

HTC News

Our Diamond Couple!

March /
April 2009

Congratulations to Joe and Jean Hancock who celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary on 16 April. The couple, who attend 8am services at HTC, met in 1945 at a wedding in Long Ditton. They began a long courtship by letter after Joe was posted to the Americas for two and a half years as a Chief Petty Officer in the Royal Navy. 850 letters



later, they were married in April 1949 and honeymooned in Ilfracombe, Devon. "The man had to bring us hot water every day in a jug and the manor house where we were staying was supposed to be haunted but all the primroses were out so it was very pretty!" laughs Jean.

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

Our vision is:

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

Holy Trinity Claygate

Following Jesus Together

Letter from the Vicar

Dear friends,

I am still praising God for the result to our Vision/Giving Review (see opposite page). The way the Lord stirred up generous and committed giving from the whole church family is a wonderful sign of His love and power, especially in challenging economic times.



I am also thanking God for the messages we are hearing as we look at Philippians on Sundays and in our small groups. It seems to me that there are some very contemporary applications, such as Paul's encouragement that the Philippians 'stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you' (Phil 1:28).

Initially language of opposition might jar with us. We can appreciate how it meant something for Paul under house arrest, or the Philippians experiencing opposition from fellow Roman citizens, but twenty-first century Britain seems a world away.

Except it isn't. Three stories from the last few weeks illustrate how those of Christian faith have experienced opposition because of their beliefs:

- the Christian nurse suspended for asking a patient if she would appreciate a prayer
- the school receptionist reprimanded for sending out a personal prayer letter to some church friends after her five-year old daughter had been spoken to by a teacher for talking about Jesus
- the Christian foster mother who has been struck off by her local council because her 16-year old foster daughter decided, of her own volition, to convert from Islam to Christianity

Each case is complex but I think they illustrate a wider cultural trend in which Christian faith is regarded with, at best suspicion, and, at worst contempt, by many in public life. The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, has called this trend a 'seeming intolerance and illiberality about faith in God... reflected in the higher echelons of our public services'.

I am not suggesting that as Christians we develop a siege mentality and think the whole world is against us. But I do think we need to take Paul's instructions to heart and 'stand firm' for the truth of the Christian faith in our public life today. If Jesus is Lord (as Paul insisted He was to the Philippians) then our responsibility is to live out our faith in our daily lives.

With my love and prayers

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

Giving Review 2009

Major Boost to HTC Vision



require to support the vision and mission of Holy Trinity in 2009."

Looking Ahead

Brian adds, "It is fabulous that we can press on and develop exciting growth in areas such as Messy Church, Toddlers' Praise and the Alpha Course, not to mention tapping into the huge potential of Emmanuel Hall."

Despite deep uncertainty facing many of us due to the current financial crisis, members of the church family are still putting God's work first and are giving more than ever. 42 members have pledged one-off gifts to the value of £63,000.

"HTC is firmly on track to continue growing in 2009, thanks to the fantastic reaction we've had to the Review." Philip Plyming

Unflagging Support

The Giving Review has sparked an exceptionally generous response, following its launch on Vision Sunday on the 11 January. Philip Plyming is delighted with how many people have shown their support, "This represents wonderful faith and commitment from across the church to help tackle the challenges facing us in the year ahead."

"It's an amazing response," says Brian Howells, HTC's Treasurer.

"More than 70% of our regular membership has already responded to the Review with a further 35 people giving at Holy Trinity for the first time." says Brian Howells, Treasurer at HTC. "Based on what has been pledged, we believe that we have the £450,000 we

Annual Process

"There will no longer be a Giving Review in May, as some people may have thought," Brian points out. "From now on, the annual process of reviewing our regular giving will happen at the beginning of the year, bringing it in line with the budget and vision process. But Brian adds. "What is clear this year, is that we have a great deal to thank God for. We are genuinely amazed with the response".

The Big Breakfast!

New Men's Group

35 blokes armed with bacon butties and mugs of tea and coffee, met for the first 'Men's Breakfast' at 8am on Saturday 7 February in the church foyer. The group was started to create stronger ties among male members of the church family. John Cole, who attended the Breakfast, believes there's a real need for closer male fellowship in the church, especially during such a time of economic uncertainty. He says, "During the session we all agreed that there's not much opportunity to meet other Christians in the work place. We felt this was especially important when the pressures at work only seem to get greater."



