

The Messenger

and Mayflower Hall News

Billericay United Reformed Church

Joint Pastorate with Brentwood and Ingatestone URCS

MEMBER OF CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BILLERICAY



*Our
Noticeboard
announces
an
Eventful
Weekend*

November 2008

*Our Church Weekend: How Pictures can move us more
than words.*

OctoberFest: Sight and Sound in full measure

Christian Aid at work in India

PICTURE OF THE MONTH



Closing Group Photo at our Debden Weekend

There are more pictures from Debden and OctoberFest inside

Please prepare for Advent with your Vision4Advent Booklet *waiting for you in the vestibule now!*

Vision4Advent is the title of a booklet, written by four people from the United Reformed Church in Eastern Synod as a companion for individuals and groups to use during Advent this year. The focus is not on the familiar stories of shepherds and wise men but on the prologue to John's Gospel ("In the beginning was the Light ..."). For each week in Advent there is a written meditation, based on a verse from the Gospel passage; questions for individual thought or group discussion; and simple prayer suggestions, using a variety of approaches.

Copies of the booklet will be available for you to collect at the church or, if you wish, from October 20th it can be downloaded from the "notice board" of the Eastern Synod website at [http://www.urc-eastern.org.uk/](http://www.urc-eastern.org.uk)

Walk Through the Old Testament

A relaxed seminar that looks at the “big picture” of the Old Testament, taking its participants through the whole story in the course of a day, using a variety of imaginative ways of learning.

This will be taking place at

Christ Church, Wickford on Saturday 29th November,
9.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

The fee, including the seminar manual, is £15.00.

Contact Anna Kahts (01268 730312) for further details.

CHURCH CALENDAR for NOVEMBER 2008

Saturday	1	9.15am	Prayer Fellowship in the Kathleen Martin Room, until 9.45am
Saturday	1	7.30pm	Try Taizé – an evening of song and reflection; in the church
SUNDAY	2	11.00am	All-age Sacrament of Holy Communion, led by Revd Colin Hunt
Monday	3	8.00pm	Churches Together Prayer Group meet in St Mary Magdalen in the High St
Wednesday	5	7.45pm	Elders' Meeting in the Kathleen Martin Room
Saturday	8	10.00am	Bazaar in the Mayflower Hall: Theme: Musicals
SUNDAY	9	10.50am	Remembrance Sunday: Morning Worship led by Ms Kate Hackett
Sunday	9	1.00pm	Special Church Meeting in the Mayflower Hall: <i>a 5-year Vision</i>
Wednesday	12	7.45pm	World Focus Committee meet at Great Blunts - home of Peggy Nisbet
Thursday	13	11.00am	Worship at Hillhouse Court

Thursday	13	2.30pm	Fellowship Group meet in the Mayflower Hall; Margaret Hatchard on <i>The Guide and Scout Movements</i>
SUNDAY	16	11.00am	Sacrament of Holy Communion, led by Revd Trevor Jamison
Sunday	16	5.00pm	Afternoon Worship at Brentwood URC, to which we are invited – ‘God and human future’
SUNDAY	23	11.00am	Morning Worship led by Revd Trevor Jamison
Sunday	23	1.00pm	Church Meeting in the Mayflower Hall
Thursday	27	11.00am	Worship at Hillhouse Court
SUNDAY	30	11.00am	Advent Sunday: Morning Worship led by Mrs Linda Mead Special Project boxes to be received
Sunday	30	5.00pm	Worship at Buttsbury Church: for us all in the pastorate of Billericay, Brentwood and Ingatestone

NOTES FROM THE CHURCH SECRETARY

Light and Sound. Elsewhere in this month's *Messenger* is a record of our *Octoberfest* celebrations of image and music. But in one sense this is a culmination of other events; it brings together themes that are already dear to our heart.

