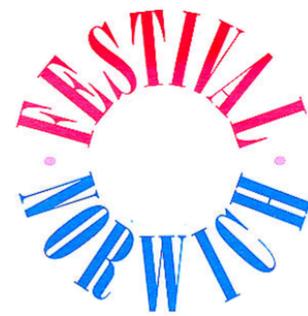


GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH

Easter 2009



Do you remember Billy Graham in Norwich?

■ Exactly 25 years ago in June, American evangelist Dr Billy Graham graced the hallowed turf of Carrow Road in Norwich drawing over 63,000 people to hear him proclaim the Christian gospel.

It was part of the major three-month 1984 Mission England crusade which saw over one million people hear the well-known American preacher in six football stadiums across the country also including Roker Park, Anfield, Villa Park, Ashton Gate and Portman Road.

From June 9 to 12, 1984, in Norwich, no less than 850 churches were involved, raising the £175,000 cost and providing 4,500 volunteers including 1,456 counsellors and a 1,745-strong choir plus administrators,



youth leaders and stewards.

Almost 100,000 people responded to Billy's message, over the 12 weeks including over 3,700 in Norwich.

Now, quarter-of-a-century on, a 25th anniversary celebration is being arranged at Norwich Cathedral on Saturday June 6 and organizers are

appealing for people to come along and to tell them their stories or memories of the crusade.

Entitled 25 Years of God's Faithfulness, the celebration event will reflect back on those momentous events of a quarter-of-a-century ago, what happened afterwards and the on-going legacy today.

The event is aimed at people who supported or attended the mission and also for those who did not.

It will include an exhibition and videos as well as the chance to hear from people involved at the time and what it meant to them.

Did it change the region's spiritual climate and Christian community and what are the lasting legacies today?

■ see centre pages

in brief



Church action fair to take over Norwich Forum

■ A first-ever Church Community Action Fair will be taking over The Forum in Norwich for two days in June to show Christian projects in Norwich that have a direct impact on the social infrastructure of the city.

The initiative is being led by Transforming Norwich and its development officer, John Betts, and will comprise a two-day exhibition called the 'Church Community Action Fair', with a strap line of 'What we do when it is not Sunday!'

It will be a two-day event on Thursday and Friday June 11 and 12, enabling the general public to get a sense of all the different things that 'the church' does in and around the city to help the community.

On the Thursday evening there will also be a Civic Reception with local dignitaries. This will be addressed by the Rt Revd Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Urban Life and Faith who is also Bishop of Hulme. He will speak on "Creating a Fine Community – The Role of Partnership and Faith in Urban Renewal".

Christian projects will be displaying what they do.

"Our intention is to celebrate, support and promote the work of organisations who serve so brilliantly in Norwich," said John. "The result of seizing this exciting opportunity will be that they reach a much wider public than they normally do, both Christian and non Christian, and perhaps gain new supporters and volunteers."

The exhibition space is now fully booked. Contact John on tel 01603 861181 mobile 07906197430 or e-mail 2john@johnbetts.fsnet.co.uk

Norwich family speak of their miracle baby

By MIKE WILTSHIRE

A Norwich family has spoken of their son's recovery from near-death as a baby, nearly 15 years ago, to become a lively and musically-gifted teenager today.

"You asked for a miracle – and you have got one!" said a senior hospital doctor to the young mother – also a doctor – after the dramatic survival of her premature baby son, Jonathan.

Parents, Michael and Bernadette Cant, recall: "Our son's name, Jonathan, means 'Gift from God.' It was almost unbelievable that our tiny baby on a ventilator had survived such severe medical problems. He weighed only 2lbs 6oz and was in a coma for three days."

The senior consultant said he "feared for the baby living", because the child would have so much brain damage. "We faced a heartbreaking decision about possibly turning off the life-support system," says Michael.

Today, almost 15 years later, Jonathan has a remarkable gift for music. As a guitarist, keyboard player, drummer, music writer and singer, he leads a band, called 'Back2Front' at his local church.

Michael adds: "We are a happy family of four, including Jonathan's lovely young sister, Isabelle, nearly 12, whose birth was without complications.

Bernadette is still a practicing doctor and Michael has seen success as an architect on award-winning projects.

However, during his childhood, Michael's family faced a dramatic tragedy. "I'll never forget the day when, as a 12-year-old schoolboy, Mum arrived with a friend at our boarding school," he said. "She looked very distressed and we drove home in silence – I was not sure what to think. Then, in our lounge, Mum broke the news: 'Darling, your father has died in a car accident'

Michael was numb. His father's sudden death left a great void, but other tragedies followed. "My mother married again, but then my step-father died in a diabetic coma. I was involved in a



Red-haired Jonathan, right, with his mother Bernie, dad Michael and sister, Isabelle, with family dog, Bernie, and above, Jonathan as a tiny baby.

car accident where another close family friend died. My younger brother Geoffrey, then 34, also died in a car accident leaving behind two young children."

Despite these events, both Michael and Bernadette remain people of faith which has helped them through hard times.

Michael trained in Dundee as an architect and later moved to Norwich where he met Bernadette at their local church. They were engaged within a year.

When their son, Jonathan, was born, Bernie, as a GP, knew that Jonathan, their first-born, was "a miracle baby" who had survived a brain

■ continued on page two



GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH

Have your say on future of Good News

■ Good News for Norwich is conducting a short online survey of its readers and potential readers to help determine the future for the publication which has been produced three times a year at Easter, Harvest and Christmas since 1992. In that time it has distributed over 1.4 million copies to homes across greater Norwich.

To give your views, and have the chance to win a £40 voucher from the Norwich Christian Resource Centre, visit: www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?s=m-_2fq3xvf4dOjWfYymyaZ6JQ_3d_3d

GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH

■ Good News for Norwich is published by Festival Norwich, 48 St Giles St, Norwich, NR2 1LP.

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The majority of Norwich churches are solidly behind the aims of Festival Norwich which is to give every person in greater Norwich the opportunity to respond to the good news of Jesus Christ and to bring the message of Christ to bear on the social, cultural, educational, industrial and professional life of the city.

In order to facilitate the communication of these aims and to improve the exchange of information, the Festival board decided to publish a periodical newspaper to keep the Christian churches, organisations and associations informed.

Leaders and church members are invited to send information on forthcoming events and short articles (with relevant photographs) relating to the demonstration of the Gospel in social action, community care and evangelism generally.

This will not only encourage those Christians involved in similar activities but also inform leaders in other churches who are contemplating similar forms of outreach.

■ The deadline for material for the Harvest 2009 issue is Friday August 28.

Family's miracle baby

■ continued from page one.

haemorrhage, a blood-clotting disorder and other complications. He was so ill that the senior consultant advised them to turn off the ventilator and let him slip away, as medically nothing more could be done.

Michael recalls that heartbreaking moment. "We cried to God - 'Take this decision from us - please intervene and decide for us.'"

"At this point I felt God reminded me how He had intervened at the last moment to save the boy Isaac, the beloved son of Abraham, from certain death, and I was to trust Him just as Abraham had.

"Then, at the crucial moment, Jonathan suddenly began breathing on his own after three days in a coma. He was able to leave hospital eight weeks later, weighing 5½lbs. Brain scans revealed no damage - that was miraculous!"

The couple say that many people have been touched by the story of their miracle baby, including a Christian consultant who had prayed with them at the time. Also Bernie's father, who came to faith in Jesus Christ as a result of the recovery of his grandson.

"Yes, my family has known deep tragedies - but also great miracles," says Michael, who is a leader in a Norwich fellowship of Christian business men. "We also know that God's love changes lives - and he is 'just a prayer away.' He promises that if we look for him with all our heart we will find Him."

Paying attention to what is before us

■ "How on earth did I miss that?" I thought to myself. It was Friday afternoon and I was sitting at home on the settee watching 'Countdown'. I don't normally watch daytime TV but it was my day off and having completed many chores I felt I deserved a rest.

As I sat and watched, out came the nine letters - a mixture of consonants and vowels. Next, the familiar sound of the ticking of the clock, as the task of making the longest word possible out of the random selection of letters began. As I joined in the game, I kept discovering the contestants found longer words than I did. As they shared what they had found, it suddenly seemed so obvious. I could only ask myself the question, "How on earth did I miss that?"

Scientists have researched into why people miss the obvious and have called it 'inattention blindness'. The mind is constantly bombarded with a cacophony of sights, sounds, smells, tastes and physical feelings. We have a limited processing capacity and if we are paying attention to one thing, we may end up missing



Rev Mark Fairweather-Tall pastor of Norwich Central Baptist Church

something that, in different circumstances, would be obvious.

Let us go back to that first Easter Sunday afternoon when two of the believers were leaving Jerusalem and walking to a village called Emmaus. With all that had happened over the previous few days, there was much to talk about and reflect upon.

A stranger starts to walk with them and asks what they are discussing. After telling him about Jesus' death, the missing body and the claims of women who said they had seen a vision of angels reporting Jesus to be alive, the

stranger explained to them why these things had to happen. They urged the stranger to stay with them.

As they ate, the stranger took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them. Suddenly their eyes were opened and they realised the stranger was Jesus. How on earth had they not realised before? Maybe they were caught up with the events of life and were suffering from 'inattention blindness'. It caused them to miss the presence of Jesus

We are all susceptible to inattention blindness. With the limited processing capacity of our minds and the many things that take our attention day by day, it is all too easy for us to fail to pay the appropriate attention and see Jesus in our daily lives. This Easter - with all that may be happening with our family and friends, at work, in the world - let us take time to focus on Jesus. In doing so, we may discover new and wonderful things about Jesus' presence with us. It may also stop us looking back in the future and thinking, "How on earth did I miss that?"

