

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



## Dad's Big Campout 2013

Fancy a night to getting back to nature with the kids?

Why not leave Mum at home and join in the big adventure campout

A few of us Dads decided we wanted the kids to experience a bit of good old fashioned camping. Something they'd remember that would drag them away from the TV and iPads for once.

We wanted a campfire as well as a safe place to forage and Milton Bryan scout camp ([www.miltonbryancampsite.co.uk/](http://www.miltonbryancampsite.co.uk/)) was perfect. The Campout is most suited to Dad's / Granddads and the over 4's but any age / responsible adult / child combinations are welcome. So get on the jungle drums and invite friends, family, colleagues - anyone who you think would enjoy it. We've not done this before but we're hoping this will be first of many 'Dad's Big Campouts' If you've got a tent that's great, if not we should be able to sort you out. And apart from some bedding / sleeping bag and toiletries you're good to go. All food, drink, and activities will be taken care of. There are basic showers, toilets and a clubhouse in case the weather turns nasty. **Cost is £12 per head.**

All we need is your name and surname, a contact e-mail and mobile number and how many will be in your party. **You can text this to Mark (07909 523319) or e-mail [bendalljones@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bendalljones@yahoo.co.uk).**

**CTNP President:** Vacancy  
**Secretary:** Beth MacKay, [beth.mackay@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:beth.mackay@yahoo.co.uk) Tel. 612475  
**Treasurer:** Paul Tolley, [PTMERCEDES@aol.com](mailto:PTMERCEDES@aol.com) Tel. 210048  
**CTNP web-site:** - [www.ctnp.org.uk](http://www.ctnp.org.uk)



## CONNECTIONS AUGUST 2013

Acts 18:9

*One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent."*

## COUNTDOWN BEGINS FOR LAUNCH

### SPACE ACADEMY 2013

### \*\*\*GROUND CREW – REQUIRED\*\*\*

Following the success of the last two years, over 100 primary school children have already signed up to take part in this year's holiday club at the United Reformed Church, with only 15 places remaining. As the numbers increase, more help is required, especially to assist when the children are working in small groups.

If you can spare any time on one or more mornings during the week and would like to help **please contact Jenny Mills ([revdjmill@btinternet.com](mailto:revdjmill@btinternet.com))** for more information. Secondary school students would be most welcome as helpers.

Have a word with Jenny if this is something you would like to do or if you know of anyone else you think might be willing to help, please pass this message on to them

**Articles to the Editor, David Huckle**  
Preferably by e-mail to [davidhuckle@me.com](mailto:davidhuckle@me.com) Tel. 217429  
**Copy Deadline - 15th of each month**

## LETTER FROM A MINISTER

I feel the need to say both “hello” and “thanks”. Since moving to Newport Pagnell I have to say the welcome from all quarters has been great. Apart from the weather there has been nothing to be worry about as Jill and I have settled in. The dog (Doo-Dah, a collie cross) has felt she has landed in paradise with the common as her back garden. Yes, I do take full responsibility for the name so if you need any help naming things perhaps I am not the man!

As a child I was brought up in a politically active house. This meant debating everything in the news. Indeed news programmes were sacrosanct, no talking till they were over. The local MP was a friend and this lifelong affiliation meant that the current one visited my father in hospital and came to the funeral. Having had such a political education I have keenly followed certain subjects throughout my life. The dreadful realisation of my growing years is that many debates and battles which seem to have been won many years ago have to be debated and fought for again. As individuals and as a society learning is as much about relearning rather than just building on past foundations. I think these matters apply to the debate about poverty in our current “age of austerity”. Anyone who has read George Orwell’s ‘Road to Wigan Pier’ and ‘Down and out in London and Paris’ will be struck by identical debates occurring during the pre world war 2 recession, sometimes promulgated by the same newspapers whom seem least compassionate today. Orwell contrasts different church responses too; some distinctly unhelpful. For examples tramps being forced to worship as a “price” for their meal. As is often remarked history repeats itself, it has to, no one listens So what are we think today about issues of poverty and benefits in Britain today? Firstly I would want to say the overwhelming breadth of scripture commands action to relieve poverty. This inspired the cricketer-bishop David Shepherd to write a book; ‘Bias to the Poor’. A simple read of Isaiah 58 informs us Christian worship is meaningless unless accompanied by the compassion for and action on behalf of the poor. Hundreds of other references could be marshalled behind this view. Secondly, I believe that is very easy to be ill informed and to have swallowed myths about the current situation. Fortunately there are some excellent sources of more independent information. The Joint Public Issue Team, an ecumenical venture has some excellent articles online

