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St. James' Church

Our Parish Magazine

Westgate
&
Garlinge



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News & Activities

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www.stjameswestgate.org.uk

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Dear Friends

“For I the LORD do not change” (Malachi 3.6)

At our evening services we recently undertook a sermon-series on the much-neglected Book of Malachi. Amidst some very challenging sections for believers then (and believers like us today) comes the above verse, which is a very precious promise of God. I hope and pray we will take hold of it for ourselves and for our church-family of St James’.

There are many changes that face us in the time ahead, not least in the life of the church. JP, Debbie and the boys are just about to leave us after four years here for Perth, Western Australia, where JP will be part of the chaplaincy team of St Mark’s Community School, with the aim of setting up a church-plant for present and past pupils and their families. Barbara and I will be retiring to Barton Seagrave, Northamptonshire, in October: although I shall no longer be a paid clergyman, I expect to be active still in preaching. My last Sunday at St James’ will be Sunday 7th October. Do pray for the Churchwardens and the PCC with all their extra responsibilities in the time ahead, particularly with the need to appoint a new Vicar for St James’. At the time of writing, there is uncertainty about the possible effects of a pastoral reorganization plan proposed by the Deanery: if you want more information, do let me know. But the PCC have made it clear that they wish to see the continuation of conservative evangelical ministry at St James’.

So with all those changes ahead, let’s take heart from the Bible’s assurance (in the above quoted verse from Malachi and elsewhere) that the Lord does not change. He is constant and reliable and unchanging.

He is constant in love: *“For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him” (Psalm 103.11).*

“Steadfast love” is one of the key phrases of the Bible – just one word in the original. It sums up the heart of God himself, who has committed himself to his people and will never break any of his promises.

He is constant in forgiveness: *“As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103.12).*

We can measure north to south, but no one has yet managed to measure the distance from east to west. It is a distance that defies all calculation. That is how far God promises to remove our guilt and sin from us.

He is constant in compassion: *“As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him”* (Psalm 103.13).

A child doesn't have to pretend to his or her parents, and to a large extent the parents can “read” their child anyway. But there can be absolutely no pretending before God. As the perfect heavenly Father, he knows all that is in our hearts and he shows perfect compassion.

How can we be sure that the Lord is indeed constant in love, forgiveness and compassion? The answer is: We look at the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If God loved us so much that he gave his Son to die for us, how can we ever doubt that his love is constant?

If Jesus cried out on the Cross, “It is finished!” (i.e. completed), how can we ever doubt that our sins are fully dealt with, pardoned and forgiven?

If Jesus became a human being like us and took on himself the burden of our guilt, how can we ever doubt his compassionate understanding of our needs?

Let's be encouraged as we step forward into the unknown future (but not unknown to our heavenly Father). Our Saviour God does not change. His promises are true. As we trust in him, we shall experience his faithfulness in all circumstances.

With Christian greetings,
Yours, **Robert Bashford**

FROM THE CHURCH REGISTERS

WEDDING: 16th June Yazmeen Darwish and Reynolds Opoku
 21st July Claire Cannon and Scott Bottom

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the relatives and friends of those committed to God's care:

FUNERALS: 11th June Emily Back, aged 92 years
 3rd July Jack Channon, aged 96 years

Sunday 30th Sept. 8.00am “Jesus heals a blind beggar” (Lk.18.31-43)
 10.30am “Putting it back together again” (Gen.44)
 6.30pm “Love the Lord” (Mk.12.28-37)

ANY QUESTIONS?

What is an Evangelical? And does it matter?

St James’ has stood as an Evangelical church (or Conservative Evangelical, to be more precise) for a number of years now. I have spoken about what this means at the past two Annual Church Meetings. But here is another look at this topic now.

The word *evangelical* comes from the Greek word *euangelion*, which means “glad tidings” or “Gospel”. So the obvious inference is that an Evangelical is a “Gospel person”. But then, we might say, surely all Christians should be “Gospel people”, shouldn’t they?