For example, in 2006 our Church Weekend was devoted to hymns. Led by John Hickmore, we enjoyed singing, looking into the background of hymns, and their place within our worship. Last year we were delighted when Bob Riester offered to have a hymn festival within the ‘*Gifts of the Spirit*’ weekend that he led.

At this year's Church Weekend, Neil Thorogood showed us new insights into how images can trigger a deeper reflection on biblical stories or current life. In the Communion service we saw what the children had created, together with the visual images created by the older members and the PowerPoint presentation of photographs taken on half a dozen or so cameras over the weekend.

Two thoughts occur to me.

Firstly, there is nothing new in having artwork from the younger people. One example comes to mind from some years ago: the young people at Debden House created some very powerful images that illustrated the plight of the homeless. This complemented very well the stories and statistics we heard from the speakers of the *Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS)* and *Habitat for Humanity*.

But how is it that every 8-year old is an artist, every preschool child can shake a tambourine, but once we are older this innate freedom to express ourselves seems to dry up for all but a few?

Of course, I too praised the fine colours and drawing that had gone into the paintings on display on the 11th/12th October. And the excellent dancing in worship. But I hope that there will also be a future place for the less perfect creativity such as we undertook at Debden.

My other thought is to ponder how this celebration of sight and sound fits with the present turmoil in the financial world.

Both are creations by humankind. We celebrate God through the creations of art, music and dance. We worry at the faltering creations of financial institutions - institutions that impact on issues of justice and managing the Earth's resources.

Regarding our own credentials in managing the world's resources, the September Church Meeting was concerned that we should not be too complacent. The Future Review Task Group includes in its suggested 5-year vision a proposal that we need - in our own small way - to be open to new environmental initiatives.

Of course, there is much more to the Task Group's vision, but to be part of that discussion, you will need to read the papers for the 9th November church meeting ...

Mission Project Boxes will be rededicated during the service on Sunday 30 November. They will then be emptied and in due course returned to those who brought them.

Churches Together in Billericay
You are welcome to CTB Prayer Group, Bible Readings on Monday 3rd November, and Monday 1st December, 8pm-9pm and thereafter the first Monday of every month in St Mary's Church (Billericay High Street)

Our Ministry to the Residents at Mountnessing Court

Thank you for your support at our Harvest Festival Service at Mountnessing Court. The residents very much appreciated the flower arrangement and the fruit and vegetables that we took with us.

The December Gift Day Service is approaching. For the last few years we have taken along Christmas Gifts to Mountnessing Court, and I have again asked what gifts would be suitable. They have sent me a list of suggested presents for 28 residents, seven of whom are men. They have suggested in general toiletries and chocolates, but if you would like to see the list and specify what you would like to give, the list will be on the vestibule table.

Colin Hunt is going to lead us in a service of carols and readings at Mountnessing Court on Wednesday 10 December at 6.30 pm, and your support to sing, read, or chat would be much appreciated. There will be a list on the vestibule table later for those coming and for those needing transport.

Margaret Dunn

Please come and look at the **Traidcraft Gifts** coming up to Christmas. At this time of financial turmoil it is the poorest countries which will suffer most. If people in the developing world can be helped onto international markets by trade, they will help themselves and their countries not to need so much aid.

Traidcraft Exchange works hard with producers to guide them in all areas of trade and business. This is not only for them to sell through Fair Trade organisations abroad., but also trade within their own country.

So please have a Fair Trade Christmas where you can and therefore encourage all who seek to make this world a fairer place.

Ann Mynott

In the New Year: we shall need somebody to organise our **New Year Party** on 10 January. Perhaps it could be you, this time?? If you are able to offer help, please see Ken Woods.

Art brings Faith to the Commonplace

At Debden with Neil Thorogood we took a fresh look at biblical images

In a whimsical moment during the October Fest, sitting in the Hall, surrounded by art and crafts on all the walls and in the alcove, and with a new work of art coming to life for us at the front (a depiction of elephants on the town's high street!), some of us gazed up at the rather battered hall ceiling, and speculated whether one day there could be art there as well. Why not, indeed? Step forward a Michaelangelo who would mount the scaffolding to paint on the ceiling perhaps the minister stretching forth his finger to connect with the church secretary!

