

# dartford community church

...in the community...for the community

newsletter - autumn 2010

## Men's Weekend 2010

**In July we held our 4th Men's Weekend near Brighton. The aim was to strengthen relationships between men in the church and build relationships with some of our non-Christian friends who also came along.**

All 16 men had a great time with the weekend being characterised by lots of laughter (chiefly instigated by Joe Kelly), excellent conversations, great food and lots of fresh air. An advance party arrived on the Friday afternoon to set up base camp which consisted of a non-snoring tent, a snoring tent and a serious snorer's tent (The Snorer's Olympic Gold Medal went to Peter Hadlow!).

All men enjoyed taking aim in the afternoon air rifle shooting competition but Duncan Hall proved to be the sharp shooter while Kev Brant looked mean but couldn't deliver the goods when it mattered! Reinforcements arrived in the evening to enjoy a barbecue with the infamous spicy 'Tony' burgers and a pint or two at the pub!

On the Saturday we did a short walk up to Devil's Dyke viewpoint on the South Downs, then in the afternoon everyone participated in an activity of their choice; Richard 'Le Moustache' Aldridge led a scenic 8 mile hike, Pete Robbins and Duncan Hall led the 'extreme' fishing activity and the rest of us embarked on a strenuous mountain bike ride. A number of bikers were forced to drop out due to the impact of the previous night's spicy burgers or mechanical failure. A support team (thanks Graham and Kim!) came out twice to rescue stranded cyclists! In the evening we enjoyed a fine meal at a local pub feasting on home-made shepherd's pie over a few pints of ale. The day concluded gazing at the stars through Pete Robbins' telescope although we were interrupted by voracious snoring! After eating a fine breakfast cooked by Top Chef Dave King on Sunday morning we packed up our tents and drove home thoroughly exhausted yet satisfied. Anyone interested in joining us for the Men's Weekend 2011 please let me know.

*Garry Simmons*



# New Frontiers

A group of about fifty of us from DCC camped for a week with 7000 others on the Norfolk Showground for the annual Newfrontiers youth event, which involves worship, teaching, social action and lots of fun. It's always a privilege and a pleasure to hang out with our young people, and to watch them growing in their faith and enjoying themselves – even the stormy weather failed to dampen their enthusiasm! Here are just a few of their comments:



Newday was great!  
Really fun, spending  
time with everyone,  
getting to know God,  
better, getting healed!  
so glad I came!

I felt God speak  
directly to me for the  
first time which was  
amazing!



An amazing time in the  
presence of God and his  
great big family.

Newday is always a  
massive encouragement...  
bring on Newday 2011!

Thanks to Dawn and  
Lynn for the great  
food!

**Newday 2011: 1st – 6th August (departing on 7th).**

## RETURNING TO LAGOS 2010.

**Last May I spent a month in Lagos Nigeria with a charity Wish For Africa. The charity aims to provide affordable, quality health care in deprived, low income areas. I left feeling God had been supporting and leading me through the entire trip.**

As I watched the BBC programme 'Welcome to Lagos' in March this year I wondered if I would have the opportunity to return. Then out of the blue I had an email from Angela, whose wedding I had been to on my last visit, offering me a room in her house if I ever wanted to return. I felt that God had answered my prayer and my work there had not yet finished. I then emailed around and decided that I would return for 2 weeks in May to include National Children's Day. I flew with my bags laden with toys, clothes and sweets for the party we would be organising in Mafoluku, plus some medical equipment for the clinic there. All the items were kindly donated or purchased with money donated by friends from DCC and colleagues at DVH. On the day of the party the staff of the Medical centre worked hard preparing party bags, decorations, and putting up canopies. The news of a free party for the local children in this deprived area soon spread and we catered and entertained around 300 children. Every child had food and drink and went home with great memories as well as clothes, toys & sweets. I went home with the memories of hundreds of smiling faces.



The highlight of my second week was when a lady turned up from Niger (a French speaking country) in labour, she had had no antenatal care, and could hardly communicate with us, but we delivered her beautiful daughter safely. Due to friends following my journey in my blog and on facebook, the couple were also blessed with their already low cost medical care being paid for.

So many people have thanked and praised me for going to Nigeria and doing what I do. I always reply that I really don't feel I do anything much at all, I just go....but by doing and going in faith God blesses others which in turn really blesses me!

