

HTC News

Maypole Mayhem!

July /
Aug 2009



Youngsters enjoyed their first taste of Maypole dancing at HTC's Jigsaw Pre-School in May. Parents were invited along to watch the boys and girls as they were taken through their paces by Brenda Chadwick, one of the Jigsaw leaders.

She said, "It's a great way for the children to learn about English traditions. They really loved the music and the effect of the ribbons twisting around the Maypole. It's also fantastic for helping them to develop social skills as well as good coordination!"

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...and a great deal more to keep you in touch with life at Holy Trinity!

Our vision is:

- *more followers of Jesus*
- *deeper followers of Jesus*
- *closer followers of Jesus*

Holy Trinity Claygate

Following Jesus Together

Letter from the Vicar



Dear friends,

It is too early to say whether the weather this summer is going to be as good as last year's was bad, but the early signs are encouraging. I for one have really been thankful that the weather has kept fine for the various thank you teas and BBQs Annabelle and I have been hosting in the vicarage garden. They are a small way of our saying thank you to so many who serve God through the local church.

With that in mind, I have been struck again recently by how often food and meals come up in the Bible. In Luke 10-19, which we have been looking at as a church under the title *Life in the Credit Crunch*, meals come up again and again: Jesus eating with Mary and Martha, and with a group of Pharisees and using both occasions for teaching his audience about God. On one occasion, Jesus refers to the great banquet at the end of time – a reminder that the life in the new creation will be well supplied with food!

One meal we have not looked at is the meal given by the Father at the end of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, from Luke 15. This famous feast – complete with fattened calf – is again a picture of the welcome home that God will one day give to all who return to him, and is the climax to one of the most famous stories in the New Testament. This story will be the focus for our summer teaching series, and we will also be encouraging all church members to take as their summer reading *The Prodigal God* by Tim Keller. This little book opens up a familiar parable in some wonderful ways, and I think we are all going to be blessed by reading it.

And we will end the series with a meal of our own. 'HTC Celebration' on Sunday 6 September is a chance for the whole church to come together to give thanks God for a year of the new services, enjoy fellowship with one another and look forward to an exciting time ahead as a church. It is going to be a great event, and we hope that many of the five hundred who come to the four services every Sunday will be there.

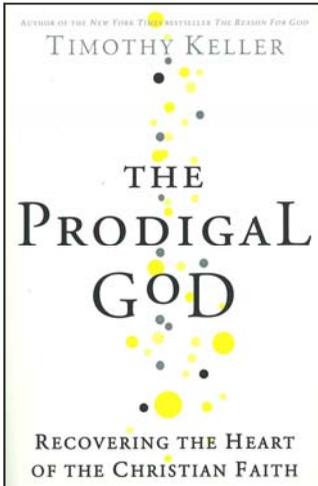
Here's hoping for good weather, a refreshing summer and a fine celebration!

With my love and prayers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. P.' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

'The Prodigal God'

New Sermon Series for August



The parable of the Prodigal Son has intrigued Christians since its first telling almost two thousand years ago. Starting in August, the HTC church family will be exploring this well-known parable through a series of sermons, supported by Tim Keller's latest book, *The Prodigal God*. Philip Plymington recommends everyone to buy a copy to read over the summer. "It's quite slim and so won't take up much room in the suitcase!" he says, "But its message is just the thing we need to refresh ourselves spiritually as we take time to recharge our physical batteries as well." *The Prodigal God* is now on sale at the Bookstall priced £10.

The parable itself is about a man with two sons. One of the sons strikes out on his own to live a life of sinful license. The older son remains dutifully by his

father's side. The story reaches a climax when the younger son returns to the family estate and is fully restored by his father who celebrates his homecoming. But the older brother, who remains estranged from his brother, puts a dampener on the celebrations when he complains bitterly to his father about what he perceives to be unfair treatment. In Tim Keller's book we see how the motives of the two brothers are not that far apart and that, in fact, it is the father who acts extravagantly in his efforts to bring his sons back into right relationships with himself.

In our sermon series we will look at the parable from different angles and hopefully see what a blessing it is that, unlike the prodigal son, we have Jesus as our older brother and a true advocate for us all. But just like the parable we will end our series with a celebration, because we too were once lost and now are found!

Sunday Sermon Series Info

- 2 August** Eating with Sinners
- 9 August** The Younger Brother
- 16 August** The Older Brother
- 23 August** The True Son - Jesus!
- 30 August** The Feast for being Found

Short Courses



Eleven volunteers spent a morning repainting Claygate's three white entrance gates on Saturday 27 June. The 'Action Day' was an integral part of the 'Just People' course that has been running alongside the 'Digging Deeper' course at HTC over the summer.