Phillip Plyming kick-started the event by talking about the need for sharing experiences in a supportive environment. In smaller groups they looked at some weekend newspapers and discussed stories that reflected issues for modern Christian men such as the changing role of men in modern society and how to address their work-



life balance.

Phillip was delighted with the turn-out, "Men aren't naturally hard-wired to reach out to each other for close fellowship. We were all reassured that so many of us share the same need for male fellowship in a relaxed and informal environment." John Cole added, "It was really great to put names to the faces you see so often at church. Also, having food involved gives the group a more relaxed feel. I am especially looking forward to the curry night that's being planned!"

The group is set to run regular Breakfasts - the next one is being held from 8-10am on Saturday 7 March so just let Philip know if you plan to be there - and other events on Saturday mornings.

Anyone wishing to be kept up-to-date with Men's Ministry events should contact the church office or email:

churchoffice@holytrinityclaygate.org.uk

HTC 20s group

A new group has been launched to foster fellowship among church-goers aged 18-30. The group, led by Tom Darwent and Jon and Hannah Hidden, has been set up to support a community of young people, mainly in their 20s, who tend to come to the 6.30pm service on Sunday. The fortnightly sessions start with a meal, followed by Bible study in small groups and have proved to be a big hit so far.



Tom Darwent says, "Up until now there hasn't been much going on at HTC for people at this stage of their lives. We want them to grow in their faith and feel part of a community their own age." He adds, "The group provides a safe place to ask questions, receive prayer support and also to equip people to share their faith with their friends."

We asked a few members what they appreciated about the new group:

Alex Evans: "I particularly enjoy being able to learn about God and talk

about the Bible with people my own age."

Neil Smit: "It's great to start to build fellowship with people I didn't know existed a month ago."

Jess Balding: "I'm gaining a better knowledge of things from the Bible so I can give answers to my friends."

The group, which is planning trips to the cinema, restaurants, nights out in London and weekends away, is currently held at Drew Waller's house every other Wednesday from 7.30-9.45pm.

Kingston University Mission

Tom and Drew have also been forging ties with students at Kingston University. They spent a week in February with the Christian Union Mission at the University. Tom says, "This gave us a great opportunity to build relationships with the Christian students there and to talk about Christianity with a large number of other undergraduates." As part of their visit they carried out a 'worldview' survey, in the main reception area of the University, about general attitudes to Christianity. "Many of the most productive conversations came through completing the survey with passing students of all faiths and backgrounds," said Tom.

Holiday Club

Deep Sea Adventure

130 youngsters set off on an epic voyage several thousand leagues under the sea this half term. They joined Admiral Andrew Cowie and his Holiday Club crew aboard the Stingray Submarine for three-day, deep-water adventure.



Creative Challenges

The youngsters built gruesome sea monsters in the recycled junk modelling challenge. Commander Jill Griffiths says, "I was blown away by their creativity. They made some amazing creatures! One of the other highlights for me was the children's reaction to the large, foam hand puppets that told jokes and parables. They absolutely loved them."



Thrilling Drama



There was custard pie buffoonery from Captain Meano (Simon Winchcombe) and plenty of high-energy singing and dancing during 'Together Time'. The crew also acted out a thrilling deep-sea drama with an unlikely hero. "The Stingray Submarine had broken down and Jack the Toilet Cleaner came to their rescue, as a parallel to the Jesus story," explained Admiral Andy.

"People are always amazed as to how important children are to the church. It creates such good will in Claygate." Jill Griffiths

Transformed by bubble wrap, the Bubble Room (aka the Quiet Room) gave the kids some time for stories and quiet reflection. "They responded by saying please, sorry and thank you to God in some very expressive ways," says Jill. "They wrote really beautiful prayers on colourful, fish-shaped paper and dropped stones into water to reflect on anything they may have felt sorry for doing or saying."



New Session for 4 year olds

A new session was also launched on the Friday of half term for 36 children aged 4 and 5. "It was a more toned-down version of the three-day event for the older ones. We deliberately had fewer children, simpler songs and crafts, but it was every bit as successful," explained Admiral Andy.



"Overall I've been thrilled with how smoothly everything ran," he says. "There's been a huge amount of work involved to make it happen but the atmosphere has been amazing which has been infectious for everyone!" Jill adds, "I'd like to pay tribute to every single person who's helped in any way. God's love really shines through all that hard work and effort!"