Hopefully yes, but Christian history repeatedly displays our tendency to slide from the unchanging truths of the Gospel, so that Paul finds himself astonished that the Galatian church should have turned so easily to “a different Gospel” (Gal.1.6), and the New Testament call goes out to “contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

Evangelical came to be applied to the “contenders” of the 19th century who saw their roots lying in the affirmed truths of Scripture and in the definitions of orthodox belief set out in the early church creeds. Evangelicals clearly had a kinship with the 16th century Protestant reformers. So although orthodox Christian believers ought not to be labelled at all, we can recognize that – in the face of repeated moves to soften, accommodate and even abandon the historic revealed truth of Scripture – every generation has featured the emergence of Christians who have felt called to summon the church back to its true origin and heritage.

Over the last century or so, such have been termed Evangelicals. How, in a few sentences, can we summarize Evangelical distinctive?

1. *Evangelicals stand for a salvation that is personal.* Here they stand in the traditions of such leaders as Wesley and Whitefield, with their insistence on the necessity of new birth and a living experience of the Holy Spirit’s work.

2. *Evangelicals stand for an authority that is final.* The Bible is recognized as the supreme authority, over that of human reason and church tradition (as indeed it is in the historic church formularies – see Article 20 of the Book of Common Prayer).

3. *Evangelicals stand for an atonement that is central.* They stress the biblical truth that we cannot be reconciled to God by our own efforts or character. God has done it all in the death of Christ.

4. *Evangelicals stand for a worship that is simple.* Christ is recognized as the fulfilment of the elaborate rituals of the Old Testament. Our approach to God in worship is now direct and uncluttered, and is not to be hampered or obscured by ornate ceremony (Heb.9.1-14).

5. *Evangelicals stand for an attitude that is radical.* God's revelation is unchanging, but it has to be re-stated and worked out in ways that will meet the social and spiritual needs of every age – as we saw in the work of Dr Barnardo, Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury.

From an article by Richard Bewes, adapted for use at St James' Westgate

A NOTE FROM MIKE AND DEBBY HULMES

We wanted to write and thank you personally for your prayerful support over the last twelve years. When we look back we are amazed to see how God has provided for us through different means.

As you are aware our roles have changed over the last 12 years. We started out as students, learning the French Language. Mike then provided technical assistance to a media group in Algeria, how wonderful to see that they no longer require any help and are continuing to reach out to their compatriots. Mike moved on to recording radio programmes, filming, video editing and more recently web development.

Debby started out doing research, gradually moving on to Bible studies at a local women's refuge, to teaching English, French and more recently Bible stories. God has blessed us during this time with good work colleagues, prayer partners, financial supporters and friends. Our family also increased with the arrival of Joshua and Luke.

As one of our supporters recently reminded us, the only call from God which does not change is our call to follow him. Just as God called us to France 12 years ago, so now we are convinced that God is calling us to leave Marseille, but like Abraham we have no clear leading for our future. We are grateful for the last 12 years and encouraged by your support and look forward to what God has in store for us.

One thing which has been a real confirmation to us that it is time to leave Marseille, despite not being able to sell our flat or find employment is our financial deficit. We are aware that our Lord owns the cattle on a thousand hills and if it was his will for us to stay then finances would not stand in his way.

The next six months will probably prove to be an emotional time as we say goodbye to our home in France and start a new life in the UK. The children are understandably concerned at leaving the only area they have ever lived in. We praise God for the opportunity for them to go on camp with other missionary children also moving back to the UK.

We would value your continued prayers for us as we look for a permanent home, you may be aware we will be living with Mike's parents initially. We also need to find employment, schools for the boys and help the children to transition into a different educational system. We would be very grateful if you could continue to support us financially as well as prayerfully in the months of transition ahead of us. As we return to the UK, AWM will have spent nearly £10,000 more on us than they have received for our support. While we acknowledge our responsibility for this deficit we would like to ask if you would pray about its repayment, thank you.

The personnel manager in our AWM UK office has also asked us to pass on to you the attached message.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

With our love

Mike & Debby

11 June 2012

Dear Friends of Michael and Debby Hulmes

Thank you for all your faithful support to Michael and Debby since they first went to Marseille in 2000. Their focussed and devoted service to the church in the Arab world, and to all to whom they have ministered in Marseille, has been much

appreciated by all the team there, and by many others in the mission family. This has only come about as you have played your part in supporting them, in prayer and in other ways, in the spiritual battle.

Michael and Debby are now in transition from ministry in France, and this is a key time. They can look back on many blessings and some recent examples are mentioned in this prayer update. And I was hearing other examples of God's faithfulness to them as we spoke on the phone last week. But this is also a time of struggle. Several different issues are set out in this update.