Tom Darwent, who helped lead 'Just People' said, "It was the first step in learning to serve and explore the needs of our community. We are planning other more people-oriented projects as well in the future." Gareth Jones, one of the participants, said "It was a very satisfying morning."

The two short courses were set up to help church members grow in their faith and understanding of God's call on their lives. Both courses lasted for six weeks and were held on Thursday evenings in the foyer and the main church building, regularly attracting nearly 100 people.

Tom, who co-led 'Just People' with

Matthew Frost, HTC member and CEO of Tearfund said, "We wanted to create an ongoing programme of courses that would address different aspects of faith and Christian living in a more comprehensive way than would be possible in Sunday sermons or in small groups."

'Just People,' developed by Tearfund, focused on developing people's understanding of God's heart for justice and the needs of the poor and disadvantaged, and to think about how we as individuals and a church can respond more effectively.

'Digging Deeper' which was run by Philip and Andrew, was aimed at expanding our understanding of the bible, and providing 'tools' to help make sense of it more effectively. Both courses involved a mixture of teaching, video clips, group discussion, homework activities and of course, coffee and cakes! Tom said, "The format of the evenings has worked well, and people have enjoyed the opportunity to get to know those from other congregations, who they may not otherwise have met."

Tom said, "We hope to run a range of other courses over the next few years at HTC. We believe that if we provide more resources to help people to grow in their faith, this will reap a long term harvest of spiritual maturity, excitement and fruitfulness."

Doug Horley's Praise Party



Around 200 people, from babes in arms to people in their 70's, enjoyed the high-energy fun at HTC's Praise Party on Saturday 23 May. Doug Horley and his team of young, energetic dancers and cheeky colourful puppets had everyone up on their feet, dancing and singing to Dougie classics such as, "Great, Great, Brill, Brill."

Andrew Cowie said, "There was a great party atmosphere! Many people turned up from other churches and there were a lot of kids from local schools who don't normally come to church." Sarah Slater, who came along with her husband Nick and their three children, said, "The whole family really enjoyed it, and when some of the children went up to pray with Doug at the end, it brought a lump to my throat."

Doug takes his Praise Parties all over the UK and across the world. His ethos

is to show families that worshipping God can be fun and something that kids of all ages can enjoy. As well as energetic dancing and audience participation through his actions songs, Doug and his team tell Bible stories and give youngsters the chance to pray to Jesus. Andrew said, "It was great to see so many families enjoying a fun time together, praising God in new ways. It was also fantastic for children to have the opportunity to pray to Jesus, maybe for the first time, and ask him to be their friend."



Following the performance, Doug said, "After two visits to HTC, I can now confirm that people in Claygate are officially "funky!" But ultimately I hope we teach kids that worship is not really about the songs we sing, it's much more about our heart's attitude and finding new ways to express our love to God. I'm keen we teach kids that worship is all about having a heart of thankfulness any time and anywhere."

Farewell to 'Admiral Andy'



HTC bids a fond farewell to Andrew Cowie this summer as he embarks on a new adventure to train for ordination. The much-loved Children and Families Minister starts a two year course in theology at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford in September. "I'm very excited about this opportunity. It's become

something I've become increasingly certain about over the last couple of years," says Andrew. "My time at HTC has given me a unique chance to explore my calling. Lucy, my wife, recognised from the start that it would mean a big change to family life but she and the kids have been very supportive in that decision."

Andrew joined the Ministry team in January 2007, not long after he and his family returned from a year in China. As the first Director of Children and Families Ministry it was his idea to bring Messy Church to HTC. "Seeing Messy Church take off in such a big way has been one of the highlights of my time at HTC. Having a Minister for children has really helped us raise the profile of youngsters as valued members of the

"It has been great having Andrew on the team. One of my personal highlights has been working with him on All Age Worship, especially over the last two Easters. He is so creative and full of ideas - I have learned a lot!" Philip Plyming



church family. It's wonderful that our children's spirituality is now taken seriously."

Numbers in children's groups at HTC have increased by about 20% over the past few years due, in no small part, to the hard work of Andrew and his team. "There's been a phenomenally positive reaction to changes, from both youngsters and their parents. We've also seen a lot of families who wouldn't ordinarily come along to church join in enthusiastically with events like Messy Church and Doug Horley's Praise Party." He adds, "I feel immensely privileged every time we do a Holiday Club, lead an All Age

service or go into a local school for an assembly. Not everyone is in the position to spread God's word in such a positive way."

