



Goodbye and God bless Oxygen

It has been nearly nine years since I joined Oxygen as the first Youth Minister and Centre Director. The years that followed have been wonderful, inspiring, challenging and encouraging. I have made some lifelong friends, been involved in some great projects and seen my own faith grow and deepen as I have sought to lead a project that would do the same for others. Now at the start of a new decade the time has come to say goodbye to Oxygen, to move on to pastures new and undertake new challenges and opportunities.

Over the next few months I will be drawing together my time at Oxygen and beginning a new role, with the YMCA London South West (formerly Kingston and Wimbledon YMCA). This will build on the contacts and relationships I have locally whilst giving me a chance to be involved in an organisation whose work, values and ethos excite and inspire me. To know more about what I am doing, visit www.oxygen-online.org; and in the meantime my trustees will be working with YFC as well as staff, young people and churches locally to draw up a Job Description and advert for my successor.

Can I just say thank you to everyone who has supported, encouraged and helped me in my work. My thoughts and prayers are with you as you move forward, and I look forward to speaking to you in my new role.

Richard James

*Future date – Sunday 23 May
Celebrate Pentecost with Churches Together in
Kingston in Kingston town centre. Watch out for
further details.*

GOOD FRIDAY WALK OF WITNESS

Gather at the United Reformed Church in Eden Street at 10am for time together over tea, coffee and hot cross buns. The Walk starts at 11am and will include a time of worship and an outreach event.

All are welcome, so please come and join us in bearing witness in our town centre this Good Friday,
2 April.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid Week this year runs from 9-16 May, but we'll be kicking off a day early with a quiz night at the United Reformed Church at 7.30pm on Saturday 8 May. These quizzes are fast becoming an enjoyable feature of the Week – all churches are very welcome, indeed encouraged, to send a team (or two!).

The Christian Aid service will be at All Saints Church on 9 May at 6pm (note time). And of course there will be the usual market stall, coffee morning (at All Saints) and Flag Day on 15 May. Collectors for the Flag Day and for the house-to-house collection would be welcome – if you'd like to help but don't know who your church representative is, or you haven't got one, then please contact Keith Long on 8546 2120.

BIG SING

Come and join with people from a range of Christian traditions to sing songs from the Iona Community and around the world, on Saturday 8 May, 2-4pm at Kingston URC, Eden Street.

No great musical skill needed, just a love of singing. The afternoon will be led by former Iona Community musician Emily Walker. Details from Isobel Robinson on 8546 5931 or dbr226@hotmail.com

Entry is free but a collection for Christian Aid will be taken.

Kingston Methodist Church

Rev Dr Angela Shier-Jones will be assuming Pastoral Charge of the Kingston Methodist Church on 1 March 2010. Angie is currently the minister of the New Malden Methodist Church and will continue in that position as well. She is widely known for her work in Methodist theology, having lectured at several universities and written or edited several books on the subject.

Revive is a new project at Kingston Methodist Church starting as a monthly evening activity of relaxation and de-stressing, reaching out to the wider community. The aim is to help restore your life balance, allowing space to explore what will bring health to your inner being, providing opportunity to talk confidentially with qualified listeners and relax and unwind with fully qualified massage therapists. There will also be an opportunity to take part in a short led mediation. Light refreshments will be served. Adults and senior school children accompanied by an adult are welcome. This service is offered free of charge, but donations are welcome.

Friday 7-9pm – further details from Dorothy Innes, 8546 3213.

St Peter's Church Norbiton – the Great Feast

It is two years since this project started, when the Lord came to our door step and knocked. "Can I and my friends have a safe place to rest in your garden" He asked, "and what about some small change for food?" This had been a testing time for us at St Peter's. To say "Yes have a seat" is good but what will the neighbours or church members say? And to say "No thanks" is also good because it's not our problem – but are we not the body of Christ? And what is our mission?

The Great Feast happens every Wednesday and offers a meal and a talk and the chance for discussion and prayer. Praise and thanks be to God for the Spirit that led us to open the door and not only give change for food but provide for the Great Feast, for friendships and self esteem built, a place where you can belong and be heard and explore faith.

Pray for these friends of ours, the Garden People, especially for Loraine, Jeff, Josephine and Andrew who were baptised and Sean who renewed his baptism vows on 23 Dec 2009, that they may fully know the Lord's mercies.

All Saints Church: plans are everything!

Sometime in the late spring we hope to be in the process of submitting our plans for the redevelopment of All Saints to the Council for approval. They include some changes to the interior of the church as well as the building of a new two storey, three level building on the western end of the north lawn opposite John Lewis. The development aims to give the centre of Kingston not only improved facilities for the community to use, but also a really smashing heritage attraction. We're hoping that our efforts to consult over the last couple of years will mean a supportive response within and without the Council Chamber, but if you feel inclined to make positive noises then we'd be very grateful.

