

## Prayer points

- That our faith may help us love our fellow humans
- The vacancy process
- Our ministers
- Our continuing youth work

## Contact information

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**For items for the next edition of Partnership news please send them to the office or to Dick Gray no later than 21<sup>st</sup> May.**

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## June

Flowery banks,  
A-drone with bees,  
Dreaming cattle  
Under trees:  
Song-bird pipe  
A merry tune –  
This is summer,  
This is June.

*From a poem by Irene F Pawsey*



# In Partnership June 2010



Dear Friends

As June begins we pray for our young people and others who face exams at school, college and university. The pressures of course work and exams seem to increase more and more, especially as they are taking so many more subjects than many of us did. Pray too for Claire and the youth activities, including Remix, as they work with the youngsters while they have heightened stress levels, and with the loss of Ivyna, who returns to Brazil at the end of May

I never liked exams. I preferred to be able to work things out from first principles rather than having to remember loads of data. But neither method of learning gets us very far when it comes to the Gospel. We can know all the facts, but still not have a relationship with the Lord Jesus. That only comes as we entrust our lives to him. And as for working it out from first principles... What Christ did for us at Calvary is just beyond anything we could have even begun to work out logically. It is a huge gift and one which we do well to go on actively exploring. It's as if when we become Christians we get given a huge treasure box, with lots of hidden compartments, which get revealed to us bit by bit as we continue our journey. Our salvation through Jesus is 'Once for all' – once, for all people; but also 'once and for all' for each of us. But how we live in the light of that salvation and all the inheritance that is given to us through Christ is something that we go on discovering and is in fact something that needs 'working out' as we continue in the faith. Paul encourages us to 'Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.' (Phil 2:12-13)

'Working it out' can mean learning more in an academic sense, or putting it into practise with active service, or meeting with others to encourage each other in our faith.

bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

In life, we're all cracked pots. But our weaknesses need not destroy our lives. God only ever has imperfect people to use. Despite our flaws, God can still bless us and make us fruitful for him.

### **Holidays coming....**

My grandchildren believe I'm the oldest thing in the world. And after two or three hours with them, I believe it, too.

### **Now you know**

A Sunday School teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem. A small child replied: *"They couldn't get a baby sitter."*

you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Thomas needed physical recognition before he could say "My Lord and My God." Today, if you want to believe, but honestly struggle with doubt, consider using this simple prayer:

"Lord Jesus, I have never seen you in person. So I sometimes doubt that you exist. The Bible tells us that it is only the Holy Spirit who can open our 'spiritual eyes', and so I ask you to do that for me. Please give me not physical recognition, but faith recognition. I will do my bit, and read about you each day in the Bible. Through your Word, please open my spiritual eyes so that I can see you clearly as Jesus, the risen Son of God."

### **Are you a crack-pot?**

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole, which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water to the house. The cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishment, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of spilling water, it spoke to the water

From time to time we need to take action in a new way to stretch our faith and discover aspects we never knew or understood. Perhaps this summer would be a good time to read a book, or investigate joining a group or a course in the Autumn, or even to investigate specific training for lay or ordained ministry. In it all let us remember that it is God who works in us – individually and corporately – to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.

May God bless you richly with his treasures this Summer  
Anne

### **St. Mary's Church Flower Festival Friday June 25<sup>th</sup> - Sunday June 27<sup>th</sup> 2010**

This year the theme is "Songs of Praise"

Church Opening Times for Flower Festival:

Friday	25th June	10am - 6pm.
Saturday	26th June	10am - 6pm
Sunday	27th June	12md - 6pm

Admission: Adults £2.00

Children under 16 Free.

Refreshments available during opening times.

### **St Mary's Church Summer Fayre Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June 1.30pm - 3.45pm**

There will be a good variety of Stalls, Raffle, and BBQ etc.

Refreshments available

Free admission and car parking to Summer Fayre.

A warm welcome is offered to all visitors to both these events.

It would also be very helpful if there were any spare hands in the Partnership to help with the erection and taking down of the gazebos.

