



# TOGETHER in Park Hill

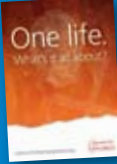
3,200 copies distributed by St Matthew's Church throughout Park Hill

Autumn 2011

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**What's on at St Matthew's?**  
 Find out what activities are on at St Matthew's.



**Page 3 - New Course for Park Hill: Christianity Explored**  
 This course gives people the time and space to think about the big questions of life - meeting 7 times in Autumn.



**Page 7 - 2012 marks 40 years of Park Hill**  
 We are planning special events and services to celebrate - turn to page 7 to find out more.



## Reasons to be cheerful?

**If you are as old as I am you may remember the song of that title released by Ian Dury and the Blockheads in 1979.**

According to the song there are an enormous number of reasons for cheerfulness including such things as Summer, Buddy Holly, 18-wheeler Scammell lorries and porridge oats as well as other things unsuitable for this publication! The song was

written while Dury was on tour in Italy. The inspiration for the song was a near fatal accident involving one of the lighting technicians, Charlie, who was electrocuted. Charlie's life was saved by one of his colleagues but the accident resulted in the cancellation of the tour. "Too short to be haughty, too nutty to be naughty, Going on 40 - no electric shocks", are lines in the

song that refer to that accident. Catastrophic events such as the recent riots in Croydon raise the question "What is of deepest significance to us?" What is it that make us get out of bed in the morning - our reasons to be cheerful? If we imagine what life would be like without those things, including porridge and 18-wheeler Scammells, and then compare how we might feel if we

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*People come to St Matthew's for all kinds of reasons*



# Reasons to be cheerful?

*Continued from front page*

lost the most significant person in our lives, I think most of us would agree that it is the quality of our relationships that matter most. We all need a certain amount of 'stuff' to survive in life. But more than material goods we need a sense of significance and purpose. Without these our lives can seem pretty meaningless. We gain significance and purpose by experiencing love - the love of parents, families and friends. But we have a deeper need still. More than human love we need divine love. We are beings made up not just of matter; we have a soul or spirit that we ignore at our peril. The greatest significance we can gain is through the knowledge that we are loved by God. This love is the biggest reason to be cheerful.

Everything in our lives can be stripped away - including all the people we love - yet God's love remains.

Love is at the heart of all that exists, and we can know this because of one Man who showed to the world the full extent of divine love. He lived in a backwoods part of an obscure country in the time of the mighty Roman empire. He was seen as such a threat to those who supposed themselves to have power, that they had him executed. But all his followers, then and now, believe that he was raised to life. Because of Jesus, we can know that death need hold no fear for us. It is faith in his love that gives us the greatest of all

reasons to be cheerful. Whatever it is, or whoever it is, in your life that gives you a reason to be cheerful, may you know that you are loved - with no precondition or pretence or limit. In spite of all the pain, misery and suffering in the world and in our lives, love does have the last word. What a reason to be cheerful!

*Rev Simon Foster,  
Vicar of St Matthew's*



## INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

**We are at the heart of the community of Park Hill and are open to all:** whatever ethnicity, religious belief, gender, trade, profession, political persuasion, sexual orientation, nationality, fanaticism (including football!), favoured pet or any other discriminator you might care to think of.

*We are an inclusive church in an inclusive community. We look forward to meeting you!*





# PRAYER GARDEN APPEAL: PHASE 2



**We rejoice that Phase 1 of the Prayer Garden has been completed.**

The flower beds are beginning to bloom and the beech hedge is beginning to take shape and colour.

We now need to complete the project and bring the vision to reality.

The final stage is to pave the path from the front of the church and link it to the Prayer Garden along the line of the hedge, and then to install a feature at the centre of the paved circle, as well as to improve the shrubs along the church boundary.

The approximate cost of this work is £6,000.

We have received a very generous legacy and the PCC has agreed to put up to £3,000 from this towards the Prayer Garden. This still leaves £3,000 to find.

Once this final phase has been completed we will have an area of the church which will be a great asset to the whole community: a place of prayer and contemplation, as well as where loved ones can be remembered.

