



CHURCH MOTTO 2006

**“As the Father
has sent me,
I am sending
you.”**

John 20v21

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The Cloud

WELL, we're back from the land where the daytime temperature fluctuated between 35 and 45 degrees. At night it dropped to a balmy, pleasant, 28-30!

Yes, the island of Crete was hot, but beautiful in an arid, stony, very exotic, sort of way. The bare landscape was softened by endless olive groves, lemon and lime trees, and huge palms constantly swaying and rustling in the breeze, a breeze that tempered the intense heat and made it more than bearable for this Englishman! It really did feel like a foreign country, where octopi (you know, lots of octopus!) were hung out to dry on clothes lines prior to being eaten; where the occasional peasant, shepherd's crook in hand, could be seen ambling slowly along the road, followed by his wife, sat side-saddle on a donkey.

The sea was the sort of colour that you only get in the bottom of swimming pools in this country, but which is the real thing over there! It felt at times, as if we had stepped back into the Bible. Dry dusty roads and the sights and sounds felt a lot closer to those that the Bible talks about than those that we experience here in Blighty.

One of the Bible-like things that we saw was a cloud. Well yes, I know that that is something that we see a lot of in England, but not like this one. This one in Crete was special. The sky was cloudless, all the time, yet just briefly, a small cloud appeared as we walked besides the sea. In the space of one minute it had increased twenty-fold. It had gone from nothing to a reasonable sized cloud, that even English skies

would have been proud of. It reminded me of the story in the Bible where the prophet Elijah told his servant to go and look towards the sea from which a small cloud, the size of a man's hand, was rising. That small cloud signalled the beginning of the end, as far as Israel's three year drought was concerned. When God broke in again, it wasn't, initially, very spectacular – just a small cloud rising from the sea.

We can be on the lookout for similar signs of God breaking into our lives in the coming days. Just because it isn't spectacular, it doesn't mean that it's not of God! Like Elijah's servant, let's be scouring the horizon for those tell-tale signs of divine activity, breaking through into our world.

Neil



Alpha

See page 4

Church Diary

September

- Sun 3 10.30am Morning Worship – *Rev Neil Abbott* including Dedication of Jude Smith
 Mon 4 8.00pm Deacons
 Wed 6 8.00pm Worship on Wednesday
 Sat 9 7.30pm Barn dance (see advert p 3)
 Sun 10 10.30am Morning Worship – *Rev Neil Abbott*
 Wed 13 8.00pm Church Members Meeting
 Thur 14 8.00pm Pastoral Care Team prayer meeting
 Sun 17 10.30am Morning Worship – *Rev Neil Abbott* including Dedication of Nahum Barlow
 Tues 19 8.00pm Joint Alpha Prayer Meeting (see advert p4)
 Wed 20 8.00pm Worship on Wednesday
 Sun 24 10.30am **Harvest Family Praise** – *Rev Neil Abbott*
 Wed 27 7.30pm Alpha Supper (see article p4)

October

- Sun 1 10.30am Morning Worship – *Rev Neil Abbott*
 Wed 4 8.00pm Worship on Wednesday
 Sun 8 10.30am CHURCH ANNIVERSARY – *Rev Clive Doubleday (Smile International)*
 Mon 9 8.00pm Deacons
 Thur 12 8.00pm Pastoral Care Team prayer meeting
House Groups meet at 8pm on Monday and Tuesday and 11am on Friday, of the weeks beginning 3rd & 17th Sep & 1st Oct.