Well perhaps not, but how had we come to think that the most inspiring art draws us physically upwards? At our church weekend, guided by Neil, we had begun by looking at paintings where the figures became more angelic and unearthly, the higher they were, until we are dazzled by a blinding glimpse of heaven, perhaps with the figure of Christ in glory at the centre. Or another picture showing the pope kneeling at an altar in prayer for his people and his church, while his prayers mounted upwards, the church institutions as the (only) channel to God.



So it was refreshing to pass from these pictures to the etchings of Rembrandt, which did not seek to overwhelm us with the power of the sublime, but gently and subtly offer us

Christ

Preaching, c.1652

a dialogue with the

ordinariness of the people, the recognisable gestures and the setting. Rembrandt was in many respects the outsider. He was a protestant Calvinist, in an age of fevered conflict between

the Catholics and at least two different sorts of protestant, but his unconventional personal morality caused all the churches to reject him. Nevertheless he had been brought up with a close knowledge of scripture, and many of his works lovingly and sometimes dramatically depict biblical characters and events, with the strong emphasis on a realistic rather than an idealised world.

We explored the etching *Christ Preaching*, with its collection of characters contemporary with the artist. Some were attentive, some bemused, some perhaps bored, some well to do burghers, others workers from the fields. Christ's gestures were eloquent, but what we didn't see was any intense light beaming from his face. Yet the central light of the picture seems to come from him, and the more we look at the picture the more we see in it persuasive humanity rather than an otherworldly divinity.

The drawing of the Prodigal Son., one of many he did on this subject, also dwells on the compassion of the father and the contrition of the son. Parables work, said Neil, because they have a moment



when we are invited into a conversation with the story or in this case the picture. What is in it is what the beholder brings to it and sees in it. Is it perhaps asking 'are you capable of forgiving?' It may connect with us in all sorts of unexpected ways, and tries to answer the question 'what is it like to be alive today?' You supply the interpretation.

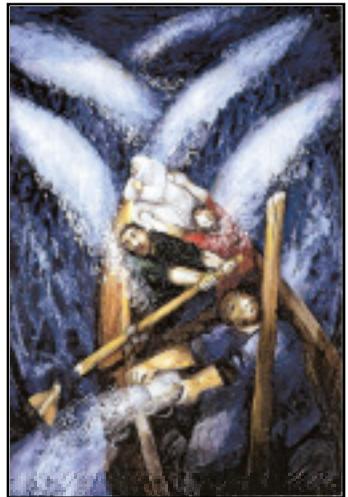
Neil asked us to compare our response to a story in words, with one told in a picture, using the narrative in Mark chapter 4: 35-41, and a painting of Christ asleep in the boat as an example. (*See Pictures of the Month*).A

verbal narrative progresses and has twists and turns and can work on our imaginations. A picture focuses on one stage and so can be more vivid than words, and creates a more immediate response. It can make us stop and take time to contemplate. Jesus is in the same boat as us and so exercise a calming influence. One of the groups took this to the length of staging a photo of its members 'in the boat' enacting the fear and apprehension of the disciples.

We were led to conclude that pictures have more of a place in our worship than we



allow them at present. They can express more of the character (of Christ) or of a person in a parable or story, so that we should stop to



think for as long as it takes, rather than turning the page immediately, or closing the book.

Some examples of the way art can be used in worship:

1. Show art related to the Christian year – Lent, Advent, Harvest, Remembrance etc.
2. Have a big picture at the front of the church as a focus of meditation
3. Use postcard sized pictures as an aid to discussion among the congregation.
4. Images may open up our encounter with Jesus as rabbi, King of Kings, friend, Man of Sorrows, Prince of Peace, fighter for freedom and justice, holy, etc.
5. Try and match the imagery of our hymns with visuals.
6. Look in newspapers and magazines for images which show God at work in the world.
7. Show people and scenes from other parts of the world who need our prayers and action.