Jo Watts

## PRaise IN the PARK

**Once again we had the opportunity to have a time of worship in Dartford Park as part of the Dartford Festival in July. Five churches closed their morning services to be part of this and the Mayor and MP also attended. It is so good to be able to worship Jesus and give him glory in this context.**



## Al and Jane's visit to Kunming, China

**At the end of May Jane and I went to visit Ingrid and Chen Gang in China.**

We had a good time with them and it was useful to have time to talk through the things they are involved in and (hopefully) give some advice on how they move forward. We also visited the different projects that Ingrid and Chen Gang have set up to give employment to the deaf and disabled. Both the handicraft workshop and the carpentry workshop are facing the challenges of having to find new premises soon. Please pray for them in this. Also, the handicraft workshop needs some good export orders to enable them to keep employing a good people. Please pray for this too. It is so good to see so many people with changed lives and in w would have had very little opportunities for employment.

Al

## Al's Moscow trip

**Al was due to go to Moscow at the beginning of August to take part in the Moscow Bible Week. However, events in Dagestan meant a change of plans.**

Having enjoyed a visit from Ruslan and Saida from one of the former Soviet states, after they had been to the Newfrontiers conference at Brighton, we felt that we had got to know some people from that Russian state. They returned home on the Sunday evening and on the following Thursday, Ruslan met with a colleague back at home. Soon after he had left the meeting, his colleague, Artur, left his office and went to his car. While sitting in the car with another leader, a masked man came up to the car and fired a gun through the window at Artur. Although they rushed him to hospital, he died shortly afterwards. This was obviously a very unsettling time for the churches there and so Al accompanied David Devenish at the end of July to meet with the church leaders from there. They met at a nearby Russian town just across the state border.

The church leaders were obviously shocked by what had happened, and Artur's widow – Zina, was also present. However, they were all determined to continue to preach the gospel in the face of such opposition. In many ways it was like something out of the book of Acts – gospel preaching despite opposition, persecution, and yet a determination to keep going.

From there David and Al went on to the Caucasus region and spent some time with some of the church leaders from there, then flew back to Moscow, where Al got straight on the night train to Orel (about 400 km from Moscow). Al preached there on Sunday and then on Monday got the train back to Moscow for the Moscow Bible Week (Mon – Fri). The speakers were David Devenish, David Rigby and Al. The week seemed to go very well and on the following weekend each speaker went to different churches to preach. Al in two churches in Moscow city.

All this time Russia has been experiencing extremely high temperatures – 40 degrees C and higher. One of the results of this has been that everything is very dry and there are several fires breaking out around Moscow. The fires have affected some forestry and also some of the peat bogs are on fire – these are very difficult to put out as they are burning under ground and are also producing some toxic fumes. The whole of Moscow was under a blanket of smoke and the smoke was even in the corridors of the conference centre during the Bible Week! So, all in all an eventful two weeks, but also a time where God was at work in many ways.

## A VISIT TO ROMANIA AND SERBIA.

**In May I accompanied Gareth and Malou Bolton on a visit to our AMEN partners in East Europe.**

We stayed in Sighisoara, Romania, visiting Mana Church and the projects they run to help the local Roma gypsies. We visited three gypsy villages and Gareth preached in one of the small churches Mana has planted. The poverty we saw was overwhelming but the welcome we received was always warm and friendly. In December this year, AMEN plan to send 3,000 family shoeboxes to the gypsy families and DCC will be taking part in this scheme.

From Romania we drove across to Serbia where we visited HUB (Belgrade Bible School). While Gareth taught the students, and Malou did sessions on children's work, I helped in the library. This year I helped re-label and organise the books in Serbian, which was a bit of a challenge but a task that I enjoyed! It was good to meet up with the staff I met last year and to see how God is blessing their work.

Janet White



Zina and Artur



Smoke in Moscow



# FUNDRAISING: CAR WASH FOR THE FLEETDOWN CENTRE

On Saturday 19th June a crack team of keen-car-cleaners washed cars for 3 1/2 hours in the Fleetdown Community Centre car park. The rain politely waited until we had finished, and we raised £120 towards repairs at the centre.



# ZIMBABWE APPEAL

Update from the previous news letter: The total amount raised by the 15-19s during the cake sale and 24 hour famine back in April was £546.51. Great result – well done guys!



# AMEN School Bake Appeal

On Sunday 6th June the children had fun while raising money for AMEN.

They filled pencil cases with small change, decorated cakes and ran a sweet stall. The purpose of the morning was to raise money to provide fully equipped school bags for children in India who are denied an education if they can not afford the stationery that they need. The DCC children (and adults) were amazingly generous and we collected over £400. This means that 40 children can remain at school this year, which really proves that "small change can make a big change"! Thank you for your support.

