast – our eleventh excellent meal – we packed our bags, bid Pilgrim Hall, its staff and each other "Au revoir" and returned safely home for another year. In 2009 the dates are 1 to 5 June - will you be there?

Jem Salter, Valerie Bagley & Tom Darwent

# Goodbye Matt!

Matt Knight is leaving and we shall certainly miss him! After 6 months with us as our Youth Ministry Assistant, bridging the gap before Drew's arrival, he is returning to a new job and his family in Durban, South Africa.

What persuades us of the impact that Matt has made, is the number of people of all ages who know him; even if it has been just to enquire "who is that young man walking down Hare Lane in shorts when the temperature is about 10 degrees?" So we thought you might like to hear what Matt thinks of his stay with us here at Claygate!



**Q** What was your first impression of Claygate when you arrived?

**A** I loved the idea of living in a small town. Having grown up in cities and huge residential areas it seemed like I was in a movie of some sort. It is a lovely place, and I will be sad to be leaving it behind!

**Q** What will you be happiest to leave behind?

**A** I am certainly not going to miss the rain, the cold, or missing my last train home (it's a long walk from Surbiton!)

**Q** What has struck you about the young people in Claygate who you have worked with?

**A** I have been lucky enough to meet some of the most wonderfully loving and sincere people here in England. The people are friendly and welcoming, and the youth are a wonderful challenge! I have loved building relationships and adjusting to the culture here – and I know it will be tough to leave behind friends of all ages in Claygate.

**Q** What's your impression of things at HTC and where we are going?

**A** Man oh man, it is such an exciting time to be a member of HTC – I think where the church is in terms of the vision process, and it's heart to see more, closer and deeper followers of Jesus is so inspiring. It is so great to see a church that genuinely cares about every generation in it's community – a church that will bend over backwards to reach out to people who do not know Jesus. And I am so glad to have been involved at a church that does not just exist and stay the same – HTC is a church on the move, holding up and

honouring where we have come from but never forgetting where we are going together. What an adventure!

**Q** Is there any part of the English weather you will miss?

**A** There is something magic about when the sun does come out after months of grey skies and wet grounds... it lightens your mood and lifts your spirits... at least for an hour or two until it rains again!

I think the Bulmers advert sums it up completely – “We will complain when it is too hot and mumble when it showers – but it’s unique, and we love the English summer because it’s ours!”

**Q** Tell us what lies ahead for you back in Durban.

**A** I leave to join a good friend of mine in starting up a new church in the city and student part of Durban – we have been talking of and dreaming about this for four years, and God has now opened a door that we are able to walk through. A daunting challenge for sure, but I am so excited to be involved in something like this... Pray for us, that we would follow God's call and be a beacon of hope to a community, city and country. – living out that Hebrews 11 faith!

God bless you all, and I will miss you.

*Matt in conversation with Maureen Webb*

## Holy Trinity gets a fig tree

In the final issue of Insight there was an article concerning the fig tree and its biblical connections, with the thought that we might include one somewhere in the church garden. We already have a range of plants that are mentioned in scripture. A fig seems appropriate as it is a symbol of peace, tranquillity and security (e.g. Zechariah 3:9-10), save for the occasions when strimmers and mowers are in operation nearby or youthful exuberance has taken over! Moreover, it transpires that Philip loves fresh figs.



Our musings turned into reality when Ken Skelton, one of the churchyard working party regulars, generously offered to donate one and a visit to a local nursery was duly made. A 'hot spot' is required for figs to thrive and bear fruit so we are trying it in a container in a very sunny position by Church House, right opposite the vicarage; but be patient, Philip, it is only a baby! Brian Mathew

**Philip Plyming**

Vicar

**Tom Darwent**

Curate

**Valerie Bagley**

Asst. Minister

**Linda Morgan**

Asst. Minister

**Andrew Cowie**

Children & Families Minister

**Drew Waller**

Youth Minister

**Janet Watkins**

Church Administrator

If 'the poor will always be with us', what should a Christian do?

Christian FAQs - 13 July @ 8pm

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Our world is full of neighbours in great need, full of people living in poverty, without hope, at the sharp end of injustice. As followers of Christ how should we love and serve such people in ways that make a real difference, that play to our strengths, that are realistic given our hectic lives, that are practical? How can we take action in our community, in our country, in our wider world?

## The Dorcas Group

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It was on April 15 that a dozen ladies met for the first time and were led in prayer by Tom Darwent before an animated discussion of our future plans. We decided to call ourselves The Dorcas Group and to meet fortnightly on Tuesday afternoon at 2pm in the Quiet Room. The object to start with was to make items for children for HTC's mission to Ukraine.

On June 8, our work was displayed in the foyer at all three services - the gifts are now on their way to Ukraine and we wish them a safe journey.

The Dorcas Group would be delighted to welcome anyone who wishes to join them.

Janet Wheatley

# News from the PCC

Since the Annual Meeting there have been a number of important developments that have been discussed and approved at PCC meetings. The most significant items of news are:

- PCC members have been allocated to **Reference Groups** to support the seven members of the Ministry Team in their areas of responsibility. The reference group can be called upon as and when required by the Ministry Team member to be a sounding board for ideas or provide more direct tangible support before issues are discussed at full PCC meetings.

- A new scheme for **Ministry Assistants** has been given approval for an initial period of 12 months and Jess Balding has been appointed to undertake the first of such roles. She will liaise with Drew Waller and provide support to youth ministry and elsewhere within the staff team as required.

Michael Porter, PCC Secretary

## Next Edition

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HTC News will appear again on 7 September.

### Services

Currently our Sunday services are held at 8am, 10am & 6.30pm and from September will be held at 8am, 9.30am, 11.15am and 6.30pm.

### Church Office

Monday and Friday - 9am to 5pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday - 9am to 3pm

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