

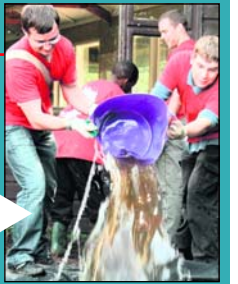
GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

Harvest 2010: FREE

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Rab Taylor tests out his eight-man bike.

Pedal power of eight set for the road

■ An amazing eight-man bike is set to take to the roads of Norfolk in the next few weeks, using pedal power to help raise much-needed cash for children in a Bulgarian orphanage.

The 21-foot bike, believed to be the longest and heaviest in the UK, is the passion of retired Great Yarmouth coastguard Rab Taylor, who has spent over 450 hours getting the impressive machine back into road-worthy condition.

Rab first encountered the bike, which weighs 625lbs and goes at 16mph on the flat, 25 years ago in South Wales when he used it for several fund-raising events.

More recently, as a member of Norwich Central Baptist Church, Rab has been involved for several years in working parties which have regularly travelled to the Burzitsa Orphanage in Bulgaria to help with vital maintenance and building work.

"I have used my DIY skills in painting, laying floor tiles and other maintenance work which all make a difference to the children and the infrastructure of the orphanage," he said. "We also have fun times with sport and visits to the seaside."

Rab, who spent 30 years as a coastguard, following 11 years in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, came up with the idea of finding the eight-man bike to raise funds for the orphanage in Burzitsa and similar ones supported by Christian charity Krasifaid.

Rab managed to track down the bike to a shed in Llanelli, where it had been abandoned ten years ago. He persuaded the owner to give him the bike and, last March, the bike was transported to Norfolk. Rab has been working on it ever since and in October it will be ready for its first outing in over a decade.

"It is my prayer that the bike will raise the awareness of Krasifaid, and that the money raised will go a long way to bring comfort to the children. We are mindful at this time there are so many worthy causes around the world, and we hope that the good people of Norfolk will support our efforts and the charity."

If you would like to know more or to support the orphanage, contact Rab on 01493 700081.

website: www.krasifaid.org.uk

Christian projects feed the hungry



Grant Habershon and Rev Sharon Willimott at the new Mile Cross Foodbank centre.

which can be taken to one of the Foodbank centres where people receive a warm welcome, a hot drink and a foodbox.

People are also put people in touch with agencies who can help resolve the underlying causes of the crisis.

Rev Sharon Willimott, Methodist Minister for Norwich North West, said: "From tiny acorns mighty oaks do grow- Mile Cross Methodist Church and its sister churches in the North West of Norwich, welcomes the opportunity to be involved, with the work of Norwich Foodbank. It draws Christians to work together to clearly show our common calling to be Jesus followers; loving, serving and caring for those in need. By their fruits you shall know them... Matthew 7:16."

Norwich North MP Chloe Smith said: "I was interested to hear about this smart, compassionate initiative and I think it would be an easy concept for many people in Norwich to support. I look forward to working with the Norwich Foodbank to assist however I can as a local MP." Grant said: "We have been

overwhelmed by the number of front-line care professionals who have contacted us asking how they can obtain food vouchers and this has really demonstrated the need for this local charity. Also the support and encouragement we have received from many local churches has been tremendous and we are expecting a good amount of food from harvest collections.

"However it is very important that we obtain a steady flow of food coming into the Foodbank throughout the year. Therefore we ask all people, who can afford to, to regularly give food to the project. Get your local churches, schools and organisations involved in food collections. We will also look to work with local businesses and supermarkets and Asda on Drayton Road in Norwich has already agreed to support a collection.

Contact Norwich Foodbank on 01603 617905 or at email foodnorwichproject@hotmail.co.uk More information can be found at: www.norwichfoodbank.co.uk

■ See article on page 3.

Free food is already being delivered to hundreds of needy people across Norfolk thanks to the efforts of local Christians and the His Church charity

And on October 1 the Norwich Foodbank project will open two new centres in the city to feed an estimated 2000 people a year.

Christian charity Norwich Foodbank, which works to support local people who find themselves on the edge of disaster, will begin to distribute food on from its two new Foodbank centres at the Norwich Christian Resource Centre on Redwell Street and the Mile Cross Methodist Church on Aylsham Road.

Project manager Grant Habershon, said: "People in Norwich are going hungry today. Norwich is the 62nd most

By KEITH MORRIS

deprived district in England and I would expect we would need to feed at least 2000 people each year when we are fully up and running.

"Many local people have no financial safety net and a sudden crisis, such as a benefit delay, bereavement, redundancy or illness, can leave them unable to feed themselves or their family. Such situations can quickly deteriorate, leading to relationship breakdown, house repossession or worse."

Food is donated by the people of Norwich and volunteers sort and pack the food into foodboxes which will last for three days. It partners with front-line care professionals, who identify people in crisis and give them a voucher

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GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

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 ■ The deadline for material for the Christmas edition is Friday November 5. It will be available for distribution from Friday November 26.
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Time of restoration and renewal

■ "They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of His splendour," Isaiah 61

■ Harvest is a time of reaping the fruits of a season's labour; a time of great beauty, a time of transition and a time to be thankful. God has taken the smallest of seeds and nurtured them into growth.

The work of Hebron Trust in Norwich is a reflection of this process. It is now over 20 years since Hebron House came into being, providing a home in which women with serious and life-threatening addictions can begin to recover and make new beginnings. The staff at Hebron are a dedicated team of Christians, seeking to provide an environment of love, respect, safety and trust. We rely on God for guidance in our daily response to difficult situations, and are motivated by a desire to show genuine compassion and care through a structured, disciplined programme.

Isaiah 61 is a key scripture for the work at Hebron. Addiction is in itself a 'prison'. Dependence on any substance removes



Kath Habershon
Care Coordinator
Hebron Trust

freedom of choice. Our need for that substance will dictate our behaviour, our thought processes and become the central focus of our lives. It will take the place of God, the one on whom we should be dependent.

Addiction leads to loss – of property, of family, of self worth and eventually loss of life. Addiction can be defined as an 'emotional,

physical and spiritual illness'. Our women come to us with a broken spirit, and it is wonderful to see how God gently heals and restores as His love is made known through the work.

Opportunity is provided for the women to explore the Christian faith should they choose to. Our House Chaplain, James East from NCBC, provides an opportunity for the women to take part in weekly Bible Study. Many choose to give church a try and choose to attend Alpha courses or Christianity Explored.

Over the years we have been privileged to see many women's lives transformed. Families have been reunited, homes established, new families have begun. Women have dealt with illness and adversity without recourse to addiction, relying instead on a firm relationship with God and rooted in the ever expanding family which is Hebron. In the truest sense we witness 'beauty instead of ashes... gladness instead of mourning and praise instead of despair.'

Restoration and renewal are God's business, and it is truly a blessing to be a part of that business in our work at Hebron House.

Madeline is a leading light for churches

By HELEN BALDRY

Transforming Norwich helps churches in Greater Norwich work together to worship, witness and serve the Norwich community. With new chair Madeline Light at the helm, the group is looking forward to building on the exciting new initiatives that have already started and further improving communication and prayer between churches.

