



Zion Baptist Church
In the heart of Tenterden

Newsletter

Autumn 2023



Christmas Tree Festival

**Fri. 24th Nov.
2-6pm and
Sat. 25th Nov.
10am-4pm**

17 local groups
have decorated a
tree each,
depicting:

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Come and vote for your favourite tree,
receive a warm welcome,
with refreshments and music.

All donations go to local charities.

'Remembrance'

Margaret Twort and friends
decorated our beautiful cross
with poppies they had knitted
themselves.

Church Diary:

Sunday Worship Service

10.30am, in church and online/Zoom
The Lord's Supper is celebrated on
the first and third Sunday each month

Saturday Prayer Meeting

2nd and 4th Saturday, 8.30am

Church Monthly Prayer Meeting

First Thursday of each month, 7.30pm

Coffee Morning

Every Thursday, 10am-12noon

Church open for prayer

Every Friday, 10am-12noon

Christmas Tree Festival

see front page

Churches together in Tenterden Service

Sunday, 26th Nov. 4pm

Carol Service by Candlelight

Sunday, 17th Dec. 4pm

Christmas Eve Midnight Communion

Sunday, 24th December, 11.30pm

Christmas Day Family Service

Monday, 25th December, 10am

Rainbow Tots

Parent and toddler group
Wednesday, term time,
9.30am-11.30am

Our **Home Groups** run fortnightly.

Mondays 10am-12noon
and Wednesdays 8pm-10pm

Letter from our Pastor:

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, we are aware of the turmoil, unrest, and conflict in different parts of the world. The Israel-Palestine war is the most recent one that according to the UN is a 'tragedy of colossal proportions' in Gaza.



A few days ago, I had the opportunity to speak with a Muslim. He asked me (a very difficult question), "How can we stop the killing of people in Palestine?". My immediate answer was, "There is not a simple answer my friend because this has to do with the heart of people". Then he said "I have heard that Jesus is coming back and that He wants to give us peace. How can we have peace? We need peace, I pray to Allah for peace to stop the killing of innocent people".

When we think of peace, most of the time we consider peace to be the absence of war and conflict. Or the end of conflict and aggression. In the KJV Bible the word peace is mentioned 429 times. In other versions like the NIV it is mentioned 230 because this version uses different words that make more sense in English. It's clear that peace is an important topic. I quoted to this man one of the Bible verses we read at Christmas: "*Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth **peace** to those on whom His favour rests."*" Luke 2:13-14.

The peace the angels proclaimed was 'the peace with God that results from salvation (Romans 35:1; Acts 10:36). Through faith in the Messiah (Jesus) who is the Prince of Peace.' This peace - salvation peace - 'belongs to those whom God is pleased to give it; it is not a reward to those who have good will, but a gracious gift.' The challenging question is 'Are we willing to accept it?' for it is not based on religion, good work or race.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, I invite you to reflect about peace. Do you have peace in your heart? Are you at peace with God and people? Peace is the theme of our Christmas Tree Festival this year. You are welcome to join our Christmas events and Services.

Our world is facing many challenges today, extreme weather, financial crises, wars but the angels' message is still relevant today, "***Peace** to those on whom His favour rests*". The question of my Muslim friend was 'How can we have peace?'. We can have Jesus' peace, a peace that surpasses all understanding (See Philippians 4:7) when we accept His invitation to surrender our lives to Him.

Yes! we can have wars around us, we can experience difficulties in life, we can have problems at work or at home, we can struggle with our mental health but it's only when we allow Jesus to be the center of our lives that we are going to experience this peace that surpasses all understanding because Peace is not the absence of trouble. Peace is the presence of God in our lives.

Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Freddy

Church Weekend Away 2024

We are hoping to have a true weekend away in Autumn 2024 at High Leigh, Hertfordshire. Whilst the weekends at home have been great, they are not the same as going away, especially when someone else does the catering and washing up! Unfortunately we no longer have access to the Oasts in Northiam and we will have to self-fund.

Before we commit to anything, we need to ensure there is support amongst the fellowship.

So far I have limited feedback. Please prayerfully consider if you can attend.

Cost will be approx. £240 per person which will include 2 nights accommodation, full board and usage of two meeting rooms. Whilst this is a lot of money, it will equate to £24 a month for 10 months. We will need to fund this ourselves, which we can do by donation and fund raising. A very generous donation has already been received. We of course will have this open to all and would not want anyone to be put off by cost and transport concerns. These are matters which we can all resolve with God's help.

If we proceed, we will need to make a 20% deposit which will be non-refundable which the church will pay, based on support from the membership.

Please prayerfully consider this and let me know if you would like to attend by 26th November.

We can then secure the date and location.

Thanks,

Simon Smith



BMS Birthdays:
21st Nov. Miss Kirsty Taylor-Black
26th Dec. Mr. Stephen Wood
BMS birthday scheme secretary:
Miss Jackie Goodsell



Our harvest gifts went to the food bank

New Football Season 2023 – Weald Hamlet FC

The church football club, 'Weald Hamlet' have now returned to Homewood School 3G for the winter and spring – meeting on Friday nights (8pm-9pm) every two weeks. This is a community club open to all for fun, football and friendship. Sessions are for open age groups (teenagers to oldies!), women and men, with a separate walking football section for more 'senior' players (over 50s). Sessions are supervised, but informal – we are all there to enjoy some exercise, with some preparation for those of us who play in matches. We play on a modern all-weather surface under floodlights - only heavy snow (or power cuts) will prevent us continuing throughout the rest of the year. We usually have 20+ participants on Fridays. Contact Simon Black for more details or email: wealdhamlet@gmail.com

Walking Football has a big group of men and women players, some playing football for the first time.

