
Union Church News

January/February/March 2009

As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God



Missionaries, not aid money, are the solution to Africa's biggest problem - the crushing passivity of the people's mindset

Matthew Parris

Edited from www.timesonline.co.uk, first published in The Times 27 December 2008

Before Christmas I returned, after 45 years, to the country that as a boy I knew as Nyasaland. Today it's Malawi, and The Times Christmas Appeal includes a small British charity working there. Pump Aid helps rural communities to install a simple pump, letting people keep their village wells sealed and clean. I went to see this work.

It inspired me, renewing my flagging faith in development charities. But travelling in Malawi refreshed another belief, too: one I've been trying to banish all my life, but an observation I've been unable to avoid since my African childhood. It confounds my ideological beliefs, stubbornly refuses to fit my world view, and has embarrassed my growing belief that there is no God.

Now a confirmed atheist, I've become convinced of the enormous contribution that Christian evangelism makes in Africa: sharply distinct from the work of secular NGOs, government projects and international aid efforts. These alone will not do. Education and training alone will not do. In Africa, Christianity changes people's hearts. It brings a spiritual transformation. The rebirth is real. The change is good.

I used to avoid this truth by applauding - as you can - the practical work of mission churches in Africa. It's a pity, I would say, that salvation is part of the package, but Christians black and white, working in Africa, do heal the sick, do teach people to read and write; and only the severest kind of secularist

could see a mission hospital or school and say the world would be better without it. I would allow that if faith was needed to motivate missionaries to help, then, fine: but what counted was the help, not the faith.

But this doesn't fit the facts. Faith does more than support the missionary; it is also transferred to his flock. This is the effect that matters so immensely, and which I cannot help observing.

First, then, the observation. We had friends who were missionaries, and as a child I stayed often with them; I also stayed, alone with my little brother, in a traditional rural African village. In the city we had working for us Africans who had converted and were strong believers. The Christians were always different. Far from having cowed or confined its converts, their faith appeared to have liberated and relaxed them. There was a liveliness, a curiosity, an engagement with the world - a directness in their dealings with others - that seemed to be missing in traditional African life. They stood tall.

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As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God

Matthew Parris

(Continued from page 1)

At 24, travelling by land across the continent reinforced this impression. From Algiers, four student friends and I drove our old Land Rover to Nairobi.

We slept under the stars, so it was important as we reached the more populated and lawless parts of the sub-Sahara that every day we find somewhere safe by nightfall. Often near a mission.

Whenever we entered a territory worked by missionaries, we had to acknowledge that something changed in the faces of the people we passed and spoke to: something in their eyes, the way they approached you direct, man-to-man, without looking down or away. They had not become more deferential towards strangers - in some ways less so - but more open.

This time in Malawi it was the same. I met no missionaries. You do not encounter missionaries in the lobbies of expensive hotels discussing development strategy documents, as you do with the big NGOs. But instead I noticed that a handful of the most impressive African members of the Pump Aid team (largely from Zimbabwe) were, privately, strong Christians. "Privately" because the charity is entirely secular and I never heard any of its team so much as mention religion while working in the villages. But I picked up the Christian references in our conversations. One, I saw, was studying a devotional textbook in the car. One, on Sunday, went off to church at dawn for a two-hour service.

It would suit me to believe that their honesty, diligence and optimism in their work was unconnected with personal faith. Their work was secular, but surely affected by what they were. What they were was, in turn, influenced by a conception of man's place in the Universe that Christianity had taught.

There's long been a fashion among Western academic sociologists for placing tribal value systems within a ring fence, beyond critiques founded in our own culture: "theirs" and therefore best for "them"; authentic and of intrinsically equal worth to ours.

I don't follow this. I observe that tribal belief is no more peaceable than ours; and that it suppresses individuality. People think collectively; in terms of the community, extended family and tribe. Every man has his place and, call it fear or respect, a great weight grinds down the individual spirit, stunting curiosity. People won't take the initiative, won't take things into their own hands or on their own shoulders.

How can I, as someone with a foot in both camps, explain? Let me try an example: the answer given by Sir Edmund Hillary to the question: Why climb the mountain? "Because it's there," he said. To the rural African mind, this is an explanation of why one would not climb the mountain. It's... well, there. Just there. Why interfere? Nothing to be done about it, or with it. Hillary's further explanation - that nobody else had climbed it - would stand as a second reason for passivity.

