



# The Marksman

**The magazine of  
St. Mark's Church, Versailles,  
and  
St. Paul's Church, Chevy.**

September 2009

# Welcome

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Going back to the church you attended as a small child can be a strange experience. I did just that twenty years ago and was sad to realise I was among the youngest people present. I went back to the same church last month and guess what? Yes, I was still below average age for the congregation! Whatever the shortcomings of Saint Mark's, it doesn't lack young people, and a whole bunch of them have contributed to this issue – read about their experiences in Thailand, Peru, England and other exotic countries. Closer to home, this issue also brings the latest update on our REACH building project, and reports on how you voted in our opinion poll about Sunday trading. The new Marksman cover design is the brilliant (in both senses) work of Nicky Bodsworth; thanks also to the Production Team Christina and Kevin in the Church Office.

*John Penhallow*

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**Just for starters!** *Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving forward*

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## A Word from Paul...

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The Rentrée is a good time for getting stuck in. It is wonderful to welcome new people to our church. We have seen several new faces during the summer and have also welcomed back some whom we have not seen for quite a long time. God is answering our prayers for the church to be filled! I still have a personal prayer-aim to see a solid membership of 200. We are currently around 140..... so invite your friends and make them feel at home!

Thank you to all those who are on the regular rotas: reading, praying, welcoming, making music, providing tea, coffee, caring for the children etc. etc. It is encouraging to find new people also offering to serve. Come and have a word if you are able to go on a rota.

The event that is uppermost in my mind is the **Kingdom Training Day on October 10<sup>th</sup>**. It's easy to remember when it is happening – the tenth day of the tenth month at ten in the morning. I hope you have it in your diary. But even more I hope that you will come, and maybe even recommend it to a friend.

This is an event for the whole church, indeed it is a weekend for the whole church. The Prayer Gathering on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> Oct at 8.00pm is a chance for us to prepare our hearts and prepare the place of encounter, such that God will be welcomed to come and fill each person who attends the KTD on the Saturday. Let's pray together for a mighty outpouring of the Spirit, for the tangible presence of God in our church and for great works of healing, strengthening, challenging and encouragement.

On Sat 10<sup>th</sup> Oct I hope we will be able to greet people from churches around France – several have already registered – and trust that God will not only bless them through David & Mary Pytches' teaching and ministry, but also that we will further develop a network of friendly contacts that will lead on to future co-operation and growth.

The programme for the day will include worship, teaching, opportunity for response, and fellowship over a light lunch which will be provided. A donation of 15€ is suggested to cover costs. We will also provide childcare for children up to 8 years old. But in order to make all these preparations we need people to **register as soon as possible**, please. I hope many of St. Mark's members will also register so as to host the event, pray for people, help create an expectant atmosphere of worship, and do the practical chores.

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Oct, David & Mary will speak at our regular services; that day there will be an evening service. This promises to be a wonderful weekend. Be sure not to miss it!! And please spread the news to all your friends who might be interested.

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*Paul Kenchington*

## Reach Building Project News

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The Marksman front cover shows you the artist's impression of the plans that are currently lodged at the Versailles Mairie and awaiting planning permission. We hope that permission will be received by late autumn and that soon after that we will have enough money to get going with building. It will be wonderful finally to see the white tower standing tall and proud and proclaiming the presence of this worshipping congregation and its community full of faith.

Fund raising is progressing surely though slowly. We have reached just beyond the €300,000 plateau, and now need to find the same amount again. There is no expectation that the pockets of St.Mark's members are bottomless – quite the opposite! But we do all have family and friends beyond the church – now is the time to get them interested and involved. I was really encouraged very recently when one of my family members in the UK responded to a letter I had sent out telling them what we are doing here. His gift warmed my heart.

Have you considered asking the people you know? Or rather, have you gone one stage further and actually put the request to them? There is no telling what response there could be if we all do this! And maybe some of them will even say a prayer for us and for the Lord's work! Plenty of REACH brochures are available at Church. Please use them.



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*Paul Kenchington*

# Houlgate 2009

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another great weekend away, blessed with sunshine, fun, fellowship and the living God in the midst of his family.

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*Paul Kenchington*

## A longer Reach

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Our REACH Building Project is not meant to be just a blessing to ourselves. We have chosen the motto: "Building To Serve Our Community" and we certainly hope that the local community of Versailles will be able to use our new building in wonderful ways. Indeed we trust that the wave of blessing will spread further than this town to perhaps France and even beyond.



What most readers probably don't know is that the Council took a decision early on in this process specifically to bless other building projects as well as our own, and so to be literally building community in the places where it is most needed. To this end we are tithing REACH gifts and finding appropriate projects to support. We have already sent gifts to St.Peter's Chantilly, one of the local ICS family of churches, to aid them in their current renovations.

But here is great news of another project we are supporting. We have sent a gift to a small but thriving church in Andhra Pradesh, India. The contact came through my cousin Natalie, who used to live in this area of India and came to know and love the pastor and his family. The church is situated "opposite the Tobacco Factory" (that's the official address!) in a poor village called Chilakaluripet. Pastor Bujie is also a carpenter, and has built the church with his own hands. It is a half shack made only of bamboo and woven tattie (see photo). There are a few stone slabs on the ground, a wooden prayer table, prayer mats and a microphone. The interior is decorated with furred red and white crepe paper streamers.

Despite its size and simplicity, Bujie's church sometimes hosts a congregation of 400 and the numbers are growing, and he travels to neighbouring villages with his message. Natalie writes that it is obvious that his church needs expanding. Natalie says she asked Bujie a question "Are you following Jesus only or Protestant, Baptist, United Reformed or other?" He replied "Only Jesus".

The St.Mark's Council have so far made a gift of 1200€ - small by comparison with our own expenditure, but untold riches for such an impoverished community in India. "Bujie will indeed think that this is a Gift from God," writes Natalie "and it will be beyond his wildest dreams. In fact I don't think he has dreams, he has faith and he works doggedly to make his vision of church come true".

I hope you will feel this is a good project to support both financially and with continued prayer.

