



# Baddow Life

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The Life of Great Baddow

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Issue 12

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# NEW HEAD FOR MEADGATE PRIMARY

by  
Mones  
Farah

**Miss Sally Clark has been appointed as the new Head Teacher of Meadgate Primary School. She has been at the school for the last three and a half years in her role as a deputy head teacher and as teacher of firstly Year Five and Six and more recently, Reception.**

Miss Clark is originally from Essex, but after completing her qualification in 1997, she began teaching in Oldham Manchester and then in Whitechapel London, before returning to take her present post at Meadgate School in October 2002.

When Miss Clark first visited Meadgate she was impressed by how friendly and welcoming the whole school felt. As well as seeing evidence of an excellent team ethos, she also noticed that the children were very capable and were comfortable in relating and talking to adults.

Excited about the future of Meadgate, Miss Clark also sees the excellent team spirit and capabilities of the children as a great strength that will continue to be

a strong basis for the continual development of the school. However, with the increasing challenges that are presented to all schools in our modern day, Miss Clark is eager to develop the school further.

She will continue to improve the strong links that already exist between the school and other groups, clubs and organisations within the community, by inviting members of the community from different walks of life into the school. Furthermore there is need to strengthen the children's understanding of global living, as our children are becoming increasingly more aware of the effect of other parts of the world on all of us by increased interactions with children of other nationalities and ethnic backgrounds as well as through the media. They need to be prepared and equipped for this with an exciting curriculum which reflects



Miss Sally Clark at Meadgate Primary School (photo by Mones Farah)

these needs. In addition the extended school policy (which includes breakfast and afternoon clubs) will be high on the agenda, and Miss Clark is looking forward to working on this in partnership with the cluster of local primary and secondary schools.

Miss Clark starts her new role as Head teacher at the beginning of the new school year in September 2006.

## Council Regs Challenged by Grave Owners

Grave owners have challenged Great Baddow Parish's decision to enforce the regulations (on health and safety grounds) relating to Lawn Cemetery at the Parish Meeting on 13th January. The challenge came due to the way in which

by Selina Knight

people did not like the regulations and the way the notice of enforcement was issued to grave owners.

Members of the public raised a number of issues including the timing of the notice of enforcement, the damage to the main gate and kerbstones on the pathway, the lack of covers on water tanks, the tardiness of topping up the graves, and the provision and use of protective clothing. Suggestions put forward for consideration by the Council involved purchasing modern strimmers, installing lighting in the cemetery, reviewing the policy regarding benches and fencing the boundary with the bridleway. The enforcement notice was suspended and it was agreed to set up a work-party to review the cemetery regulations.

At the Parish Meeting on 18th April, Councillor Mrs Chris Shaw explained that new regulations, which were agreed by the Parish on 10th April, were now clearer and gave more explanations about the size of the grassed area between the individual cremated remains plots and the full grave plots. Councillor Martin

(Continued on page 7)

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# FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERING

*In this issue join us as we take a look at the variety of youth volunteer work within and around our village.*

## CPAS Falcon Camps

Have you heard about Falcon camps? No?! Well that's no surprise as they are in the main a well kept secret. Falcon camps are Christian holidays for children and young people who won't otherwise be having a holiday. They happen all over the country for anyone from eight years old upwards and are exciting and loads of fun.

For the past ten or so years people from the Baddow Churches have helped in a wide variety of ways to make one of these camps happen each summer. At the moment we have direct links with Ringsfield Hall near Beccles (which might be familiar to pupils from Larkrise). We spend a week in August staying at the Hall, running a holiday for about 25 children aged eight to eleven, enjoying their ponies, rabbits, goats, and even peacocks. We have trips out including the seaside, play games and do a wide range of activities. Last year we had a crabbing competition - the winners caught eleven crabs, (no hooks or nets allowed!).

People from Baddow help make this happen through giving up a week, paying to come as leaders on the holiday and helping organise activities, buying and cooking our meals,

planning and arranging transport for the outings, and playing and having fun. They also support the camp by subsidising children to come on holiday, the brochure price is £95 but many families need more financial help to be able to afford a holiday, so subsidies are arranged. Importantly they also pray for all of us before and during our exciting/strenuous week away.

We get a lot out of volunteering to lead the camp; this may include some sleepless nights as the date approaches but it's also a chance to be more creative than work often allows. It's a chance to play, care, and listen to children from a wide variety of backgrounds, and the great joy of hearing them talk about camp, their best bits and how they plan to come again next year.

If you would like to find out more about Falcon camps, to go on one for a holiday, or as a volunteer leader, then please do give us a ring for more info or contact Jane Ives of CPAS Falcon Camps on 01926 458456 or look on the web site. The brochure isn't out yet for this summer, but there are 4 day holidays at Easter and holidays to cater for all ages and tastes over the summer.

*(For reference CPAS = Church Pastoral Aid Society.)*

*Jo and Mark Brown*

*Co-Leaders Ringsfield Hall Falcon Camp*

## School Governor

I've always been one of those people who likes to know what's going on and to be there deciding how things should happen. I've been secretary of the church youth group committee, fixtures secretary and hockey captain at university, later captain and club secretary at my local hockey club and, Secretary on the Playschool Management Committee to name a few. So when the opportunity came up to be a parent governor at Baddow Hall Infant School where my son had just started, it's perhaps not surprising that I was keen to give it a go.

I have been a governor there now for five years and Chair of Governors for the last eighteen months. What's it like being a Governor? In my experience, it can be a lot of hard work, challenging, a big commitment but most of all very rewarding. Being Chair of Governors is all those but twice as much so...

As Governors, we have statutory responsibilities for the strategic management of the school in partnership with the Head teacher. We have a duty to ensure that the school has the appropriate plans and policies in place to ensure that all children achieve the highest standards. This means monitoring the School's Development Plan, managing the budget, recruiting the best staff, even ensuring that nutritional standards of school meals are met. We work with the school in areas such as Healthy Schools and Safer Journeys to School too. As Governors and Staff we want to make sure we work together to do the very best for the children at the school.

I have to say that I do really enjoy being a Governor, and most of the time being Chair! It can eat up a lot of my time but I hope I am contributing something back too - especially as it is the school that I went to as a child (it was quite fun meeting up with one of my old teachers from some 25 years earlier!). I am also really proud to be associated with the school, particularly when I meet parents whose children have just started there and they tell me what a lovely school it is. I know it's down to the hard work and dedication of the teachers and staff, but it's great to be able to think that I've had something to do with it too.

*Sue Cilvert*

## Girlguiding

I have been a Guider for 43 years, the last twenty of them in Great Baddow.

I have seen many changes in the programme and the uniform, all of which helps to keep us up to date as the biggest movement in the world for girls from the age of five years.

Many girls have passed through my units in those 43 years. I have seen them grow and develop, and most of all have a great deal of fun. As an adult in the Guide movement, I, too, have had a lot of great times and made many good friends.

It is very rewarding being a Guider, seeing the girls do things like abseiling, rock climbing, or just peeling potatoes for the first time at camp. It is not all knots and camp fires these days, although outdoor cooking and going to camp is still very popular.

