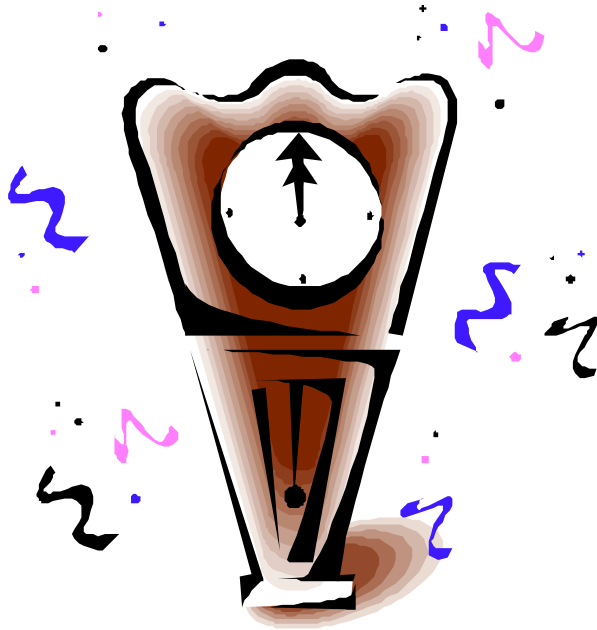


# The Outlook

January 2006



## Happy New Year

**Magazine of Hope Baptist Church**

*Our mission is to be Christ's body in the community,  
demonstrating the Kingdom of god and calling others to become  
his disciples.*

## Millions

One of the family films I most enjoyed last year was 'Millions' directed by Danny Boyle. It is beautifully filmed, well acted, very funny and tirelessly inventive. Almost every scene has something quirkily eccentric about it which made me want to watch it all again. The film also packs a thought provoking moral challenge.

Damien (9), Anthony (11) and their father have moved house close to a railway embankment. It is just two weeks before the final change from the pound to the Euro takes place and all currency must be changed or spent before it becomes worthless.

The two boys, whose mother recently died, stumble across £229,320 lost as the result of a daring bank robbery.

Damien, who is frequently visited by saints such as Francis of Assisi wants to use the money to help the poor. Anthony, a financial adviser in the making, wants to invest it or spend it. As the boys tussle over their use of the loot we are drawn into moral questions about how we use money, the difficulties of defining and dealing with poverty, the transforming effect of small donations to the third world and the consumer culture in which we live.

As we reflect on our hopes and dreams for 2006 its worth remembering that just as the boys pounds were going to be worthless after December 30<sup>th</sup> so when we die we can take none of our money or worldly goods with us to heaven. Given that, how do we want to invest our resources of time, energy and money now? I think most of us have a Damien and Anthony inside our heads (and probably a few others beside!). Is one of them right? Do we need to listen to both of them? What does Jesus say?

A happy and a challenging New Year to you!

*Andy*

## **Women's Rendezvous**

Women's Rendezvous were sad to learn of the death of Miss Mary White in November. Mary was secretary of WR for many years and only retired from the post when her health and sight began to fail. Mary worshipped with us at Hope but she was a Congregationalist at heart. Her late brother had been a minister in the Congregational church and Mary often accompanied him and his family when he preached in small village chapels in Cornwall.

Mary obtained a Bsc in Geography and taught in Tamerton Foliot Secondary Modern School and later at Public Secondary School for Girls. Merrilyn remembers being taught geography by Mary and there are probably others in the fellowship who were taught by her.

Always a very independent lady with strong convictions, Mary even described herself as "English Cornish" on the census forms as she was proud of her Cornish ancestry. Mary's hobbies included sports – mainly hockey and tennis, geology and motoring. At one time she owned a 1947 Bentley and took great delight in driving it around the countryside. She was a county class hockey player in her youth and was still playing in a team in her 70's much to the worry of her team mates who feared for her safety as the game can be quite rough at times.

Beryl Chun, Merrilyn Duook and I attended Mary's funeral at Lee Mill Congregational Chapel on behalf of Women's Rendezvous and were able to pay our respects to a remarkable lady. We extend our sympathy to Mary's niece Nicola and her sister-in-law Greta.

## **News from Olga**

I recently spoke to Olga on the telephone and she confirmed that the \$690 US which I send to her on behalf of the various people in the fellowship had arrived safely and that her parents had purchased a new cooker with the money. She said that her parents were delighted with the generous gift

and the new cooker will mean that the family will be able to enjoy a more varied diet from now on.