*Paul Kenchington*

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# UK Church Leaders support Climate Change Day of Prayer

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Church leaders of all denominations have expressed support for a Climate Change Day of Prayer on 4 October in the run up to the next United Nations climate change summit due to take place at the end of the year.

"I shall be joining Christians from many different churches on 4 October in praying to the Author of Life and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that God's will be done during the decisive Copenhagen conference this December," said the Bishop of London, the Rt Revd Richard Chartres. "Prayer is powerful in dispelling the illusion that we are gods; an illusion which has wreaked such havoc on the earth."

The Climate Change Day of Prayer is an initiative of the Environmental Issues Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI). The network brings together environmental representatives from all of Britain and Ireland's mainstream churches. Also involved are Christian development and environmental organisations, including Christian Aid, CAFOD, Tearfund, A Rocha, Christian Ecology Link, EcoCongregation, the John Ray Initiative, and Operation Noah.

"Prayer is at the heart of all our actions, and this call to prayer comes at a good time," said Linda Jones, Head of Spirituality for the Catholic development agency, CAFOD. "We pray not just that political leaders might act but that we too may be transformed. We need to be ready to change the way we live to reflect our belief that we are called to care for creation, not to participate in its destruction. Poor countries are already bearing the brunt of droughts, floods and extreme weather conditions. CAFOD is calling for a fair and binding climate change deal at the UN meeting in Copenhagen this December, which puts poor communities at its heart.

The President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd David Gamble, and the Rt Revd William Hewitt, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, are also supporting this initiative. The Revd Professor Michael Northcott, professor of ethics at the University of Edinburgh and a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church, has commented on what he believes are the underlying issues of climate change. He said, "The biggest per capita global polluters have laid out their stall before Copenhagen and declared their intent to go on polluting, with very little restraint, to 2020 and beyond. Faith in capitalism has supplanted faith in the Creator, and humanity and the planet are on the brink of runaway global warming. On this day of prayer, Christians will gather to witness to their love for God and creation."

Those behind the Climate Change Day of Prayer initiative hope that Christians will hold joint times of prayer within every town and city.

# New Wine

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How do you react when you hear the words "This year at New Wine..." followed by someone's personal testimony of God at work in their life, emotions, family? Do you wish you had been there too? Or would you run a mile from a God who was that involved in the intimacies of your day to day life? Or do you feel hurt, disappointed, frustrated; even angry and rejected that your experience of God is not that powerful or effective?

I went to New Wine this year with a list... a list of areas I wanted to see God work on in my life. I have prayed about these areas of my life almost every day for years and years with very little sign of change. They are all big personal issues. Hearing others' testimonies to God at work in their lives gives us the faith to carry on believing that God does act in our lives and to keep on praying. But it can also make us question God's love, whether we are praying about the right things in the right way or whether we have missed something in our understanding of what "Omnipotent" and "Saviour" mean.

I am a Myers Brigg's "J" personality, I like lists, I like ticking things off. It makes me feel I have achieved something, scored some points, impressed someone (who????) won favour ??? made myself Worth Something. Lots of room here for psychoanalyzing me so maybe this should remain Anonymous.

So there I was, feeling fairly upbeat and ready to do business, up front and personal with God, "Here we are, now sort me out." (Guess who is in control here, or who would *like* to be...)

## New Whine?

Day One, I labelled my list "DISAPPOINTMENTS". Was that my attempt to make God feel guilty? "Sort these out Lord and just see how much more effective I'll be as a Christian". These are YOUR responsibility. But on Day Two, He re-labelled my list "GRIPES". A bit of a shock, a rude and much more negative word than the one I had used. Strange, list-lover as I am, I would not go to my husband or children with a list of *disappointments* or *gripes*. A list of jobs I'd like doing maybe, but not a list that said I AM DISAPPOINTED WITH YOU. It wouldn't seem very loving or constructive and would do a lot of damage to my most precious relationships, maybe irreparable damage. So how come I had the nerve to do that with God? In fact Him re-labelling them Gripes was a rather gentle reaction wasn't it? Pointing out I was complaining when actually He could have withdrawn rather frostily.

## Moving Mountains...or not?

Day Three. My list felt like a range of Mountains I wanted to cross, rather overwhelming.

Day Four. He reminded me He can move mountains. I wish He would... but on

Day Five He told me to turn my back on the mountain range. He wanted me to put them behind me, maybe so He could work on them in peace without being told by me that He'd "missed a bit" here or there. He also reminded me of things I needed to repent of in all the situations I'd listed. Oops.

But then I realized if I turned my back on the mountains I could look at the Sun/Son.

Repent, face the Son, keep my eyes on Jesus, believe He loves me, trust I am safe and secure even if I don't feel it and surrender all to Him.

No magic wand, no miracle, no change in my situation; but a change in me.

*By a member of St Mark's.*

## Our God Rains

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I didn't know that wellies came in so many colours and styles!!! Yes, the rain poured down, and so did the blessings.

We were MEANT to be at New Wine: I booked the week, and all of the camping gear we didn't possess (i.e. everything bar sleeping bags) just became available from different sources; the New Wine week "happened" to take place just before I started my new job; a last minute accommodation problem the night before New Wine started was solved when the local B&B just "happened" to have 1 room free for 1 night only... I could go on.



Many times as I walked round the New Wine site I was struck by the sheer number of people there - so many people – families, young people, groups of friends had all come to spend a week at a muddy camp site to focus on Jesus. They all seemed so at home and the whole thing seemed so, well, normal. And that is exactly how it felt for us too, right from the start. It was a week of refreshment and renewal in lots of areas.

I loved the worship – to be part of such a throng of people all singing their hearts out for God was a really powerful experience. There was no holds-barred, dancing, jumping, giving, and – yes – arms up-stretched worship – and do you know what? It was great.

There was some very practical help from the seminars: a 2 part seminar presented by Geoff Shattock on applying Jesus' teachings in the workplace was excellent and so timely. A seminar on prayer started by asking for a show of hands –who thinks their prayer life leaves a lot to be desired? 2/3 of the participants raised their hands. Then followed some very practical points about praying differently. What a relief. Another seminar gave me the chance to learn more about prophesy – rather more than I had bargained for: the seminar turned out to be a workshop. As half of the participants prepared to stampede for the door, we were all invited to join in. Some of the results were amazing.

