

# DPC News

Dagenham Parish Church

November '11



Dear Friends,

If someone told you that two senior clergymen in St. Paul's cathedral had resigned, you'd think something scandalous had happened.... especially if what they resigned over then prompts headline comments from the Archbishops of Canterbury & York - the 2 most senior clerics in the country!

However the fuss is about a group of people in the 'Occupy London Stock Exchange' movement. They have set up 200 tents in front of St. Paul's simply because it is a convenient open space near the Stock Exchange. One clergyman supports them; the other didn't. They both left. The Archbishop of Canterbury and York have now weighed in against individual 'fat cats' profiting too much from our financial systems.

Now some would say that it doesn't take a tented protest to tell us that there is urgent need to review our financial decision-making. Our capitalist system, no more Christian than any other financial approach, is in crisis. We're being sucked into the money mess of Greece and Italy. These are important social concerns our society is well aware of.

But how large should these concerns be on the minds of our church leaders? Jesus was once asked to make a financial ruling. It was between two brothers arguing over their inheritance (Luke 12). Here was an important social concern. It gave Jesus opportunity to say something about fairness in human relationships. Instead he said there was a real danger we'd focus on this life, and be unprepared to meet God when we die. Jesus went on to urge people to trust God for the things of this life (very practical advice actually), and to seek his kingdom as the first priority.

I know it appears we haven't got our feet on the ground if we talk about eternal life, when society is wanting to improve this life. But eternal life is more real than any financial game plan, because it will last longer. Those tent protestors won't be asking our church leaders why we didn't say more about financial fairness when they stand before Jesus one day.

[www.dagenhamparishchurch.org](http://www.dagenhamparishchurch.org)

They'll want to know why they weren't told about the reality of eternal life in heaven or in hell. The question is not whether Jo(e) Public thinks the church is 'relevant' now. It is whether we'll be thought truthful in the future. So when senior clergy resign or seem preoccupied with matters to do with our Stock Exchange, something scandalous HAS happened.

God's spokesmen have lost their eternal perspective. When that happens it's time Archbishops left their grand palaces... and took up life in a tent!

Mike Reith

Your child could have a  
*free healthy lunch*  
and you could help their school financially!

Did you know that if your child is entitled to free school meals, their daily allowance will automatically be credited to their StreetBase Connect or Splash account?

By topping up their StreetBase Connect or Splash account, no one will know if they have a free school meal or not as it's anonymous.

Your child's school will also benefit greatly.

Schools receive funding from the Government for children who claim free school meals – this way, both your child and their school benefits.



**F** = *Funds for your school*

**S** = *Stay anonymous*

**M** = *Money for you and your family\**

\*If you are on a low income or receive Child Benefit and any of the following benefits, you could claim free school meals for your child.

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Pension Credit (guaranteed credit)
- Employment and Support Allowance

To get the daily allowance automatically credited to your child's StreetBase Connect or Splash account, just make that claim!

Check if you think you're entitled and fill in an on-line form at [www.lbbd.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals). Or you can fill in the application form over the page.

If you would prefer to speak to someone, phone **020 8227 2970** for more information or help.

Please fill in and return the application form as soon as you can to start receiving an entitlement that will help your child and their school.



# BOOK REVIEW

## Seven Days that Divide the World by John Lennox

Have you ever asked yourself or even been asked... "Where do we come from?"

"Are the scientists right when they claim it all started with a big bang, and we are merely a product of chance?"

Or even... "Mum/Dad my teacher says that we all come from apes...is there any truth in that?"

It seems nature programmes on TV take every opportunity to teach this 'fact'!

On the other hand... The Bible claims God did it!!!

In the dim and distant past that claim may have been good enough.

But what about today when scientists are so much more knowledgeable and have even discovered the building blocks of 'life itself'!