So now is a key time for supporters to pray for them. There are many aspects to "re-entry" and such books as "Honourably Wounded" (Marjory Foyle) and "Burn Up or Splash Down" (Marion Knell) give helpful background. It will be quite natural for all four of the Hulmes family to feel a sense of loss at this time. Some have described it as mourning, for all that France is just "next door"! It can be very challenging for children entering a new school in a different country. Joshua and Luke will be top of their classes in French, but may struggle with other aspects. And working out longer term plans for accommodation, employment, finances and the sale of their Marseille home are significant items too.

So during the next six months or more, please could you set aside extra time to support the Hulmes family in prayer. Asking that God's will will be done in their lives, as it is done in heaven. Travel from France may only take a few hours, but transition will take many months. Please walk with them in this, as part of your loving care for them. We will be doing the same in the AWM office.

If you have been supporting them through emails, visits, finance, birthday cards, phone calls or loving letters, do not stop now. That is something to reconsider in 2013. The UK office will be seeking throughout this year to support them in similar ways too. We cannot do so without you.

Thank you for all that you do for Michael and Debby, Joshua and Luke.

Yours in our Lord

Alasdair McLaren
Personnel Manager

THE SERVANT CHURCH TRUST - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

The side chapel was filled to capacity for the 9th Annual General Meeting of the Trust. Since the Trust is primarily concerned with funding Rev. JP Schroeder and his outreach into Garlinge, the Agenda was primarily concerned with reporting the financial situation.

In presenting the accounts for the period 1st January to 31st December 2011, the Treasurer was able to assure the Meeting that the Lord had graciously provided for the needs of the work through another year.

Income for the above period amounted to **£18,655.27**

Expenditure for the above period amounted to **£43,102.28**

Leaving **£80,713.86** in the Trust accounts. With the departure of Rev. JP Schroeder to Australia in the near future it was agreed that this sum would be reserved for a future project once the new incumbent had arrived.

Chairman's Report

After much prayer, JP, Debbie and the boys came on board to head up this work some 4 years ago. Considering the small number of supporters, the Lord has provided for the Trust in a wonderful way. In his goodness, we have been saved those challenging experiences where funds run perilously low and workers in our care get by on a day-to-day basis. From the beginning the funding of the Project leader was set at the going rate, plus expenses and annual increase, and the Lord has honoured this. The fact that we are coming to the end of our initial Project with such an encouraging balance in hand is also remarkable- and a stimulus to considering any challenge the future may bring.

The struggles of the earlier years are typical of Gospel work and we should not be surprised when we are confronted by them. Ian Hamilton's exposition of Psalm 126 during Bible Week reminded me of this. I frequently pinned my hopes on this Psalm when church planting was unyielding and difficult. **"Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seeds to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him."**

Why do tears go hand in hand with sowing the precious seed?

Probably because of the **heavy preparation** that must precede the sowing. The ground has laid fallow since the previous harvest. Weeds must be cleared, deep furrows ploughed and rough soil harrowed to receive the precious seed. **No wonder the tears flow.**

Probably because of the **time of year** sowing takes place. The skies are leaden. The wind cuts like a knife. The rain and hail are horizontal, biting, drenching. Meanwhile, the fire burns warmly in the hearth at home. **No wonder the tears flow.**

Probably because of the **terrible choice** the sower faces. The winter has been long and hard. Last year's harvest wasn't great. Seed was in short supply. How much seed to use, in making sure wife and children are adequately fed – and how much to reserve for doing the craziest thing of all – throwing it on the ground! But the fact is without sowing there is no harvest! **No wonder the tears flow.**

It is they who **weep** and **go** who **return with songs of joy!** There will yet be a **rich harvest of souls** for whom the **Saviour died.**

My sincere thanks to those who have wept and sown with us over these years. Thanks too to those who have prayed and given. Thanks to Peter for his bookkeeping skills. Thanks to Marion for keeping us on track. Thanks to Robert and Graham for their wise counsel.

The work of the **Servant Church Trust** continues, as does the sowing, praying and giving. Who knows what the Lord may require of us in the coming years?