And the children? The children eagerly attended 2 sessions a day in their different groups – and I watched in thankful amazement as they got themselves ready to be there, on time, for every session, not willing to miss anything. They have all grown with Jesus so much during that week. Lots of tears were shed on the last day.

A word on the practical front – don't let the prospect of organizing a week's camping put you off. Within our group, we all helped each other out. We shared anything that was needed. We collectively helped with the care of and organization for the children. It was a week with our church *family*. It was GOOD.

New Wine 2010 – just come.

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*Catherine Fourel*

# Soul Survivor

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## Testimonies from a few youthies !

We had an amazing time at Soul Survivor and in order to cherish the memories, a few of us decided to put them down on paper. Excited about starting the September hustle and bustle, we know that reading over these testimonies again will give us that boost we need. I would like to say a big thank you to the church who prayed for us. God is good and he showered us with His love. I can say beyond a shadow of a doubt that everyone was touched by Him. We had lots of fun all have fond memories of the week!

### Victoria Reardon

This summer was my first time at Soul Survivor. Before coming I was a little stressed out because I didn't know what to expect. But this experience has been life changing! Every morning and evening we had a "Big meeting" which lasted about 2 hours. During these meetings there was a time of worship, a talk/testimony and at the end, Mike Pilavachi often felt God telling him that certain people were in a difficult



situation, so he asked these people to stand up or sometimes to come around the stage, and he asked the Holy Spirit to come and help them. Most of the time strange things happened, some people were shouting, crying, laughing, shaking... I had never seen that in my life so at the beginning of the week I was quite scared and I didn't dare to pray for these people. But with time I became more comfortable with this; I was glad to pray for the people of the youth group but I still didn't dare to stand up when Mike was asking certain people to do so. On the last day, I prayed like I had never prayed before. My relationship with God is very special. I've always believed in Him, considering him a protector, but I've never felt His presence, His love in me like certain people seem to feel. I haven't been to church for a long time, and during the last couple of years I had lots of personal and family issues and sometimes I had some doubts about Him, about His love. So that night I asked Him to give me a sign of His love, of His presence in my life, I asked Him to help me and to lead me in my life, to show me the way. Then, during the worship, Mike asked the people who didn't feel the love of God, who had doubts and wanted to feel His presence, His love and spread it, to stand up and come around the stage. I told myself that it was my last chance and I went. I closed my eyes and I prayed. I felt my heart beating very fast, and then a sort of flame, heat in my heart. My body started to shake and I was at the same time really scared, (because I didn't know what was happening) and amazed by the love of God. But then I felt a hand on my shoulder, and without looking I knew it was Emily Hopkins, and all the fear was gone, I felt only the love of God, I was at peace. After this experience I cried, I was physically exhausted, but I was at peace, a weight had left me.

At the beginning of Soul Survivor, Emily Hopkins asked me what I was expecting of this camp from a spiritual point of view. I hadn't thought about it before coming but I told her that I

wanted to meet Jesus again. Now that Soul Survivor is finished I can say that I really met Him again and it was an extraordinary experience. Now I know that God is good, He loves me, He is there for me. I feel better and stronger than ever, and when I came to the Church on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August, after Soul Survivor, for the first time I didn't come because I felt that I had to come but because I wanted to come to praise the Lord, because "I love the King and the King loves me".

### **Noelle Lewkowicz**

Soul Survivor this year was going to be a very important bridge in my life since it immediately led into my moving to New York for my studies. I was really counting on it for being reinforced in my faith and confidence and getting peace in my heart for this great change. Excited and mentally ready as I was to go, I knew I couldn't do it without God in my life. During Soul Survivor God's presence was so strong all week and I got several revelations about my life and move. God reminded me to live for him instead of living for me and just leaning on him for support.



I also got a sense that I'm going to have to overcome this city and its people as a small light shining in a big dark place. Hopefully, with God's help I'll be able to help other people and hopefully bring them to him as well.

Amazingly God placed me in a dorm building that is not 5 minutes away from a beautiful church named Saint Marks!! Placed in eastern Greenwich village it is very open to the artist community and I cannot wait to go see it next Sunday.

Apart from reassuring me in my move to New York, my week at Soul Survivor helped me get closer to God and open my heart more to those less fortunate which has been a struggle for me so far. I am trying to live in faith as much as possible and am trying not to lose that amazing feeling that floats all around when at Soul Survivor.



### **Anna Thorley**

I have already given my testimony in church but I thought that it wouldn't do any harm in writing it down. Don't worry, this will be an abridged version! My testimony spans over three weeks; my week as a delegate at New Wine, my week on team at New Wine and my week with the youth at Soul Survivor.

For the past 11 years, I have been going through a process which has been one of healing and strengthening. It hit its epitome in these three weeks and it was a lot to take it, if a little scary! During my first week of New Wine, I quickly realised that I was in the final stages of the process. It was the final push. I knew that God wanted to release me into something new. It was no coincidence that I have graduated and am on my gap-year. School was a hard place for me, a place where I bought into the lie that I was no good and worthless. I felt inferior and even friendless. When I look back, I was really just a square peg in a round hole. God was disturbing the nest. I know that God has always been good to me, so why would now be any different? I realised that what I had failed to let God heal in me had turned into fear. Whilst I was excited about what God has for me, I was bound by fear. I couldn't understand why, though. I know of God's faithfulness, of His goodness. If God is for me, who can be against me? I wanted to be free but I was afraid of the person I would be if I was to change. However, that evening, I took a step of faith with God and prayed that God would help me make the choice to ask to be released from my fear. I needed to forgive myself for finding it hard to want release. I had become used to who I had become but I did want my chains to be undone.