Nadia, Olga's mother, has been coping with just two rings on an old and broken cooker for several years. Cooking for at least eight people every meal must have presented Nadia with a big challenge. I hope that Olga will be able to try out some of the recipes that I showed her when she was here earlier this year.

Olga's youngest sister, another Nadia, and one of her brothers, Pavlik, have been touring the far east of Russia with an orchestra and choir. Pavlik is the musical director and pianist of the orchestra and Nadia in the soprano soloist with the choir. The choir and orchestra use their talents to reach out to the people who come to see and listen to them by giving their testimonies and preaching God's word. The musicians and singers trust entirely on the Lord to provide for their needs whilst they are on tour, staying with other believers and sharing food and any money that they receive. They believe that their reward is in seeing others come to know the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.

Please pray for Nadia, (she is just 16 years old and it is the first time she has been away from her family) that her health will improve and that she will not be homesick for her family and also for Pavlik for the Lord to give him strength and stamina for the gruelling task he has in leading the orchestra and travelling thousands of miles in difficult circumstances.

Ron and I are hoping that Olga and her mother will be able to come and stay with us next year, possibly in April. I have been corresponding with Nadia for 14 years and I am so looking forward to meeting her after all this time. Please pray that she and Olga will be granted the necessary visas to enable them to come to England for a holiday and that we will be able to get suitable flights for them to come from Kursk.

Olga will be writing to the fellowship at Hope to thank everyone for their generosity. As soon as her letter arrives I will circulate it and get it published in the Outlook.

**Jenny Weeks**

## What is Gods Name?

Following on from my thoughts about talking to others about God (September 2005 issue) these thoughts, which do not echo anyone else's opinion, that I know of in particular, concern how some people can get us tight regarding the name of God.

I have read that there are 23 names for God in the Old Testament, and 442 names for Jesus in the New Testament. These names are mostly descriptions rather than names, each relating to something about Him, who He was, what He does etc.

To myself, God is unique, there is no other, God is God, full stop, or period, as the Americans say.

John Calvin, when commenting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, used the term "Great Architect of the Universe", I have no problem there, and our Holy Bible does not give credence to anyone other than God for the creation.

The Jehovah's Witness sect, quoting the Lords Prayer state "Hallowed be thy name" (sanctify his name) and any other name from Jehovah is disrespectful. Jehovah was also quoted as Yahweh and Jahweh of course and other Old and New Testament names that spring to mind, are Adonai (master), El Shaddai (God Almighty), El meaning strength or Ruler, El Elohe Israel (God the God of Israel), El Eligon (The Most High), Father, I AM, and the Alpha and Omega.

Some women think that God should be referred to as "Mother" or Mother and Father", but our Lord Jesus Christ always referred to Father, and I would imagine that most Christian women have no problem there.

Some Christians do not like the fact that Freemasons refer to God by the John Calvin description, during their business meetings, in their capacity of being Freemasons. The reason for this being two fold, it is apt with respect to architecture being mentioned during the ritual ceremony and can be related to all present who may be of a different faith.

All members must declare a belief in God prior to joining, but theology is not referred to during the meeting, so every one is comfortable with each other.

As long as each of us is happy with our own thoughts about Gods name there should be no need to worry, false gods are only ones to have a specific name as a rule, the God of our Holy Bible is God – period.

## **Guinea Pigs Wanted!!!**

Help! ... I am currently taking a course in “Life Coaching” and have now reached the point where I need to practice what I am learning. I need to find six people who are willing to act as ‘guinea pigs’ and be coached by me.

I must emphasise that this is very much a training exercise for me. You need know nothing about life coaching (in fact it may be better if you don't!!). If anyone is willing to help then please contact me and I will provide you with more information to enable you to decide whether you can do this for me.

I can be contacted as follows: -

Home 313 953

Work 201 915

Email [paul.aldersley@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:paul.aldersley@blueyonder.co.uk)

Many thanks

**Paul Aldersley**

## Outreach Committee

Once again it is the turn of the Outreach Committee to write an article for magazine on how things are going for us...

