

HTC News

Taking the Plunge!

May /
June 2009



A hardy team of Young Adventurers dipped more than a toe in the water at Worthing Beach on Saturday 25 April. Drew Waller, five team leaders and 12 youngsters braved the chilly water to have a go at body boarding.

Afterwards, they warmed up with hot drinks and sausages served up by Annie Helen at their beachside campsite. Drew said, "Struggling into our wetsuits had us helpless with laughter, even before we got in the water! I think it helped reinforce the message that Christians can have a lot of fun."

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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 want to thank many of you for praying for me during my recent retreat. I found my five days of solitude in Cornwall refreshing and enriching, both physically and spiritually. I also valued the chance to reflect on what God has been showing and teaching us as a church over the past year, and what He might want of us in the future.



First, I believe that God has really showered His blessings on us: new services that continue to grow; Messy Church that attracts many to explore and experience Christian faith; 40 Days of Purpose that helped so many go deeper in faith; new people in leadership; expanding links with Ukraine and other mission partners; and generous giving to support the vision. All are blessings from God's hand, given in abundance.

God has been good to us as a church.

My second thought was what God expects of us in the light of all these blessings. I am clear that He has not given them so we can display them like trophies, but rather that we are open to being further used by Him in the future. A verse which spoke to me on retreat was Luke 12:48 'from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.'

I believe that as people who have received much from God, much is expected of us and we can expect God to ask more of us in the time to come. I am not absolutely certain what that will look like, but I am confident that God wants us to be part of His mission wherever He calls us: in expanding ministry in the parish of Claygate and nearby; in supporting other churches more locally; in sending out leaders for wider ministry; and in actively participating in worldwide mission.

*'from the one who has been entrusted with much,
much more will be asked.'*

God has blessed us so we can bless others. I look forward to being part of that with you.

With my love and prayers

New Short Courses

Just People & Dig Deeper

Two short courses are getting underway this Spring to help people explore and develop their faith.



Just People, a course written by the Tearfund organisation, will look at whether we are ready to embody Christian values to combat poverty and injustice.



The other course, **Dig Deeper**, concentrates on bringing our understanding of the Bible alive in our personal study.

Tom Darwent is leading 'Just People' alongside Tearfund CEO Matthew Frost. Tom said, "The course is designed to get people thinking about the theology behind the Christian concern for justice and God's call for us to be merciful and compassionate both locally and

globally. It will also give us many ideas about what we, as individuals and as a church, do to put this into practice."

Dig Deeper draws on a book of the same name. Led by Philip Plyming and Andrew Cowie, the course is designed to increase people's confidence in understanding and applying the Bible today. Philip said "This is a real opportunity to get to grips with the whole Bible including the bits we rarely read. Andrew and I are excited about helping people look at the big picture and introducing tool that can transform our reading of God's word."

Short Courses Info

Just People and **Dig Deeper** take place in the church building on the following six Thursdays:

14 & 21 May
4, 11 & 25 June
2 July

Arrive **7.30pm** for coffee and cake.
Courses run from **8pm to 9.30pm**.

Everyone is welcome on either course, including those who don't regularly attend HTC.

For more information please contact the church office.

Alpha Update

Gillian Hall Q&A



Gillian Hall became a Christian following an Alpha Course in September 2008. She is Head of Kingston Youth Services and has lived in Claygate for 28 years.

What made you decide to take the Alpha Course?

"A leaflet came through the door around the time of my grandson's christening which started me reflecting on things. I knew I believed in something but I had a lot of questions. When another leaflet arrived, advertising the Alpha Supper, I thought I'd give it a go."

Did the Alpha course answer your questions?

"As a child I went to a faith school but I was left with the impression that the Bible was just a series of myths and stories. Alpha was actually very practical as it presented me with many facts. This helped me start to get closer to understanding about my faith."

Did you have any light bulb moments?

"One of the most powerful moments for me was when Philip talked about grace. It really clicked when we discussed how grace was a two-way process. Before the course I had a vague notion that faith was about earning brownie points or ticking boxes

but the concept of true grace blew that theory out of the water! It really helped me in my decision about taking the step to becoming a Christian."

What part did Alpha play in this decision?