Pictures from Debden

Beetle Hunting.



Hard at work creating figures for a visual communion.



Launching our message Balloons. How far did they travel?



I counted them out and I counted them back: Simon checks nobody got lost on the walk.

Dave Chuck working with the Children.





Our *October Fest* continued the theme of art, and brought us music as well....

As a start, here is one of Harvey Bradley's paintings which he kindly

brought. It shows Christ walking on the water (Why not look at it in conjunction with your re-reading of Matthew 14)



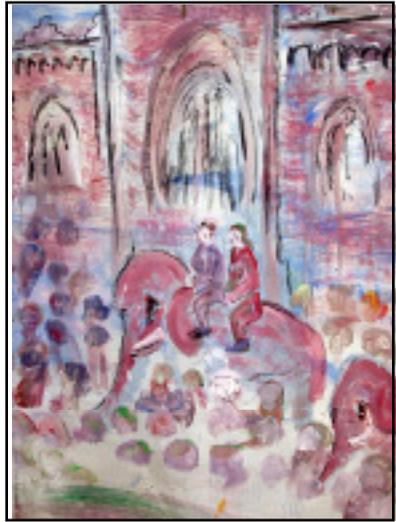
The art and craft show was an eye-opening collection of the work of our members and friends. Among them were John Wilkins with his woodwork (the stool was made of the remnants of an old piano), Ann Montgomerie with her



designs embossed on plates. Sue Undy brought beautifully colourful vessels constructed from silk thread, and Harvey Bradley took time off from arranging his pottery exhibition at Ickworth House to demonstrate his subtle skills in painting. Others brought painting and embroidery to enliven the

exhibition.

There was another painting, a vast canvas which grew before our eyes as Peter Brierley added to it bit by bit – the High Street wedding of the circus artists in 1937, who rode off afterwards mounted on an elephant. There were those present who could vouch that it actually happened. Here is one detail of the painting, rescued for posterity, before the poster paint deteriorates and dissolves.



The Singing Competition concert that wasn't quite. Not enough singers entered for the competition, but had there been one, then surely Muriel Bainbridge might have won it. At the evening concert she sang two beautiful songs for us and won us over with her musicianship and her charming presentation.

She was just one of the excellent musicians who responded to Simon's invitation and provided us with a memorable musical evening. Sonia Philips and Lorraine Ely, with Simon delighted us with their versatile performances of operatic and lighter numbers, but there were others. John Hickmore and David Costello were a couple of recorder virtuosos, and included two pieces written by John himself which exploited the possibilities of weaving together the sounds of these two instruments. And speaking of composers, Matthew Reader gave us original compositions on the guitar (he had also serenaded us at the Hall during the day). And Andrew Dyckhoff with his daughter



Clare took time off from his CTB role to sing for us. The skill of Louisa Lam as short notice accompanist was particularly appreciated.

The Fest wound up with our service on the Sunday morning. Trevor skillfully wove his theme of forgiveness together with the artistry of our guests. The dancing group Reflections from Emmanuel Church performed their dance on the theme of forgiveness, and the Choir for All Seasons, as well as joining our own choir in leading and strengthening the singing, sang the Rutter benediction The Peace of God. Members and visitors joined afterwards in finding it a very



memorable and meaningful service. The inspired choice of the opening words of the service were by Gerard Manley Hopkins:
Glory be to God

for dappled things -.....

All things counter, original, spare, strange;

Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)

With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;

He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:

Praise him.

So many contributed to this October Fest, but most of all our appreciation is due to Simon Houlton and Peter Brierley, who in their different ways brought to us so much creativity and enjoyment. One visitor asked 'is this an annual event?'. Well, not quite, we'll need to catch our breath before we put on the next one!