Friday	8am. to erect	dismantle 6pm
Saturday	8am to erect	dismantle at 6pm
Sunday	8am to erect	dismantle at 6pm.

## Regular activities

**Every Thursday**

**10-11:30am @ Toothill  
(See below)**

**Toothill Tinies**

**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month  
8:00am @ Toothill**

**5<sup>th</sup> June  
Men's' breakfast**

**Every Monday**

**9:30am-1:30pm @Toothill**

**Community Cafe**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday each month  
4-5:30pm @ Shaw**

**13<sup>th</sup> June  
Messy Church**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month  
Noon @ Toothill**

**8<sup>th</sup> June  
The lunch bunch**

Friendship, fellowship and a good lunch

**Usually 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday BUT  
3:00pm @ Toothill**

**13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> June  
AS People's Puppets**

The All Saints Peoples Puppets have their next practice sessions on Sundays 13th and 27th June and 25th July.

All at 3.00pm until 4.00pm at Toothill Church; Come early for refreshments.

The Group is open to all children (8+) and adults prepared to obtain a CRB check.

### Sermons

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible.

## Do you struggle with doubt?

Do you ever look at other Christians and wonder: "Do they REALLY believe this stuff? That Jesus really was the Son of God who rose again, and is alive today?"

Doubt is an honest place to be, and is not the opposite of Christian faith. To believe is to be in one mind. To disbelieve is to be in one mind also. To doubt is to waver between the two minds, to be in a state of "double-ness," or "two-ness." To doubt something is to be willing to believe it – IF you can find evidence to back up the story.

If you are in this state of 'double-ness' just now, you may find the story of the disciple Thomas (John 20:24-29) to be helpful. Unlike the other disciples, he was not present on that first Easter night when Jesus appeared to the other disciples. Instead, Thomas was told that someone whom he'd seen crucified and dead was alive again three days later, in perfect health.

Thomas had been devoted to Jesus, but the fact that dead people don't rise again was just too much for him. So despite the joy of the other disciples, he could get only as far as: "unless I see the nail marks... I will not believe it."

It was a week later that Jesus appeared again to his disciples and confronted Thomas. He said simply: "Put your finger here; see my hands... Stop doubting and believe."

Jesus then looked forward to all the millions of people in the future who would never meet him in person, and so would have understandable grounds to doubt. "Because

moment of prayer if we slow ourselves down and allow our thoughts to turn towards God.

An essential part of resting is to breathe slowly. Christian tradition has always made a connection between prayer and breathing. You can learn to pray to the rhythm of your breathing, using chosen prayer words to focus. As you breathe in, you might say 'Abba', and then as you breathe out, add the word 'Father'. Choose words which are meaningful to you, deliberately slowing your breathing so you become relaxed and peaceful.

Perhaps you have a favourite chair where you are able to unwind easily. For a few moments sit and do nothing. Simply become aware of the present moment, reminding yourself you are in the presence of God. As you feel yourself relax, bask in the knowledge of God's love and acceptance of you. Sense his smile of approval upon you. You don't have to do anything, just 'be' for a moment. This too is prayer.

Sometimes we are forced to rest by circumstances... illness, disability, growing older and so on slow us down and we can't rush around like we used to do. Never mind. Don't fight against your circumstances. Enter in to the place of rest that God is giving you. He loves you for who you are, not for what you do. Turn your thoughts into prayer and offer them to God. You don't need to advise God as to what He should do; simply hold people before Him, leaving the outcome to Him.

Prayer should be a natural expression of our relationship with God. Sometimes we have words, sometimes silence is enough. We don't need to impress God with our fervour. We can relax and be rested, even as we pray.

## EMERGE

We have taken a huge step of faith in transferring Claire Camm from ncounter to the Partnership to be our Youth Work Manager. She starts work with the Partnership in June continuing the very good work that has seen Emerge move from an idea to a reality that is really engaging with young people. She will work 10 hours each week.

