



**"The kingdom of God has
come near. Repent and
believe the good news!"**

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Just Socks?

How do you choose your socks? Do you look for bright colours and jazzy designs? Or do you prefer plain socks in sober blue or black? Perhaps you simply wear whatever you get for Christmas.

But do you ever stop to wonder what your socks are made of, where they are made and who actually makes them?

Traidcraft is now selling socks with a difference. In the first place they are made mainly of bamboo. This may seem initially rather odd as we tend to picture bamboo as a tall plant with sharp stems which quickly overwhelm anything in the way. Yet bamboo fibre is surprisingly flexible and as a raw material has a number of advantages over cotton. It is easy to produce.

Bamboo is the fastest growing plant on earth and generally requires neither fertilisers nor pesticides. There are numerous cavities between the fibres and this means it absorbs moisture better than other fabrics keeping the feet cooler in summer and warmer in winter. It also has anti-bacterial qualities as bamboo itself contains a substance known as bamboo kun which protects the plant from pests and insects. Finally it is totally biodegradable.

Now it may be no surprise to find out that these socks are made in China. After all, a high proportion of what we find in the shops today has "Made in



China" somewhere on it. Businesses tend to buy from China because they can get the goods more cheaply. After all, there is plenty of labour and in a one party state the workers

usually have to accept whatever terms and conditions they are offered.

However, there are other reasons for buying bamboo socks from China. For a start it is a

way of working with the environment as the bamboo forests of China have been carefully cultivated for hundreds of years. Each Spring new poles grow from underground shoots and can reach 20 metres in just three months. Once a shoot has reached its full height it is tagged with a year code so that it can be harvested at the right maturity. The mature stems are very strong and resilient having a tensile

Bamboo is the fastest growing plant on earth and generally requires neither fertilisers nor pesticides.

strength similar to mild steel!
The cut stems are taken back to the factory where they are crushed and soaked so that the fibres can be drawn off, washed and bleached.

It is a principle of Fairtrade that every worker deserves a fair reward and fair working conditions regardless of which country they live in. Traidcraft's socks are manufactured on Fairtrade terms. So all the workers involved receive

adequate wages and safe working conditions.

So if you want to be part of a new way of doing business with China, come along and buy bamboo socks. They are good for our feet. They are good for the environment. They are good for the people who make them. Traidcraft's bamboo socks are not just socks but are also a way of bringing fair play into our trading practices and making life a little more just.

Gill Parker

The CBC Fairtrade stall is open on the third Sunday of each month after the morning and evening services and also on Tuesdays in term-time between 10.30am and 2pm.

You can also order Traidcraft products direct from traidcraft.co.uk

For all the negative things we have to say to ourselves God has a positive answer.

- You say: It's impossible
God says: All things are possible (Luke 18:27)
- You say: Nobody really loves me
God says: I love you (John 3:15, John 13:34)
- You say: I can't go on
God says: My grace is sufficient (2 Cor 12:9, Psalm 91:15)
- You say: I can't figure it out
God says: I will direct your steps (Proverbs 3:5-6)
- You say: I can't do it
God says: You can do all things through Christ (Philippians 4:13)
- You say: It's not worth it
God says: It will be worth it (Romans 8:28)
- You say: I can't forgive myself
God says: I forgive you (1 John 1:9, Romans 8:1)
- You say: I'm always worried and frustrated
God says: Cast your cares on me (1 Peter 5:7)

Faithful Teaching



Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, justice, self-control and loyalty are all fruits of the teacher, not only in the classroom and in the corridor, but also in the staff room, on school trips and on bus duty!

I came into the profession, having been convicted of my calling at 17 years old. My motivation was to facilitate communication between nations by creating exciting learning experiences in and out of the classroom, using my passion for languages. It has been famously said; speak to a man in a language he understands and you speak to his brain; speak to a man in his mother tongue and you speak to his heart.

After having completed a degree in French and German & Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), I found myself indeed Teaching English as a Foreign Language in many capacities (at a French boarding school, to French business professionals, to Italian, Spanish and German students) before working my way towards my current

role as Lead Practitioner of French and German at Secondary School level. On the surface, my faith has no role in my job, subconsciously sandwiched between German cinema clubs and teaching manners. However, the fruits of the Spirit are extremely important day in, day out. After all, my role involves relationship.

