

## The Gospel of John

with  
The Very Revd Dr Jeffrey John Dean of St Albans



Saturday 20 February 2010 10.00am to 1.00pm  
Venue: St Andrews Church, Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK40 2PF  
£15.00 (waged) £12.00 (unwaged)

To book a place on these Courses, please contact the **BELIEF** office  
c/o Priory Methodist Church, Newnham Avenue, Bedford MK41 9QJ  
Tel: 01234 293688 E-mail: [office@beliefbeds.org.uk](mailto:office@beliefbeds.org.uk)  
[www.beliefbeds.org.uk](http://www.beliefbeds.org.uk)

## Dreaming of a Holy Night

An evening with Graham Kendrick In Concert with Band  
plus guest Philippa Hannah

7.30pm Monday 21 December 2009  
at  
Bedford Corn Exchange



Tickets are available from: Mrs Carolyn Smith Tel: 01234 344 544  
1 Abbey Road  
Bedford  
MK41 9LG

Please let Carolyn know if tickets are needed for wheelchair users, when booking.

Cheques should be made payable to 'Hope Bedfordshire' and the tickets will be sent by post. Tickets purchased in advance are £12.50 but will be £15 on the night.

## FEEDBACK PLEASE

to Jocelyn Harper Tel: 01234 406969 E-mail: [jos.harpy@ntlworld.com](mailto:jos.harpy@ntlworld.com)

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BEDFORDSHIRE



# TOGETHER



Please copy and distribute widely

AUTUMN 2009

## EDITORIAL

Thank you to all who have sent in material for this copy of Together. I hope you all find the various pieces of news interesting and helpful and will be able to support some of the events advertised.

I am planning to produce another newsletter in the New Year and would like contributions in by 8 January 2010, to cover the period up to around 6 April, to include Easter.

Thank you  
Jocelyn Harper

## From Bishop Richard

We were all terribly saddened by the death of John Stubbs at the beginning of August this year. John was the Methodist Ecumenical Officer and was hugely devoted to the role. He faced his illness with good humour and great fortitude, and was determined to keep going as long as possible. It was good to be present at his Memorial Service at St. Mark's, Brickhill, both on my own account and to represent BEC. We assure Mary and the family of our continuing love and prayers.

I mentioned in my note in the last edition of 'Together' that the review of BEC and its structures, and the conversation about the future of the post of County Ecumenical Development Officer (CEDO), were still in progress. A little more progress has been achieved, and at its meeting on 22 October, BEC will receive some proposals, which, if they determine to do so, will be circulated to CT groups and LEPs for comment.

Our main concern is that the organisation should be 'fit for purpose' in these days, and that the limited resources available to us are used in the most effective way. I and the other members of the review group would be pleased to hear from anyone who has views on the appointment of a CEDO - and of anyone you feel might be suitable when (and if) we get to the stage of advertising.

In the meantime, I hope and pray that this autumn will be a positive session in working together for the kingdom of God for you all.



[www.bedfordstreetangels.org.uk](http://www.bedfordstreetangels.org.uk)

### A message from Adam May

#### Project Co-ordinator of the Bedford Street Angels

Greetings in the name of Christ!

As the newly appointed Co-ordinator for the Bedford Street Angels, I wanted to write to update you on the work of this exciting ecumenical work going on during a Saturday night and early Sunday morning in the town centre of Bedford. I would want to encourage you to pray and think about your own commitment to our work. The Bedford Street Angels scheme is similar to existing Street Angel and Street Pastor schemes, of which Portsmouth and Watford are good examples. There are well over a hundred such schemes across the towns and cities of the UK. All of them have teams of volunteers from local churches and have seen success in reducing violence, antisocial behaviour and fear of crime in their communities

The approach is to learn from existing projects and from the experience gained. The key will be to replicate good practice but adapt the model to our local culture and demographics. The common aim is to provide unconditional, non-judgemental support and practical help to those who have become vulnerable to crime or distress. It uses the biblical example of the Good Samaritan on which to mould its values.

For churches, this is a great opportunity to put our Christian faith into practice in our community. By working together across denominational groupings, we can demonstrate our shared desire to make a difference in our locality. Volunteers will undergo a comprehensive training programme which should equip them to respond to all sorts of situations in the late night environment. Volunteers **must** be age 18 or over but there is no upper age limit.

Recruitment of volunteers for street based work will be through the local churches networks and happens on a relational basis, but there is an informal one to one interview. We are always available to meet with local church leaders on a one to one basis, give presentations or talks to groups, whether it be for large or small groups. Our project will endeavour to make the experience of the volunteers a fulfilling and enjoyable opportunity. After the initial training, there will be ongoing support, feedback and development opportunities for volunteers. As well as volunteer street angels, there will also be a prayer support network which will include a regular prayer newsletter circulation.

