

In Contact



Thatcham
Baptist Church
magazine

*2014 - A YEAR OF HOPE
FOR THE WORLD*

Jan-Mar 2014

In Contact

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Published by:
Thattham Baptist Church
Whealers Green Way,
Thattham RG19 4YF
Tel: 01635 867054
www.thatthambaptist.org.uk

Pastors:

Rev. David Taylor,
07922 170503
david@thatthambaptist.org.uk

Rev. Ken Franklin,
07968 173160
ken@thatthambaptist.org.uk

Secretary:

Rob Sneddon,
01635 866334
secretary@thatthambaptist.org.uk

Treasurer:

Ian Andrews,
01635 861499
treasurer@thatthambaptist.org.uk

Deacons:

Robin Appleby
Susan Deering Punshon
Mike Livingstone
Christa McCormick
Nick Richmond
Jill Selwood

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A small child in church for the first time watches the stewards passing round the collection bag. "You don't have to pay for me, Daddy," urges the youngster, "I'm still under five".

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The next issue of *In Contact* will be out on 6th April. Please let David Taylor, Susan Deering-Punshon or Roger Potter know of any items you would like included, e.g. articles, news, events for the months of April, May and June. Deadline for submissions is 23rd March.

King David knew great success in his life: uniting his people; ensuring their safety time and time again from nations who wanted to enslave or destroy them; bringing them into blessing and God's rest. Unity, safety, peace and rest – these are goals we would love for ourselves and our families. David also knew great failures: adultery, murder; failing to listen to and adhere to God's wisdom. Be encouraged, that great king was actually no different from the rest of us!

Nevertheless the Bible still describes David as 'a man after God's own heart'. You can read about his life and family in the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles. Throughout you'll see God's love for David was so much bigger than his mistakes. God's love for you is the same.

We don't gain points for good performance and lose them for failure, God simply loves us! And if we draw near to God, then that promise of love grows, and nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Epiphany (Jan 6) is not simply the day to have all your decorations down. Epiphany started out as time to be glad that Jesus came to share the joys and pains of our lives by experiencing them himself. So it's the day to start the year as you mean to go on, by celebrating Jesus, God revealed to us in human form.



You can read about Jesus' life first in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Whether you've read them a hundred times, or never, if you want to see who God is, find him there. Also if you've never read about him and you've been given this magazine by a friend, ask them to read some of his life with you.

David wrote songs of worship. Some of them were beautiful and others angry and harsh. In Psalm 2 he wrote 'Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain?' 2014 will be as challenging as any other we've known. We'll all be tempted to fix our eyes on many things, yet Jesus alone can meet us, hold us and walk us through whatever the year holds. What else can you say that about?

Ken Franklin

Dads n Kids: Breakfast

Saturdays – 25th Jan, 22nd March, 10th May, 14th June

A good breakfast followed by playtime. Mums love the time off, kids play, Dads get sausages, everyone wins!

Details – Adam Pollard (adam@thatchampollards.org)



All you need is love?



Supporting & developing your marriage
Friday evenings 28th Feb, 7th & 14th March

*You're welcome to join us for three evenings
that will help you and your spouse.*

Details – Ian Andrews (treasurer@thatchambaptist.org.uk)

Six Nations Social

Who will cross the line?

Saturday 15th March (afternoon)

With everyone in action,
the Six Nations finale is always a thriller.

Come for a Braii (BBQ with real meat)
social and watch the action.

Details - Nick Richmond (nick_richmond@hotmail.co.uk)



The word 'HOPE' is written in large, stylized letters. 'H' is red, 'O' is black with a white dot, 'P' is blue, and 'E' is yellow. The letters are set against a white background with a black border.

for Easter

sharing Jesus. Please come and take part in some marketplace witness this Good Friday.

Good Friday

18th April - 10am

Hot Cross buns, family activities, live worship,



I found mine!

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday 6th April 3pm

Parents and children always have a great time, so get this date in your diary and look out for more details soon.

Dads n Kids: Camping Adventure

Two days and a night for Dads n kids to play.

2013 was great! 2014 will be amazing,

so if you fancy some adventure contact

Nick Richmond (nick_richmond@hotmail.co.uk)

for more details. Camping equipment optional!

Profile on...*Iris and Eric Martin*

What are your full names?

