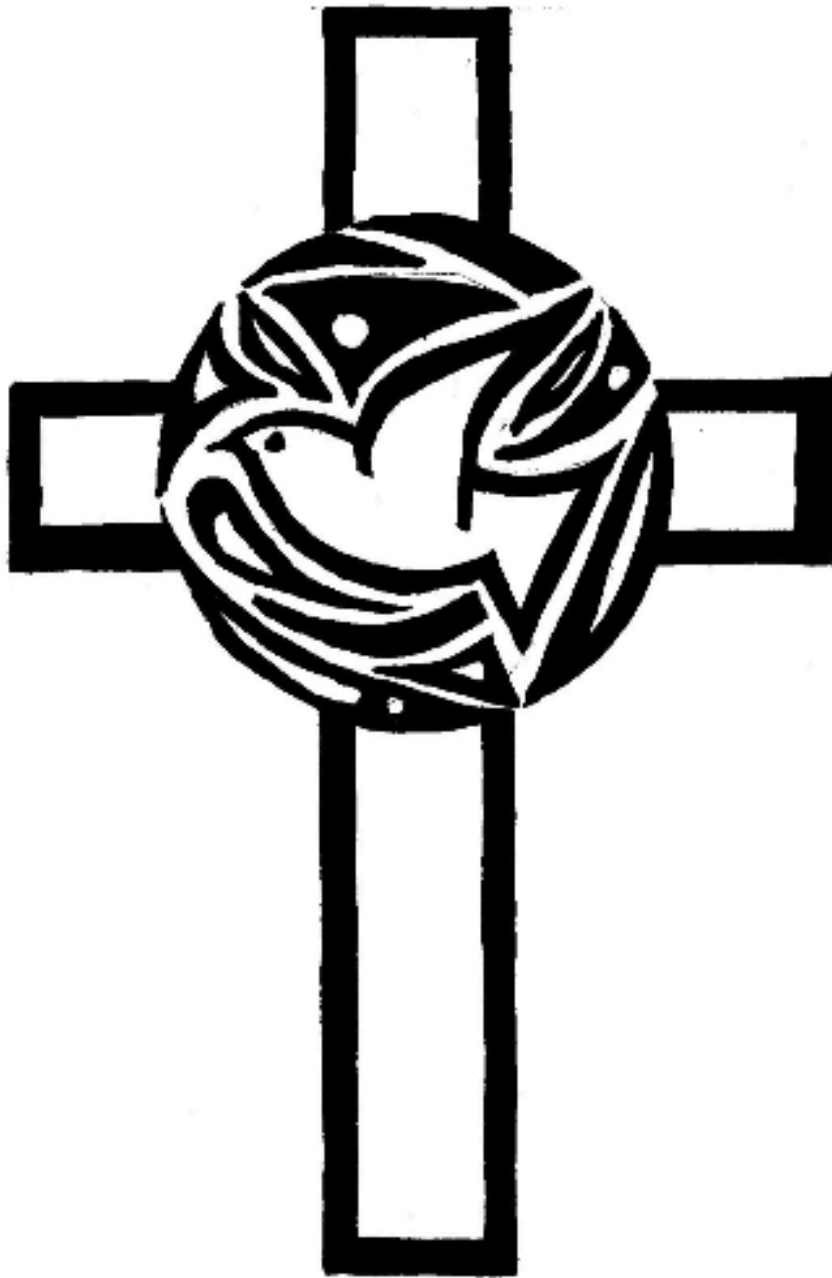


HOMEWOOD HERALD



**Web edition
July - August 2015**

Oh, we don't want to lose you -----

I used to visit a First World War Veteran, from time to time, of course he is no longer with us now. When it was time to go he used to sing a song from the period, which was later made known again, via stage and screen, by appearing in 'Oh what a Lovely War!' I can't quite remember if he sang it as a hint to go, or after we had said we were leaving!

Anyway, the song was 'Your King and Country Want You,' and it included these lines:

*Oh, we don't want to lose you but we think you ought to go.
For your King and your country both need you so.*

It was a recruiting song for the First World War, usually sung by women. I think that we can presume that it was thought it would have more of an emotional effect if sung by a woman.

