

CHELMER CROUCH GROUP BBQ

We must record our very grateful thanks to the folk at St Andrew's Sandon for organising the BBQ on 4th September. It was an excellent friendly occasion.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR - HOLY TRINITY, SOUTH WOODHAM F.

We will be holding our Christmas Bazaar on 19th November from 2 pm to 8 pm at Holy Trinity Church and Trinity St Mary's School Hall. This will be an ideal opportunity for you to buy your Christmas presents and taste our lovely cakes, washed down with a cup of tea. At the same time our Christmas town lights will be switched on. Make it a family outing - entrance is free and everyone is most welcome.

Margaret Hill.

BICKNACRE CHRISTMAS MARKET

This is being held on Saturday, 3rd December St Andrew's Church Hall from 11 am. Entertainment will include the local school choir and Santa, and a variety of stalls ranging from face painting and games to Christmas gifts. Nick Kitchen.

CHELMER CROUCH GROUP PRAYER DIARY

- Nov 6th** - For the Christians in many parts of the world who are suffering for their faith. May they find strength and comfort in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Nov 20th** - For all the parishes of Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre, and South Woodham Ferrers during their time of interregnum.
- Dec 4th** - For the many charities that work with children in any kind of need. May God work through them as messengers of his love.
- Dec 18th** - For all who will be leading and taking part in our Christmas Services. May they be able to convey the true meaning of Christmas.
- Jan 8th** - For all who will be arranging activities for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. May the Holy Spirit strengthen us in all that we have in common.
- Jan 22nd** - For the elderly and housebound of our parishes. May we seek to offer them support and companionship during the darker days of winter.

FORTHCOMING DATES AND EVENTS

- Nov 6th - First Messy Church at St Andrew's Room, Little Baddow, 11.30am - 1.30pm
- Nov 13th - Remembrance Sunday.
- Nov 19th - Holy Trinity SWF Christmas Bazaar 2 pm. SWF Christmas lights switch on.
- Nov 30th - Sandon St Andrew's Day. Patronal Eucharist followed by Wine & Cheese
- Dec 2nd - Little Baddow Luxury Christmas Shopping Evening, Memorial Hall, 7 pm.
- Dec 3rd - Christmas Market at St Andrew's Church Hall, Bicknacre at 11 am.
- Dec 18th - Crib Service at St Andrew's, Bicknacre at 10 am.
- Dec 18th - Little Baddow United Village Carol Service at St Mary's, 6 pm.
- Dec 18th - Carols by Candlelight at St Mary's, Woodham Ferrers, 6.60 pm.
- Dec 18th - Sandon - Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies, 7.30 pm.
- Dec 24th - Christingle and Crib Service at St Andrew's, Sandon. 4 pm.
- Dec 25th - Christmas Day!!

*Please send items for inclusion in CCGN to Brian Gilders
2 Green Meadows, Danbury, CM3 4LD. (01245 224524)*

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Chelmer – Crouch Group News



For the Churches of St Andrew, Bicknacre; St Andrew, Boreham; St John the Baptist, Danbury; All Saints, East Hanningfield; St Mary the Virgin, Little Baddow; St Andrew, Sandon; Holy Trinity, South Woodham Ferrers and St Mary, Woodham Ferrers.

PILGRIMAGE TO ST OLAF'S SHRINE

On 26th July this year 11 of us from the Chelmsford Diocese set out from Stansted to Oslo, on the first stage of a journey to Trondheim, to visit St. Olaf's Shrine in the Cathedral there. This was an idea conceived many months before as a result of the Diocesan link with Karlstad in Sweden. This link has produced a number of visits over the years and the idea arose to include more lay people and to have a joint pilgrimage of Swedish and English pilgrims to the shrine in Trondheim in Norway.

We arrived in Oslo and were taken by minibus to Karlstad, stopping for lunch on the way. The first night was to be spent with Swedish hosts before joining our coach and courier and beginning the pilgrimage on the Wednesday morning. There were 9 Swedish pilgrims joining us on the coach, plus a group of motorbikers who met us and joined us at many of the venues. Each day we did a stage of the journey, working our way through Sweden and into Norway. Each night we stayed at a different Hotel until we reached Trondheim.

The days were spent partly walking and partly travelling in the coach with the option to do more or less of each, although it was a long way and for two days we had to do quite a lot of time on the coach. The scenery was very beautiful and we were very lucky with the weather which was warm and sunny. We were following the old pilgrims way from medieval times and before. This had been lost but was re-opened in 1997 after clearance work by the Norwegian government.

Each day we stopped off at churches and places of interest and had the opportunity for prayer and quiet meditation. Karen Best from Roxwell Church led us in this alongside Kajsa, a priest from Sweden. We saw many interesting sites including reindeers and mooses but missed the musk ox! Meals included moose stew in a tee pee with wood fire, and fruits of the forest roulade. We learnt about Swedish and Norwegian culture and history and about their homes and national costumes. Some places very high up in the mountains were virtually

uninhabited except for the occasional very large family farm house, where several generations lived and farmed together.

