

# Parish

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# Magazine



October/November 2018

Chichester Road, Croydon

[www.stmatthew.org.uk](http://www.stmatthew.org.uk)

Registered Charity No: 1132508

## **Services at St Matthew's**

### **Sunday Morning Services**

**1st 3rd 4th and 5th Sundays**

**8.30 am Eucharist (Said)**

**10.00 am Parish Eucharist with Choir and Children's Groups  
followed by tea and coffee in the foyer**

**2nd Sunday**

**8.30 am Eucharist (Said)**

**10.00am All Age Service**

**Sunday Evening Service**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday 5.00pm Healing Service with Prayers**

**Morning Prayer**

**Monday to Thursday 7.45 am**

**Tuesday**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 3.30pm**



**Wednesday**

**10.00 am Holy Communion (Said)**

**Baptisms, Weddings and Banns of Marriage  
By arrangement with the Vicar**

***St Matthew's Vision  
'Celebrating God's love throughout the whole  
community  
By what we believe and do'.***

The Vicar writes...

Dear friend,

If there is one thing that history teaches us, it is that we are not good at learning the lessons of history! The human race tends to repeat the mistakes of the past. This nation stands at a crucial point in its history, having taken a momentous decision to leave the EU, a decision which has deeply divided us. Whichever way we voted in 2016, we need to recognise that almost half of the nation voted the other way! Whatever the outcome of negotiations, the UK is going to face great uncertainties and difficulties over the next six to eighteen months - and almost certainly much longer - as we seek to find new ways of relating to our European friends - who sometimes, for very good reasons of their own, do not seem to be too friendly!



If we believe that the affairs of this world are ultimately governed by our sovereign God who is seated upon his throne, and whose kingdom will never end, then this is the lens through which we should see human history. What is God's purpose and will for us as a nation within the continent of Europe? Every human institution and structure is both inevitably flawed and also subject to God's judgement. If, then, we place our hope on any human institution or structure, we are standing on shaky ground. As the great hymn reminds us "What with care and toil he buildeth, tower and temple fall to dust." There has been much talk of sovereignty in recent times, but the sovereignty of God is the only sovereignty that truly matters. So, as the first line of that hymn says, "All my hope on God is founded".

If our hope is placed on God alone, we know we are standing on solid ground. Our faith in the kingdom also removes fear from us, and enables us to face all the uncertainties of the future. The position we are called as Christ's followers to adopt is one of fervent prayer. Prayer for those in authority (1 Timothy 2.1-4) that this nation, and indeed the world as a whole, will recognise God's sovereign power, and seek first his kingdom and righteousness. There have been crucial times in the past when this nation has led the way in social reform rooted in Christian values - perhaps the outstanding example being the movement to end slavery. Today we face the twin dangers of extreme secularisation on the one hand and religious extremism on the other. It is only God who can bring us back to himself and rescue us from these dangers. Let us be wide awake at such a time as this, and never cease to call upon the Lord to have mercy upon us, that his righteous judgement will not fall on us, but that his will and purpose

for us, for Europe, and for all the world, will be accomplished. The lessons of history, however, are not encouraging! As we remember that one hundred years have passed since the First World War came to an end, and during that century wars have continued to this day, the longing for peace and harmony in the world will only find its fulfilment in the coming of the King and the final establishing of his kingdom - the kingdom that has no end.

With my love and prayers.

*Simon*

## Events

### QUIZ NIGHT

On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30pm for 7.00pm we will be holding a Quiz Night with a Fish and Chip Supper. Tickets are £10.00 per person. Please come either on your own or as a team with your friends for an evening of guaranteed good food, good fun and good fellowship!

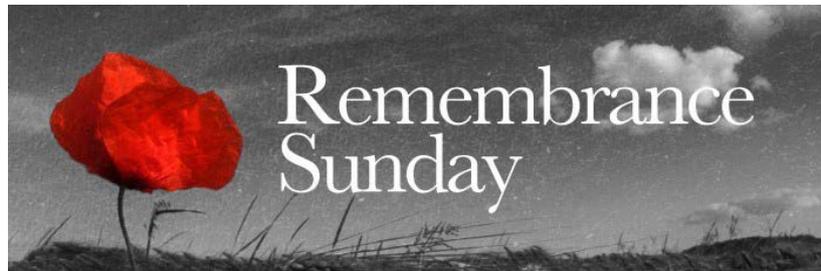


### ALL SOULS' SERVICE

On Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 4.00pm we will be holding a memorial service to remember and give thanks for those who have died. If you want a loved one remembered by name at this service, please let Simon, Darius or Terry in the office have the details. The service will be followed by refreshments in the hall. Everyone is warmly invited.

### SENIOR PARISHIONERS' LUNCH

On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November we are having a lunch for Senior Parishioners. This will be a two-course meal, including a glass of wine, and will begin at 12.30pm. The cost will be £6. If you consider yourself to be a "Senior Parishioner" and would like to come, please contact Terry in the church office (020 8681 3147) for further details. Lifts are available.



Remembrance Sunday this year is on 11<sup>th</sup> November, when we shall have a special Service of Remembrance at 10.00am. This is of course 100 years to the day since the signing of the Armistice that brought the First World War to an end.