Please will you help St Matthew's

church realise this vision? I know there are many calls upon our resources, but one final push will enable us to complete this task and leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

### **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP:**

Please make cheques payable to St Matthew's PCC. If you are a UK taxpayer, St Matthew's will be able to claim an additional 25% of your donation at no extra cost to yourself. All you have to do is supply us with your name and address.

Please be as generous as you can.



## New Course for Park Hill: Christianity Explored



**Christianity  
EXPLORED**

Christianity Explored gives people time and space to think about the big questions of life. This is an opportunity for you to explore the life of the person at the heart of the Christian faith: Jesus Christ.

Meeting in small groups in homes on Park Hill, we will meet on seven occasions during the autumn this year. The basic structure of our meeting is an informal meal or snack, a short Bible study, a short talk (either 'live' or from a DVD) and

sharing in discussion based on the talk.

We will come together one Saturday for sharing across all of the home groups and for lunch together.

Do join us for this new development, which is for the entire community of Park Hill.

To express interest and find a suitable home group (daytime or evening to suit), please phone Terry at 020 8681 3147 or email: [explore@stmatthew.org.uk](mailto:explore@stmatthew.org.uk).

# WHAT'S ON AT ST MATTHEW'S?

Day	Activity	When	Information
Sun	Morning services	Weekly 8.30am and 10am	Church website: <a href="http://www.stmatthew.org.uk">www.stmatthew.org.uk</a>
	Healing service	Monthly 5pm 1st Sun	
	Evening service	Monthly 6pm 3rd Sun	
Monday	Caterpillar Music - babies; pre-school	Weekly 10.30am -11.15am	Mrs Gerry Farrell-Morrish: 0797 424 9466
	Little Stars - 4-6 year olds	Weekly 4.15pm - 5.15pm	Mrs Faye Willingale: 020 8460 5711
	Fit for Life - circuit classes	Weekly 12 noon - 1pm	Mrs C Ridley: 020 8680 8307
	U3A - Looking at London	1st Mon, 2pm - 4pm	<a href="http://www.u3a.org.uk">www.u3a.org.uk</a>
	Rainbow Guides	Weekly 6.10pm - 7.30pm	Diane Bull: 020 8680 0065
	Brownie Guides	Weekly 6.10pm - 7.30pm	Judith Spencer-Gregson: 020 8688 6640
	Croydon Speakers Club	2nd & 4th 7.45pm - 10pm	email: <a href="mailto:sana@croydonspeakers.org.uk">sana@croydonspeakers.org.uk</a> or 07508 394324
	Croydon Writers	Monthly 2nd Mon 7.45pm - 9.45pm (Not August)	Diane Battenberg email <a href="mailto:battenbergdiane@yahoo.co.uk">battenbergdiane@yahoo.co.uk</a> or <a href="http://www.croydonwriters.org.uk">www.croydonwriters.org.uk</a>
Tuesday	10 O'Clock Club mothers & toddlers	Weekly (Term Time) 10am-12	Lauren Doherty 077 9217 9255
	Flower Arranging	Monthly 8pm 3rd Tues	Sue Collins: 020 8688 2362
	U3A - History of London	Monthly 4th Tues	<a href="http://www.u3a.org.uk">www.u3a.org.uk</a>
	Disco Dancing - children	Weekly 4.45pm - 6.30pm	Danielle: 0750 512 6160 <a href="http://www.parkhillschoolofdance.co.uk">www.parkhillschoolofdance.co.uk</a>
	Cub Scouts	Weekly 7pm - 8.30pm	Mark Hudson: 020 8776 1660
	Croydon Philharmonic Choir	Weekly 6.45pm - 9.45pm	Mrs B Walmsley: 01689 811133
Wednesday	Coombe Townswomen's Guild	3rd Weds 10am -12 noon	Mrs B Jones: 020 8668 3472
	Eucharist	Weekly 10am	<a href="http://www.stmatthews.org.uk/services">www.stmatthews.org.uk/services</a>
	Gallery Group	Weekly 11am	Christian Discussion Group
	U3A - Singing for Pleasure	4th Weds, 10.30am - 12noon	<a href="http://www.u3a.org.uk">www.u3a.org.uk</a>
	U3A - 20th Century British history	1st Weds, 2pm - 6pm	<a href="http://www.u3a.org.uk">www.u3a.org.uk</a>
	Adult exercise	Weekly 2.15pm - 3pm	Fiona Avenalle: 020 8657 0602
	Children's Ballet Classes	Weekly 3.15pm - 6pm	Fiona Avenalle: 020 8657 0602
	Girl Guides	Weekly 7pm - 8.30pm	Judith Mitchell: 020 8681 1924
Croydon Bach Choir	Weekly 8pm - 10pm	Mrs M Padgham: 020 8655 3064 or Mrs H Draper: 020 8405 2172	
Thurs	Breathe Easy	1st Thurs, 12.30-2.30pm	Mrs P Andrews 020 8654 6940
	Helen O'Grady Drama Academy	Weekly 4pm - 6pm	Mr I Brown: 020 8667 9812
	Tai Chi	Weekly 8pm - 9pm	Marnix Wells: 020 8656 9038
Friday	Dancing Art Academia (Indian Dances)	Weekly 4.30pm - 5.30pm	Mrs Gargee Singh: 07738473523 email: <a href="mailto:gargee@hotmail.co.uk">gargee@hotmail.co.uk</a>
	Beaver Scouts	Weekly 6pm - 7.15pm	Mark Hudson: 020 8406 4849
	Appreciate Life	Weekly 8pm - 9.45pm	Neel Shah 07840 796 706
Saturday	Coffee Morning	Weekly 10am - 12pm	Drop in and chat. Come and join in
	Fairfield Councillors Surgery	2nd & 4th Sat	Drop in to meet your local Councillor
	Safer Neighbourhood Team	Various dates	See noticeboard for dates
	Forget-me-not Café - Alzheimer's	Monthly 1st Sat 1pm - 5pm	Alzheimer's Society Croydon Branch: 020 8916 3587
Occasional	Concerts by Croydon Bach Choir, Croydon Philharmonic Choir, Jubilate Choir, Cantilena Singers		Noticeboards in church
	Family birthdays and special occasions		Apply to Church Office
	Residents Associations: quarterly and annual meetings		