Girlguiding in Great Baddow is doing very well at the moment, but we are in need of Brownie Guiders at two of our units; we cannot take girls from the waiting list until we find this help. If you feel you would like to join us as a child, or an adult, please call me: - Ann Malin, District Commissioner, on 01245 476584. I would love to hear from you, and I can assure you that you won't regret it!

*Ann Malin*

## Chelmsford Prison Visitors Centre

Please we need your help now to extend a warm welcome and hospitality to our visitors

We are currently looking for volunteers in the following areas:

- Admin
- Tea and Coffee making
- Help within the children's play area
- Lending a listening ear to worried visitors

Please call Gill Wilson on 01371 810309

## Meadgate Primary's Head Moves On

Mrs. Linda Hughes, who has been Head Teacher at Meadgate Primary School for six years is sadly leaving at the end of the summer term. I asked her how she came to become the Head Teacher, and she said when she visited the school for the first time she found it a really lovely school, and she felt it was a school that she could really build on the positives that were already there.

During her time at Meadgate, Mrs. Hughes has felt that these strengths have been developed, and that there is a very strong ethos that goes throughout the school. There is a good team spirit with everyone working well together and visitors find a real warmth when they enter the school. This reflects well on the children, and because of the team work which goes on amongst the staff, this does help the children to feel a real part of everything that is going on, and builds healthy relationships amongst staff

and children. Mrs. Hughes said that the children are great, and want to be involved. At the 2003 Ofsted the report commented on the outstanding relationships and ethos in the school which was so good to hear and very encouraging for everyone.

Over the years a School Council has been formed, which is elected annually. Voting booths are borrowed from the Borough Council and the children really think through who they want to represent them, voting for who they think are the right people, rather than for their friends. This group meets regularly with one of the teachers, Paula Welham, and have many ideas. Mrs. Hughes said that having a School Council gives the children a voice and a sense of responsibility. One of their projects was towards healthy eating in the school, and it is ensured that good, healthy food is sold during the break!

When Mrs. Hughes arrived, one thing that the children really wanted was a new playground, and over the years this has been achieved. The grounds in the School are now superb and very valued by the children. Matthew's Garden has been a welcome addition to the grounds and the children treat this with great respect and do expect others to do the same. They worked on it as a school with the help of parents, Governors and local businesses and the garden is very special to them.

Mrs. Hughes has introduced School journeys to the school, feeling that it allows the children to value another area of the country, helps them to work as a

team, gives them more independence and to learn how to live with others. They go to the Isle of Wight and the Lake District on a rota basis, and Mrs. Hughes said that the children are a real credit to parents and the school.

Meadgate is a very community minded school, and Mrs. Hughes wanted to build on this, and although not a Church school she does believe that children need an understanding and to experience celebrating the message of religious and Christian Festivals, and this has been achieved by holding School Services in the Meadgate Church Centre each Christmas, Easter and Harvest. These are always very happy occasions and a time to share with parents. The children work hard to make these Services very meaningful and their singing is always superb - a real joy to listen to.

Mrs. Hughes has greatly valued the support of the School Governors who have worked alongside her. She is very sad to be leaving and

found it a very difficult decision as she has enjoyed working with everyone, seeing the people she meets as friends, she feels, however that she is leaving with a good investment for the next Head Teacher to develop further.

Mrs. Hughes is looking forward to a new challenge when she moves to Moulsham Junior School which is a much bigger school, and I know everyone reading this will wish her a happy and successful time in her new position.

*June Davidson.*



Linda Hughes

## Wanted Urgently

We need help at our brownie pack at Keene Hall, Galleywood on Wednesday evenings between 5.45pm and 7.15pm.

If you are interested, please contact Ginny Lawrence on 01245 477201.

Thank you.

If you are unable to help with this unit, our other units always need help.

If you are interested in volunteering, look out for the next issue, where we will have more articles on voluntary organisations around the Baddow area.

## Review: THE DA VINCI CODE by Dan Brown, and film directed by Ron Howard

(Bantam Press, 2003 and Corgi Books, 2004; film released May 2006)

"The Da Vinci Code" is one of the best selling novels of all time. Now, as a film, it is a hit but not a record breaker. But it is also notorious, attracting condemnation from historians, literary critics and churches. So, what is all the fuss about?

Firstly, the book is a good example of a very popular type of novel. There is a huge market for mystery thrillers combining action and suspense with touches of history and religion. In "The Da Vinci Code", as in his earlier "Angels and Demons", Dan Brown followed this formula very skilfully. He added extra touches like historic locations, famous works of art, and codes to break, and turned his book into a quest for the Holy Grail. It is this which made the novel a record breaker, and ensured the success of a film which is actually a little disappointing. The highbrow literary and film critics like to disparage such works, but they sell far better than any Booker Prize or Cannes Palme d'Or winner.

But, while Dan Brown writes well, his research seems to be weak – or perhaps not. Novels are set in fictional worlds which are usually like our real world but not identical, for they include fictional characters, events and sometimes locations. Dan Brown preferred to use real locations, but his adaptations to fit his story are not accidental. Many authors, even Shakespeare, have made similar changes.

Dan Brown has also written into the novel speculative ideas on religion and history, such as that the Church suppressed the feminine side of religion. The most controversial idea is that Jesus Christ was married to Mary Magdalene, and that their descendants are alive today. This is nothing new: it is taken straight from books like "Holy Blood, Holy Grail" (1982, credited in the text), "non-fiction" bestsellers for years for their exposés of supposed conspiracies involving Templars,

by Peter Kirk

Freemasons etc.

In the novel these speculations are treated as fact, or at least as being accepted by a reputable Harvard professor. Within a fictional world, this is reasonable. But on an introductory page headed "Fact" Dan Brown gives details from a parchment which scholars consider a forgery. Maybe he has chosen to ignore the scholars, or maybe he has got his facts wrong, but a novel isn't supposed to be true. He obviously has an anti-clerical message in mind, but this is a long tradition in novels, and the Church is one of the few "politically correct" sources of villains.

The same speculations come up in the film, although the professor is more

sceptical. But the anti-clerical message is played down, and there is no claim to be anything more than fiction.

So, I can recommend "The Da Vinci Code" as good light reading, and as an entertaining but rather slow-moving film. But it should not be taken too seriously. For Dan Brown is no expert on religion, he has simply copied wild speculations from others. As for the Church suppressing the sacred feminine, does Brown really want to bring back an old paganism in which virgins were exploited for ritual orgies? But in the modern Church male dominance is receding, and men and women can increasingly fulfil their individual callings regardless of gender.

So, enjoy the book and the film as fiction, but don't mistake them as fact.



Detail from The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci: Peter speaks to a youthful John, not Mary Magdalene

### The Marriage Course

A seven session course, designed to strengthen, enrich and enliven your marriage.

