

# Nifty News

February 2009



## Message from Mike Reith



Dear Friends,

**Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.**

(Psalm 146:3)

On 20th January Obama-mania peaked. The world watched a good looking, intelligent, articulate leader take charge of a powerful nation. Obama has brought unity and hope perhaps more than any other leader.

However the Bible tells us not to trust him. Why not?

First, No human leader is in charge as much as he (or we) think. Leaders are made helpless by 'opposing forces'. Obama would love to shut Guantánamo Bay. But he can't risk releasing some terrorists. He wants to cool the planet. But the expense involved will stifle the economic growth he needs. He wants to please Muslims... and Israelis! Some call his silence on the Israeli attack on Gaza 'missing in-action'.

Second, Leaders don't control the future. He didn't cause the credit crunch. But the reality of it means his 'socialism' is derailed while he bails out capitalism! External events like that will keep happening.

Psalm 146's command not to trust princes makes sense for 3 reasons.

First we'll stop trusting God - which means we'll stop praying to him. Obama and America will be more prayed for if we have a realistic understanding of his weakness, rather than a false hope in his strength. Psalm 146 has a great social programme in view. But only God can achieve it. We ought to voice our longings to him.



The other other reason not to trust Obama is to be kind to him. If we expect too much of leaders, we'll condemn them when they fail, rather than encourage them in failure.

Thirdly, Jesus is the only perfect leader. Psalm 146 has in mind a Lord reigning forever. Keep your eyes on that kingdom.

Mike Reith

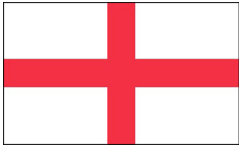
## Wider Community News

### New houses near the Cross Keys Pub

The council have some land between the pub garden and Plum Tree Close. The idea is to build new houses on it, and the entrance will be through the pub car park. Local residents however are concerned about the space available for traffic entering the site from Crown Street, and are likely to oppose the developers in this scheme.



## St. George's Day Local celebrations 25th April '09



Although St. George's Day is on the 23rd, there are plans to put on a local event for the community on the Saturday. Plans are still being formed, but there may be stalls and attractions

based on 'the green', the church car park, and in our church buildings. As this is a gathering organised by local residents for the community (and there are no political parties involved), it is an ideal opportunity to add our friendship to those who will be there.

## Bowel Cancer screening.... Helpline - 0800 707 6060

If you are between 60-69 screening may help to prevent bowel cancer which is the 3rd most common cancer in men, and the 2nd most common in women. Caught early, it can be cured.

[www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk](http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk)



## Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (FCA)

It may be helpful to remember "FCA" which is a new movement for CofE types (called 'Anglicans') across the world to encourage each other to stick with the core moral and missionary values that we have always believed in.

Dagenham Parish Church has joined FCA as an organisation. However individuals within our church are encouraged to join as well. Visit the website [www.fca.net](http://www.fca.net) for further information.

## SOUTH EAST GOSPEL PARTNERSHIP.

The PCC will attend the annual conference of SEGP during February and will have the privilege of being fed from the Word of God by John Woodhouse.

Hopefully they will bring back many good things to feast on and to challenge us as we think and prepare for the 2010 Mission - *Passion for Life*.

SEGP interviews John Woodhouse, Principal of Moore College in Sydney, Australia. He will be speaking at the SEGP Annual Conference in February 2008.

**Q:** The theme of our annual conference is "Prepare for Mission". Why should church leadership teams give up a Saturday to prepare for mission together in February?

**A:** It is vital that we all learn to see the people around us in the light of God's wonderful purposes. At the South East Gospel Partnership Conference we will be hearing from God's Word about the needs of our neighbours and friends and the joyful privilege of sharing Christ with them. We must take time to ensure that God's Word shapes our thinking and motivates our lives.

**Q:** What do you consider to be the major obstacles today as churches reach out with the gospel in mission locally?

**A:** The major obstacles that I see are firstly that Christian churches can become inward looking and need to make a deliberate effort to practically care about the unbelieving community around them. Secondly there is always (and always has been) the temptation to be ashamed of the gospel. Foolish as this is, it very easily holds us back from sharing the wonderful news about Christ with those who so desperately need to hear it.