# Croydon's Best Kept Secret?

**Christian Family Concern (CFC) was founded in 1893 as an organisation helping unmarried mothers and their children.**

Providing semi-independent living accommodation for young mothers with support needs remains an important part of the organisation's work today. The charity also provides accommodation for young single women without children who have similar support needs and runs a move-on programme to help develop independent living and parenting skills.

Christian Family Concern is based on South Park Hill Road. The purpose built complex includes a nursery as well as an after school club (both rated good in recent OFSTED reports). The Birdhurst Kids Club is an after school club and holiday play scheme. Both the nursery and the after school club welcome babies and children with special needs and the Birdhurst Kids Club has a summer disability

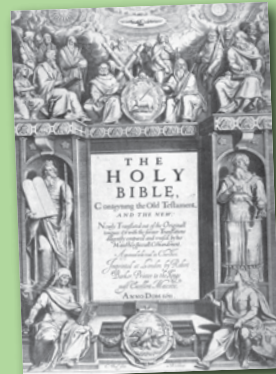


initiative that has been running very successfully for several years.

Leslie Hillier, the Chief Executive of Christian Family Concern acknowledges that his organisation is probably "Croydon's best kept secret" and is proud of the work the charity does to support all families in Croydon not just Christians. Looking forward, Christian Family Concern is planning to launch a 1-2-1 Christian counselling service for adults towards the end of 2011.



## 400th Anniversary of King James Bible



**The King James version of the Bible is central to both the religious and secular cultures of the English speaking world.**

Since its first publication in 1611, it has contributed more to idiomatic or proverbial English than any other book in the English language.