In February we are planning our second Community Quiz night, following on from the success of last year's. If you are involved in a local business or community enterprise you may already know about it, otherwise please speak to either myself or Debbie Houston to book in a team

We have also been initiating the outreach to our local streets - 'Hope in Action' - by getting people to sign up to prayer walk a particular street in the area

Over the next year we will be encouraging those people to prayer walk the street regularly, either meeting with others or doing it individually. The volunteers will also be given the opportunity to be the ones who deliver any literature we have for distribution to their particular street e.g. Christmas and Easter publicity.

Later in the Spring we will be having our first Hope in Action week when we are hoping that we can show love for the community by providing a programme of works e.g. small decorating jobs, car washing, shopping etc for local residents. Please look out for the information on this and prayerfully consider how you can take part.

Those of you who were at the November church meeting will also know that we have now taken the Monday evening Soup Run as an official Hope organisation. Peter Brown is the co-ordinator and it falls under the umbrella of our committee, so we hope to work closely with Peter in this.

There is a lot for our committee to consider, with evangelism being a high priority at Hope, and we continue to ask for your prayers for guidance in all we are hoping to do.

Nicky Hatherell, Chair

## **Ready For A Challenge?**

When you look around you on a Sunday morning do you think “Lord, I really love these people and I am so pleased that I will be spending eternity with them”? I don’t.

Certain Christian friends (and other Christians that I don’t even know that well) are godly, Spirit-filled and prayerful people. When I look at them I can see Christ in them. How I love them and long to be like them.

Perhaps I’m asking too much, but I want more of these people in my Church. I want to see God at work in our fellowship, I want to see people growing spiritually, and when I look around on a Sunday morning, I want to see Jesus in the people around me.

I know that if this is how I feel, this is probably how you feel. I can’t make you more like Jesus, but I can seek to become more like Him myself. I want to be that godly, Spirit-filled and prayerful person who inspires others to seek God more.

How about you?

## **Let God Do Your Dishes!**

In April 2004 I got a sore throat. 2 days later I was in hospital on a drip because I had an abscess on my tonsil and couldn’t swallow. Over a year and a half later God has reminded me of something that happened and likened it to something that He wants to do in the lives of all Christians.

### **The Cosy Story – Great, but not the whole Story**

One Monday evening in April 2004 I had that scratchy feeling in the back of my throat. By Tuesday morning I had a sore throat. By Wednesday morning I was feeling quite ill and had a very sore throat! A friend from

day so I could rest. A great example of how the Christian family rally round in times of need.

### **The Bit That's Missing**

My friend has a very tidy house – immaculate in fact. My house is not tidy. Even when I tidy my house (never all at once) it has what I like to call the 'lived in' look!

I was feeling pretty rough, and although I had managed to feed my family, I hadn't the energy to even think about tidying up – my kitchen would not have looked any worse if the fridge had exploded!

Under normal circumstances, this friend would not be invited into my house unless I had at least hidden some of the clutter. You can imagine the horror I felt when she said that she would just go and do my dishes – there were a lot of dishes, I think probably every dish I've got.

I so wanted to say "it's all right I'll do them later" but I didn't have the strength to argue and by then I didn't even have a voice. I was deeply embarrassed, and would have given anything to keep her in the sitting room with a nice cup of tea!!! But when I saw my kitchen I was grateful that she was willing to come in and sort out my mess.

### **The God Bit**

It's wonderful and amazing how things that happened to us in the past can be used by God to teach us something today.

We have been looking at the Holy Spirit during November, how He convicts us of our sin, helps us to pray and equips and empowers us for Christian service. But I would like to share that it is also the Holy Spirit who comes in and helps us sort out those areas of our life that we like to try to keep hidden, from God, each other and even ourselves.

When we become Christians we invite God into our lives, but often only into the front room. We all have clutter and mess elsewhere that needs to be sorted out – past hurts, painful memories and wrong attitudes to name but a few.

The phrase “out of sight, out of mind” is misleading. You can stuff whatever you like into the coat cupboard and even forget exactly what’s in there, but you know full well that one day you will open the door and it will all fall on top of you!

God wants to help us sort through our mess; He wants you to have a tidy ‘house’. God doesn’t just want to sit in the living room; He wants to get stuck into your dishes too.

Lynda Henagulph

ps. God is continually challenging me over the housekeeping arrangements in my life, it is ongoing and always worth doing.

pps. My husband continues to challenge me over the housekeeping arrangements in our house – no comment!