**Q:** How would you hope this day would help prepare local churches for the nationwide 2010 mission "A Passion for Life"?

**A:** My hope is that those who attend the conference will discover afresh the joy of making Christ known. There is nothing to compare with seeing people move from "darkness to light", from being "without hope and without God", to becoming His forgiven children.

**Q:** Sydney is having its own city-wide mission next year - Connect 09. What are your hopes for Connect 09?

**A:** "Connect 09" in Sydney is a great effort to see Christians 'connecting' with every person living in Sydney. In a wide variety of ways, we hope that we will be able to share God's Word with everyone in our city. This is already involving a lot of thought and work about how we can make meaningful contact with our communities from which we have at times become too isolated.

**Q:** Having led a local church for many years before becoming principal of a theological college, what do you miss about the local church? What were your main encouragements as you look back on your time at Christ Church St Ives?

**A:** Moya and I spent 11 years at Christ Church St Ives. Among the many joys of those years, by far the greatest was seeing young people and adults from many different backgrounds, joining God's family and growing in their knowledge and love of Him.

## A Passion for Life is about God's mission: God's passion for our life in Christ

A Passion for Life is all about **God the Father** – furthering his purpose of redeeming a great multi-cultural people for life in his Son, by stirring up local churches across the land to work together in numerous mission initiatives that climax in March 2010 for his glory alone.

A Passion for Life is all about God the Son – his marvellous death and resurrection for sinners, that can be celebrated at Easter by people of all ages and backgrounds.

A Passion for Life is all about God the Holy Spirit – who, through his Holy Word, is calling us to prayer and transforming the way we think about our churches, evangelism and the world around us.

## WORLD NEWS January - 2009 PLEASE PRAY

Monday January 26, 2009

### SRI LANKA: PARLIAMENT TO VOTE ON ANTI-CONVERSION LAWS

Draft 'Bill for the Prohibition of Forcible Conversions' enters final phase. COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, January 26 (Compass Direct News) – The Sri Lankan Parliament may soon enact laws designed to restrict religious conversions. A standing committee assigned to consider a draft "Bill for the Prohibition of Forcible Conversions", presented its report to Parliament on Jan. 6, suggesting minor amendments that clear the way for a final vote in February. The provisions of the bill criminalize any act to convert, or attempt to convert, a person from one religion to another religion by the use of force, fraud or allurement. Those found guilty of breaking the law could be imprisoned for up to seven years and/or fined up to 500,000 rupees (US\$4,425). Civil rights groups and Christian churches say it will infringe on the constitutional rights of freedom of religion and legitimise harassment of religious minorities. Sri Lankan Christians have repeatedly expressed concern that key sections of the draft bill are open to wide and subjective interpretation that could criminalize not only legitimate religious activity, but also legitimate social action by faith-based organizations or individuals. "A lady who heads a charitable trust caring for orphans asked if she could be charged under this law, since she is a Christian, and some of the children she cares for are not," a lawyer told Compass. "Many people will now think twice before helping the poor or needy, for fear of being accused of committing a criminal act."

Please pray for Mike and Debbie as they travel to Sri Lanka in February. Pray for Mike as he will be teaching students and pastors from the book of Romans at the Colombo Theological College for the first week. Pray too for Debbie as she will be studying for the Bible course she is doing. Pray for safety and refreshment, as they visit friends and have some holiday time.

### Government minister: faith should not be kept private

Religious people should not have to keep their faith private, a Government minister has said. "A large number of people in Britain see faith as "the key to their whole identity" and should be listened to by politicians", said Stephen Timms, Financial Secretary and Labour MP for East Ham.



Mr. Timms was delivering a lecture on politics and faith at the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR).

His comments will be received with caution by Christians who feel their religious freedoms have been increasingly eroded by new legislation introduced in recent years.

He said, "faith communities offer a rich resource of hopefulness which, in progressive politics, we need to tap into and draw upon".

He argued that rather than dismissing "faith-based perspectives", progressive politicians should recognize them as "valid and mainstream".

"That means recognising that faith cannot be relegated to the private sphere", he said.

According to a recent poll, more than four in five Christians (84 per cent) think that religious freedoms, of speech and action, are at risk in the UK.