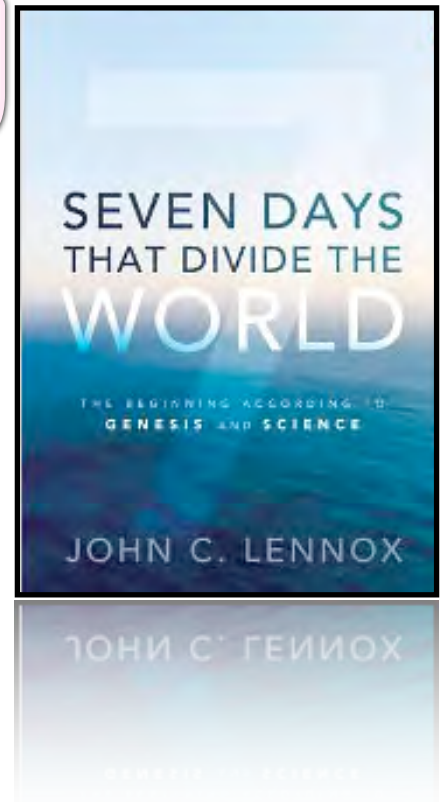
Does claiming that 'God did it' mean we are simply using Him to fill in the gaps that we can't explain?

John Lennox is a professor of Maths at Oxford University and has travelled the world lecturing in Maths, the philosophy of science and the intellectual defence of Christianity.

In this book he takes on all of the above questions... and more... and provides some fascinating answers based on what the Bible says in the first two chapters of Genesis.

Using his extensive scientific understanding He is able to tackle head on modern atheistic arguments with brilliant logic that is entirely faithful to Scripture (and in language that is understandable to ordinary every day readers). He is able to expose the flaws in leading scientific claims that the Bible and science are mutually incompatible. He answers the thought that we don't keep God anymore because of scientific advances..

If, like me, you find answering the questions above difficult, then I would highly recommend reading this book.



Pete Turner



Gardeners can learn a thing or two from Dagenham Parish Churchyard which has won the Green Flag award for the fifth year running!

Gentlemen who manage the Royal Parks visited DPC's churchyard in May to inspect the area, studying plans that had been made, and to give advice about planting new trees in different areas of the Churchyard. One of the Royal Parks gardeners expressed great interest in the Churchyard's war graves, explaining he had worked for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The team were also impressed to see that there was very little sign of vandalism or litter.

DPC Churchyard is maintained by hard working conservation volunteers from Barking and Dagenham.

Gareth Winn, senior conservation officer who manages the Churchyard site, said: "Thanks so much to our volunteers for their hard work in helping to manage this and other green spaces in the borough."

Do you love the great outdoors? Would you like to serve the local community? Why not join the team who help maintain the conservation sites in Barking and Dagenham.

To find out more, contact the Ranger Service on 020 8595 4155 or email [parksandcountryside@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:parksandcountryside@lbbd.gov.uk)

### **Coming Events...**

Help plant fruit and nut trees in the new Community Orchard in the Beam Parklands from 11am to 2pm on Saturday 12 November.  
Book a space by calling 020 8595 4155.

Come and help tidy up Beam Parklands from 10.30 to 12.30 on Thursday 17 November. No need to book!  
Children aged 6 and over can join in a Festive Treasure Hunt on Saturday 26 November from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.  
You can book a space by calling 020 8595 4155.

For all other events check out the council website: [www.lbbd.gov.uk/parkevents](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/parkevents)

[www.dagenhamparishchurch.org](http://www.dagenhamparishchurch.org)

# WOMEN'S CONVENTION

## Mirrors and Mistaken Identity? (Finding ourselves in Christ)

Mirrors help us see ourselves but some mirrors give us a distorted image. We learned this at this year's Women's Convention.

Our first speaker was male! I wondered why! Then we read from Psalm 8: 'Majestic is the name of the Lord in all the Earth'. I realised this subject was relevant for both men and women.

Graham Beynon (our speaker) explained we can look at ourselves using two mirrors - the world or God's word.

The world's mirror focuses on physical appearance and possessions. It compares us with others to measure our success, so we need, or are threatened by, others.

The mirror of God's word gives a true picture of us. We are God's creation, free to love and serve others. We depend on God's praise and our lives revolve around Jesus, acknowledging his importance and his Glory.