Kingston Churches Winter Night Shelter Update

The Winter Night Shelter is reaching an end. How quickly three months passes by! The shelter has been a momentous success and many thanks to everybody who has been involved in one form or another. Twelve churches offered their venues as shelters which was fantastic in itself. We estimate that over 200 people were involved in volunteering during the period that the shelters have been open – it is quite staggering how much dedication has been poured into making sure that this scheme has worked. The volunteers have come from so many churches – it is great that this has been a cross-denomination event. School pupils, others from the local community have been involved, including KCAH Access Project tenants who have been homeless themselves. The warmth and welcome that the “guests” receive at each shelter is so inspiring and it is wonderful to see such faith in action. Thank you and especially to the co-ordinators of each shelter.

The statistics are currently being compiled but we believe that around 50 “guests” have passed through the shelters this winter. Some have been transient homeless, only staying a couple of nights and are not seen again, but a significant number have had a local connection to Kingston or the surrounding boroughs. KHAH staff have worked tirelessly to try and find more secure accommodation for the guests.

We have achieved some great successes with a significant number being found temporary accommodation in the YMCA, Leatherhead Night Shelter and even KCAH’s own housing through the Access Project. Some have been offered temporary council accommodation, some have “bid” successfully for permanent council housing and a couple of over 55s have been offered sheltered accommodation.

The next stage is to have a de-brief in March and evaluate what has gone well, what has gone not so well and what lessons can be learnt for next time. There has got to be a “next time” of course!

A great number of agencies/organisations have supported the scheme as well as the churches – the Kingston Mayor, John Lewis, Millets, Reed Employment, the Town Centre Management, the police, the Primary Care Trust, the local MPs, councillors and Kingston Council as a whole. The scheme is well recognised for the benefits it brings to the local community and we can only go from strength to strength. Particular mention must go to Rachel Makin, a remarkable person who has project managed the whole scheme as a volunteer.

Of course, there are “guests” who have not yet been resettled so please pray for them. The scheme has to come to an end at some point and it is an anxious time for those who are still in the shelter and do not know where they will be sleeping next week.

Matt Hatton, KCAH Operational Director, 23 February 2010.

News from Archway The Church on the Estate

Archway has re-launched its Toddler Group, now on Tuesday mornings, 9.30-11am and the new Youth Club is meeting on Wednesdays, 5-6.15pm, both in St Peter’s Parish Hall on the Cambridge Estate. Plans are under consideration for redeveloping the Hall to make a second meeting room.

A Night of Prayer is planned for Friday 21 March.

Further information from Caroline Groves on 8549 1585.

Fit Lives is a Christian organisation that works in gyms and health clubs around the country, seeking to build friendships with the members and to offer to help them 'make life work'.

A 'Life Skills Coordinator' who will spend time at the health club or gym is trained to build relationships with members and offer them support. The coordinators may run courses such as marriage, parenting, managing money, beating burn-out or Alpha for the members. The coordinators are also valued by club managers as they offer something extra for members and increase the sense of community.

On Wednesday 16 June, 7.30 for 8pm, Kingston URC is hosting an information evening for any church member who is interested in getting involved with or supporting Fit Lives in their local gym. A representative from Fit Lives will be speaking on that evening. Fit Lives have a website, www.fitlives.co.uk or you can look at their video online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtRE_f2ieM

King's Church, Kingston

We now run three Alpha courses a year (all at the YMCA Hawker Centre in Kingston). The majority of those attending come in via the web or personal contacts: it's great to see so many wanting to find out more about Christianity. We've seen good numbers of people making commitments to following Christ, which has been a real joy.

Gareth Stranks is working with us for a year as part of a Newfrontiers FP Impact course. Gareth is concentrating on student work and using his graphic design background to create a 'brand' image for King's. We have started weekly student lunch and prayer meetings and will shortly be starting a mid-week evening student small group. Having prayed over the summer that we would reach 15 students, we now have 15 who are coming to us regularly – praise God.

Kingston Baptist Church

Thank you for your prayers for our carol concert, it went well as many of our friends got to hear about the birth of Christ and its implications. We are now looking to further our relationships and build upon what God was doing in December.

We are now looking forward to our next music night on Saturday 17 April, 7pm: a night of good music with refreshments afterwards and a chance to meet others. Our previous nights have been well attended and a great opportunity to bring friends along. If you would like to join us, you are very welcome!

We are still in the process of working with an architect as to how we can refurbish our building to be a valuable ministry tool for us as we seek to introduce people to Jesus. We continue to value your prayers, especially for the above, and that God would lead us in His will and make us faithful and fruitful for Christ.

Daniel Macleod, Pastor, Kingston Baptist Church
www.kingstonbaptistchurch.org.uk

Lent Course

This year seven different churches in Kingston, Surbiton and New Malden are offering a Lent Course sponsored jointly by Churches Together in Surbiton, Churches Together in Kingston and Kingston Methodist Circuit. The course, 'Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living' is produced by the Jubilee Centre and Tearfund, and is being held at ten different venues and on three different days to enable as many people as possible to attend. Many thanks to Rev Bonni-Belle Pickard for initiating and organising this new ecumenical venture.

