

SEPTEMBER 2008

THE MINISTER’S LETTER

My dear friends,

Early this month, three representatives from The Hyde URC and the Chinese Church will meet as the Joint Church Council, to consider our ministry and our use of the buildings. It was Roger, I think, who thought of the title for our weekly notice sheet “The church at the centre of Colindale”, but while this is factually correct – at least *geographically* – I wonder how much we are at the centre of *the community*. Please hold the members of the Council in your prayers: in the case of the URC they are Maria, Chris, Jim and our Moderator.

I hope that, as we get used to “living together” and working together, we will find ways of truly being “The church at the centre...”

I have now passed the fifth anniversary of my induction into the ministry here. During those five years there have been a few changes, some more noticeable than others. The new buildings are of course very obvious; but the change and growth of the congregation and membership perhaps not so obvious. For example, last Sunday, Cathy was at the piano and able to count the congregation. With about twenty ‘regulars’ missing and accounted for, and a few ‘extras’ in church, there were 34 people present. From memory (which is admittedly not very good in someone my age) that was the average congregation five years ago. The growth has been almost imperceptible, but certainly has happened and is continuing.

The ethnic makeup of the church has also changed, too. Those 34 people represented twelve nationalities. I hope that we can claim that this reflects a welcoming church: one in which all who come are loved and accepted.

So, we’re growing *in numbers*; are we growing *spiritually*? I know I’m banging a familiar drum, but *what do we want for our church?* Do we just want a pleasant religious club to which we come for an hour or two on Sundays? Or do we want a place where we can all *grow in Christ*?

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This is tied up with something I preached about in August: that in our tradition, and in the tradition of any growing church since New Testament times, it was not just the minister, not even just the Elders, but the whole of the people of the Church who shared in the proclamation and the sharing of the Gospel... and they did this from a basis of close fellowship with each other.

How can we develop this fellowship? In a month or two we will be challenged to do this in the process of *Vision4Life*. Perhaps our fellowship with the Chinese Church will throw up other ways – for example in the way we minister to the children and young people in our membership. But our thought processes should also be guided by – you’ve got it – the whole of our membership.

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Finally, **our buildings**.

During the next week or two, a few of us will be walking round the new parts of our premises with clip boards, for we have to report to the builders with any snags we find. If you have spotted something that “isn’t quite right”, and which should be rectified before we sign the buildings off and make our final payment to the builders, will you please see (or preferably give a note to) Roger or me. We can then get the problem dealt with.

I hope that your holiday break – if you were able to take one – was joy-giving and life-enhancing!

Love and peace to you all.

Revd Jim.

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GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST



NEWS AND NOTICES FROM THE CHURCH

HARVEST WEEKEND

Our Harvest Celebrations will be on the weekend of 27th and 28th September. Please keep an eye open on the weekly notice sheets for further information.

Chris Mortimore

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HARVESTING PRAYER – A HYDE CHURCH EVENT

On Saturday 27th of September our church is holding a focused time of prayer. This will take place from 12 noon until 6.00 p.m. During that time it is hoped that different people will be leading prayer on behalf of the church, so that we are talking to God every minute of the six hours. This event will take place in the Hendon Room – you are invited to come and stay for as long or as short as you feel able – to be a part of what we hope will be a really focused spiritual event.

We are also looking for members of the congregation to lead prayer.

You can lead prayer for as long or as short a time as you feel able (5 mins, 10 mins, 15 mins, half an hour – the choice is yours). Leaders will be asked to sign up to a rota just so we know who is leading, at what time and that the whole afternoon is covered.

Your prayers can take any format you wish – written yourself, published prayers or just your spontaneous thoughts on the day.

Please consider this event carefully if asked to take part, or even better – come and find me and volunteer – that way you'll get the slot you want. Want to volunteer but unsure of where to start? Please contact me – I'd be happy to give you some pointers.

The afternoon will end with a short time of worship and prayer from 6.00– 6.30 p.m. –to unite all the prayers of the day and dedicate them to God. Following that, after a suitable break, you are invited to attend the Harvest Supper Social Evening at 7.00 p.m.

The focus will continue on Sunday as we come together at 10.00 a.m. for our Harvest Festival Service, which this year is being led by the Elders.

Be a part of this event. Support your Church in prayer and action and witness the power of prayer.

Paul Wardrop-Day
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INDUCTION OF MODERATOR

On Saturday 4th October at 2.30 p.m. the new Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Andrew Prasud will be inducted.

The service will be at The City Temple and will be followed by a presentation of “Spirit Songs” by the Life and Mission Choir.

Chris Mortimore

**PREACHING PLANS for -
SEPTEMBER 2008**

SEPTEMBER

7th Sept. - 10.00 a.m. - Mr. C. Mortimore
 14th Sept. - 10.00 a.m. - Rev. J. Gould
 6.30 p.m.- Communion
 Rev. J. Gould
 21st Sept. - 10.00 a.m. - Rev. J. Gould
 28th Sept. - 10.00 a.m. - **HARVEST**
 Rev. J. Gould
 and Elders

OCTOBER

5th October - 10.00a.m. - Mr. C. Mortimore

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**PREACHING ENGAGEMENTS
FOR CHRIS MORTIMORE**

Please pray for Chris as he leads worship
at the following venues during
September.