Lucy, Andrew and their four children will remain in Claygate during Andrew's training which will take him up to Oxford for a few days each week. "I'll still see everybody at church on Sunday in my first year. My second year will involve a placement somewhere in the Guildford

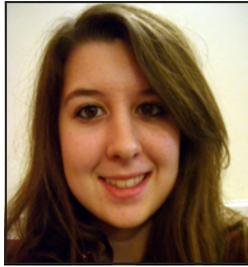


diocese." But Andrew says he's very sad to be leaving the HTC Ministry team, "Everyone has been incredibly supportive and understanding throughout my time here, particularly Philip who has been an outstanding boss. It's also been great to work with all the volunteers, especially Jill Griffiths who's been an absolute trooper and takes over the helm as the new Children and Families Minister."

"I have really enjoyed working with Andrew. He's provided unflinching support, encouragement and creative flair in everything he does. He's certainly been in touch with his fun side for the various Holiday Clubs, delighting youngsters by dressing up in medieval, Egyptian and nautical outfits and jumping around enthusiastically on stage!" Jill Griffiths

Farewell to Jess

It's hankies at the ready as we also wave off Jess Balding this summer. Drew Waller's cheeky yet lovable Youth Ministry Assistant is off to Chester University to study Human Nutrition. Jess had nothing but good to say about her year at HTC:



"I can honestly say this has been the best year of my life so far. I've learnt so much from so many different people, not just in the Youth Ministry area and I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work at HTC and with the ministry team. One of the many highlights was the Leeds Mission Trip. It was such an eye-opener to see how other communities lived and how churches can pull together to really make a difference. It has been

absolutely bonkers working with Drew and the team. This year I've dressed up as a Mexican, a banana and Supergirl! All the events we've run have been out of this world. I just want to say a massive thank you to everyone who's prayed or supported me in any way over the past year; I've been so blessed, encouraged and incredibly lucky. My faith has gone from strength to strength."

Drew added, "It has been such a joy to watch Jess develop both life skills and grow in spiritual maturity this year. Her commitment to the Lord is evident and I am so eager to see where God will take her and how He will use Jess for his Kingdom."

Pentecost Party

Around 100 people joined a special celebration on Sunday 31 May to mark Pentecost, when God sent his Holy Spirit to earth following the Resurrection.

Tom Darwent and Andrew Cowie co-led a special 6.30pm service which included talks about Pentecost, centering on who the Holy Spirit is, what he does and how he can change us.

At the end of the service there was an extended opportunity for people to pray with members of the prayer ministry team and ask God for the Holy Spirit.

Once the service finished people filtered through to the church hall and sat down together for a special meal. The team in the kitchen provided a cracking feast, which was followed by excellent lemon cheesecake.

The food was a great opportunity to sit down and chat with different members of the 6.30 congregation. One member of YF appreciated the food so much he ate six platefuls!

The Pentecost Party proved to be a great time for everyone to celebrate our unity through the Holy Spirit.

Survival Weekend



It was back to basics for a team of Young Adventurers and their leaders during a Survival Weekend in June. The intrepid team from HTC spent two challenging nights camping out in the grounds of Fairthorne Manor, a YMCA facility in Southampton. Drew Waller who helped lead the weekend said, "Fairthorne offered full modern amenities, but the goal of the weekend was to use limited supplies and survival skills to meet all of our basic needs."

As soon as they arrived on the Friday, the first priority was to build a shelter using tarpaulin, twine and the trunks of two trees. They then set to work building a camp fire and cooking dinner, including nettle soup! Drew said, "Over the course of the weekend we explored survival and safety techniques and learnt about the importance of honesty, following instructions and being considerate of other people. We also looked at the first chapter of proverbs which promises that the beginning of knowledge comes from reverence and fear of the Lord."

Leading the survival elements of the trip

were Mike Booker, a former member of the TA medical corps and Simon Winchcombe, who trained in the TA with the SAS. As the weekend came to a close, Simon said, "The weekend has been a challenge for the kids and for us as leaders, both physically and mentally. They were out of their element, and the leaders didn't get much sleep and had to lean on the Lord for patience and compassion, but over the course of the weekend, through prayer, the guys really responded to the skills we taught them, we bonded as a group and we saw heart change in most of the kids."



Fairthorne Manor also treated the group to activities such as abseiling, climbing, obstacle courses and a giant bouncy pillow! Georgia, a year eight student in school, said, "Thank you guys so much for taking us on this trip! I started my own fire with a flint and it was really cool." Jess Balding who helped lead the trip added, "Learning survival skills really helped to build friendships with the youngsters, giving us a chance to share some basic life lessons. It also gave them a unique opportunity to open up to us."

Thank You!!