Madeline has been priest of St Stephen's church, Norwich, since May 2009. Her role as chair of Transforming Norwich started in June this year at the outreach event Celebrate Norfolk. Her role for the next two years is to facilitate conversations between the various churches and specifically to encourage outreach initiatives across the churches including Norwich Foodbank, Celebrate, Street Pastors and Unite.

Madeline said, "Transforming Norwich is unique in the city here. There are many associations and friendships between individual churches in Greater Norwich – whether through physical proximity or similar doctrinal stand. Transforming Norwich overarches all that and gives opportunity for new ways of communication."

Madeline moved to Norwich in 1984. She has had a lot of experience of different Christian denominations; she was brought up with Roman Catholic influence, married a Methodist, was ordained in 1999 in the Anglican church and her four children got involved in various Christian churches in their teenage years. She feels this background and experience of different denominations equips



New chair, Rev Madeline Light.

her well as the chair of Transforming Norwich. "My background has helped enormously. I have noticed a change in attitude over the last

30 years. Christians want to work together more now with less importance placed on denominations. There is now more movement between churches."

Madeline believes that a big impact will happen when the ministers of local churches pray together. "I believe this is something that is close to God's heart. Social action unites people and always has done. Prayer is what unites people with diverse opinions," she said.

The way Transforming Norwich engages with new projects is to get involved at the start to bring people together, then to step away to enable them to become independent. Future plans for the group include a decision over the format of the Celebrate event next year and changes to the Good Friday walk of witness in Norwich. There has been some discussion over extending the impact of the Good Friday event, since it takes place when the city is empty of people. The event is greatly appreciated by many people and it is felt that there may be scope to do something else to raise the public impact of the event.

Asked about her experience as a female priest, Madeline said that the subject of women in leadership has always been influenced by cultural issues. She says that Jesus' treatment of women was quite extraordinary for his time. She has never faced any kind of opposition in her involvement with Transforming Norwich.

She said: "Diversity and the different aspects that it brings will always be a challenge but we are strengthened by our same core understanding and we work together united in Christ. Transforming Norwich is all about attempting to express faith through action rather than trying to debate doctrine."

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Sarah's dream becoming reality

The Open Youth Venue's new Principal, Sarah Mintey, has a dream for the young people of Norwich and Norfolk and, alongside partners such as local churches and Norwich Youth for Christ, she aims to deliver on that vision. Keith Morris reports.

My dream is to deliver a monthly Christian programme which will inspire, engage and challenge the young people of Norfolk to reflect on the values they wish to live their lives by and explore what faith is, says Sarah, who has recently been appointed in post at Open.

And the former head teacher also has a clear plan of how to make the vision become reality: "Here at Open, we need to work closely with groups such as Norwich Youth for Christ and Transforming Norwich, along with local churches, in order to find out how best to serve the young people in their care."

A joint programme of events, fully utilising the fantastic array of facilities at Open, appointing a youth pastor, having a clear marketing campaign of Christian events and prayer are all on Sarah's agenda.

Sarah's own Christian faith, and a burning passion to help young people make the most of their lives, is what drives her on.

"I have had a personal faith in Christ since I was about six, but it was not until my teenage years that I came into a full realisation of what it all meant," she said. "When I was 11, I was on a bike ride, when I heard an audible voice from God saying 'Sarah you are going to be a missionary'. I will never forget that."

A Norfolk high school teacher for 12 years and a former trustee of NYFC, Sarah became involved in a training programme for head teachers for challenging urban schools in 2006. There followed several senior roles in London schools until Sarah returned to Norfolk last year.

Sarah is a member of Today's Lifestyle Church, which meets at Drayton Hall and is led by Graham and Julie Dacre along with John and Debbie Davies. Graham is, of course, the driving force behind the Open Youth Venue.

When the opportunity of being Principal at Open came along, Sarah leapt at it. "My role is to facilitate programmes within the building and also build relationships with schools and other groups and agencies," she said. "Brett Rennold is chief executive of the Open Youth Trust and his role is to build the Trust and outwork what we do.

"I believe that every young person can



Mark Tuma and Sarah Mintey at the Open youth venue.

achieve regardless of their background," said Sarah. "I am passionately keen to help every young person we come into contact with realise their ultimate goal in life. For me, it is about being helping young people get from one place to the next in their own personal faith journey within their own community and church setting."

One of the first groups to see the huge opportunities at Open is NYFC, under leader Mark Tuma, and his team have already begun to explore what is possible.

NYFC has been running a monthly event in the Bridge and café area of Open. "We are learning how to use different bits of the building," said Mark. "We have tried to create something that would be ok for someone who had never been to church before to engage with. It uses a learning from everybody style - let's talk about this together, not just from the front.

"When someone becomes a Christian it is because God has already been at work in their hearts before," explains Mark. "If we believe what God says, we should be ok with them learning from him and the other young Christians here and not necessarily from me."

"The great thing about this place is that it encourages us to experiment and to ask what can we do in this time, in this space with these young people. That is what NYFC wants to do - to innovate - and occasionally some of those things will work and it opens up the way for others to think that that might just work for us as well.

Sarah is busy looking at what Christian music bands are out there and then running them by young people she is in contact with either at church or through the large Open Facebook group.

"If Open can provide that hook to support NYFC in whatever way it can then I think that that is the perfect model

for me," she says.

"Open is keen to work with groups such as NYFC because it works across a number of different churches. We want Open to support the work that individual churches are doing and be seen as a gateway to the kingdom, accessible to all churches. If we can help facilitate relationships that enable youngsters to want to explore and find out more about the Christian faith and what it means through friendship, then great.

"We would look to put on events that are attractive and provide a service to a range of churches and young people. Maybe events that churches by themselves could not put on. It is about building and facilitating the growth of the kingdom and not about any one specific church."

"It is not about being a threat or competition to churches but being a resource," agrees Mark. "Whether you are big or small, use it as a resource if you want to and reap the benefits yourself.

"We are not trying to draw a bunch of young people and take them out of churches. We want the church youth leaders to come along and do the interacting with the young people as we cannot do it all on our own anyway."

Sarah is keen to have discussions with any church or organisation leaders who are interested in being a part of the monthly event programme, which is all about designing programmes that will engage and inspire young people in partnership with NYFC.

Church leaders interested in getting involved, working alongside Open or having a look around the facilities, which include a night club, dance studio, concert hall, café, climbing wall and multi-media IT suite, are invited to contact Sarah for an initial chat on 01603 763111, or e-mail sarah.mintey@open247.org.uk website: www.open247.org.uk

■ in brief

Hundreds receive free food from Norwich Christian group

■ **NORWICH:** Free food is being delivered to hundreds of needy people across Norfolk thanks to the prayers of local Christians and the help of a charity from Bedfordshire.

Two years ago, the Vine group of Christian women were praying inside the All Saints Church Centre in the city centre when a remarkable prophecy was given, said group member Pearl Bayliss.



Pearl Bayliss, right, delivers food to Kedesh.

"A sister gave a prophecy saying the Lord was telling us to prepare our storehouses. His words were 'Feed my people'.

