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# Union Church News

August/September 2009

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## Not Tourists but Pilgrims: A message from Mark

Dear Friends,

**B**y the time you read this, our holiday club will have taken place. As I write, we have over 60 children signed up and it looks as though this will be an excellent event.

We are praying that the church forges relationships with children and parents and we are delighted that children and parents are already booked into the family services taking place at either end of the Holiday Club Week. Can I take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been involved as leaders and/or as givers of funding.

For those of us involved with the holiday club there will be a sense that the holiday period starts when the holiday club ends.

The origin of Holidays is of course Holy Days. The many festivals of the medieval church provided a rhythm of life. As well as the main festivals which were universally observed Holidays, or Holy Days, each locality would observe the festival of its particular patron saint.

In addition to these events people would also take time out to go on pilgrimage. These events were as much a holiday or excursion as a holy day, as anyone who is familiar with Chaucer's Canterbury Tales will tell you.

As a family, we will be making our regular trip to the place of our birth and upbringing. It will be something of a pilgrimage as we retrace the early years of our own spiritual journey.

For me, at the start of our holiday there is the point on our journey back to our old home where we pass the place of my conversion. We will visit the church

where Sarah grew up and I preached my first sermon; a church where both of our families have ancestors buried in the churchyard.

We will take the children to play in the place where we both played as we grew up, we will enjoy the feeling of the familiarity of landscape of our beautiful lush green valley which is etched upon our consciousness.

This will add a sense of continuity to our lives and give us a strengthened sense of our identity, both as followers of Jesus Christ and as a people with a heritage.

The prophet Jeremiah spoke these words:

<sup>16</sup>This is what the Lord says:

“Stand at the crossroads and look;  
ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,  
and you will find rest for your souls.”

[Jeremiah 6:16].

Our time away will be both a holiday and a pilgrimage - a holy day. As we have shared with many of you the anticipation of your plans for a time of rest and renewal, we are praying that you too will find rest, direction, and peace. We are not tourists, but pilgrims.

With every blessing,

*Mark*

Union Church  
High Street  
Heathfield  
TN21 8LB  
Telephone: 01435 867195  
[www.unionchurch.co.uk](http://www.unionchurch.co.uk)

Church Office:  
3a Cherwell Road  
Heathfield  
TN21 8JT  
Telephone: 01435 866400  
Mobile: 07549 039578

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# “Death is nothing at all”

## Comforting words found in a house clearance

In January this year, my grandmother moved into a residential care home. She had managed on her own, since the death of my Grandpa in 2000, until the age of 91, so she'd done OK (and, I hasten to add, she's still going strong)!

My grandparents weren't religious; they'd attend a carol service at Christmas if invited but weren't regular church goers. However, they had a couple of old bibles and prayer books in their study. In the sorting and cleaning of the house in Tunbridge Wells with my Dad and Aunt earlier this year, I found the following poems. They had been typed (presumably copied by my Grandpa himself) or cut out of various publications, and obviously meant enough to my Grandpa to be kept. I found them tucked into the front of a bible.

I often think about dying. You might think I'm being morbid but I want to make sure that, if the worst ever does happen and I leave my children without a Mum at a young age, and Sean without a wife, then I'll have made sure they know how much they mean to me. After the event it will be too late to do anything about it!

So when I say “Goodbye” to my children, I always do it, in my mind, as if it might be the last time I'll see them. I don't go overboard - just a quick kiss, cuddle (“oh Mum, do you have to?”) and “love you!” called out after them as they run off. I'd rather they remember those as my last words to them, than something uttered in an argument and later regretted which might never be undone.

So here are the passages I found in my Grandpa's bible. I'm sure some of you already know of them. I hope someone also finds them when I'm gone, and that they can give comfort to my loved ones - and yours.