## CAKE SALE

We shall also be holding a bring and buy cake sale after the Remembrance Sunday service to raise money for our December Toy Service. Please bring a cake to sell on that day. Thank you.

## CHORAL EVENSONG

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 6.00pm there will be a service of Choral Evensong. Everyone is very welcome.



## CHRISTMAS FAIR AND CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

I know, it's far too soon to be thinking about Christmas! But as this issue covers two months, here is advance notice that our annual Christmas Fair and Christmas Tree Festival will be taking place on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November - please put this date in your diary today!

## CAROL SINGING

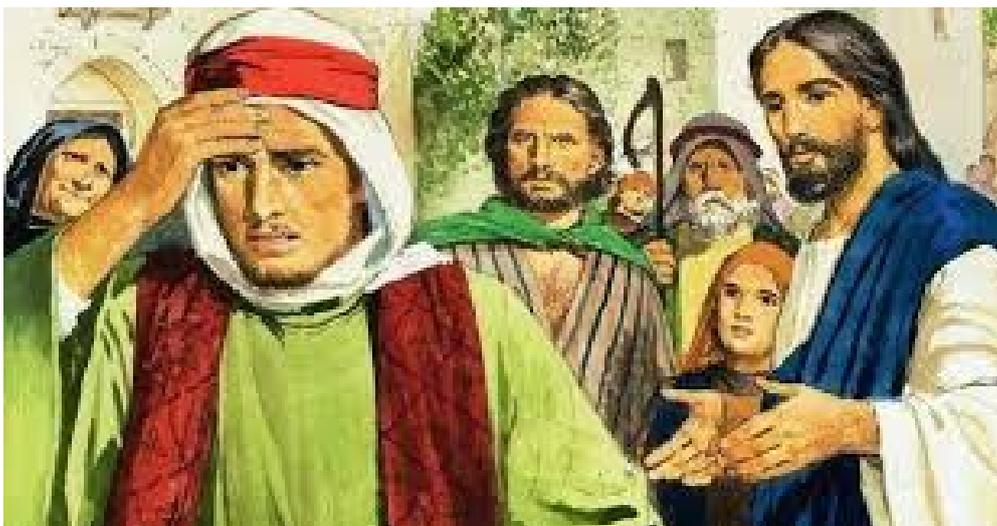
On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December we will be singing carols at East Croydon station from 5.00pm to 7.00pm to raise money for the homeless. If you enjoy singing carols please come and join in!

## An autumn reflection “Learning from the Rich Young Ruler”

(Luke 18 v 18- 25)

Luke records: “A certain ruler asked Jesus, Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” So Jesus said to him..... “You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not commit murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘honour your father and mother’.” And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. This man had two problems, and Jesus put His finger on each.

First, he discovered that keeping a bunch of religious rules cannot fill the emptiness in your soul; only a relationship with Christ can do that. Second, he discovered that he didn’t just own riches; his riches owned him and kept him from following Christ. He had so much potential, he could have leveraged his resources, his network, and his energy for kingdom causes, but he wanted to keep it all for himself. And the Bible captions his life in four words: “He became very sorrowful.” The rich young ruler eventually became the rich old ruler. Until the day he died he’d remember the words of Jesus: “Come, follow Me.” And Jesus makes the same offer to you. If you say no, you’ll regret it at the end of your life. If you say yes, you’ll be rewarded with joy and a level of blessing you never knew was possible.



# Praying for Croydon

## Work with older folk

*“They will still bear fruit in old age.”* Psalm 92:14

Many of the older generation are struggling with the limitations of old age and uncertain of what their future holds. Those who live on their own can experience isolation, anxiety and loneliness. Some who are newly retired can find it hard to adjust to the lack of purpose or routine. These folk are a great resource for the Church.

Many churches across the borough have set up ministries for, and services to, retired and elderly people. They may not be able to do all they once could, or to live life at the same pace, but they can still embark on extraordinary adventures of faith.

### **Please pray:**

1. For the various daytime meetings, outreach groups and lunch and retirement clubs to offer a warm welcome, much-needed company and interesting and stimulating programmes.
2. That Croydon’s retired folk will be a fruitful generation, discovering new ways to serve God and minister to their contemporaries.
3. For the outreach by St Matthew’s Pastoral Care Team to Sheltered Accommodation and Care Homes within the Parish.



## Quotes

Every day in which I do not penetrate more deeply into the knowledge of God's Word in Holy Scriptures is a day lost for me. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

The pure heart is God's paradise where He delights to walk.  
(Thomas Watson)

Science can add years to your life, but only Christ can add life to your years. (Anon)

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.  
Jim Elliot (mentioned in "Story behind the hymn")

Confessing your sins is no substitute for forsaking them. (Anon)

The humble knowledge of thyself is a surer way to God than a deep search after learning. (Thomas a Kempis)

Faith is the power of putting self aside that God may work unhindered.

Narrow minds and wide mouths bring trouble (Paul L Powers)

### Observations on life today

The modern idea of "roughing it" is to holiday without internet access.

If men speak ill of you, live so that no one will believe them.

Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% of how you respond to it.