My third point is based on a large body of practical experience. This is my understanding that the administration of our benefit system is not fit for purpose. The number of mistakes being made and the lack of human dignity allowed for are below standards that all of us would desire. This is not a criticism of staff, more a comment on the current management and the lack of resources allocated to the task. I would like to give one sample from last December. I accompanied a registered Heroin addict to a health interview. These generally are conducted in the hope of moving people from the sickness benefit ESA to the job seeking JSA. (Interesting they pay the same amount.) I know this person well and am unconvinced of the wisdom and expense of such an interview. What the person needs is a rehabilitation course and encouragement and support to get through such! The interview is perfunctory and impersonal. During this we come to the area of self-harm. This person does not eat. I have tried every which way to bring back their appetite to no avail. This apparently cannot be regarded as self-harm and is not recorded. The addict is very stressed by the whole process. On taking the person home they wanted to be dropped at Tesco to steal a bottle of whisky to drown their sorrows. The next day the police are chasing me for the whereabouts of this person. The addict is found close to death as a result of an overdose. I get to see this person later and we debrief the event. It was just the stress and inhumanity that pushed them over the edge. There are many more stories, but suffice it to say we can and must do better. Everyone is precious and made in God’s image. Society can be judged by its treatment of the least the last and the lost.

*Rev Jack Walker*

## GIANT GAMES AVAILABLE

We did used to have people borrowing them and now they just sit here in our garage. Shame not to have them used more. They were used a lot a few years ago at the carnival field. Games include Giant JENGA, Giant SNAKES & LADDERS and Giant CONNECT FOUR.

*Contact Geoff and Linda Morris for more info*

## SEARCH FOR NEW CTNP PRESIDENT

The search for a new President continues as no nominations were received at the Forum on 20 June. Please think prayerfully about whether this is a role you might consider taking on for the next two years or, if there is someone in your congregation you think would make a good President, why not talk to them about it and encourage them to think about it. In the meantime, it will be business as usual for CTNP as the Executive and working groups continue with ongoing and planned activities. – *Beth Mackay*

## EMERGENCY HELP SCHEME - UPDATE

In the last year (May-May) the team have dealt with 364 requests, significantly up from 220 last year. This increase reflects the cutbacks to Health and Social Services provision. Our thanks to all drivers and telephone co-ordinators without whom the service would not be able to continue. In the last few months we have taken on an additional co-ordinator to help us cope with the increased number of requests. John Gordon, one of our drivers has come forward and offered to do this role in addition to his driving.

Our Garden Party and AGM was well attended on 13th July. Jennifer and Ralph Mazzone kindly afforded us the use of their garden. The event raised £166-00. Thanks to all who contributed.

**Joyce Tootill** (driving) who has worked for us in this role for many years will be stepping down, & **Betty Course**, who has been the scheme's secretary for MANY years has decided that it is now time for her to retire. **A BIG THANK YOU, TO YOU BOTH, YOU WILL BE MISSED**

The committee now seek a volunteer with secretarial skills who would be willing to undertake this responsibility. We meet four times a year. Applicants please contact Nita Tolley (chair) on 01908 615729.

Telephone co-ordinators Gillian Copperwheat 01908 616352, Alison Gould 01908 615131, David Watkins 01908 612816 (please note this was incorrectly advertised last month), John Gordon 612060

## URC RAISES £1000 FOR VIPINGO SCHOOL

A HUGE thanks to all who came along and supported our Old Time Music Hall event on June 29<sup>th</sup> at the United Reformed Church. We had such fun and raised £360. Everyone who came commented on what a great night it had been! We had Geoff as Master of Ceremonies-eloquent as ever- and Alison tinkling the ivories; we had monologues, solo singing and dancing, the children from Spirit and a good old fashioned panto to end (oh yes we did!). The following day we sold the remaining cakes and reached our hoped for total of £1000. This means Vipingo School in Kenya has enough money to give each of the 120 children fruit for a year!! - *Rev Jenny Mills*

## CTNP IN THE 2013 CARNIVAL PARADE

This year's Carnival was a great success despite the hot weather and we even managed to get a photo in the MK News. Thank you to everyone who helped by wearing such colourful hats, and to those who supported the walkers on the day. (Photo courtesy of MK NEWS)



Churchs Together join up to make a colourful procession of flags from around the world