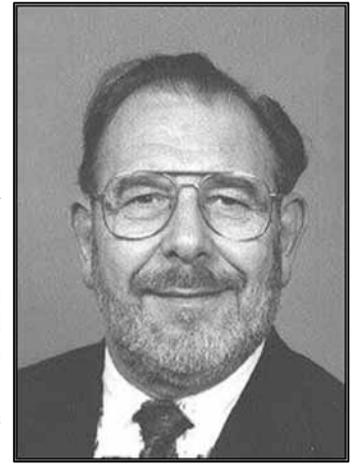
It is designed for couples of all ages, and hundreds have already completed it.

Some of the subjects covered in the course are: building strong foundations, the art of communication, resolving conflict, the power of forgiveness, parents and in-laws, good sex, and love in action.

The course costs £70 per couple, which covers a two course meal each session and all the course material, and starts on Friday, 22nd September 2006 at 7.00pm, at Meadgate Church.

For more details call 01245 471516 or see [www.meadgatechurch.org.uk](http://www.meadgatechurch.org.uk)

## Farewell to Great Baddow Anecdotalist



On the 6<sup>th</sup> May this year, Mr Edmund Curties died peacefully in hospital. He had been a regular contributor to the paper with his anecdotes of the history of our village. Having written a thesis on the histories of both Great and Little Baddow, consequently gaining a diploma for genealogy, and being very interested in the growth of these villages, he had many other facts to reveal. Unfortunately, these will have to remain a secret. Eddie will be missed by all those who knew him, and it seems only fitting to print his final anecdote, which was finished just before he was taken into hospital.

## The Rise of Great Baddow The Original "Vineyards" by Eddie Curties

For many of us living in Great Baddow, "The Vineyards", means a useful, functional, shopping centre with an adjacent business site known as "Marable House". Both are no doubt necessary but I believe they have the architectural appeal of a breezeblock. This cannot be said for the building they replaced.

In the 17th century, Lord Petre owned the site and probably used it as a vineyard because it was then called "The Vines". In the 18th century, about 1740, the house was built and the gardens laid down. It was modernised inside but remained in its original form until the mid 20th century.

The house and gardens covered the area bounded by the High Street, Maldon Road, The Causeway and a line running through Barclays Bank and the New Restaurant.

The area from this line to the cottages on Bell Street was used as a paddock for the horses.

The house stood on, approximately, the same ground as Marable House, with its front towards the High Street. The front garden area included an orangery and rose garden at the High Street and Maldon Road junction and a lily pond near the front gate. To the rear of the house were the stables and coach houses. Backing on to Maldon Road were the vegetable gardens and fruit trees and along the Causeway we would have seen a

bowling green.

The Bullen Family owned the house during much of the 19th century; first the Rev. Abraham Bullen and his wife Lucy; and later his son, another Rev. Abraham Bullen and his wife Caroline. The Bullen family claimed that they were descended from Anne Boleyn. Another well-known resident of the Vineyards was Cecil Armstrong Gibbs, the famous composer who was born at 'The Vineyards', in 1889. He was the first child of David Cecil Gibbs and Ida his wife. His mother Ida died when he was only two years old, and he was brought up by five maiden aunts who took it in turns to stay at Great Baddow and run the household. Later, in the early part of the 20th century, the house was owned and refurbished by a Mr Arnold Mitchell.



**"Great Baddow Oral History":** At last Great Baddow has a written history. You can learn about life 50 or more years ago, as recalled by many residents of the village. Read about the Great Flood of 1958, wartime exploits, leisure activities before TV, survival in the old school under Mr Amoss, mass in the billiard room and housekeeping on 15 shillings a week.

At £7-00 this book is a bargain and a good read. It deserves a place on your bookshelf and makes an ideal present. The book is on sale in Chelmsford & Gt. Baddow libraries and from **Allen Buckroyd**, the Compiler. Ring 01245 478417

## Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society Celebrates its 70th Anniversary

At the end of April the Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society (CARS) celebrated its 70th anniversary. The club was originally founded by Louis Varney, Laurie Fuller and other Chelmsford Radio Amateurs in 1936 and apart from the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War has been holding monthly meetings ever since.

The Society currently has over 120 members and meets at 7:30pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month in the Marconi Athletic and Social Club (MASC) in Beehive Lane, Great Baddow.

Over the years CARS members have been involved in many of the pioneering developments in radio communications ranging from early TV broadcasting to Digital Radio. Today, as well as talking to other Amateurs around the world, members also transmit their own TV pictures, link up computers via radio and experiment with space communications.

Most of the Astronauts who've served on the International Space Station have been licenced Radio

Amateurs and a permanent Amateur Radio station has been established onboard. The Astronauts use this during their free time to talk to other Radio Amateurs as they orbit the earth and on several occasions they have spoken to CARS members.

The Society has created the Chelmsford Award for Radio Amateurs. Those who successfully complete the radio challenge receive a special certificate which commemorates the fact that Chelmsford is the Birthplace of Radio. Money raised from this award is donated to the Essex Air Ambulance.

Recently volunteers from the Society have started running training courses to teach those who are interested in learning more about radio communications and becoming a Radio Amateur. To find out more about the courses contact the training organiser Clive Ward Tel: 01245-224577 Mob: 07860-418835

Email: [training2006@g0mwt.org.uk](mailto:training2006@g0mwt.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.g0mwt.org.uk/training/>



Students on the course, learning how to tune a transmitter

# Welcome To St Mary's Church

Picture  
by James  
Millham

## Have You Visited the Church in Church Street?

You know, that prominent building in the village with the tower and spire. Over the centuries, many people have come inside. There was possibly a little Saxon church made of wood and thatch on the site before the Norman Conquest - 1066 and all that! The Normans built a simple church of stone and thatch consisting of a nave, where the people worshipped, and the chancel, where the priest officiated. Later on, in the 14th century, the north and south walls were removed and two aisles were added to double the size of the church. Also in this century the tower was built. In the 18th century galleries were added to accommodate even more people. These were removed at the end of the 19th century during restoration work. A vestry for the clergy was also added around this time. There have been many changes to the fabric of the church during its long history; in Canon

Jack Kingham's time much of the Tudor brickwork on the exterior of the building was replaced. This was in 1967. At the end of the last century, there was an extensive reordering with new heating installed, the old pine pews replaced with comfortable chairs, a kitchen and toilets added - quite a change from that cold draughty little Saxon church with its earth floor strewn with rushes and no glass in the windows!

So, if you haven't visited St Mary's Church yet, come and have a look - it is open every Thursday and Friday from 11.30 until 2.00 p.m. and you will be very welcome. You may even find the name of your road on one of the memorials commemorating a past resident of Great Baddow, or the name of a relative or friend in the lists of those who died in the two World Wars.



## Have You Visited the Church in Church Street?

No, not the building, but the people who meet there, because they are 'the church'. Come and join them sometime and find out what the church really is. You will find them welcoming and friendly. They enjoy lively worship of God and our Lord Jesus Christ led by different groups of musicians and singers as well as by the organ.. They celebrate together and listen to interesting and thought provoking talks. Sometimes young peoples

groups take their turn to lead and occasionally the children have a whole service for themselves rather than joining the rest of the church for only a part of the time. So, why not come to the church to join 'the church' in its worship, 10.00 am and 6.30 pm every Sunday. You will also hear about its other activities such as Coffee Pot, Toddlers, Switched On!.. You are sure of a warm welcome. See you there ?