Not least does a teacher have to love working for, with and because of children, but I have an immense joy in knowing that God has given me this privilege to teach transferable linguistic, grammatical and communicative skills for life, enabling the next generation to thrive in an ever-increasing international society, where there is no place for xenophobia and mutual cultural understanding is key to peace.

My style is one of kindness, involving a great deal of humour, but also goodness, as each child must know their boundaries and be given a second or even third chance. Anyone who works with young people will realise that a positive behaviour management is the key to developing

responsible, confident young people.

Justice or righteousness come into play in many of our professions, whether we discuss moral current affairs and virtues in office gossip, or seek credibility in the service or products that we offer. As a teacher, there are also many layers, such as accountable grading of work and conduct of examinations, consistent and fair praise and sanction of work and student behaviour, not to mention defending principles, which directly reflect my faith. A few years ago, I supported the Samaritan's Purse Shoebox appeal and despite the 140 odd gift boxes that the students and teachers charitably collected, vital were also the conversations about world poverty and selfless giving, which took place in the classrooms.

Although teachers are guided to allow students to make their own decisions about politics and religion, there is space at certain times of the year, when I celebrate Christian values with my students. This year alone conversations have developed about the nature of baptism, God in the

nativity and the role of religion. To my surprise, a bilingual student questioned me last year in German about my views on the Bible's view on scientific creationism!

As a role model to all students, I seek to show integrity of character and respond to students' honest questioning. I am privileged to be in a role at a very important time in these young people's lives, who are searching for identity, meaning and satisfaction, occasionally in the wrong places. The complexity of their home lives entangled in an ever burdensome need to stay connected via hand-held devices obstructs their basic purpose in school.

My prayer is that I, along with all teachers, may not so much teach my subject, but more than that, convey the fruits of the Spirit through who I am day in day out. I pray I have often found myself praying as I walk into school is: Lord, let me glorify your name today in what I do. Let me through my professionalism have a lasting impact on these young people.

Richard Bellworthy



CHESS



Who are we?

'CHESS' stands for the 'Churches Homeless Emergency Support Scheme' operating in Chelmsford and Essex, offering temporary accommodation to help single adults that have been affected by homelessness.

Our history

Birthered in the mid-nineties, churches began by offering accommodation to rough sleepers over the winter months, but soon recognised the need for a more permanent solution. This is where the night shelter began, offering basic accommodation to those who find themselves homeless.

What do we do?

Since gaining the night shelter which offers basic accommodation to a maximum

of 7 people, we have expanded to a capacity of 26 bed spaces, over 5 properties in Chelmsford. We also manage a further 4 bed spaces in a house of multiple occupancy. For the service users that come into CHESS they engage with CHESS' support staff and work with the process that empowers them to 'move on' in their lives.

A typical service user would come into the night shelter, and be assigned a support worker. The service users have access to the night shelter from 7pm – 9am, but then have to leave the shelter for the rest of the day. Once having been in the night shelter and engaging in the CHESS process, they will then move onto the annex (this remains monitored by CCTV from the night shelter) and have access to their new home all the time. By continued engagement with the support team, the service users will then move into one of the other 3 properties of CHESS, until we are able to work together on a more permanent solution to their living accommodation.

Last year (2014/15) we were able to move

46 people on positively in their lives.

How many staff are there?

At present CHESS has 12 staff, four full-time and eight part-time. But we have an army of 84 volunteers!

What do the service users say about us?

"I believe the help is there constantly, but it is up to each person whether they take the help, and help themselves. I personally want help."

"I have answered this as honest as I can. I am the happiest I've ever been for years. Jacqui and Tracy have been brilliant to me. I didn't want to come here at first, but was talked into it, I'm glad they did as it's the best move I've ever made."

"I think CHESS is a good organisation that are doing a great job in helping the homeless people and I'm very satisfied with the service."

How can you get involved?

Donate: You can become a member of CHESS and receive our newsletter for £2.50 pcm, or just donate online www.chelmsfordchess.org

Volunteer: We are always looking for volunteers for a number of different and exciting roles. Contact the CHESS office on 01245 281104 and ask for Barbara.



Our Mission: CHESS seeks to relieve homelessness and related hardship and distress amongst single adults in Chelmsford and Essex, through the provision of support services and temporary accommodation that helps them move on in their lives.

The 33: a movie about a true story that captivated the world in 2010

Can you imagine being buried alive for days, weeks, months on end?

Boom!