We had fun, and we asked people to make a donation to two charities which help those who don't have the use of their eyes or their ears to enjoy sight or sound in the same way. We raise £560, which will be divided equally between Sightsavers and the National Deaf Children's Society. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Emma tells us first hand of the work of

Christian Aid in North India.

Improving the lives of women, and the devastating floods

World Focus wanted to introduce the Church to another country where Christian Aid works. A clear choice was India. Christian Aid said they could send us Emma Grant, who has recently visited India and observed the work and the challenges there. We said Yes please. What Emma brought with her was her vivid stories of the part of this vast country which she had experienced, together with some striking photographs.

Christian Aid always works through local partners, and she focussed on one which supports the Dalits (Untouchables). Although Indian law forbids discrimination there is a tacit understanding on the part of the local authorities and population that they are not entitled to the same status and benefits as the rest of the population. Dalits are easily identified by their dress and their speech, and the names they use. So the partner organisation has set up legal advice centres which inform the Dalits of their rights, for example to at least 100 days work per year.

Emma spoke movingly of the work being done with women. Only 48% are literate, compared with 73% of men. Women still play a subsidiary role. If you ask some Indian women what their hopes are for the future, the question appears meaningless to them. They are totally preoccupied with the immediate daily round of tasks in the family. But education provides better opportunities, wells are built near their homes to reduce the physical burden of fetching water, and the veils which cover their faces are removed. Daughters are no longer married off at the age of 12 to relieve the economic burden on the family. Problems are there to be fixed, not accepted..

Emma's visit was centred on North India, and the province of Bihar, and coincided with the heaviest monsoon rains in living memory. The Kosi River burst its embankments and changed course over 120km eastwards. Water has submerged over 1000 villages Around 3 million people have been affected, with many thousands feared dead. (Did we hear about this in our media?).

There is uncertainty whether the cause is climate change, but Christian Aid is reacting on two fronts. A strong political lobbying campaign has

been launched to reduce the causes of climate change created in this country and the Western world generally. Meanwhile Christian Aid partners are working to enable the people of Bihar to defend themselves better against possible future flooding, by measures such as stronger flood defences and buildings.

Meanwhile the sufferings are immense. A doctor working with a Christian Aid partner says: 'Many of the people who I have seen in this camp have lost their loved ones, their livelihoods, their cattle or their fields, and crops, and have had to leave their houses. They are undergoing an emotional as well as economic trauma. So we need to pray for them for the healing which they need in their hearts, and that God will fill the emptiness in their hearts'. We prayed with Emma that God would provide the victims with basic necessities to live a life with dignity, and that we would be the instruments of providing relief for the victims.

Emma gave examples of the amount of money needed to feed a family of flood victims for a week, and for essential reconstruction projects. A collection taken immediately at the end of our meeting raised £212. Those who attended the meeting took away strong memories of the stories which Emma told so directly and so vividly.

Remembering Bethlehem at Christmas

There is great sadness and poignancy – particularly as we approach Advent and Christmas – that the Holy Land is a place of unresolved conflict. A new 30 minute DVD about Bethlehem has been produced by Rev. Garth Hewitt of Amos Trust. It is called '***Bethlehem – Hidden from View***' and shows Bethlehem today in its state of siege. Voices of Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Christians share their hopes of peace. We think there will be people in the church who will be interested in seeing this excellent video and so we plan to show it in the Livingstone room on ***Sunday, 23rd November at 12.20*** – while you are eating your sandwiches, before Church Meeting.

At last it's time for our

**Christmas Bazaar – the Musical
Saturday, 8 November , from 10.00-1.00
in the Mayflower Hall**

Please make a note of the above date in case you have not already done so! Come along and help, bring your friends, tell your friends about it, and put up posters – these will be on the vestibule table soon.

We'll be singing songs from the shows from time to time during the morning. We are hoping that stallholders will be inspired by our theme to decorate their stalls and dress up as well. There will be a fancy dress competition for the children, with small prizes.