Eric John and Iris Gwendolen Martin

Where were you born? *Iris: in Warley*

Barracks, Brentwood, Essex;

Eric: at home in Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey

Have you any children and where do they live? *We have 3 sons: David (54),*

lives in Bicester. He has 2 children:

Stephanie (30) and Philip (28).

Peter(53), in Curacao, in the Caribbean.

He has 2 children: son Alex (26) and daughter Kristy (24).

Finally, Ian (50), in Exeter. Has 2

children: daughter: Kayleigh (26) who has a 6-month old son called Clark (1st great-grand-child) and a son, Jamie (23).

What is your favourite film?

Iris: Goodnight Mister Tom, starring

John Thaw. Eric: Films based on fact, like The Longest Day; alternatively Westerns.

What are your favourite foods?

Iris: Sea Bass with chilli and cashew nuts, a Rick Stein recipe.

Eric: English roast with Yorkshire pud'.

Any roast meat, but especially beef.

If you were shipwrecked on a desert island, which song would you take?

Iris: "What a friend we have in Jesus". It was a favourite of my mother's and we have sung it in some very difficult times.

Eric: "Oh What a Beautiful Morning", from the film Oklahoma.



What are your favourite Bible verses?

Iris: Underneath are the Everlasting arms.

Deuteronomy 33: 27. A comfort since

I saw these words in the chapel where

I went to Sunday School. Eric: Psalm 91:

"You that live in the shadow of the Most

High and lodge under the shadow of the

Almighty..." and Psalm 121 "I lift up mine

eyes to the hills. Whence cometh my

help?" This Psalm was given us by the

Padre of our Regiment in Cyprus.

When did you give your life to Christ?

Iris: When I was 14, at Grovelands Baptist

Church. During my Mum's baptism I had

felt called to make a public commitment,

too. Eric: In 1977, with the help and

support of Iris' Mum, at Kings Road

Baptist Church, Reading.

Are either of you romantic? Yes: Iris

has always been a romantic and Eric is

getting more romantic as he gets older!

What is your husband's/wife's most

endearing feature? Iris: Eric's ability to

be calm in a crisis. Eric: That Iris has

stayed with me!

Being and belonging: about organs

Church is not a club! There is a great variety of clubs on offer: football clubs, golf clubs, men's clubs, youth clubs, clubs for stamp collectors, birdwatchers, knitters, and more. They are organisations which bring people together around some common interest, age-group, or activity. They are usually run by the members for the members. Church, however, is not a God-club, even though at first glance it seems to share some of a club's features.

In fact church is not an organisation at all! (Which some may think explains a thing or two!) But, seriously, if church were nothing more than something people organise simply to share a common interest in religion it would be deadly. Perhaps that's why so many have died.

The church is something far more amazing and interesting than an organisation: it is an organism. Church is something different from any and every human organisation. It is something alive, something dynamic; something conceived, brought into being and sustained by God.

Like organisations it is made up of people, but there the similarity ends.

What these people have in common is not an interest or hobby (or hobby-horse!). They share an experience of new birth and spiritual life. Church is the inevitable outcome of conversion. The new life which Christians receive needs its own field of activity and expression. It grows and matures in relationship with others who share that life.

The New Testament has many pictures of Christian life and they all suggest dynamic relationships between believers. The most vivid of these is the picture of the church as the Body of Christ. (Read it again in I Corinthians 12). It depicts us as a close-knit organism in which we each have a distinctive place and because of which we are mutually dependent. Even when the imagery changes to the church as a building it describes us as living stones.

The major difference between the church and every other form of organisation is the nature of the relationship between participants. What makes us church is that, as we belong to Christ, we belong to one another. An organism, not an organisation!

David Potter



Looking into 2014, as you begin to engage with Hope 2014, I am excited to realise that so much of what you will be doing is going to be happening here in Santo Domingo as well.

Jill Ball, the founder of the school and the Women's projects I am working with, has arrived for a 2 month visit. She has been listening to the local teachers, Pastors and Missionaries, and prayerfully considering the future. 2014 is going to see some big changes here. We will be starting to meet the needs of people in 2 new barrios (suburbs), and reducing the amount we do in Laura Flores. Although the church there will remain a priority.

The school has potential to grow, and is reaching both Christian and non-Christian teachers and pupils. It is run on Christian principles. The Healthy Eating class, which I started, now has 7 students and each lesson starts with a prayer. Each school week starts with an assembly.