On August 5, 2010, 33 miners – 32 Chilean, one Bolivian – descend into the 121-year-old San José Mine for a twelve-hour shift. A sudden explosion sends a granite chunk twice as heavy as the Empire State Building crashing through the mine shaft, blocking all exits.

The roar is deafening. One man feels as if his skull were an inflating balloon. The dust cloud at the mine's entrance resembles a volcano.

As the miners regroup, they discover their long odds. Their emergency food stash has only a few cans of fruit, vegetables and fish; some condensed milk; and 93 packages of cookies – with careful rationing, maybe a week's provisions. Some loot the food cabinet, diminishing the supply. They're 200 storeys underground. Only massive drilling could reach them but will their leaders even try? Will this become their tomb? Discouragement, rage, despair,

and fear of death haunt the mine.

Contemplating the hopelessness, Chile's minister of mining sheds tears on live television. Alarm and mourning spread across the nation. But families and friends gather at the mine and Campo Esperanza – Camp Hope – springs up.

Below ground, José Henríquez, a devout Christian, whispers to Mario Sepúlveda, "God is the only way out of this." Mario asks José to lead them in prayer. Henríquez becomes the miners' 'pastor' because, "as soon as he begins to talk it's clear that he knows how to speak of God and to God."

The miners pray for forgiveness, for help, for rescue, and for unity. Drillers above hold hands as they pray to Jesus for success. Camp Esperanza grows to over one thousand; with so



many praying it reminds one inhabitant of Jerusalem.

The miners' spirits wax and wane. Hunger and fluctuating emotions discourage Omar Reygadas. Then a mysterious, fresh breeze invigorates him. It's from "the thirty-fourth miner" he explains, meaning the miners' souls and God's protecting spirit.

'Pastor' José tells fellow miners of the biblical Jonah, swallowed by a large fish after running from God. Jonah prayed, "I sank down to the very roots of the mountains. I was imprisoned in the earth, whose gates lock shut forever. But you, O Lord my God, snatched me from the jaws of death!" Then the fish regurgitated the repentant Jonah onto the beach. The miners can relate to the story, as if they are "living inside a Bible parable." José exhorts them to look to Christ's love and peace.

Finally, on Day 18, a small drill breaks through, and miners send up notes. One reads, "Estamos bien en el Refugio. Los 33." ("We are well in the Refuge. The 33.") Cheers and sobbing erupt as drillers, families, the nation, and the world realize all are alive.

The film – understandably limiting detail and taking some dramatic liberties – depicts complex and intense psychological struggles. One miner's wife and his current



lover both show up in Camp Esperanza, while still below ground, the miners – now international celebrities – dream of profiting from their adventure.

The movie ends with the rescue. In real life, the post-rescue publicity whirlwind included visiting Disney World; the Real Madrid soccer stadium, Israel; even Graceland, and singing an Elvis song on Letterman.

Despite psychological help, post-traumatic stress sets in; depression, mood swings, nightmares, alcoholism and suicide wishes accompany liberation. The road toward recovery is not easy, but these 33 men and all who watch can rejoice in what many still call a miracle rescue.

From an article by Rusty Wright
www.RustyWright.com

Sherlock



New Year's Day – Sherlock! Finally... the special we had all been waiting for had arrived. Sherlock, as a character, has continued to fascinate audiences the world over because the character of Sherlock is a relentless force, never ceasing to hook the reader or the audience into his incredible perception and enthralling lifestyle. Despite his intellect Sherlock is seemingly devoid of emotion, empathy, and compassion. He is hard to envy as a human being, although utterly fascinating to observe at a safe distance on our sofa.

One Sherlock trait, however, is sought by many of us. In the face of fear, difficult circumstances, stress and the anxiety of those around him he remains solely focused and mindful at every moment and opportunity, intent on his one and only goal – solving the puzzle, restoring justice and protecting his country. His mind-set is a focused one. The kind of mind-set that Sherlock has is unique in its ability to remain dedicated to the

short term goal it has in each moment, which is to understand a particular aspect of a problem, and to the long term goal - to solve the entire crime. In fact in the rare moments where Sherlock is not solving a problem he becomes unhinged, desperate to once again seek the purpose for which he believes he is called, the one purpose that motivates and stimulates his mind at every waking moment – solving the unfathomable.

I have never met a person with a Sherlock mind-set and I expect this is because many of us face many demands on our time. We are pulled and pushed in all manners of directions and therefore lack purpose and are instead filled with distraction. We may, for example, have home commitments and while we want to be focused on these our work commitments pull us in another direction.