Christianity, with its teaching of a direct, personal, two-way link between the individual and God, unmediated by the collective, and unsubordinate to any other human being, smashes straight through the philosophical/spiritual framework I've just described. It offers something to hold on to to those anxious to cast off a crushing tribal group-think. That is why and how it liberates.

Those who want Africa to walk tall amid 21st-century global competition must not kid themselves that providing the material means or even the know-how that accompanies what we call development will make the change. A whole belief system must first be supplanted.

And I'm afraid it has to be supplanted by another. Removing Christian evangelism from the African equation may leave the continent at the mercy of a malign fusion of Nike, the witch doctor, the mobile phone and the machete.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's 2008 Christmas Message to the Anglican Communion

As Mark was extremely busy in the period running up to Christmas, we gave him a break for this edition. Instead, let's hear the Christmas message from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Revd and Rt Hon Rowan Williams. Although written for an Anglican audience, it is relevant to all Christian denominations.

Human beings, left to themselves, have imagined God in all sorts of shapes; but – although there were one or two instances, in Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt, of gods being pictured as boys – it took Christianity to introduce the world to the idea of God in the form of a baby: in the form of complete dependence and fragility, without power or control. If you stop to think about it, it is still shocking. And it is also deeply challenging.

God chose to show himself to us in a complete human life, telling us that every stage in human existence, from conception to maturity and even death, was in principle capable of telling us something about God. Although what we learn from Jesus Christ and what his life makes possible is unique, that life still means that we look differently at every other life. There is something in us that is capable of communicating what God has to say – the image of God in each of us, which is expressed in its perfection only in Jesus.

Hence the reverence which as Christians we ought to show to human beings in every condition, at every stage of existence. This is why we cannot regard unborn children as less than members of the human family, why those with disabilities or deprivations have no less claim upon us than anyone else, why we try to make loving sense of human life even when it is near its end and we can hardly see any signs left of freedom or thought.

And hence the concern we need to have about the welfare of children. As we look around the world, there is plenty to prompt us to far more anger and protest about what happens to children than we often seem to feel or express. In the UK this year there have been several public debates about childhood, as research has underlined the lack of emotional security felt by many children here, the high cost of divorce and family breakdown, the disproportionate effect of poverty and debt on children, and many other problems. We look forward to the publication here in the New Year of a nationwide survey about what people think is a 'good childhood' – sponsored by the Children's Society.

Elsewhere we see far more horrendous sights – child soldiers still deployed in parts of Africa and in Sri Lanka, the burden laid on children in places where HIV and AIDS have wiped out a whole generation, leaving only the old and the young, the fate of children in areas of conflict like Congo and the Middle East and the insensitive treatment that is so often given to child refugees and asylum seekers in more prosperous countries.

'Though an infant now we view him, He shall fill his Father's throne' says the Christmas hymn. If it is true that the child of Bethlehem is the same one who will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, how shall we stand before him if we have allowed his image in the children of the world to be abused and defaced?

Recently I accompanied a number of students and British faith leaders on a pilgrimage to the extermination camps at Auschwitz, where some of the most unforgettably horrifying images have to do with the wholesale slaughter of Jewish children – their toys and clothes still on display, looted by their killers from their dead bodies.

Christmas is a good time to think again about our attitudes to children and about what happens to children in our societies. Christians who recognise the infinite and all-powerful God in the vulnerability of a newborn baby have every reason to ask hard questions about the ways in which children come to be despised, exploited, even feared in our world. We all suspect that in a time of economic crisis worldwide, it will be the most vulnerable who are left to carry most of the human cost.

The Holy Child of Bethlehem demands of us that we resist this with all our strength, for the sake of the one who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor, became helpless with the helpless so that he might exalt us all through his mercy and abundant grace.

With every blessing and best wish for the New Year.

Can sending a cow feed a country?

Did any of you, like me, give charity gifts as Christmas presents to family and friends? Have you ever wondered what effect this actually has? Journalist Paul Heiney travelled to Uganda to see for himself what Tutti the cow and her descendants have achieved.

Edited from www.timesonline.co.uk, first published in The Times 10 September 2008

Four thousand miles is a long way to travel to set eyes on a mere cow, but this was one animal I had to see. I wanted to know if a fanciful scheme of 20 years ago had actually worked. It was dreamt up by a group of British farmers who believed that they could relieve poverty in Central Africa by a simple act of kindness. Was it too simple? Had it done good? Only this week, Professor Sir David King, the president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, has condemned such untechnological schemes as “keeping Africa poor”. Has he got a point?