"On the same day, one of our ladies had gone outside and saw a young man walking past the centre and he asked if he could get something to eat in the church. She invited him up to the prayer meeting."

The visitor was Richard Humphrey from the "His Church" Christian charity in Bedfordshire.

Pearl said: "He shared with us that the Lord had been speaking to "His Church" members, the exact same words. They had started to prepare their storehouses and the food had begun to come in."

Two years later, Richard got in touch with Pearl again and said that the Lord had laid it on his heart that an abundance of food should be delivered to Norwich. The first two pallets were delivered and food deliveries began around the city.

Pearl, who attends Elim Pentecostal Church, said: "God gives us the discernment where the food needs to go but two pallets only last us five weeks now as there are more and more needy people out there.

"Although we do deliver to individuals, most of the food goes out to different churches or organisations who distribute it. They include The Ark, Kedesh, Wellspring Church at Poringland, Healing Streams Charity shop, Canaan in Sheringham and the Jubilee Family Centre in Aylsham."

The food comes courtesy of Bedfordshire-based Christian charity His Church which redistributes huge amounts of surplus food donated by manufacturers and thousands of items of clothes previously seized by trading standards officers, from its HQ in Bedfordshire and an aircraft hangar in Lincolnshire.

Pearl said: "Please pray for us to have the discernment that we may give to those who truly are in need and please pray for funding, as we have a unit that has to be paid for and funding is needed for the hire of a van when we go to Market Rasen where the food comes from."

You can contact Pearl on 07827 018704 or at pbayliss7@yahoo.com

Taking God down to the pub

■ **ATTLEBOROUGH:** A South Norfolk church is taking the Christian message out to local pubs and a town hall with a couple of different initiatives this autumn.

Christ Community Church in Attleborough is trying something a bit different with their God @ The Pub initiative; a series of events open to the general public upstairs in a local pub. The events are a chilled out opportunity to listen to live music, hear some short talks on some big topics, ask some big questions, meet new people and have some fun.

Rob Tervet, the leader of Christ Community Church, says: "When Jesus was on the Earth he did not turn up in the places people expected him and quite often got in trouble for it. These events are ideal for people who wouldn't normally find themselves in a church but still like to consider the big questions of life."

Christ Community Church is also holding an Alpha course this autumn and people from Attleborough and the surrounding villages are invited to attend the taster night on Tuesday 28 September.

Ring Rob on 01953 452865 or info@christcommunitychurch.co.uk or visit the website: www.christcommunitychurch.co.uk

Are you interested in writing

■ Good News for Norwich & Norfolk has vacancies for occasional writers both for the printed and web versions of the paper. If you have some writing experience, or would like to gain some, and are interested in the local Christian community, please e-mail editor Keith Morris at keith.morris@networknorwich.co.uk to arrange an informal chat.

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Christian bikers on the road with their faith

■ **NORFOLK:** The Norfolk branch of the Christian Motorcyclists Association was out in force during the Celebrate Norfolk weekend, bringing their powerful bikes and cross-covered jackets to the Forum and Millennium Plain in Norwich.

Branch secretary, Ken Hardy, said: "We are a group dedicated to talking about Christ among fellow motorcyclists.

We offer opportunities for fellowship and social events as well as organising bikers services at various services.

"We are always looking to meet up with like-minded Christians who ride or are interested in bikes and who have a passion for outreach ministry."

To find out more, visit www.bike.org.uk or ring Ken on 01603 495277.

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Church leaders unite in Norwich

More than 40 church and ministry leaders in Norwich have come together for the launch of Unite, a prayer initiative, in the hope of "heralding a new day for our city and region."

The event at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel was sparked by an earlier spontaneous response among 500 church members from all denominations and background who had met at Norwich Cathedral for the Global Day of Prayer on Pentecost Sunday (May 31).

Pastor Philip Thorne, one of the church leaders sitting on the front row at the Cathedral, admitted that the congregation's response following a prayer for unity – there was a cheer and applause – "took us all by surprise – it was so spontaneous and so loud that it was clear what was going on in the hearts and minds of those who had gathered . . . surely this is a wake-up call for us as leaders?"

The subsequent initiative, Unite, marks the relaunch of an earlier prayer project called 'Prayer in the Park'.

By MIKE WILTSHIRE

Introducing Unite, Pastor Paddy Venner called for "a massive unity of the churches, praying and working together to see what God can do."

"Unite is not a campaign, a fraternal gathering, ministry or an outreach event. Local churches are not being asked to scrap plans, vision, distinctive or share members, but rather it is a coming together of spiritual men and women in leadership to see the name of Jesus lifted high over our city and region."

"It is simply uniting ourselves in prayer," added Pastor Paddy, who leads Eternity Christian Centre in Norwich. He recalled that the city was once a spiritual hub in Europe with more churches per capita than any other city in the UK. "Let's reclaim our spiritual heritage – but it will mean the spiritual leaders getting up on the ramparts, waging spiritual war by befriending and loving one another

and not speaking badly of one another."

Pastor Philip Thorne of Norwich City Church said he found it "incredibly exciting to think we could all be part of a move of God that has been longed for, for many, many years."

"The church at large could surely achieve so much more by acknowledging one another and our need for one another . . . we need to act together for the good of our city and our region."

An eight-member facilitating team in Norwich is arranging prayer meetings on the first Wednesday of every month from 12.30 to 2pm, with a light buffet on October 6 and November 3.

For details of venues, email Unite at: unite.eastanglia@btinternet.com or phone Hilary Oliver, administrator, on 07777 656 689.

The Global Day of Prayer will continue on June 12, 2011, with perhaps an added united gathering in the autumn for all churches across the city.

NEWS

Norwich & Norfolk Christian online shop at www.norwichchristian.co.uk

800 players in big Christian football kick-off

■ **NORFOLK:** Almost 800 players kicked off a new season in the Norfolk Christian Football League on Saturday September 4, starting with a series of matches at Heartsease Towers in Norwich.

An impressive 60 different teams (13 adult and 47 youth) will take part in the various leagues this season watched by an average of around 1400 spectators every week.

Tim Stapleford, vice chairman of the league,

said: "A significant change is the location of the U10 League, which is moving venue from Recreation Road to Bignold School on Saturday mornings. Norfolk Christian football matches have never been played this close to the city centre before and it offers all kinds of new opportunities for outreach, with particular focus on building on the work done locally in partnership with Football in the Community coaches.

"We hope that Christian youth football will

become an added attraction for any Saturday morning shoppers who generally head for the Chapelfield area of the city for their shopping."

Tim said: "We would like the season to continue and further accentuate the emphasis on fellowship and friendship between teams and managers, not just within them – which our League stands for by its biblical principles and Christ-centredness."

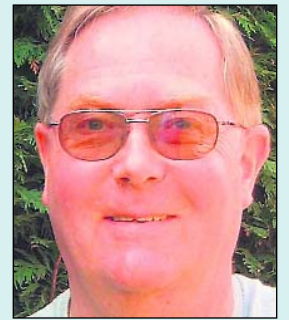
website: www.nccayl.org.uk

news in brief

Les joins the Good News team

■ **NORFOLK:** The Good News for Norwich & Norfolk team has been boosted by the addition of Les Champion, who has taken over responsibility for distribution of the newspapers from Peter Barnes.