Expressions such as east of Eden, to everything there is a season, a still small voice, how are the mighty fallen, a thorn in the flesh, suffer little children, beat their swords into plowshares, get thee behind me and be horribly afraid are unique to the King James version.

To mark the 400th anniversary of its publication, we have chosen this year to read the King James version of the Gospel at some of our services.

In early July many parishioners celebrated the anniversary by sharing their favourite readings whilst enjoying a traditional English cream tea.



# Update on Schools

Together in Park Hill talks to Bill Yearly, Head Teacher of Park Hill Junior School, Jane Charman, the new Head Teacher at Park Hill Infants School and Richard Parrish of Archbishop Tenison's School.

## JANE CHARMAN, PARK HILL



I have been a member of the Senior Leadership Team at the school for nine years, as Inclusion

Manager and then as Assistant Head. I'm extremely proud of this school. All the staff and governors are totally committed to providing a creative and stimulating learning environment for every child.

Now I am delighted and excited to be appointed as the new Head Teacher at the school. I'm looking forward to continuing to build partnerships across the school and the wider community, and to developing closer links with the Junior School. We aim to build on the high standards already achieved and to find new and innovative ways to help Park Hill Infants School develop and grow.

## RICHARD PARRISH, TENISONS

[What do you see as the key issues for the school looking to the future?](#)



We are trying to build up our community following the introduction of 10% open places and increasing

numbers coming into year 7 from 96 to 108, whilst continuing to maintain a strong 6th form, which

makes up a third of the school.

The school is adapting to all the changes in the curriculum, especially the English Baccalaureate. Our aim is to help young people to become independent learners and ultimately to make an impact in the global economy. As a Church School we aim to nurture the Christian character of every young person and of the whole school community.

[What is your response to the comments made by Bishop John Pritchard concerning admissions to church schools?](#)

Church Schools are there to serve everybody. We seek to offer a Church of England education to those who want to benefit from it, without losing sight of the distinctive contribution that Church Schools make to the whole education service.

[How do you respond to RE being left out of the English Baccalaureate?](#)

It would be big mistake if an overemphasis on one area led to a lopsided curriculum in which learning of subjects such as Art and RE gets downgraded. Whatever happens RE will remain a compulsory subject within the curriculum. At Tenison's all pupils will gain a RE GCSE or equivalent as part of their core curriculum. RE should be part of every child's curriculum, because whatever our views or beliefs it is vital to know what we believe and why and to gain an understanding of what others believe and why.

## BILL YEARLY, PARK HILL



The end of the summer term means the end of an era, as two-form entry is replaced by three-form with a one year four-form entry, owing to a population bulge. This means big challenges for the school both in terms of the staff - how to maintain the quality of education that we all expect, and the buildings - how to squeeze space out of the existing site, without losing playground area. Obviously the playing field is sacrosanct!

The school has recruited two new teachers and six support staff who will start in September, and over the summer the Cotelands area will be redeveloped which will provide a temporary solution to the space problem. A permanent solution will have to be found by September 2012.

Other problems flow from this increase in pupil number. As 50% of children are brought to and from school by car, congestion will be an even greater issue.

At this time of change it is good to note that the Head Teachers of both schools are working closely together to obtain the best education for all the children.



# TURMOIL IN NORTH AFRICA

**We are all aware of the uprisings which have affected many countries in North Africa this year. How are people faring?**



Bishop Bill Musk is the face of the Anglican church in Tunis and has a role in leading the church in

North Africa.

He shared his experiences with us during his recent visit to the UK. Bishop Bill told us that places are changing quickly.

Holy Trinity Algiers has 160 people in the congregation but no ordained leaders.

Christ the King in Tripoli was, until the current crisis, a church buzzing with services in many languages, from exuberant African services to Asian spiritual singing.

St George in Tunis is 80% African. The congregation is

grappling with big issues such as when does ethnocentrism become racism, and how do you have helpful and creative relations with Moslem peoples? People of St George's are very active in supporting refugees, having helped NGO's to provide up to 20,000 meals a day before the UN could get started. The church is still deeply involved as around half a million refugees are stuck on the border.

