

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please join us for our Christmas celebrations this year

Sunday 11 December - 10.00
Nativity Carol Service

Wednesday 14 December - 11.30
Weekday Carol Service. Followed by lunch

Sunday 18 December - 18.30
Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve - 16.00
Candlelit Christingle Service

Christmas Day - 10.00
All Age Holy Communion

Look out for the following in 2017

Vision Sunday - 15 January - 10.00 and 18.30

Giving Sunday - 22 January - 10.00 and 18.30

Vineyard Lunch - 22 January - 12.30
Hosting the weekly lunch run by local churches

Alpha Course
Thursdays (evening) - 26 January to 23 March

Concert - 28 January - 19.30
Featuring Regina Goessel, one of our church members, who trained as an opera singer in Germany and worked for 13 years for an opera house in Germany. Classical music, opera, oratorio and art song, sung in English, German, Italian, French and even Czech!

Church Day - 4 February - 09.00
Breakfast, followed by a morning of worship, prayer and encouragement, with guest speaker John Valentine, Rector of St George's Church, Holborn. Social event in the evening

Please see our Weekly Church Bulletin and website for details of prayer meetings, breakfasts, socials and lots of other events.

VERSES TO LIVE BY

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" - which means, "God with us" (Matthew 1:22,23)

Just stop for a few moments and take in the significance of those three small words that Trevor highlights in his article - **God with us** ... They can make a huge difference to how you see the challenges of today and the uncertainties of tomorrow. Pray that this truth will transform how you see life and give you a new sense of hope as we move into 2017.



THE LAST WORD FROM TREVOR



God with us

Some people have the most unusual hobbies. One of the most bizarre I have heard of is people who drive around the M25 for a hobby. Particularly eccentric were the couple who had their honeymoon on a specially converted coach driving around the M25! I think for many of us the build up to Christmas can feel like we are on the M25, endlessly going around in circles at various speeds.

But this Christmas I also detect a 'dis-ease' and sense of insecurity. We are faced with the unknowns of 'Brexit' and a Trump presidency in the US, whilst the horrors of life in Syria continue to dominate the news agencies.

I want to state with confidence though that there **is** hope. The Writer to the Hebrews in the Bible speaks of the hope that is the bedrock of Christians everywhere; he says **"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."**

What is the hope that the writer is speaking of? It is as the angel said to Joseph in Matthew's Gospel, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" - which means, "God with us." It is the promise of God coming to us in Jesus, so that we can know that He is with us! The Christmas story is about God in Jesus revealing Himself to the world in human form, so that we might know Him and be reconciled to Him forever through his death on the cross; in Jesus, God draws us back from the isolation that human sin has created.

Jesus says to us 'follow me.' The early disciples did that, and if we turn and follow Him He **will** come to us and live within us by the Holy Spirit. One of the Church Fathers summed things up well - 'Lord we were made for you and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.' My prayer this Christmas is that you will know the anchor-like hope of God with **you**.

WELCOME TO HTR



Christmas is a great time of year to come along to church, especially if you're not used to joining us very often. There are lots of opportunities on Sundays and during the week. Or how about exploring the big questions of life on our Alpha Course in the new year? Or maybe your kids would like to join our groups for children and young people.

Call us on 020 8404 1112 or go to www.htrichmond.org.uk



@church_htr



HTR - Holy Trinity Richmond



holy|trinity|richmond
a church with an open door

Sunday Services - 10.00 and 18.30
Wednesday Service - 11.30

CORNERSTONE

Edition 10 - Christmas 2016

Sheen Park, Richmond, TW9 1UP | 020 8404 1112 | office@htrichmond.org.uk | Vicar - Rev. Trevor Patterson

CHRISTMAS IS COMING



In fact the season is already here! We kicked off our Christmas Services on 4 December with Contemporary Carols, which saw HTR members past and present join with some special guests for an evening of music, readings, video and worship. It was great to have Will Jackson and Josh Carpenter back with us, and to hear the harmonies of the local Campfire Choir.