Les became a Christian at a Baptist Church youth group house party back in 1965. He first came to Norfolk for work and met and married Linda in the Assemblies of God in St Giles St in 1969.



"We have three fine sons, all married and respecting the faith in which we brought them up," said Les.

"Over the years I have been involved in various citywide Christian projects and events, most notably the Festival of Light and the things it spawned from 1971 and also Living Water Radio.

"We have lived in Hellesdon now for 31 years, and are very much part of the church family at King's Community Church, where we help to lead a housegroup, do a bit of mentoring and get involved in various catering functions as they come along.

"My recent involvement with Good News is an answer to prayer, as I have recently retired, and have room in my life to be of additional service to the body of Christ in Norwich and Norfolk," said Les.

Please contact Les with any queries about the newspaper distribution, if you are in Norwich and want to increase your order or you are in the county and want to start receiving the free paper at your church or organisation. Ring Les on 01603 402310, or e-mail lesandlinda@talktalk.net

Trust success with Palestinian student

A young student from a Palestinian refugee camp near Bethlehem has just successfully completed 18 months of study in Norwich thanks to an innovative educational trust set up in memory of a local church minister.

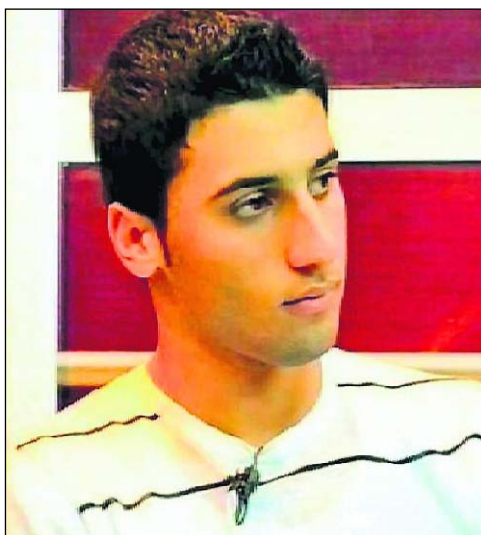
Bahaa Milhem, from Dheisheh Refugee Camp in Bethlehem, recently returned home after studying at City College Norwich with the help of funding from the college itself and as the first recipient of support from the local John Aves Educational Trust.

The Trust was set up in memory of Norwich minister, Rev Canon Dr John Aves, who was living and working in Dheisheh Camp at the time of his death in January 2004.

The Trust seeks to empower disadvantaged young people to fulfill their potential through educational achievement in order for them to better serve their community. Before his death, John wrote from the refugee camp: "This centre is run by some of the many Palestinians who are placing their hopes in educating their children in dance groups, in self-confidence and language skills and computer technology to carry on the long-term struggle with dignity and grace."

To date the Trust, which involves John's wife Anne and sons Edmund and Ben, has raised £23,000 to fulfill these aims

For the first six months in Norwich, Bahaa studied basic English and a computer qualification, then from September 2009 to July 2010 he studied Access to HE Humanities and Social Science. He has achieved all these qualifications with good marks and for his



Bahaa Milhem in Norwich.

final assignment, writing about the Palestinian struggle and the importance of the media, he gained a distinction.

"He said: "It has been a privilege being the first John Aves Trust Fund's scholar. It is not easy to describe my experience in the UK which was challenging, educational and incredibly valuable in terms of cultural understanding. I spent an unforgettable period in the UK and I consider myself lucky that I had this opportunity.

"This project has broadened my understanding and changed the way I look at everything surrounding me. It also strengthened my

confidence and made me more aware of what is going on in the world," said Bahaa.

"This experience has given me the chance to look in a different way at my society and to understand its actual needs. It also gave me the chance to visit many places I was dreaming to visit. Besides that, I felt safe and free to go anywhere in the UK at any time, which I have never felt before in a country like Palestine."

Anne Aves, who has worked at City College since 1984, said: "When John died so suddenly, Ben, Edmund and I knew we would like to continue to make the hope that John had written about just the day before he died a reality. We also knew that education is an important way of giving hope and also the means by which fundamentalism will be rejected by the young people.

"I'm thrilled that Bahaa arrived in Norwich and through his hard work and amazing support from his tutors and fellow students has achieved well deserved success. And humbled because so many have been part of making this happen, to do something positive in John's memory. As a clergy family you are never just a nuclear family but rather part of a wide and rich community. The John Aves Educational Trust exciting times ahead."

Bahaa's study has proved a real success as from September he will go on to study at Bethlehem University, with the help of the Trust, which will also be helping fund two other Bethlehem University students.

Anne and colleagues always welcome an opportunity to talk to groups about the Trust, e-mail abaves@googlemail.com.

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FEATURE

Celebration of faith

The first-ever **Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk** event held at the Forum in Norwich in June made a real impact **Helen Baldry** reports.

Thousands of people experienced something of the rich diversity of Christian social action work, worship, drama and much more, at the first ever Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk event held at the Forum and on Millennium Plain in the centre of Norwich for three days in mid June, and organisers are already planning a similar event for 2011.

Around 300 people gathered at the closing service of Celebrate Norfolk to sing songs, praise God and hear testimonies about what had happened during the outreach event over the weekend of June 11 - 13. The closing celebration was a fitting way to end the exciting and wide-reaching event.

Bishop Graham James opened the event on the Friday morning explaining that the word "Celebrate" comes from the Latin for numerous, thronged or renowned. This certainly reflected the aims of the event to spread the word about what God is doing in Norfolk to as many people as possible.

Thousands of people walked through the doors of the Forum to browse the many exhibition stands inside representing Christian charities and groups from around the county. The Christian Motorcycle Association gave away 70 Bikers Bible through the course of the weekend.

Norwich city centre was filled with the voices of the Norwich Youth for Christ gospel choir and crowds were attracted by performances from Riding Lights Theatre Company, Bowthorpe Church puppet team and the Rivers of Life Congolese choir amongst others.

One passer-by perceived that the atmosphere was made different by all these Christian groups coming together, "I come to the Forum every week but this week everything's changed".

Norfolk Healing Rooms had a caravan outside the Forum for the first time and testified to some remarkable stories during the weekend including a young man whose damaged ligament in his foot was healed and a lady who is in rehab who was prayed for and was filled by the Holy Spirit.

The music and drama ministries also had a great impact; for example, a 25 year old woman was moved by watching the Riding Lights theatre company sketches. After watching the performance she approached one of the actors who helped her to become a Christian.



in action



Action from the Celebrate 2010 event: main picture of the Forum and the Celebrate banner; above the Riding Lights Theatre Company; below, project director John Betts; and below left, the closing service, the ENYP Dance Off team and the Salvation Army band.



Celebrate to return in 2011

■ **NORFOLK:** Following the successful Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk weekend held at the Forum and Millennium Plain in Norwich in June, a date has been announced for the 2011 event and a new charitable trust is to be set up to run it and related activities.

The festival, which aims to showcase and celebrate much of what is good about the work of the local Christian community across the county, has been set for the weekend of June 10 to 12, 2011.