I find time to walk alongside some of the younger missionaries, which is helping

all of us to grow in our spiritual journeys.

This week Jill, Pastor William and I met with the Salvation Army and another Christian Organisation to seek advice and ideas about supporting the children once they have left school. This is a project which I believe God wants to begin here. It became apparent quickly that there are no organisations (in Quito and Santo Domingo) who offer any support to children with special needs once they leave school. The only person with any knowledge of supporting young people and adults with Learning Disabilities...is ME. Jill looked at me and said 'you could be a pioneer'.

I am still waiting for the board of the Foundation to meet and decide if they want me to devise a programme for them, to enable them to offer support in the future. But this week I truly believe that it is something I have to do, if not for the Foundation, for the sake of the children themselves. God is not going to let them lose all the skills they have, and are learning. It is at this point I realise why God has brought me here, and I feel excited to have been chosen to help these vulnerable young people look to the future with HOPE.

Wishing you every blessing as you seek to reach out to the people of Thatcham.

Sharon Wilcox

What is Christian Hope?

As it says 'on the can', Christian Hope is firmly rooted, not in an ideal, a philosophy or a religion, but in a historical reality: the person of Christ. His teaching, his love and compassion, his miracles revealed an extraordinary life. His death and resurrection seal an extraordinary message: that God himself came to us in Jesus, offering love, forgiveness and abundant life. We ourselves are experiencing this life and hope day by day.

Here in Calvisson, we are seeing individuals and families experiencing Jesus' hope in this life, and for the next: a lady healed of gallstones after her 6-year old son prayed for her, a young guitarist finding a sense of belonging in His Christian family and seeing God's guidance in his professional career. Another young lady is discovering words of comfort, challenge and meaning in the Bible that speaks to her every day.



A recently completed Alpha course enabled friends to discover more about Jesus through a safe place for discussion and friendship.



We see Jesus still changing lives today - why not give Him a try this year?

David & Claire-Lise Judkins

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One of my favourite verses in the Bible is Romans 15:13: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit”.

This verse begins and ends with hope! God is the SOURCE, who fills an individual (recipient) with “all joy and peace” ... SO THAT ... he/she may “overflow with HOPE”.

The verse also begins and ends with GOD! God IS hope, and we as God’s children who allow the God of hope to fill us with hope, then experience it by the power of the Holy Spirit! It’s God’s gracious work on our behalf! We never deserve any of it, but as God fills us with hope, we are to “rejoice in it [hope]” (Romans. 12:12).

We are not talking about wishful thinking here! When Jesus becomes our Saviour, heaven becomes our ultimate destination, our present and

future hope! The “hope of heaven” highlights the benefits we can enjoy right now while remaining on earth.

As Sarah Young puts it in her book *Jesus Calling*, “This hope keeps you spiritually alive during dark times of adversity; it brightens your path and heightens your awareness of My Presence.”

We may grow inwardly at times as we long for the gift of heaven and the redemption of our bodies, but what keeps us looking up is that steadfast hope in a God who is himself HOPE, and the One who fills us with joy and peace for the journey!

In the meantime, we walk by faith with hearts filled with hope in our soon coming Saviour. And we can do so with heads and hearts held high because Jesus walks with us – he never leaves us nor forsakes us.

We are not alone!

Tim & Carol Kopp



We saw this in Eastern Washington – made completely out of horseshoes. And NO, this is not how we travelled while “out west”!

When did you last find yourself waiting for a bus or a train, hoping and believing it would soon arrive, only to have your hopes dashed? This scenario played out just a few days ago as we waited to catch our plane back to South Africa. We endured the cold and rain, confident that the bus would appear at any moment, but doubts emerged and thoughts of a 'hope misplaced' began to dawn.

God's Word speaks meaningfully to the subject of Christian hope, both negatively and positively. True to life, we are reminded it is all too easy to possess a false hope in either people (John. 5:45) or things (1 Timothy 6:17). When we do so – and we do – we are often left with a deflated and distressing anxiety which in hindsight questions our insecure source of hope to begin with. Thoughts not dissimilar to those we experienced the other evening as our flight departure time edged closer.

But hope which is rooted in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ is uniquely different. Some of the dimensions of Christian (or biblical) hope are worthy of consideration:

- ◆ It can only be understood by Christians, (Ephesians 2:12-13).
- ◆ It is interchangeable with faith, (Hebrews 11:1).
- ◆ It is motivated by sure confidence, not wishful thinking, (Hebrews 6:19).