I couldn't tell if he was looking back to the past, and the days of his youth, or looking to the future, when we would be gone, and he could enjoy his peace and quiet again. Whichever it was he wasn't enjoying the moment, the here and now.

It is certainly good to look back. Nostalgia is no bad thing, reliving our memories, re-counting how we got to where we are. One Minister that I knew used the phrase '*The gathered experience of Christians all through the ages*' quite a lot. And it was a good phrase, reminding us of all those who have played a part in our faith journeys. But we can also look back with sadness and regret.

It is also good to look forward. To anticipate what may happen, to plan and prepare for it. To have a sense of excitement about the future. To know that God is in it and, as Mother Julian said, '*All will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well.*' But we can also look forward with fear and dread.

The risk with looking backwards and forwards is that we miss what is happening now, that we don't live in the moment. Where God is active. That we are so busy looking back and forth that we miss what is going on, what God is doing now.

Of course we are grateful for the past, but we don't live in it. Of course we plan for the future, but we don't hold our breaths waiting for it. Today is God's gift, and we need to use it.

Wishing you every blessing,

Paul



UPDATE ON LINK WITH TRINITY URC

Our link with Trinity Church continues to grow and strengthen as we do things together. Trinity members are now a regular feature at our Walks as well as at our Men's Breakfast. We continue to work towards doing more to draw our two congregations closer together.

On Saturday 9th May we held a social event with our friends from Trinity here at Homewood Road. The evening was a great success and was an excellent opportunity to get to know the folk from Trinity a bit better, as well as to see the wealth of talent that we have within our two churches. Thanks to all who came and all who worked hard to make the evening possible.

Most recently, on 31st May, we had a joint service at Trinity Church at 10am. A planned picnic at Wheathampstead was cancelled because of rain, but a duck race in the river took place to raise money for Christian Aid. At the time of writing, the duck race has raised around £200 for Christian Aid, which is an excellent testament to what our two congregations can achieve together.

Sarah Green

WEDDING INVITATION

We take great delight in inviting you to our Wedding, and to the afternoon celebrations afterwards.

The service starts at **11:30 am Saturday, 18th July 2015, here at Homewood Road.**

We request that there are no gifts but, if you would like to take some photographs and e-mail them to us (paul.homewoodurc@yahoo.co.uk) that would be super.

In order to help with catering arrangements please use the sign up sheet at the back of the Church.

We do hope that you can make it,

Alison & Paul



THURSDAY STUDY GROUP

The Thursday Study Group continues with its look at the story of Abraham, in Genesis. This will continue to the 9th July, when we take a rest for our summer break.

As usual we meet in the back hall at Church, starting with tea or coffee, at 2:00 pm, and getting in to the subject proper at around 2:15 pm. Usual departure time is around 3:30 pm.

Everybody is very welcome. You will be well looked after, and be able to join in some very stimulating conversations.

Paul

SYNOD'S RE-VISIONING FOR GROWTH

The Thames North Synod is concerned that the Synod structure is not helping Churches to engage in mission, but that it is more of a hindrance with its top heavy committee structure. They have been working hard to turn this around, so that Synod can help and not hinder. Below is a short guide, produced by Synod. Details and a fuller explanation of all proposals are to be found in Synod Documents C1 and C2, and I am happy to supply you with copies if you wish. Just let me know. We shall be discussing this at our Church Meeting on the 5th July.

One of the key proposals is 'To create Local Area Groups of 8-15 churches so that we can jointly explore local mission ideas and practice and also share leadership.' That is an idea that the St Albans Area have been pursuing quite independently, for some time, at the request of the Synod Deployment Group. It is good when two bodies share a similar thought, and no doubt you will recall our regular reports to you on, what feels like, slow progress. This has quickened in pace recently and there is a separate article on that subject.

Paul Dawson.

RE-VISIONING THE SYNOD- WHAT WE'VE SAID SO FAR

OUR VISION, which the Moderator outlined last November, is for *our churches to be vibrant and relevant, purposefully engaged in God's reign*. We want to grow, but we have finite resources and energy; so the two parts to the proposals are:

1. To encourage local churches to come together in groups for mutual support and to effectively use resources for mission activities, to promote the growth we are seeking.
2. To streamline Synod's structures and programmes to allow greater volunteer time and resources to engage more directly in local mission.