Kendrick concert in Norwich is sell-out

By MIKE WILTSHIRE

World famous Christian singer/song-writer Graham Kendrick, who has a sell-out concert in Norwich on Friday April 24, has spoken about his love for the Bible and how it inspires his lyrics.

Graham has been described as a 'father of modern worship music' whose songs are 'crammed full of poetic, divine, biblical truth' that have 'sculpted a view of God that has impacted generations.'

For more than 30 years he has been at the forefront of Christian music in the UK having written and recorded hundreds of songs, many of which are well-known around the world, including Shine Jesus Shine, Knowing You, The Servant King and Amazing Love.

Graham has written many songs around the Easter story - the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Two of his latest songs are based on the Easter message and the Bible message has a big influence on his life and song-writing.

"I make time to read chunks of the Old and New Testament at the start of the day. The Christian faith is a matter of revelation and not opinion. The sum total of the revelation of God is seen in Christ, and the Bible from cover to cover points us to Christ," he said.

"So if worship songs are about our



Well-known Graham Kendrick is to visit Norwich.

relationship with God, then they have to be biblical in their content."

Graham has received numerous awards for his contribution to the worship life of the church at large, both in the UK and around the world. Based in the UK he travels internationally for music tours, festivals, conferences and training events, as a worship leader, speaker and performer.

He is a supporter of the worldwide children's charity 'Compassion', encouraging audiences to understand worship as a way of life, and true intimacy with God as well as sharing in the concerns of young people in need. The charity operates in more than 24 nations, helping over a million children.

Graham was one of the founders and the songwriter behind the global phenomenon called 'March for Jesus', which has mobilised millions of Christians to 'take the walls off the church' and bring praise, prayer and acts of goodwill and reconciliation on to the streets of many cities.

All 730 tickets for Graham's Norwich concert sold out in a few weeks in January. An Evening with Graham Kendrick is at Kings Community Church on Friday April 24 at 7.30pm and is arranged by Transforming Norwich with the Diocese of Norwich.

However, there is another chance to hear Graham Kendrick in Norwich on Saturday April 25 at Norwich Cathedral when he will take part in "Finding a Voice", (10-5pm), a music day for all who want to find fresh ways for music to flourish in church worship. Singers and musicians from around the country, including Graham will lead a variety of workshops. Details from Rosie Sethia on 01603 729818.

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Norfolk Christian Police group to reform

■ Norfolk Constabulary are set to re-form their own branch of the Christian Police Association, known for supporting fellow officers and staff, thanks to Sergeant Rachel Thrussell and a colleague attending the national CPA conference in October 2008.

"I felt strongly that God was telling me to write to the Christian churches throughout the county asking for prayer for the CPA in Norfolk," explained Rachel. "It seemed an onerous task but when I started things began to fall into place."

The response from church leaders and members has been immense, with significant email networking. As a direct consequence, some local churches have started getting in contact with their own Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) and getting to know their local police officers and Police Community Support Officers.

Rachel continues: "The Safer Neighbourhood Teams' remit is to integrate with their communities at all levels and they are encouraged to know all faith groups."

"The police service plays a vital role in protecting the public from crime and disorder in our communities and we believe that the Church has a vital role in bringing a message of hope to our communities."

The CPA is open for membership to serving and retired police officers and support staff irrespective of



denomination. Currently Rachel and colleagues meet as a group on a regular basis and operate with some flexibility based on local priorities.

To find out more about the aims and principles of the National CPA and initiatives such as Pray4YourPolice and

'Adopt a Cop' visit: www.cpauk.net. Find out more about Safer Neighbourhoods at www.safernorfolk.co.uk

You can e-mail Rachel Thrussell at thrussellrm@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

Report and picture by Kevin Gotts

■ news in brief

US hit movie makes UK debut in Norwich church

■ An American box office movie sensation has made its UK debut not in Leicester Square but in a Norwich church, organizers believe.

Excited voices filled the foyer and the smell of fresh popcorn wafted enticingly as people looked forward to the premiere of a major new film in Norwich on February 25. However it wasn't at Riverside or Castle Mall where the crowds gathered but at Witard Road Baptist Church.

Showing on the big screen at the church was the film Fireproof which has proved a box office sensation in the USA. With the international licence for the film

only granted for this country five days before, Witard Road was swiftly off the mark to buy the authorisation over the weekend. The church believes that it is possibly the first in the UK to show the film.



Fireproof showing at Witard Road Church.

Fireproof tells the story of a firefighter who, while saving lives through his work, has a dramatic battle to save his marriage, helped in no small way by an introduction to the Christian faith.

The film was made by Sherwood Baptist Church, Albany, Georgia, USA with the help of 1200 volunteers from the church and is the follow up to their last successful movie, 'Facing the Giants'.

Fireproof, which cost \$0.5 million to make, has confounded critics who said that it would be a limited success, by debuting at No4 at the US box office with receipts to date of \$33.5 million. The DVD of the film climbed to No 3 on Billboard's DVD chart and the accompanying book 'The Love Dare' has sold over 2 million copies, propelling it into the bestsellers list.

'Fantastic', 'Wonderful movie' and 'Brilliant' were just a few of the comments from members of the church, friends and invited guests as they left the building. Members have become accustomed to seeing Hollywood blockbusters at their church with a monthly 'Reel Issues' evening, where people look at clips of movies and discuss the associated life issues from a Christian perspective.

See the Fireproof trailer at www.fireproofthemovie.com

The DVD is available from the Norwich Christian Resource Centre

By Duncan MacInnes

Crisis food bank idea for Norwich

The idea of launching a crisis food bank project to offer emergency food parcels to needy families across Norwich and Norfolk is being explored by Transforming Norwich to see if there is a demand for the service and churches willing to support the concept.

Foodbank is a project already being operated by groups of churches in up to 30 locations across the UK, providing three days of emergency food to individuals or families in real crisis, before the statutory authorities can get involved.

Food is collected from churches, schools and outside supermarkets when shoppers are asked to buy one item from a list. It is then gathered into a central warehouse and sorted for use.

Food is allocated on a voucher scheme basis and collected from centres where clients are also offered advice from experts.

Transforming Norwich development officer John Betts is looking for local churches already involved in similar projects to help determine both the need and possible support for a similar cross-church project based in Norwich.

"In the present economic situation with a credit crunch in full flow, many people are now finding themselves in difficulties and looking for support,"

By KEITH MORRIS

said John.

"Some local churches are already being called upon by individuals and other agencies to help supply food to those who are finding it increasingly hard to feed their families," he said.

"New Hope Christian Centre and Lakenham Street Pastors are already seeking to respond in this situation. One local school has asked for help for families who are in serious need in Lakenham. Lakenham churches, Ipswich Road URC, St John's and St Paul's, contributed their Harvest offerings to help alleviate the need."

Norwich Vineyard has run a food-store scheme, giving boxes of food to needy families, for the past ten years, and as news of the service has grown, requests have started to come in from further afield, according to organizer Austin Perkins.

"Although as a fellowship, Vineyard gives very generously, we are unable to meet all the requests we get because the need is so great. We are now getting pleas for boxes from as far as Great Yarmouth and Wymondham.

"I have definitely noticed the economic climate making things worse. It's not so much that we cannot meet every need, which was always

the case. The rising cost of food means we are able to help less people. Whereas a box of food used to cost around £20, now it's well over £30."

John Betts believes there is the potential for a number of churches to work together to really address the issue: "It is a time in which the churches could arise to the challenge and minister to those who are struggling to cope. This project gives churches a practical tool for social action whilst sharing the Gospel."

The Food Bank concept has been backed by the Archbishop of York, the Rt Rev John Sentamu, who said: "This project has a lot in its favour – the fact that people can easily get involved, that it brings churches together to make an immediate difference and that those who seek assistance find personal and prayerful support - it is a model which I hope to see spread."

John Betts is organising a meeting on Tuesday April 21, 2pm at Norwich Salvation Army Citadel, for those who are currently involved in distributing food and those who have an interest in exploring what they might do together: "The purpose of the meeting is to reflect on the present demands for food being experienced by churches and our response to it," he said.

2john@johnbetts.fsnet.co.uk

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Paul is on the fast track



Paul Harvey in his 1993 Ford Escort Cosworth.

By SANDIE SHIRLEY

Church minister Paul Harvey is a rally car driver on the fast track of faith in East Anglia and beyond. It takes him on the knife edge of danger at speeds of up to 120 mph in all weathers.

With a passion for motor sports, the Suffolk Baptist church leader at Occold near Diss races at dawn and through the night, across a changing terrain, including disused airfields, farmyards and the twists and turns of Thetford Forest and the Snetterton race circuit.

"I never had bags under my eyes until I did this, but using it to share the gospel is dear to my heart," said the man who has taken Jesus out of the church box and into the sporting arena.

Revved for faith, his 1993 Ford Escort Cosworth carries the Bible text: You must be Born Again (John 3:7). He takes the driving seat of the Christian rally sport team, the Alpha and Omega CMT and has shared the thrills and spills of faith both on and off road. Now Paul, aged 40, is hoping to win new ground with visits to schools, churches and youth clubs in neighbouring Norfolk and Cambridgeshire this year.

The last decades have seen toil, tears and sacrifice but Paul still holds firm to his future dreams that include competing in the Blackpool car rally that attracts 10,000 people along the promenade. With wife Pauline, the couple provide most of the finances for this expensive sport – one day of racing cost £15,000. He swapped his full-time farm worker's job for a flexible grounds man's post 12 months ago to facilitate his rally mission role. He and his five-man team refuse to race on Sundays. "There are some events we would like to do nearer to home but they are on Sundays so we concentrate on Saturday events to keep the Lord's day of rest," he said.