She will lead activities that include:

- **Remix**
- **After school clubs**
- **TGIF**

Which together probably engage with and minister to more than 50 young people most of whom have no church links.

We are also working with CareForce to recruit a young volunteer (probably Doreen from Uganda assuming she can get a visa) to work both alongside Claire in the Emerge project and in other activities related to the churches. Doreen will also be involved with:

- School clubs at Bradon Forest and Greendown

And she will also have time to be involved in church projects throughout the partnership.

These activities are about 80% funded by grants and committed giving. However we do need to close the gap and offers of financial support would be very welcome. We shall also need to provide Doreen with accommodation, and we propose that will be for 3 months initially extensible by mutual agreement. If you are able to put up Doreen, please let me know.

ReMix also needs additional volunteers on Tuesday evenings at 7pm. Please talk to Claire if you are interested.

This is a really exciting development, and I hope that you will rejoice with us at what we are able to do among the young people of Swindon. Who knows you may see some in church.

Dick Gray

### **Summer outing**

A lorry driver had to deliver 500 penguins to the regional zoo. On his way, he broke down, and was desperate to get rid of the birds. So he waved down another lorry, and offered the driver £500 to take the penguins on to the zoo. The second driver agreed.

The next day the original lorry drove into a nearby town and to his horror saw the second lorry driver crossing the road with 500 penguins walking in single file behind him. He leapt out of his lorry and demanded: "What's going on? I gave you £500 to take these penguins to the zoo!"

"I did take them to the zoo. And I had enough money left over so that now we're going to the cinema."

### **Which way?**

Middle age is when you find yourself in the middle of the staircase, and you can't remember if you were downstairs going up or upstairs going down.

### **Churches celebrate victory over 'the vultures'**

Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed Church leaders are celebrating after the Debt Relief (Developing Countries) Act was passed in the final hours of the last Parliament sitting.

'Vulture funds' allow private companies to purchase debt from creditor companies and countries for knock-down prices. As the debtor countries have long defaulted on these loans, the companies then use UK and international courts to sue for the full debt, plus costs and interest, which means substantial profit for the company.

The Rev Jonathan Edwards, President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, said: "So many Christians and people of goodwill worked hard through Jubilee 2000 and MakePovertyHistory to ensure that politicians took action on debt relief. But this action was undermined by the action of vulture funds in our own courts. This act will bring an end to vulture culture and stands as testament to our belief that no one deserves to live in absolute poverty."

### **Using Rest to Pray**

Most of us think of prayer as a very demanding activity, but did you know it can be extremely restful?

One of the great verses in the Bible says this: 'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10). It suggests we experience God most fully when we are still. When we cease rushing around, pausing for a moment of thought and recollection, we are becoming prayerful and God is very near. Even a break for a morning coffee can be a

## **Faith Aloud.**

On Saturday 13 February 2010, 6 young people and 3 members of the Junior Church team from St. Mary's Church, Lydiard Tregoze joined a crowd of other leaders and young people from across Swindon to attend this fantastic event led by the inspiring Jamie Hill, accompanied by musicians and helpers.

Here are just a few comments from the feedback of our Junior Church members, who are eagerly anticipating a further event, and who would encourage others to attend if the opportunity comes along.

**B** : " I really enjoyed Faith Aloud, and I learnt that God is 100% here, then and in the future". It helped me to unlock the secrets and meanings in the bible".

**M** : " The evening prayer was a place that I learned about God's news more and helped me answer my questions about the Lord".

**H** : " I felt closer to God and able to be honest with him this was something I was unable to do in the past". "I felt this was a turning point in my life because I discovered who I really was".

**C** : "I liked the songs, activities and the pizza. I learnt that most of Jesus life was predicted".

**Br**: "Good stuff".

This type of event is geared to young people and fires their minds to think about themselves and others and to have confidence in their faith.

We look forward to Jamie Hill returning to inspire and challenge us again.

We must lay it down as an elemental principle of religion that no large growth in holiness was ever gained by one who did not take time to be often alone with God.