The event will again be focused around the Forum and on Millennium Plain, but organizers hope that other venues will also stage events, as they did this year, and take advantage of the high profile and marketing provided by the Celebrate Norfolk team in terms of a special newspaper, dedicated website and other promotional activities.

This year's event hosted almost 30 different local Christian organizations, many of whom were delighted by the chance to showcase their activities and work to the wider community, including an estimated 10,000 Forum visitors.

Project director, John Betts, said: "I was thrilled to see the crowds which gathered on Millennium Plain to watch and listen to those who sang and danced and performed in such a vibrant demonstration of the life of the Church in Norwich and Norfolk. It was also very pleasing that the organisations who exhibited in the Atrium were delighted with the contacts made and the links formed during the two days of Celebrate 2010."

"The enthusiastic response we got from many visitors and the excellent feedback from our exhibitors and participants demonstrated the real value of getting the Christian message out in such a public venue. We are hoping to build on that success next year and produce an even better event."

A new Celebrate charitable trust is to be set up to run the event and facilitate its wider vision which is to celebrate, demonstrate and effectively communicate the work of the local Christian community.

Celebrate will remain a member organisation of Transforming Norfolk, which launched it last year, and during the autumn, the existing team will be seeking new members and trustees to help move it forward.

John said: "We are looking to enlarge the Celebrate core team. We need people who have a passion to see the church in Norwich and Norfolk finding all manner of creative ways to celebrate our work. This is a terrific opportunity to support the work of the Church and Christian organisations county-wide."

"If you have time, energy, experience and the desire to contribute to this worthwhile project, and a sense of calling to serve the Body of Christ in our fine city and county, then we need creative as well as administrative and financial people."

The work of Celebrate will go on throughout the year and the team requires an appropriate home in which to be based. It is looking for somewhere to set up its office and administration. If your church, organisation or business has room for an emerging ministry, full of passion and vision to support and enable the work of God county-wide, then please get in contact with John.

If you are interested in exhibiting at or supporting the Celebrate 2011 event, or in finding out more about becoming a team member or trustee, please register your interest in the first instance with John Betts on 07906 197430 or email 2john@johnbetts.fsnet.co.uk

website: www.celebratenorfolk.co.uk

news in brief

Matt is new team minister with Norwich area URCs

■ **NORWICH:** Matt Stone, a trainee minister from Westminster College, Cambridge, has joined the Norwich Area URC Team Ministry and was ordained and inducted on August 7 at a packed Trinity URC.

The service was attended by the Sheriff of Norwich, the Mayor of Norwich and presided over by the Revd Paul Whittle, Moderator of the Eastern Synod of the United Reformed Churches, supported by other Church dignitaries and representatives of Westminster College, Cambridge.

Matt said: "I am equally excited and daunted about this new stage in my – and the Norwich churches' – journey: daunted by the challenges a new situation brings, but excited by the opportunity to join the churches in their mission to know and share God's love."

"I am passionate about knowing and living God's love – I am a great fan of Julian of Norwich – and making that love known to those outside the church. I am always reminded that the church is here not primarily for itself, but for those who aren't yet followers of Jesus."

Matt grew up in Southend, and has studied geography and theology in London and Cambridge respectively. For the last year, he has been serving full time on placement at Christchurch, Hitchin, a joint Methodist-URC congregation.

Outside of church life, Matt enjoys travelling, crime fiction, good food, red wine and spending time with friends and family. He also keeps a blog at: <http://singtothelordnewsong.wordpress.com/>



Mission to Peruvian prison

■ **NORWICH:** A Norwich woman will be travelling to Peru later this month to visit a prison where a Christian charity she helps to run has been doing vital work over the past six years.

In 2004, a link was set up between Christian women in Norfolk and some in Lima, Peru, who are imprisoned under false charges of terrorism. The work is headed in Peru by Miriam Breña Torres, who spent three years in prison and Liz Lake, who attends Oak Grove Chapel in Norwich.

Miriam came to England in 2005 and again in 2007 to talk about the work of the ministry, which is called Hope and Song to Freedom with churches and small groups in and around Norwich.

Hope and Song to Freedom exists to encourage those who are in prison and help provide for their physical and spiritual needs. It also exists to support the ladies who are released and help them re-adjust to the outside world.

Having supported Miriam from a distance these last few years, the opportunity has now arisen for Liz to go to Peru and experience first-hand the struggles the women face.

She will travel on September 27 and spend a week meeting with those who were in prison as well as making a trip into the prison itself. She will be taking gifts from the ladies in Norfolk who have been praying for these ladies and writing to them.

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Couple lead worship academy

By AARON CURRAN

A Norwich Christian couple have spent part of the last four years leading an innovative academy to train church worship leaders in Romania.

Mark and Susan Watson, from City Church in Norwich, have helped to train no fewer than 60 worship leaders over the past four years as hosts of the Romanian Worship Academy.

Worship Academy was first set up in 2002 in the UK by singer/songwriters Chris Bowater and Andy Bromley with the aim of 'building people', seeing people equipped for ministry and developing worship lifestyle and Godly character. It was four years later that Worship Academy spread overseas, birthing an academy in Romania.

The first two-year course started in 2006 with the English team flying out for eight teaching weekends. The English team working in Romania was led by Mark and Susan.

Speaking about the role, Mark said: "As hosts, our role was to help with the organisation and smooth running of the weekends, including arranging sessions to be taught, guest speakers, teams for practical workshops, as well as teaching subjects ourselves, hosting the weekends and sessions, and generally seeing that the core vision and ethos of a worship lifestyle was communicated from start to finish."

The second two-year course started in 2008



Left, Mark and Susan Watson in Romania and, above, the worship academy.



and finished in April this year. In total, over 60 people have graduated in the four-year period that the academy has been running in Romania.

Mark, also Assistant Minister and regular worship leader of City Church added: "Each year the students had to present a personal journal of their journey so far. This was a real

opportunity to see and hear what God had been doing in the lives of the students. Most of these sessions had us in tears, listening to the stories of transformation and change in the lives of individuals. Greater still was to hear of the change that was being witnessed in the churches of some of the students; some church situations which were historically far from

being 'free' in the area of worship. We feel very humbled, yet honoured that God is doing such a great work."

Mark and Susan's time in Romania did come to a disappointing end when the volcanic ash chaos prevented the UK team from attending the graduation of the second course. The event was successfully run however by the team in Romania. This also completed the heart of the UK team to give more responsibility to the Romanian team and the third academy which commences in early 2011 will be mainly run by the Romanian team with the UK team providing support where needed.

Worship Academy is currently running in Romania, Portugal, Ireland and Singapore as well as running courses in the UK. For further details on Worship Academy, visit the website: www.worship-academy.com

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Supper with Bishop Graham James

Monday 4 October 7pm

Two course supper with Bishop Graham James talking about "The House of Lords and the General Synod: a view from the bishops' bench".

£16 per head.

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Tuesday 12 October 5.30pm

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Close encounters

For a week in August, 7000 young people descended on the **Royal Norfolk Showground** to encounter God at the **Newday festival**, reporter **Aaron Curran** gives a personal account of the event.