"There's no way I would have started this journey without Alpha. I think before I was waiting for a dramatic sign but now I realise it is more of an ongoing process. I feel like a Christian with L-plates on but it's definitely a challenging and rewarding journey!"

What did Easter mean to you this year?

"It was like experiencing Easter for the first time! I'd never been to church on Good Friday and found it very powerful when the cross was raised during the service. I knew then that I was no longer going through the motions and finally it was all beginning to make sense."

New Daytime Alpha Course

It's not too late to join the new daytime Alpha course which was launched at HTC on 30 April.

It takes place every **Thursday** from **10am until noon** and lasts for 8 weeks, with a break for half term.

Each session starts with coffee, tea and cake and there is a crèche for the little ones.

Contact Church Office for more details.

Demonstrate Day - Leeds



A team of Youth Fellowship Outreach youngsters and leaders joined more than 200 volunteers for Demonstrate Day in Leeds on Saturday 21 March.

Having arrived late on Friday night, the team was up early on Saturday morning to help out at 'Kidz Club,' run by former HTC YF member, Jackson Turner. The session attracts around 200 children from inner city areas and is similar to Messy Church involving games, worship and prizes. Jon Hidden, one of the YF leaders said, "It was very professionally run. 'Kidz Club' leaders keep the Gospel firmly at the centre of things and believe in building strong relationships with young people."

The YFO team were then whisked off to join Demonstrate Day in the Burmantofts area of Leeds - a council estate with tower blocks and sheltered accommodation. Demonstrate Day is a 'Churches Together' project to show God's love for the community and involves a wide variety of social action, including a family fun day, visiting

elderly people and trimming hedges.

"The volunteers all congregated at St Agnes church for a briefing. There were about 200 of us, all in red 'Demonstrate' T-shirts," explained Jon. "We then split into teams and we were allocated the cemetery where we spent about three hours litter picking and clearing footpaths. It was amazing to see the body of Christ working and worshipping together to make communities in Leeds a better place to live. Following a BBQ back at base, the teams joined together for celebration service where people reported back on their experiences from the day. Jon said, "We all thoroughly enjoyed the service, which lasted about three hours so we didn't get back to Claygate until about 3:30am on Sunday! We were tired but felt that we had learnt so much about the importance of local mission to local people."

"It was amazing to see the body of Christ working and worshipping together to make communities in Leeds a better place to live."

Drew added, "We were really touched by our experience serving in Leeds. The combination of hard work, great worship, and lots of churches working together was a powerful witness of God's power and grace both to our young people and the local communities we served."

Easter 2009

Good Friday

March of Witness

Nearly 200 people joined the procession behind a large wooden cross carried by Andy Clifton. Everyone gathered for prayers at 10am in the station car park then followed the cross along The Parade, up Hare Lane and ended up at church for the service.



All Age Service

There was a reflective and sombre mood among church-goers gathered for the All Age service. Prayer stations were set up around the church to help people reflect on the betrayal of Jesus and the part we all played in his sacrifice on the cross. People wrote the words, 'Crucify Jesus' on post-it notes and



hammered them into wood with nails. They washed their hands in water, just as Pontius Pilate washed his hands of Jesus. They ran coins through their hands to remember how Judas sold Jesus. Most movingly, the large wooden cross carried on the march was raised, high up above the dais, covered with the names of everyone there.



Stainer's 'The Crucifixion'
Claygate Choral Society performed John Stainer's 'The Crucifixion' on Good Friday evening. This adaptation of the 'Crucifixion of Jesus' by William J Sparrow Simpson has become a regular part of Holy Week music up and down the country.



Easter Sunday

Sunrise service

25 people trekked up Telegraph Hill for the 6am service this year. Philip Plyming led the service and said, "It was worth the early start. The reality of starting the day with



praise was very special indeed. Throughout the Easter weekend, I was thrilled that the message of the cross and the resurrection reached so many people." Andrew Cowie added, "We wanted people to get involved, not just sit back and listen. It gave everyone the chance to reflect on the part that we all played in the Easter story."



Thurible - 'new' for 2009!

A Thurible was used for the first time in church on Easter Sunday. The silver incense burner was swung gently to circulate the aromatic fragrance of frankincense around the church. The idea was to evoke the



women's experience of the first Easter Sunday when they made their way to Jesus' tomb, only to find it empty. It is thought that special oils and spices, including frankincense, would have been used to anoint Jesus' body.