Michael Toogood

FRIENDS OF KENT CHURCHES SPONSORED RIDE AND STRIDE – SATURDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2012

I now have all the paperwork for this annual event and will be very happy to hand out sponsor forms and lists of participating churches to anyone who wishes to take part. You can either walk or cycle round as many (or as few) Kent churches as you wish. Sponsor money is divided equally between Friends of Kent Churches and St James'. As usual I am looking for volunteers to sit in the church and welcome visiting cyclists and walkers.

Please get in touch with me as soon as you can either for sponsor forms or to put your name on the rota of Church sitters.

I look forward to hearing from you. St James' has benefitted in the past with grants from Friends of Kent Churches to help with building repairs, so it is all in a good cause.

José Gibbs (224700)

DESPERATE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS ENGULFS DISPLACED SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

*“We have used the terminology ‘appalling’, ‘desperate’ and ‘deplorable’.
We have run out of language to describe how it is for the civilian
population.’*

John Ging, operations director for the UN’s Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

*‘My heart goes out to the countless numbers of our brothers and sisters in Syria
who have been reduced to homelessness and poverty by the present conflict.
Within their own country they are in grave peril, and they may be unable to
find security anywhere else. They have no-one to turn to for help except their
worldwide Christian family.’*

Dr Patrick Sookhdeo, International Director of Barnabas Fund

Disturbing new reports from Syria have revealed the desperate humanitarian needs both within the country and on its borders, heightening concerns for its vulnerable and beleaguered Christian community.

Aid agencies are struggling to deal with an ever-growing number of refugees fleeing into neighbouring countries, as well as a large number of internally displaced people trying to get away from the fighting between government and opposition forces.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reported on 20th July that around 120,000 Syrian refugees have now registered with it. But it acknowledges that the real number is undoubtedly much greater, and expects the total to reach 200,000 to 250,000 in the foreseeable future.

The agency says that an average of 700 people a day are crossing the borders into Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey, though some of these countries put the figures much higher. Many are women and children, and have nothing with them except the clothes they are wearing. Large numbers are living in hotels

or makeshift shelters, and are in urgent need of food, blankets and medical care.

One of the aid organisations active on the ground estimates that between 1 and 1.5 million Syrians have been forced to migrate within the country. There are thousands in the capital, Damascus, many lodging in schools, while local parks have been turned into camps for them.

The UN has launched two appeals, for \$189 million to support aid to civilians inside Syria and \$193 million for Syrian refugees. But both appeals are falling short by 75-80% and the UN has warned that it may have to cut back its operations.

Christians in peril

As Syria implodes into chaos and civil war, its large but endangered Christian minority has been caught up in the growing crisis of displacement and poverty.

Tens of thousands of Christians have been driven from their cities by threats and violence. Almost the entire Christian populations of Homs and Qusayr have fled to surrounding villages or further afield. Many Christian families have seen their homes occupied and their lives torn apart from the conflict. They are in urgent need of food and other essentials.

The opposition forces and the militant groups that support them are largely hostile to Christians, believing them to be supporters of the government. An Islamist takeover is likely to generate further violence against Christians. Some believe that they have no alternative but to leave the country to avoid persecution or even death.

But few if any havens remain for them in the region. Turkey and Iraq are inhospitable places for Christians, and they have only restricted freedoms in Jordan. Even in Lebanon, once a Christian stronghold, the churches are beset by a powerful and confident Islamist movement.

Barnabus Fund is helping displaced Christian families within Syria and in other countries, with food, medicine, money for rent and other essentials. You can help by sponsoring a Christian family for just £18 a month.

Please Pray

- For all refugees and internally displaced people in Syria, that emergency aid will reach them quickly and that their needs will be met.
- For Christians who have been driven from their homes or fled the country altogether, that the Lord will be a sanctuary for them and that their distress will be relieved.
- For an end to the fighting in Syria and that its people will soon be able to return home.