Newday is a Christian event run by the New Frontiers group of churches and is aimed at young people aged between 12-19 and has now been running for seven years, two years in Norfolk. Newday 2010 saw nearly 7000 youngsters come from all over the UK to encounter God. The heart and purpose behind Newday is to give these young people an opportunity to meet with God and also to serve His people and community. This year thousands of young people went out into local communities such as Norwich, Lowestoft, Aylsham and Poringland and got involved doing a wide range of tasks from painting fences to talking to people and sharing God's love with them.

As well as the community outreaches, there were plenty of things for visitors at Newday to do when not in the daily meetings and seminars. On site, there were a wide range of different cafes which allowed attendees to meet with new people whilst giving them time to relax.

Despite a lot of rain, there was a positive vibe about the camp and it was evident that God really had moved amongst the young people during the week. This included the news that during the main evening meeting one night, over 300 people became Christians for the first time and 300 people renewed their faith in God. Also, around 400 people were healed, including reports of blind people receiving sight and deaf people being able to hear.

Sasha Steggles, of Christ Community Church, Attleborough was one of the young people at Newday, and said "My favourite bit about Newday was the worship and the evening meetings. There were lots of Holy Spirit encounters and prophecy."

Other campers added that it was



Action from the Newday event (above and below) and social action in Poringland, left.

a great experience to hear Matt Redman lead worship, which he did during a few of the main evening meetings. Another camper summed up his week at Newday as "awesome".

The event was brought to a close with a final evening meeting filled

with praise and worship and then a time of prayer. The presence of God was very evident as nearly 7000 people started dancing, singing and shouting in praise to Him.

This was followed by everyone standing in agreement over prayers for our cities, towns, communities

and churches.

On a personal note, God really changed my life during the meeting I attended as He poured His Spirit upon me and it is clear that through Newday, God has impacted the lives of many people.

www.newdaygeneration.org

news in brief

Garage to turn into a church

■ **WROXHAM:** Wroxham & Hoveton United Reformed Church's planned new worship and community centre in a former garage has been given the green light by planning officials.

The new £150,000 centre will be used for Sunday services, community outreach, youth activities and for hire to community groups. Church elder Corrie Mould said that the new centre will provide "modern facilities suitable for our informal style of worship and fulfil our desire for more outreach into the community."

Team Minister, Rev Matt Stone, said: "We are really excited about the potential this new project gives us to serve our community and reach out to the people of Wroxham and Hoveton with the good news of God's love. We are currently exploring many different uses for the building, and for different ways we can meet the community's needs."W

www.wroxham.urc.org.uk

Loving for life

■ **NORFOLK:** Mothers Union Norwich Diocese is looking to develop a network of Loving for Life facilitators to work alongside clergy across the diocese. A two-day facilitators' course will be held on 3 & 4 November at St Luke's Church in Norwich. It is open to clergy and lay people as well as Mothers' Union members who want to offer the warmest of welcomes to couples seeking to marry in our churches.

There will be a fee of £25 towards costs for non-Mothers' Union members, for details, contact Barbara Bryant, Mothers' Union Project Development Worker on 01603 882003 or email: barbara.munorwich@googlemail

Exhibition of faith

■ **NORWICH:** An exhibition of 3,500 years of art and belief in Norfolk is being hosted this autumn at Norwich Castle Museum and a series of religious art events are taking place at venues around the county.

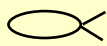
The Art of Faith exhibition runs from October 2 to January 23. It is an exploration of religious art and history from Norfolk's many and diverse faiths; including the Viking and Roman settlers, through Judaism and Christianity, to the current population.

www.artoffaith-learning.co.uk

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Bishop lays first brick to launch £70k appeal

The Bishop of Norwich has urged people to buy one or more of the 70,000 bricks that will be required for the new YMCA Norfolk flats for homeless young people in Bethel Street.

The Rt Rev Graham James, who is Chair of the YMCA Norfolk Council of Patrons, launched the Brick Appeal to raise £70,000 by laying one of the first bricks in a ceremony on the site of the new development of 40 self-contained units on Bethel Street in Norwich on August 2.

Just £1 will cover the cost of each brick, mortar and labour that will be required for the development. It is hoped that this part of the £1m appeal will enable the YMCA to receive small amounts of money from as wide a cross-section of the community as possible with a view to making long-term friends and supporters.

Names of all those who have donated, whether they are individuals, community groups, churches or schools, will be displayed in a permanent exhibit in the new development.

Bishop Graham said: "This new wonderful facility is going to help rebuild the lives of many young people that need a lot of help in our city and county. There's an invitation to everyone to contribute by buying a



Lovell operations manager Trevor Haystead, left, and YMCA Norfolk CEO Tim Sweeting help the Bishop of Norwich to lay the first of 70,000 bricks.

brick for this new accommodation."

YMCA Norfolk CEO, Tim Sweeting, said: "We are seeing an increase in the numbers of young people requiring our services and we are committed to doing everything we can to help young people when they need it most. This housing will provide young people with crucial move-on accommodation.

"Young people will be given a place first at the Central YMCA where they can be assessed. Those who demonstrate that they are committed to developing themselves and moving forward will be offered the opportunity to live in one of the flats on Bethel Street with a view to living independently within two years," said Tim.

Norwich-based affordable housing developer Lovell has already started work on the £4.4 million project which involves the redevelopment of the back part of the YMCA's current building in St Giles Street. The company is demolishing the existing 1960s bedsits and a gymnasium on the Bethel Street side of the building with the St Giles Street frontage remaining intact.

The three and four-storey develop-

ment will provide 'move-on' accommodation helping young homeless people prepare for pathways to independence. Each self-contained flat will have a living room/bedroom, a kitchen and a bathroom.

There will be shared communal facilities such as a lounge, and somewhere to provide training in life skills such as cooking, budgeting and IT. The YMCA will also provide support staff who will give advice and guidance to encourage young people into work and training.

One feature of the new facility will be a bank of photovoltaic panels on the roof to supplement the heating. "We are delighted to be working once again with YMCA Norfolk to build this important new development which will provide accommodation for vulnerable young people in Norwich," said Lovell regional director Simon Medler.

Work on the project is due to be completed in January 2012.

To make a donation and buy a brick visit www.justgiving.com/ymca-1m-appeal or cut out the coupon (left).

For details e-mail Susie Knights at susieknights@ymca-norfolk.org.uk

news in brief

N Norfolk Bible school offers new courses

■ **AYLSHAM:** Aylsham Community Bible School has a new programme of courses on offer this autumn. The sessions will focus on Hebrew study and the theme of the feasts of the Lord.

The group will meet on alternate Mondays from September 13. Dr Clifford Denton, who leads the studies, said, "We trace these themes through the entire Bible, thus achieving a balanced perspective."

During the course of the sessions, the entire Bible is read in a structured way, utilising a daily prayer and a study diary, coming together for discussion study at each fortnightly meeting. For more details contact Dr Denton at fcjdenton@hotmail.com

Church puts on family fun day

■ **WYMONDHAM:** A South Norfolk church took over a public park in Wymondham recently to stage its annual fun day for the whole town.

Ketts Park hosted the Wymondham Fun Day, an annual event organised by City Church, an event that has seen success over the past eight years that it has been running and 2010 was no exception.