The high spot of the pilgrimage was on Thursday evening, the day before St. Olaf's day, starting out on the hillside outside Trondheim and visiting many churches as we wound down into Trondheim with the congregations of the churches joining us as we went. By the time we got to the cathedral there was a torch light procession to light the way of the several hundreds of people, who had joined the procession, all singing quietly Taize type chants. It was a very uplifting experience and the cathedral was magnificent.

The next day was St. Olaf's day and we attended a further service to celebrate this which was led by a female Bishop named Helga and an envoy from the Pope offering his sympathy and support to Norway after the bombings and killing that had taken place. The rest of the day gave a chance to explore Trondheim and see the sights. Then we began the journey home arriving back at Stansted on Sunday night. It was a truly wonderful experience and great to have made many new friends, sharing and chatting as pilgrims. Christine Horton.

A FLAVOUR OF SALT AT SANDON

'SALT' stands for 'sharing and learning together'. There are creative activities, cooking, time to chill out and play, space to pray, opportunities to ask questions about God, to find out what the Bible says, to make new friends, to have fun, think, sing, and eat together on Tuesdays 3.45-5.15 pm. 'SALT' is for children and adults together (not for children on their own). Our focus group is children aged 4 and over, but older and younger children are very welcome to join in too, in family groups. There is something for everyone, young and old.

There have been many memorable moments in 'SALT' over the past term or two. One of these was when we looked at Jesus' parable of the pearl of great price. For the first time at 'SALT' we used the 'Godly Play' method of story-telling where everyone sits in a circle and watches the story unfold in the centre as the storyteller moves around characters and items connected with the story as it is being told. Everyone there is encouraged to 'wonder' about what they have seen and heard. When the man buying the pearl gradually moved all his possessions across the circle to the seller and ended up rolling up his felt house and giving that up as well, many of the children were outraged! 'Now he hasn't got anywhere to live!' 'But he has the pearl!' 'Why did he want the pearl?' 'What is he going to do with it?' 'It must be very, very precious'. 'But where will he live?'

And so the discussion went on, completely spontaneously, all through toast time! And, of course they were right to be outraged! The Kingdom of God is outrageous ~ outrageously welcoming, outrageously precious, outrageously upside down in its priorities (in the world's eyes), outrageously worth putting before anything else in our lives. And yet, sometimes we take it for granted. Thank you to the 'SALT' children for reminding us to look at Jesus' parables with fresh eyes and reminding us that the parables demand a reaction and a

response from us as we seek to live as people who are part of the 'upside down' Kingdom of God, bringing his outrageous love to those he puts us in contact with, day by day.

Let's pray that 'SALT's 'saltiness' goes on as God continues to work in and through the children and their families, and the team.

Based on an article by 'SALT' team leader, Jean Elliott.

PEOPLE TRAFFICKING

A group has been formed called Active Communities against Trafficking and the first Meeting was held in Costa Coffee in Chelmsford during September. The Salvation Army has been given £2million pounds to manage the provision of services for victims of people trafficking. The aim of this organisation is to make people aware of what to look for in their local communities and raise awareness so that we can both help and stop those caught in this trap. Many victims are girls and young women sent into the sex industry, but there is also the fact that a third of cocoa comes from plantations in West Africa which use child labour trafficked into the plantations. The police told us some very interesting information and it is clear that trafficking is going on in local brothels and possibly restaurants. We also need to be sure to buy Fairtrade products where we can. We were given details of products to avoid and those to buy. The local Co-ops are very good about supplying Fairtrade goods. For more information look at pt@cgcchelmsford.com or www.ACTchelmsford.blogspot.com – we shall be giving updates about this at Deanery meetings so alert your representatives. I am happy to provide what information I can. Christine Horton (Lay Chair Chelmsford South Deanery and Reader at Boreham).

QUIET DAY AT OTHONA

Next year on Saturday, 9th June, St Andrew's Church, Boreham is offering a Quiet Day at the Othona Community at Bradwell. The day will run from about 10 am until 5 pm and will include tea/coffee, lunch and afternoon tea, alongside the opportunity for quiet thoughts and reflections around the Church of St Peter-on-the-Wall and using the Othona Community as a venue. We have still to ask our lead person and work out the final details, but you might want to register an informal interest. Cost will be around £20 plus. I look forward to hearing from you. Places are limited so early enquiries are welcome. Christine (466534).

MESSY CHURCH IN LITTLE BADDOW

We are launching into Messy Church on Sunday, 6th November at St Andrew's Room, North Hill from 11.30am to 1.30 pm. It's a Church with a difference for families and others to enjoy. Come and share in craft and games activities, join a celebration and enjoy a meal together. It is planned to meet on a monthly basis. To find out more call Ann Poulard on 224221.