## A Hope for Growth in the Future by Alistair McGregor

"I didn't realise it would be so full."  
"Fancy having to search for a seat"

These are typical comments from visitors to St Mary's. Not that we are packed to the doors every Sunday morning, but to be honest it often seems that way. It is a problem that we are facing more and more often. And it is a great problem to have. But what do you do when you begin to run out of space at a church.

St Mary's is basically a medieval building so we can't really enlarge it. So the only options are to look at the possibility of

starting another congregation elsewhere in Great Baddow or having two main services on a Sunday (as well as the 8.00am and 6.30pm services. As a church we have experienced a growth in the number of worshippers over the past few years and we need to plan for continued growth in the numbers of folk coming to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The future may not be orange but it certainly seems bright.

The church is about far more than what goes on in a building. There is a thriving Play School which has received extremely good reports from OFSTED and we expect to see that continuing. There are three Toddler groups (all with waiting

lists) and groups for youngsters of all ages. Twice a week there is "Coffee Pot", a place for folk to drop in, have a coffee and chat and find real friendship. The future lies in areas such as these, reaching out into the community, sharing in the community's life and sharing the life of Christ with the community. On Thursday and Friday lunchtimes the church is open (and staffed) for those who want a place of quiet, a time of prayer or just to look around.

The church is also about more than a building and activities, it is about a community of people who accept their need of God and who believe they have found him through Jesus Christ. This community has existed in Great Baddow since Saxon times. Our hope and prayer is that such a community will not only continue to exist, but grow and thrive in the future.

## After Alpha ... by Selina Knight

....comes Beta" in the Greek alphabet, which Andrew said had led to the name of the Housegroup which is led by Mary and Steve Kersys. A lot of the group had

attended an Alpha course in getting to know God and the Christian faith, whilst others had become confirmed, and yet others had attended a Start programme. Some

had attended more than one of these courses in their desire to make a commitment to God. Most members, therefore, are in a learning curve, and want to ask more about Jesus' sacrifice for them. There are also several people who had known God some years ago, but had 'dropped off the end', so to speak, for a number of years, but now have a thirst to increase their knowledge. Besides Steve and Mary, mature Christians like Sheila, Andrew and Karen give their support, too.

Julia had attended Alpha sessions in the USA, and on her return to England, she completed the Start course with Di Matthews at St. Mary's Church, Great Baddow. Simon, however, had no church experience before the Alpha course - apart from hatches, matches and dispatches - but had been encouraged to attend by a friend, and found that there were "not many weirdos" participating in the Alpha course; and it was interesting and gave him a better understanding of the message. He does not feel ready yet to be confirmed, but appreciates the support he receives from the Housegroup. Some of the group

even considered that they were not "good enough" to be confirmed, but are learning that the only perfect person has been Jesus, and that we are all practising at being Practising Christians.

Fiona talked about a big gap of for some years' lack of contact with God, but after witnessing her friend Liz's confirmation, which she found 'scary', she had recently joined the group and felt able to settle in. Liz wants to continue to know more about the bible for everyday application. Karen had been very involved in church life in the past, and had missed out on bible study of recent times, so had joined the group for fellowship and personal growth.

Lily and Mike suffered a traumatic bereavement three years ago, but after attending a Carol Service at St. Mary's, had felt so welcomed, they eventually became confirmed together, and now feel that they understand the bible much more. They are able to share their worship with their son and daughter-in-law, drawing them all closer.

Wendy spoke of Christian influences whilst at college, and then through her children met other parents in Great Baddow who were committed Christians, and she felt her need to commit herself to God,

too. Mandy met Mary and Steve via her in-laws, and began attending St. Mary's Church, and then the Alpha course - but see her story elsewhere on page 5!

Andrew, despite many years as a Christian, still has many questions for which he seeks an answer, and wants to continue to learn more within the group. Sheila feels that the group, in its early steps of the Christian faith, will help her to explore and renew her relationship with God, too; being the Rector's wife does not give her a carte blanche understanding of everything, she said.

As a group, Beta feels that it wants to find out more about the bible, and to actively put the Christian faith into practice, much like the early disciples. As a starter, the members organised a quiz and fish and chip supper for the end of May at St. Mary's church in order to raise funds for Phil and Sally Lowe, who are missionaries in Chad. Being a Christian alone can defeat what God had in mind. After all, Jesus had a group of friends around him, and helped them to understand what the Jewish history with God had been telling them for years, and those friends carried on growing in their faith. Here, 2,000 years later, Beta is still sharing the Good News.

## CHELMSFORD STAR CO-OPERATIVE FUNERAL SERVICES

**Chelmsford**  
78 Broomfield Rd  
01245 353978

**Great Baddow**  
348 Baddow Rd  
01245 268993

**Ingatstone**  
47 High St  
01277 350988

**Braintree**  
6 Clare Rd  
01376 551951

**Bereavement &  
Aftercare  
Support Group:**  
0800 0284808



# Great Baddow Community Care Group by Clive Spratt, Chairman

The Community Care Group was founded over 30 years ago when the then Vicar, the Revd Jack Kingham, called on every local group to send a representative to a meeting with the aim of setting up a group to provide care and help for the elderly. This was at the time of the 'three-day week' when due to industrial action electricity was only available on three days per week and concern was expressed that some of our elderly people living alone would suffer. Since that time the group has helped so many people in Great Baddow, and as part of the Chelmsford Association of Voluntary Care Groups has seen the idea of a Community Care Group spread to over a dozen other local groups in and around the Chelmsford area. Several awards have been given to members of the group to mark their work for others, with both Doris Oddy and Pat Freeman having received the Parish Council's Centenary Award. The group has been well supported over the years by the Parish Council and other bodies with financial grants to facilitate the work.

The group has two main areas of activity; the most important being the provision of transport to take people to hospitals, doctors surgeries and clinics for

appointments. This fills a need where there is no statutory provision of transport to get people to hospitals, etc., because they do not qualify for ambulance or hospital car travel. The group only carries patients and their helpers, and is not able to take visitors to hospitals, as there are so many who would like to visit they would swamp our limited resources. The transport is provided for elderly people needing to get to hospital and clinics for appointments, using a dedicated team of volunteer drivers using their own cars, all arranged by our coordinator. The doctor's surgeries know that they can call upon the group to provide this essential service, which enables patients to get easily to their appointments, and occasionally takes the strain off the hospital transport system.

Another team of volunteers helps with shopping, collection of pensions for the housebound and other tasks that we who are fit find so easy. This is another area where more helpers are required for occasional calls to assist the elderly, or sometimes just to sit with them whilst their spouse or carer goes out shopping.