CHALLENGES

- We have only 40 full-time equivalent stipendiary posts for 136 local churches,
- over 60% of our churches have fewer than 40 members,
- Increasingly elderly congregations have fewer people able to take on local leadership.

PROPOSAL 1: GROUPING CHURCHES

To create Local Area Groups (of 8-15 churches) so that we can jointly explore local mission ideas and practice and also share leadership. These may consist of two or more deployment groups

- Churches in a group will support each other in their local mission but may also join together to do something more ambitious with greater resources of people and money
- Each church will have at least oversight by a named minister or lay leader and its own Church Meeting
- Area Committees will cease to exist: some of their decision-making responsibilities will be devolved to the Groups; others to the Synod Pastoral Committee
- Church Groups and Ministry teams will help reduce the isolation otherwise experienced by many
- LEPs will be encouraged to fully participate in the groups

PROPOSAL 2: STREAMLINING COMMITTEES

To create five Synod committees to replace all existing committees and working groups. This will encourage effective communication at all levels. Less time will be spent maintaining the Synod apparatus and more devoted to local mission.

Synod Executive: Synod Executive to Synod is like Elders' Meeting to Church Meeting.

- The Trustee Body of the Synod, mainly in relation to staffing, finance and property matters
- Ensuring the good governance and wellbeing of Thames North Synod between Synod meetings.
- Listening to the needs of Local Area Groups, being creative and proactive in seeking out opportunities and encouraging growth across the Synod.
- Supporting Synod Committees and facilitating coordination between them.

CONT'D OVER

Discipleship Committee: Nurturing faith into action

- Helping Local Area Groups to assess local mission needs and opportunities
- Support the CLR (Church Local Review) process
- Encourage work with all the diverse age groups; ecumenical, racial justice and Interfaith links; and other relevant networks

Pastoral Committee: Oversight and support

- Oversee the deployment, working arrangements and pastoral care of Church Leaders (Lay and Ordained)
- Care for Candidates for Ministry and Retired ministers
- Facilitate leadership development in churches and Local Area Groups
- Maintain links with local churches and respond to needs

Resources Committee:

- Encourage a fair distribution of resources across the Synod to encourage mission and growth.
- Oversee contributions to the Ministry and Mission Fund
- Ensure that Synod's financial and property resources are properly safeguarded and used to boost the advance of the Synod's mission and growth objectives.

Nominations Committee:

- Ensure the best possible candidates are found through an open and transparent process to fill vacancies in Synod Committees, long and short term task groups and to represent Synod at General Assembly.
- Maintain a balanced representation of the geographic spread, age, gender and ethnicity of church members.
- Local Area Groups provide appropriate nominations

WHY ARE THESE PROPOSALS NECESSARY? Synod agreed that doing nothing is not an option. **God wants us to grow, *This will help.***



A big **thank you** to all the volunteers who supported Christian Aid Week by carrying out the house to house collections - all your hard work is much appreciated. We are also very grateful to Margaret and Margot who took on the task of counting again this year. We can now announce that the total amount collected was: **£1350.20**. This figure is an improvement on last year's collection of **£1288.60**. Well done everyone!

Marilyn & Nigel Whittle

COFFEE CLUB CAKE STALL

The next cake stall, in aid of the charity, "Count the Kicks" will be on **Sunday 14 June**, not as previously advertised. Please bring your cakes to sell, and money to buy, that day.



AFTERNOON TEA CLUB

Tuesdays - 21 July and 18 August 2015

Back Hall - 3.00pm - All welcome



STROLLERS

Friday 10 July 10.00am

5 mile walk, led by Sue Gray, starting at the **Rusty Gun, St Ippolyts, SG47PG** This is the lesser known sister pub to The Wellington, known to many of our strollers for its good food.