**We would like to thank everyone who contributes regularly  
on a Sunday morning.**

**January 2006**

**Communion**

15 To be arranged

**Flowers**

01 Mrs Viola Woodward. In loving Birthday Remembrance of her husband.

08

15

22 Mrs Estelle Robertson. In loving memory of her father, Mr Jack Veal.

29 Ron and Jenny Weeks. To celebrate their Wedding Anniversary.

**Coffee**

01 Beryl Brown and Christina Carter

08 Sandra Brown and Julie Harrall

15 Marian Brown and Patrick Cann

22 Nick Beard and Richard Simpson

29 Kelly Hopwood and Pat Taylor



**Crèche**

01 Family Service – no crèche

08 Jackie May, Leontine Amissale, Claire Knight

15 Linda Snell, Sarah-Jane Scott, Kelly Hopwood

22 Sheena Kingdon, Merrilyn Duook, Karen Beard

29 Family Service – no crèche

**BMS Birthdays**

07 Mrs Claudia Robertson

09 Mrs Kathleen Pritchard

# South West Baptist Association

## Prayer Calendar: January 2006

Please use this calendar in your daily or weekly prayers, personally or in your fellowship, to strengthen the South West family of Baptist churches as one Body in Christ.

Two churches are “featured” each week, and have had the opportunity to submit a short paragraph.

The “in addition” churches are just for those who use the calendar in their daily prayers and would like to pray for more than two churches in a week. It also means that each church is mentioned twice a year, once as a “featured” church, and once “in addition”.

Let us praise God for all He is doing in the South West

South West Baptist Association  
Wonford Baptist Chapel  
36-38 Wonford Street  
EXETER  
EX2 5DL  
Tel: 01392 433533  
Email: [chris@swbaptists.org.uk](mailto:chris@swbaptists.org.uk)



**8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> January**

**WINCANTON Minister: Revd Crawford McIntyre**

*These past months have seen us having outreach events for the Polish community plus the start of craft and children's outreach events.*

*Please pray for us, to have continued vision and ideas, in this coming month and year.*

*Please also pray as we start on renovating and improving our buildings.  
Thank you.*

**ST BUDEAUX (Plymouth)**

**Minister: Mr Allan Jones**

*Please pray that God will continue to guide us as we continue to build on the relationships that have been established in the community. We thank God for the neighbours who now feel comfortable enough to drop into the church to discuss their problems, for the youngsters who now attend God's Gang on Sunday morning, and for the people who attend The Way coffee club for meals.*

In addition: Barnstaple Baptist Church,  
Silverton Evangelical Church

**15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> January**

**BRIDGWATER Minister: Revd Niels Waugh**

*We have suffered a serious loss of children and young people on Sundays, which is cause for concern, but rejoice that we still have a flourishing BB Company. Pray with us that we can encourage the boys to come on Sundays.*

*The church is currently wrestling with a unanimous proposal by the deacons that we offer our entire premises for sale, believing that we must trust God for guidance and provision for our future life & work as Christ's people here. Pray that we will come to a clear mind in this matter.*

*We have recently undergone the Moving Forward with God review, and are awaiting feedback from our reviewers. We believed it was right to have the review - and will know in due course whether we recommend it to others!*

**THORVERTON Minister: Revd Maurice Harrison**

*Our small, elderly congregation soldiers on. We are encouraged by occasional visitors from other churches and now and again some one from the village will come in and join us for worship. Numbers are considerably higher on special occasions. The church was full for the Harvest Supper, when the auction of produce raised over £220 for Operation Agri. We continue to enjoy a warm relationship with our Anglican friends and hold joint services once a month. Sadly, we lost our oldest member, in her ninety seventh year, a few months ago. Brothers and sisters - pray for us.*

In addition: Catherine Street Baptist Church, Plymouth  
Torrington Baptist Church

**22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> January**

**NEWTON ABBOT Minister: Revd Alan Mason**

*We start with a party with friends from three nearby churches. Then we're holding an 'at home' church weekend to launch Fit4Life - promoting a healthy church ready for growth. There's a covenant service, a united service in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and a service marking Homelessness Sunday.*

*We are eagerly praying for more adults [churched or unchurched] - especially musicians, children's workers and - oh, and for more money.*