A Falconry Display, Police dogs, the City Church Dance Team, a display from Silhouettes Majorette Team, drama from the Kett Theatre Society and a family fun fair were all included in the July 4 event.

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EVENTS

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Helen walks back to happiness

■ **THETFORD:** Former showbiz star, Helen Shapiro, will share the realities of the gospel at Thetford on Friday September 24. The stirring message can be heard at Church on the Way at 7.30pm. It will include testimony and gospel tracks including one from her acclaimed new album.

"People need to know the truth that salvation can only come through Jesus' perfect sacrifice. You cannot get right with God by trying to keep his laws – no-one can," says Helen.

She discovered Jesus, the awaited Messiah and her Saviour, 23 years ago. After studying Old Testament prophecies that foretold his birth, death and resurrection she explains that she was convinced and convicted by the truth.

The turning point for the Jewish lass from London's East End came when she was 40 but it was never kept under wraps; she shared her life-changing beliefs with thousands in packed auditoriums across the world after performances.

Since walking off the showbiz stage over seven years ago, her message has been constantly pruned and honed to help deliver the nub of the gospel at invitation outreach meetings. No stone is unturned, as she lifts the lid off Biblical prophecies that foretold Jesus' coming and talks about the hidden dangers of some alternative therapies and the occult which she dabbled with unwittingly before walking back to happiness with her Saviour.

The latest CD – What Wondrous Love is



Singing star: Helen Shapiro.

this – has come after a season of waiting and preparation. "God has had to do a work of refining in me as he has dealt with things in my life, as he does with all of us. He works on our identity, upbringing, relationships and job roles as we allow him to," says Helen, who

was just 14 when she tasted stardom and the beginning of 42 years of international touring.

Since her faith commitment Helen has produced five gospel albums, umpteen gospel events and the autobiography: *Walking Back to Happiness*, and the formation of a long-awaited jazz band three years before retiring from the entertainment business.

This year Helen has produced her first gospel album for 12 years.

Says Helen: "I waited for the green light otherwise it would have been from me and not from the Lord. Most performers are critical of their work, including myself, but in the main I am really pleased with its spiritual content and musically it is jazzy, well played and with good backing vocals because the Lord has provided the best."

After 15 years of prayer, Helen is now busy forming a new group called Hebron with two Christian colleagues.

"We will be using some good songs from different sources. There will be some Messianic Hebrew Gospel numbers with testimonies and teaching for such a time as this," says Helen who will be playing a baritone, ukulele and guitar."

Tickets to see Helen Shapiro are available from: Church on the Way, Churchill Road, Thetford, IP24 2JZ, telephone: 01842 763585 and can be ordered online (£5.50) from www.networknorwich.co.uk/Shapiro. For more information visit Helen Shapiro's website: www.mannamusic.co.uk

By Sandie Shirley

events in brief

City churches unite in prayer and praise

■ **NORWICH:** On September 26, two Norwich churches will meet for their third united prayer and praise service.

It was earlier in the year that the leaders of City Church Norwich and Norwich Family Life Church decided to meet together and from this a joint service between the two was born.

This service brought members from both congregations together and an opportunity to not only praise and worship together but to stand in agreement in prayer for one another's church and also the city of Norwich.

Mark Watson, Assistant Minister of City Church Norwich, said: "Church unity and working collectively as God's people is something I long to see unfolding across the city and region. It's great that we can come together like this, and worship and pray as one people. For me this is a small glimpse of what John describes in his revelation; of people from every tribe and nation (every church stream and denomination) worshipping as one, our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

A great sense of purpose and direction was felt after the previous meetings. Graham Bell has been asked to be the guest speaker for the evening on September 26 at Norwich Family Life Church's Mason Road venue in Norwich. Graham Bell runs Ashwood Church in Kirkby in Ashfield and is involved in the Groundlevel Network.

Speaking about the event, Pastor Kingsley Armstrong of Norwich Family Life Church said: "There is tremendous power in coming together. David wrote in Psalm 133 that when people come together in unity, there God commands the blessing, so we are expecting God to be very present with us and to speak to us and command his blessing."

Aaron Curran

Church marks 75th

A Norwich church is celebrating its 75th birthday in September and a journey from a stable to a mission hall and now to a sports hall.

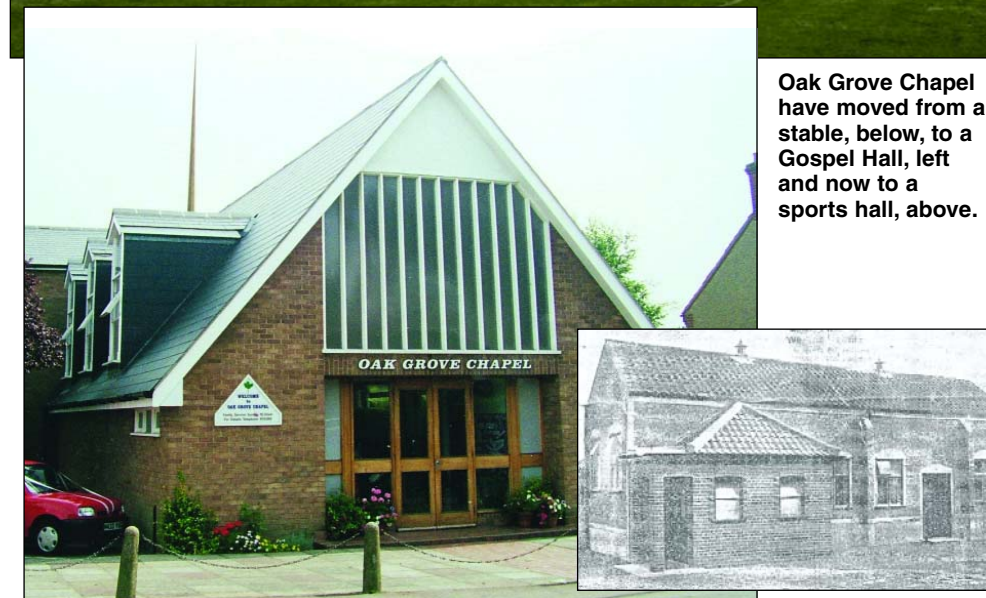
It is 75 years since the pioneers, who started Oak Grove Chapel, came from what was Wensum Chapel and took over an old stable to begin work in this area of Norwich. The present chapel building was built in the 1960s and the new joint venue with the local school (The Hub) opened three years ago.

Oak Grove Chapel is celebrating this milestone on Sunday 26 September, 10am, at The Hub, Catton Grove Primary School, Weston Road, Norwich.

Pastor Ian Savory said: "We give thanks to God for all he has done, but our focus on the day will be looking to the future. Our current community ministries make contact with at least 1,400 each month and we wholeheartedly believe if we weren't here the community would notice."

"The day will be the occasion we commission out new Pastor (admin) Sián Pearce and also the first of our Mission Communities, our speakers are our new friends Paul and Priscilla Reid, pastors of the Christian Fellowship Church, Belfast, who visit us twice a year to bring encouragement to the leadership and congregation."

