

# **St Thomas',** Trowbridge & **St John's,** West Ashton

February 2010  
Monthly News

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## **Mission Statement:**

Preparing the hearts of the people and the structures of the church for the next great move of God in England.

## **Motto for 2010:**

He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure.

## *THE FATHER HEART OF GOD*

**Martin Luther** was a monk, a priest, and a university professor, but had a terribly troubled conscience and no confidence that a just God could accept him. Then while lecturing on Paul's letter to the Romans, he had a moment of revelation.

*I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which, through grace and sheer mercy, God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise... If you have a true faith that Christ is your Saviour, then at once you have a gracious God... This it is to... look upon his fatherly, friendly heart, in which there is no anger or ungraciousness.*

The deepest, and arguably most needed, work the Spirit does is to reveal God's Father Heart to us. Paul describes this in Romans 8:16;

*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

Luther talked about God's 'fatherly heart' and it's an aspect of our gospel the Holy Spirit is highlighting again today. That's no accident because many of us nowadays haven't experienced a father's love. Many have had **absent** fathers who simply weren't on the scene, or only paid occasional visits. [Incidentally, this is not an attack on lone parents. I know some amazing single mums who work incredibly hard and manage to combine both roles for their kids brilliantly] Others had **emotionally absent** fathers who were physically present, but simply weren't able to give the warmth and affirmation a child craves... or else work took up every ounce of their time and energy and there was nothing left for the kids. Others still have had over **strict or demanding** fathers, or fathers who have **abused** you, physically, emotionally verbally or sexually. All this means many of us carry deep wounds or struggle with lack of confidence and self-worth in ways God never intended. God is now doing something about that - he's adopted us as His children and wants us all to have a fresh revelation of His Father heart.

Jesus said He'd come to show us the Father – to introduce us to the best father in the universe. He revolutionised the whole concept of prayer by telling us to call God Abba – Dad or Daddy. No one before him had ever suggested you could be as familiar or intimate with God as that. The Prologue to John's Gospel says,

*Yet to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave **the right to become children of God.** (John 1:12)*

This is dramatic. It was a deliberate choice on God's part to adopt us as children and give us full rights of access, intimacy and inheritance alongside Jesus. It's like Madonna, one of the richest women in the world, flying to Africa, scooping up a baby born into abject poverty, with no prospects, and bringing it back to a life where it has every opportunity and advantage anyone could wish for. (Maybe that's not the best example because being adopted by Madonna might be a bit scary in other ways!) Most of us know we are children of God as a doctrinal fact – now the Holy Spirit is intent on making it an experienced reality, which is a completely different thing. Paul calls him the *Spirit of Adoption*.

[You can listen to this sermon, 'Assurance of Salvation' (24 January 2010), in full on the Sermon Recordings page of the church website [www.stthomastrowbridge.org](http://www.stthomastrowbridge.org). It includes a powerful testimony of what God did at a Catch the Fire 'Father Heart Conference'. Elsewhere in this month's news you can find details of one of these conferences you could attend in Swanage.]

**Allan Coutts**



# 2010: THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT AND GREEN!

**What did YOU get for Christmas?  
Whatever you got, I hope you liked it!  
But think about it. There are over 6 billion people on the Earth. How many got presents?  
Where does all that paper, ribbon, rubbish and plastic go? Now you're**



My friend here has the answer!

Correct. So here are some ideas of what to do with all you leftover stuff:

**REDUCE**

By using less packaging.

**REUSE**

By reusing the not too ripped paper and making amazing junk models with it

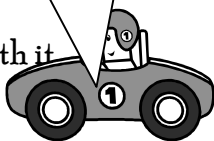
**RECYCLE**

Do it for the



Remember us?  
Help preserve our habitat!

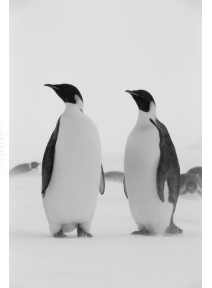
The landfill site of DOOOOOOM!



# I'm dreamin' of a green christmas...

Here's some people who really did get one!  
Let's see what they got:

- Stuart - cut throat razor
- Chris - bought wind up torch
- Andrew - energy monitor



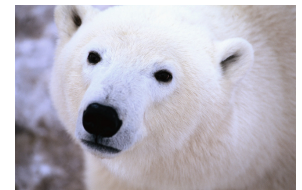
What to get for 2010: Prezzy problems SOLVED!

- Solar powered light
- Solar calculator
- Solar radio



The coolest thing EVER – a COLA POWERED radio!  
(available from WHSmiths).