*Debi*

*Death is nothing at all  
I have only slipped away into the next  
room  
I am I and you are you  
Whatever we were to each other  
That we are still  
Call me by my old familiar name  
Speak to me in the easy way you always  
used  
Put no difference into your tone  
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow  
Laugh as we always laughed  
At the little jokes we always enjoyed  
together  
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me  
Let my name be ever the household word  
that it always was  
Let it be spoken without effort  
Without the ghost of a shadow in it  
Life means all that it ever meant  
It is the same as it ever was  
There is absolute unbroken continuity  
What is death but a negligible accident?  
Why should I be out of mind  
Because I am out of sight?  
I am waiting for you for an interval  
Somewhere very near  
Just around the corner  
All is well.  
Nothing is past; nothing is lost  
One brief moment and all will be as it was  
before.  
How we shall laugh at the trouble of  
parting when we meet again!*

*Canon Henry Scott-Holland (1847 - 1918)*

*Do not stand at my grave and weep  
I am not there; I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the diamond glints on snow,  
I am the sun on ripened grain,  
I am the gentle autumn rain.  
When you awaken in the morning's hush  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry,  
I am not there; I did not die.  
Mary Elizabeth Frye (1905 - 2004)*

*Year by year the rose will bloom beside  
this window pane,  
There'll be April lilac, winter frost and  
summer rain,  
The thrush will go on calling from the same  
old apple tree,  
And autumn leaves keep falling, but you  
won't be there to see.  
The seasons in their turn will come but you  
will not come back,  
You walk with me at Bluebell time along  
the woodland track,  
I shall not hear, as once I heard, your  
footsteps on the path,  
Your face I can no longer see beside the  
lamp lit hearth.  
And yet you come. The way of it I cannot  
understand,  
But in everything we shared I feel you close  
at hand  
And hear your voice in silence, and upon  
the wind's soft breath  
Telling me that love outlives the changes  
we call death.  
[Author not found by editor]*

*They are not gone, these loved ones  
whom we mourn,  
We must not think of them as far away,  
Unto a fuller life have they been born,  
Laying aside the vesture of this clay,  
These sweet souls around us watch us still,  
When troubles come, press closer to our  
side,  
Into our thoughts and into our prayers  
each day,  
On wings of love with gentle helping guide,  
Yet near us still they watch, and love, and  
know,  
We are the blind ones who no longer see,  
Beloved forms that softly come and go,  
Waiting reunion in eternity.  
[Author not found by editor]*

## **Bottle Top Collections for CRY**

I am writing as the Voluntary Co-ordinator for CRY [Care and Relief for the Young] to thank you all most sincerely for all the collecting you have done on our behalf. All these initiatives add to the general way forward of supporting our work now in 17 countries around the world.

**Sadly, this opportunity has come to an end and we can no longer gain benefit for the work from your collecting.** Sorry about this but situations do change.

There are other ways in which you can help if you wish; do contact me direct at:

Rev. Ray Avent  
St Elmo  
12 Fernleigh Road  
Wadebridge  
Cornwall  
PL27 7AX

Telephone: 01208 816821

Email: [aventray@hotmail.com](mailto:aventray@hotmail.com)

## Sunday Club and Sunday Special

As I write, it is the last Sunday of the summer term for Sunday Club. We have enjoyed the events and lessons this term. Our particular thanks to those who organised an interesting and fun programme for us at the Community College on Pentecost Sunday; to those who made all the arrangements for Andrew's baptism on 12th July; and to the Wells and the Greens for welcoming us once again to their lovely garden and swimming pool on a beautiful summer's day for our church picnic.

There will be no Sunday Club or Sunday Special on 26th July or 2nd August. Instead we have two Family Services - to launch and then to provide a grand finale to our "Showstoppers" Summer Holiday Fun week. We'll report on that next time!

Then there will be four weeks of "Holiday Mode". The Architects will meet when leaders are available, and the younger children will meet all together with just two leaders each time, to do some different activities.