Funnily enough, the evening meeting was about just going for it with God and not being afraid. I decided to take the step and I asked for prayer, I asked to be released. During my second week of New Wine when I was working on team, God tackled on of my fears in particular. There were about 140 of us working with hundreds of children. As I walked into the room ready to meet everybody, I knew that I would have to step out of my comfort zone and talk to people I didn't know and not worry about whether people might like me or not. I ended up having a great week and meeting some lovely people. I didn't need anyone to



hold my hand by the end of the week and did things of my own accord. I have made some really good friends who even cried when I left. I feel silly saying this but they actually liked me! Those who have been to be Soul Survivor will understand when I say that I am coming into land with this last bit. At the end of the week, we were talking about the gifts of the spirit and in particular the gift of tongues. When Mike asked those who wanted this gift to come forward, my heart sank. About three years ago, I asked for the gift and didn't come. Things at school had become particularly difficult and I had decided that the reason God had not given me my own prayer language was because I wasn't worth it. Then Mike asked for people who can already speak in tongues to pray for those who were seeking the gift. It seemed as if the whole tent got up to pray and I felt terrible. Everybody was worth the gift except me. All of a sudden, I was in that place again, I was brought back to the Anna of three years ago. I decided to go for it. I sat a bit away from the St Marks group where there seemed to be a quiet spot. I asked God if we could try again and He honoured that. I now speak in tongues. It is not very developed but it is a start! It only seems to be a small improvement but I felt free, I didn't want to stop. I felt free from the past 11 years of my life.

I now know that I am my own person, I am ready to be a new Anna who is free from school and everything that went with it. I am a work in progress. I will have to work harder at not believing the lies fed to me by the devil. I will have to make an extra effort in fighting off my fears but ultimately, I know that I am free.

## Sarah Thorley

I think many of you know that I have had back pains for the past four years now. I went to Soul Survivor hoping that God would heal me or speak to me about the pain. One of the evening meetings during the week was about healing and the kingdom of God on earth and after the talk, there was a time of prayer ministry during which Mike Pilavachi asked all those who were in need of physical healing to stand up, and I did. Many people gathered round me to pray, including Marion, Noémie and Emily Hopkins. As they were praying for me, the pain was not going away but I felt God was saying that I just needed to stop praying, so I did. As you can probably imagine, I was very disappointed that but as we were walking back to the youth group, Emily turned to me and said: "I feel God would want to say to you that he loves you and wants you to praise, worship and serve him even through the pain. He will never let you go." Just after having said that, the band began to play "Blessed be your name" and Emily said to me: "This is your song." It was a very difficult thing to do but that evening and the days following, I began to worship him with everything I had.

Then, a day or maybe two after, during one of the morning celebrations, as I was worshipping and praying for people in our youth group and beyond, I began to feel no pain in my back and it lasted for three days after this. I was so happy and spent the last days at Soul Survivor celebrating and thanking God. For that short period of time, I had been released. My disappointment had been washed away. Gradually though, the pain began to come back and even though the healing is not complete, God spoke to me at Soul Survivor and I know that even through the pain, I have to worship, serve and obey him. It might be a gradual process but one where constant prayer is needed.

## Teaching in Northern Thailand

In 2008 Claire Simmons spent several months teaching at schools on the Thai-Burmese border. In March of this year she went back for more:

Until April 2009, I was just 'Teacher' to the 400 refugee/migrant Karen students in KKB school. These children are all victims of the attempted genocide to their Karen people by the dictatorial Burmese government, and when in their homeland in the Burmese jungle, they often find themselves on the run. On the border, in Thai territory, they are safe from landmines, guns, rape and many of the dangers the jungle brings. Without legal status however, they are not safe from police raids and human trafficking, and are victims of harsh poverty and all the conditions that accompany it.

I had taught in a few schools in that border town in 2008, but KKB was where I spent most of my time. At the beginning I dreaded it. The heat, the smell, the awkward language barrier, the overcrowded classes, the bland food. After two months' teaching there last year, I had eased into teaching, and at the same time eased into closer contact with the students, but I was exhausted by the effort of it all and glad to be home in France.

When I returned in March, the students were overwhelmed.

"You came back!"

## Teaching in Northern Thailand (Continued)

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I began teaching them again, in their summer holidays. The 200 boarding students had nowhere to go home to, so summer classes were more than welcome. In April, after a few frustrations with the organisation of the school, a thought crossed my mind.

'Move into the school.'

I was half terrified, half over-excited. My friends in the NGO office I was living in told me I was crazy but that I was more than welcome to do so; it was my choice.

And it was my choice. I could have chosen to stay in the comfort of my private room with a proper bathroom and electricity. I could have missed out on the deepest experience of my life so far.

I could never ever tell anyone everything I lived and felt whilst living in that school. I loved eating the tough rice and ever-same curry with my fingers. I loved sleeping on the concrete floor, sharing a mosquito net with four of my favourite girls in the world. I loved waking up at five in the morning to realise I was the last one up and that the whole town was already busy. I loved sitting with the boys after classes exchanging songs on the guitar, playing volleyball with a deflated ball, learning cane-ball with painful ankles, helping the students with the homework I had given them myself, answering their questions about Europe and aeroplanes. I loved life. But underlying problems began surfacing as the language barrier faded and the proper school term approached.

It pained me to see my 22 year old students ashamed because they were breaking the school rules by talking to their girlfriends on the phone. They only spoke on the phone because spending time with the opposite sex was forbidden in the school by the headmaster, as was music, football, chess, earrings, and to me at least it seemed, happiness.

As sponsors backed out of funding the school due to the uncooperative directors, my oldest class began reducing in numbers. 'He's on kitchen duty' was the reply to most of my roll-call. Kitchen duty for 200 boarding students.

I stayed up a whole night with the girls on a school night manually removing the bones from (what seemed like) a million fish for a ceremony the following day. The students never complained, never brought it up, but it broke my heart a little bit more every day. And I thanked God every day that He had told me to move into that school, and that I had said yes, because in no other way could I ever have seen any of this.

There are so many beautiful young men and women in that school who had spiritual riches I envy, and potential that is screaming to be worked. They give their all in everything they do, and have been forced by life into efficiency and responsibility, that makes me look like a spoilt child next to them.

And I was to be spoilt a second time in my life, this time by their love. I've seen in these hardly educated Buddhist young people the image and body of Christ more concretely than I have ever known him before. I felt so full, so satisfied, even though I spent everything I had every day, physically and mentally. I was full with the food of eternal life, and I didn't even know how hungry I had been until I answered yes to his calling. For my food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work. *John 4:34*

There is so much to be done, in KKB and elsewhere, and rather than despair about the enormity of brokenness in the world, I'm just going to ask God what He wants me to do today.