YFO Couch Olympics



12 youngsters and two blow-up sofas set off on a mad dash around Claygate on 17 March for the 2009 Girls v Boys Couch Olympics.

Both teams had just over an hour to take photos of themselves and their couch in 40 peculiar scenarios. These included taking the couch up a tree, into a public toilet, onto Claygate station and into a swimming pool.

Jess Balding, one of the leaders on the girls' team said, "The girls did manage to find a private pool but the owners were really surprised when we turned up with a blow-up sofa on their doorstep!"



Both teams were on foot and had to run to try and complete as many of the tasks as possible. Jess says, "We did consider hitching a ride with the K3 bus

when we had about ten minutes to go! Considering the size of my Nissan Micra, driving was out of the question, as we would have had to deflate the sofa each time!"

The main idea of the event was simply to have fun.

Jess said, "Friends of one of our YFO girls also came along which was great as it showed them that Christian life can be fun and you can let your hair down a little!"



Both teams managed to get photos with Tom Darwent wearing full clerical gear and also a shot of team mates kissing at Claygate station. "The boys got lots of extra points as they were able to include strangers in their photo because a commuter-filled train arrived just as they got there!" laughed Jess. "No one managed to get a photo of their team with someone dressed up in a chicken suit. But the girls did get a photo with six species of animal thanks the cunning use of the Hayes' family cat who had just caught a mouse!"



PCC - New Faces

Three new people were elected onto the PCC at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, which attracted about 120 people on Wednesday 22 April.

Mel Dawes, Bill Lowe and John Smith are all delighted with their new roles:



Mel Dawes: "I'm really looking forward to supporting the Children's and Families Minister as well as sitting on the Jigsaw Management

Committee. The highlight of my journey of faith at HTC has been joining a small group following an Alpha course."



Bill Lowe: "I'm relishing the challenge of helping shape the direction of HTC over the next few years. I came to know Jesus when I went on an Alpha course in 1998

and joined a home group where my faith has matured and deepened."



John Smith: "I feel very honoured to have been asked to be a Churchwarden, having been a member of Holy Trinity Claygate for most of my life. For nearly 20 years I ran

HTC Youth Fellowship and I also helped establish and lead the first Alpha courses

here, which was tremendously rewarding."

PCC Secretary Michael Porter was encouraged by the good turnout at the APCM and said, "Philip delivered an incredibly enthusiastic presentation, giving thanks for everything that God has given to us as a church over the past year. He also outlined how we needed to continue to expand our ministry both locally and globally. It was exciting and frightening all at the same as we have so much more to do!" Michael added, "A senior member of congregation said to me that it was the most inspiring APCM he's ever been to!"

PCC News

Our March meeting was particularly fulfilling, in light of the very positive response to the Giving Review. This enabled us move forward and advertise the posts of Children & Families Minister and Ministry Assistant, since both Andrew Cowie and Jess Balding will be moving on after the summer.

Valerie Bagley updated us on the Pastoral Care teams and the changes in leadership that had recently taken place. We also gave approval to proceed immediately with both phases of improvements to Emmanuel Hall, so that we can make more use of the entire building sooner rather than later.

Michael Porter, PCC Secretary

Shining As Stars

Stories of Faith During Challenging Times



Colin Wheatley has been an active member of HTC church since childhood and has lived with Motor Neurone Disease for 25 years. Here, he shares his story:

this time I didn't feel His presence and I was just going through the motions; attending church but not really praying, not connecting, not listening. Then I had a breakthrough at a parish weekend in Dorset. After communion they offered healing and they laid hands on me and prayed. A wonderful feeling went through me; a warm, almost electric, tingle. I was healed, not physically, but spiritually and mentally.

'Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?' Job 2:10

"My family moved to Claygate when I was six and the church has played a central role in my life ever since. As a youngster I attended the Sunday school, joined the robed choir and got married at the church, more than forty years ago. Having settled in Claygate with a young family, I became a member of the PCC, Deanery synod and led one of the first home groups.

It was a new start. I won't say I've never looked back as I have my ups and downs, but I have never doubted God's provision for me. I have so many blessings; financial security, eight grandchildren, many friends and so much more.