Regular Weekly Programme

Sunday

10.30am Morning Service, Sunday Club and Young People Communion is celebrated on the 3rd Sunday morning of the month

Tuesday

10.00 - 11.00am "Getting to Grips" – Bible study group (Refreshments served half an hour before and after the session) restarts **12th September**

Wednesday

10.00 – 11.30am Parents and Toddlers restarts **13th September**
 7.45pm for 8.00 Worship on Wednesday

Thursday – "Open Doors"

10.00 – 10.45am Music & Movement for pre-schools – restarts **5th October**
 from 12.00am 'Open 4 Lunch' – restarts **5th October**
 1.15 – 3.00pm Line Dancing – restarts **7th September**
 from 2.15pm Afternoon tea – restarts **5th October**

Friday

7.30 - 9.30pm Contact - games, talk-time and tuck for young people – restarts **8th September**

September

Happy
 Birthday

Lxxx Gxxxxxxx
 Jxxxx Gxxxxxxx
 Mxxxxxx Gxxxxxxx

BMS Birthday Scheme

Fellowship News

Please pray for those who have lost close relatives recently, especially **Jxxxx Kxxx**, whose mother has just died, and **Rxxx Nxxxxx** whose sister, Pam, died just after our last Newsletter was published.

Rxxx Cxx's sister, **Dxxxx**, has at last been found a place in The Priory (the same nursing home as **Mxxx Wxxx**). We thank God for answered prayer. Continue to pray that **Dxxxxx** settles in well and for **Rxxx** as she completes the property sale and prepares for her sponsored cycle ride in Kosova next month.

Axxx and Cxxxx Jxxxx are expecting their first baby in February. Pray for them as they prepare for this event while continuing to lead Contact.

Congratulations to **Pxx and Fxxxx Bxxxxxx**, who celebrate their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 7th September.

Pray for **Dxx Hxxxxxxxxx**, who has been unwell recently, as she waits to learn how the move of Interserve to Milton Keynes will affect her personal situation.

Several people in the fellowship have been unwell or undergoing hospital tests. Remember to pray for one another especially for **Mxxxxxx Bxxxxxx, Jxx Cxxxx, Vxxx Dxxxxxx, Pxxxx Gxxxxxx, Rxx Gxxxxxx and Dxxxx Sxxxxxx**. Remember, too, others who have been unable to worship with us recently including **Dxxxxxx Sxxxxxx, Mxxxx Kxxx, Exxxx Yxxxx** and **Mxxx Wxxx**.

Congratulations to our young people on their recent GCSE and A level successes. **Hxxxx Axxxxxx** is now going to Royal Holloway

University of London; **Axxx Cxxxx** is going to the University of Southampton, both of them to read Geography; **Hxx-Mxxx Cxxxx** is going to Aston University to read Business Studies; and **Dxxxx Txxxxx** is going to Trinity College, Oxford, to read Chemistry. Please pray that they settle in well and find good Christian friends.

Pray too for our other students who are returning to College or University, including **Jxxxx Kxxx** who is spending the next two terms in France and Germany, **Mxxxxxx Cxxxxx** and **Mxxxxxx Nxxxxx** who return to Durham and Brighton Universities respectively; and **Hxxxx Axxxxx** who is returning to North West Kent College.

Rxxxxx Kxxx has now completed his assignment with the Navigators and is currently "temping" in Birmingham while he looks for permanent employment. Please pray for him.

July Giving

General Fund	02/07/06	£520
	09/07/06	£546
	16/07/06	£553
	23/07/06	£716
	30/07/06	£429
BMS		£50
Gifts		£40
Total for month		£2854
Expenditure for month		£6342
The figures in this table include amounts given under gift aid.		

August Giving

General Fund	06/08/06	£780
	13/08/06	£294
	20/08/06	£410
	27/08/06	£299
BMS		£20
Gifts		-
Total for month		£1803
Expenditure for month		£3895
The figures in this table include amounts given under gift aid.		

In Brief

Church Anniversary

Our Anniversary this year will be held on Sunday 8th October when our visiting speaker will be Rev Clive Doubleday, Chief Executive of Smile International, who will be updating us on Smile's work. We are planning to collect shoeboxes as usual during October so you may wish to start collecting bits to fill them. Alternatively you may wish to make a donation so that shoeboxes can be assembled in the destination country. This saves on transportation cost and import taxes and ensures that boxes are assembled to match the local culture and local needs. If you prefer to do this, gift aided if possible, then just place your donation in the offering clearly marked "shoeboxes".