We are planning to put up tables on Thursday evening at 7.30pm. Will volunteer helpers please contact Alan Lough or me. This means that setting up stalls will be from Friday morning for keyholders, or please contact me for entry. I plan to be at the hall from 7 pm Friday evening and expect the hall to be closed by 9 pm. The hall will then be opened about 8.45 am on Saturday for stallholders to set up prior to the bazaar opening at 10 am on Saturday. Helpers to put away tables and chairs after the bazaar would be most welcome at 1 pm.

I gave you a list of stallholders in last month's magazine. It only leaves me to say that I hope that the bazaar is at much fun this year as it has been in previous years, and to thank you in advance for your support.

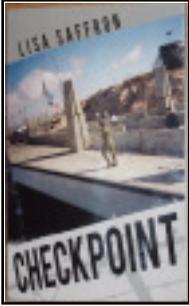
Margaret Dunn

Billericay Mayflower Twinning Association

Billericay is Twinned with Billerica, Massachusetts USA

On the vestibule table are newsletters, leaflets and application forms to join the above association if you are interested. There has been a recent complete change in the management of the Association, although the Twinning Charter was formalised in 1998. Contacts and friendships have existed since Billerica's founding in 1655, and there is a connection with Christopher Martin from our church. Please have a look at the information available. Membership is free.

Two Books you may be interested to read



'Checkpoint' by Lisa Saffron: A new novel which explores the lives and attitudes of the Palestinians and Jews living in the Holy Land. Some years ago, we met an American woman in London. Her name is Lisa Saffron and she is Jewish. A couple of years later, she invited us to share a meal with her and her partner Maria at their home near Bristol – and we enjoyed a traditional Jewish dish, a kind of chicken stew. Lisa told us she was writing a book. It was published earlier this year. It is a work of fiction, and its story explores the realities of conflict and its resolution through a lively cast of characters. Lisa herself belongs to the UK organisation Jews for Justice for Palestinians (www.jfjfp.org). She also actively promotes 'Compassionate Listening', an organisational network whose aim is “empowering individuals to heal polarisation and build bridges between people, communities and nations in conflict.”

www.compassionatelisting.org.uk

“Checkpoint” : A Review

One of the surprising aspects to those not involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict is the diversity of attitudes among Jews and Israelis towards the State of Israel. This very readable book brings these different strands to life within the members of one family, the Shapiros.

The book starts in October 2002, when Yigal the 19 year old son of the family and now serving in the Israeli army meets a girl at a checkpoint. Ruth, his mother is a volatile personality; when we first meet her she is sitting shiva (the traditional week of mourning in a Jewish family). Ruth grew up in Baltimore, US, with her two sisters and her great friend Vivi. Later she moved to Israel with her very authoritarian husband David, who is bitterly opposed to the friendship of Vivi with his wife. Vivi, who is also Jewish, still lives in America and has become deeply involved with support for the Palestinian people.

On the plane to Israel, Vivi encounters Barbara a fervent American Christian Zionist, whose church had adopted an Israeli settlement in

“Samaria” (Jewish name for the occupied Palestinian territory of the West Bank). There is no meeting of minds between the two women!

On a previous visit, Vivi had discovered how little Ruth and David knew of their Palestinian neighbours whose land they had inhabited. When Yigal becomes a soldier in the Israeli army, he sees Palestinians “like a different species. Mysterious and weird.”

The gulf between Ruth and Vivi seemed wider than ever after Vivi and other peace activists arrive in a Palestinian village. The story unfolds further, as we learn more about Aisha Awad, the girl at the checkpoint, whose young brother was shot dead as he played football and whose mother Leila has worked tirelessly for peace. The tragic ties that bind the families of Yigal and Aisha are at the heart of the book.