**CHARD Minister: Revd Warwick Lydiate**

*We are going through a lengthy time of searching at Chard Baptist Church for direction regarding our buildings, however God has blessed us with great unity and commitment in this process. We ask for prayers as we continue to study the book Purpose Driven Church together. We maintain a firm commitment to outreach with Christmas and Alpha events taking place. We give thanks for the baptism of two young people in December.*

In addition: Exwick Community Church, Exeter  
Preston Baptist Church, Paignton

**29<sup>th</sup> January – 4<sup>th</sup> February**

**OKEHAMPTON Minister in Training: Mr Darren Pike**

*“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.”*

*We at OBC are looking to the future! We are a small fellowship who meets faithfully expecting God to make a difference. We have just had Darren Pike (our Minister in Training) join us with Melanie, his wife, and their children Daisy, Molly and Thomas. It is our plan for the New Year to seek God's Vision for us. We will study and pray on this subject culminating in an away day. Please pray for this new thing!*

**WESTWARD HO! Minister: Revd Steve Robinson**

*Our vision to redevelop our premises to meet the growing needs of the church fellowship and local community, is now gathering pace as we enter a new and critical stage. Please pray for us as we submit the plans for Council approval and as we consider how the development may be funded. Please also pray for our ongoing mission and ministry in the village, especially for our new Alpha and Discipleship Groups and for us as we seek to share the love of Jesus with the many community groups who use our premises.*

In addition: Roundswell Church, Barnstaple  
Ford Baptist Church, Plymouth

**University of Plymouth Chaplaincy presents**

**Unravelling the Da Vinci Code**

**A lecture by Derek Burnside**

**Pastor, Belmont Chapel, Exeter and Exeter University  
Chaplain to the students from Independent Congregations**

**Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup> 6.30. p.m.**

**Robbins Conference Centre, Gibbon Street, Plymouth  
For further information contact the University Chaplaincy  
on 01752 232261**

The Da Vinci Code has been a best seller for months now. Although a work of fiction very strong implications are made in the book that certain allegations are historical facts. Derek Burnside, a highly skilled and entertaining speaker has made a thorough study of the facts behind the allegations and sees this as a tremendous opportunity for Christians to talk about things that they hold dear.

With the film of the book coming up in May this is a wonderful chance to get ready for the issues that everyone will be talking about.

## **Mission in Romania**

After a long tiring journey, I arrived in Timisoara. I stayed with a married couple called Steve & Deb Bishop (American and Welsh) who are the main organisers of International Team's- Timisoara. They made me feel very welcome and are fantastic cooks! Praise God!

The first week was spent visiting different area's of ministry, these are Damsescu Placement Centre, Street Children Day Centre, Baby Hospital, Student Plus, Jimbolia Boys Home (being built), also as an extra teaching English at a crèche.

The Day Centre open's during the day for the children living on the streets to get hot meals, showers, clean clothes, bible teaching and also play games with the leaders. A lot of these children use very strong solvents as their way of escape from their problems/lack of love. Before coming into the Centre they have to hand over their solvents.

At the Baby Hospital I was allowed into one room where there were 25 babies, aged 4mths- 2yrs with a cot each. The babies are orphans due to many different reasons including disabilities, lack of finance or inconvenience. We got some of the babies out of their cots to play, sadly the others would've had to wait for another day. Having to leave these babies behind at the end of the 4 hours is one of the hardest things I have ever had to do.

The 2nd week I helped at the Placement Centre, Student plus and Crèche.

The Placement Centre children are aged 6yrs – 18yrs. Some have been on the streets or been removed from homes where they've been subject to abuse. Deb and I went in for 2 hours twice in the week. We did colouring and craft with the children. Most of the children demand for attention, whilst others don't bother to join in. Often we had to break up fights and apparently whilst I was there their behaviour was better than they often are! My time here was very tiring but enjoyable.

Whilst planning my trip, I asked God to show me direction in the plans for my life and lead me forward in my faith. True to form God was completely breath taking! God spoke directly and indirectly to me during my 2 weeks. He challenged and stretched my Faith in ways I wasn't expecting, all of which I am completely thankful and Praise him for. I have returned with a greater passion to live obediently to God's will for my life- serving him in all I do.

For anyone who has or is considering overseas mission, I can wholeheartedly recommend it. Don't let the fear of finance or unfamiliarity get in the way. "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13. God will be with you all the way!

Thank you everyone for the support you have shown me in prayer, encouragement and financial. Thank you for willingly being a part of God's plan for my life.  
God Bless.