Children seldom misquote you. In fact, they usually repeat word for word what you shouldn't have said.

# Remembering the Persecuted Church

## Nigerian pastor and family burnt alive in Fulani attack

The persecution of Christians continues unabated. The first two items were given prominence in the national media last month and, deeply distressing though they are, I've included them as a reminder of the price that many people pay for following Jesus. Please pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters – and do take the **Pews News** home after the weekly service as it incorporates a prayer topic for the suffering church.

A Nigerian pastor, his wife and three children were burnt alive when their house in Abonong village, Plateau State, was set on fire by Fulani on the night of 28 August. “The attackers armed with machetes and AK-47 rifles stormed the village at about 8pm on Tuesday [28 August], shooting sporadically and burning houses including part of the reverend’s house,” a source told journalists. Pastor Adamu Jang and his wife died, along with their three children. At least eight people were killed and churches and



houses in several villages were set alight. Police later confirmed that 95 houses in Barkin Ladi County were burnt in the attack and that 310 cattle were stolen. A local politician stated “many houses and churches were burnt to ashes”. On 26 June, 50 Christians were killed in an attack on two other villages in Plateau State by armed

Fulani Muslims. The Christian Association of Nigeria estimated in June that attacks by Muslim Fulani herdsmen have claimed the lives of more than 6,000 Christians so far in 2018.

## Chinese authorities shut down one of Beijing’s largest house churches

Chinese authorities shut down one of the largest unofficial churches in Beijing on Sunday 9 September. Although unregistered, the church has been (in practice) permitted to operate for years with relative freedom, but since church leaders refused a request from authorities to install CCTV cameras inside the building in April the church has come under growing pressure. District officials announced on 9<sup>th</sup> September that the church had been banned because it had “not registered and had carried out activities in the name of social organisations without authorisation.”The government introduced new religious regulations governing church registration in February. As many as 1500 people attend the church’s five weekly services. Police officers are now guarding the building. Prior to the church being shut down the congregation had been threatened with eviction. In June, 34 “house churches” (unregistered church groups) issued a

statement calling for Chinese authorities to respect freedom of religion and not view religious believers as a “dissenting force.” They stated, “House churches have a strong desire to contribute to a necessary dialogue to achieve better relations with the government in the new era.” China’s Communist government only recognises state-registered churches, which are closely monitored.

Here are two recent “good news stories” not covered by the media.

### **Solar panels help Christian orphans in Pakistan**

Orphaned schoolgirls in Pakistan can learn comfortably, and sleep well at night, after Barnabas provided solar panels to power ceiling fans at Abba Home in Lahore. The home cares for girls who have tragically lost both parents, or have only one parent who is too sick to care for them, providing a loving home and a good Christian education. The home was built with the help of Barnabas Fund. The 38 girls were struggling to concentrate in lessons during hot summer months, or sleep at night, as power cuts often stopped their ceiling fans from working. Outages are common in Pakistan due to lack of supply, and electric companies often “loadshed,” turning power off for hours each day. Now, the girls can keep cool and the home is saving money on electricity bills and helping the environment.

### **Building repairs enable Syrian Christians to restart their lives**

Repairs are nearly complete on more than 258 Christian homes and businesses in the Syrian city of Homs. During the early years of the Syrian civil war, many Christians fled from Homs and its surrounding villages to safer parts of Syria. When peace and stability returned to the area, people wanted to go back to their homes and small businesses, but buildings were severely war -damaged. With funding from Barnabas, local Christians are doing



basic repairs on Christian properties, just enough to make them habitable ie secure from break-ins and with functioning water and electricity supplies.

Now, walls have been repaired, new doors and windows fitted, power restored and water tanks, seized by rebels to make barricades, replaced. Shops are reopening, providing income for the owners and a service to the community. More properties are due to be repaired soon.

## Story behind the hymn “We rest on thee our shield and our defender” (Often called “The Martyrs’ hymn”)

We rest on thee our shield and our defender!

We go not forth alone against the foe  
Strong in thy strength, safe in Thy keeping tender  
We rest on Thee, and in Thy Name we go

Yes, in Thy Name, O Captain of salvation!  
In Thy dear Name, all other names above  
Jesus our Righteousness, our sure Foundation,  
Our Prince of glory, and our King of love.

We go in faith, our own great weakness feeling,  
And needing more each day Thy grace to know;  
Yet from our hearts a song of triumph pealing,  
“We rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go.”

We rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender!  
Thine is the battle, Thine shall be the praise;  
When passing through the gates of pearly splendour  
Victors, we rest with Thee, through endless days.

Edith Gilling Cherry, the English poet who composed these lines, was stricken with polio in infancy and for the rest of her brief life (she died age 25) walked with the aid of crutches. Most of her poems were written before she was 15 years old. She was a deeply spiritual young woman who gave the glory to God for her rich and insightful poetry. When she lay dying, after suffering a stroke, she said, “It all seems so small, all I have tried to do, so small to Him.” Her mother answered, “These are your songs, dear, they will carry on your work.” But Edith replied, “Ah, but they were not mine at all, they were given to me all ready, and all I had to do was write them down.”

## This hymn is based on (2 Chronicles 14:11)

“And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.”