We then looked at what God sees inwardly; our shameful admission of sin in Mark 7 and the humble dignity of our salvation as shown by the Prodigal Son in Luke 15.

Andrea Trevenna, our next speaker, explained the consequences of living through the world's mirror. We studied the second chapter of Jeremiah where Israel strayed from God and worshipped idols. Like them, we prefer to believe the lies of the world instead of trusting God.

Without God, we become heartless and focus on short term pleasure.

We ultimately become discontent and resentful.

Instead, we can choose to trust in God and walk in God's will.

As each day comes we can delight in God as He delights in us.

We are loved and valued by God! I had an amazing realisation - I am the most beautiful of God's creation as I am made in his image.

I am so precious that he sent his only son (Jesus) to take my punishment and experience death for me, before returning to Glory.

I found the 'Mistaken Identity' theme was very powerful & relevant. Since the conference, my focus is definitely on the future. I am asking God to help me to look at all life through His eyes, and not my worldly eyes.

It was also great spending time with my DPC sisters.

Verona Lawrence

# OPEN DOORS

## Life after Gaddafi: hope for Libyan believers?

Following the defeat of Muammar Gaddafi, Libyan Christians face an uncertain future. Gaddafi led a tight security system that monitored his people, whether Muslim or Christian.

Foreign Christians could express their faith publicly, but converts from a Muslim background kept a low profile out of fear of being expelled from their family or forced to return to Islam.

The new government will almost certainly be Islamic. For now, the microscopic minority of local Libyan Christians will keep a low profile. However the revolution temporarily opened the borders of the country. This provided an opportunity for Open Doors to respond to requests for humanitarian aid, Christian literature and Bibles.

What Libyan Christians need most are our prayers. Please pray for the new government, and for a real change for the country. Pray also for the Christians, for more openness to the gospel and for more opportunities to share Christ's love.

Meanwhile in Algeria, Christians are closely surveyed by security services and face harassment from their relatives and communities. The pressure to return to Islam is great. The Algerian Constitution provides for freedom of conscience and opinion, yet blasphemy laws are used to punish non Muslims. Other laws are used to intimidate and detain Christians.

Open Doors organised a meeting for MPs to discuss religious liberty in Algeria. Supporters emailed invitations to their MPs, which resulted in 50 MPs making contact and 12 MPs attending the event. As a result, the MPs have decided to put down an Early Day Motion and contact the Foreign Secretary. At the meeting, Algerians expressed their gratitude to their Christian brothers and sisters in the UK whose prayers and campaign actions are deeply encouraging.

Open Doors provides Bibles, Christian literature, training and practical support to the persecuted church worldwide. Please consider signing up to receive information – believers who face persecution are strengthened by our prayers and our support. To find out more visit [www.opendoorsuk.org](http://www.opendoorsuk.org) or call 01993 885400.

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CDEA

Chelmsford  
Diocesan  
Evangelical  
Association



## The Anglican Covenant and the Future of the Anglican Communion

Chelmsford, CM2 7LJ.

Queries 01245 492741

**Saturday 26 November: 10.00 to 1.00**

*Coffee from 9.30.*

Our speaker will be the Rev Dr Andrew Godard. Andrew is a Fellow of the Anglican Communion Institute. He was a tutor in Christian Ethics at Trinity College, Bristol and taught at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.

**the South East Gospel Partnership presents..**

**7:00-9:30pm, Saturday 19 November 2011**

**PIE, MASH & LIVE BAND**

# **COCKNEY RUBBLE**



*Sing along with all your favourite cockney tunes,  
then hear the band singing the same tunes  
with words that explain their Christian faith.*

**at Robert Clack School, Gosfield Rd, Dagenham, RM8 1JU.**

**Pie 'n' Mash dinner & soft drinks provided.**

**STOP PRESS... if you'd like to buy a chair for the 'new church' in memory of someone, it will cost £115 to include a plaque with their name on. See Shirley.**

**CONTACT US...**

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