Young Adventurers

Cooking Challenge

A team of hungry youngsters rolled up their sleeves for a culinary show-down in the church kitchens. The Young Adventurers cook-off was designed to help kids learn how to make inexpensive, 'good-for-you' food that could compete with the local fast food shop. Drew and Emma Waller, who ran the session said, "We hoped that through learning a new skill our kids would come away with a unique experience that might show them that Christ offers us an abundant and full life."



The kitchens were buzzing with activity as the youngsters chopped, stirred and simmered their way to a delicious home-cooked meal. On the menu was Shepherd's Pie with peas and sugar snap beans or bangers with root vegetable mash. The meal was rounded off with a generous supply of warm oatmeal and chocolate chip cookies.

Drew explained, "In Young Adventurers we want to provide young people in our community with engaging and adventurous experiences that stretch them beyond the confines of the usual dull routine." Drew knew they were on the right track when one of the boys came up to

him and said, "Making that food was really fun! Can we do more stuff like that?"

"It is hard to sum up the grace that came from something as simple as preparing a meal and eating it together," said Drew. "As the kids took part in the preparation, we could see rough exterior facades melt away to reveal kids who were hungry for attention and acceptance. When we sat at the dinner table we thanked God for our food, and our banquet was seasoned with warm conversation and the room was full of a real sense of family."

Drew is appealing to our congregation to help lead these adventures which are due to be held fortnightly. "I really hope that more people will consider becoming a leader on a Young Adventurers project as part of our effort to give kids hope and a hunger for God's love."

If you are interested in leading a YA project, take a look at the HTC Youth website for details and then call Drew Waller to sign up.

Services

Our Sunday services are held at 8am, 9.30am, 11.15am and 6.30pm.

Church Office

Monday and Friday - 9am to 5pm

Tuesday - Thursday - 9am to 3pm

www.holytrinityclaygate.org.uk

churchoffice@holytrinityclaygate.org.uk

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The next edition of HTC News will appear on Sunday 3 May 2009.

Confirmation Course

HTC youngsters are being invited to explore their faith on a special Confirmation Course this spring. Drew and Emma Waller are running the course for those in year 9 who have not yet been confirmed. It starts on 1 March and runs every Sunday from 5-6pm at Drew and Emma's house until Tuesday April 28 when the youngsters will be confirmed.

Drew says, "Our hope is that this class will help our young people to better understand what it means to have a personal faith in Christ. We'll cover topics such as the basics of the Christian faith, the importance of the local church, Christian service and how to grow in a relationship with Christ."

Each session will include an interactive activity, small group discussion, question time and plenty of cake, tea and hot chocolate! Mums and Dads will get the opportunity to join in, thanks to a weekly family Bible study that goes through key sections of the Gospel of John. Members of the class will get the chance to become young leaders in our Spring Pathfinders' retreat. The course will also mark the youngsters' transition from Pathfinders into the Youth Fellowship.

Drew, who did not grow up in the Church of England, will not only be teaching the confirmation class; he is also preparing to be confirmed alongside the youngsters on the course. He says he hopes they can lean a lot

from one another, "Proverbs talks about how, just as iron sharpens iron, God places people together to sharpen us spiritually. My hope is that the confirmation class will be an opportunity for us to grow in our faith together!"

Messy Church Update

There's been double the mess and double the fun at Messy Church so far this year. Thanks to its incredible popularity, there are now two sessions each month instead of one. More than 100 children and carers turned up on 12 February, despite the disruption that week due to heavy snow, and a further 100 came to the repeat on 24 February!



The theme for February was Noah and how God always keeps His promises. The children created edible

mini arks out of cocktail sausages, paper doves and beautiful animal masks which they wore to the short, lively service before getting stuck into fish fingers and potato wedges for tea!

Messy Church is held in church from 3.30pm on the first Thursday of each month. There's an identical session two weeks later on a Tuesday.

Ukraine Trip



Clair Sadler has just returned from a two-day mission to Ukraine which she has been visiting for the past four years. She filled us in on how it went:

What was the emphasis of this particular trip?

“We wanted to introduce 40 Days of Purpose to the elders and their wives. We were particularly keen to involve the women this time as they often have such strong faith and play such a powerful role in their society.”

What impact does their faith have on the lives of their families?