### The Five Ecuadorian Martyrs

This hymn has a sad story associated with it. In January 1956, five missionaries sang it before entering the Ecuadorian jungle to bring the Gospel to the Auca Indians. They were Nate Saint, Ed McCully, Jim Elliott, Roger Yoderian, & Peter Fleming. After the men reached the Aucas, the Indians murdered them on the Curaray River. On January 8 the missionaries waited, expecting a larger group of Huaorani to arrive sometime that afternoon, if only to get plane rides. Saint made several trips over Huaorani settlements, and on the following morning he noted a group of Huaorani men traveling toward Palm Beach.

The Huaorani arrived at Palm Beach around 3:00 p.m., and in order to divide the foreigners before attacking them, they sent three women to the other side of the river. One, Dawa, remained hidden in the jungle, but the other two showed themselves. Two of the missionaries waded into the water

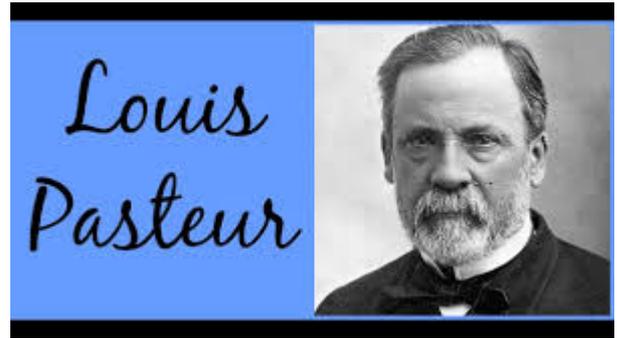


to greet them, but were attacked from behind by one of the women. The other missionary in the river, Fleming, before being speared, desperately reiterated friendly overtures and asked the Huaorani why they were killing them. Meanwhile, the other Huaorani warriors, led by Gikita, attacked the three missionaries still on the beach, spearing Saint first, then McCully as he rushed to stop them. Youderian ran to the airplane to get to the radio, but he was speared as he picked up the microphone to report the attack. The Huaorani then threw the men's bodies and their belongings in the river, and ripped the fabric from their aircraft. They then returned to their village and, anticipating retribution, burned it to the ground and fled into the jungle.

Ever since then, the hymn *We Rest on Thee* has been associated with those five missionary martyrs and is rightly called The Martyrs' Hymn. However, the story has a happy ending. Years later, contact with the Aucas was re-established, and many came to Christ, including the killers, which is how first hand details of the missionaries' deaths came to light.”

## Famous scientists with a strong Christian faith- Louis Pasteur

Louis Pasteur was a French biologist, microbiologist and chemist renowned for his discoveries of the principles of vaccination, microbial fermentation and pasteurization. He is remembered for his remarkable breakthroughs in the causes and prevention of diseases, and his discoveries have saved many lives



ever since. He reduced mortality from puerperal fever, and created the first vaccines for rabies and anthrax. His medical discoveries provided direct support for the germ theory of disease and its application in clinical medicine. He is best known to the general public for his invention of the technique of treating milk and wine to stop bacterial contamination, a process now called pasteurization. He is regarded as one of the three main founders of bacteriology, together with Ferdinand Cohn and Robert Koch, and is popularly known as the "father of microbiology".

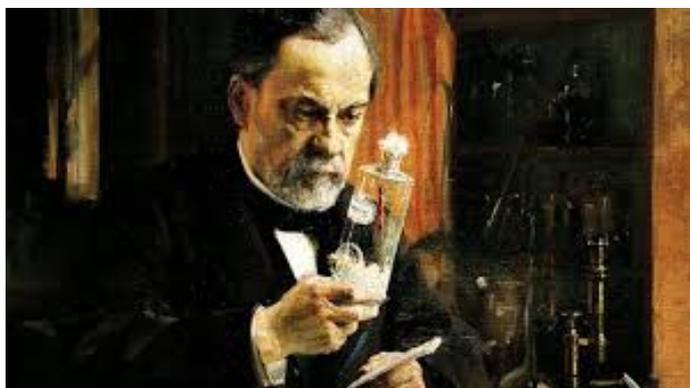
Louis Pasteur was born on December 27, 1822, in Dole, Jura, France, to a Catholic family of a poor tanner. He was the third child of Jean-Joseph Pasteur and Jeanne-Etiennette Roqui. The family moved to Marnoz in 1826 and then to Arbois in 1827. Pasteur entered primary school in 1831.

He was an average student in his early years, and not particularly academic, as his interests were fishing and sketching. He drew many pastels and portraits of his parents, friends and neighbors. Pasteur attended secondary school at the Collège d'Arbois. In October 1838, he left for Paris to join the Pension Barbet, but became homesick and returned in November. In 1839, he entered the Collège Royal at Besançon to study philosophy and earned his Bachelor of Letters degree in 1840. He was appointed a tutor at the Besançon College while continuing a degree science course with special mathematics. He failed his first examination in 1841. He managed to pass the *baccalauréat scientifique* (general science) degree in 1842 from Dijon but with a mediocre grade in chemistry.