Austin Phelps

## **MIX FESTIVAL REPORT 2010**

### ***Some comments from young people who were there ...***

- We loved the drumming – the man was so good at getting everyone involved!
- The bungee run and the sumo suits were really good fun ...must have them next year!
- The youth-run Beauty Parlour was fab and we had 70 customers to have hair plaits and nails painted! ....
- Messy Space looked great for little kids and some of us loved helping in there!
- We loved the live bands in the evening
- It was great having special laminated name-badges (for helpers) – it made us feel important ...
- We liked having a Volunteer Lounge this year to chill out
- It was great helping to run the event
- The field looked really great with so many different things to do
- The puppet show with Crowdy's school went really well (some of Remix were also involved)
- We enjoyed learning the dances with Ivyna and performing them in the evening

### **From the Organiser's viewpoint**

#### **The aims of the festival were:**

- Churches to outreach in friendship and service to the community
- Community groups to get involved
- Give opportunities for all ages to meet and learn new skills
- Provide showcase for young peoples' talents
- Develop partnership within WSEP

The festival ran very smoothly, with weather on our side too! There was a real community feel to the event and many people stayed all day. Set-up **and** rehearsals in the morning (which could have been challenging) went very well with all

young people and adults working together brilliantly. We had 33 young people helping on the day and 35 adults (plus the contributors) drawn from all five churches in our partnership.

All the workshops (craft, art, singing, dance, basket ball, football, drumming, circus) were well attended and enjoyed by all ages, the exception being 'Body Balance', new this year, which only attracted 2 attendees - perhaps it needed more explanation in the programme. The volunteers for the stalls and other attractions (Messy Space, youth stalls & games, Tranquility Tent, café) all worked hard to create imaginative and welcoming areas where there was good engagement with members of the public.

The evening performances were enjoyed by all ages, with a festival round-up (Drumming, Circus, Tranquility Tent panel, Gospel singing); followed by youth performances of dance, singing and bands, involving 12 young people from Greendown and Bradon Forest schools. The finale to the day was provided by Mix Festival favourite "Dominic French" and ncounter band, "Hero Next door". It would be true to say that only the young people lasted the evening out for these last two acts and there was a real party atmosphere as the young people danced and enjoyed themselves in the church. It was a great end to a fantastic day as we gave thanks to God who had made it all possible.

Around 400 people of all ages were on the site (including inside) during the day and evening. It would be good to have more different community groups involved next year and members of the public helping to run the event. Please consider getting involved next year, it's a great way to "be Church" together as we outreach to the community.

Claire Camm

Quote from "Hero Next Door"

- *Hero Next Door really enjoyed taking part in the Mix – the singing workshop was loads of fun (attended by 20 people of all ages); the concert went great and there was good support from the young people – thanks to all who stayed! Looking forward to next year.*

## Beyond Fundraising - Bristol

### Generating income to become more sustainable

**Date:** Thursday 1st July 2010

**Time:** 9:45am-4pm (we start promptly at 10am)

**Venue:** Elim City Church Bristol, Jamaica Street, Stokes Croft, Bristol BS2 8JP

**Cost:** £10 (including lunch) – paid on the day

This is one day interactive seminar to enable churches and faith-based community groups to get greater understanding on how to become self-sustaining.

This day seminar provides an opportunity to consider:

- Legal Structures – looking at the pros and cons of different legal structures and issues around social enterprise and trading;
- Working with statutory organisations – looking at opportunities around commissioning and contracting and what to look out for before signing on the dotted line
- Making Assets Work for You – the pros and cons of managing buildings and trying to earn an income from them and how to legitimately minimise the tax bill and maximise benefit.

The seminar will incorporate interactive sessions to which delegates can bring their questions, case studies of those who have been there, done it, and have lived to tell the tale and written materials.

The day will be run by Anthony Collins Solicitors in collaboration with accountants Mazars. Both firms regularly advise churches working in their local communities. This is a partnership with ISR (Churches Council for Industry and Social Responsibility) and Church Urban Fund.

