

**CGSC Executive Committee:**

Chairman Tony Cornfield  
 Secretary Miranda Cormack  
 Treasurer Rosemary Wakefield  
 Executive Elaine Coupe  
 Executive Rita Bennett  
 Executive Vivienne Hall

Contact:  
**The Chairman** on 01732 452062  
 Or email  
 Tony@7oaksvineyard.freeserve.co.uk  
**The Secretary** on 01732 457230  
 Or write to 17 Pontoise Close,  
 Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3ES

**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.



# Compassion

**The Sevenoaks Churches Group for Social Concern Newsletter**

Issue 9, Sept 2006

## So what's next?

Two years ago, the concept of a Christian Befriending Scheme was just an idea from an individual working in our community. Today it is a fully fledged project, where Christians can provide real care in the community.

To respond to the "what next" question, the executive asked Sue Revell from St John's Mental Health Team for her perspective on the needs in our community that could potentially be impacted by Christians working together.

These are the 4 ideas that she shared—do any of them resonate in your spirit as something to strive for?

- 1) A "Welcome" pack for new housing association residents, moving into the area, containing local services, information etc.
- 2) An "Action Team" to help with anything from house moving to minor maintenance.
- 3) A network of local employers, willing to offer part time supported employment to people with disabilities.
- 4) An Organic Café - and more . . . offering supported voluntary employment to people with long term problems/disabilities, in the garden, kitchen and café, as well as being a drop-in venue.

Please share these concepts widely within your church, and feedback to the Secretary or Chairman (see back page for contact details).

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<sup>5</sup>May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of **unity** among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus

**Romans 15 v 5**

## Future plans and events

**Churches Together in Sevenoaks and District AGM:**

Thursday 9th November starting at 7.30pm with coffee in the main hall at St John's Hill URC.

This year there will be much more discussion in small groups  
 Everybody Welcome.

**Gifts and Donations**

Gifts from churches or individuals to support the work of Befrienders or resource the magazine costs should be made payable to:

Sevenoaks Churches Group for Social Concern, and sent to the Treasurer:

81a Bradbourne Park Road,  
 Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3LQ

Please indicate the intended purpose of the gift, so that it can be appropriately applied.

<sup>2</sup>Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12 v 2



# Values and Beliefs under attack

On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July, a group of over 70 Christians, mainly pastors representing thousands from the black majority churches in and around London, congregated ready to descend on Parliament for a strategic lobbying campaign to educate and inform MPs about the worrying new 'Sexual Orientation Regulations 2006' being put forward by the Government.

This followed a letter in the **Daily Telegraph on July 13, 2006**, signed by 177 black pastors:



## Anti-Christian law:

Sir - We write as pastors on behalf of tens of thousands of black British Christians. Many members of our congregations in London left their home countries to come to England to experience the freedom of living according to their Christian beliefs in a Christian democratic country.

But increasingly the Labour Government is discriminating against Christians in order to appease minority groups. From the Government's behaviour, it seems that those minority groups have disproportionate access to the ears of politicians and use that access to promote views and values that are contrary to the

views and values which have been at the centre of protecting and promoting British families, schools and local communities for centuries.

The latest discrimination against Christians is the new law called the Sexual Orientation Regulations, said to combat the problem of homophobia in Britain. It alarms us that the Government's only

evidence for a problem actually existing is "accounts in national newspapers".

The regulations force Christians in churches, businesses,

charities and informal associations to accept and even promote the idea that homosexuality is equal to heterosexuality.

For the sake of clarity, this is not what the Bible teaches and it is not what we believe to be the truth. In our view, these regulations are an affront to our freedom to be Christians.

If the Government thinks that we will accept this law lying down, they are mistaken. This sort of Christianophobia from the Government is no longer acceptable.

What do we say?

# Vision & Purpose

Most of our churches have a Mission Statement, Vision or Purpose, written and displayed prominently in our literature or web pages.

How many of us have the courage to ask, "How are we doing" . . . is the mission being realised, is the vision being pursued and the purpose adhered to?

For all the energy being expended, how fruitful are we?

How likely would we be to hear Jesus' words, "well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" Matt 25v21

As believers in our churches, are we merely sheep being fed, or are we disciples . . . followers of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . asking ourselves, what would He have me do, today / this month / this year?

When we pray, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven", do we acknowledge our roles in helping to bring this about. We are kingdom people who are called and commissioned to be participants in this kingdom adventure.

When people ask the question, "What Would Jesus Do" (WWJD), do

we personalise this, by asking our selves, "What would Jesus do if He were me, living my life"?

When Jesus spoke about Himself being the vine and us being the branches, saying that we have been chosen and appointed to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last (John 15 v 16) does something stir in your spirit asking, what are you waiting for, what should my fruit look like?

As individual Christians in fellowships around our towns and villages, are we playing our part in seeing the missions, visions and purposes fulfilled?

- Are people coming to know Jesus?
- Are those in need being cared for?
- Is love, acceptance and forgiveness being demonstrated?
- Is God's name being praised?

The leader's responsibility is to prepare God's people for works of service . . . to equip the saints to serve, so that the church is built up. . . and the Kingdom extended.

How are we doing leaders?

How are we doing, people?



Love must be sincere.

Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

Romans 12 v 9