A similar proportion of Christians, (82 per cent), feel that it is becoming more difficult to live in an increasingly secular country.

Last year, Labour MP Ruth Kelly said political debate was becoming more secular and sidelining religious belief. Speaking in the wake of her resignation from the Cabinet, she said, "It is difficult to be a Christian in politics these days".

Mr Timms was among a number of MPs who voted against the inclusion of a free speech protection, in a recent 'incitement to homophobic hatred' law.

The Government is now seeking to remove the protection, despite warnings that the 'incitement' law could be used as an excuse to silence the views of Christians on sexual ethics.

Government minister: faith should not be kept private Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, recently prompted fears that Christian groups carrying out important social work could lose funding unless they dilute their Christian character.

She said: "I am concerned to ensure that if faith groups become involved, they do so on a proper footing – not by evangelising or proselytising, but by providing services in a non-discriminatory way to the whole community."

A report from the Church of England recently accused the Government of ignoring the valuable work that Christians – many of them volunteers – carry out in prisons, hospitals, counselling services and other organisations.

The Government itself acknowledged in a report last year that there are "a number of specific challenges for faith-based organisations" including "poor understanding of their role by all sectors" and "concerns over proselytising activity that can serve as a barrier to accessing funding". Yet, the document says: "Faith-based organisations make up a substantial part of the third sector, with a long history of working with offenders in prisons, through the gate, and in the community."

The article has been taken from the Christian Institute. This organisation is carrying out vital work on our behalf in looking into, understanding, battling with parliament, lawyers and others who seek to water down the Word of God, or blatantly disregard it. We at DPC acknowledge the important work they do and send them an annual donation of £1000. They have an excellent website - [www.christian.org.uk](http://www.christian.org.uk) Please do spend time reading and praying for their projects, many of which will affect our lives.

## The Christian Institute - WHO ARE THEY?

The Christian Institute exists for "the furtherance and promotion of the Christian religion in the United Kingdom" and "the advancement of education".



The Christian Institute is a nondenominational Christian charity committed to upholding the truths of the Bible. We are supported by individuals and churches throughout the UK.

We believe that the Bible is the supreme authority for all of life and we hold to the inerrancy of Scripture. We are committed to upholding the sanctity of life from conception.

**Colin Hart, Director**

## FOR A COLD WINTERS NIGHT.

### How many can you solve?

#### ANAGRAMS - Men of the Old Testament

Hat on JanEh? .....	I'm a hen! .....
More acid .....	Hard cash .....
Like Zee .....	Mob a hero .....
Hit goal .....	Me Saul .....
SOS! Me? .....	Hi Asia! .....
Enhance buzzard .....	I do, Ahab .....
Jim 'n' Bean .....	So, a Jephthah! .....
No looms? .....	Denial .....
A Manna .....	A lush theme .....
Hike haze .....	Hire map .....
I jam here! .....	Seal him .....
Bah! A ram .....	In dorm .....
I'd gone .....	Hail Cam .....
One badge .....	No semi .....
No mass .....	Razzle bathes .....
An oar .....	A bad machine .....
A lamb! So? .....	Heal an ant .....
Sheila .....	Canine herbs .....
More a job .....	Adores hand .....

**ANSWERS** - See March Nifty News

### Are you searching for a table?

**Well, Kathy and David Playle have a Round Table, (without King Arthur) just for you. It is about 4 foot in diameter. Please see them if interested!**



### Free transportation can be arranged

<b>1st Feb</b>	All Age Service - 10.30 am - Church
<b>1st Feb</b>	Parkview Nursing Home - Service 3.30pm ALL WELCOME Please see PETER ANDREWS
<b>5th Feb</b>	Prayer Meeting - 8 pm - Minor Hall
<b>7th Feb</b>	SEGP Conference at St. Helen's, Bishopsgate
<b>15th Feb</b>	Welcome Lunch
<b>15th Feb</b>	Friendship Team Visits - 3 pm - Vicarage
<b>16th Feb</b>	PCC Meeting - 7.30 pm - Minor Hall
<b>28th Feb</b>	Men's Breakfast - 8.30 am - Exeter Road Hall

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