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*Claire Simmons*

## Book Review – Light Force

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When Christians behind the iron curtain faced persecution for practising their faith, Brother Andrew, a Dutchman with a gift for crossing frontiers unobtrusively, gave them hope by smuggling Bibles. He was helped by the apparently miraculous way in which customs officers failed to notice his cargo, and wrote "God's Smuggler", a best-seller, about his activities and the resulting growth of the underground church.

This book's fame was such that his contacts in Eastern Europe might face danger, so he turned his attention to strengthening the Christians in the Middle East. With Al Janssen he published "**Light Force**" in 2004, telling of his concern over the hatred and conflict there and how he felt led to approach a leader of Islamic Jihad: "Perhaps through my actions I could, in some small way, bridge the gaping chasm between Israel and the Palestinians and between Christians and Muslims." The sheikh agreed to see him and surprised him with his knowledge of the Bible! The founding of Bethlehem Bible College and of the Bible Society shop in Gaza are described, also the origin of Musalaha, a movement organising desert camps where Jewish and Palestinian Christians can form friendships and overcome prejudices and stereotyping.

Steve Chalke wrote: "It is imperative that Christians in the West seek understanding of the crisis in the Middle East. This amazing book explains and illustrates like no other the conflict – political and spiritual – and its devastating effect on human lives."

I was inspired by this moving story and agree with the publisher who wrote that it is "every bit as exciting as "God's Smuggler", as Andrew puts his life on the line time and again to bring his radical Christian message to the stalemate of Middle East conflict. Only the love of God has the answer..."

*Sheila Brown, former member of St Mark's*

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"Intellectuals solve problems; geniuses prevent them; politicians cause them" –  
(Discuss)

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## 25 Years at St Paul's Chevry

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On May 17<sup>th</sup> 2009 St Paul's Church celebrated its 25 years. In the morning was the impressive Roman Catholic celebration in the grounds of the Chateau de Belleville. It was for the whole secteur (Gif, Chevry, Bures, Les Ulis, Saclay etc)... in other words, hundreds of people. The bishop of Evry was there and a large number of local clergy. It rained quite heavily throughout the Eucharist, but that didn't seem to dampen spirits in any way

The evening began with a quiet time of worship led by the Chemin Neuf prayer group. We sang Taizé songs, and from there we then went into our own service of holy Communion, slightly adapted to help the French speakers present, of whom there were a large number. It was particularly good to have Père Libère Pwongo with us for this time. As always we all stood around the Lord's Table for the consecration of the bread and wine, but this time we needed two ranks. This we felt was a real ecumenical occasion, and most of those present shared in the sacrament.

It all started with the Chevry teas in the 1980s, where the nucleus of the future congregation gathered, held on a Sunday afternoon. Fortnightly services at St Paul's began in 1984, shortly after the building of the new church, and our then chaplain, Jonathon Wilmot was present at the consecration. Unusually for a church built after 1905 it belongs to the Mairie of Gif -- officially it is a Centre Culturelle (this is all to do with laïcité). Five congregations use the building. The Roman Catholic community is by far the largest; they fill the church whereas we rattle around in it. The Baptists have been here from the start, and it is also used by the Eglise Réformée. Very recently an evangelical Portuguese congregation has started holding lively services on a Sunday afternoon. To that should be added the flourishing ecumenical and « charismatic » prayer group run by the Chemin Neuf community.

25 years passed by! Services went from twice monthly to weekly in the 80s, and now continue throughout the summer since 2007. The congregation has always been small, and mainly of long term residents in France, from different Christian traditions, Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed, Methodist... The group was to a very great extent lay-led, even if that leadership was at times unofficial, and I think that to some extent we forged our own identity here. Some of the particularities of St Paul's, the more extensive use of the liturgy, the three bible readings, the use of traditional hymns and older songs, the gathering of the congregation around the altar for communion, the informal summer services, come from congregational initiative. A locum during an interregnum said that we were orthodox - I'm fairly certain that this was meant as praise. We've always been very close to one another. We are also an almost local church, with a nucleus of people living within walking distance of the church. However it is a very open and welcoming group, and short term visitors who have worshipped with us have really enriched our lives and I believe been enriched.

The link with St Mark's is essential in a material sense, and we try to take part in the life of the chaplaincy, helping for example in Operation Stephen. In the past, St Paul's members have

been involved with the youth group, as wardens, church secretary and others. We're especially grateful to some of the St Mark's people who have helped us, and continue to do so, Christina playing the organ and helping with Sunday School, Roberta also on the organ, and of course for our chaplains, Jonathan Wilmot, Martin Oram, David and Angela Marshall, and Paul.

Now being a small congregation has disadvantages, but it has advantages as well, and we need to use them to the full. An example is the summer service, where we desert the pews, and sit in a circle. We call it « informal » though it being St Paul's we of course have a liturgy, different from that of the rest of the year. Prayer and intercession are free and instead of a sermon there is a short space for discussion and reflection, and everyone can join in. The subject can be the readings, but nothing is excluded, the canticles, the psalm, the hymns, and sometimes discussion can go on for quite a long time.

Two of the biggest changes have come recently. The first was the return of the Sunday School. When St Paul's started there were mainly young families and quite a lot of children, and two age classes. The children grew and families moved away, and unfortunately young children were not enough of a priority to make the effort start it up again, though everyone was very happy having children there in the service. Recently Felicity and Lori started it up again and it has become an essential part of St Paul's, and yet again we sometimes see almost as many children as adults (and the congregation halving as the children go out for Sunday School). So we now again have a church of people of all ages coming together to worship God.



The other big change is the arrival of Elaine. Now what can I say about her, other than that she seems to be made for St. Paul's. Not only, for the first time in 25 years, there is someone with principal responsibility for our congregation, but we have real ministerial leadership for the first time. This is good, but it is also something that we are going to have to adapt to. We will be able to grow in a way we couldn't before, but at the same time we must keep the strengths we had. We need to move outside the building more, and perhaps develop the potential strength of a shared building, working with the other communities, like we did years ago in the Christian bookstall on the market (St Paul au Marché).