Following the success of the Community Care Group a Luncheon Club was set up to

provide a hot meal once a week, and ever since between 25 and 35 members have sat down to a hot meal and have a social time every Tuesday at the United Reformed Church. Two teams of helpers shop and prepare the meals on alternative weeks and over the years many willing helpers have found that their help has raised a new community spirit or camaraderie. There is always a need for new people to keep the Luncheon Club running, particularly as helpers move or retire. Help and training will be given to anyone who wants to learn to cater for more than a family-sized meal in the cooking role every other week, but if you just want to come along and help at the Luncheon Club, or just to find out what is involved, please talk to Mrs. Margaret Gill on Chelmsford 471437. In 1999 Margaret received the Parish Council's Centenary Award for her work at the Luncheon Club as both cook and chairman.

Both the Community Care Group and the Luncheon Club use teams of dedicated volunteer drivers, without whom neither group could not operate; if you can help by driving occasionally, or want to be involved in any other way, please give me a call to find out more. Tel.: 01245 472223

## Ask Alistair

"Is there a difference between private morality and public trust?"

It all comes down to a matter of trust.

"Trust me I'm a . . . ?" So who would you trust? One of the sad things about national life is how little those who hold high political office are trusted. Clearly their behaviour in private has had an effect on the way they are perceived by the general public. Now, nobody is perfect and few of us would want our private weaknesses paraded in public. But what we are like in private does say something about our characters and our basic integrity. Those who are entrusted with responsibility for the well-being of society should be those with high standards of integrity – in other words, they should be people you can trust.

Jesus said, "To whom much is given much is expected." He was talking about those who were leaders or teachers in the church, but I think it is a principle that can be applied to society at large.

I am not sure that standards have necessarily fallen over the years. It may well be that today's media is more intrusive than in the past. It maybe also that we expect too much from our leaders and that the pressures they are under are too great. It may also be that the standards we see in those who hold public office are simply a reflection of society at large. We need to be aware of being hypocritical. However, I believe that we need leaders who are people of integrity, who can be trusted in private as well as in public and who do set standards that all of us would want to emulate.

That was the mark of Jesus' leadership (in contrast to the political and religious leadership of his day) and in part it was that which attracted ordinary people to him.

Revd Alistair McGregor  
(Great Baddow Team Rector)

Questions to Alistair: please direct to the address on the back page, or e-mail: askalistair@baddowlife.org.uk

## Journey to Faith

Imagine that you are baptised as a baby as an insurance policy for the future because you had been very ill! That was the beginning of Amanda Creak's journey to faith - one that she did not know or realise at the time, was guided by God's hand.

She attended a small Church of England primary school, at Burnham on Crouch, where there were daily services, and from the age of about five or six, she requested to be allowed to go to Sunday School. A friend of her parents, who had no particular interest in church, took her to a Baptist church, which she found to be a lovely experience, and great fun until she was ten. However, on moving on to senior school, she discovered that it was not fashionable to go to church, and dropped out!

Whilst at Swansea University studying maths, Mandy met her husband, Andrew, studying computer science a few years ahead of her. He came from a Danbury Christian family, and was confirmed at the age of 14, admittedly with some reluctance. At university he had doubts about the Christian faith, but, since having had his two children he has returned to believing again. They married in 1994, and she worked as a security consultant in London.

In fact, for Mandy, too, the birth of their daughter, Chloe, aged 3, was a 'magical' moment, and after her baptism at St. John's Church, Danbury, where they live, she found



Practising Christian, Amanda Creak

that making the promises to God really meant something, and she wanted to know more about the Christian faith. Having lost her father unexpectedly a couple of years before Chloe's birth, she recalled feeling a sense of calm descend over her during the funeral service, as if God was with her. Then, when her closest friend's baby was stillborn three years ago, Mandy felt drawn to begin to pray. Added to these events, her close relationship

with her in-laws whose faith witnessed to her not by preaching but their daily lives, and her friendship with Steve and Mary Kersys, led to Andrew and Mandy attending St. Mary's church in Great Baddow eighteen months ago.

Immediately, Mandy felt a welcome from the congregation, and found that she could not ignore the need that had been building up in her to go to church regularly, because of her desire to know more about God and His Son, Jesus. She decided to sign up for the Alpha course in October 2005, and to her surprise she found that one of her friends, Liz, was also attending, which gave her encouragement. One of the things she enjoyed most was the luxury of time to explore the Christian faith, and to listen to Alistair, the Rector, expound what it means to each person. She then became confirmed. Following the birth of their son Harry, Mandy and Andrew attended a pre-baptism course. Mandy described her journey to faith as a gradual conversion, and she admitted struggling with the concept of how on earth anyone would let their son die in such an awful way on a cross, but then realised that it was the only way that each one of us could gain a relationship with God. She learnt that God always existed - in her life as well as the world - and that we are here for a reason. She also learnt to assess whether Jesus was good, mad or bad! As a consequence, after Mandy became confirmed, and as most of the people had been part of the Alpha or confirmation courses, the ready-made group naturally

## Happy Birthday, Switched On!

Earlier this year, Switched On celebrated its first birthday following a very successful first year.

For anyone still in the dark, (bad pun, I know!) about what Switched On is, we are a children's church service....not a crèche, or a toddler group, but very much an 'all singing and dancing' church service. We aim the service at 0-6 year olds (with their carers), although some of the children are slightly older, and we follow the pattern of a normal service, but simply tailor it to the needs of the children, whilst

ensuring they have lots of fun.

We kick off with lively action worship songs and encourage the children's musical creativity, with the help of instruments, flags and ribbons and allow them to express their personalities through the music. Then we have our 'sermon', which is either a child friendly bible tale or a story which emphasises Christian values, kindness, caring for one another etc. The children particularly enjoy participating with these, and regularly join in with appropriate 'noises' and actions.

We then have a time of prayer and the children have the opportunity to share anything they would like to say to God if they wish to. To give thanks for nice things that have happened, or to say 'sorry' for things that perhaps shouldn't have! We finish off with the lively goodbye song, and then the children lead the stampede for the refreshments...the adults have to rush if they want the chance of a some of the really nice biscuits and cakes! We have just introduced welcome packs for all of our children, and they love the activities provided, especially our ever popular stamp and sticker books.

We would love to welcome new members to join us. Whether you are looking to introduce your child to God or simply to help install good, solid values, please feel free to come along and give us a try. We are confident that the children will have a lively half

hour and you may be surprised at just how enjoyable you find it too.

After all...

