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freeserve.co.uk

The Secretary on 01732 457230
Or write to 17 Pontoise Close,
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Churches Group for Social Concern -

Aims:

To encourage the people of the churches in the application of their faith to everyday life in the community.

To draw the attention of member churches to current local needs and work in partnership with other agencies in an attempt to meet them.

To assist in thinking about ethical and moral issues, by initiating appropriate study projects and conferences.

When necessary it will arrange fundraising events.

Future plans and events

Annual Open Meeting

Tuesday 21st February 2006 at St Johns Hill URC from 7.45pm

"Drink, Drugs & Jesus"

Tony Williams from the Kenward Trust will be speaking about the organisation's work locally with regard to drug and alcohol abuse.

Community Action Day

Monday (Bank Holiday) 29th May

Speak to your church's co-ordinator to see how a team from your church can provide practical help within our communities on the day.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3 v 12 & 14



Compassion

The Sevenoaks Churches

Issue 7, Jan 2006

Befrienders launched

The Sevenoaks Christian Befriending Scheme was successfully launched on Thursday 20th October at a lunch with 60 guests, hosted by Kippington Church Centre.

The scheme, called **Befrienders**, is the culmination of over a year's discussion, planning, recruiting, training, fundraising and prayer. At its inception, there were 15 trained volunteers, from 7 different churches, awaiting the invitation to serve our community.

Befrienders is accessed by referral from Social and Healthcare professionals, in the area of Sevenoaks and its surrounding villages.

The scheme aims to offer quality time and short term support to families and individuals in the local community. We believe this to be a powerful demonstration of God's love in a practical way, enabling us to put Jesus' **2nd Commandment** into practice.

It is so exciting to see aspects of the church's vision and mission coming to fruition in our neighbourhood, repositioning the local church in its community and giving glory to God.

There is the potential to train additional volunteers in the spring, if there is sufficient interest. Please contact the Co-ordinator: Margaret Samaranayake on 01883 712576 to register.

faithworks

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"The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

There is no commandment greater than these."

Mark 12 v 31

Youth Nightstop in West Kent?

The Bridge Trust is a local charity working with single homeless people. Out of concern for the growing number of young people facing this crisis in their lives, the Bridge Trust is working towards a West Kent Youth Nightstop.

There are now over 40 schemes nationally providing 1-3 nights of accommodation to young people in an emergency. This gives a breathing space for

the services of other agencies to be engaged. This could be through mediation (with the aim of the young person returning home if appropriate or re-establishing communication) and/or sourcing of longer term accommodation.

The success of Nightstop nationally has been significantly helped by the Christian community in each area. With the considerable support that the Bridge Trust already receives from Churches in West Kent we feel confident that this new initiative will also be supported

At present we need people to



volunteer as Host Landlords and Drivers. We understand that initial response to volunteering as a Host Landlord may be one of extreme caution. The scheme however will offer support and training to all Hosts and every young person is assessed before placement. Flexibility always remains with the Host and they are never under obligation to accept a young person.

We need the opportunity of reaching as many Churches as possible.....more importantly the people within them and the opportunity of visiting to give a brief talk about the scheme. This enables people to have a think about whether they would like to be involved and then go on to talk to us further before volunteering.

If interested, please contact Wendy Denman at the Bridge Trust: 01732 368363

Independent Christian Education—Update

We are an interdenominational group of evangelical Christians who are wanting to set up an independent Christian primary school in the Sevenoaks area.

We are hoping to start this, God willing, in September this year

and we would be grateful if you could tell your congregations and encourage any interested people to contact us on:

01732 760924.

Befrienders: Two months on . . .

On our handout we state that we, the Befrienders, are motivated and inspired by our faith, and I want to thank God for His faithfulness and guidance in this venture

We have received referrals from West Kent Housing Association, Sevenoaks Christian Counselling Service, St. John’s Mental Health Centre, local G.P.s. and Health Visitors.

We have wonderful supervision and support from Claudine Gavin and a special under girding of prayer from the Prayer Support Group and from friends who pray for us regularly.

The ‘pairing up’ of Befriender and Befriender has been truly God guided. Mutual interests and connections have emerged, and what can only be described as divine appointments in Sevenoaks!

Surprise has been expressed by an O.T. as to the change in her client. The only explanation to be found is that a Befriender is involved in that situation.

Feedback from Social Services has told us how invaluable the Befrienders support has been. A Doctor offered a patient antidepressants or a Befriender. The patient chose the latter!

At present, nine members of the team are active. Six are still waiting, but there are ‘clients’ in the wings.

Chris Morgan of SAMHAG (Sevenoaks and Area Mental Health

Awareness Group) is providing further training for us in January. Potential new Befrienders are making enquiries about joining. Recently when I said to a team member that it’s just amazing how things are working out, she replied that it’s not amazing, it’s just that God’s hand is on everything.

Thank God that this is the truth. Margaret Samaranayake. Befrienders Co-ordinator. 01883 712576

Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Philippians 4 v 8