St Paul's and its people have been very important to me over the past 25 years. Things have not always been easy, and in those times we've needed to support one another. I shall be retiring shortly, but we're not considering moving away, the existence of St Paul's is a main reason. I've learned so much there about life, the Universe and everything, and in particular about God, and I look forward to living here as much of the next 25 as I'm allotted as I see exciting times ahead.

*Gareth Lewis*

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## A Seed of Faith

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A mustard seed,  
Is a tiny bead.  
So small in fact,  
I must react  
To question,  
Our Lord's intention,  
When he used this tiny measure,  
To gauge that vast, oft hidden treasure.  
The gift of faith, our trust in Him,  
Which applied with love, more souls will win.

What sheer surprise,  
That faith this size,  
Has such great power.  
Could miracles shower?  
Will greater girth,  
Move the whole earth?  
Joshua stopped the moon and sun,  
Until a great battle was won.  
What was the size of his belief,  
To give Israel such relief?

The seed is small,  
And the tree is tall.  
By calculation,  
With extrapolation,  
A shrub, the moon it could displace,  
The tree, the earth move from its race!  
Does God intend to ridicule,  
Grading our faith so minuscule?  
Seed size alone with God you see,  
Can do all things sufficiently.

So is our faith,  
A wish, a wraith,  
That we secrete.  
Or is it real and concrete?  
The seed is small but it exists.  
What of our faith, does that subsist?  
If a pin-head can move a massif,  
Do we lack faith, are we so passive?  
It's not size that matters, to my relief,  
But in God's power and promises belief.

In God we must,  
Confer our trust.  
To him we pray,  
And must obey.  
If you forebear,  
The Lord will hear.  
For when we take him at his word,  
And show our faith by stepping forth,  
Our great reward,  
Is from the Lord.

To venture boldly on thin ice,  
Is surely danger to entice.  
Because it's thin,  
You will fall in.  
But if it's strong,  
You won't go wrong.  
Though you may waver,  
It will be safer.  
Your weight it'll bear,  
And get you there,

Let us be wise,  
Whatever its size,  
Just faith alone,  
Is like a stone.  
With faith misplaced,  
You'll be disgraced.  
With no pride for faith must we be endowed,  
It is God who acts by love with power.  
We with thanks and humility,  
Praise His grace and majesty.

Is shifting mounts from their location,  
A Christian's true, God given vocation?  
Why all the fuss?  
All things are made possible to us.  
God's Word and Spirit will guide us to,  
Ask what we will have Him do.  
What lesson then can we learn through it?  
Why, not to measure, but just do it!  
Lord I believe,  
Help my unbelief!

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*David Logan*

# Peru

Would you spend three months in a small town 3000 metres up a Peruvian mountain?

Julie Pham did. This is what she said about her experience:



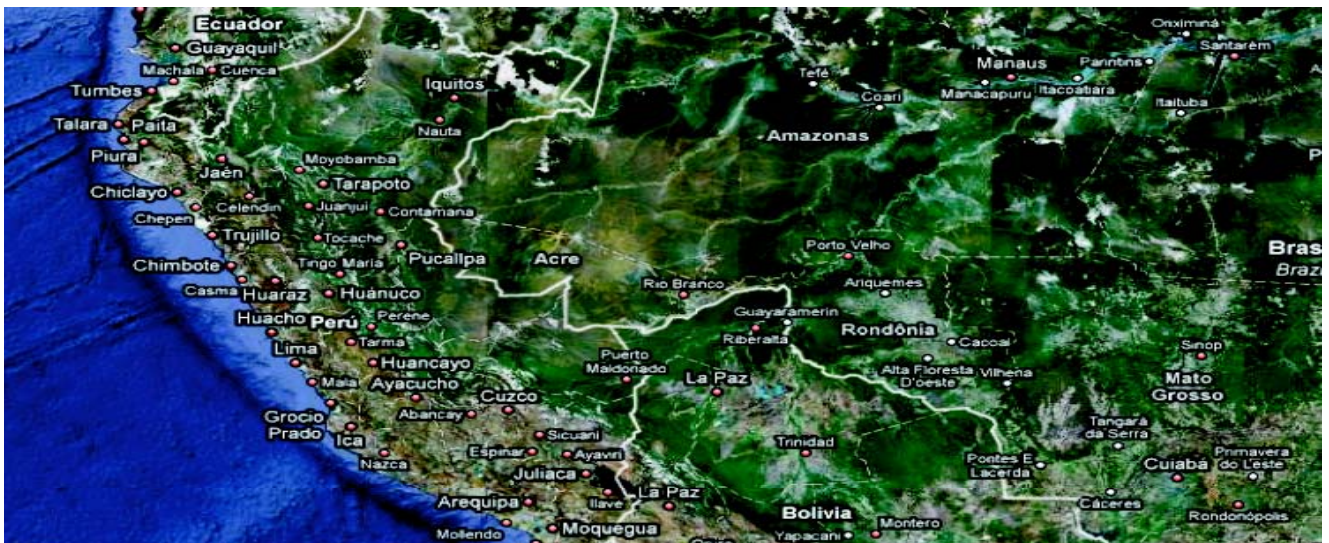
"I was taking a gap year from University, and I got to know of this possibility through the internet. It's an organisation called Esperanza de Peru. They were looking for volunteers to teach in an orphanage in Huancayo. It's a seven-hour bus ride from Lima, and the orphanage houses around 40 kids of ages from 8 to 17. Some of them have been picked up off the street, some just abandoned by their families. Not all of them have been in trouble with the police, but many for one reason or another can't or won't go to the local schools, so they are taught at the orphanage. I found myself teaching them all subjects except English. It was difficult at the start because Peruvian Spanish is different from Castilian, and in addition the children, like kids everywhere, had their own brand of

slang – so that I can now sometimes come out with expressions that surprise my Spanish friends.

The orphanage is not specifically a religious foundation, although everyone went to church on bank holidays (which are quite numerous in Peru!) - Peru is a strongly Catholic country although as in France many people's faith may not go deep.