***Kathryn Rundle***

We thank everyone who has prayed for us, and our family, during dad's illness and subsequent death. Prayer has given us the strength to cope, well most of the time, and we are all very grateful. Our thanks also go to those of you who sent cards with messages of sympathy and comfort. It has all been much appreciated.

From  
Ray and Cynthia Hedges and Pam and Adrian Smith.

## **Minibus... an update**

Since taking over as Minibus Co-ordinators last September we have been working closely with CAT and others about the best way forward regarding the usage of our minibus; we would love everyone to make the most of this fantastic facility.

However, as the bus does not run on fresh air, in fact the overall annual costs amount to quite a high sum, we ask for donations from anyone who uses it – we can suggest how much...! Also users such as Youth groups, Men's Group etc are now being asked if each passenger would contribute towards the cost of their transport when going anywhere in the bus. In this way we will all be contributing according to use and the church will not be subsidising it as much.

We also need to ensure that any driver that wants to use it has the appropriate licence, and is aware of insurance limitations, for example all drivers must be over 25 and have been driving for a minimum of 2 years. For all these reasons new paperwork is being produced for ALL drivers of the minibus, even those that have been driving it for many years.

If you use the minibus on a regular basis we will need you to complete this new paperwork, so rather than us have to look for you maybe you could speak to one of us in the very near future. Thank you.

Please do continue to consider using our bus for private bookings such as transporting children to and from birthday parties etc. We want to have this facility for Hope use, but we also want to share it... especially if it helps with the running costs.

Nicky and Paul Hatherell



## Having an art attack

**Richard Wallis** reflects on *Jerry Springer: The Opera*  
and how we react when art offends

On 27th January 2006 the Theatre Royal in Plymouth opens its doors to a new touring version of controversial musical, *Jerry Springer: The Opera* (JS:TO). It remains to be seen whether or not it will excite the same interest as the television broadcast did one year ago.

*JS:TO* is a satirical take on the trashy, morally bankrupt world epitomised by Springer's tasteless TV show. It is a clever work of deep cynicism, and black humour. Its central comic device is the absurdity of an art form as 'serious' and conventional as opera, being the vehicle for the language and themes of the gutter. It contains what most evangelical Christians would consider to be offensive religious parodies, and by anyone's standards, extreme language.

The show was originally developed in a series of workshops and performances at the Battersea Arts Centre, shortly afterwards becoming a sell-out hit at the 2002 Edinburgh Fringe. As a result of its Festival success, the show opened at the National Theatre in April 2003, to largely rave reviews. It soon created history by winning four Best Musical awards and three further Olivier Awards.

Despite its critical success, however, the play went largely unnoticed by the churches - indeed, the great British public in general - until a year ago when BBC 2 announced its plans to broadcast it.

It's difficult to determine exactly what triggered the reaction that followed. Not since Mary Whitehouse took on Howard Breton's play *The Romans in Britain*, in 1982, had there been such a storm over a piece of theatre. The most vocal and high profile protestor was a previously little-known organisation called Christian Voice, one of the initiators of the anti-*JS:TO* campaign. However, its publication of addresses and phone numbers of

BBC executives (resulting in 'abusive and unpleasant calls'), together with its intimidation of the cancer charity, Maggie's (prompting its refusal of a donation from the show), was grist for the mill of those attempting to discredit the campaign. The impression created was that the vehemence of the condemnation was the work of minority extremists, and mirrored some of the excesses of the US Christian Right.

Yet, unquestionably *JS:TO* touched a genuine nerve for many Christians, and it was disingenuous for the BBC to suggest that more than 45,000 emails and calls could be simply dismissed as an orchestrated campaign and therefore unrepresentative. Do Christians not have a right - indeed a duty - to speak out when they feel that their faith is the target of derision and outright attack on public service television?

Whilst there are no hard and fast rules, I believe there are some general principles that should inform the way we respond when we feel under attack in this way:

## **1. Identify the lessons we can learn**

One of the challenges of *JS:TO* for me, is to ask where the Christian voices are in British theatre today. Why has such a powerful medium of ideas been all but abandoned by people of faith? When was the last time a work of real Christian integrity stirred-up such a storm of discussion?

## **2. Examine what our indignation tells us about our priorities**

On the scale of outrage, where does this come in relation to the death of thousands of other people's children from preventable diseases; or the greed that demands sweatshop labour to produce our designer clothing; or the sex trafficking that supplies brothels in Birmingham? Is our response to this issue in proportion to that of other affronts to our faith?