Pasteur was responsible for disproving the doctrine of spontaneous generation. He performed experiments that showed that without contamination, microorganisms could not develop. Under the auspices of the French Academy of Sciences, he demonstrated that in sterilized and sealed flasks nothing ever developed, and in sterilized but open flasks microorganisms could grow. Although Pasteur was not the first to propose the germ theory, his experiments indicated its correctness and convinced

most of Europe that it was true. Today, he is often regarded as one of the fathers of germ theory. Pasteur made significant discoveries in chemistry, most notably on the molecular basis for the asymmetry of certain crystals and racemization. Early in his career, his investigation of tartaric acid resulted in the first resolution of what is now called optical isomers. His work led the way to the current understanding of a fundamental principle in the structure of organic compounds.

Pasteur's later work on diseases included work on chicken cholera. He received cultures from Jean Joseph Henri Toussaint, and cultivated them in chicken broth. During this work, a culture of the responsible bacteria had spoiled and failed to induce the disease in some chickens he was infecting with the disease. Upon reusing these healthy chickens, Pasteur discovered he could not infect them, even with fresh bacteria; the weakened bacteria had caused the chickens to become immune to the disease, though they had caused only mild symptoms.



In 1879, his assistant, Charles Chamberland (of French origin), had been instructed to inoculate the chickens after Pasteur went on holiday. Chamberland failed to do this and went on holiday himself. On his return, the month-old cultures made the chickens unwell, but instead of the infections being fatal, as they usually were, the chickens recovered completely. Chamberland assumed an error had been made, and wanted to discard the apparently faulty culture, but Pasteur stopped him. He inoculated the chickens with virulent bacteria that killed other chickens, and they survived. Pasteur concluded that the animals were now immune to the disease. In December 1879, Pasteur used a weakened culture of the bacteria to inoculate chickens. The chickens survived, and when he inoculated them with a virulent strain, they were immune to it. In 1880, Pasteur presented his results to the French Academy of Sciences, saying that the bacteria were weakened by contact with oxygen.

Catholic observers often said that Pasteur remained an ardent Christian throughout his whole life, and his son-in-law wrote, in a biography of him: "Absolute faith in God and in Eternity, and a conviction that the power for good given to us in this world will be continued beyond it, were feelings which pervaded his whole life; the virtues of the gospel had ever been present to him. Full of respect for the form of religion which had been that of his forefathers, he came simply to it and naturally for spiritual help in these last weeks of his life." He died in 1895.

## Friends recently sent me this – for reflection

You are the peace of all things calm  
You are the place to hide from harm  
You are the light that shines in the dark

You are the heart's eternal spark  
You are the door that's open wide  
You are the guest who waits inside  
You are the stranger at the door

You are the calling of the poor  
You are my Lord and with me still  
You are my love, keep me from ill  
You are the light, the truth, the way  
You are my Saviour this very day

Jesus Christ is a wonderful, glorious person. To look away from self and man to Christ, is to lay hold on everlasting life. If men would be safe, let them flee to him. His names and titles are as important as they are significant. Every one of them is as an ointment poured forth:

**A**

To them he is altogether lovely. He is their Advocate, the angel of the covenant, the author and finisher of faith. He is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, the alpha and the omega,

**B**

the Beloved, the shepherd and bishop of souls, the bread of life, the bundle of myrrh, the bridegroom, the bright and morning star, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

**C**

He is their Creator, captain, counsellor, covenant, cornerstone, covert from the tempest, a cluster of camphor, and chiefest among ten thousand.

**D**

He is to them as the Dew, the door into the fold, a diadem, a daysman, a day-star, a deliverer, and the desire of all nations, ranks and generations of pious men. (More letters in the next issue)

# Croydon's health in the 1930's by Kenneth D James

## Croydon's measures to improve health

The Medical Officer of Health paid a great deal of attention in the 1930's to the nursing of sick children. There was an Observation Nursery for young children at Mayday Hospital and a Children's Convalescent Home in a large house at Coombe Cliff. Much attention was paid to diet and hygiene, and it was an object of particular pride in the Department, being described in one of the Reports as "being as good as beside the seaside." Croydon was also well to the fore in promoting health in schools. The Report for 1931 complains of the diet of some schoolchildren as relying too much on cheap carbohydrate "filler" foods to the neglect of the more expensive protein and fat rich foods. To help improve the situation, the Council cooperated with the National Milk Publicity Council, set up in 1929, to provide one third of a pint of milk per day at the cost of 1p. Almost all schools in Croydon adopted the scheme. In 1930, 8,723 bottles were supplied; by 1931 the figure was 946,000 bottles.

There was a temporary fall in 1932, put down to the financial pressure caused by unemployment, but a large rise in 1934 when the Milk in Schools legislation came in. A recurrent theme was the failure of some parents to join in the scheme, despite the fact that the School Medical Officer would recommend a free issue of milk to malnourished children. There was clearly a significant group of children "who would benefit most but who do not get the milk"



(1933 Report). These children were not in such poor physical shape as to be malnourished but came from poor backgrounds.