For me these three months were a wonderful experience, and a real chance to strengthen my faith in God while doing something for other people.

I'm planning to do something similar during my next long vacation.



# Catering for all Tastes

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There are various exciting events approaching at St Mark's:

**19 and 20 September:** On Your Marks Big Weekend and Rentrée Barbecue. Volunteers needed to set up, serve and clear up.

**Saturday 10 October** 10.00 – 16.00: Kingdom Training Day with David and Mary Pytches, including lunch. Volunteers needed to prepare food, set up, serve and clear up.

**Sunday 15 November:** Thanksgiving Lunch with special menu. Volunteers needed to help prepare food, set up, serve and clean up.

**Sunday 6 December:** Christmas Fair, stalls including one where you can buy a simple lunch. Volunteers needed to look after stalls, set up on the Saturday beforehand, serve food and clean up.

As you will see, all of these events involve catering! The organisers would therefore be very grateful for your help with any of the above events. If you are not free on the day but would like to help, you can volunteer to provide food ahead.

Please can you have a look at the jobs & dates on the list displayed in Church, and let Christina Galley know what you can help with?

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## Quick Quiz – Test your bible knowledge

Which of the following phrases do not come from the Bible: *(answers – page 23)*

1. How are the mighty fallen
2. Nothing new under the sun
3. Let my people go
4. Between a rock and a hard place
5. Great men are not always wise
6. No man can serve two masters
7. Filthy lucre
8. The quick and the dead

# Sunday Trading – How you voted

## Sunday opening in France

Thirty members of the church “voted” to record their views on Sunday Trading in the light of the new liberalising law likely to come into force very soon. **These were the options:**

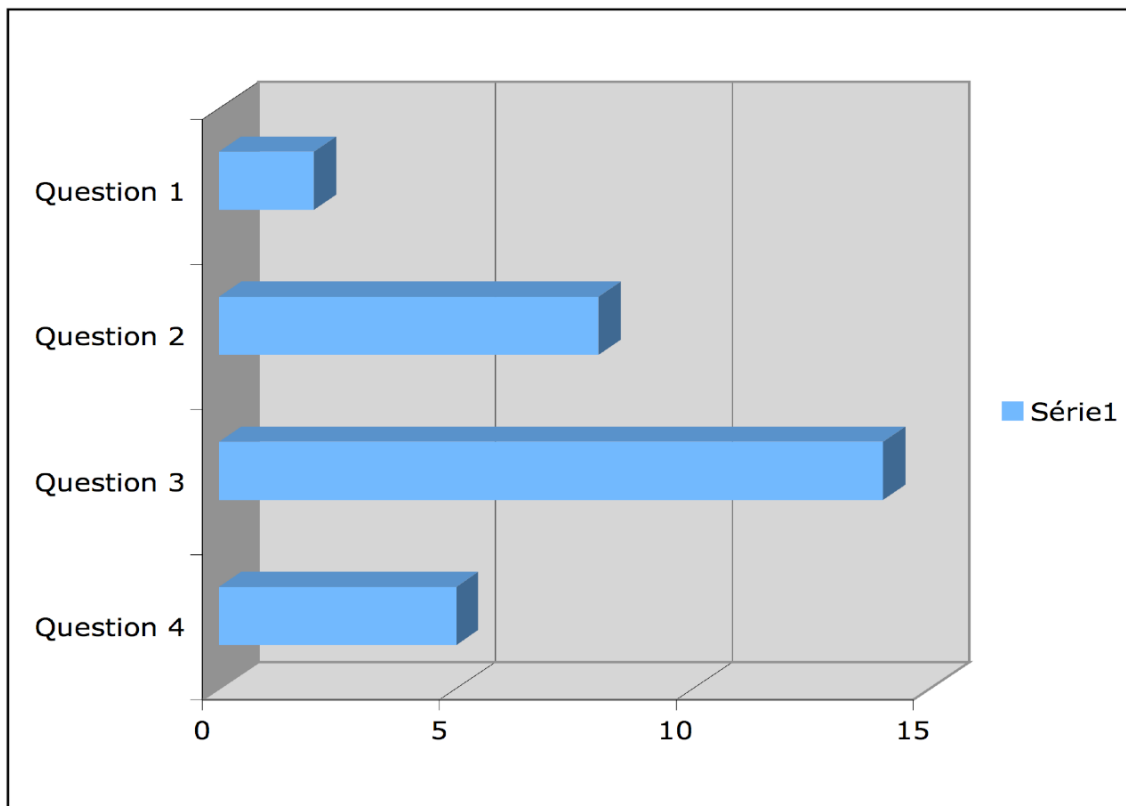
(1) It is no business of Christians to decide how others should spend their Sundays. So long as employees are not exploited, shops should be allowed to open whenever they like.

(2) The 4<sup>th</sup> commandment means what it says: as Christians we should do everything in our (legal!) power to ensure that only essential services are allowed to operate on Sundays

(3) Even those who don't go to Church should be encouraged to treat Sunday as a day of rest, a time to spend relaxing with family and friends. So in most cases shops shouldn't be allowed to open.

(4) If I am honest, I like Sunday to be a “different” sort of day, with time for family, church, rest .... etc (and this would quickly be lost if all shops were always open); but I also value being able to buy what I need on that day. Since I can't “have my cake and eat it (!)” I have to accept that Sunday opening should be allowed.

**And these were the results:**



## Sunday trading – your comments

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« Sunday opening will be destructive to families and society for a meagre gain in commercial value and employment »

“I vote for the second option on the basis that I would like to think we live in a Christian society”

« I lived in UK when they legalised Sunday Opening and didn't like the way it's changed the whole ethos of Sundays »

« There are also lonely people without families and for whom open shops provide somewhere to spend time. »

“Interesting debate considering that for me as an American, Sunday opening has been a reality since my birth”

### ICS News

At this time of year, lots of people move. Moving house anywhere is supposed to be one of life's most stressful events. Packing, boxes, redecorating, redirecting post, losing your son's favourite cuddly bear...change, change, change and even the occasional crisis. Just imagine then (or think back if you have done this yourself) having as well to change country, banks, culture, daily language, children's schools, and job as well...