Provision has come against the odds. The team have a premier car once owned by the Ford World Rally Team and driven by a former world rally champion, Carlos Sainz. "We were really blessed because the car also has a high build specification," said Paul.

Due to current expenses for the sport, the team only compete in three annual events at present – Manby in Yorkshire, Goodwood in Sussex and Woodbridge in Suffolk.

"This is one way we thought we could reach people. For many rally car drivers, the sport means everything to them and they can get into serious debt. For some, their life is empty. They may have a £100,000 car but they are still seeking something in life," says Paul who visits churches and youth groups with his rally vehicle and has made two appearances at a local engineering show.

Paul was trying out the family car off-road as soon as his feet touched the pedals and he was always enthralled by motor sports on television. He put his enthusiasm to the test in 1990 at the Bill Gwynn Rally School in Oxfordshire where he was the fastest driver on his course. He saved his earnings and bought his first rally car,



Minister and rally driver Paul Harvey.

an Escort Mark II for £3,000. He entered his first event in Cambridge a year later despite parental threats that he would be evicted from home if he was involved in the dangerous, expensive sport.

Alpha and Omega CMT is now a family affair. Brother Mark is the mechanic and together they burn the midnight oil, preparing the car for the heavy assault courses. Mark's hi-tech surgery has saved the team thousands including £10,000 when he rebuilt the Cosgrove engine. Pauline is the administrator and his sister was the first navigator (co-driver) before becoming an overseas missionary. Today she is replaced by student Becky Pullen.

Teamwork is the key to successful rally driving. The navigator is often the unsung hero, judging and communicating every turn, jump, crest and hazard ahead to the driver.

"You are running blind with a navigator to guide you around so it puts a bit more fear and excitement in the sport," admits Paul.

"I have had various rally drivers but my sister was one of the best," he adds. She never lost her cool and continued to signal the course ahead despite hitting a redundant barracks during a race in Watton after being wrongly advised to use a particular set of tyres in wet weather.

"I always say to the navigator, don't worry unless the car actually stops but

ladies are usually better navigators than men." They have no pre-conceptions about the holding and manoeuvrability of rally cars unlike many men who incorrectly compare their performances with normal road vehicles which rally cars far exceed, explains Paul. "Once a former male co-driver screamed 80 per cent of the time, which was not very helpful."

Paul found faith at 19 but the foundations were laid when he went to chapel and pondered creation. One of four siblings, the family was strapped for cash. There was no pocket money so sometimes he stole from home. He left school with few qualifications and joined a youth training scheme to follow in his father's footsteps as a farm worker. "I earned £25 a week and thought I was rich." He was rebellious and wrestled with adolescence until his brother and sister became Christians and he was drawn to church after seeing their lives change.

"I knew I was a wretch and had done wrong but I had to deal with it," he said. A bedside prayer became the turning point of confession and commitment. Peace came, striving ceased and there was a new confidence that changed his life's course with a thirst for adventure and faith.

For sponsorship details and booking events with the Alpha and Omega Christian Motorsport Team ring: 01379 678764 or paul.harvey@btinternet.com or visit: www.alphaomega-cmt.org

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Churches attract more young people

■ Norfolk's Anglican churches are bucking the national trend with a large rise in the number of under-16s attending church, according to a new report.

The new figures from the Church of England show average weekly attendance up 11% (2,800) and highest weekly attendance up 19% (5,700) in the Diocese of Norwich.

Among all age groups, the Diocese also performed well with average weekly (+3% at 22,100), Sunday (+1% at 19,600) and highest weekly attendances (+9% at 32,200) also going up.

These Norwich rises buck figures from across the country, which show weekly and Sunday attendance of under 16s falling by 4% and no change amongst all ages.

Diocese youth and children's administrator, Tricia Elson, attributes the rise to creative and innovative youth projects and the dedication of youth workers and volunteers.

Tricia said: "Credit must go to our hundreds of youth and children's workers, most of whom are volunteers. These figures are the result of their committed work in reaching out and building relationships with children and young people."

"The weekly rises reflects the rise in after-school, mid-week and holiday activities being offered. Being such a rural diocese has its disadvantages but it can make it easier to get to know the children in your community. Much of the work with the under 16s is small-scale but together amounts to a great deal. Churches with their army of volunteers are supporting and reaching out to young people in new ways and it's bringing results."

Last year the diocese received nearly £19,000 from the Youth Evangelism Fund which was used for a hand bell ringing group, a puppet team and starting youth clubs in the parishes of Ludham, Catfield, Potter Heigham and Hickling.

Innovative youth projects include a developing

café church called Xpressions in the Chet Valley, where children and families worker, Alison Ball, said: "Seeing God grow the number of families who have made the café their church has been fantastic. It has been very encouraging to see many of the original families coming on a Sunday morning having discovered the café."

The diocese is also currently working on a youth networking website, where young people will be able to find out more about the Christian faith and ask questions about Christianity.

St John's, King's Lynn, have begun an after-school Messy Church, building on the interest and momentum created by 'Bright Light Night' an alternative Halloween party.

Popular Christian band, thebandwithaname, will be performing at Norwich Cathedral in October 2009 in an event organised by the Church of England Youth Task Force.

Subscribe free to *Fresh* magazine on 01603 266316 or tricia.elson@horsteadcentre.org.uk

news in brief

Mike is new FGB Norwich president

■ The new president of the Norwich Chapter of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship is author and journalist Mike Wiltshire. He succeeds Michael Cant, who successfully held the post for three years.

New president Mike Wiltshire, worked in the secular media for more than 25 years and was a commissioning editor with the Financial Times in London. He was also founding editor of the FT's monthly review of business technology.

He and his wife Lois have four grown-up children.

London-born Mike has travelled in 50 countries. In earlier years, he helped to publish more than 100 million pieces of Christian literature in India, while working with a mission group, Operation Mobilisation. Later, the group asked Mike to find an ocean-going ship to purchase as a training and conference vessel, carrying hundreds of

tons of books and medical supplies. He found the right ship in Denmark and this became the first of four such ships which together have attracted more than 37 million visitors worldwide.

The Norwich fellowship arranges around 20 lunch and dinner events a year with guest speakers from business and professional sectors.

During 2009, the Norwich group will be holding all its events at the Maids Head Hotel in Tombland, including its monthly Friday night dinners and Thursday lunches.

www.networknorwich.co.uk/NorwichFGBMFI



Norfolk flying doctors in new bid for airplane



Right, Craig and Rae Oranmore-Brown, working together in theatre at St Francis Mission hospital, above, a Cessna 206, and left Zambian villagers with all their worldly goods: a set of clothes and a mud hut.



East of the country, Rae became acutely aware of the need for trained surgeons and has now completed her first year of a specialist surgical training programme at the teaching hospital in the capital Lusaka.

The hospital serves those unable to afford private health care.

Rae said: "I am enjoying contributing to the surgical care of a wide range of patients and would like to thank health professionals from the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital who have contributed various items to help those less fortunate in Zambia. We appreciate your effort and interest and our patients are truly grateful for the difference these items make."

Anyone who would like to make a donation can visit the website www.mercyflyers.org and find various ways of doing this.

Former Norfolk doctors, Craig and Rae Oranmore-Brown, are climbing new mountains in their dream to establish a Christian flying doctors service in isolated rural areas of Zambia and are also appealing for funds for a new aircraft.

Twenty months after the medical consultants left Norwich, Mercy Flyers is now a registered Non Governmental Organisation in Zambia and has supporting offices in both the UK (near Norwich) and the USA (near Boston). But the couple, who worshipped at Norwich Vineyard, are having to climb mountains of paperwork and political negotiating in a bid to establish their dream two years after they climbed Mt Kilimanjaro to raise start-up funds for the venture.

Craig said: "It is our opinion, shared by many of our colleagues in the charity sector in Zambia, that 'Unity is Strength' and in working closely together and sharing resources we can all achieve a lot more for the community. The charity has seen over 300 patients in the clinics and operated on over 100 of those seen. The surgery provided so far has been in gynaecology, orthopaedics and plastics

By KEITH MORRIS

and provided training and anaesthesia support to the rural hospitals."

Mercy Flyers are working with Dutch relief organization CORDAID as well as Flyspec in Zambia.

Craig has now completed training for his commercial pilot's licence in the USA and has converted this to a Zambian commercial license. This sets the stage for the flying operations in Zambia.

"Our need for our own aircraft has become critical. The charity Wings of Hope in the USA have offered to help us in this regard. A Cessna 206 aircraft has already been sourced which is being partly donated by its owner. We therefore only need to pay \$60 000 (around £40,000). This is extremely cheap for this aircraft and we are pleading with the public to help us raise this amount before we lose this wonderful offer."

After spending the first six months working at a mission hospital in a rural village in the



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FEATURES

2009: what people said

Today, 25 years on, what is the legacy of that memorable event.

■ East Anglia North regional co-ordinator **Peter Carroll** spent two full years on the enormous enterprise. "It was a life-changing moment for a large number of individuals," said Peter. "But the most enduring thing for me was all the churches in the region coming together in co-operation and understanding. Then working together and forging relationships across geographical and denominational boundaries to a common purpose. The mosaic of Christian life in the region changed forever."

■ **Tim Stapleford**, chairman of the Norfolk Christian Youth Football League, said: "It gave me a greater depth and confidence in my Christianity to make this apparent in my high school teaching role and in leading a young people's group on a Sunday morning at Holy Trinity, Norwich. Today, my commitment through faith includes coordinating the running of the Norfolk Christian Youth Football League, having shared a vision to create this in 1995."