GROUP 2, ST ALBANS AREA

Hopefully you will remember the coming together of the Group 2 Churches on the 22nd of June 2014, here at Homewood Road. We were following up on the St Albans Area Committee idea that the Area should be divided up into three groups. As it turned out this was in line with Synod's Re-Visioning, of which there are more details in another article. The churches had prepared displays of their ministry and activities which were viewed by members of the other churches during a shared lunch. There were group discussions in which we asked ourselves what areas of church life we would gain most from sharing together. These conversations gave us short and longer term key issues and actions to help make our grouping of churches work.

After much enthusiasm it feels as though little progress has been made. But the wheels have been turning slowly in the background and there has been progress, particularly in one of our five core areas, that of ministry.

There have been two main changes that have happened independently to this process.

Leonora Jagessar, currently minister at Bricket Wood, Harpenden and Trinity, has accepted a call to Slough, taking up her post in September.

Two of the three Welwyn Garden City Churches had come together, to form a single Church. They had asked if their Minister, Jane Weedon, could be given at least a year to concentrate on their coming together. Their Unification Service was held on the 14th September 2014.

This gives us a great opportunity to re-imagine how the Churches in our Group could work better together, and how they could be clustered together to achieve that end.

After much discussion, the last Group 2 meeting proposed the following Clusters:

- Dunstable, Edward Street and St. Katherine's, and Luton, Bury Park, St Ninian's and Wigmore.
- Harpenden, Wheathampstead and Welwyn Garden City.
- Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and St. Albans, Homewood Road and Trinity.

This was discussed at some length at the last Elders' Meeting. After some initial concerns, and the certainty that there is a lot of detail to be ironed out, it was greeted with much enthusiasm as a real chance to more effective agents for change in God's Kingdom.

We shall have an opportunity to discuss this at our Church meeting, on the 5th July.

Paul Dawson

HISTORIC ST ALBANS WALK

SATURDAY 20th JUNE 2015

Please join us for an historic St. Albans walk, led by Jonathan Kiek.

Start point: St Peter's Churchyard, St Peter's Street

Time: 10.00 am, ending approximately 3.00 pm

Please bring a packed lunch

If you are interested in joining us please let Linda Lovett know; alternatively add you name and phone number to the list at the back of the Church

St Albans Friends of Palestine

Public Meeting

Grief and Joy in Gaza - an eyewitness account

from:

David Harrold, Palestine Trauma Centre (UK)

**Thursday 9 July 2015 at 7.30pm at
Trinity URC Beaconsfield Road**

All welcome, free entry, collection in aid of Palestine Trauma Centre (UK)

LONDON CHURCHES REFUGEE NETWORK

Please note that the next LCRN Meeting will be held on Wednesday 29 July. We shall focus upon the very important issue of **Detention** and the fact that people are imprisoned for an indeterminate length of time. I am liaising with Eiri Ohtani of the Detention Forum for the programme. Please attend and encourage other friends to be present. LCRN must work with other organisations to bring this appalling practice to an end.

Human Rights Act Please keep up to date with news and if possible google the Act ,especially Article 8. LCRN must take appropriate action. Amnesty International has a petition circulating calling upon Michael Gove, the new Justice Secretary not to abolish the Act

The Queen's Speech 27 May: it is widely anticipated that the Human Rights Act will have a place in the Queen's Speech along with other issues which will concern LCRN and other refugee organisations.

The Mediterranean Crisis is another weighty concern especially as at the time of writing Theresa May will not engage with EU ministers even to discuss the crisis.. Compassion needs to become a key word in government

Best Wishes

Geoff Duncan
londonchurchesrefugeenetwork@gmail.com

The London Churches Refugee Network

London Churches Refugee Network brings together Christians working with refugees and asylum seekers in London

DEC NEPAL EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

DEC member agencies and their partners have reached over half a million people with aid since a deadly 7.8 magnitude quake rocked the country on 25 April 2015. The DEC Nepal Earthquake Appeal has now raise £65m since it opened to donations on 27 April.

DEC member agencies are providing a wide range of emergency items and services, such as emergency shelter, food, blankets, clean water, sanitation supplies, water storage units, medical aid, baby kits and other essentials. As quickly as possible, they will begin supporting the worst affected communities to begin rebuilding more permanent homes and restoring their livelihoods.