Sunday Special will resume on Sunday 6th September with a full programme and, we hope, some new children. Sunday Club will re-launch itself on Sunday 13th September with a new look to its programme and some changes to the things we do and the way we do them. Watch this space!

*Sue Mumford*

## YClub730

The summer has been a quieter time for YClub. We've met at Sheepsetting Lane a couple of times to make use of the longer days. Rounders or French Cricket seem to be the most popular games. We ended our official year of YClub events with an extension to the church picnic; several of the young people stayed until 6pm either in the pool or playing games on Lindsey's lawn. Many thanks to her - I hope we didn't outstay our welcome!



You may recall that YClub did a sponsored walk back in May along the Seven Sisters. We've got almost all the money together now and we've raised over £450, which is fantastic. Thank you once again to all those that took part and those that sponsored us. The kids themselves chose where the money should go - half is going to the Teenage Cancer Trust and half to Union Church, specifically to help meet the costs of the Holiday Club.

The new programme of events will start in September (although we may have impromptu meetings during the summer, depending on who is available). The dynamics of the group will be different as most of the older ones will be leaving for University and we will welcome some new faces in those that have joined Year 6. We are looking forward to another exciting year of events - there will likely be trips to concerts, bowling, laser quest, tobogganing and many more. Watch this space for more information.

*Sean*



### Sunday Club and Sunday Special attendance prizes

25 January	Lorna	Architect	"The One Year Alive Devotions for Students" by Rick Christian, published by Tyndale House Publishers Inc.	50 stars
1 February	Megan	Candle	"NIV Adventure Bible" published by Zonderkidz	200 stars 
8 February	Bella	Starlet	"Noah's Fantastic Boat" by Tim Dowley, published by Candle Books	50 stars
26 April	Jessica	Candle	Topz Secret Diaries - "Josie's Jazzy Journal" by Alexa Tewksbury, published by CWR Christ's Story: beaded bracelet	200 stars 
10 May	Amy	Candle	"The Explorer's Bible" published by Barnabas "My Little Bible" Cross Pendant WWJD (What Would Jesus Do) bracelet	100 stars
14 June	Freddie	Crèche		5 teddy bears
5 July	Ellyn	Sunday Special		5 stars

# TM

Our evening meetings are continuing as and when possible - although exam season is now over, holidays are keeping many of us busy.

A-level results are published on 20th August; please pray for all those who have made university plans which are subject to those results.

Please pray specifically for the following friends:

- Lucy B: planning to study Medicine at Newcastle
- Chris M: planning to study Physics at Southampton
- Jon H: planning to study War Studies at Birmingham
- David P: planning to study Marine Biology & Animal Behaviour at Anglia Ruskin
- Kathryn A: planning to study Music at Southampton
- Iain M: planning to study Physics at Southampton

*Sue Fletcher*

## Sudoku Challenge

2		7			4			
						8		
	1		8				2	
7			3				9	4
	5	6	7			3		
		4			9			
				3	6	5		
6							4	
							1	

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A little girl walked to and from school daily. Though the weather that morning was questionable and clouds were forming, she made her daily trek to the primary school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with lightning. The mother of the little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened as she walked home from school and she feared the thunderstorm might harm her child. Full of concern, the mother quickly got into her car and drove along the route to her child's school. As she did, she saw her little girl walking along.



At each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up and smile. Another and another flash of lightning followed quickly and with each, the little girl would look at the streak of light and smile. When the mother's car drew up beside the child, she lowered the window and called to her: "What are you doing?" Her daughter simply said, "I am trying to look pretty because God keeps taking my picture".

May God bless you today and every day as you face the storms that come your way. Just have a good day.

From Fairlie Parish Newsletter - May 2009

**One Voice, One Rhythm, One World**  
**Featuring the Kabubbu Orphan Choir**  
**Congress Theatre, Eastbourne**  
**Sunday 4th October**  
**7.00pm**  
**Special guest appearance by Graham Kendrick**

Quicken Trust brings together a new group of 12 orphans from the rural village of Kabubbu in Uganda with 150 children from eight primary and four secondary schools for a bright, colourful celebration for the whole family. Guaranteed to be a memorable evening.