“Many of the elders’ wives have impressively solid faith. One lady I met had prayed for her husband to become a Christian every day for years. He became a Christian 25 years later!”



How did you manage to deliver 40 DOP in such a short time!?

“We gave a condensed version with 5 presentations over the two days and split into groups for discussion, just as we did

here in Claygate. We adapted the questions very slightly but it was more or less the same.”

What was their reaction to 40 DOP?

“It was a different approach from what they were used to but they seemed to love and really embrace it. Everyone found the book very accessible so we left 10 copies behind in Hungarian for the five villages.”



What was your overall impression of the trip?

“It felt like a truly blessed mission with an incredible sense of togetherness and fellowship. We gave particular thanks to the women who served tirelessly over the two days to make us feel really welcome. At the end of second day we had Holy Communion whilst wearing our wellies, which was a first for me!”

Any memorable moments?

“We had a massive snowball fight on the Saturday lunchtime! There was such a sense of true joy and happiness throughout the trip which lifted the spirits for people living through such tough times.”

Our Diamond Couple!

Continued from front page

David, their first son, came along shortly before Joe left the navy in 1952 and they moved to New Haw where their other two children, Philip and Joyce, were born. Jean worked for the Milk Marketing Board for 10 years and then at Hawkers. Joe worked as an engineer for British Aerospace under the direction of Barnes Wallis. Joe says, "It's amazing to think I started out working as a farm hand for £12 a year when I left school at 13." The couple have fond memories of being invited up to London to see the premier of the classic 1950s 'Dam Busters' film. Joe says, "We turned up in an old jalopy amongst all the shiny black Jaguars so we got a massive cheer from the crowd!"

They moved to Jean's childhood home in Claygate in 1990 after her parents passed away and now they have two grown up grandchildren. Their son Philip, who lives in Australia, is flying back for the Diamond Wedding celebrations but the family are keeping the details a closely guarded secret from Joe and Jean! The couple say 60 years of marriage has gone by in the blink of an eye, "The secret to a long marriage is tolerance and remembering that no one is perfect! But we still can't quite believe we've got a son who's nearly a pensioner!!!"

Vision For Seniors

David Wakefield is set to give an illustrated talk on 'Art & the Passion of Christ' at 2.30 pm on Thursday 26 March in the church. David's talk will be followed by afternoon tea. All Seniors are invited to come along.

This talk is the result last year's questionnaire, which sought to assess which activities or events would be most popular with HTC Seniors - most people prefer events with guest speakers, viewing films and documentaries or just the chance to socialise.

Since September many Seniors have enjoyed helping out at Messy Church for children and their carers, which is now held twice a month. It involves helping out with craft activities, teas and welcoming. Please speak to Andrew Cowie if you would like to join the team.

Finally, Caroline Fish has joined the Pastoral Care leadership team. Caroline was commissioned as a Pastoral Assistant in November. She will focus on the needs of older people in the church family and our wider community.

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

Bishop Christopher visits HTC

There was more than a hint of episcopal purple when Christopher Hill, the Bishop of Guildford, spent a morning at HTC on Sunday 22 February. It was the first time that the Bishop had been to Claygate for

Phillip Plyming was delighted that Bishop Christopher had found time in his busy schedule to accept the invitation to come to Claygate. "I know Christopher really enjoyed the different styles of the two services he attended. He even joined in the actions to the children's song!"



a Sunday service. He spoke at both the 9.30am and 11.15am services and his message from Philippians 2:1-11 was that we should not forget the uniqueness of what God did in Jesus Christ.

News from the PCC

We were delighted to hear the outcome of the Giving Review at the last meeting and equally pleased to hear about the impact of 40 Days of Purpose, particularly on the growth in number of small groups.

Philip updated us on the Alpha Course, which is also fertile ground for more small groups, and will have attracted 104 guests including the current course.

Finally, the Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held on 22 April at 8pm.

Michael Porter, PCC Secretary

EASTER AT HTC	Fri 10 April	10am	March of Witness from The Parade
	Good Friday	10.30am	All Age service followed by hot cross buns in the church hall
		12noon	Three-hour Meditation divided into sections
		7.30pm	Stainer's Crucifixion - Claygate Choral Society tickets £12.50 adults, £6 for schoolchildren
	Sun 12 April	6am	Sunrise service on Telegraph Hill
	Easter Day	8am	Holy Communion
		9.30am	All Age Holy Communion
		11.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Evening Praise