...“We're not Switched Off, we're **Switched On!**”

Elaine Fisher



Parents and children at the Switched On! service

# Local Information

Local Churches		Doctors' Surgeries	
<b>St Mary's Church</b>	<b>Rector:</b> Revd Alistair McGregor <b>Tel:</b> 01245 471740 <b>E-mail:</b> amcgregor@care4free.net <b>Address:</b> Church Street, Great Baddow	<b>"Baddow Village Surgery"</b>	
<b>Services each Sunday</b>	8:00am Holy Communion 10:00am Morning Worship 6:30pm Evening Worship	<b>Address</b>	Baddow Village Surgery, Longmead Avenue, Great Baddow, Chelmsford. CM2 7EZ
<b>Special services for the coming weeks</b>	<b>Powerhouse Presentation Service:</b> Sunday 25th June at 10.00am followed by a barbeque <b>Family Harvest Service:</b> Sunday 24th September at 10.00am	<b>Telephone Numbers</b>	<b>Surgery:</b> 01245 473251 / 0870 2851990 <b>Dispensary:</b> 01245 472449 <b>Out of Hours:</b> 0845 8501547
<b>St Mary's Church Office</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01245 477501 <b>E-mail:</b> stmaryschurchoffice@care4free.net <b>Opening Hours:</b> <b>Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays:</b> 9:30am-12:30pm & 1:30pm-3:00pm <b>Wednesday:</b> 9:30am-12:30pm only <b>Also for Wedding and Baptism enquiries:</b> <b>Tuesdays</b> 7:00pm-8:00pm	<b>Opening Hours</b>	<b>Surgery open Monday to Friday:</b> 8:00am-6:30pm <b>Practice closed:</b> 12:30pm-1:30pm <b>Test Results:</b> After 3:00pm
<b>St Paul's Church</b>	<b>Vicar:</b> Revd Tudor Roberts <b>Tel:</b> 01245 269026 <b>E-mail:</b> tudorandtricia@ezekiel124.fsnet.co.uk <b>Address:</b> Beehive Lane/Loftin Way, Great Baddow	<b>"Sutherland Lodge Surgery"</b>	
<b>Services each Sunday</b>	9:30am Family Praise (1st Sunday of month: 10.00am) 10:30am Morning Worship	<b>Address</b>	115 Baddow Road, Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 7PY
<b>Meadgate Church</b>	<b>Vicar:</b> Revd Mones Farah <b>Tel:</b> 01245 471516 <b>E-mail:</b> monesf@yahoo.com <b>Address:</b> Meadgate Shopping Centre	<b>Telephone Numbers</b>	<b>Surgery:</b> 01245 351351 <b>Dispensary:</b> 01245 353530 <b>Out of Hours:</b> 01245 295000 (Primary Care Trust, St John's Hospital)
<b>Services each Sunday</b>	10:30am Morning Worship 5:30pm Evening Worship 7:00pm Alternative Rock Style Worship	<b>Opening Hours</b>	<b>Surgery open Monday to Friday:</b> 8.30am-6.30pm all day
<b>Special services for the coming weeks</b>	<b>Harvest Festival Services:</b> Sunday, 1st October at 10.30am and 5.30pm	<b>Other Local Information</b>	
<b>United Reformed Church</b>	<b>Minister:</b> <b>Tel:</b> 01245 472356/473057 <b>Address:</b> High Street, Great Baddow	<b>Great Baddow Library</b>	
<b>Services each Sunday</b>	10:45am Morning Worship 6:30pm Holy Communion (1st Sunday of each month only)	<b>Address</b>	27 High Street, Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 7HW
<b>Church of the Holy Name</b>	<b>Minister:</b> Fr Brian O'Shea <b>Tel:</b> 01245 352898 <b>Address:</b> Lucas Avenue, Moulsham Lodge	<b>Telephone No.</b>	01245 478032
<b>Regular Services</b>	6:00pm Saturday Mass 10:30am Sunday Mass	<b>Opening Hours</b>	<b>Monday:</b> 2.00pm-6.00pm <b>Friday:</b> CLOSED <b>Tuesday:</b> 9.00am-5.00pm <b>Saturday:</b> 9.00am-5.00pm <b>Wednesday:</b> 2.00pm-7.00pm <b>Sunday:</b> CLOSED <b>Thursday:</b> 9.00am-6.00pm
		<b>R.S.P.C.A. Mid Essex Clinic</b>	
		<b>Address</b>	32 Maldon Road, Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 7DL
		<b>Telephone Number</b>	01245 478886
		<b>Opening Hours</b>	<b>Office open Monday to Friday:</b> 9.00am-3.00pm
		<b>Please Note</b>	All Consultations by appointment only. Means tested benefit only.
		<b>Coffee Pot</b>	
		<b>Opening Hours</b>	<b>Wednesday</b> 10.00am-1.00pm Bell Street Hall <b>Saturday</b> 10.00am-1.00pm Bell Centre (old library)
		<b>Telephone Number</b>	01245 472673
		<b>LunchBox</b>	
		<b>Address</b>	St Paul's Church, Great Baddow
		<b>Opening Hours</b>	<b>1st Monday of each month,</b> 12.30pm-2.00pm For soup, a roll and a chat



## "MONSTERS STINK!"

Holiday Club for Primary School age children.  
 21st - 25th August.  
 From 10 a.m. - 12.15 p.m. at St. Paul's Church.  
 Final Service: Sunday, 27th August at 10 a.m.  
 All enquiries to Revd. Tudor Roberts.  
 Tel: 01245 269026.

## Jungle Jamboree Holiday Club

At St Mary's Church Centre  
 On Tuesday 22nd August to Friday 25th August  
 9.30am—12.00noon  
 Ages 5—11 years  
 £8 per child, but £4 for other children in the family  
 Enquiries at the Church Office 01245 477501

## A Lesson In Marriage

A few years ago my husband and I joined our Church's Marriage Course along with a few other members of the Congregation. That brought a couple of issues to the surface I can tell you! One was the subject of "holidays". This has always been a bit of a hot potato in our relationship. On the one hand Mones adores going abroad, whereas I would probably prefer something like a walking holiday in the Dales. Such are our differences in this area that a supposedly romantic trip to Paris was almost ruined.

It was my birthday present. Hubby had booked the Hotel and was all set to show me the local sights. The only problem was I was seething. An insidious thought had started to form in my mind, that this trip was more for Mones' pleasure than mine. Now this was totally unfounded. I told myself that many wives would be grateful for such a present, but the growing resentment would not be squashed. Trailing miserably along behind my husband I really tried to say positive things like how nice the weather was keeping, but it was obvious something was wrong. I think the sharp little retorts that slipped out every now and then were a dead giveaway.

It was a woebegone married couple who arrived at our third tourist spot of the day. It was an enormous Church. I didn't pay much attention when Mones told me the name. He walked towards the front to have a pray and I obstinately plonked myself down at the back. Warily I closed my eyes and as I did so I immediately saw Jesus kneeling with his head bowed in the front pew. His feet were bare and I knew somehow that he was praying for me. As I watched he came towards me. In my heart I cried out. Jesus I'm so sorry about my behaviour, you are beautiful and humble and I want to be like you. I've struggled and struggled with this anger but I don't seem to be able to get rid of

(Continued from page 1)

Townshend, who had chaired the working group, stated that all the changes represented a relaxation of the regulations, with valid reasons for all the decisions about what would be allowed. They included permitting trays around cremated remains tablets, provided that the chippings and/or stones are bound with a recognised binding agent; that tributes can be placed on plots providing they are no more than two

inches in height; and that nothing encroaches outside the plot. There was a recommendation to establish a Friends Group as soon as possible linked with the National Federation of Cemetery Friends. Compliance with the new regulations must be made by 1st August 2006. People present at the meeting again raised a number of issues associated with the repairs needed and the general level of maintenance required to

Lawn Cemetery, and were informed that the Parish had recently engaged another member of Grounds Staff, who is there all the time. Further discussions included the cemetery extension and future plans, rubbish bins, lanterns, and that work on headstones should be carried out by qualified people, that only guide dogs are allowed within the grounds and allowing china ornaments to stand against the base of the headstones.