In 1984, I started slurring my speech and stumbling. Two years later I was diagnosed with a rare form of Motor Neurone Disease. At the time I was a practising solicitor and Liberal Councillor, so my greatest fear was that within just a few years I would become an alert mind imprisoned in a useless, uncommunicating body. I tried to take my own life and woke up disappointed in Kingston hospital. I had expected to be with God but He had other plans.

A few years ago God drew my attention to a verse on my daily calendar. When I bought a new bible the marker was right at Job 2:10 'Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?'

God has always been sitting beside me in times of crisis, especially during the early days following my diagnosis. At

Like anyone else, my strength of faith comes and goes but more recently the sermon series on Philipians has been a great source of encouragement to me. Paul wasn't grumbling about his own situation in prison but praying that he could be a good example to others."

Seniors' Talk & Tea

Valerie Bagley reports

In the run-up to Easter, David Wakefield's fascinating talk focusing on the Passion of Jesus in art attracted around 60 people; a great turn out for the first event specifically for HTC Seniors.

Clearly born out of years of a loving familiarity with all kinds of art, David focused on the many and varied interpretations of Christ's suffering and death, such as Michelangelo's poignant 'Pieta' sculpture, and Holman Hunt's desolate 'The Scapegoat.' David pointed to an intriguing example of how Christ's death has been politicised in Goya's painting of an execution during the Napoleonic wars. The victim is depicted with his arms spread wide, dressed in innocent white with the stigmata on his hands.

David also revealed certain points of technique such as how artists often distort the visual facts in order to convey a heightened sense of reality! In the 'Pieta' for example, Mary is over-sized and could not possibly have supported the bulk of the dead Jesus in the position depicted – but our eyes are deceived!

A wonderful selection of David's pottery was on display and he explained to us how he has sought to express aspects of the Gospel message in his works.

The afternoon ended with tea and cakes and several of the guests expressed keen interest in a drawing class which David plans to run.



"The tear in this vase suggests a bereavement, and in its attempted repair lies the hope for a new life to be created. The torn lip was inspired by the Ginkgo leaf and it's frayed, fan-like edge, suggests that energy for new growth is always possible." David Wakefield

HTC
INFO

Sunday Services

8am Traditional
9.30am Lively
11.15am Reflective
6.30pm Contemporary
See website for more details.

Church Office

Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm

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Tom Darwent

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Valerie Bagley

Asst. Minister

Linda Morgan

Asst. Minister

Andrew Cowie

Children & Families Minister

Drew Waller

Youth Minister

Janet Watkins

Church Administrator

Confirmation Service



A special Confirmation service led by Bishop Ian was held at HTC on Tuesday 28 April following an eight week course to prepare youngsters for the big day. Drew Waller led the course, but he was also being confirmed:

"I joined 20 people from HTC and neighbouring parishes, to be confirmed at the Tuesday evening service. It marked the culmination of weeks of prayer, discussion and study for our young people who came to the

preparation class, including a few from Christ Church Esher. The class was a great chance for everyone to explore their faith, hear different points of view and look at their relationship with God and the church. I was being confirmed because I did not grow up in the Church of England. But it was a great opportunity for me to ask myself the same questions, so that I could prepare my heart for being confirmed."

Bishop Ian began the service by reminding the congregation that confirmation was a beginning step on the 'Journey of Faith' and not the end of the road. During the service those being confirmed recognised publicly their individual commitment to the church and to seeking God's direction for their lives. The night was made doubly special because friends and family had come from all over the country to join in the celebration.

London Men's Convention

The London Men's Convention on Saturday 18 April attracted nearly 4000 men, including four members of HTC. Majella Fernando, Jon Hidden, Mark Chapman and John Cole were bowled over by the sheer size of the event at the Excel centre in the London docklands. Jon said, "Following a warm welcome from the chairman Richard Coekin, nothing could quite prepare us for the volume and power of 3900 men during the sung worship!"

The event drew speakers such as Wes McNabb, Tim Keller and Mike Cain who spoke passionately about the need to be ready when Jesus returns in glory. The worship was led by singer and composer Stuart Townend. Jon said, "As well as the talks and sung worship, we were able to pray and listen to inspiring personal testimonies from a diverse range of people including a former drug dealer and a Conservative MP (not the same person I hasten to add!)."