Update from Barnabas Fund 26th July 2012
For more information go to www.barnabasfund.org

PRAY FOR CHRISTIANS UNDER ATTACK

'Remember...those who are mistreated.' Hebrews 13:3 NKJV

Do you ever pray for persecuted Christians in other countries? You should, because they are your spiritual family. John writes: '...I saw...those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained' (Revelation 6:9 NIV). Increasingly, believers around the world are giving their lives for the cause of Christ and the testimony they've maintained in the face of hostility. 'Are you trying to make me feel bad?' you ask. No, just: 1) *More prayerful*. 'Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.' Next time you hit your thumb with a hammer and your whole body aches, remember this truth and pray for the great worldwide body of believers, any of whom are still being mistreated, imprisoned, tortured and even killed in Christ's name. 2) *More grateful*. You say, 'Grateful for what?' That your faith is so effective that you're on satan's hit list; that he considers you a threat to his kingdom and his agenda in the earth. 3) *More faithful*. Richard Wurmbbrand, who wrote 'Tortured for Christ', said, 'What a person really believes is not what he says in his creeds, but what he's willing to die for.' Now, the odds are that you will never be called upon to die for Jesus. But the question is, if you're not willing to die for Him, what are the chances you'll really live for Him? Before you can answer that question you must ask yourself, 'How much of my time, my treasure and my talents am I investing into His kingdom?'

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Based on 1 Peter 5:5-8

We know the law of nature which applies
To us and every man upon this earth,
It is a law built deep into our souls,
And listening hard to hear that voice,
Helps us fulfil our earthly roles.

Just thank the Lord when conscience speaks,
And strain our ears for every word of life,
It is the Spirit of the Lord so calm
That urges us, and by such gentle lead,
Anoints our souls with heavenly balm.

There are times, when we, so obstinate
Shut out that voice, and to the Lord
With angry words proclaim how we're so right,
And pointing blame to others,
With our own conscience fight.

But Christ just waits, and when the turmoils cease,
Repeats again commands with love,
And coming to him with our tears
Speak humble words and thus,
Have confidence that us he hears.

Humility can then give up,
The sweet and gentle fruits of righteousness,
And peace we feel, as to our Lord we come
And realising, how very short this life,
We walk with him to our eternal home.

BIBLE PLANTS AND FLOWERS

Wormwood (*Artemisia Judaica*) – This shrub grows to some eighteen inches height, greyish leaves much divided, panicles of small yellow flowers, strong smell and bitter taste. Deuteronomy 29:18 Moses urges the people to ensure the obedience of everyone and family to the Covenant ‘Lest anyone of them be a root to bear wormwood’. The root of the shrub is sweet but the leaves and flowers are very bitter. See also Hebrews 12:15, Proverbs 5:3-4 ‘The lips of the strange woman are sweet but in the end she is bitter as wormwood’. Jeremiah 9:15 The bitter consequences of disobedience. Also Lamentations 3:15 and Amos 5:7. Revelations 8:10-11. The falling ‘star Wormwood’ embitters a third of the earth.

Fennel Flower (*Nigella orientalis*) – These erect annuals, growing to about eighteen inches high, have finely cut leaves and produce yellowish flowers in spring. Other varieties have blue or white flowers. The Hebrew name is ‘Ketsach’ which is rendered ‘fitches’ in the A.V. It occurs only in Isaiah 28:25,27 where it is associated with cumin and wheat and barley. Evidently it was a smaller plant, for verse 27 says its seeds are to be beaten out, not with a threshing instrument but with a staff. The small black seeds have a very fragrant smell. Ansonius described the seed as ‘pungent as pepper’ and Pliny said it was good for seasoning and gave a good flavour to bread if baked in the mixture.

Tares – Debate continues to identify firmly the ‘tares’ which threatened the wheat – Matthew 13:25, 27, 29, 30. ‘Tares’ is a term of European origin from Dutch ‘tern’ and Anglo-Saxon ‘Tiran’ – to consume or destroy. We illustrate the ‘ervum’ known in our cornfields. These are weak-stemmed annuals with pinnate leaves terminating in tendrils. It has small pale blue summer flowers. Because the tendrils clasp the stems of corn it is a very troublesome cornfield weed and difficult to uproot without uprooting the corn also. Darnel (*lolium temulentum*) is the other candidate. It is a species of rye-grass hard to distinguish from wheat in the growing stages and for that reason many prefer to identify with tares. Labourers trying to pull up the tares could pull up the wheat by mistake. The small seed of the darnel was believed to be poisonous. ‘Gather the tares in bundles for burning’. Certainly subsequent to the time of Jesus tares were not burnt but threshed with the corn and mixed grain and seed sorted out through a sieve which allowed the darnel seed to pass through.