For more information or any problems, please contact Jon Doble, ISR on 0117 955 7430 or [jon@ccisr.org.uk](mailto:jon@ccisr.org.uk).

The next Healing service at Highworth Methodist church is on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.  
All are very welcome

**Roundabout Concert:**

**3rd July 2010, from 7.00pm at the Pilgrim Centre**

Please see poster at

[http://www.swindonchurches.ik.com/p\\_Events.ikml](http://www.swindonchurches.ik.com/p_Events.ikml) ..

Tickets are £5.00 each (includes refreshments), obtainable from the office weekdays 9am to 4.30pm, telephone 537642 or email [info@pilgrimcentre.co.uk](mailto:info@pilgrimcentre.co.uk). Money raised will go to the work of the Roundabout (including the Befrienders).

We have 5 local choirs coming along - Mothers Jam, Swindon Gospel Choir, Swindon Scratch Choir, Swindon Swahili Singers and Treble Makers, to entertain us for the evening. All we need now is an audience!

**ISR lecture and AGM**

**"Personal ethics and social responsibility"**

Wednesday 16th June 2010 at 6.30p.m.

Leigh Court Abbots Leigh, Bristol, BS8 3RA.

Simon Barrow is the Co-Director from Ekklesia, the Christian think tank, who is an engaging and challenging commentator on the relevance of a faith perspective to contemporary issues and Sally Muggerridge who is the Chief Executive of the Industry & Parliament Trust.

The noblest revenge is to forgive. Thomas Fuller

We trust not because 'a god' exists, but because THIS God exists. C S Lewis



We are a new group who aim to provide a relaxed, friendly environment where you and your child can enjoy some fun times and meet new friends.

Toothill Tinies is led by a trio of volunteers Titch, Wendy and Rachael. We are supported by Toothill Church.

**Time: Thursdays 10:00 to 11:30 –**

every week (including holidays)

**Age: 0 to 5 years**

**Cost:** £4 per month, £1 per month for each additional child over 6 months

**First week is free**

**STOP PRESS**

**Grateful thanks to the Baptist Union for £1200 grant for Toys, Tables etc.**

**Black death**

An elderly parish priest was tending his garden near a convent when a passerby stopped to inquire after the priest's much-loved roses. "Not bad," said the priest, "but they suffer from a disease peculiar to this area known as the black death."

"What on earth is that?" asked the passerby, anxious to increase his garden knowledge.

"Nuns with scissors."

## Church Services in the Partnership

### All Saints, Lydiard Millicent

Date	Time	Form
6 <sup>th</sup> June	8:00am	Communion
	10:30am	Morning service
13 <sup>th</sup> June	8:00am	Communion
	10:30am	Family communion
20 <sup>th</sup> June	8:00am	Communion
	10:30am	All age worship
27 <sup>th</sup> June	8:00am	Communion
	10:30am	Communion

Morning prayers each weekday (except Tuesday) @ 9:00am

### St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze

Date	Time	Form
6 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	All age worship
	6:30pm	Communion
13 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	Communion
20 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	Family Service
27 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	Communion

### Contentment

Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married, and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked!

Government expert: one who complicates simple things.

Prosperity: something private citizens create, for which politicians take credit.

## Church Services in the Partnership

### Holy Trinity Shaw

Date	Time	Form
6 <sup>th</sup> June	10:30am	Communion
13 <sup>th</sup> June	10:30am	Communion
20 <sup>th</sup> June	10:30am	Morning worship
27 <sup>th</sup> June	3pm	Special service

### Toothill

Date	Time	Form
6 <sup>th</sup> June	10:30am	Morning service
13 <sup>th</sup> June	10:30am	Communion
20 <sup>th</sup> June	10:30am	Family Service
27 <sup>th</sup> June	10:30am	Morning service

### Westlea

Date	Time	Form
6 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	Family service
13 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	Communion
20 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	Morning service
27 <sup>th</sup> June	10:00am	Swap service

### Home is...

Teacher: Sam, give me a definition of 'home'.

Sam: Home is where part of the family waits until the others are through with the car.