■ **Tony and Carol Smith** currently work in West Africa and met as a result of the 'Mission England' crusade. They have been long-standing members of Holy Trinity, Norwich and are supported within the church's missionary network. Carol said: "At the last prayer triplet meeting before Mission England, a friend said that none of the people she had been praying for would come to the event, but a colleague had asked to come. We prayed for him; he went forward, and became a member of our church. I met him there; we married and are now working with a Bibleless people group in Africa."

■ Mission England was an important milestone for the **Waite** family with two of them having since become Church of England ministers. **Dan Waite**, 66, is part of the ministry team at St Andrew's, Gorleston where he was ordained 11 years ago. He was director of a bacon company in 1984. He and his wife, **Jill**, had started taking their two daughters, **Sally** and **Alison**, to Sunday School at St Andrew's when a coach to Carrow Road was organised. Dan describes how, as Billy Graham was speaking and calling people forward, he felt the need to "get up out his seat" and go down to the front. But he had his eyes closed in prayer and when he opened them "the whole family had gone as well".

Daughter **Sally Gaze** also went into the ministry. She serves a group of South Norfolk churches including Saxlingham Nethergate and has been greatly used to develop new types of church styles and rural work, and has written two books on the subject.

Reunion ■ Were you involved or touched

Billy played

June 9, 1984 was a truly memorable day. It was the day that Norwich City's captain Dave Watson first played for England against Brazil in Rio De Janeiro, Heveningham Hall went up in flames and minister Ian McGregor and Arthur Scargill met during the miners' strike.

There was also a special souvenir edition of the Eastern Evening News dedicated to the first night of Mission England with Dr Billy Graham preaching at Carrow Road.

The meeting was front page news in the Eastern Daily Press and was covered by national newspapers, TV and radio stations and even by international correspondents.

Dr Graham told the hushed crowds that he was going to speak to them as though it was the last sermon he would ever preach and told them that he could not prove the existence of God: "You cannot go to a laboratory and prove God scientifically. But it is instinctive in man's heart to believe that there is a God."

He then asked people to come out of their seats and make a public commitment to Christ and some 3,700 did exactly that.

1984: what people said

■ Reaction at the time was very positive. One local minister said that the next Sunday morning, he noticed 16 new people in his small congregation. They all said the same: "Mr Graham told us that we should get into a church where Christ is proclaimed."

■ **Dr Peter English**, a GP and former lord mayor of Norwich, and chairman of Mission England in East Anglia, said: "I have great joy at so many people coming forward to show their commitment to Christ. It is something I have dreamed of for years. It can only be the work of the Holy Spirit; we couldn't have organized it ourselves."

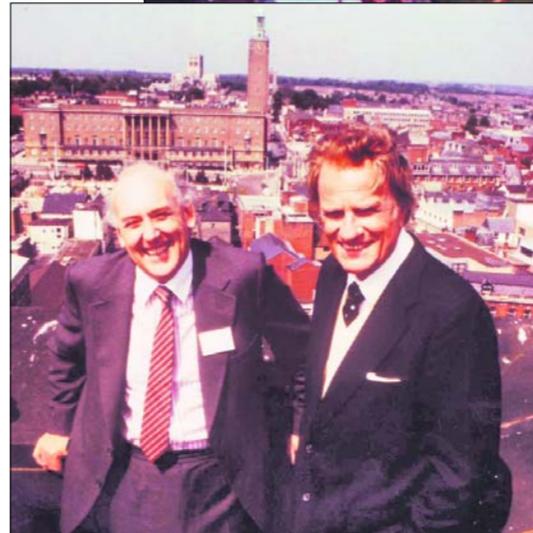
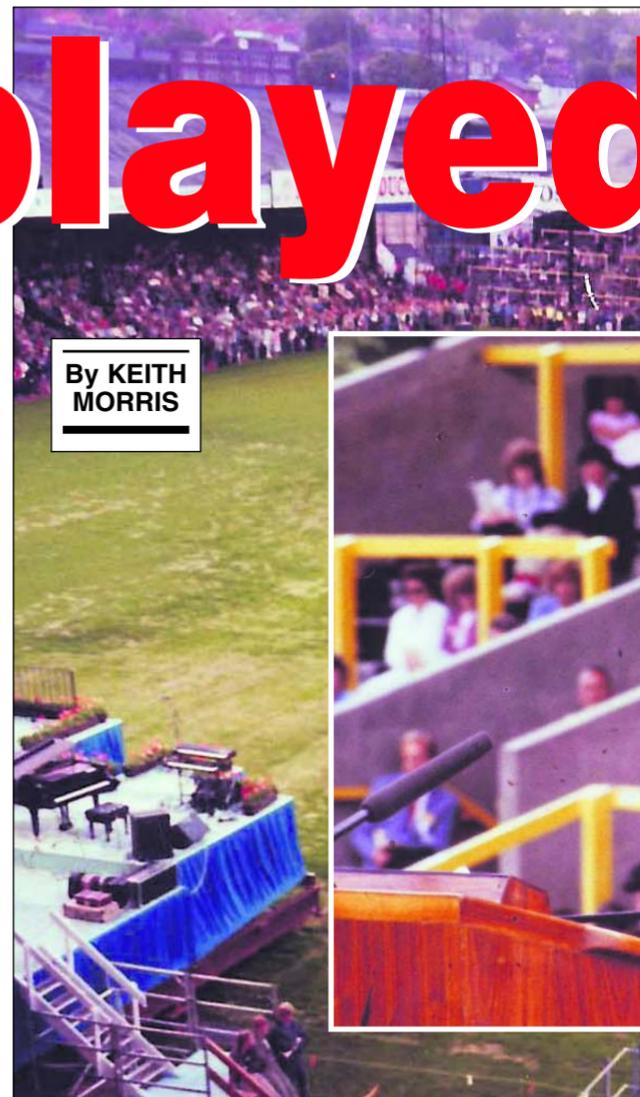
■ **Rev Hugh Palmer** from Holy Trinity, and now Rector at All Souls, Langham Place, said: "I find it hard to take in. This is all that we thought would happen and more than we dared hope. I pray that we pick this up and channel it effectively."

■ **Rev Canon Gordon Bridger**, vicar of Holy Trinity, said: "If we learn this lesson, we should never be the same again."

■ Mission England was in fact a three-year programme of local church outreach with the crusades the centrepiece. Thousands of Christians across the region attended Christian Life and Witness classes and Caring for New Christian Courses in preparation with the backing of **Bishops Maurice Wood** and **Timothy Dudley-Smith**.

■ More details of the 25th anniversary event on June 6 will be available on networknorwich.co.uk or from Peter Carroll at peterjcarroll2000@yahoo.co.uk or on 07739 189288.

By KEITH MORRIS



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"Inheriting a New Dawn"



Bob and Linda Humphries outside the Kedesh drop-in Centre in Norwich.

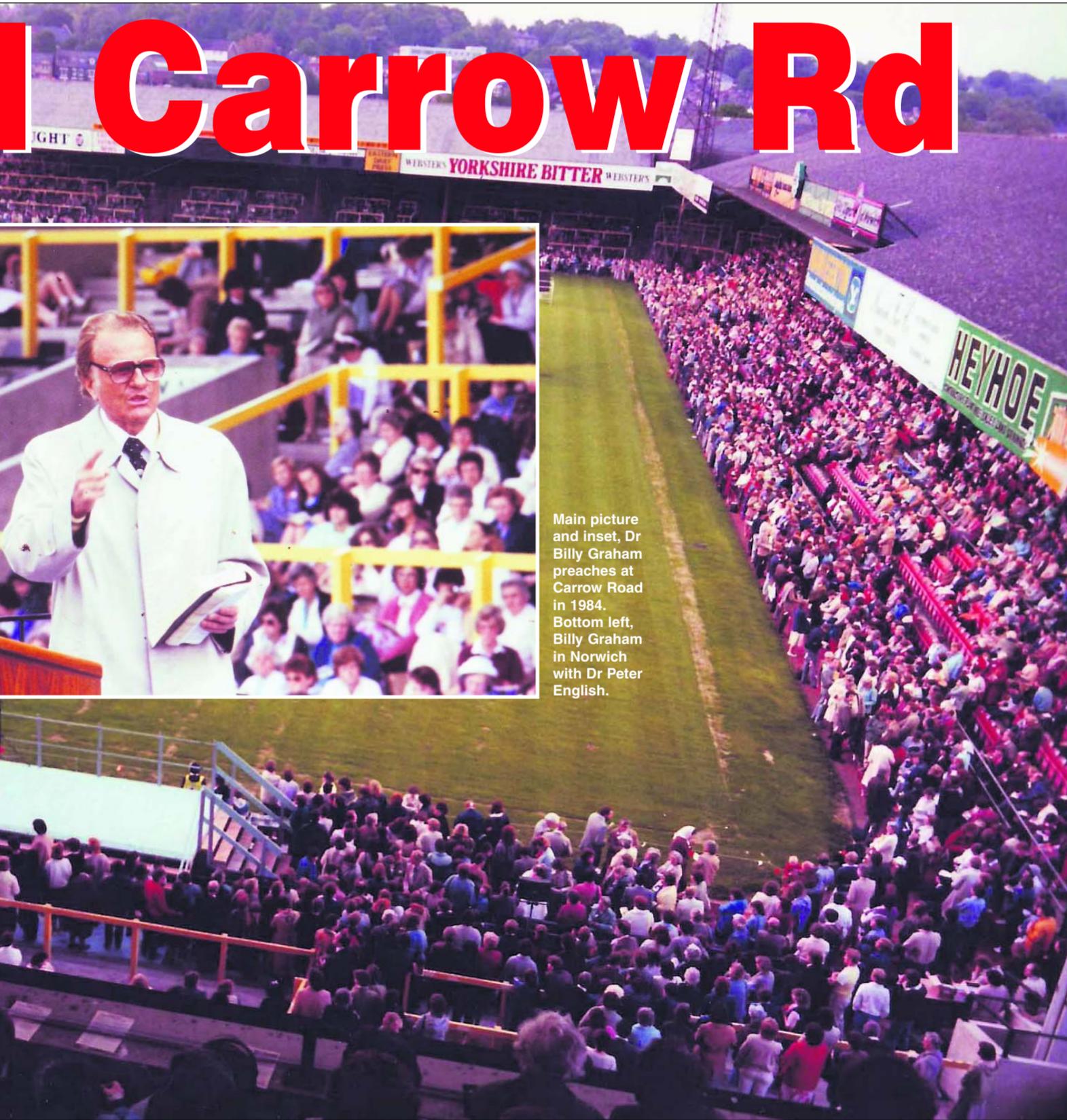


by the Mission England crusade 25 years ago?