Soap (*Salsola*) – This is an extensive genus of maritime plants, herbaceous or shrubby, with fleshy spiked leaves and small stalk less pink flowers in July. It is found on the coast in Jordan valley by the Dead Sea. The plants are burnt to obtain the soda they contain and the ash used for linen cleansing and soap

making. The Hebrew term 'bor' or 'borith' (fem) literally 'purity producer' was used for the plant as well as product. Jeremiah 2:22 'Though thou wash thee with mitre and take thee much soap ('borith'). Malachi 3:2 'fullers soap ('borith').

White Lily (*Lilium candidum*) – Hebrew 'shushan' literally 'white one' translated 'lily'. The true white lily now found in wild only in Lebanon. It was a widely esteemed emblem of purity. So Song of Solomon 2:2 and 6:2. Hosea 14:5 Lily so much esteemed by Israelites that they chose it as a model for temple ornamentation – 1 Kings 7:19 and 26.

ONE WAY TO EXPLAIN THE TRINITY

An obituary appeared in the Daily Telegraph on 23rd May of the Rev. John Lambourne who died on 3rd May 2012 aged 76. Part of the obituary read as follows:-

'His sermons were brisk (he claimed that no one could be expected to concentrate for more than four minutes) and notable for his use of sporting metaphors to explain complex matters of doctrine.

The Trinity, he liked to say, was like a set of cricket stumps: from the bowler's end they would appear as three; from square leg they would be seen as one."

HARVEST FAMILY SERVICE

Please note that the Harvest Family Service will be held on **Sunday 23rd September** at 10.30am

A SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

While shopping in the supermarket, I saw three small children dashing about, bumping into people and knocking over boxes and crates. Their frantic young parents finally managed to corner them, and as they proceeded to the check-out, I heard the father remark wearily to his wife, 'I told you this would happen once we let them outnumber us.'

"THE UNKNOWN SHORE"

By Elizabeth Clark Hardy

Sometime at Eve when the tide is low
I shall slip my moorings and sail away
With no response to a friendly hail
In the silent hush of the twilight pale
When the night stoops down to embrace the day
And the voices call in the water's flow

Sometime at Eve when the water is low
I shall slip my moorings and sail away.
Through purple shadows
That darkly trail o'er the ebbing tide
And the Unknown Sea,
And a ripple of waters to tell the tale
Of a lonely voyager sailing away
To mystic isles
Where at anchor lay
The craft of those who had sailed before
O'er the Unknown Sea
To the Unknown Shore.

A few who watched me sail away
Will miss my craft from the busy day
Some friendly barques were anchored near
Some loving souls my heart held dear
In silent sorrow will drop a tear
But I shall have peacefully furled my sail
In mooring sheltered from the storm and gale
And greeted friends who had sailed before
O'er the Unknown Sea
To the Unknown Shore

CREATION MOMENTS – The Not-So-Blind Watchmaker

Read Luke 6:39

Several years ago a book was published that tried to answer the “watchmaker” argument for a Creator. Simply put, the argument says that if you find a watch, you know that the watch didn’t just happen. There had to be a watchmaker. This book, titled *The Blind Watchmaker*, tried to show that the design we see in the creation is simply an illusion – there is no Watchmaker.

In answer to this claim, we can point out to the millions of wonderfully intricate designs in the creation. However, it seems more fitting to respond to the claim that there is no Watchmaker by mentioning the many “timepieces” in the creation that tie everything together.

All of us are aware of the daily rhythm of waking and sleeping. However, this is only one of many timepieces in creation. Our bodies also have weekly, monthly and annual rhythms. So important are these rhythms to life and health that physicians are beginning to learn how to use them for healing. Doctors know, for example, that jogging in the evening will reduce platelet clumping in the blood; however, it won’t in the morning. And doctors have learned that T-cells, which fight infections, are at a peak in the wintertime. Ulcer medicines are now timed to release in the body at night when flare-ups are the worst.

When medicine is so reliant on the many clocks built into us, we know they are not illusions. The entire complex creation is tied together by an even more complex set of clocks – all telling us that the Watchmaker is no illusion!