SEPTEMBER 2008

7th Sept. – 10.00 a.m. – The Hyde
 14th Sept. - 11.00 a.m. - Chesterfield Road
 21st Sept. - 11.00 a.m. - St. John’s, New Barnet
 6.30 p.m. - St. John’s, Kenton
 28th Sept. - 11.30 a.m. - Bushey

OCTOBER 2008

5th Sept. - 10.00 a.m. - The Hyde

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DEAR GOD

A Sunday School teacher challenged
her children to take some time on
Sunday afternoon to write a letter to
God. They were to bring their letter
back the following Sunday. One little
boy wrote,
“Dear God, we had a good time at
church today. Wish you could have
been there”.

DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER 2008

SEPTEMBER

Wed. 3rd Sept. - 1.15 p.m. - Lunchtime Service
 Thurs. 4th Sept. - 2.00 p.m. - Hyde-De-Hi
 Sat. 6th Sept. - 9.00 a.m. – Men’s Breakfast
 Sun. 7th Sept. - 12.30 p.m.– Lunch at
 Poolsford Road
 Mon. 8th Sept. - 7.30 p.m. - Church Council
 Wed. 10th Sept. - 1.15 p.m. – Lunchtime Service
 Wed. 17th Sept. - 1.15 p.m. - Lunchtime Service
 Thurs. 18th Sept. - 2.00 p.m. - Hyde-De-Hi
 7.30 p.m. – Elders Meeting
 Wed. 24th Sept. – 1.15 p.m. - Lunchtime Service
SAT. 27TH SEPT. - 12 NOON – 6.30 P.M. –
 PRAYER DAY
 7.00 P.M. - HARVEST SUPPER
 Wed. 27th Aug. - 1.15 p.m. - Lunchtime Service

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Message from the Editor

I have just had a few days away over the Bank
holiday, a nice rest but the weather left much to
be desired! The Bar BQ started outside and
puddings were eaten inside out of the rain!
Anyway, the rest of the few days was
reasonable but not sunny or bright, certainly not
summertime. Maybe September will be a much
better month weatherwise.
Don’t forget Harvest weekend – lots going on!

May I please have all material for the **October**
Messenger by no later than **Sunday 28th**
September.

Vivien Crispe

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Some boys stopped to collect conkers on the
way to church. As a result they were late
and they entered the church just as the
congregation were singing the first hymn:
“**See the conquering heroes come.**”

HOUSE GROUPS

Our two Housegroups will restart for the Autumn term on Wednesday 10th September. If you feel that you would like to join either the morning or evening group, please speak to our Minister, Jim Gould or myself.

Chris Mortimore

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CONGRATULATIONS!

On behalf of the Church, we wish to congratulate Josephine Balfour, who has obtained a 2-1 degree in History and Politics. Josephine is now going on to King's College, London to study an M.Sc in Public Services Management.

We wish Josephine well in her future months of study and, once again, many congratulations.

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Final Examinations

Revd Samuel Jordan had a son at college preparing to take his final examinations. He asked him to be sure to let him know how he got on. One day the minister received an e-mail which read, "Hymn 179, verse 5, last line." Looking up the hymn in the hymn book, he was pleased to read,

**Sorrow vanquished,
Labour ended,
Jordan passed.**

THANKS

Following my recent hip operation, we would like to thank all those who have helped us in so many ways during the past few weeks.

Your prayers, cards, messages and visits have been much appreciated and we have been very grateful for your love and support.

Joyce and Stella Field

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HARVEST PROJECT

This year our Church Outreach Project has been for St. Luke's Hospice, which last year celebrated their 20th Anniversary, looking after and giving support to the terminally ill, giving comfort and companionship to the patients.

As in previous years we will be supporting the Hospice by donating our Harvest produce. This helps very much towards meals for the people who are resident or day visitors. Please give as generously as you can with any home produced vegetables or fruit, together with boxes of cereals, tins of soup, tea, coffee, etc., all of which will help.

The Harvest produce is always welcome and is gratefully received, so, a little tin or a big box of cornflakes will be accepted but please, no out of date tins or packets.

Vivien Crispe.

PROJECT POTS

At the Harvest weekend on Sunday, 28th pots for the St. Luke's Hospice Project will be returned. We hope to increase our giving for this Project as we are, at present, somewhat under our target! This will be our last return of pots for the Hospice, after which our new project for 2008/2009 will commence. This will be an overseas project and will be advised in next month's Messenger.

REFLECTIONS

“BLESSINGS”

WHAT HAPPENS IN HEAVEN?

I dreamt that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, “This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received.” I looked around in this area and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section. The angel then said to me, “This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them. “I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth.

Finally at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. “This is the Acknowledgment Section,” my angel friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed. “How is it that there is no work going on here?” I asked.

“So sad,” the angel sighed. “After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgements.”

“How does one acknowledge God’s blessings?” I asked.

“Simple,” the angel answered. Just say, “Thank you, Lord.”

“What blessings should they acknowledge?” I asked.

“If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the world’s wealthy.”

“And if you got this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity.”

“If you woke up this morning with more health than illness....you are more blessed than the many who will not even survive this day.”

“If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation.... you are ahead of 700 million people in the world.”

“If you can attend a church without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by and more blessed than, three billion people in the world.”

“If your parents are still alive and still married.... you are very rare.”

“If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm, you’re unique to all those in doubt and despair.”

Ok, what now? How can I start?

“If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you as very special and you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.”

“Have a good day, count your blessings, and if you want, pass this along to remind everyone else how blessed we all are.”