Photo by James Millham

## Great Baddow Youth Group!

The Great Baddow youth group was launched in November 2005 and is managed by the Chelmsford YMCA. A committee including CHP, Essex Youth Service and Great Baddow Parish Council support and fund the project, which offers an opportunity for young people in the local area to attend a weekly youth group. The group is designed for young people in school years 6-8.

The Group runs on a Tuesday evening from 6.30 -8pm at the Bell Centre in Great Baddow, it is a structured youth group. Each half term the group will look at a different theme, recently we have looked at Communication Skills, Healthy Eating, and Team Work. The evening offers a variety of activities such as drama, art and Crafts, games and most importantly fun.

Currently the group has 25 registered members, and most weeks will have about 20 young people attending. The young people recently voted that having fun, playing games and making new friends were the most important parts of the youth group.

The group is looking forward to welcoming a new intake of year 6's in September and is planning to have an open day before the summer holidays for any prospective new

members to demonstrate what the youth group the youth group has done so far and

it. With that Jesus opened up his hands, looked me in the eye and said "Give it to me, and if Satan tries to throw it back at you, tell him that Jesus has already taken it".

This was to be one of the most profoundly moving moments of my life. Having given my struggles into Jesus' hands, I left that Church free to enjoy the rest of my holiday.

The building I later discovered was the Sacre Coeur at Montmartre.

So if France happens to be your holiday destination this summer I would highly recommend a visit to this beautiful Church. It's certainly got first place on my list of top ten favourite birthday presents.

Sally Farah.

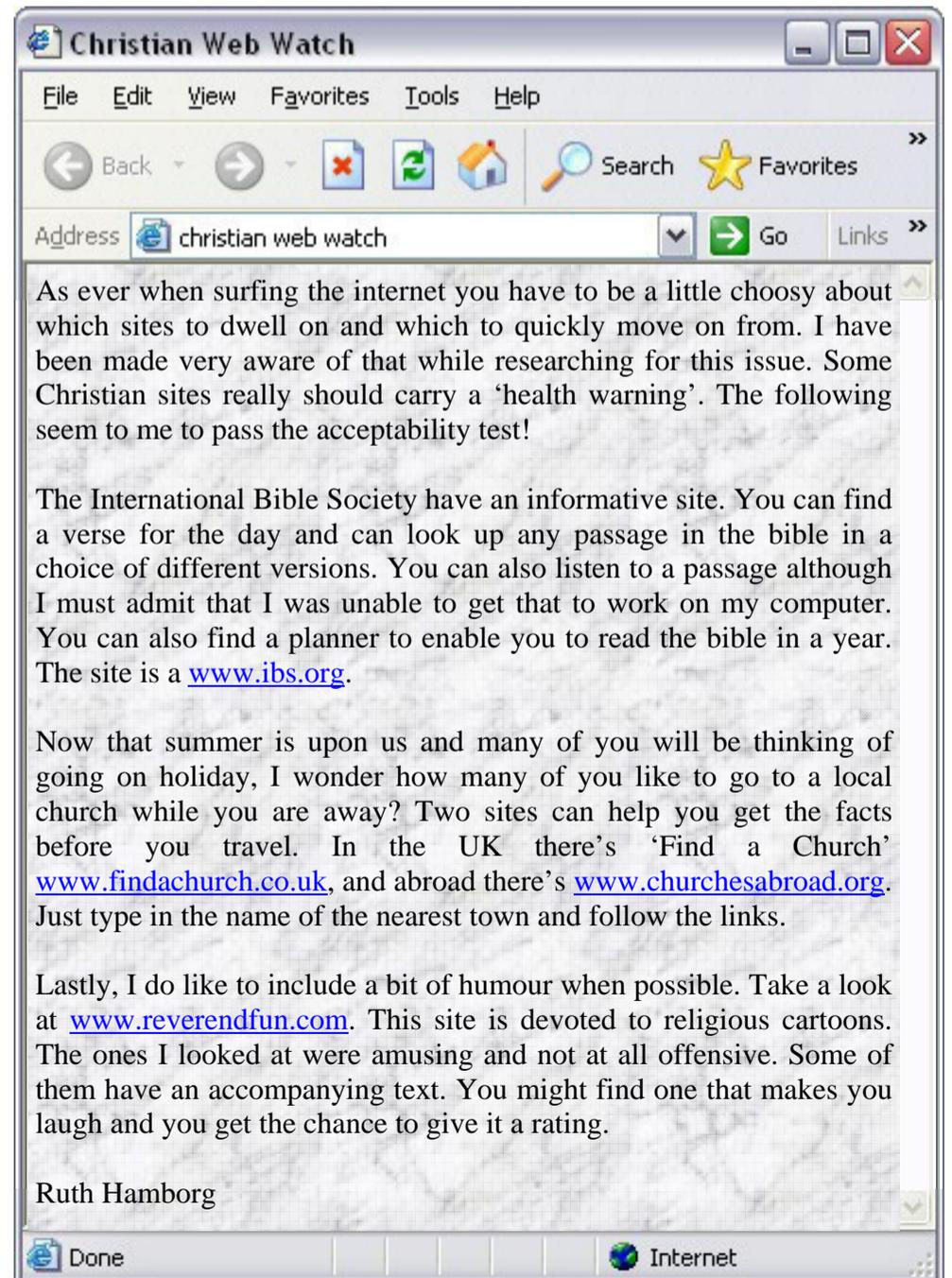
members to demonstrate what the youth group the youth group has done so far and



Hannah Matthews (centre) with some of the group

## Christian Web Watch

There is a lot of material for Christians on the Internet. Some of it is poor or misleading, but there are also many gems to be found. Here Ruth Hamborg presents for Baddow Life a selection of recommended sites.



As ever when surfing the internet you have to be a little choosy about which sites to dwell on and which to quickly move on from. I have been made very aware of that while researching for this issue. Some Christian sites really should carry a 'health warning'. The following seem to me to pass the acceptability test!

The International Bible Society have an informative site. You can find a verse for the day and can look up any passage in the bible in a choice of different versions. You can also listen to a passage although I must admit that I was unable to get that to work on my computer. You can also find a planner to enable you to read the bible in a year. The site is a [www.ibs.org](http://www.ibs.org).

Now that summer is upon us and many of you will be thinking of going on holiday, I wonder how many of you like to go to a local church while you are away? Two sites can help you get the facts before you travel. In the UK there's 'Find a Church' [www.findachurch.co.uk](http://www.findachurch.co.uk), and abroad there's [www.churchesabroad.org](http://www.churchesabroad.org). Just type in the name of the nearest town and follow the links.

Lastly, I do like to include a bit of humour when possible. Take a look at [www.reverendfun.com](http://www.reverendfun.com). This site is devoted to religious cartoons. The ones I looked at were amusing and not at all offensive. Some of them have an accompanying text. You might find one that makes you laugh and you get the chance to give it a rating.