- ◆ It is future-focused requiring patient waiting, (Romans 8:24-25).
- ◆ It anticipates change for the better, (Philippians 1:20).
- ◆ It produces perseverance and endurance, (Romans 8:24-25).

For what do you hope in 2014? One aspect of our work is to see African missionaries sent from African churches accustomed to 'receiving' missionaries during the past 100 years. We have been waiting and persevering in this hope for several years now and believe that God will bring it to pass in 2014. If you struggle to identify an aspect of Christian hope, perhaps a good place to begin is with the words of 1 Peter 1:3-5, "...By His great mercy he gave us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that is, into an inheritance imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. It is reserved in heaven for you, who by God's power are protected by faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time".

Tim & Tricia Barrow, SIM Region of South Africa, January 2014

Where are they now?...*Mary Lewis*



Mary moved back to Ipswich 3 years ago, after an absence of about 40 years. It was the right move at just the right time, however, she truly values the TBC contacts who helped her through the settling in period. It was really helpful to know she wasn't alone, when friends kept writing or were just at the end of a phone-line, especially as she couldn't pick up exactly where she left off with her Ipswich friends. Forty years is quite a gap!

Mary has moved from a house to a bungalow, which suits her fine. The neighbours are lovely, caring people, while her son, Chris, still has a season ticket for Ipswich Town FC. He visits when he comes over for their home games, travelling some distance, from his home in the South of England, where he lives at present.

Ellen, Mary's daughter, is not far away with the grandsons, who are: Harvey James: he is now at Northampton University, while twins, Toby and Hugo, are both in Sixth Form and are very happy studying different subjects.

Mary has returned to Holly Lodge Baptist Church, where she used to worship and where she was involved with Girls' Brigade.

Nowadays, she is a deacon; takes a small house Group and is in a prayer triplet that meets weekly for just one hour of prayer, following Jesus' request to Peter "could you not wait one hour?" They have their chat over cups of tea afterwards.

The life-style in Ipswich is a bit slower, but mostly on a par with Thatcham: catching up with the modern age! The bus trip to Thatcham is only $\frac{3}{4}$ hour longer than driving and the coach pops into Victoria en route. The journeys are very reasonably priced with her Senior Coachcard.

Thoughts to leave us with: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5, 16 – 18).

Also, Psalm 103. Mary was prompted **three** times to read this Psalm; now she recommends that we do, too!

Book Review - Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World

Essential reading for every woman who has ever felt overwhelmed by all the things her faith seems to require of her.

Starting with Luke's account of Martha and Mary's very different responses to Jesus' visit to their home, Joanna Weaver draws out the implications of what our own responses can be to the Jesus who wants us to share quiet -time with him in the Living Room, and the Jesus who guides us even in the busy-ness of the Kitchen.

Martha seems to be overly-concerned with the preparations, but custom demanded the best for a visiting VIP such as Jesus.

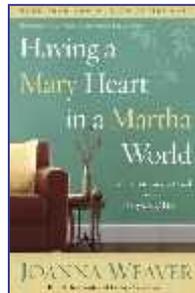
Meanwhile, Mary has had to steel herself to defy convention to claim her space at Jesus' feet, placing her desire to be with Jesus above all else.

Jesus says that Mary has chosen the better part. Does Martha accept his gentle rebuke and join them in the Living Room? Or does she rush back to the familiarity of the Kitchen? What would we do?

The next time we meet the sisters, after Lazarus has died, it is Martha who rushes to meet Jesus and declares her belief first. How wonderful!

Joanna Weaver makes wonderful use of anecdotes, personal testimonies and stories, as well as Bible exposition and practical advice

about seeking the One Thing that Jesus says is needed in our lives: a closer relationship with Him, so that worship becomes a delight, not a chore, and devotion is more than just another duty.



One story that spoke to me is about the man whom God asked to take 3 stones in a wagon up to the top of a hill. But he comes a cropper when he takes on other people's rocks and pebbles. "I cannot carry every load, but I can carry the load God has for me. For his yoke, indeed, is easy, and his burden is truly light." (p63).

In addition, Joanna Weaver warns us that Satan uses the same tools he's always used, including the "Deadly Ds of Destruction: **Distraction; Discouragement; and Doubt**". Only Jesus can stop us self-destructing with those Ds planted in our hearts.