Following the sell-out visit of the Kabubbu Orphan Choir on their last visit in 2005, this evening features lively Ugandan and English songs and dances which will prove as popular as before. Be prepared to applaud!

Tickets: £7.00 (adults) £3.00 (children)  
 Concessions £6.00 (Over 60s,  
 Students, People with disabilities,  
 Unemployed)

## Finance report - June 2009

At the end of June receipts are ahead of payments, mainly due to Gift Day donations. Direct givings – the money we receive regularly every week or month - has increased by 14% from this time last year. This is very encouraging – many thanks to everyone who has reviewed their giving and been able to increase it.

The Lord bless.

*Christine*

## Union Church Gift Day 2009

We have had a magnificent response to our Gift Day appeal. We hoped to raise £5,000 toward the cost of repairing our roof with any excess going into a Fabric Fund. To date we have received £5,000 for the roof and £2,610 for the Fabric Fund. A further £450 has been pledged over the next year. When we reclaim Gift Aid on relevant donations this will generate an additional £1,431.

To everyone who has contributed to this appeal – very many thanks and God bless!

*Christine*

## Flower Rota



August 2nd	Mrs M Grout
August 9th	Mrs P Cogger
August 16th	Mrs S Cronk
August 23rd	Mrs C Thomas
August 30th	Mrs G McMahon
September 6th	Mrs H Stevens
September 13th	Mrs L Miller
September 20th	Mrs G Goldsmith
September 27th	Harvest
October 4th	Mrs R Dimsdale

## News in brief

### Union Book Group

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 8th September when we will be discussing 'The Lovely Bones' by Alice Sebold and 'To The Hilt' by Dick Francis. Telephone Julie Baxter on 868799 for more information or for current and planned book titles.



### Inspire magazine

Copies of this free monthly magazine are available for you to take home and read.

Do pick up a copy either on a Sunday or during the week - it's also available at Open Door, Luncheon Club and Do Pop Inn.

### Union Church News on the internet

All editions of Union Church News are available to read on the Activities and Events page of the church website:  
[www.unionchurch.co.uk](http://www.unionchurch.co.uk)



*"It is the power of words that will link with love and feelings. Words speak, words tell, words link mankind with their higher being. Words destroy confidence and the power of words never fails, so use them carefully, use them well and always with love and lightness. Too often the spoken word works against their kindly ways, and remember also to listen, listen, listen, for it is in listening that comes awareness of the next step."*

From Robert Louis Stevenson's writings in Samoa

# Union Church regular events

<b>Monday</b>	10.00am - 2.00pm	Open Door - tea and coffee in the Coffee Lounge
	12.00noon - 1.30pm	Open Door - lunches in the Church Hall
<b>Tuesday</b>	12.00noon (fortnightly - check diary on page 12)	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
	6.00pm (term time only)	Beavers in the Church Hall
<b>Wednesday</b>	1.30pm - 3.00pm (term time only)	Parent & Toddler Group in the Church Hall
	4.30pm (term time only)	Rainbows in the Church Hall
	5.45pm (term time only)	Brownies in the Church Hall
	7.00pm (term time only)	Guides in the Church Hall
<b>Thursday</b>	10.00am - 4.00pm	Do Pop Inn - teas, coffees and light lunches in the Coffee Lounge
	6.30pm (term time only)	Cubs in the Church Hall
<b>Friday</b>	2.30pm (first Friday of each month)	Women's Fellowship
	7.30pm (term time only)	Scouts in the Church Hall
<b>Saturday</b>	8.30am	Prayer Meeting in the Coffee Lounge
<b>Sunday</b>	7.30pm (alternate fortnights)	YClub730 - for Year 6 and above
	7.30pm (alternate fortnights)	TM - Youth Fellowship for Sixth Form and above