## Shillington Village Christmas Tree Festival at the Congregational Church Shillington on 5 and 6 December

ALL proceeds go to this year's charity - the Air Ambulance Service. You are welcome at any time over this weekend and may bring your own entry of a tree on Friday 4 December if you wish. Tel: 01462 712096 for more details.

### Other Meetings at Shillington Congregational Church

Open discussion on matters of faith on the third Wednesday of each month at 7.45pm. Those of all faiths and those of none are welcome to join our lively discussions.

Our monthly socials continue to attract anyone who wants good food and fellowship, with lots of fun and a range of activities. All free.



### God Calling? Being a Christian in ..

Education	Jim Oliver, headmaster and educational adviser Wednesday 21 October
Sport	Mark Pinney, Logos Golf Ministries Wednesday 28 October
Banking	Ed Bloor, Senior Manager HSBC Global Banking and Markets Wednesday 4 November
Law	Martin Banham-Hall, Senior Partner, Healdlaw Wednesday 11 November
Medicine	Dr Mary Fenske, General Practitioner, Bedford Wednesday 18 November

Venue: The Holt Room, St Andrews Church, Kimbolton Road, Bedford M40 2PF  
7.45pm - 9.30pm

Each session will consist of a presentation and refreshments followed by a real-life 'dilemma' from the vocation under consideration, to be discussed in groups. This Course is FREE but donations will be welcome.

## Wixams has arrived!

Yes, there really is a Wixams now, with roads, houses, a village green, a lake and a school; this is the first of five villages and has been named Lakeview Village.

The majority of housing occupied at present is that of Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association (BPHA) but there are also several private houses being purchased.

There are around 80 residents at present but of course, this number is growing each week.

The Lower School opened in September with only seven pupils but this number has already increased.

Members of the Kempston Hardwick Ecumenical Group continue to meet and are now liaising closely with Linda Whitfield, the Community Development Officer for Wixams, who is employed by BPHA. Linda's aim is to '*build community for the residents*', to include those occupying BPHA's and private homes. She has already produced a Welcome Booklet giving useful information and will be based at Wixams as soon as premises are available.

There are plans to begin the process of appointing a Minister for Wixams next year. Meanwhile, KHEG members will continue to liaise with Linda and will be able to meet the residents when a suitable venue has been set up.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Turvey Abbey

#### A Christian East/West Exploration

'New Visions of Monasticism for Lay and Monastics'  
14 November 2009 10.30am to 4.30pm

Cost £12 Please bring a packed lunch - coffee and tea provided  
To book, please contact Sister Esther at the address below.

#### Advent Retreat Weekend

11 - 13 December 2009

**And the desert shall blossom:** A *silent* weekend sharing the peace and beauty of Advent with the Turvey communities.

Cost £90 including £30 non returnable deposit.  
To book a place, please contact Sister Judith at the address below.  
Turvey Abbey  
Turvey  
Bedfordshire MK43 8DE

You can continue to support our project - in addition to the significant time and resource already given by some member churches and leaders.

#### Facilitate volunteer recruitment

- Do invite me to give presentations/talks in church services/meetings. I am also happy to speak in notices, over coffee to church members or even preach the sermon!
- Encourage members of your churches to become volunteers on the streets.

#### Individual Support Partners

- Prayer, encouragement & spiritual support for volunteers. If you contact me I will make sure you are added to our weekly prayer update.

#### Financial

- Sponsor a volunteer (costs of training, uniform and ongoing support).
- Make a 'one off' donation either personally or as a church.

For further information on the project or to discuss recruitment, please contact:  
Adam May, Project Co-ordinator Tel: 07595 703833  
E-mail: [coordinator@bedfordstreetangels.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@bedfordstreetangels.org.uk)  
or log onto our website: [www.bedfordstreetangels.org.uk](http://www.bedfordstreetangels.org.uk)

## John Stubbs A Tribute

The passing of John Stubbs caused many to stop and reflect on the life of a man who was called to serve in so many different areas and who contributed greatly to church and community life.

He had been a Methodist local preacher for 50 years, an Elder of the Church of Scotland and was devoted to ecumenical commitments for most of his life at local, district and national church levels.

He had been employed by YMCA for 12 years, at local, area and national levels. He served on the National Board for six years and was Vice Chairman for three years. He was granted the Gold Award of the Red Triangle for 'great distinction' in service to YMCA in England and was instrumental in setting up Bedford YMCA, Chairman of the Board for seven years, and Vice President.