Speaking about the appeal Saleh Saeed, DEC Chief Executive, said: "I have been very moved by the extraordinary generosity of the UK public in response to the appalling devastation in Nepal. Their kindness, combined with the courage and tenacity of the Nepali people, working with our member agencies and their partners, have helped provide aid to over half a million people in just one month.

"This has been achieved even in many villages that were all but inaccessible even before the earthquake; despite Kathmandu's small airport being completely overwhelmed; regardless of the severe damage to Nepal's already inadequate road network; and in the face of extremely hazardous flying conditions for the limited number of available helicopters.

"There is no room for complacency. The monsoon is coming. The need for emergency shelter and materials to help people begin rebuilding homes is incredibly urgent because conditions for homeless survivors will be soon be intolerable and the road will become even more treacherous.

"These huge challenges, and the need to support the Nepali people through the hard years it will take to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, are why the DEC Nepal Earthquake Appeal remains open and why we are relying on the continued support of the UK public."



Amendment to Church Directory :

Janet Eaton's email address should read:

kandj.eaton@ntlworld.com

RETIRING COLLECTIONS



In **July** we support two charities based in the UK and working internationally - **Tools for Self Reliance (TFSR)** and **Teaching Aids at Low cost (TALC)**.

TFSR works with local African organisations to deliver a programme of tools and training to bring about effective and sustainable change to trades people and their communities. The primary countries the charity works in are Ghana, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

TFSR aims to empower artisans working in developing countries so that they can better participate in the development of themselves and their communities.

It believes that people in poor countries are the best placed to know their own problems and to find ways of overcoming them. It therefore works with local organisations whom it calls partners to provide an holistic approach to helping the artisan sector. The partners help with training and business development and TFSR helps them with funding so that they can pay for this training. TFSR also sends out hand tools to support the training. The tools are collected and refurbished by hundreds of people throughout the UK.

Tools for Self Reliance aims to contribute to poverty reduction in Africa by working with its partner organisations and supporters in the UK to empower people to build viable and sustainable livelihoods through the delivery of technical, business and life skills training and through the provision of tools for their trades.

It works closely with local partner organisations in Africa to deliver effective and targeted support to the rural poor of the region. Moreover, its broad-based volunteer base in the United Kingdom helps to raise awareness of issues such as rural poverty in Africa, and the importance of sustainable livelihoods and income diversification.

TFSR recognises the fact that tools and training are only a small part of the answer to the problems facing the poor. In collaboration with its partners, we strive to provide appropriate support and conditions, such as:

- ensuring availability of affordable credit
- the presence of a real and sustainable supply of spare parts and raw materials
- networking opportunities so that ideas and knowledge can be shared
- ongoing demand for products
- access to further training opportunities

Teaching Aids at Low Cost (TALC) was founded in Harpenden in 1965 by Professor David Morley (CBE, MD, FRCP) when he was lecturer at the Institute of Child Health, in response to many requests from

overseas students for teaching equipment to use in their own countries.

After starting out in a small way sending out transparencies, demand grew and the charity expanded into distributing books and teaching-aids. Since then TALC has continued to grow and has distributed millions of books, slides and accessories relating to health and community issues to thousands of health workers throughout the developing world.

Use of these has enabled doctors and health workers to make the right diagnosis and provide the right treatment, resulting in the saving of many lives and the alleviation of an enormous amount of pain and suffering.

The materials are chosen because they are specially written for conditions in poor countries. TALC either buys in the books and CDs and distributes them at as low a cost as possible, or finds the funds to produce and/or distribute new materials – such as e-TALC CDs.

Health workers across the developing world already know and value TALC materials. In addition, TALC works with authors of key texts to help them reach a wider audience. Translations of essential TALC publications have been made into 22 + languages including: Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Korean, Mongolian, Portuguese, Spanish and Vietnamese.

In **August**, we support the local branch of the mental health charity, MIND.