Ruth Hamborg

# A Visit To Marks Hall

by  
Paul Bedwell



Marks Hall is a 2000 acre Country Estate located near Coggeshall. The estate comprises of agricultural land, woodland, arboretum and gardens. Our visit focused on the arboretum but the estate also has three woodland walks of varying lengths to help visitors explore the landscape plants and animals on the rest of the estate.

Entry to the estate is free but there is a £4.20 fee for the car park. The starting point for exploring the estate is the visitors centre that adjoins the car park. The Centre, a picturesque restored Essex barn, houses an information



Ordnance Survey mapping © Crown copyright AM18/06

point, gift shop and refreshment area. Morning coffee, light lunches and afternoon teas are served, specialising in home made fare and using local produce. Regrettably we only used the visitor centre to pick up a copy of the free visitor guide but are reliably informed that it is worth lingering.

We moved on to explore the arboretum. I use the word "explore" as on our visit it really did feel like we were discovering new treasures around every corner. Whether it be stepping stones across the river, a 700 year old oak (apparently home to over 1000 different species of insects) or

we were never quite sure what we would come across next.

Although the arboretum is full of treasures, not least more than 4000 species of flowering plant any visit must include a look around the walled garden. Our discovery of the garden felt almost magical. As we walked through woods along the edge of the gardens 17<sup>th</sup> century walls we found a ornate wooden door and felt like we were in a scene from "The Secret Garden" as we slowly opened it to discover the contemporary formal terrace gardens that lay inside.

Unfortunately we only had a couple of hours to explore Marks Hall but drove away making plans for a return visit armed with a picnic lunch and allowing sufficient time to linger in the visitor centre refreshment area.

Marks Hall is very clearly signposted on the A120 north of Braintree. Further information about Marks Hall can be found at [www.markshall.org.uk](http://www.markshall.org.uk)

## Alpha Courses

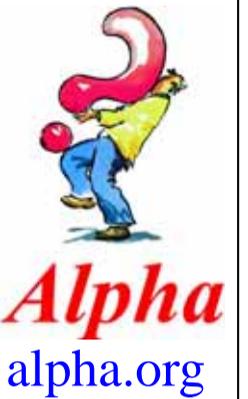
Exploring the meaning of life—  
a ten session  
introductory course about the  
Christian faith.

Is Christianity boring, untrue and irrelevant? Who  
is Jesus? Why did he die?

And how can I be sure of my faith?

Come and find out more!

Thursday, starting 5th October at 7.30pm.  
For further details please contact Mones Farah  
on 01245 471516



## HOME ALONE?

Loneliness is one of the most common "ailments" in our society - people need people, so what is the answer?

Our club meets every Thursday (the Thursday Club, obviously) and we are always on the lookout for new members. There are many; ladies living alone and if you are one of them, do come along and find out just what we are all about. We try to make our meetings enjoyable and informative, and there is always a "cuppa" to end the afternoon.

As well as various talks on all kinds of subject, we have the occasional Bring and Buy, a game of Bingo, quizzes, and in the summer two or three afternoon outings. At Christmas we always have a Christmas dinner - last year we visited the Baddow Social Club and enjoyed an excellent meal.

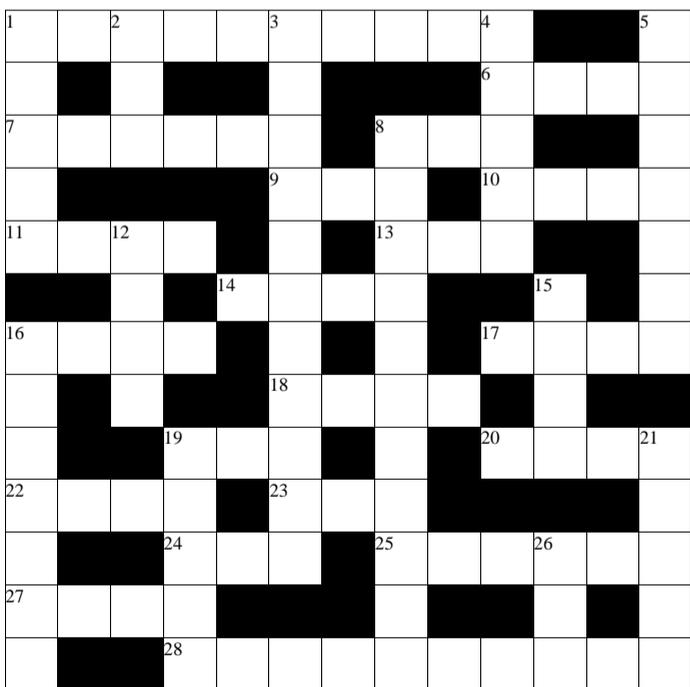
We meet in the Meadgate Church Centre at around 2 pm - and if you are wondering "where is that" - you will find us right next door to the local Co-op in Meadgate Avenue - so very handy if you need a loaf of bread or some such item!

Please don't hesitate to come along to see us- we don't bite! We look forward to meeting you.

Rene Duke



## CROSSWORD



Across:

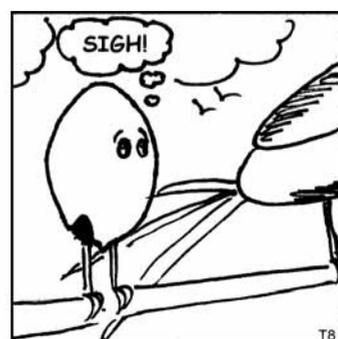
1. Admission to Christian ministry
6. Goat
7. From lack of colour
8. Canine
9. Grain
10. Illuminated circle
11. Bond
13. Feline
14. Offshoot
16. Spheroid covering
17. Hebrew ancestry
18. Kiln
19. Crowd
20. Emanating essence
22. Matthew
23. Anger
24. Genetic code
25. Indian
27. Musical ending
28. Religiously preserved

Down:

1. Gift of the gab
2. Overlay
3. Fear of open spaces
4. End of day
5. Urges
8. Decrease in noise
12. Rough wool
15. Lover
16. Matted wool
19. Gold converter
21. Overhead
26. Grass bristles

### Answers:

- |                |                |           |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| 19. Mob        | 1. Ordination  | 18. East  |
| 20. Aura       | 22. Levi       | 17. Jews  |
| 4. Night       | 5. Exhorts     | 16. Dome  |
| 8. Decrescendo | 8. Dog         | 14. Spur  |
| 12. Kemp       | 24. DNA        | 13. Cat   |
| 15. Bean       | 25. Navajo     | 11. Yoke  |
| 16. Daglock    | 27. Coda       | 10. Halo  |
| 19. Midas      | 28. Sacrosanct | 9. Rye    |
| 21. Aioft      | 1. Oracy       | 8. Dog    |
| 26. Awn        | 2. Dub         | 7. Albino |



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Although we will withhold your personal details if you wish, we will not normally print anonymous letters. However, your comments and suggestions are more than welcome.

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