## New Years Resolutions



Have you made a Resolution to Help the Environment? Try these suggestions:

- Use water more sparingly.
- Buy only sustainably sourced fish - MSC certified.
- Insulate your home and fit radiator valves.
- Let the train take the strain for longer journeys.
- Eat less meat and buy your food locally.

## 2010: A Critical Year for Sudan

Our mission focus during January and February is on Sudan. This is a highly significant time in the life of the nation five years after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and one year before a critical referendum. General Scott Gration, special envoy to President Barack Obama, said "*The CPA has survived through five years of sometimes acrimonious dissent between the parties and it has prevented a return to war,*" He also acknowledged that north and south Sudan are "*far behind in their implementation of the most contentious provisions of the CPA.*"

In January 2010, 10 charities issued a report warning that the CPA is in danger of failing, and that Sudan could slide back into war. "*A return to war is by no means inevitable, but it depends whether the world heeds the warning signs of the past year and has the political will to save the peace,*" said Paul Valentin, International Director of Christian Aid.

**Pray for our Sudanese brothers and sisters, sharing the impassioned conviction of Archbishop Deng (Archbp of Sudan), 'When God speaks through us, everything around us changes.'** Pray for church and civic leaders, and for the military to work for unity and peace.

In 2009 some 2,500 people in Southern Sudan were killed and 350,000 fled their homes, a human toll greater than occurred last year in Darfur. Women and children have increasingly been targeted in attacks on villages and the Government of Southern Sudan and international peacekeepers have not been able to protect them.

There are two key deadlines: April 2010, when nationwide elections are due to be held and January 2011, when a referendum will decide whether the south should remain part of a united Sudan, or become an independent state. There are several complicating

factors including failure to deliver key parts of the

CPA, suspicion between parts of the country and the logistics to ensure the process is fair.

**Pray for fair and effective implementation of all the parts of the CPA and for appropriate, international involvement to hold the parties to account. Pray for the process leading to the elections and the referendum that they would be fair and effective to secure a just and lasting peace.**

On 14 February our visiting speaker in the morning service is Jan Ransom who founded Flame International. She is currently leading a team on a mission to the Nuba Mountains in Sudan.

**Pray for the Flame team currently in the Nuba Mountains. Pray for team unity; an anointing on the teaching; good health, safety and fitness; and opportunities to minister. Pray for Jan Ransom as she shares with us.**

Pray for expatriate missionaries; many who are rarely 'off duty', often facing dangers on the roads and in their homes, often isolated and experiencing increasing uncertainty and insecurity.

**Pray for wisdom, strength and safety for missionaries; especially those in remote areas.**

If you can, please commit to pray for Sudan this year. Special points for prayer have been printed in bold type above. Please also have a look at the display at the front of church and help yourself to the free literature on the table by the display.

Please see me if you would like any more information.

Andrew Sharland

### **Father Heart Conference**

19th—21st March

At Emmanuel Baptist Church, Howard Road, Swanage, BH19 2QJ.

7pm Friday, 10am, 2pm & 7pm Saturday

Speakers: Chlo & Stu Glassborrow

Cost £25 single or £45 married couple

Registration contact details from the Parish Office

*“I love you with an everlasting love. You are my precious child.  
Love, your Father”*

### **Rise up Women!**

A Worship and Praise evening for all Women  
in Trowbridge and the surrounding area.

Bethesda Baptist Church, Gloucester Road, Trowbridge

Saturday, 13th February 7.30pm

Guest speaker: Jane Wheeler

From ‘Christian Fellowship Church’, Belfast

### **Five-a-side Tournament**

Saturday, 6th March

The Astro Turf, St. Mark's School, Bath

For Boys 11-14 and 15-18 Girls 11-18

First Kick-off 10am

Open to anyone with a team of 5 young people  
aged 11-18 (max. 8 per squad) £10 per team

See Steve Dewar if interested.

Bristol Hippodrome

### **Calendar Girls**

Saturday, 22nd May at 7.30pm

Grand Circle seats have been provisionally booked for this  
memorable show, and a coach will be provided if enough  
interest is shown; pick-up at usual points.

Cost £30 plus coach (depends on numbers attending).

If interested, please contact Jean Robertson  
by 21st February.

### **Sailing Weekend 28th-30th May 2010**

Following the success of the weekends sailing over the last two years we will be  
having another weekend onboard the Morning Star this summer. The Morning  
Star is a 62ft sailing yacht that can take a group of 11 people. The dates would  
be 28th - 30th May leaving from Portsmouth, this is an ideal opportunity to try  
sailing for people who have never done it before. For more details contact:

Oli Dell or Jamie Farnell via the Parish Office.