Counselling

Our free Christian Counselling service has been well received and Brian Joyce has joined the team as a student counsellor in order to cope with demand. Brian has already completed his third counselling qualification. Please pray for Brian and Maurice as they minister in this way.

Counselling does not offer easy answers to problems but can help people to deal with anxiety and stress, depression, phobias, prolonged bereavement, low self esteem, lack of self confidence and many other problems. If you know anyone who might find this service helpful, phone Maurice on 079 4703 5725 for a leaflet or more information.

Harvest

This year our celebration will be on 24th October. If anyone can provide flowers or green-

ery or can help to decorate the church, please have a word with Sue Goudie.

This year our Harvest offering will go the BMS World Mission and we are collecting non-perishable items for the London City Mission who feed and care for many homeless people in London every day. If you would like to help, the following items are needed.

Food

Tinned food
Baked beans
Spaghetti rings
Tomatoes
Soup
Fruit
Sugar
Tea Bags
Coffee
Biscuits
Orange Squash
Blackcurrant and Apple Squash
Salt and Pepper
Vegetable Oil (cooking)
Brown Sauce/Tomato Ketchup (all in plastic containers for safety please)

Toiletries

Shower gel
Disposable Razors
Toothpaste
Toothbrushes

Manse Kitchen

As a result of a very generous gift, we have been able to go ahead with re-establishing a garage at the manse and installing a much needed new kitchen. We are grateful to all those who have given freely of their time to help the work along but especially Pat and Frank Bowdery's son, Martin, for organising the electrical and plastering work, to Rita Coy's son-in-law, Ian, who skilfully joined the work surfaces, and Terry Alliston for assembling and installing the units.

Sunday Club Anniversary

What a great weekend we had for our Sunday Club Anniversary back in early July. Perfect weather for the outing to Swanley Park followed by a great morning, led by Andy Masters from CRIBS. Andy's sense of humour, mime and ability to have us listening eagerly to every word, was thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated by everyone.

Well done to all the children who sang "God you're amazing" with such obvious enthusiasm. It was one of those tunes that you can't stop singing!

Many thanks to Julie, Carol, Sarah, Jenny and Heather who ran the Sunday workshops for the children during the summer. Sunday Club resumes on the 3rd September and we'd love to have more children, ages 3-11 join us. Each Sunday we play games, and do craft or artwork relating to the day's Bible story. Why not come

and see for yourself?

Christine Keep

On Saturday the Sunday club went to Swanley Park. We went on the steam train and the paddleboats. On the steam train we went quite fast and when we went past the field we saw some children playing. On the paddleboats Thomas and I kept on swapping seats/ It was very rocky. We also had a great lunch. THANKS! I would like to say thanks to Christine for taking us out on a lovely day.

Eddie West

We went to Swanley Park on Saturday July 8th. We went on the Pedaloes, to the swing park and had a picnic. It was a fun day and we all had a great time.

On Sunday 9th Andy Masters took the service and told us about how God looks after his sheep. The Sunday Club sang a song to the congregation. We enjoyed it.

Thomas Graham

Family Harvest Praise

10.30am
Sunday 24th September

This year we would welcome contributions of non-perishable food and toiletries which will be given to London City Mission to help with their work with poor and homeless people in London.



Barn Dance

7pm - 9.30

Saturday 9th September

£1.50 per person £4.50 per family of 4

Tickets from: Christine Keep 020 8302 3052
or Sarah Graham 020 8302 9308

Joining Forces for Alpha

Ten churches in *Bexley, Sidcup and Welling* are set to run Alpha courses this Autumn and will be inviting people to supper parties in a range of venues. These are designed to introduce local people to the Alpha course, which provides an opportunity to explore the meaning of life. The course is free and open to anyone.