Sherlock uses his time fiercely. He is

filled with focus in every particular moment he finds himself in. Single-mindedness has been viewed in some contexts negatively – as it has implied someone is so blinkered they lose their ability to notice all that is happening in the world around them. However, if we take single-mindedness to be a quality of someone who is determined, dedicated, and purposeful through their life then much good can come from this mind-set. Every-one of us is heading in one direction through life to our end destination, which would have been death.

The good news, of course, is that God connected with humanity through Jesus, who exclaimed

*"The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"
(Mark 1:15 NIV)*

If we repent of our sins then we are free to acknowledge that Christ came near to us, died for our sins, and while our earthly body will fade we can now have eternal life – our purpose has been set.

Interestingly, Paul writes in Philippians

*"...the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead. So I run straight towards the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above."
(Philippians 3: 13-14 GNB)*

Our direction through life has been altered and our mind-set now points heavenwards. Let us be mindful of

our loving relationship with God at every moment then and be attentive to our fellow man, sharing this love so they may know their end destination is no longer death, but in fact LIFE! In this way our life will have purpose as we head towards our collective goal with determination and dedication, which is to reach our new life to come together, where we can bathe in the awesomeness of God's eternal glory and be in His presence for eternity.

Naomi Rowlands

Chameleon Christian

I'd become a Christian in 2008 but unfortunately this added to difficulties I was having with my marriage and led to me becoming what's sometimes described in as a 'Chameleon Christian' – someone who blends in against the background. I stopped attending Church because it posed too many difficulties.

Unfortunately my wife and I separated for the final time early in 2015. I lost pretty much everything materially. Whilst not destitute I was left a lot worse off financially and faced being at the mercy of a private landlord.

Sitting in the traffic on my way to work one morning I wondered where the lorries I queued behind every morning were going and then I saw the sign "Genesis Housing Association – Shared Ownership". Looking back the name of the organisation isn't lost on me!

I had an extremely stressful six months, dealing with a new job, selling a house and personal matters.

Come September 24th and I finally move in. Waiting for me at my front door is a small white carrier bag containing polystyrene cups, tea bags, coffee, sachets of milk and an information pack with details of local amenities and information about Central Baptist Church. I have a look at the Church website and I see there's an Alpha course starting in a couple of weeks. I try and register but my email isn't working properly so I have no choice but to go to the Church where I meet Leesa McKay,

one of the two Ministers.

Now I'm pretty angry with God at the moment, I'm wondering why my world has fallen apart, but I'm also feeling drawn in. "I'd like to join your Alpha Course, but I can tell you, I'll have a lot of challenging questions!" I tell Leesa.

"That's OK" smiles Leesa, "ask away" which throws me.

I start the course and start attending Sunday services. Everyone is very nice but I'm still wondering "Is it for me?"

During the Alpha session on prayer I took absolutely NO PART.

Anyway I persevere...

And then we have the session on The Holy Spirit. Well!!!

One of the Alpha Team, Katherine, was an absolute inspiration in the discussion that evening, as was one of the course members, Marianne. I could feel The Spirit taking me over!

That evening we talked about telling people we attend Church. If you'd told me even 24 hours earlier that's what I'd do I'd have said you were joking.

The next week I told six people that I attend Church. As Katherine says "Given something so great, why wouldn't you want to share it?!"

So 2015 was a remarkable year. A year of low points and desperation

that ended with a fantastic experience, finding a renewed faith in God's love, and feeling His Holy Spirit working.

In the summer, at my lowest point, a Christian colleague told me that God never burdens us with more than we can bear. At the time I found it

difficult to understand, but now in 2016 I'm in better shape mentally and spiritually.

For 2016 there'll be no more Chameleon Christian for me!

Gavin Johnson

Want to find out more about Christianity?

If you would like to find out more why not join our next Alpha course?

This is an opportunity for anyone to explore the Christian faith. It's relaxed, low-key, friendly and fun. It's a place where no question is too simple or too difficult.

To find out more email
alpha@centralbaptistchelmsford.org



We're on Facebook!



Why not join our virtual community?

Follow us to receive regular news about what's happening at CBC.