## Book Reviews - John Glover

### The Reason for God

**Author:** Timothy Keller

**Publisher:** Hodder & Stoughton

**ISBN:** 978-0340979327



Timothy Keller's book is a welcome contribution in the current debate about faith and belief. The book has a pastoral touch written out of Timothy's own ministry in New York. He addresses some of the questions that bug believers and non-believers alike. Why does God allow suffering in the world? How could a loving God send people to hell? His answers are not just a collection of proof texts but a thoughtful exploration of scripture. It is in every way a twenty-first century 'apologia' for the Christian faith.

### Tales of Total Forgiveness

**Authors:** R T Kendall & Julia Fisher

**Publisher:** Hodder & Stoughton

**ISBN:** 978-0340863275

Here is a little book you can tuck into your luggage when you go on holiday. Here are the answers to some of those questions people ask about forgiveness: 'Does it work?', 'Is it possible?' The answers are not theories but the stories of ordinary people who have taken the step and found out for themselves.

It is a collection of tales that challenge us to take this difficult but essential step if we are to know God's healing peace. In other words, this is a book for us all.

## Church diary

<b>August</b>	Saturday 1	10.00am	Women's Fellowship Coffee Morning
	Sunday 2	10.30am	All Age Family Service to celebrate Showstoppers! holiday club - Rev. Mark Welch
	Sunday 9	10.30am 6.30pm	Rev. Tony Powell (Holy communion) Deanery service for Healing and Wholeness - St Richard's Church
	Tuesday 11	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
	Sunday 16	10.30am	Alwyn Fletcher
	Sunday 23	10.30am 6.30pm	Rev. John Glover, followed by a barbecue at Winkton, Burwash Common - all welcome CTH United Service at St George's, Broad Oak
	Tuesday 25	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
	Sunday 30	10.30am 6.30pm	Rev. Mark Welch Holy communion
	Monday 31		Le Marché - refreshments and ploughman's lunches served in the hall, and a display of the work of local organisations in the church
	<b>September</b>	Tuesday 1	7.30pm
Friday 4		2.30pm	Women's Fellowship
Sunday 6		9.00am 10.30am 6.30pm	Sunday Special Rev. Mark Welch Window on the World
Tuesday 8		12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
Sunday 13		10.30am 6.30pm	Rev. Mark Welch (Holy communion) Nooma Series
Friday 18		7.30pm	CTH Forum at Welcome Baptist Church
Sunday 20		10.30am 6.30pm	Rev. Mark Welch CTH United Service at Welcome Baptist Church
Tuesday 22		12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
Sunday 27		10.30am 6.30pm	Becky Rust (Christian Aid) followed by Hunger Lunch Holy communion
Tuesday 29		7.30pm	Church Members' Meeting
<b>October</b>	Friday 2	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship
	Sunday 4	9.00am 10.30am 6.30pm	Sunday Special Rev. Mark Welch Window on the World



### Union Church, Heathfield

Senior Minister: Rev. Mark Welch, The Manse, Tilsmore Road, Heathfield TN21 0XU Telephone: 01435 868160, Email: mswelch@tiscali.co.uk  
 Pastoral Minister: Rev. John Glover, Telephone: 01323 764329, Email: johnglover@pepyswalk.freereserve.co.uk  
 Treasurer: Christine Thomas, 6 Springwood Road, Heathfield TN21 8JY Telephone: 01435 862886, Email: catherine54@gmail.com  
 Church Secretary: Mike Dimsdale, Winkton, Vicarage Road, Burwash Common TN19 7LH Telephone: 01435 882435, Email: mike.dimsdale@uwclub.net  
 Magazine Editor: Debi Tompsett, 48 Bay Tree Close, Heathfield TN21 8YG Telephone: 01435 868981, Email: debi.tompsett1@virgin.net

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Items included subject to suitability and space.