Attention was also paid to the introduction of domestic science into the school curriculum, and the inculcation of the concept of a balanced diet. The 1934 Report actually spells this out; it recommends "a plain straightforward diet on old-established lines" consisting of meat once a day, green vegetables, bread and butter, and milk which "contains all the necessary food factors and main chemical groups necessary for proper nutrition." The Medical Officer of Health also organised lectures on public health which were targeted at the parents of schoolchildren. Attendances were sparse, and this prompted complaints of apathy, but since a number of them were held in the afternoon when mothers would be anxious to get away to collect their children from school, perhaps such complaints are a little harsh.

## Bible themed quotes – Patience

“Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.” (Psalm 37 v 7)

“I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined to me and heard my cry.”  
(Psalm 40 v 1)

“For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” (Habakkuk 2 v 3)

“.....rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer.” (Romans 12 v 12)

“Therefore do not cast away your confidence which has great reward. For you have need of endurance , so that after you have done the will of God you may receive the promise.....” (Hebrews 10 v 35 & 36)

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and completed, lacking nothing.”

(James 1 v 2-4)

“Therefore be patient brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand.” (James 5 v 7 & 8)



## “Getting the most from life or getting the most from God?”

This deeply challenging article is taken from the August issue of the monthly magazine, “Turning Points” and reproduced with their permission.

Moses is the Biblical hero of old age. He lived for 120 years so that puts him a bit beyond our reach. But what’s impressive about the great Jewish deliverer is that his career for God didn’t begin until age 80. He spent 40 years growing up in Egypt, 40 years as a shepherd- in -exile in Midian, then 40 years delivering the Hebrew slaves from Egypt to the Promised Land of Canaan. We marvel at Moses while wondering whether we could be that productive at 80?

In the Western World it seems to be the accepted practice/thinking/convention to start “winding down” at a certain age. It seems to happen around the mid- sixties age and is widely regarded as the traditional age for so-called retirement. After people spend 40 years in a vocation, they begin to view life in terms of their job. and when that job ends, there’s a natural assumption that life “ends” in terms of productivity. Wrong! I can’t tell you how much I disagree with this entire worldview. By the time people hit their sixties, assuming they remain in good health, they are at the peak of their ability to contribute in terms of skill, wisdom, knowledge and so forth. Consider these examples of people whose lives just blossomed in their “senior season” of life:

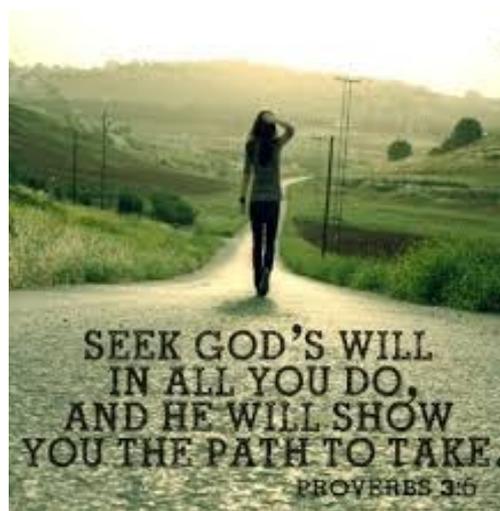
- Peter Roget invented the Thesaurus at age 73
- John Glenn became the oldest person to go into space at age 77.
- Ronald Regan became President of the United States aged 69.
- Frank McCourt took up writing at age 65 and won a Pulitzer Prize for *Angela’s Ashes*.
- Teiichi Igarashi climbed Mount Fuji at age 99 and Katsusuke Yanagisawa climbed Mount Everest at age 71.
- Harland Sanders franchised his Kentucky Fried Chicken recipe at age 62.

Regardless of your age today, how do you look at the years ahead? Do you view them as bursting with possibility and opportunity? Are you just warming up or beginning to cool down after this marathon we call life? I realise that life presents all manner of variables and circumstances that are beyond our control. We must trust God with those. But when it comes to our spiritual and emotional outlook, we ought to be always looking to go deeper and further with Jesus Christ into this world – to discover more of God and how He might use us. That might be through your vocation, through a

ministry, through the arts, as a witness in your neighbourhood or community – the sky is the infinite limit as long as we haven't bought into the cultural mandate of stopping sooner than necessary.

Physically, life can be a challenge. And it was a huge challenge for the apostle Paul. God's providence shortened his life, and God may shorten ours as well (Psalm 139 v 16). So, we leave the length of life in God's hands. But while we are alive....that is what I want to encourage you to consider. Wherever you are with the Lord you bring intelligence, talent, giftedness, wisdom, how-to experience, and a world of insight to your relationship with Him. You are a unique, irreplaceable member of God's spiritual temple, the church, and of His kingdom. Think back to Paul; he knew more than most of us know when he wrote the letter to the Philippians. Yet he told them he wasn't satisfied; he was casting off everything in order to know more of Christ.

That should be our attitude as well. We shouldn't put off knowing God better for the future since none of us knows what the future will hold. We should make it our goal to know more about Christ every day and in every way. How can we do that? How many Christian books did you read last year-Bible study, theology, biographies, or practical help? How much of the Bible do you read on a daily basis? What is your prayer life like? When was the last time you shared your faith with a non-Christian? How often are you together with other Christians from whom you can learn? These are all avenues that lead to increasing the depth of your knowledge of God. It is up to us to get on the avenue and take new steps daily.