We're also on Twitter
[@cbcchelmsford](https://twitter.com/cbcchelmsford)

New Zealand, New Year, New Beginnings

We were blessed as a family, to take a six week trip to New Zealand over Christmas. A mixture between exploring cricket grounds, visiting family, various heart stopping adventures, ice-creams, river swimming, and glorious sunsets. Every corner was exhilarating. Different scenery, dramatic landscapes, wild sea, beautiful sunshine, fresh, fresh air, wild Lupins and Agapanthas and serene and humble people. A country of extremes. It also had a wonderful spirituality about it – especially in the North Island which has a high Maori population. The picture is a little church situated at the end of Lake Tekapo with a congregation of 30. There are no stained glass windows, just a full clear picture window that stretches across the back wall and overlooks the Lake – Gods creation was stunning enough.

Since we've been home, we have had a difficult time with family matters; My mum is proceeding with chemotherapy for aggressive Non Hodgkins Lymphoma; My dear cousin Erica had been taken into a hospice with the final stages of ovarian cancer at 51 and passed away two days after our return. The country was mourning the loss off David Bowie, Alan Rickman and Terry Wogan – all to Cancer. And then during the week there was a quote on the radio included in a book by Paul Hannam "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

The beauty of each new day keeps me buoyant. The brightness of my mothers' face to the news her eldest



grandson is to become a daddy. The snowdrops arriving and the excitement of Finn - my son - being able to tell of his adventures in New Zealand to anyone who would listen. I am reminded of a poem by Robert J Hastings called The Station which includes the line from Psalm 118:24 "This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it." It isn't the burdens of today that drive men mad. Rather it is the regrets of yesterday or the fears of tomorrow: regret and fear are twin thieves who rob us of today. Climb more mountains, eat more ice-creams, go barefoot more often, swim more rivers, watch more sunsets, laugh more and cry less. Life must be lived as we go along. The Station will come soon enough.

New Zealand enabled us to do this and much much more.

Marion Kerrison

Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the most important Christian festival, and the one celebrated with the greatest joy. Without Jesus' suffering, death and subsequent resurrection there would be no Christianity, ... it was part of God's plan for the salvation of humankind.

Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate
Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen
Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing
Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty
Christ is Risen indeed from the dead,
the first of the sleepers,
Glory and power are his forever and ever

St. Hippolytus (AD 190-236)

God, give us eyes to see
the beauty of the Spring,
And to behold Your majesty
in every living thing -
And may we see in lacy leaves
and every budding flower
The Hand that rules the universe
with gentleness and power -
And may this Easter grandeur
that Spring lavishly imparts
Awaken faded flowers of faith
lying dormant in our hearts,
And give us ears to hear, dear God,
the Springtime song of birds
With messages more meaningful
than man's often empty words
Telling harried human beings
who are lost in dark despair -
'Be like us and do not worry
for God has you in His care.

Helen Steiner Rice

When everything was dark and it
seemed that the sun would never
shine again, your love broke through.

Your love was too strong, too wide,
too deep for death to hold.

The sparks cast by your love dance
and spread and burst forth with
resurrection light.

Gracious God,
We praise you for the light of new life
made possible through Jesus.
We praise you for the light of new life
that shone on the first witnesses of
resurrection.
We praise you for the light of new life
that continues to shine in our hearts
today.

We pray that the Easter light of life,
hope and joy, will live in us each day;
and that we will be bearers of that
light into the lives of others.

Amen.

Revd Michaela Youngson

Church Diary ~ Main Events

Key dates to put in your diary

- Thur 24th Mar:* MAUNDY THURSDAY Communion Services at 2:00pm and 8:00pm
- Fri 25th Mar:* GOOD FRIDAY 11:00am Churches Together in Chelmsford Open Air Act of Worship (High Street, Chelmsford)
1.30pm City Passion (Easter Street Theatre, outside Shire Hall, Chelmsford)
- Sun 27th Mar:* EASTER SUNDAY
- Sun 8th May:* Church 111th Anniversary

Regular Events

- Monday* Ladies Circuit Training 8:00pm
Badminton Club 8:00pm
- Tuesday* Baby & Toddler Group 10:00am
JUNCTION: CLUB - youth club for any young person in school years 7-13 7:00 - 9:00pm
- Thursday* Girls' & Boys' Brigades
Check our website for latest details

We'd love to hear from you.

To get in touch you can email us at: info@centralbaptistchelmsford.org, call us on 01245 264163 or pop in and see us at: Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1LN

If you'd like to contribute to Connect or have any comments then you can email us at: connect@centralbaptistchelmsford.org