"We give God glory for all He has done but pray that our fruitfulness now will be the main thing that blesses God. Who we are and the Kingdom impact we have because we want as our vision statement says: To build a Christ Centred Community in Catton and beyond," said Ian. "All friends past and present are welcome to join us on this day and stay for lunch afterwards."



Oak Grove Chapel have moved from a stable, below, to a Gospel Hall, left and now to a sports hall, above.

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An upto date list of events for the Norwich & Norfolk Christian community can be found at www.networknorfolk.co.uk

Life-changing mercy mission

When you meet Jonathan Payne, it's not difficult to think to yourself, 'In a life-threatening situation, if that man said jump', I'd jump!

Which is rather re-assuring because, as a consultant anaesthetist specialising in paediatrics at the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital, Jonathan holds life in his hands on an almost daily basis. And not only in Norfolk because, for the last 12 years or so, he has chosen to give some of his annual leave to serve on the Mercy Ships.

He has joined a Mercy Ship, usually berthed in a West African port, at least once a year since 1998, for two or three weeks (and once for 15), to assist in hundreds of life-changing operations.

Sierra Leone is one of the frequent ports of call for the huge hospital ship Africa Mercy, an ex Danish rail-ferry, staying in port for approximately six months at a time.

Jonathan said: "It brings hope and freedom from a wide range of health problems we've not seen in the developed world for

Norwich consultant anaesthetist **Jonathan Payne**, has given up several weeks holiday each year for the past 12 years to help provide free life-changing operations for Africans with the **Christian Mercy Ships** charity. **Les Champion** reports.

many decades due to the comparably high standards we have. Cleft lips, huge tumours, cataracts, etc are the stuff of daily medical life on board.

"One of the most life changing operations is for thousands of African women who, following childbirth, suffer from permanent incontinence (fistulae), which creates a stigma, and makes them a social outcast."

Jonathan, in his early 40s, lives in Costessey with wife Joanna and their little girl. He first

became aware of the Mercy Ships ministry in 1991 whilst still training.

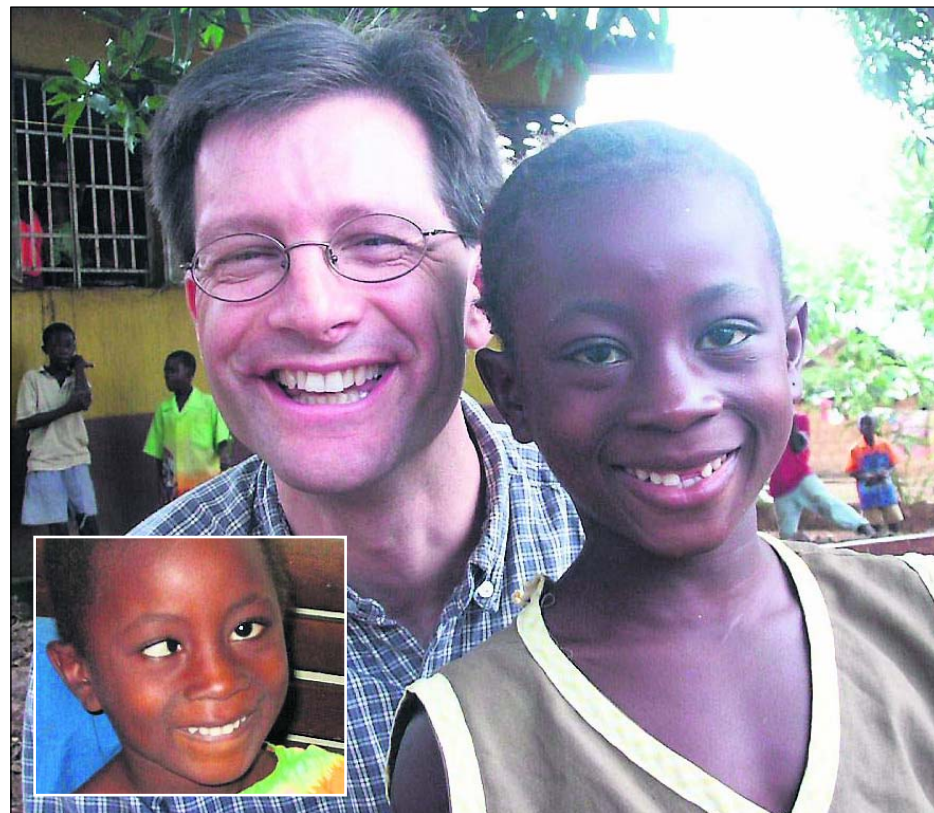
"I knew in my heart straight-away that this was for me, but I decided to delay involvement until I was qualified and had more experience under my belt. I am keen for us in the developed world to understand that most of the world lacks the advantages we have, and that we need to do something about it."

Although Mercy Ships is a Christian organisation, you do not have to be a committed Christian to serve on the ships for up to a year. But it is expected that participants are sympathetic to Christian ideals.

Beyond a year, only committed Christians are accepted, and go through a period of training. Applicants have to arrange and pay their own travel costs, and approximately £10 a day towards accommodation and food.

If you are interested to know more on a personal level, you can contact Jonathan via King's Community Church, on 01603 765795.

www.mercyships.org



Norfolk doctor Jonathan Payne with one of his patients, Aminata, before and after the operation to correct her crossed eyes.

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Tabernacle brought to life

■ **ASHILL:** The original vision for Call to Prayer's Tabernacle became a reality this summer, when they hosted their first Hebrew Roots conference, and 26 delegates came and camped around the Tabernacle at Ashill near Swaffham.

On the first morning of the conference the wind had been almost gale-force so, disappointingly, the first guests arrived to a skeletal Tabernacle: outer court furled, no gates, no door – though the Cross was starkly visible against a grey sky.

By Saturday, the weather had changed; a number of day visitors arrived and appreciated Jill Gower's teaching on the Ancient Wedding and the Bride, along with three 'brides' dressed in wedding gowns from Samaria, Ramallah and Bethlehem. Jill said: "As we unveil the roots of our faith, opening up culture and tradition, all backed by the Word of God, we come into a deeper understanding of the plans and purposes of God especially through His Son, Jesus our Lord."

The conference speakers were Jill Gower and Tristan McDonald; Tristan has been a life-long collector of biblical memorabilia, and those he brought along added great visual impact to

his teaching.

Far from merely theorising about the New Jerusalem and the end times, he challenged us strongly about how we are living our lives today. Jill spoke for us all when she said: "It was a privilege to have Tristan with us, and his wealth of knowledge and visual aids added so much to the whole."

On Saturday afternoon a group of 12 New Jerusalem Dancers arrived; on the dot of 3pm, as they were about to start their presentation in the outer court, the heavens opened! The only place to perform was in the Tabernacle, so everyone crammed in, the youngest member, aged 9, blew the shofar and the restricted space did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm, energy and inspiration of the dancers, whose presentation was educational as well as visually exciting. Following this, with rain replaced by sunshine, many joined in communal worship in dance, which was a new and moving experience for most of us.

Nobody fully 'gets' the Tabernacle until they see it, so for every newcomer it is to some extent a venture of faith – but none were disappointed.

By Gail Halley

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