For this important rendezvous, we drove 35 miles southeast from Kampala, the Ugandan capital. We travelled to a huddle of mud huts in a place called Ngungulo and stopped at a small house set amid vanilla and coffee trees. And there she was: the black and white cow I had come to see. She was bright of eye, glossy of coat, and smelling of milk, as a healthy cow should be. I bent down to look her in the eye and whispered, “Tutti's granddaughter, I presume?”

Tutti the black and white cow came into my life back in the mid-Nineties, when I was writing in *The Times* about my quixotic Suffolk farm with its truculent livestock and often exasperated owner. A charity called Send a Cow came to my attention. They'd had the original (or possibly foolhardy) idea of sending pregnant cows, of which Britain had too many, to the poorest people in a bankrupt and demoralised Uganda who were in desperate need of them. It was more than just milk machines they thought they were exporting: they believed they were spreading wealth and hope.

It worked like this. Ownership of a milking cow, for a poor Ugandan farmer for whom a wheelbarrow was beyond dreams, brought immediate benefits. The family added to their poor diet by drinking the milk, obviously, but surplus milk could be sold and income created. Feed for the cow had to be grown, which might need extra labour, but that too could be paid for out of the milk money. The animal had suddenly

turned into a real cash cow. Add to that the increased soil fertility after liberal doses of cow manure, resulting in better crops, and you start to understand why this charity thought it could make a real and lasting difference to the poorest in Africa.

Each cow came with a promise: the first-born calf would be given free, as a gift, to another needy family. Like magic, the investment would double, and go on increasing, calf after calf. As I wrote all this in the paper the enthusiasm spread, and in response we raised the money to send our own cow to Africa. She was called Tutti and she flew to Uganda in June 1994. From Gatwick, actually. Now, on the 20th anniversary of the founding of Send a Cow, it was time to revisit to see if what worked so beautifully on paper did just as well in the harsh economic environment of rural Africa.

The cow that stood before me now was not, of course, Tutti. Cows don't live that long. But Kadugalu (which means “black”) was the very latest of her direct descendants, and, to my relieved eyes, encouraging evidence that this had been no half-baked adventure. Tutti's calf, called Jacob, had been a bull, and so was destined to lead a vigorous love life, serving 236 cows in three years. Every one of those romances is recorded in a dusty exercise book in a precise hand and treasured by his proud keepers, the Luyombyas. He is fondly remembered.

And what have Tutti's bull calf and the current cow done for them? For a start, the mud and wattle hut in which they had lived their entire lives and raised seven children has been replaced by a brick-built house. “Look, we've got proper windows which close,” Mrs Luyombyas boasts, while Mr Luyombyas adds that by drinking the milk “we are much healthier. And we have been able to buy beds!” Now, above the clatter of the banana trees, you can also hear the rattle of a precious, elderly Singer sewing machine, a huge investment by their standards and bought with milk money. They use it to make school uniforms.

Ten other farmers now join in with enthusiastic talk of cows. But it is not until the mention of the word "manure" that their eyes really light up. "With the manure," one of them explains, "I grow twice as many bananas. Big bananas." They revere the dung as much as the cows. "I can even grow carrots," he adds with great pride. The farmers now understand the secret that has long eluded them: where there's muck, there's money.

If you ask to meet a farmer who has been given a cow, you will always be introduced to a woman. "We only work with women's groups," Send a Cow says. "We find that if the profit from the milk goes to the woman, it will end up back with the family."

Ask the farmers what they will spend the money on and the answer is always the same - education. One girl who now holds a degree in education tried to explain to me what her life would have been like if her family had never been given a cow, but got no further than the first few words before she broke down, distraught at the thought. She is one of seven children. Her brother has just received a degree in civil engineering. The cow paid for that, too.

It is at this point in the story that your responsible reporter should break off to spell out the downside. But I can't find one. Others have tried. Those few in Uganda who accuse aid work of being a new form of Western imperialism made quick efforts to deliberately confuse BSE (mad cow disease) with Aids in the minds of a fearful rural population, and the import of live cows was banned. By good fortune, sufficient bulls and cows were already in place for breeding to continue unaffected. As to the accusation of imperialism, Send a Cow says, "We help the people of Uganda to get what they want, we don't dictate." It's hardly subversive.

Slowly but surely, the milky trail of kindness that began 20 years ago is spreading across Central Africa. In Rwanda, it is a condition that a calf born to a Hutu must be given to a Tutsi - a small bit of sticking plaster on a terrible wound.