### **3. Check we give positive as well as negative feedback**

There are many excellent programmes on television, and there are breathtakingly powerful and challenging pieces of theatre. There are great films too. If it's good, will the new Disney production of the Christian classic *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, excite the equivalent positive response? Or do we really just prefer complaining?

### **4. Pin-point the real issue**

We need to be clear about exactly what we are, and what we are not, objecting to. In the case of *JS:TO* there was confusion between the primary issue of deeply offensive material being put out by a public service broadcaster, and the altogether different matter of censoring what a paying audience is choosing to see in the privacy of a theatre.

### **5. Identify who our problem is with**

There's little point in a general rant. We need to know who our problem is with, and what we want them to do about it. And then take the action most likely to affect that change. Just getting it off our chests isn't the point! Think yourself into the shoes of that individual.

### **6. Consider the tone of our response**

Whatever we feel needs to be said, let's say it with humility and with grace. Far too often the Christian voice sounds shrill and sanctimonious.

Finally, having prayerfully considered these principles, and still feeling called to speak out, then let's do so fearlessly, with passion and with love.

## **Extract of a letter from Sheila and Roger Torpey now living in Spain**

2005 has been a great year for us. As you know we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary in April – we had a service of blessing in the garden, followed by a hot and cold buffet and it was attended by about 40 guests – friends and my younger sister who came for 3 weeks. We continued our celebrations further when all three daughters and family arrived on 25<sup>th</sup> May and we transferred to the most beautiful villa up in the mountains overlooking the beach Mijas on the Costa del Sol. This was the family's gift to us – and what a week we had.

Another wonderful event this year was when God answered our prayers – and a Church was born in Mollina. We had been praying from October 2003 and those eighteen months seemed endless, but in May our prayers were answered and we held our first service on 15<sup>th</sup> May with 6 people! We use one of the rooms adjoining the Catholic Church and for this privilege the Church is paid 50 per cent of our collection every time we meet there; which is 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays in the month. We now have +/- 20 people each week! WOW!! What blessings we've had bestowed on us this year.

In September we held a men's breakfast in our garden and had 12 to sit down at 10 o'clock and socially a huge success. (Guess who did the cooking?)

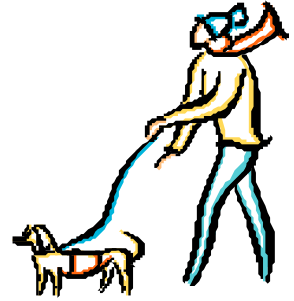
In October – as is usual – we thought about Harvest, and a member of our music group who lives about 345 kilometres up in the mountains offered the use of her home for the Harvest Thanksgiving. What a wonderful day we spent there. We held the service outside with an improvised 'altar' made of straw bales – and on it was all the local goodies you could imagine ranging from local grown produce to bottles of Mollina wine. Roger preached that day and we all had a bring and share lunch following the service. There were about 40 people present.

Now we are preparing for another Carol service and nativity but as a Church this year, which will be held here where we live. Because it is not just Roger and me this year – there will be more details and I understand that at this very moment our Pastor and two 'volunteers' are busy with hammers, nails, brushes and paint making scenery – so hopefully the Lord will bless us yet again in what has been a wonderful but very busy year.

I must close this letter with our love and prayers and thoughts for you all are included each day in our prayer time. A Happy Christmas to everyone.

## January diary

- |        |       |   |
|--------|-------|---|
| Sun 01 | 10.00 | Prayer in the Lower Guildroom**                               |
|        | 10.30 | Joint Family Service with St Pancras and Pennycross Methodist |
| Mon 02 |       | New Year Walk   |
| Thu 05 | 10.00 | Coffee Morning*   |
| Sun 08 | 10.30 | Morning Worship   |
| Tue 10 | 10.00 | Mums and Babies Group**                                       |
|        |       | Parent and Toddler Group**                                    |
| Wed 11 | 10.00 | Parent and Toddler Group**                                    |
|        | 1.00  | Parent and Toddler Group**                                    |
| Sun 15 | 10.30 | Morning Worship and Communion                                 |
| Tue 18 | 7.30  | Church Members Meeting  |
| Sun 22 | 10.30 | Morning Worship   |
| Wed 25 | 7.30  | Women's Rendezvous AGM  |
| Sun 29 | 10.30 | Family Service  |



\*These meetings meet weekly **during term time only**

\*\* These meetings meet weekly **all through the year**

Fellowship Groups now meet on various nights and in different weeks, so check with group leaders when yours in meeting.