Some of HTC's huge army of volunteers have been given a big pat on the back this summer for all their hard work over the past year. Philip and the ministry team have been hosting various Thank You teas and BBQs in the vicarage garden to show appreciation to the hundreds of people who regularly volunteer to help keep the church up and running. Just a small handful of the many duties include: cleaning the church buildings, housekeeping HTC's five kitchens, chair straightening, gardening, cleaning the silver, washing the communion linen, general DIY and helping to run pastoral care, small groups, and the youth and children's groups.



Janet Watkins, who served at several events said, "There was a fantastic turn out each time. It demonstrated to us all just how many people are willing to give up their time to help out at HTC."



Over just two of the events we must have served about 200 cups of tea, 140 half scones plus a huge selection of amazing cakes including the deepest chocolate cake I have ever seen! There was no hint of anyone holding back because they were watching their waistlines - if anything the exact opposite was true!"

Philip added, "The ministry team is so grateful for all the ways in which people serve the mission of God at HTC. In this last year we have seen more, deeper and closer followers of Jesus, but that has only happened with church members serving faithfully and sacrificially across the range of church life. These thank you events are a small way of expressing our very real thanks."

PCC Day Away

Michael Porter, PCC Secretary, reports



The PCC spent a Day Away at the Ark, Okewood Hill on 16 May. Since each member of the PCC is allocated to a Reference Group, we spent most of the morning session in our relevant teams. The Reference Group system was set up about two years ago in order to provide a support group to each of the church leaders. Reference Groups offer support, prayers and guidance and some meet more often than others, especially if there is something important happening in the team's area of ministry. At the PCC Day Away we were asked to ponder the main points made by Philip at the APCM. In particular we were asked to consider what we are hoping to achieve in our

relevant areas of ministry over the next two years and what opportunities the words, "Much will be demanded," create for our area of ministry.

Reference Groups

Evangelism - Philip Plyming

Team: Stuart Sadler, Dudley Sloggett, Barry Wakefield

Discipleship - Tom Darwent

Team: Mark Chapman, Tim Hurdle, David Steeds

Pastoral Care - Valerie Bagley

Team: Clive Finniear, Rose-Marie Francis, Rodney Luff

Children and Families - Andrew Cowie

Team: Jackie Burton, Andrew Forbes, Mel Dawes

Youth - Drew Waller

Team: Gilly Hayes, Jon Hidden, John Smith

Mission & Worship - Linda Morgan

Team: Bill Lowe, Andrew Stroud, Andrew Tarcy

Central Support - Janet Watkins

Team: Brian Howells, Michael Porter

Sunday Services

8am Traditional

9.30am Lively

11.15am Reflective

6.30pm Contemporary

See website for more details.

Church Office

Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm

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HTC
INFO

Philip Plyming

Vicar

Tom Darwent

Curate

Valerie Bagley

Asst. Minister

Linda Morgan

Asst. Minister

Andrew Cowie

Children & Families Minister

Drew Waller

Youth Minister

Janet Watkins

Church Administrator

The 6.30 Success Story

Tom Darwent reports



It seems hard to believe but our 6.30 service is still less than a year old. Numbers have grown steadily since it was launched on 7 September 2008, with around 120 people now regularly attending. The congregation has developed its own distinctive identity and a worship style which can best be described as relaxed. Services start fashionably late (except when Philip is leading!), clerical vestments are nowhere to be seen, many new songs have been introduced and the services frequently involve things such as icebreakers, discussions, testimonies, prayer activities and sustained 'blocks' of worship.

It has also been really interesting to see some significant changes to the profile of the 6.30 congregation. Now up to 30

teenagers and around 20 young adults regularly attend. However, the biggest growth area has been adults with older or grown-up children. Many have joined the church for the first time, attracted by the informality of the service and the parallel provision of the Trekkers and Pathfinders groups for youngsters. Sometimes, that has led to whole families coming along. Andy Howe, who was drawn to HTC thanks to the new 6.30 service, has recruited his parents, sisters, brother and brother's girlfriend.

Simon Kelly, 23, previously went to a church in Leatherhead and is now one of the 6.30 music leaders.

"I first started coming to the 6.30 in January after being invited by Simon Botham. It has been really nice to be part of a church with my mum and



brother who live in Claygate and now also come along to the service. I would now say that the main loves in my life are Jesus and football!" (a good combo says Tom!).

Some members of the previous 6.30 congregation remain with us, such as Linda and Julian Stedman. Linda has found herself surprised how much she has taken to the new songs: she has even been spotted whistling some of them in Somerfield!

Looking forward, we hope to continue to provide a time to refresh and recharge for those who serve in children's work during the morning services and also to see the congregation continue to grow and experience a closer level of fellowship.