This new venture for us was a reminder that in all the busyness, complexity and sometimes messiness of life today, God acted decisively in human history by sending Jesus to be God with us, a hope not only for today but for eternity.

Thanks especially to Nico Marais for putting together such a wonderfully inspiring evening.

DID YOU KNOW?

During December this year, we will have six special Christmas Services - see the back page for more details - as well as hosting six Services and concerts for local schools.

CHRISTINGLE



Our Christmas Eve Service is always a lively and packed gathering for local families, when we join together to celebrate as Christmas Day beckons. When it's too late (almost!) to do any more Christmas shopping, and the kids are becoming more and more excited, it's a

chance to sing some well-known Carols and consider the true meaning of Christmas.

The Christingle helps us think about what God did in sending Jesus: The orange represents the world; the red ribbon symbolises the love of Jesus in being ready to die for us; the sweets and dried fruit remind us of God's wonderful creation; and the candle speaks of Jesus the light of the world, bringing hope to people living in darkness.

BUILDING GOD'S CHURCH



Thank you to everyone who responded to the consultation exercise we carried out last summer and autumn. We asked you what you thought about plans to repair, refresh and redevelop our church building and site, and we were encouraged by receiving over 80 replies.

The Church Council spent some of its November meeting considering your responses. You generally indicated a high level of support for the things we're considering, but identified some where we need to think and pray further.

This is a challenging but exciting project that will be hugely significant for us and our local community. Please continue to pray for this venture as we take it forward.

FOCUS ON ... KARIS KIDS AND ST PETER'S CHURCH, WANDEGEYA

Karis Kids is about to celebrate its 10th Birthday! It started in January 2007, bringing hope to children orphaned by AIDS by supporting local families to care for them. Currently it works just in Uganda, but hopes to spread to other countries in the future.

Karis Kids families for orphans

Karis links churches in the UK with Ugandan churches to partner together in caring for orphaned children. Families in the UK churches are linked with Ugandan family groups, with a full time project leader administering the project in Kampala and overseeing local community workers who visit every family. The majority of our families live in the slums in Kampala with dependents of their own.

Rather than leave these children without the necessities of life that we take for granted, such as food, medical care and education, they are integrated into and supported by adoptive families. Karis aims to provide continuous support for the whole family, through building relationships with them and providing finance, encouragement and prayer.

Through our involvement with Karis we have been able to develop a link with St Peter's Church, Wandegeya, Kampala, which ministers in the needy and challenging slum area of Katanga. We have been able to support the church's ministry through annual gifts towards the cost of Rev Emmanuel's accommodation and through your donations to our annual Gift Day. Recently we have been



able to help the church construct a two storey building consisting of a front shop which is likely to be let to a pharmacy, a good size office for the vicar, an office for the Karis worker, and a large room to house the Children's Church and the sewing project, in which local people can come to learn tailoring. The space can also be used for meetings or functions. It should be finished later this month.



A team from our church - Trevor Patterson, Becky Edwards and Karin Boyton - together with Verity Bridges from Holy Trinity Barnes, recently arrived back from a trip. Becky writes ...

"Trevor did an amazing job speaking. He planned to deliver part of a course for emerging leaders, but had to change his talks at the last minute to cater for an entirely new audience of children and mothers. He spoke using the parable of the lost sheep, and then on sharing the Good News, getting everyone to discuss questions and pray for each other about miracles each would like God to do for them.

He also spoke on Micah 6 about real men at a men's breakfast. Then he preached three times over in three Sunday services to different language groups. All in all, we spent 6½ hours at church on Sunday! About 150 children were able to use the newly opened upstairs Children's church room. The heavens opened, making it difficult for the children to hear their leaders, and making Trevor struggle to speak over the noise of rain on the tin roofs.

Families we visited in Katanga opposite and below the church talked to us about what it is like when their homes are flooded repeatedly due to poor drainage or blocked channels. The slum is crowded, with busy thoroughfares filled with small stalls, with narrow alleyways, and channels of waste water flowing between. Yet it houses our lovely Karis families, who welcome us gladly into their homes, sharing their lives with us. I am grateful for their openness, and humbled by their zest for life, their gratitude for what everyone at HTR does for them, and by their fortitude and joy, often in difficult circumstances.