## The Value of Human Beings by Barney Powell

One of the great conundrums of business life is why employees appear on company balance sheets as liabilities, not assets. This seems to be an anomaly, as employees are clearly the company's most valuable asset. Apparently it's because in accounting terms they are counted as a cost, not an investment. The value of employees cannot be quantified as assets quite simply because they're not owned by the company like premises or machinery. (This gives rise to an interesting quandary in the valuation of some IT and software companies – often operating in rented premises – where the principal asset is clearly the expertise of employees, while the electronic hard- and software employed is in itself of only limited, and rapidly depreciating, asset value.)

How can monetary value be assigned to employees who are not fixtures at a company, not part of a company's inventory, who depart every evening and return (not always) the following morning? It cannot. Human beings are not just 'economic agents', nor are they to be defined by their job, yet 'human capital' is so expensive that, as any management consultant will tell you, any project can be much more 'economically' completed by only 40 per cent of the people normally employed on it. Their value to the company lies in the quality of their presence and their productivity while at work, in identifying with something bigger than themselves – and this is strictly 'off-balance sheet'.

Statistical estimates of the value of a life (by actuaries and others) vary between £2-4 million. This is partly based on some rational notion of 'replacement value' (putative future earnings plus things like organ donation), which is clearly quite non-sensical.

Today, it seems that the market calls the tune in almost every walk of life. The range of choice for young people entering the work place has narrowed down considerably: you can become either a commodity or a celebrity, i.e., a person of either 'instrumental' or questionably 'intrinsic' worth. Mao Zedong's revolutionary attempts to persuade Chinese workers of the dignity of labour and Marx's Labour Theory of Value have been thwarted by the iron laws of supply and demand. Productivity is a capitalist, not a socialist notion. Oscar Wilde's oft-quoted quip that a cynic is someone who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing is more a way-of-the-worldly wisecrack than a genuine witticism.

Thus, value can only be measured in terms of the contribution the individual makes to the collective effort required to achieve effective results in any enterprise – be it a business, a voluntary organisation, a school, medicine, government, even a marriage. In short, having value means feeling valued – in any occupation. The notion of human value is all too often confused with notions of self-confidence, self-worth and self-esteem, as if measured

in terms of personal achievement, assessed subjectively. The reality is that no meaningful valuation of human beings can be made, except in terms of our innate worth to other people.

## Can you find 30 books in the Bible hidden in this passage?

I included a similar quiz in a previous issue in 2014, but this is a different (and harder) one with a PRIZE! The first person who sends me the correct answers (all 30) will receive a £10 Waterstones card.

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much that he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his John-



boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it, she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column.

Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving that she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially as some books are not capitalised. Truthfully from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing books in these paragraphs. During a recent fundraising event, which features this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phil-Lemonade booth set a new sales record.

The local paper, the Chronicle, surveyed over 50 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humble puts it, "the books are all right here in plain view, hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books Timothy and Samuel appear without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you to compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mass exodus, there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in these paragraphs waiting to be found.

## Prisons - some observations and reflections

During the last few months there has been extensive media coverage regarding several aspects about the state of prisons throughout the UK: staff shortages, attacks on officers, riots, vandalism, and the appalling condition of some old Victorian structures with extensive rodent infestation and sewage problems. However, what isn't normally covered by the media is the wonderful work being done by Christian charities such as Prison Fellowship whereby members take the Good News of Jesus into prisons, conducting services, leading Alpha courses and counselling inmates. Incidentally, Peter, one of my cousins, regularly takes services at a prison near Rugby and recently updated me of the wonderful opportunities he gets for sharing the Gospel.



I saw this article (which I've edited) in the current prayer diary of "Speak Life Daily." A man who carried out a string of burglaries last Christmas, including taking communion wine from a Derby church, is now studying the Bible in prison. Derby Crown Court heard that Richard West, a 43 year old father of four, caused more than £12, 000 worth of damage when he committed eight break-ins. His lawyer stated that "his repeat offending was linked to a return addiction after his marriage fell apart. His heroin and crack cocaine habit saw him spending between £300- £400 a day to feed his addiction but since his incarceration he is now doing Bible studies and attending the weekly prison chapel services. He bitterly regrets what he did and would like to apologise in person to the people he affected."

Such is the positive effect of prison ministry. In another account, the CEO of Prison Fellowship says, "I was visiting a prison with a PF group helping the chaplaincy with an Alpha course, when a prisoner took me aside to thank me and the team for what they do. He said that this course and the services were the only things that he and his friends looked forward to each week because it was a place of acceptance and refuge. Furthermore, it reminded me of a verse from Psalm 46-God is our refuge and strength."



- Praise God for Christians who regularly visit prisons and remand centres to lead Bible studies, services and offer pastoral care for prisoners.
- Pray that many offenders may come to a transforming knowledge of the Saviour.
- Pray for safety of the volunteers as they visit prisons.