He received the High Sheriff Award for 'great and valuable' service to the community and received a 'thanks for national support' connected with the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

His was a calling as committed and life-long as any priest or member of a religious community but we remember him as a man who had time for people and was always ready to share ideas and give advice when needed.  
We shall miss him.

## Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy

This project is led by the Revd Canon Nick Bell, who says, 'Thousands of people work in or visit Luton town centre each day, each with a variety of ongoing concerns or immediate needs. The project aims to serve these needs by offering support to anyone who needs it, of all faiths or of none.'

The priority at the moment is to secure funding - the project's estimated expenditure for an initial three-year period will be in the region of £150,000. Once this has been raised, the inter-denominational position will be advertised and a full time chaplain appointed by the end of next summer. There has been much positive support from the leaders of the council and other local organisations.

For more details contact:

Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy (LTCC), c/o St Mary's Parish Church, Church Street, Luton LU1 3JF Tel: 01582 721867 E-mail: [ltcc@live.com](mailto:ltcc@live.com)

## Shalom Group

### Guided Tour of St Joseph and the Holy Child Church in Bedford

On Saturday 3 October 2009 the Shalom group and parishioners were invited to a guided tour of the oldest Catholic Church in Bedford, led by Michael Simmonds.

About 35 to 40 people were there from at least 8 different churches in Bedford and Kempston. Michael began in the pulpit, by giving a brief history of the parish.

'Father John Wormoll arrived in Bedford on Christmas Eve in 1863 with £2 and one portmanteau containing all his possessions. He said Mass on Christmas morning in the home of the Tandy family in Little Grove Place, the first Mass in the town for 300 years. Fourteen people attended.

During the next 22 years he built a church, a house and a school. When he died in 1885 people lined the streets, from Brereton Road to Foster Hill Cemetery, in respect for this good man who had been sworn at, insulted and spat at when he first walked out in Bedford wearing his clerical garb.'

Michael then gave us a tour around the church, showing us the altars, statues, carvings and side chapels. He even had photographs of the three stained glass windows behind the Lady Altar which are almost completely hidden. He named nearly every bust and saint that is represented in the church and also taught us why some of the devotions to various saints etc. have come about.

At the close of the tour, which took over an hour, everyone adjourned to the Guild Room (the original church, which was also used as a school for many years) for a welcome cup of tea and lots of cakes and biscuits. Everyone had enjoyed the tour and learned a lot as well. Several people suggested that Michael should produce a book based on his talk which could be available in the church for visitors; this is now in process.

Anne T. Simmonds

## St Albans Woodland Burial Trust

One of the most difficult losses to bear is the death of a child. In recognising this, the Trustees of St Albans Woodland Burial Trust have made the decision to open a special glade dedicated for the burial of children and babies. This special resting place will be provided free of charge to try and enable all parents to have access to Christian burial in consecrated ground.

Woodland or natural burial has been increasing all over England, and with concern for the environment growing all the time, many people are looking for a natural burial. People who choose woodland burial care about the environment. The creation of natural woodland, where birds, animals and all nature can thrive, is a caring alternative to traditional cemeteries which leave large areas of tombstones.

Cremation contributes to global warming by producing greenhouse gases; it is also harmful to the environment with the release of dioxins which create long term pollution. By choosing woodland burial we give something back to nature for future generations and contribute towards the conservation of our environment.

A woodland burial will always be much less expensive than other types of burial, it will also help protect the environment and make a lasting contribution towards a woodland nature reserve. Oak memorials are used rather than gravestones and coffins should be made of traditional biodegradable materials such as wood, wicker or bamboo. Many people value the ability to dedicate a tree in memory of a loved one, a particularly lovely way to pay tribute to somebody we love.

For further information please contact:

Mrs Linda Parry, The Administrator, St Mark's Church Community Centre, Calder Rise, Bedford. MK41 7UY Tel/fax 01234 342613

E-mail: [office@woodlandburialtrust.com](mailto:office@woodlandburialtrust.com)

The woodland is located in Keysoe, Bedfordshire. [www.woodlandburialtrust.com](http://www.woodlandburialtrust.com)

## Note from the Treasurer

Thank you to all treasurers who have sent their CT or LEP subscription for 2009. If you have not yet done so, please send your cheque (made payable to Bedfordshire Ecumenical Committee) to my home address:

32 Wheathouse Close Bedford MK41 8JX.

Tel: 01234 305931 E-mail: [pandm.ormerod@ntlworld.com](mailto:pandm.ormerod@ntlworld.com)

Please enclose the name and address of a Contact for your CT or LEP.

Thank you  
Peter Ormerod