Mind in Mid Herts has a positive and holistic approach to promoting mental well being. They support individuals who are suffering or who have suffered from mental and emotional distress. This is achieved by following the Recovery model which enables individuals to make well informed life choices. This way of working underpins all aspects of work within the organisation

Mind in Mid Herts aims to provide services that:

- all persons who live in the locality can easily access.
- promote social inclusion
- provide facilities for early intervention
- work cooperatively with partners
- provide effective support for groups and individuals
- support carers
- are user led.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WORK UPDATE

More@4

In May we explored the story of Jesus' ascension with rockets, kites, helium balloons, candy floss clouds and lots more. In June we'll be looking at the theme of God's Kingdom. In July we'll be having a More@4 style communion service with lots of crafts, games and activities, followed by a really informal communion. We won't have a More@4 in August, instead we'll be joining with our friends at Chiswell Green Church for another Fun Day, following on from the success of last year's event. Please do feel free to join us for More@4, both adults and children are most welcome at these informal, family friendly services.

Children's Church

Children's Church has looked at some really exciting themes in May and June including Belonging to God's World, Superhero Jesus and we even had a birthday party for Pentecost. The themes in July and August will be as follows;

July 5th- Jesus Sends the Disciples

July 12th John the Baptist Dies

July 19th Jesus Draws the Crowds

July 26th Jesus Feeds a Crowd

August 2nd Moses the Baby

August 9th Moses and the Burning Bush

August 16th Moses Escapes from Egypt

August 23rd Moses in the Wilderness

August 30th Moses Reaches the Promised Land

Festival Service

A reminder that June 28th is our Summer Festival Service. The theme is 'Healing' and we explore the story of Jesus raising Jairus' daughter from the dead. Thanks to all who have helped make this service happen and to all who are planning to come and join in.

Play and Praise

Play and Praise continues to meet every week, although our numbers have been very low. If you know anyone that you think might like to come along, please do invite them. We meet every Tuesday morning at 10.30am for candles, singing, dancing, stories and prayers. If anyone is interested in coming along to help out then please do get in touch with me.

Youth Group

In June I will be starting a new Youth Group in the church on Sunday evenings for some of our older children between 6.30pm. Please do pray for this venture. If anybody thinks they might like to be involved with this please do let me know. Offers of help are always appreciated!