Very salutary reading.

There is a Study Guide for the 12 chapters and Resource lists for Living Room Intimacy and for Kitchen Service, to help the reader further.

I have spent months dipping back into this **wonderful book** and have been refreshed each time! Do get a copy for yourself.

Susan Deering-Punshon

Spicy Lamb Tagine with Chickpeas and Apricots



Ingredients:
500g Stewing
Lamb cut
into cubes
1 large onion
sliced
4 tsps
Moroccan
mixed spice

2 cloves garlic
1 cinnamon stick or 1/2 tsp ground
cinnamon
400g tin chopped tomatoes
400g tin chickpeas drained
and rinsed
75g dried apricots
Salt and pepper

Preparation:

Sprinkle the Moroccan spice on to the lamb and place in the Tagine.

Add the onions, garlic, cinnamon and tomatoes and season with salt and pepper

Method:

Cover Tagine with the lid and place in the oven at 150 C/ 300 F or Gas Mark 2.

After 1 hour add the apricots and chickpeas and mix well.

Add water if required.

Cook for a further hour until meat is tender.

Serving suggestion:

With bread and couscous.

This can be cooked in a Slow Cooker just as well as in the Moroccan cooking pot known as a Tagine. Moroccan Mixed Spice is available at some supermarkets, or you can make your own from recipes for Ras-El-Hanout.

Women's World Day of Prayer - Friday 7th March at 2pm

Hosted by TBC and co-ordinated by the WWDP committee (TBC reps, Margaret Wyatt and Susan Deering-Punshon).

The Theme is **Streams in the Desert**, prepared by Christian women in Egypt, based on John: 4; Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well.

Leader will be Christa McCormick.
Speaker will be Rachel Fadipe,

Executive Director of SAT-7, whose channels are mostly Arabic speaking.

There will be music and songs for all, and spoken words and prayers by people taking the role of representatives of the Egyptian people.

Light refreshments will be served after, including culinary speciality Basbousa. Come and try some with a cup of tea, or glass of squash.

Psalm 139 for under-5s and a photo/mirror frame to make

Scripture Union tells us that our under 5 year olds look at the world as revolving around themselves. Every day the children discover and explore that "self", as well as the things and people who are "other". How wonderful to share that God is interested in and shares in this exciting time of life!

This Psalm reminds us that God never changes; he knows us better than we know ourselves and he will always be with us, no matter where we go, or what we get ourselves into.

A mirror, or a photo, is a good way to show us what we look like and to help us think about how God loves us just as we are.

Follow the instructions and share a phrase or two from Psalm 139, for example "Wherever I go, you will be there to help me. You know all about me".

1 Cut out two rectangles of thick card (packing boxes are ideal).

2 Stick a picture, photo or piece of mirror card on one piece.

3 Cut the centre out of the other piece (square, rectangle or oval).

4 Stick the two pieces together. Write the words 'God loves' along the top edge.

5 Spread glue generously round the other three sides of the frame.

6 Press on shiny 'scraps'.

7 Leave the glue to dry.

8 Tape a stand at the back, made by folding a strip of card to form a triangle.

© Scripture Union 2013

So, what is HOPE?

Lord save us all from a hope tree
that has lost the faculty of putting
out blossoms.

Mark Twain

I am prepared for the worst,
but hope for the best.

Benjamin Disraeli

**Tomorrow hopes we have
learned something from
yesterday.**

John Wayne

We must accept finite
disappointment, but never
lose infinite hope.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

I hope that I may always desire
more than I can accomplish.

Michelangelo

When I stand before God at the end
of my life, I would hope that I
would not have a single bit of talent
left, and could say, 'I used
everything you gave me'.

Erma Bombeck

**My hope still is to leave the
world a bit better than
when I got here.**

Jim Henson

*To love means loving the
unlovable. To forgive
means pardoning the
unpardonable. Faith
means believing the
unbelievable. Hope means
hoping when everything
seems hopeless.*

Gilbert K. Chesterton

He who has health, has hope;
and he who has hope, has
everything.

Thomas Carlyle

Don't give up. Don't lose hope.
Don't sell out.

Christopher Reeve

Every day begins with an act of
courage and hope: getting out
of bed.

Mason Cooley

I place no hope in my strength,
nor in my works: but all my
confidence is in God my
protector, who never abandons
those who have put all their hope
and thought in him.

Francois Rabelais