## “Know your hymns”- I’ve been sent some different ones

Contractor’s hymn    The Church’s one foundation  
The Tailor’s hymn    Holy, Holy, Holy  
The Golfer’s hymn    There is a Green Hill Far Away  
The Income Tax agent’s hymn    I Surrender All  
The Gossip’s hymn    Pass it On  
The Shopper’s hymn    Sweet Bye and Bye  
The Estate Agent’s Hymn    I’ve Got a Mansion  
The Dentist’s hymn    Crown Him with many Crowns  
The Optometrist’s hymn    Open my eyes that I Might See

### Not covered by insurance

A recent letter that appeared in The Independent newspaper; “Following the recent major flooding, I find myself out of pocket, due to what I am informed is an ‘act of God.’ To avoid future financial embarrassment, please could you recommend an atheist insurance company?”

### The pictures

A New York attorney representing a wealthy art collector called his client and said, "Saul, I have some good news and I have some bad news." The art collector replied, "Jack, I've had an awful day, so let's hear the good news first."

The lawyer said, "Well, I met with your wife today, and she informed me that she has invested only \$5,000 in two very nice pictures that she thinks will bring somewhere between 15 to 20 million dollars...and I think she could be right."

Saul replied enthusiastically, "Holy cow! Well done! My wife is a brilliant business woman, isn't she? You've just made my day. Now, I know I can handle the bad news. What is it?"

The lawyer replied, "The pictures are of you and your secretary."

Q. How did Moses make his coffee? Hebrews it.

Q. How do we know that Peter was a rich fisherman? By his net income.

Q. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible? Samson; he brought the house down.

**The Parish Church of St Matthew, Croydon**  
(a member of Churches Together in Addiscombe)

|   |  |              |
|---|--|--------------|
| <b>Church Address</b>   | Chichester Road Croydon CR0 5NQ                  | 8681 3147    |
| <b>Parish Office Email</b>  | churchadmin@stmatthew.org.uk                     |              |
| <b>Website</b>  | www.stmatthew.org.uk                             |              |
| <b>Parish Administrator</b>   | Terry Mitchell                                   | 8681 3147    |
| <b>Hall Bookings</b>  | Contact Parish Administrator                     |              |
| <b>Vicar</b>  | Revd Simon Foster<br>revsimon@stmatthew.org.uk   | 8688 5055    |
| <b>Curate</b>   | Revd Darius Weithers<br>d.o.weithers@gmail.com   | 8686 1095    |
| <b>Readers</b>  | Paul Parmenter<br>Alison Radford                 | 8689 5874    |
| <b>Director of Music &amp; Choir</b>  | Michael Strange                                  |              |
| <b>Southwark Pastoral Auxiliaries</b>   | Carolyn Tweed<br>Sue Collins                     |              |
| <b>Churchwardens</b>  | Stephen Collingwood<br>Rohini Abhayaratne        | 8686 2815    |
| <b>PCC Secretary</b>  | David Williams                                   | 8768 3599    |
| <b>Treasurer &amp; Gift Aid Recorder</b>  | Terry Mitchell                                   |              |
| <b>Sacristan</b>  | Gillian Bridger                                  |              |
| <b>Assistant Sacristan</b>  | Jerry Savage                                     |              |
| <b>Electoral Roll Officer</b>   | David Williams                                   |              |
| <b>Magazine Editor</b>  | Steve Tucker<br>stephen.tucker123@btinternet.com | 8681 6872    |
| <b>Parish Committees and Organisations</b>  |  |              |
| <b>Young Church (Sunday 10am)</b>   | Judith Spencer-Gregson                           | 8688 6640    |
| <b>Fundraising Team</b>   | Jane Passfield                                   |              |
| <b>Fellowship Team</b>  | Lucasta Grayson                                  |              |
| <b>Communications Team</b>  | Alison Radford                                   |              |
| <b>Fabric Team</b>  | Chris Grayson                                    |              |
| <b>Finance Team</b>   | Richard Tweed                                    |              |
| <b>Pastoral Team</b>  | Revd Simon Foster                                |              |
| <b>Circle Dance</b>   | Sally Ditzel<br>Sallyditzel1960@gmail.com        | 07568338204  |
| <b>Youth Groups and Clubs</b>   |  |              |
| <b>Rainbow Guides (Wednesday 6.10-7.30)</b>   | Zoë Sheehan                                      | 07855 779458 |
| <b>Brownies (Wednesday 6.30-8.00pm)</b>   | Laura Easton                                     |              |
| <b>Ten O'Clock Club (Tuesday 10-12noon)</b>   |  |              |
| <b>Cubs (Tuesday 7-8.30pm)</b>  | Simon Hamilton                                   | 07730 586252 |
| <b>Scouts (Tuesday 7-9.00pm)</b>  | Michael Smaldon                                  | 07949 586203 |
| <b>Guides (Wednesday 6.45-8.30pm)</b>   | Zoë Sheehan                                      | 07855 779458 |
| <b>Beavers (Friday 6.30-7.30pm)</b>   | Tracey Hague                                     | 0752 8812877 |
| <p><b>For details of other activities taking place at church during the week that include Pilates, Bach Choir, Philharmonic Choir, Children's Ballet, Children's Drama and U3A Groups. Please contact the organisers direct. Details from the Parish Office which is usually open Monday to Thursday 9.30am -12.30pm.</b></p> |  |              |