Carrow Rd



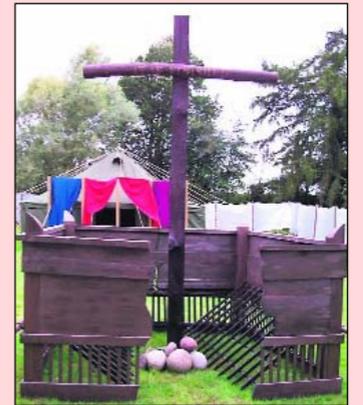
Main picture and inset, Dr Billy Graham preaches at Carrow Road in 1984. Bottom left, Billy Graham in Norwich with Dr Peter English.



Tabernacle set to open to the public

■ A full-sized New Testament Tabernacle is being erected in a beautiful Norfolk garden and will open to the public from May 23 to June 7.

Skilled people from within the Norfolk Call to Prayer team, following in the footsteps of Bezalel and Oholiab, have constructed a full-size Tabernacle as a teaching tool and visual aid for understanding the Christian faith. Its purpose is to enable people to encounter God in a deeper way, with the altar of sacrifice broken in two and replaced with the cross of Jesus, and the deep significance of every item revealed.



The Tabernacle is available for bookings for local churches, schools and youth groups, retreats and conferences, as well as visits by individuals. Teaching tours are led by Jill Gower, who brings amazing insights into the links between the Old and New Testaments.

John and Susan Wright have kindly given permission for the Tabernacle to be erected in their garden at Kirby House, Kirby Bedon, Norwich NR14 7DZ, and it will be open to visitors from Saturday 23rd May to Sunday 7th June.

For further information contact: Jill Gower jill@jill495.orangehome.co.uk or 01508 491770, Annabel Valentine

Food “miracle” at Norwich drop-in

■ Hurting and needy people from London, Birmingham and Sheffield have been making their way to a Christian Drop-in Centre in Norwich, as word has spread about its helpful services.

The Kedesh Centre in Magdalen Street has increased its volunteer support team to 13 people. "It's quite extraordinary to see the way things have developed since we opened in July," says Bob Humphries who pioneered the project with his wife, Linda.

With the credit crunch, even anxious business people have visited the centre which offers a warm welcome to anyone who wants a chat, a cup of tea, a listening ear or a word of prayer.

One worried man, who came in for prayer for his struggling business, later reported: "I've had so much new work come in I can hardly cope with it!

Kedesh has a two-pronged ministry: to welcome people who would never go near a church, and to help train people in the Christian community who – with the backing of local churches – share the vision to reach out to the community.

Bob and Linda gained much previous experience while working at London's Wandsworth Prison and at a hostel for ex-offenders.

The faith of Kedesh staff was boosted at Christmas when food, offered free to drop-in visitors, appeared to be 'miraculously multiplied'.

The staff had bought two turkeys to serve a free Christmas meal for people who live alone. Carol Legg, the experienced cook and meal co-ordinator, estimated they had just enough food "with all the trimmings" for 15 to 20 people.

But as the number of guests increased, Carol

wondered if they should serve smaller portions – until Bob and his wife, Linda, felt that, in faith, they should go ahead and serve generous helpings.

"I remembered that in the Gospel story, Jesus blessed the food and told his disciples go ahead and feed the people," says Bob.

Remarkably, Carol then became aware that there was a lot of food left over, so they gave dinners to all nine staff and then offered seconds to guests till they could eat no more.

"We must have served 50 generous dinners," adds Bob. "If we had charged for the meal, we'd have been 'on our own'. But this was the Lord's lunch, and everyone was fed!"

Contact: 01603 615100 or 07729 263650, at 148 Magdalen Street, Norwich, NR3 1JD.

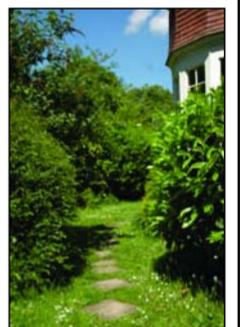
By Mike Wiltshire

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New church set for developing Norwich suburb

■ A new church is set to be launched in a Norwich suburb later this year as a plant from a growing existing congregation.

Lively, vibrant but able to bridge the gap between the 1st and 21st century church experience is what Rev Vic Ready is anticipating for Taverham Evangelical Church's (TEC'S) new church plant at Queens Hills in Costessey.

"It will incorporate a culture that will have a multi-generational approach to worship where young and old can worship together in the unity of the spirit and share the love of Christ together," said Vic.

Queens Hills is very much a stand-alone community that will eventually consist of some 2,500 houses, shops and a sports pavilion, but it already has a great community spirit, according to Vic.

For those who are not familiar with this new development, it is very close to the 'Sainsbury's' and the 'Range' end of the southern by-pass. Vic will be taking a team of around 12 from the 120-strong TEC congregation to take charge of this new plant and he, along with Marie Hobbs, will make up the initial pastoral team.

The worship will be led by Dan Hobbs and Queens Community Church (QCC) have also appointed Joey Graver, an MA graduate from Loughborough University, to head up the Youth/Student ministry. QCC has been supported financially by AoG as well as by TEC and from the outset will be an AoG church.

Vic will look after both churches for a year and then look to hand over to the local teams with Fran Tregay and Geoff Brendling already at Taverham.

QCC will be launching the Church with a Community Fun day on August Bank Holiday Monday, August 31. Their first Sunday morning service will then commence on September 6 at Queens Hills Primary School in Costessey.

Vic said: "Norwich is an area of real church growth and, as most successful modern churches have already discovered, to succeed they must always have one foot planted in modern culture to reach this generation. The other foot however, needs to be firmly planted in the power and authority of the 1st century church. It is important to get the balance right. QCC aims to get that balance right and, with the mixture of youth and adult ministry experience from the beginning, it has every chance of succeeding."

For more information ring Vic Ready at the QCC church office on 01603 865111.

Keith Morris



Queen's Hill Primary School where the new church will meet.



CMA President Mike Fitton on his Harley Davidson.

Mike gets on his bike

By SANDIE SHIRLEY

UK President of the Christian Motorcyclists' Association, Mike Fitton, put a new spin under the wheels of its Norwich members in a bid to win more bikers for Christ. The former policeman, who forges links with national and international members, was in Norwich in February to help mark the Association's 30th anniversary.

He shared his rousing call to swell membership by 2500 during the next ten years and to place a Biker Bible in the hands of every UK biker after its remarkable publishing success 18 months ago.

"I want to encourage every member and affiliate member to find four new members over the next ten years," he said. Renewed manpower from committed Christians will help share the Good News and the love of God to give hope and encouragement to people, explained Mike, at Norwich's Racecourse Public House on Salhouse Road.

As he addressed new targets for mission, he has seen the Biker Bible exceed projected forecasts. It was launched in June 2007 – a pocket-sized New Testament with 24 stirring global bikers' stories. "Since then we have given away 22,000 and now we have enough funds to publish 20,000 more," said Mike. "The original idea was to publish 50,000 in five years.

"We are seeing bikers, at Holy Joes (tee-total refreshment tents, manned by CMA at bike rallies) sitting up all night and reading those stories after a skin full."

It is not just affecting bikers and their families. "One man was given a copy on his death bed. The motor neurone disease sufferer was a confirmed atheist when he read the testimonies from the Biker Bible given to him by a nurse. His wife was convinced they made

■ Norwich CMA

- The Norfolk branch of the Christian Motorcyclists' Association meets regularly on:
 - First Tuesday in the month at Costessy Baptist Church, 7pm to 10pm.
 - Harvest Centre, Brandon Full Gospel church, Fengate Drove, Brandon on the third Friday in the month, 7pm to 10pm.
 - The Boundary pub in Norwich on the second Tuesday of the month
 - Social at the Racecourse on Salhouse Road, Norwich every third Wednesday from 7pm.
 - Witard Road Baptist church most Sundays if they are not doing runs events or visits.
- To find out more contact Ken Hardy 01603 495277 or visit www.bike.org.uk

an impact and asked me to take his funeral service," said Mike.

"Recipients have got the word of God in their hand – the Bible that brings life – not a worn out document – and it has made a difference in my life," said Mike, who believes he would have taken note if he was given one when he was looking for the way ahead when he was younger.

At 16 he drifted through nine European countries. There was a brief encounter with a cult in Vienna and a memorable Christian in Amsterdam with haunting eyes of love. "I did not realise it was the peace of God that passes all understanding," he reflects.

Returning to England he joined the police force for an adventurous career with fights and car chases. He needed a daily fix of adrenalin that included endurance sports. Descending into the depths of depression he pushed himself physically with rock climbing, winter mountaineering alone in the Alps and

Pyrenees, canoeing, motorcycling and back packing.