### Advance notices

#### February

12 Community Quiz Night, more details to follow

## Praying for your minister!

I was delighted that the church meeting asked for ideas on how to pray for Andrew and I. Many of you will remember Gwen Pidsley. While she was housebound she prayed for a number of Plymouth's ministers including myself on a daily basis. We cannot measure the benefit of such prayers but we do know we are involved in a spiritual battle and in this context Paul exhorts us to:

*Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.*

I think the keys to praying for your ministers are:

1) Remember they are human!

This shouldn't be too hard at Hope! Ministers have the same struggles as you. They are tempted in the same way, have off days like you, have weaknesses and sensitivities like you, get tired and drained like you. In other words, pray for them as you would hope a close friend would pray for you. Pray for their family relationships, their personal relationship with God, their wise use of time, to keep a sense of perspective in good times and bad, for health, encouragement, good sleep etc.

2) Use your imagination.

To pray for anyone you need to imagine what life is like in their shoes, how it would feel to be them, what their fears and hopes may be. So how would you feel standing on the door after you had preached a sermon, or managing the building project, or dropping in on 20 Mums at Parents and Toddlers or preparing to lead a church meeting at which a contentious issue was on the agenda?

3) Be inspired by prayers in the Bible.

Look at Paul's and Jesus' prayers as they are recorded in John 17 and the beginning of most of Paul's letters. They are prayers for spiritual vision, empowerment in mission, the fruit of the Spirit and moral fibre. These are the things all of us most need.

#### 4) Remember their calling.

The prayers said at a ministers induction include:

‘In preaching and teaching give to him wisdom and understanding. In pastoral care and leadership may he be filled with the compassion and vision of Christ. In the tasks of mission and all the varied concerns of your kingdom enable him to discern and do your holy will. Keep alive his sense of your call and of your strengthening presence and peace. For him and for all your church here we ask that mutual trust and love will help them maintain the unity of the Spirit....’

#### 5) Peculiar pressures

All jobs have particular pressures associated with them. For ministers I think firstly of the way in which it is hard to escape from the pressures of work. Because we often work from home, take phone calls re the church at all times of day and night and regularly have to carry out certain duties on our days off it is hard to escape the sense of always being on call. Secondly, people often have very high and widely varying expectations of ministers and it is impossible for anyone to fulfil all such hopes.

#### 5) Ask them.

Sorry for stating the obvious but we are always delighted when people ask us how they can pray for us in the coming week!

Jesus had three disciples that he asked to go with him to pray in the garden of Gethsemane and there will probably only be a few people that any of us feel able to confide our most personal concerns with. All prayer though is heard by God, who knows our deepest needs, and answered often beyond our expectations. Thank you for reading this and for praying for us.



## Prayer Focus

### People

Give thanks for the safe arrival of Nathan to Sue and Darren and pray for them and Hannah as they adjust to the demands and joys of a baby.

We remember those of our fellowship in residential homes and unable to meet with us: Gladys Gardiner, Glendora Philips, Joyce Thomas, Viola Woodward.

Pray for all who have been bereaved in recent months, the Adeneys, Hedges and Smiths, and the families of Mary White and Muriel Hazeal.

Marian Brown hopes to have a hip operation early this year.

Jonathan Ward and Chris Reed are both looking for employment

### Church

The elections for the Deaconate take place in January.

No-one is standing for Secretary, pray the Deacons will know how best to cover this vacancy.

Give thanks for so many baptisms last year and pray for the continued work of the Holy Spirit in bringing people to faith.

This promises to be a demanding period for Andrew and the Building's Development Committee as they co-ordinate major changes to the sanctuary

### Mission

Gomer and Torph Roseman have been evacuated from the Sudan as the political situation has worsened. Pray that they may know God's clear leading for their future.

Our Link Workers in the Middle East have moved to a remote part of the country where they are having to learn a new language. Pray for patience, safety, good health, and good relationships with neighbours, colleagues and workmates.

Pray for David Evans as he helps the little fellowship at Metherell to discern God's will for the future.