Of course international Anglican churches welcome through their doors many who have just moved: in some, a *quarter* of the congregation come and go each year. ICS, since our founding in 1823, has been concerned for the welfare of people who venture far from home but who want to worship in English. We built churches for them (and still own many); we specialise in recruiting Anglican ministers suited to the challenge of serving the many nationalities in international churches; and support the mission of chaplaincies and Anglican dioceses through prayer and targeted help with outreach projects, training, student ministry and the like. When planting new churches in Northern Cyprus or supporting church building projects in France, ICS has a single aim: to help English-speakers (whether they are far from home or at home) find Christ's love; fellowship, friendship and community; and grow in faith in Christ. To find out more about what we do and hear about and pray for other international churches, pick up a copy of *ICS News and Prayer Diary* from the back of church or see our web site. I hope you will be encouraged by what you read.

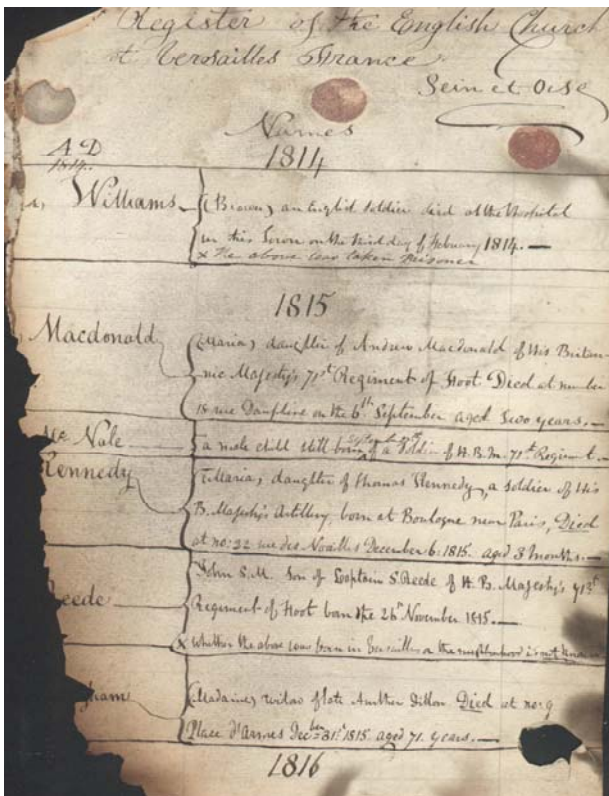
#### ***Please pray this month for***

- The recruitment of a new chaplain for Holy Trinity Cannes: advert will go in the press shortly.
- ICS's outreach to tourists, just coming to the end of its summer season in fourteen resorts. May the ministry of our volunteer seasonal chaplains and the church services help and encourage many to follow Christ.

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**David Healey, General Manager of ICS: [www.ics-uk.org](http://www.ics-uk.org)**

# A Glimpse at St Mark's Archives



Our documented history goes back to 1814. There exists a funeral register from that era whose first entry lists the burial of a soldier who had been wounded and sent to hospital; a margin note states that "the above was taken prisoner". The register itself was snatched from a fire which in 1911 burned down the then church building, as is witnessed by the charred and ashy edges of the book. The volume itself is a piece of history.

That book, along with other early church records, lives carefully preserved in our archives so you have probably never seen it. However on the weekend of **September 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>** which are designated as

"journées du patrimoine" you will hopefully have the chance to view these and other records. People may, for instance, be interested in finding relatives' names in old baptism registers, or the record of weddings conducted years ago (the blessing services allowed now are not, of course, registered).

The suggestion so far is that we make the records available for viewing (supervised, of course) in the Old Chapel for some part of the weekend. If you are a history buff, this is a good moment for you. Are there volunteers who would like to help keep a vigilant eye on these valuable treasures of history? If so, please speak to Paul K or to Christina.

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Answers to Bible quiz: Numbers 4 and 8 (it was too easy, wasn't it?)

**St Mark's Anglican Church, Versailles**  
**In the Diocese of Europe**  
**founded in 1814**

St Mark's is a self-financing chaplaincy working in partnership with:  
The Intercontinental Church Society, 1 Athena Drive, Tachbrook Park,  
Warwick CV34 6NL United Kingdom

**“Our God is able to do abundantly more....”**

**31 rue du Pont Colbert, 78000 Versailles**

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<b>Chaplain:</b>	<b>Paul Kenchington</b>	01 39 02 79 45
<b>Associate Chaplain St Paul's:</b>	<b>Elaine Labourel</b>	01 69 04 09 91
<b>Administrators:</b>	<b>Christina Galley</b>	01 34 52 28 85
	<b>Kevin Bodsworth</b>	01 30 95 84 49
<b>Youth Worker:</b>	<b>Nathan Lambert</b>	06 88 35 51 97
<b>Children's Programme Coordinator:</b>	Catherine Fourel	01 30 24 79 15
<b>Evangelism Coordinator:</b>	Kevin Bodsworth	01 30 95 84 49
<b>Music Ministry:</b>	Paul Kenchington	01 39 02 79 45
<b>Churchwardens:</b>	Judy Johnson	01 30 56 52 31
	Barry Saunders	01 46 23 99 09
<b>Deputy wardens:</b>	Maggie Simmons, Karen Thorley, Neal Cotton	
<b>Lay Assistants:</b>	Buki Kogbe, Gareth Lewis, Clare Kenchington, David Logan, Barry Saunders, William Morris	
<b>Church Council:</b>	John Ferrero, Catherine Fourel, Alan Kendall, Anne-Marie Laidet, Beki Lambert, Anne-Charlotte Tassin, Ian Wray	
<b>Archdeaconry Synod Representative:</b>	Allison Pineau, Jim Watkins	

**Worship:**

<b>St Mark's</b>	9.00am	1st Sunday	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.30am	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	Morning Worship (CW)
		2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays	Holy Communion (CW)
		3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	All-Age Family Worship
		5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Praise & Prayer
5.30 pm		Evening service	
<b>St Paul's Chevry</b>	5.30 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays	Holy Communion (CW)
		2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays	Evening Prayer (CW)

Association Culturelle Déclarée (d'après la loi de 1905)