Frustrated by authority, and with a growing violent temper, his police career took a downward spiral. Mike's answer was to move to a self-built cabin in Alaska by the Yukon River in the wilderness. But God had other ideas.

He met some Christians while on police duty when their house roof flew off in a storm. "They invited me in for a cuppa and I noticed the scripture: 'If the son sets you free, you will be free indeed'. I saw in their eyes the same peace I saw in the man in Holland." A friendship developed and they taught Mike about Christ before he heard a tough Welsh preacher speak about God's love despite his sin and violent temper.

"I realised Jesus died for my sin and everything I had filled my life with just made me thirsty. I carried a burden of guilt bigger than any pack I hauled over the mountains. I ran from problems, leaving a trail of hurting people in my wake. I wanted to stop running. I walked to the front of the packed church and surrendered my life, asking Jesus to change me and walked out free indeed."

Returning to work, the following day, began years of ridicule. But it was the best training ground for evangelism. Mike was injured in a fight and was forced to end his police career. He became a children's evangelist and development worker - leading missions in Poland and Spain before joining CMA with his passion for motorbikes. In 2004, he became their first full-time president: "This is my job and I actually get to ride a bike and tell people about Jesus which is great."

He oversees 33 branches and has developed CMA's partnership with World Horizons to provide motorcyclists for overseas missionaries in rural areas. Mike's travels across the world to forge a new and expanding mission field.

Church is on the move

Meadow Way Chapel is celebrating a year of holding its two Sunday morning services at Hellesdon Community Centre because it has outgrown its original purpose-built premises.

Church chairman, Gavin Struthers, said: "For a number of years Meadow Way Chapel has tried to become more involved in the local community. By 2007 we also realised that our premises could not accommodate any further increase in attendance at the Sunday morning Family Worship Service.

"Various solutions were considered during a period of seeking God's will, then the membership were surveyed. The survey showed that many felt we should be more in the community. So last February our two Sunday morning services, early morning communion and family worship, were moved from Chapel premises to the local Hellesdon Community Centre.

"We were already involved in the community centre, running a Friday afternoon club for the older residents of Hellesdon. We had been asked to take this over when

it was in danger of closing due to lack of volunteers willing to organise it."

The club has just celebrated its 60th anniversary and each Friday attracts 60-100 older people. This club is another contact for the church's full-time community worker, Thelma Robertson, who works with the older people of the area.

About the same time the church started a coffee morning called "Stage 1 Café" in the foyer of the community centre offering refreshments and the opportunity for a chat.

"There is no doubt that the church now has a much higher profile in the community, with at least some misconceptions about 'church' people allayed, and a number who wouldn't have come to the Chapel, now attend family worship," said Gavin.



www.meadow-way.org.uk



Meadow Way is now meeting on Sundays at Hellesdon Community Centre and running other groups there.

John Drake steps down after 30 years

By **KEITH MORRIS**

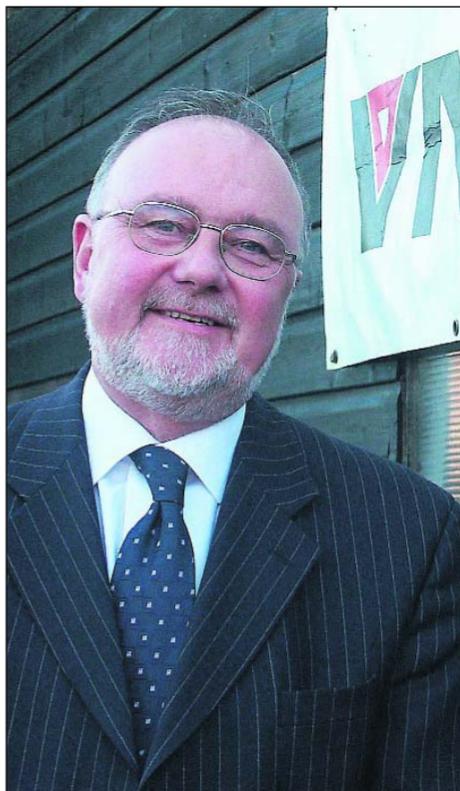
YMCA Norfolk is nearing the end of its search for a new chief executive officer after the decision by existing CEO John Drake to step down after 30 years of distinguished service.

John joined YMCA Norfolk on January 1, 1979, and since then has overseen a massive expansion in its size and scope, culminating in the opening of a new £3m Central Norwich YMCA on January 5.

The organization now employs over 100 staff and works not only to support and house homeless young men and women, but also in pastoral care in schools, prison work, a furniture warehouse, NightStop and Y-Life schemes and providing advice for asylum seekers.

John said: "Barbara and I have been privileged to see the transformation of the YMCA over the last 30 years. Although we are now inundated with policies, procedures and professionalism the YMCA's core DNA remains unchanged. The commitment of local people to respond to the challenges of local need as their faith gives them motivation and courage to do so. Now is the opportune time for a successor to come and take the Association forward into this new century."

But John will be far from retiring and is looking to develop a range of projects that



John Drake.

give scope for enjoyment, extended travel and less bureaucracy.

Amongst John's aspirations are to re-

engage with programmes in the Jordan Valley as well as chairing a number of companies and charities

"I have enjoyed incredible support from so many loyal and committed staff teams over the last 30 years, with each generation bringing innovation and building on the success of those who have gone before. I just count it a privilege to be part of their success.

"My successor will inherit opportunities, challenges but most valuable of all the skills and commitment of some incredible people."

John and Barbara will continue to live locally in a county in which they have come to appreciate and cherish over the last 30 years.

YMCA Norfolk chairman, David Ingham, said: "John has taken the Association from a struggling organisation with significant debt to the excellent state in which it exists today. We have seen a huge expansion of the housing work and the spread of the Association's work throughout Norfolk with centres in Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Thetford plus other developments which are still in the planning stage.

"John is leaving us with one of the country's leading YMCAs with its probably unique mixture of urban and rural mission and activity. It is a thriving business, supported by a group of Christian business people with a real heart for meeting the needs of those who are in trouble."

John plans to retire from YMCA Norfolk on July 31.

Norwich charities meet government minister

Representatives of Norwich Christian social action charities have met with government minister Sadiq Khan MP (pictured below) to talk with him about engaging faith communities in the delivery of public services.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Department for Communities and Local Government visited Norwich on March 23 and included a visit to look around the newly-opened Norwich Central YMCA.

The visit also included a meeting with representatives from YMCA Norfolk, the Magdalene Group, Pregnancy Crisis Norfolk and Norfolk Street Pastors.

The Under Secretary is keen to hear from faith groups how they are delivering services of benefit to the public and how the government could help them to do that more effectively.

"Faith is a key issue to the government," said Sadiq. "We recognise that faith groups can reach parts of the community which just cannot be reached by other agencies and they make a vital contribution. The amount of voluntary work the faith communities are undertaking means that if we give them public money, we will get out far more than we put in – it is a no-brainer.

"Faith plays an important part in people's lives whether they be Christians, Muslims or Buddhists. In the midst of the uncertainties of the global economic crisis, people will look to where they can find certainty. Faith communities can help to provide that. Not just through their messages but through their practical experience and expertise at delivering or signposting services and by giving a sense of hope and optimism for a better future."

The minister met with Mair Talbot from the Magdalene Project, Tish Ash-Lameer from Pregnancy Crisis Norfolk, John Drake from YMCA Norfolk and Keith Morris from Norfolk Street Pastors.

They told Sadiq about the work of their charities, the vital role volunteers play in most of them and the difficulties they sometimes encountered accessing public finance to support their work.



Pioneering website spreads its wings

Pioneering ecumenical Christian website Network Norwich has spread its wings and relaunched itself to provide coverage for the whole of Norfolk as well, under the banner Network Norwich & Norfolk.

Web editor, Keith Morris, said: "We have been online for over three years now, with more than 1,650 subscribers for our weekly e-newsletter and over 7,000 unique visitors every month. For quite a while we have been covering news, events, projects etc across Norfolk as well as those based in Norwich. The relaunch simply reflects this reality and helps us to provide connections and communications for the Christian community right across the county.

"While maintaining our weekly news service in the Norwich area, we are now extending our award-winning coverage to other parts of the county with the backing of groups such as Norfolk and Waveney Churches Together.

"We hope to be able to help local ecumenical groupings and partnerships communicate what they are up to. If you are interested in the website promoting your news, project or church or even helping you to produce a professional website as part of the project, please get in touch."

Keith is also looking for local web champions in the different areas of the county, to help provide local news and information.

Contact Keith on 07712 787762 or at keith.morris@networknorwich.co.uk
www.networknorfolk.co.uk

Norwich churches share in a passion for life

■ A growing number of evangelical churches in Norwich are signing up for the Passion for Life initiative – a nationwide evangelistic project planned for March 2010, in the lead up to Easter.

A number of evangelical churches from across the denominational spectrum in the Norwich area are already part of this movement, and plan to make the most of the opportunity that this venture represents in the region. They include South Park Evangelical Church, Norwich Central Baptist Church, Surrey Chapel, Holy Trinity and St Andrew's.

A month of gospel outreach

The focus of the mission will be proclaiming the gospel message. "Great work is being done in our area through projects with a social action emphasis," says Pastor Tom Chapman of Surrey Chapel, chair of the Norwich area steering group. "But we want to rise to the challenge of putting action into words!"

The Mission will have a national identity through advertising and media, and eye-catching activities and exciting larger events will be planned to begin and conclude the month, with



the help of visiting evangelists. However, the main thrust of the work will be done through the ground-level efforts and energies of ordinary church members.