Prayer: Father, I thank You that in Your mercy You allow us to learn about how You made the creation operate so that we can alleviate the suffering and death. I pray that this knowledge would lead people to You and not away from You. **Amen.**

Submitted by Doreen Dallison

MANY SOLDIERS WANT THE BIBLE

I remember the day when someone came to my junior school, stood up in front of the assembly and spoke about something I did not understand, or at that time did not want to understand. We had many assemblies like this one in the

first three years of secondary school, gathered in one place with someone talking.'

But this one was different. At the end of the talk, as we were leaving the school hall, we were given something. Many years later I would come to realise what a beautiful and valuable gift I had been given. It was a Gideons New Testament. The Testament at the time was a nice thought, but I put it in a drawer and forgot about it.

It was a number of years later, in 1982, when I found myself as a young married serviceman being invited to take part in what is now called the Falklands Conflict. I remember that for many of us there seemed to be change in outlook to life and particularly to faith and belief in God. I did not go to the Falklands but I am told by many who went, and particularly by those who sailed the long journey by sea, that it seemed everybody was looking for a Bible, or someone who had one. Many deep conversations took place in the preparations for the battles that were to come and many will testify that they renewed their faith in God or found faith in God.

In 1990 the military mobilised for what soldiers call 'Gulf One'. I was part of that encounter and I remember the buzz of getting everything together ready to travel. I had become a Christian while serving in Germany a few years before, and so I packed my Bible as would be expected. But to my surprise, it seemed that many other servicemen and women were doing the same. A Testament was easier to carry and took up less room, and many who were packing this valuable piece of equipment were those who did not go to church, chapel or mission hall, but the presence of the small Testament was very important.

To their credit, the American military produced a desert-covered version that blended in with the soldiers other kit. I found it very interesting that this small item was something that many really valued having with them.

There is a saying: 'There is no such thing as an atheist in the foxhole.' This is a very robust statement and I am sure it could be argued against. But, in my experience, servicemen and women like having the Word of God in their kit.

Having served 24 years in the military and having been ordained in the Church of England, I now have two parishes in the centre of Birmingham. I also serve as a Reserve Army Chaplain. I have journeyed with my Regiment's

Commanding Officer (CO) to the camp where some of our young soldiers (male and female) were preparing for deployment to Afghanistan. Before I travelled, I had asked our local Gideon representative if he could help me; I shared my concern that these young people may not have a New Testament.

In my combat backpack, I took with me 20 Gideon New Testaments that the representative happily provided for me. During the CO's questions I emptied the contents of my backpack on a table near the door. Then there was moment of gentle fear, the thought that: 'Could I just offer these Testaments to these soldiers? What if they are offended? What if they thought I was saying you need this because I don't think you will be coming home?'

To my utter amazement God started the ball rolling. Speaking out of turn, one of the young soldiers asked, 'Padre, are the Bibles on the table?' He did not give me time to answer before saying, 'Can I have one?'

The CO stopped his questions and for the next 20 minutes I gave out a Gideon Testament to waiting hands and, I believe, waiting hearts. The Testament is small enough to go in the daypack and therefore can travel everywhere the soldier travels. I also explained to the soldiers that it represented the generous ministry of The Gideons, who wanted them to have this important piece of equipment for any task – the Word of God.

Thank you Gideons for your support and help, way back in that school hall and in the drill hall.

Rev Canon (Padre) Steve Simcox
Chaplain to the Forces
From the Gideon News – Summer 2012

NEWS FROM THE THANET BRANCH OF THE GIDEONS NEWSLETTER

Jacque Carter included this passage in her summer Newsletter:-

“Dear Friends,

We are reminded in Scripture that ultimately all authority is given to Jesus in heaven and on earth and that those who rule should do so with an eye to

pointing to Him in their just governance and dutiful obedience. We are to pray for those who rule over us and this is a most timely opportunity to pray for Her Majesty. We also desperately need to pray for those in parliament including the Prime Minister and those in opposition. Pray that the Lord would save them and cause them to rule wisely and justly in accordance to God's sovereign laws. This will mean a change of heart in a number of planned laws including the plan to redefine marriage, which of course was given by God himself to point to Him; we are made in His image; Genesis 1:27 "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." To change this is to ruin the whole point of His creation of men and women. Only God can overrule – pray He does! And then what benefits divine are poured upon us! Proverbs 14:34 "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." To change, though, people must hear the Gospel, so do continue to pray that God would bless the work of the Gideons as they seek to bring the Word of God to the Lost."