An important issue for an emerging national church in North Africa is one of self-perception and national identity. Those who come to Christ need to see that they are true Tunisians. As followers of Christ,

they need to learn new skills of forgiveness and not to judge others.

Another issue is how does the Anglican Church become indigenous? One solution is to use indigenous songs to stir the spirit but how far do they go?

**How far should the church go to make people feel at home?**

There is a great need for the church of North Africa to emerge with leaders from the region. Many of us are concerned for people of all the nations and all faiths living in North Africa. We pray for them, their families and those whom they love.

Reporters: James Foster and Richard Hinder



# Park Hill celebrates 40 years in 2012

**Many older people in the parish of St Matthew will recall the extensive redevelopment of the 1960s to 80s. The population increased dramatically as high density modern dwellings replaced large Victorian houses and their extensive gardens.** Coincident with the development of Park Hill came the move of St

Matthew's Parish Church from its previous location in George Street to Chichester Road.

To celebrate our 40 years together in Park Hill, we are planning special events and services. Visit our website at [www.stmatthew.org.uk](http://www.stmatthew.org.uk) for up to date information, and watch for announcements on

the church noticeboards. The precise date of our 40 years anniversary is Thursday 14th June 2012 - see the carving in stones below which is above the inner entrance doors to the church.





# SCIENCE AND FAITH - FRIENDS OR FOES?

Contemporary western societies are profoundly ambivalent about science. On the one hand science is invested with exaggerated expectations and inflated hopes. The vision is for a high-tech universe in which we manipulate its powers to serve our own ends. At the other extreme a vigorous anti-science lobby views scientists as dangerous meddlers, wresting secrets from nature that are best left well alone.

Christians of all people have every reason to see science as a friend. After all, within the European context, modern science was started by Christians. The 1663 charter of the Royal Society declares that its activities shall be devoted 'to the glory of God the Creator, and the advantage of the human race' and its officers were required to swear an oath on 'the holy Gospels of God'. The experimental study of nature was seen as a form of religious worship. The founders of many of our scientific disciplines were people of deep Christian faith - people such as Robert Boyle, one of the founders of modern chemistry; the astronomers Kepler and Galileo; naturalists such as John Ray and

Linnaeus; and natural philosophers working in the physical sciences such as Isaac Newton, Michael Faraday, Clerk Maxwell, Kelvin and Eddington, to name but a few. The very idea of scientific laws has its roots deep in Christian theology.

In Britain science and faith in the form of natural theology remained mutually supportive until the closing decades of the 19th century. Then science began emerging as a professional discipline, those who practiced it started being called "scientists", and science and religion increasingly parted ways. The idea of "conflict" between science and religion was started by the campaign of the new professional class of scientists to gain for themselves the power and prestige that then belonged to the Church.

In more recent years the new atheists have tried to use science to prop up atheism. At the other extreme creationists have opposed evolution. The exposure given in the media to the minority pursuits of both these opposite poles has ensured that the idea of "conflict" between science and religion remains in the public consciousness.



But the reality is that science and faith remain friendly first cousins. The scientific community has a sizeable cohort of Christians in its ranks, far more than in the arts. Several universities have chairs and lectureships in science and religion and there is no lack of books and conferences on the subject for those who want to learn more.

Science and faith provide complementary narratives. Science addresses questions of mechanism: How do things work? Faith addresses the big questions beyond science: Why does something exist rather than nothing? Does life have a purpose? How should we live our lives? There is no need to choose between science and faith. They provide different perspectives on the same reality and we need them both.

*Written by Denis Alexander, Director of The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion [www.faraday-institute.org], St. Edmund's College, Cambridge, where he is a fellow.*



## Save the planet: register to receive 'Together' by email

If you have a PC or Mac at home, please register to receive future issues of this newsletter by email. Point your web browser to [www.stmatthew.org.uk/together](http://www.stmatthew.org.uk/together) and follow the instructions. We will send you a copy of this edition by email as confirmation.

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