The strategy is to turn all the activities of the churches over to evangelism for that whole month, whether through personal witness, small groups of different kinds, the whole congrega-

tions, or churches working together.

A year of preparation and a lifetime of results The month itself will be preceded throughout 2009 by shared evangelistic training programmes, opportunities to pray together, and efforts to build relationships with the wider community.

"We believe that the focus on grass-roots witness and genuine co-operation will mean this will not be just another evangelistic flash in the pan," says Pastor Tom. "It is just as important to us to increase co-operation in the gospel between Bible-believing churches, and inspire sustainable long-term commitment and gospel confidence in our members, as it is to notch-up commitments during the mission itself.

"Since Billy Graham, the gospel hasn't changed – but the culture has, radically. We must convert our churches to share Christ, before we'll ever convert others to follow Christ."

Churches working in partnership

"We hope that this venture is something that many Churches in our area can be part of to some extent," said Pastor Tom. "We of course

understand that there may be very good reasons, both of principle and practice, why some churches may not wish to fully participate. But we hope that you might include us in your prayers, and might even suggest that you keep in mind what we are intending to do when you make your own plans for evangelism."

"However, we do also hope and expect that there are many churches in Norwich and Norfolk who can share our understanding of the gospel and our vision for proclaiming it. If so, perhaps you would like to consider joining with us in this mission?"

Gospel initiative

"Passion for Life" is an initiative of the Gospel Partnerships, a national inter-denominational group of evangelical churches which is represented in our region by the East Anglia Gospel Partnership. Further information about "Passion for Life", including the basis of faith to which participating churches subscribe can be obtained from the website www.apassionforlife.org.uk

For more details of the Norwich group contact Tom Chapman at pastor@surreychapel.org.uk



Venerable Jan McFarlane, the new Archdeacon of Norwich at Norwich Cathedral. Picture and article extracts courtesy of EDP.

Archdeacon Jan makes Norwich Diocese history

■ Norwich's first ever female archdeacon was installed during a ceremony in front of hundreds at the city's Anglican cathedral on Sunday March 15.

The Ven Jan McFarlane made history for the Diocese of Norwich when she became one of just 12 female archdeacons nationally out of 112 in total in the Church of England.

She said that she felt privileged to be chosen for the role but also acknowledged the pressure that came with breaking new ground.

The archdeacon shares with the bishop the pastoral care of the clergy and undertakes much of the practical, legal and administrative work in a diocese, including looking after buildings.

She said: "What is fantastic is I know the people so well because I have been in the diocese for 10 years and because I know the people it just feels a real privilege to be taking on the role.

"It is a role of offering support to the parish clergy and doing work on the ground and I know they are all great people and fantastic churches and congregations.

"And of course I am the first female archdeacon for the diocese so I do feel a little bit more pressure. It feels like it did 15 years ago when women first became ordained, when you felt you had to do things better.

Ms McFarlane succeeded the Ven Clifford Offer as archdeacon after spending the past nine years as both communications officer for the diocese, a role she will continue, and chaplain to the Bishop of Norwich.

Financial team aims to help Norfolk Christians

A new wealth management and financial solutions company has been launched in Norfolk specifically to look after the financial needs of the Christian community.

Ichthus Financial Solutions is run by Matthew Newton, a Partner with well-respected wealth management company, St James's Place.

Matthew, who is married with two children, has worked in the financial sector for the past 24 years, 22 of them with HSBC, latterly as an Independent Financial Adviser.

He is a regular attendee at Aylsham Community Church since becoming a Christian in May 2008 and says he has a real desire to serve the Christian community with the skills he has.

"We take a personal pride in looking after and caring for the financial needs of the Christian community," he said. "In my various roles I have enjoyed long-term relationships and loyalty from clients and their families for many years, providing advice in all areas of financial need.

"St James's Place Wealth Management, who we represent, has a particularly strong record in managing clients' investments and has received many prestigious industry awards."

St James's Place is a FTSE 250 business with funds under management of over £17 billion and has a charitable foundation, which in 2008 distributed some £3.1m to more than 700 charities.

It offers its services through its team of over 1,100 financial advisers, 80% of whom also contribute towards the foundation.

Based near Norwich, Ichthus Financial Solutions provides advice to individuals, trustees and companies in investments, pensions and protection, inheritance tax and will planning.

"At Ichthus, our objectives are to build long term relationships with our clients,



Matthew Newton and Carol Smith from Ichthus Financial Solutions.

provide a trusting, local, accessible and consistent service and offer clients a first class investment proposition with a proven track record," said Matthew.

"In addition we aim to help promote the Christian message by contributing 10% of our income to the church or a Christian charity of the client's choice."

Matthew is supported at Ichthus by his PA Carol Smith, also a long-serving ex HSBC employee.

"In the light of recent volatility on world stock markets and economic uncertainty, I would stress the importance

of reviewing existing arrangements to ensure they remain suitable," said Matthew.

"I have the facility to provide independent research on people's investments and pensions, without obligation, in order to make them aware of just how well their existing arrangements are performing against similar funds with peer companies."

To find out more about Ichthus Financial Solutions contact Matthew on e-mail: matthew.newton@sipp.co.uk or on 01603 891320.

EVENTS

Norwich & Norfolk Christian job opportunities at www.networknorwich.co.uk

Silent Norwich reconciliation walk

■ Transforming Norwich has announced that this year's traditional Good Friday Procession through Norwich will be a silent event, with those joining in being encouraged to consider the theme of reconciliation.

In the past the procession has been a 'Walk of Witness' and have marched, with the support of the Salvation Army Band, to The Forum where there has been a short open air service. This year they are being asked to silently consider the themes of Good Friday, and demonstrate a unity in this silence.

Members from churches across the whole of Norwich are being encouraged to meet at Chapelfield Road Methodist church at 5pm, where they will gather together, and then move off along the traditional route with a cross at the front, a cross in the middle and one at the back.



At The Forum the procession will hold a two-minute silent vigil, then move off again. "We want to walk as a silent presence that speaks of a unity amongst ourselves in the face of what Jesus did for us on the cross," says Nicholas Vesey, Chairman of Transforming Norwich. "In modern society silence is often the way we remember people and events, and so it seemed appropriate for Good Friday. We hope it will be a powerful event, both for those of us taking part, and for those who witness it."

Stewards for the event are being provided by the Street Pastors team, who will accompany the procession wearing their uniforms. The walk will aim to be at the Cathedral at 5.45, in time for the traditional service at 6pm.

Dawn service over city

■ The Thorpe & Heartsease Christian Forum will be holding a Dawn Service on Easter Day: The short service will be held on St James' Hill (corner of Mousehold Heath).

Everyone is invited to assemble at the car park at 5.45am on Sunday April 12 ready to join in the sunrise service which starts at 6am.

There are ample parking facilities on Britannia Road Car Park and further details about this event can be obtained from David Joscelyne (01603 433493).

events in brief

Christian centre marks Passover

■ The Norwich Christian Resource Centre are holding an evening of food and faith on Friday April 3 with a Jewish passover meal.

Everybody is invited to come and enjoy some delicious Jewish cuisine and experience a traditional passover celebration, with its significance explained by speaker Barry Barnett from Jews for Jesus.

Jim Channell from Norwich CRC says, "This is the meal that Christ poured new meaning into and became Holy Communion. So its a good opportunity to experience something rooted in Biblical history and something Jesus himself celebrated."

The three course meal with tea or coffee costs £15 per head

For bookings Tel 01603 619772 or 619731 to book or email norwichcrc@btconnect.com

The event takes place at Forget-Me-Not Café, St Michael at Plea, Redwell Street, Norwich, NR2 4SN.

Five-a-side football

■ The Norfolk Christian Youth Football League is holding its annual five-a-side tournament on Saturday June 6 in Norwich.

Tournaments for Under 10s and Under 12s are held in the morning with Under 14s and Under 16s in the afternoon, with squads of between five and eight players.

The venue, to be confirmed, is usually at Heartsease Towers, off Salhouse Road.

As well as a great end to the season, the day is also an opportunity for interest from any churches who might want to form new teams for next season, including girls' football teams.

For further details and an application form, for any church-based teams, please contact the league secretary, Katherine Hume by e-mail at secretary@nccayl.org.uk

Family May Day

■ Swingboats, a giant slide, a bouncy castle and Punch and Judy are just some of the many attractions at this year's Family Fun Day, organised by local churches, on May 4 at Heigham Park on The Avenues, Norwich.

Stalls, games, Maypole dancing and the Youth for Christ Gospel Choir provide ample entertainment and amusement for all ages whilst hot dogs, crepes, doughnuts, ice Creams and a refreshment tent will also be on offer.

Organised by the local churches, all proceeds from the event go to local and national charities. Further details from Margaret Culley 01603 250105.

Who did move the egg?

■ Oak Grove will kick off their Easter celebrations on Palm Sunday, April 5 at 10am with the visit of the one and only Saltmine Theatre Company and their amazing production, 'Who Moved the Egg?' A real must for families this Easter.

Journey with Saltmine team as they travel through the Last Supper all the way to the Ascension - whilst trying to find an answer to that age old question that still puzzles people today - Who did move the egg?

Admission is free, a collection will be taken to cover costs. More details from Tel. 01603 403388, or email: office@oakgrovechapel.co.uk Website: www.oakgrovechapel.co.uk



Light at the end of the tunnel

■ After a nine-month interregnum at St Stephens Church in Norwich City Centre, there is light at the end of the tunnel. Rev Madeline Light (pictured above), to be precise, who will join as the new Priest-in-Charge from Friday May 8.