The bid to upgrade the local area also means slum clearance. All our Karis families, along with the other residents, have been served notice of the impending demolition of their homes. One or two have been able to put money aside to buy a tiny plot of land on the edge of the city on which they hope to be able to build. Most are sitting tight, waiting to see if it will really

happen. They have no plans. It is likely that many will just have to move their things to the next slum area. Going back to the village is not possible for some, who sold their land to come to the city, and not desirable for others who have settled and made friends and family there. It's an uncertain time for all the residents; they are feeling very anxious about the situation. Day to day, however, life goes on as usual in this busy area.

The beauty of our link with Karis Kids is about relationship. Our HTR groups of supporters and individual families have developed real relationships with the families they support, through letter writing, praying and through our regular visits. The Karis families in turn pray for their link families and write too. The relationship with the church has deepened over the seven years of working together. We always feel welcome when we visit, and we look forward to welcoming visitors here too one day."

2016 KARIS SUMMER CAMP



This September's Camp saw 315 children enjoy a week in the countryside away from their homes in the slums of Kampala.



The theme was *Rooted to overflow* (Colossians 2:6,7), and it was a time of great joy, energy and exuberance, from the keep fit session at

dawn through the worship times, teaching sessions, in the craft activities and on the sports field. The 45 team



members, including four from churches in Winchester, devoted themselves to the children, teaching and guiding them throughout

the week. God was clearly at work in the lives of the children and young people, and many became Christians.

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

Karin Boyton writes ... "Ever felt the tiniest bit envious? Looked at what others have and wanted it for yourself? That red fiat complete with eyelashes that is parked at work ... I sooo want that ... Or looking at those turning **left** instead of right on entering a plane for a long journey ... and oh, wishing ... my neighbour's designated room JUST for laundry ...

At the end of November I spent time thanking God for **my** blessings. I had the privilege of meeting our link families in Katanga slum in Kampala where families of up to twelve live in one or two tiny rooms with no windows and, in one case, only a curtain for a door. We were invited in to chat, catch up on family news, exchange greetings and relay messages from all you who support them at HTR. Pictures of some HTR members were seen on tops of shelves! We brought back gifts they had made or bought with their meagre resources.



As Becky has said, the authorities are warning that the slum is to be cleared for developers. Unlike the UK where they would have to be rehoused, these people are tenants only and have no rights. This threat is hanging over all our families who live there (three have moved out to areas with improved conditions). I received far more than I have ever given by meeting these people, and encourage you to continue to give, write and pray for them.

And... who needs a red fiat with eyelashes anyway ..."

PLEASE PRAY

Please pray for St. Peter's as it continues to face the challenge of how best to reach out to the Katanga slum. Especially for

- The sewing project, which is helping anyone locally who wishes to come to learn a skill which might generate them an income
- Local children thronging into the Children's Church each week, that they may not only grow in knowledge and love of God, but be so empowered that they spread Jesus' love wherever they are
- Karis families living in Katanga, that they will carry and share Jesus' love in increasing measure.

WOMEN'S WEEKEND



Kate Webb writes ... "On Sunday morning of 9 October, there were around 40 women missing from church! All were away at The Oast Houses Christian Retreat Centre in East Sussex. The weekend was a wonderful opportunity to get away and spend some extended time with God and with each other, deepening our relationship with Him, praying for one another and deepening friendships between women. It was also a time of relaxation, great food, games, mocktails and opportunities to swim and walk in the beautiful countryside around.

We were so blessed to have Mary Kissell come with us and speak to us over the course of the weekend about living in the fullness of the abundant life that Jesus came to give us. I was particularly moved by her call for us to remember the promises of God and to hold them close. And she reminded us that it only takes a moment to turn back to Jesus - He will be right there to welcome us.

Extended times of worship, seminars and small group prayer were special times for us to meet with Jesus and know Him really close to us. A quote from the weekend - *"It's full of blessing, encouragement, challenge and faith building."*

A big thank you to Kate Patterson for all her hard work in organising such a special time away."