The story of Send a Cow is one of farming and feeding, but beyond that of hope and choice, and of building communities where before there were none. It is yielding results that could never have been predicted. A man confessed to me, "I am ashamed to say it, but we used to beat our wives. But since they

have learnt to become farmers and done so well for our families, we respect them greatly. There is no trouble in my house now."

It is cows that have achieved this, with the help of a handful of British farmers who have inspired thousands of African women. Those founding farmers knew instinctively that rolling up their sleeves and getting on with it will always bring swift results in any part of the world.



Send a Cow was founded in 1987 after an appeal for aid by the Archbishop of Uganda. The first shipment of 26 pregnant cows landed at a battle-scarred Entebbe airport, where burning oil drums served as landing lights.

Send a Cow has to date sent 300 live cows to Africa but, since the ban on livestock imports, has relied on breeding programmes within the nine Central African countries in which it operates, also using artificial insemination. There is now no need for live animal exports.

Thirteen thousand households have benefited directly, another 100,000 indirectly. Their current focus is on small-scale, animal-centred, sustainable, organic food production using goats and chickens, as well as cows.

The population of Uganda has doubled to 30 million in the time they have been operating in a predominately rural country where 70 per cent of all farm produce is still carried on the heads of women.

Each family has an average of seven children, not including adopted orphans.

Life expectancy is 47 years. Funerals are so frequent that the Government is considering restrictions which would confine them to Saturday afternoons to prevent the loss of working hours.

The recipient of Tutti, Betty Kiwanuka, is now on her third cow. She has called it Kirabo: Gift of God.

Sunday Club and Sunday Special

Our Love-in-a-Box project reached a final total of 183 shoe boxes which we sent to Mustard Seed Relief Mission accompanied by a cheque for just over £300. Many thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to this excellent effort. This year we were delighted that the Courier newspaper published an article about our shoe box project and, in a later issue, a picture of some of our children with the boxes. An enlarged version of their picture is now in the frame on top of the cupboard in the Coffee Lounge.



We enjoyed performing our short 'Nativity with a difference' at the Family Service on December 21st and many of us attended the other special Christmas activities.

YClub730

We had a busy end to 2008. Early November saw us taking YClub to LaserQuest. The kids ran around and got hot while the leaders had a chat over a cup of coffee! At the beginning of December we had a cinema trip to see Madagascar 2 followed by a trip to McDonalds. The year finished with the Christmas Party - amongst many things this involved flour, water, raw eggs and plenty of laughter.

As we move into 2009 we have another busy few months; we are planning the following events:

- 25th January 'Who done it' evening
- 8th February Pancakes
- 22nd February Games Tournament
- 8th March Bowling
- 22nd March Concert

Please check the church website for photos taken at some of these events.

Sean

TM

With increasing school work, revision and important exams approaching, TM evenings have been a little erratic, but in the coming months we will continue to meet whenever we are able to, taking into account studying commitments.

Please continue to pray for our older teenagers as they face a variety of stressful issues from completing course work and sitting exams to finding employment or going through the university application and interview process.

Sue Fletcher



In January we are planning a Sunday Club Open Day. This will be after the morning service on Sunday 25th January. We do hope that many of you will allow time to come and see something of the work that is done in our Sunday Club.

Sunday Special on January 4th was in 'holiday mode' and it was great to see so many children attending at the start of the new year.

February Sunday Special will be back to normal with breakfast from 9.00am.

Sue Mumford



Sunday Club and Sunday Special attendance prizes

2 November	Harriet	Starlet	30 stars
	Reuben	Sunday Special	5 stars
	Codie	Sunday Special	5 stars
9 November	Catharine	Sunday Special	15 stars
	Arthur	Candle	5 stars
	Milly	Starlet	5 stars
23 November	Jake	Starlet	5 stars
30 November	Elliott	Starlet	30 stars
7 December	Sam	Sunday Special	5 stars

Kids' Bits

Sudoku Challenge

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

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Maths homework (yes, really!)

Read 1 Kings chapter 7. Find the part where something is measured round and across. Write down that verse. What value of pi is being used?

Book Reviews



From Hannah, age 8¾:

Maximus Mouse (Brian Ogden)

I think it's a really good book because it's got prayers at the end which makes it more interesting. This book is the right stage for me and it's good for ages like this.