Madeline is at present at St Helen's and the Great Hospital and will remain as Chaplain to the St Martin's Housing Trust.

The Licensing will be carried out by the Bishop of Norwich, from 7.30pm and the Installation will be done by the new Archdeacon of Norwich, the Venerable Jan MacFarlane - as her first parish Installation.

St Stephens church warden, Peter Carroll, said: "We're all very excited by it and are expecting a full church. We're inviting the city centre clergy from all denominations, and because of the strategic location, we're hoping for a good response from the City authorities. We're the Fire Service and the Normandy and RAMC Veterans church - plus the new YMCA centre is in our parish, together with other charities and agencies.

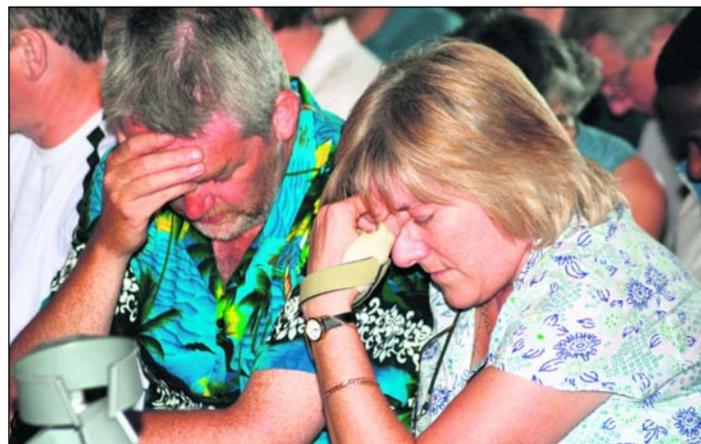
"The Diocese are being really supportive of this appointment and are making a substantial financial commitment to it and there is also a link with the Fountain of Life church, a non-geographic missionary congregation, based at the Well Christian Centre, Ashill."

Global Day of Prayer in city

Norwich and Norfolk will be participating in the fifth Global Day of Prayer on Pentecost Sunday, May 31, with a service of repentance and prayer in Norwich Cathedral at 6.30pm. The Bishop of Norwich will be present as will other leaders from different streams of the Christian community.

Administrator, Hilary Oliver, said: "This is a wonderful opportunity for Christians from Norwich, Norfolk and beyond to come together as one body, uniting through a world prayer with our brothers and sisters from around the globe. How awesome to think of being part of a vast 24-hour wave of prayer starting as dawn breaks in New Zealand, flowing through Australasia, Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas and finishing in Samoa."

Jane Holloway, Director of Prayer at the World Prayer Centre in Birmingham and organiser of the UK Global Day of Prayer, said: "The vision of GDOP is to mobilise Christians around our world to pray from Ascension Day to Pentecost Sunday (10 days), unite with other believers on Pentecost Sunday (1 day) and to be people who share the good news with others in mission (90 days). In 2008, 214 nations took part and we pray that



Last year's GDOP service at Norwich Cathedral.

Christians from all 220 nations will be able to participate this year."

Hilary said: "In this time of global shaking and concern for our nation, let us respond to this resounding call to prayer, in accordance with 2 Chronicles 7:14, a foundation scripture in the GDOP movement. In previous years the cathedral has been well filled - this year let's see it bursting at the seams."

The Norwich event is being organised by Prayer in the Park - for further information and to obtain leaflets about the event please contact the administrator Hilary Oliver: phone 07777 656689 or email: prayerinthepark@btinternet.com

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Christian centre resurrected

By KEITH MORRIS

The resurrection of the Norwich Christian Resource Centre has been celebrated by staff, directors, supporters and the Bishop of Norwich.

A reaffirmation service to mark the successful reopening at St Michael at Plea Church, on Redwell Street in Norwich, on January 30, was led by the Rt Rev Graham James, Bishop of Norwich.

"The centre and its staff have won the support of people in many churches across the city and beyond," he told the packed Centre.

"There are contradictions about a Christian bookshop of course. Christianity is not about what you know but who you know. But this is more than just a bookshop. The bond between staff and customers is something that you just cannot get on Amazon.

"We all believe in Steve Foyster

and his team and Lynton Johnson and his café team. It has become a place where friendships are formed and the spirit of God's hospitality is demonstrated.

"It is also a tribute to unfussy, undiluted ecumenism and proof that the ecumenical spirit is still alive."

The service included hymns, readings, prayers and a blessing of the Centre.

Centre manager, Steve Foyster, told the assembled audience: "It has been a bit of a rollercoaster ride. But there was only one day when I said I really couldn't be bothered with it anymore. It is all you people that have made it happen by your prayers and financial donations and all because it is a place you want to be and to enjoy.

"This coming together of spirit and goodwill has made it possible and long may it continue, as times are hard at the moment and we need to Centre to continue to be visited and used."



Scenes from the reaffirmation service, including, top NCRC driving force Steve Foyster and the Bishop of Norwich.

Chinese link to Surrey Chapel

■ The spiritual roots of world-famous Chinese Christian leader, author and martyr, Watchman Nee, can be traced back to a Norwich church, and the connection recently led a coach-load of Chinese believers turning up on the doorstep.

The Chinese visitors, led by a Professor Chen, turned up at Surrey Chapel in Norwich on a Maranatha Tour in search of the background to city missionary Margaret Barber, sent out from Surrey Chapel exactly 100 years ago.

In 1909, Margaret left Surrey Chapel to return to China as an independent missionary supported by the church and met an 18-year-old Christian, Watchman Nee, whom she personally tutored in the Word of God. Watchman Nee went on to become one of the most influential Christian leaders in the history of the Chinese church.

The story for Surrey Chapel began when they received a request to host a visit by a group of Chinese believers keen to visit their really rather unremarkable church building. Not understanding why, the Chapel politely turned down the request, but were informed that the coach would be turning up anyway, so keen were the visitors.

They relented and decided to open the doors to what turned out to be a wonderful and encouraging experience, according to chapel elder, Derek Haylock, who takes up the story:

"I told them a little of the history of the Chapel, showing them the plaques for the first two pastors, Robert Govett and D.M. Panton, that had been brought from the original Surrey Chapel in Surrey Street. They were given copies of 150 Years at Surrey Chapel written by Rosamunde Codling (2004).

"I explained why the church had moved from its original building in Chapel Loke off Surrey Street (now the site of John Lewis car park). But, in fact, they seemed to know the history already because it was all written and illustrated in their study guides!



Derek Haylock shows the Chinese visitors around.

"They were particularly keen to see some of Govett's and Panton's books in the Govett Room and to take photographs of everything. In the main Chapel upstairs, as they sat excitedly on the old Surrey Chapel wooden chairs, Professor Chen reminded them of why they were there. The story was inspiring.

"D.M. Panton became Pastor of Surrey Chapel in 1901. A lady missionary called Margaret Barber (1866-1930), who had returned to England from service in China,

left the Church of England and joined the Chapel around 1907. There were some suggestions of a possible romance between Panton and Barber, but in the end the call to return to China for Margaret Barber was stronger.

"It was a period of missionary fervour in the Chapel, when, during the years 1906 to 1917, as many as nine individuals went to serve in China. Margaret Barber went back to China as an independent missionary, sent and supported by Surrey Chapel in 1909.

"So 2009 is the centenary of her sending to China by Surrey Chapel and for the Chinese visitors, a most significant event in their own history. In China, Margaret Barber met an 18-year-old Christian man, Watchman Nee. She personally tutored him in God's Word, directed his study and encouraged him in his spiritual development. Watchman Nee became one of the most influential Christian leaders in the history of the Chinese church - and the visitors to Surrey Chapel in 2009 were all from churches whose roots are in Nee's ministry.

"This is why they were so excited to be visiting Surrey Chapel in Norwich. As they saw it, in the sovereign purposes of God, they were Christian believers today because Surrey Chapel had sent Margaret Barber to China one hundred years ago!"

"There in the Chapel, we sang together a hymn written by Margaret Barber and enjoyed a thrilling time of prayer and thanksgiving. More photographs and numerous handshakes and hugs and then they returned to their coach - on their way to visit the John Lewis car park!" said Derek.

"Jesus said, 'The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree ...' (Matthew 13.31-32)."

www.watchmannee.org



Michelle Smith with some of the street boys of Kisumu.

Pastors return to Kenya

■ Two Norfolk pastors who were caught up in the violence sweeping Kenya after last year's election, are returning to the country in April to reach out to needy people in the local prisons, rubbish dumps and slums and to hold a Revival Bible School.

Michelle and Rod Smith, of Wellspring Church, Poringland, near Norwich witnessed the violence in January 2008 while they were in the country with their Christian charity Healing Streams Kenya, visiting five children they have adopted.

Since then Rod and Michelle have return to the country twice and are going again on April 27, taking a team of around 13 people from Britain, the USA and Canada.

Michelle explained: "We will be doing a Revival Bible School, ministering at the men's and women's prisons at Kodiago, the rubbish dump where 30+ men and boys live amongst the rubbish, Kisumu Children's Hospital, among street boys and girls, and in the heart of Nyalenda slums where the poorest of the poor live.

"In May we have booked the Polyview Hotel, Kisumu, Kenya as the venue for the Revival Fire School and are expecting a team of around 13 from USA, Canada and Britain to join us for the two-week school led by Dr Sandy Kirk of Camp Ablaze, Alabama, USA.

"The team are paying for their own flights, accommodation and gifts to Kenyan people but we need to raise around £2100 to enable 15 young Kenyan potential leaders to join us for the school," said Michelle.

If you can help ring Michelle and Rod Smith on 01508 494211 or 0774 693 3908 or michelle-smith@tiscali.co.uk