Geoff Waller is leading Alpha at Albany Park and will be supported by a band of helpers. Invitations to the Alpha Supper on 27th September are going out to our neighbourhood with the Harvest publicity so please encourage friends and neighbours to come along to find out what Alpha is about.

A joint prayer meeting for all the churches involved will be held at Albany Park on Tuesday 19th September at 8.00pm so please come along to seek God's blessing on this Autumn's campaign.

The campaign is the UK's biggest Christian advertising initiative this year. It is titled 'The Alpha Invitation' emphasising the relaxed and non-threatening nature of the course, which is primarily for those who do not attend church regularly.

The national advertising campaign features former Alpha course guest Bear Grylls, the youngest Briton to climb Everest, reaching the summit of a mountain asking

the question 'is there more to life than this?' A 60-second Alpha cinema commercial will be shown nationwide in September 2006 with matching postcards in cinema foyers. There will also be advertisements on bus backs.

Alpha is one of the most widely-known Christian initiatives in the country. Over 10 million British adults can identify Alpha as a Christian course (*MORI, September 2005*). Two million people across the UK are already estimated to have taken part in local Alpha courses, now running at over 7,000 churches of all denominations.

The Alpha Invitation forms part of the church's plan to reverse the decline in attendance over the past twenty years. Only 7.5% of the population now regularly attend church, but many churches running Alpha report that their congregations are growing as a result and some are seeking bigger premises to hold these growing congregations

The Alpha course is a practical and contemporary introduction to the Christian faith and provides a relaxed and informal opportunity for participants to make up their own mind about Christianity. It involves one meeting a week for about ten weeks and typically involves a meal followed by a talk and then time for discussion.

Back on Terra Firma

David and Mary Trim have successfully completed their journey round the coast of Britain in "Jemima" with Charlie Tait of Charlie Sailing. They are now slowly picking up the threads of local life and David faces decisions about treatment for his prostate cancer. But more enjoyable things like the choice of a new boat, planning work, Alpha courses and further expeditions also lie ahead... "now choose life".

The blog tracking their adventure is on http://uk.360.yahoo.com/round_britain_2006 and makes fascinating reading.

Some interesting statistics are:
Jemima has logged 1,877.3 Nautical Miles in the eight weeks.
No. people seasick 5
No. of lifting/swing bridges negotiated: 5
Nights sailed: 5
No. of islands encountered: 23 (at least)
Wildlife spotted - Seals, Dolphins, Puffins, Basking sharks, Otters
Co-sailors: 13
Underwater things bumped: 2 (plastic boom Tobermory, shoal off Muck)
Longest leg: Eyemouth to Buckie: 166 miles, 37 hours
Max speed over ground: 12, through water: 9 knots (rounding Calf of Man)
Max wind - F7 sailing to Isle of Man, F9 while anchored there
Injuries list: one strained

shoulder, one stubbed toe, one grazed leg, numerous minor bruises

Things lost: blue flannel, blue swimming trunks (leaving historical flower power lurid yellow ones unscathed much to family's dismay), blue compass (reappeared at bottom of glory hole after several days), winch handle (overboard), ear cushion of Mary's spectacles

David and Mary would like to thank all those who have been following their journey and for your prayers. Some people have already given generously to the two charities which they wanted to promote: Mildmay Mission Hospital and Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). Others may have been waiting until they finished and wish to make a donation now. Maybe you might like to consider donating say a penny a mile or perhaps £10 for every person who was seasick, etc. You can do this by credit card at <http://www.justgiving.com/2006RoundBritain>
Donations are split 50/50 between the two Charities with MAF administering the process on behalf of both.

David and Mary will be preparing a presentation of their trip in support of the two charities. Please let Geraldine know if you would like us to invite them to Albany Park.

***Joint Alpha Prayer Meeting for 9 churches running
11 Alpha groups in Bexley, Sidcup and Welling this Autumn
8pm Tuesday 19th September at Albany Park Baptist Church***

**IS THERE MORE
TO LIFE THAN THIS?**