From Thea, age 6¾:

The Good Friend (Jackie Tulip)

Thea enjoyed this book as it had stories, colouring and stickers. Next time I think she'd enjoy a more advanced reading book as her reading has really excelled. Many thanks - another good choice and greatly appreciated.

Are Nursery Rhymes going out of fashion?

How many of these titles can you work out from their initials? I've done the first one to start you off!

J & J	Jack & Jill
SASOS	
HD	
LTT	
DDB	
TTTSP	
TBM	
TWACM	
PCPCWHYB	
LBP	
RADD	
OKC	
LBB	
RACH	
LJH	
WWW	
TWAOWWLIAS	
LMM	
TLPWTM	
BBBS	
LPF	
TQOH	
OMH	
HDD	
PPTKO	
JSCENF	
RAROR	
HDDTCATF	
RRRYB	
RABB	
PGTW	

(Answers on page 9)

Finance report - December 2008

By the time you read this, work will be underway to prepare the final accounts to December 2008 for presentation to the Church AGM in February 2009.

The budget for 2009 has been agreed. To be able to meet all projected expenditure it is hoped that direct givings will increase by at least 5%, that is 5p for every £1 given. Please consider whether you are able to do this.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generous contributions during 2008 and wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

The Lord bless.

Christine

A display of faith

Ichthys (in Greek, ΙΧΘΥΣ) is the ancient and classical Greek word for 'fish'. In English it refers to a symbol said to have been used by early Christians as a secret symbol and now known colloquially as the 'sign of the fish' or the 'Jesus fish'.



Many people like to display a symbol of their Christian faith in their day-to-day lives. Various forms of this are available from Christian bookshops, however we now have some small pin badges available at Union Church.

Please speak to Christine Thomas if you would like one; she can also obtain car stickers if you would like one of those.

Flower Rota



January 4th	Mrs M Dodd
January 11th	Mrs N Fletcher
January 18th	Mrs H Stevens
January 25th	Sunday Club
February 1st	Mrs N Saunders
February 8th	Mrs B Pitches
February 15th	Mrs A Miller
February 22nd	Mrs P Middleton
March 1st	Mrs T Rutherford

News in brief

Union Book Group

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 10th March when we will be meeting for a meal and discussion in Uckfield (location to be confirmed). Telephone Julie Baxter on 868799 for more information or for current and planned book titles.



A message from the Editor

As you will have noticed, this edition is late and covers January, February and March. As I have struggled over the past two years to produce an edition during December for January and February, we have taken the opportunity to alter publication dates by one month to make future editions easier to produce. The next edition will cover April and May; submissions by Sunday 22nd March please.



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



Church Family Chinese Lunch



The Wok Inn
near Halland
(on the B2192)



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Sunday 8 February
after the morning service

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Buffet lunch (three courses)

- Eat as much as you like for:

Adults and Children over 10	£8.95
Children 5 to 10	£4.95
Children under 5	Free

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Please give your name to
Marilyn Dodd by
Sunday 25 January
to book your place

Nursery Rhyme quiz answers

- Jack & Jill
- Sing A Song Of Sixpence
- Humpty Dumpty
- Little Tommy Tucker
- Ding Dong Bell
- Tom Tom The Piper's Son
- Three Blind Mice
- There Was A Crooked Man
- Pussy Cat Pussy Cat Where Have You Been?
- Little Bo Peep
- Rub A Dub Dub
- Old King Cole
- Little Boy Blue
- Ride A Cock Horse
- Little Jack Horner
- Wee Willie Winkie
- There Was An Old Woman Who Lived In A Shoe
- Little Miss Muffet
- This Little Piggy Went To Market
- Baa Baa Black Sheep
- Little Polly Flinders
- The Queen Of Hearts
- Old Mother Hubbard
- Hickory Dickory Dock
- Polly Put The Kettle On
- Jack Sprat Could Eat No Fat
- Ring A Ring Of Roses
- Hey Diddle Diddle The Cat And The Fiddle
- Row Row Row Your Boat
- Rock A Bye Baby
- Pop Goes The Weasel

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."



Alpha Courses running at Union Church

What is Alpha?

Alpha is a course that gives anyone an opportunity to explore the Christian faith in a way that is relaxed, non-threatening, low key, friendly and fun.

What's involved?

Listening to a series of short talks on such topics as 'Who is Jesus?' 'Why and how to pray?' 'How does God guide?' followed by a time in a small group to talk about what you have heard.

What will it cost?

Nothing, although you may make a donation if you wish.

Who is it for?