Yigal's grandfather, a Holocaust survivor, had told him before he joined the army: “Our enemies surround us, Yigal. They still try to destroy us. We can't afford to be soft, to make concessions.” However, Olga, Yigal's once very bolshy little sister, has grown up to take a different path. She becomes part of the Shministim movement and refuses to do compulsory military service in the Palestinian territories. She confronts her father David and explains: “It's because I love Israel. Not the distorted, paranoid Israel where only Jews count. The Israel I love is the one which has Wahid and Habiba and the people of [the Palestinian village of] Beyt Nattif in it as well as all of us...”

Ruth and Leila share their histories of pain through what happens to Yigal and Aisha when they finally meet at the Parents Forum. After the shedding of bitter tears, Ruth and Leila share their vision of the “kind of world we do want to live in.” Ruth goes away, not with one of her familiar anxiety attacks, but “tingling with hope,” and sets off on a lecture tour of America to share that vision with others. Orli has learned lessons too, along with Arabic. “They're not my enemies. They're just people, same as you and me.”

There is a fantasy element to this novel, which helps to move the plot forward and finally hints at a hopeful outcome for future generations. But the real fantasy element is the inability of politicians to find a way forward to peace for all the peoples of this land.

'Checkpoint' by Lisa Saffron is published by Author House (www.authorhouse.co.uk) If you would like to borrow my copy to read,

*or would like more details to buy your own copy, please see me.
Margaret Derbyshire*

If It Falls by Naomi Young. Christ Church Chelmsford's magazine has brought news of another novel, written by the daughter of our former minister Arthur Young, and his wife Mary. It is set in Guatemala, drawing on Naomi's experience's there in 1993 and 1996 working with the Presbyterian Church of Guatemala. In 1995 a colleague and friend of Naomi's, Rev. Manuel Saquic was kidnapped and murdered, and although the story is fictional it paints a picture of a corrupt and violent country. It is a psychological, character-driven thriller whose central character is a journalist who is haunted by his past and tormented by guilt that he survived the war, while his wife and son didn't.

It is published by Discovered Authors at £8.99 and is obtainable from bookshops or through Amazon.

CELEBRATING EID AT THE END OF RAMADAN

Some of us received an invitation to join with the children, staff and parents of the South East Cultural Centre to their celebration on 12th October of Eid, the festival which marks for them the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Muntaha Naeem (the 9 year old son of Sidra, who came to talk to us about Islam earlier this year) designed the cover for the morning's programme in which the young people gave presentations of how the Eid is celebrated round the world. We were sorry that the date clashed with our own OctoberFest so that friends from the church were not able to share in this celebratory occasion.

Prayer Focus from the 'Public Issues Calendar'

- 9 Nov. Remembrance Sunday www.britishlegion.org.uk
- 16 Nov. International Day of Prayer for
Persecuted Christians www.csw.org.uk
- 16-22 Nov. Prisons Week www.prisonweek.org

PRAYING TOGETHER
Our Time – Your Time

Lord, the time we live in is so different from even just a few years go.
Technology has advanced beyond our comprehension.

It is so easy to communicate, and yet we find it so hard to say what we really think or feel.

Our lives are full of e-mail, internet banking, ipods, running machines and self-service tills. So much distracts us from what we can do to help you and your people.

In a hundred years time, when people are looking back at our lives,
will they see that we tried?

will they see a world committed to peace and justice?

or will they see one filled with greed, hatred and fear?

Help us to make the world into a place we would be proud to look back on and say,

That was the time we lived in.

They were our neighbours,

and we showed them your love, as best we could. Amen

A Prayer from Commitment for Life

Endpiece by a Member of the Congregation

So you won't be staying in to watch Strictly Come Dancing tonight, then. Should be exciting.

No, I'm off out with this girl.

Oh, Very nice, have a good time, so that's why you were polishing your shoes. Are you calling for her?

Well no, we haven't got that far yet, I'm meeting her outside the cinema at seven. So I can't stop to talk.

Just a word of warning, so as you won't be disappointed. When I was your age my first date stood me up. No sign of her. Left me looking very foolish. Very embarrassing. Could happen to you.