The Weald Hamlet Mens Veterans Team – had their first match (25mins each way under floodlights) against 'Fathers for Football in Tenderden' (FFiT) in a tight well-balanced game, just losing to a freak goal. Many of the players were playing 11-a-side for the first time in many years and did very well. The 'vets team' hope to be having two more matches before Christmas.

Mens 11-a side – East Kent Churches League – has now restarted (a little late due to fixture constraints) and we won our first match convincingly 5-3 against league leaders (who have played 3 matches). League matches continue through November, December and into the New Year. Home matches are at Homewood School, 10am kick-off on Saturdays.



Archie (centre right) turns and fires in a fine goal past the diving goalkeeper in the men's opening match against Barton, in the sunshine at Homewood.

Prayer Partners/Triplets

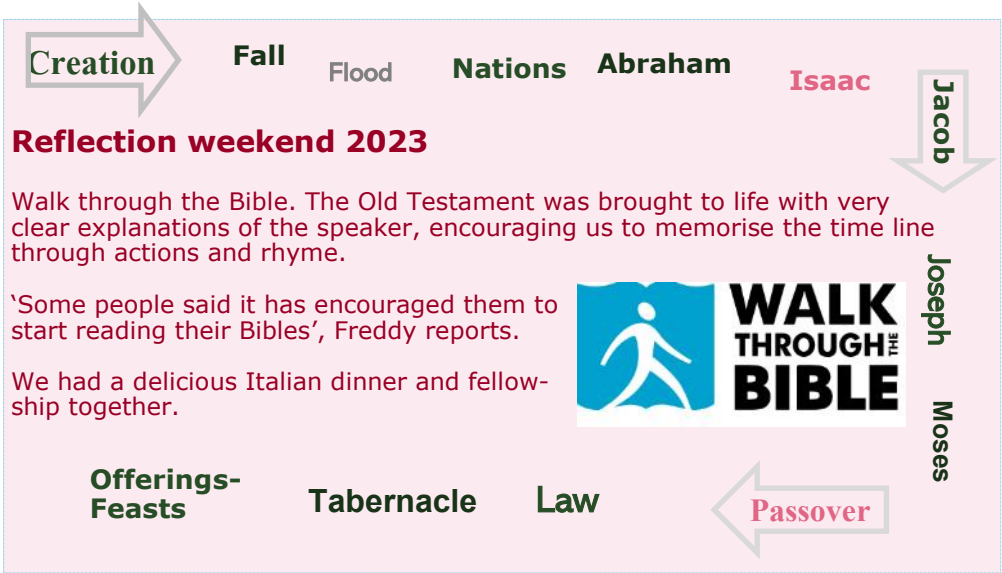
Do you remember what we proposed and agreed together: (a) “Doing a few things well” - a repeating principle in our discussions which came out of our Healthy Churches exercises and, (b) “enabling more access to prayer”, which were the priorities for Zion to consider from the (September 2022) Healthy Churches Working Group.

Well, I am pleased to let you know that of an original 48 members and non-members of our fellowship that the Lord prompted me to approach regarding joining a prayer partnership, 27 of you are now in a prayer partnership or triplet. That’s so encouraging and certainly upholds both of those criteria of (a) and (b). I do pray that those of you who have entered into new prayer relationships will find great benefit from it over the months and years to come and will see answers to your prayers. A prayer guideline sheet should have been given to you all and if for some reason you didn’t get one but want one, please come and ask me for it.

There is always opportunity for you to speak with me (after November) concerning prayer partnerships. However, there will be a second round of my approaching and asking people, later this year, as new people join our fellowship, those yet uncommitted to prayer partners wish to join, or people less regular in attendance express an interest.

When considering your answer, please remember that it is the Lord that is seeking to ask you to help someone else, by committing your time to praying together for them. You may not be comfortable in praying out loud, you may not be comfortable in sharing personal details, you may not feel comfortable in many other ways, but the Lord may still be calling you to a prayer partnership where you will help someone else by simply being a listening ear and praying in silence. To aid your decision, a prayer guideline has been agreed by the Leadership and was published in the previous newsletter. The Lord is in it, always.

Carolyn



Murder mystery evening



Six of us went to the murder mystery evening that the Church in the Weald put on at Bethersden village hall. This was a very enjoyable evening where we had to try and work out who the murder was !

Inspector Margaret Smith had her torch out looking at one of the clues on the table and Sargent Suzanne was making notes and taking everyone's details with the help of constables Wendy, Joan and Jackie. Chief Inspector Valerie Penfold was the closest of solving the murder however we didn't win. What fun we had with a lovely dinner and pudding in between courses each table had a chance to ask a question to one of the suspects.

This was a very good evening and found that all the ladies were talking about it in church the next day.

Cameo: We took Margaret out for her big birthday to London Beach and a good time was had by all. We raised £276.50 for the church in the process.

Jackie

God Sent

God sent

A storm which cleaned the sky

He gave me

A garden and a home

He shielded me with faith

Came death

Came doubt

I thought He sent me not

what

I asked for

or desired

I realised that He had

I read myself all wrong

And what I thought was lost and gone

Was in my every breath.

By Francesca Evans



At **Rainbow Tots** we looked at God's creation this term. We will also have a Tots Christmas tree decorated for the Christmas tree festival.

You are invited to:

*Churches Together
in Tenterden Breakfast*

at St. Andrew's Parish Centre
on Saturday, 25th Nov. at
8.30am

This breakfast is open to all.
Speaker: Jeanette Kennett

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