APOLOGY

I am grateful to Ian Dallison for pointing out that the item headed up "Calendar for July 2012" in the June/July magazine referred to July 2011 and not 2012. Red face – apologies to all.

However, try Chocolate Maths. I have tested it and it works!

CHOCOLATE MATHS

Chocolate Man will know your age by chocolate maths! Try this out. Have a pencil and paper ready.

- First, pick the number of times a week you would like to have chocolate (more than one but less than 10)
- Multiply this number by 2
- Add 5
- Multiply by 50 (you may need a calculator)
- If you have already had your birthday this year add 1762...if you haven't, add 1761
- Now subtract the four digit year that you were born
- You should have a three digit number. The first was your original number.

The next two numbers are your age! This is the only year (2012) it will ever work.

SATURDAY SHOP

The takings for the Saturday Shop in June totalled £217.74 whilst those for July amounted to £188.87.

Our thanks, as ever, go up to God and out to all those who helped in any way to achieve these results. Thank you for your continued support and donations to sell.

The next two Saturday Shops will take place at the Old School Hall, Garlinge from 10.00am on 11th August and 8th September.

Please come along to support the Shop and the Church.

DEADLINE DATE

If you have any articles for inclusion in the August and September 2012 magazine, please may they be with the editor by **Friday 21st September 2012**.

Please remember articles can be submitted by e-mail to w.merry@tiscali.co.uk or by post to 29 Fitzmary Avenue, Westbrook, CT9 5EL. Thank you.

JESUS SAID: "Go back and report to John (*the Baptist*) what you have seen and heard: The blind to receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me. What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." I tell you, among those born of women there is no-one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." **(Luke 7:22-28)**

**A POEM DEDICATED TO ALL THOSE WITH
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES BY ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS...**

Because I cannot talk, please don't turn away
I'd love to smile and talk with you or
pass the time of day
Don't look away because my brain won't work the
way it should
I'd love to talk and walk with you,
if only I could
I like meeting people as I know you do,
So when you come across me, say a word or two.

A BLESSING

May the God of hope fill you with all God's peace as you trust in Him
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy
Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

AUGUST 2012

Wednesday 1 st	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting, Church Centre
Thursday 2 nd	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Sunday 5th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service with the Lord's Supper
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Wednesday 8 th	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting, Church Centre
Saturday 11 th	10.00 am	Saturday Shop, Old School Hall
Sunday 12th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Wednesday 15 th	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting, Church Centre
Thursday 16 th	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Sunday 19th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service with the Lord's Supper
Wednesday 22 nd	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting, Church Centre
Sunday 26th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Wednesday 29 th	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting, Church Centre
Thursday 30 th	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre

SEPTEMBER 2012

Sunday 2nd	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service with the Lord's Supper
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Tuesday 4 th)	
Wednesday 5 th)	Home Bible Study Groups (<i>whatever date and</i>
Thursday 6 th)	<i>time have been arranged for your Group</i>)
Thursday 6 th	10.00 am	Tiny Tots, Church Centre
	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Saturday 8 th	10.00 am	Saturday Shop, Old School Hall
		Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride
Sunday 9th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Tuesday 11 th	7.30 pm	PCC, Church Centre
Wednesday 12 th	8.00 pm	Know what you believe: "What is creation?", Church Centre – a DVD-talk by Wayne Grudem
Thursday 13 th	10.30 am	Tiny Tots, Old School Hall
Sunday 16th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service with the Lord's Supper
Monday 17 th	2.30 pm	Friendship Club: "Members' Hobbies: Art" (Pam Foulkes, Pat Short and others), Church Centre
Wednesday 19 th	8.00 pm	Focus on Prayer, Church Centre
Thursday 20 th	10.00 am	Tiny Tots, Church Centre
	2.00 pm	Dandelyon Patchers, Church Centre
Sunday 23rd	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Harvest Family Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Monday 24 th	10.00 am	Living Stones Bible Study Group, 8 Northumberland Court, Cliftonville
Tuesday 25 th	7.30 pm	Garlinge Outreach Team, Church Centre
Thursday 27 th	10.30 am	Tiny Tots, Old School Hall
Sunday 30th	8.00 am	The Lord's Supper
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service