Oh dad, that was in the stone age! Why d'you think we have mobiles these days? If she's not there pronto I can text her, track her down in no time. We have all sorts of ways of keeping in touch which you never had. From what I can tell, in your time no wonder there were so many misunderstandings and broken promises. We're all much more upfront with each other. And the technology helps.

You're not telling me these gadgets have turned you all into saints!

Dad, look I have to say this, my mates have been talking. Your generation hasn't much time left to turn the supertanker round. If you don't, we'll be left to clear up after the smash.

Supertanker? Smash? Are you taking something I should know about?

A supertanker, dad. Quarter of a mile long. Something in its way but it takes six miles to stop, so there's a disaster. People of your age are just piling on the speed, polluting the atmosphere, gobbling up the world's scarce resources, and not even thinking about the consequences. And you won't be there when the crash happens.

Well, thank you very much! Perhaps you haven't noticed that your Mother and I are fully co-operating with the Council's recycling scheme and are using our bus passes as far as possible.

Dad, it's about more than that. If we go on chasing after economic growth, nothing but growth, exploiting natural resources as if there were no.....

....Tomorrow, I've heard this already, but don't let's get too alarmist.

But we'll reach a tipping point, and we'll push nature over the edge, and there'll be no way back. Nobody wants to believe this, but we're kidding ourselves if we don't.

Please don't think we don't care.. But the good things of life, we have a right to enjoy them, while we have them, haven't we?

You've got to try harder than that, dad. Live more simply. When I was 10 years younger, it was you who used to lecture me. Now it's us who are preaching at you, to save our futures. The government has just set a new target to reduce carbon emissions by 80%. That's a huge challenge, but it's because campaigners like us pushed them into it. But did you notice

by when? By 2050, if that's not too late. And if it doesn't happen, then me and my girl friend, Samantha, by the way, you'd better note the name, I have a feeling we could just click, well, we will be either drowned or frazzled or at any rate the world you are enjoying so recklessly will be much less pleasant than it is now. Anyway I've got a two mile walk to the cinema, that's in aid of my carbon footprint, so I must be off.

And it's nearly time for our dance programme, too. I reckon I know who'll win it this time. That's all I can think about right now. Live more simply, eh? After all the cutting down we're doing already. But have a fun evening, anyway.

The Messenger

Please let Dianne Lough have your copy for the December/January 2009 issue by **Sunday 16 November 2008**. Articles are welcome. Please speak to Robin Derbyshire at any time about any proposal you have.

The Great Result for Macmillan Cancer Care in Essex

Thank you, everyone who supported our 12th Macmillan Coffee Morning on 26th September. 65 people supported our effort and we raised £240. It was a very happy and relaxed occasion. This brought our total for the 12 events which our church has run to £3,040.

We look forward to your support for next year's event on 26th September 2009!!
Dennis.

CHURCH FLOWERS

November	2	Jennifer Brown
	9	Kathleen Martin
	16	Joyce Nevill
	23	Joyce Elliott
	30	Hazel Wilkins
December	7	Janet Phillips

A special 'Thank You' to Rachel and her faithful helpers for arranging Harvest Flowers, while Joyce and I were on holiday.

Janet.

Mayflower Ladies will meet each Thursday in the Mayflower Hall at 8.00pm, as follows:-

- November 6 Secrets of Royal Jewels by Anne Hardy
- 13 Len Hale with a selection of his cards
- 20 Janet Saunders with a puzzle evening
- 27 Christmas Decorations from around the world with Angela Christianson

Coffee Morning – 18 November

Once again, thank you all so much for supporting our fund raising events. The Ploughman's Lunch raised an amazing £550.00 including some donations and the Craft Fair an impressive £311.70.

Lyndsay Robertson, Secretary

**Come to the
Cantabile Concert - "Christmas Cheer"
on Saturday 6th December
at the Mayflower Hall from 8.00pm.
Tickets are £5 each incl. refreshments
Please see Rachel Stenhouse
or buy tickets on the door**