Everyone wanting to investigate Christianity. That includes newcomers and those who want to brush up on the basics - in fact anyone and everyone.

When is it happening?

There are three courses at Union Church.

- The main one is on Monday afternoons at 2.00pm for 2.15pm. Following a taster session on 19 January, the course proper will begin on 26 January.
- Another course is being run on Monday evenings, for those who are unavailable for the daytime course.
- A Youth Alpha course is being led by Mark on Sunday evenings (alternate weekends to YClub) for teenagers.

How can I take part?

It would be really helpful if you can let us know if you are coming by signing up on one of the invitations in the Church and putting it in the offertory, or by telling one of the Ministers. If you don't manage to let us know in advance, just turn up.

Who can answer my questions about Alpha and provide further information?

Mark Welch - 01435 868160

John Glover - 01323 764329

Outreach to the Homeless - Penge

The following letter of thanks has been received from Katherine Bance, co-ordinator of Outreach to the Homeless, following your donations last year.

We sincerely thank the congregation at Heathfield for the very generous donation of clothing and toiletries for the homeless. We were very short of jumpers and your donation helped us to make up 100 holdalls full of nearly new clothing as well as toiletries and a small gift. The ladies clothing was in exceptionally good condition and will be kept for the warmer weather.

All the other items were distributed on Saturday 13th December and we served 83 people with a hot Christmas meal including a dessert of Christmas pudding, a mince pie and a piece of Stollen cake for their tea.

We gave out 83 holdalls filled with new or nearly

new clothing, underwear, and new jeans which we had been storing up for the Christmas run. All this made the December trip a little more special. We also gave out 83 gifts and Christmas cards, all of which had been donated during the year.

Several of our regular customers were in hospital so we will take up a few holdalls in January to make sure they do not miss out on the newer clothing items. We can assure you that all those we served were very appreciative of the gifts and support they continue to receive from our team and the groups and organisations that support this work so thank you so much for thinking of them at this time of the year.

Union Church regular events

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

Book Review - John Glover

What's so Amazing about Grace

Author: Philip Yancey

Publisher: Zondervan

This book is fast becoming a Christian classic. Yancey helps us to explore something that many of us talk about but few understand. In simple everyday terms the author unpacks this central theme of the Gospel. It is profusely illustrated with stories of grace at work and challenges readers to discover more of God's goodness for themselves.



Out of sight but not out of mind

When a category three cyclone hit Burma's delta region in May 2008, it devastated the country.

With the help of Bible Society supporters, practical aid, Scripture portions and Bibles have been distributed to people in more than 50 villages and 15 towns worst hit by the storm.

Although this is no longer in the news, please continue to pray for communities struggling to cope with the grief of losing everything.



Church diary

January	Saturday 24	8.00am	CTH Prayer Breakfast
	Sunday 25	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch Followed by Sunday Club Open Day in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Holy communion
	Tuesday 27	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
February	Sunday 1	9.00am	Sunday Special
		10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch
		6.30pm	Window on the World
	Tuesday 3	7.30pm	Deacons' Meeting
	Friday 6	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship
	Sunday 8	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch (Holy communion)
		6.30pm	Nooma Series
	Tuesday 10	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
	Sunday 15	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch
		6.30pm	Holy communion
Tuesday 17	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting	
Sunday 22	10.30am	Rev. John Glover	
	6.30pm	Rev. John Glover	
Tuesday 24	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club	
	7.30pm	Church AGM and Members' Meeting	
March Mission Sunday	Sunday 1	9.00am	Sunday Special
		10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch
		6.30pm	Lenten Bible Study
	Tuesday 3	7.30pm	Deacons' Meeting
	Friday 6	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship
	Sunday 8	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch (Holy communion)
		6.30pm	Lenten Bible Study
	Tuesday 10	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club
	Sunday 15	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch
		6.30pm	Lenten Bible Study
Tuesday 17	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting	
Sunday 22	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch	
	4.00pm	Senior Friends' Tea and Service - Rev. John Glover	
	6.30pm	Lenten Bible Study	
Tuesday 24	12 noon	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club	
Sunday 29	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch	
	6.30pm	Lenten Bible Study	
April Palm Sunday	Friday 3	2.30pm	Women's Fellowship
	Sunday 5	9.00am	Sunday Special
	10.30am	Rev. Mark Welch	
	6.30pm	Lenten Bible Study	

Union Church, Heathfield

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Items included subject to suitability and space.