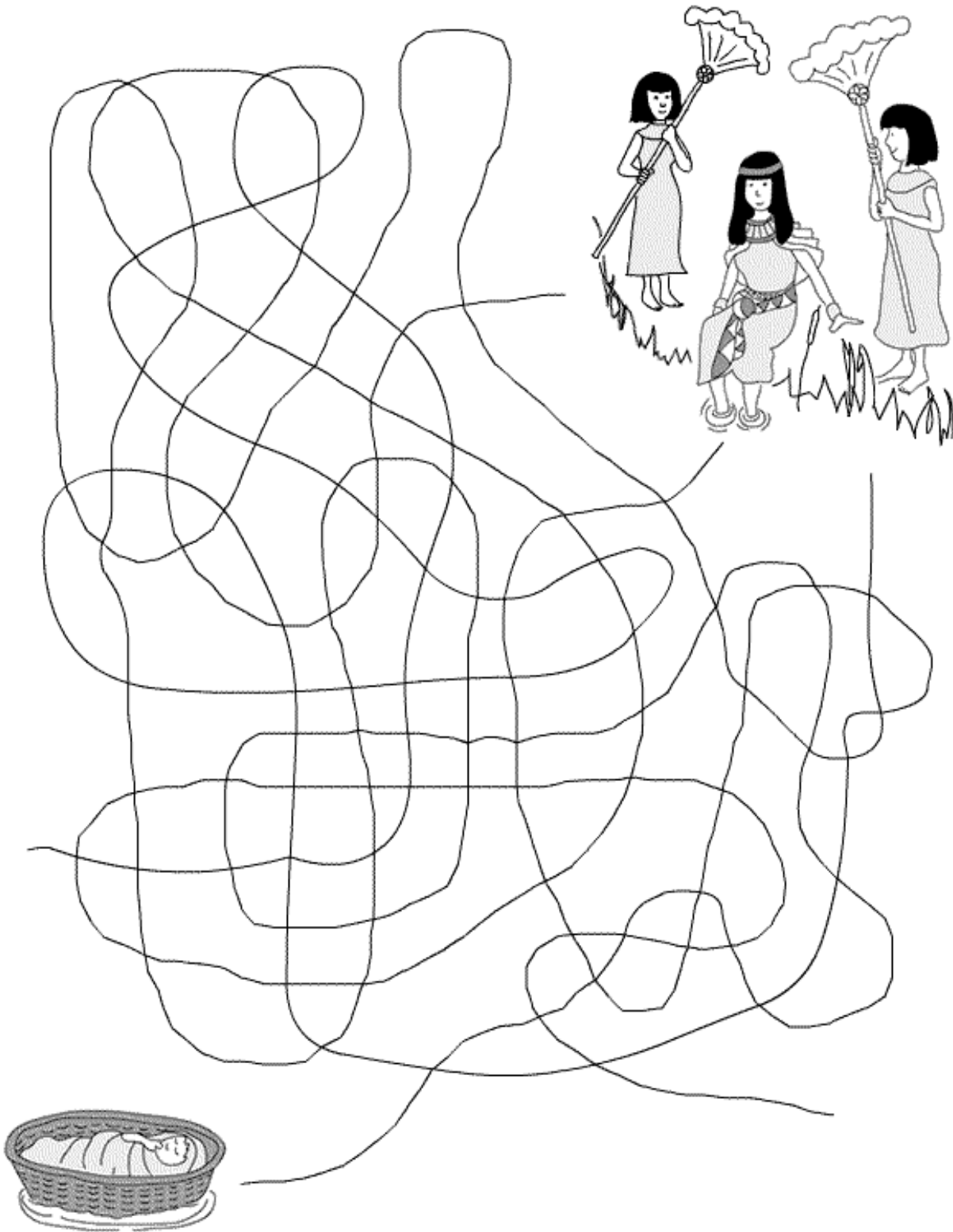
Happy Birthday

We wish many happy returns to;

Kameron Lall on 26th July

In August in Children's Church we'll be looking at the story of Moses. Why not have a go at this Moses activity to keep you busy during the summer?

Which of the three paths lead to the baby Moses in his floating basket?



God sent people to love and help baby Moses.
God sends people to love and help you too.

A DAILY PRAYER

Take a moment to listen to the still small voice of God within the bustle of the day which has begun. Find a quiet place where you can enjoy precious moments of peace in God's presence. Sit quietly and listen to the sounds of the world around you, both outside and in the place where you are. Breathe slowly and rest in God's presence.....

From our rising in the morning
to our lying down again,
you are with us
every hour of the day,
our reassurance
when storms assail
and strength
when courage fails.
From our rising in the morning
to our lying down again,
your light illumines
every step of the way,
our comfort
when darkness falls
and peace
that calms our souls.
From our rising in the morning
to our lying down again,
you are with us.



A word of confession:

When our faith is weak
you strengthen us,
when we lose our way
you rescue us,
when we fall into sin
you forgive us.
Gracious Father,
please remind us
as we forget,
that your love is
unconditional,
always moulding us
into what we could be,
always blessing us
that we might glorify you.
For love,
grace
and forgiveness,
we thank you.

Read more at: <http://www.faithandworship.com/Wednesday.htm#ixzz3c0WppOBJ>

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CALENDAR

10.30am

6.30 pm

(unless shown otherwise)

JULY

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| 5th | Paul Dawson HC | 6.00pm Songs of Praise St Leonard's, Sandridge |
| 12th | Paul Dawson & Sarah Green Worship all Together | No service |
| 18th | 11.30 Paul & Alison's wedding | |
| 19th | Fredwyn Hosier | No service |
| 26th | TBA | No service |

AUGUST

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------|------------|
| 2nd | Martyn Macphee HC | No service |
| 9th | Rev Ann Jack | No service |
| 16th | Bob Little | No service |
| 23rd | Rev John Steele | No service |
| 30th | TBA | No service |

HC = Holy Communion

Copy for next edition of HH to Lesley King (see details overleaf) by **Sunday 2nd August 2015**, please