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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.



# Compassion

**The Sevenoaks Churches**

**Group for Social Concern Newsletter**

Issue 15, Sept 2009

## Compassion, the precursor to:

When we look at Jesus' life as recorded in the gospels, we see a man who was filled with compassion. Time and time again it appears that compassion both motivates and precedes the miraculous.

**Healing:** "Filled with **compassion**, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man [with leprosy]. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"

**Evangelism:** "When he saw the crowds, he had **compassion** on them, . . . Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

**Prodigal's Return:** "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with **compassion** for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

**Feeding 4 thousand:** "I have **compassion** for these people; . . . he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. They all ate and were satisfied."

**Sight to the blind:** "Jesus had **compassion** on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him."

Paul writes about our need for compassion: "As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with **compassion**, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

Imagine the effect on society, here and throughout the world if only . . .

## Future plans and events

**Churches Together AGM**  
**Thursday 12th November,**  
**7.30 for 8.00pm at St**  
**John's URC:**

- **All that's happening in Sevenoaks & District**
- **Report from the Child Contact Centre**
- **Worship & Prayer**

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

**Gifts and Donations**

Gifts from churches or individuals to support Befrienders, the Child Contact Centre, 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.



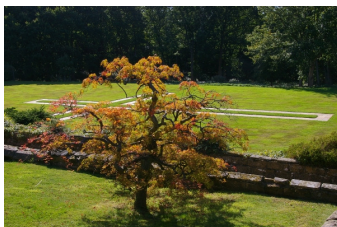
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"He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour"  
 Luke 4 v 18b-19

## Debt Advice Centre

Sevenoaks Debt Advice Centre was launched in February 2009, at just the right time to meet the growing demand for help in this area. A downturn in the economy had become a recession and it wasn't just individuals who were losing jobs and being made redundant, the banks too were at the brink.



Beginning with very little publicity so as not to overstretch the fledgling services, debt advice began to be offered through offices generously provided by Vine Evangelical Church.

With Autumn approaching and enquiries increasing, the team of volunteers led by Graham Garner from Bessels Green Baptist Church, are demonstrating God's love in very practical ways.

Sue Revell from St Johns Community Mental Health Centre, has referred clients with mental health problems to the new Service and received very positive feedback. She said, "I have been told that the response was very quick - this is always important - and that the service was extremely professional and reassuring. Above all, clients were not made to feel bad about the fact that they had got into debt."

"Congratulations for setting up an excellent service!"

## Faith Works

What does the Lord require of us? The prophet Micah replies, "He has showed you, O man, what is good. To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

The Apostle Paul says, "Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the

Lord." "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." Ephesians 5:8 & 14

Wake up, get involved, become history makers, do something!

Justice, Mercy, Humility, Goodness, Righteousness, Truth . . . the list could go on as we read God's Word, but let's not be those who simply read the Word, let's do what it says too. Paraphrasing James 1:22.

Let us find ways to serve Christ, His Church and His Cause by giving our time, energy and money as we are able.

Let's find faith based, or faith inspired initiatives in our "Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth", through which to witness the difference that Jesus Christ makes in our lives.



## Child Contact Centre

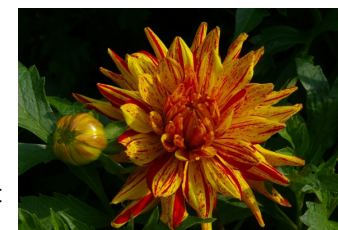
The Sevenoaks Child Contact Centre was inspired by an agenda item relating to an action plan at a Sevenoaks Domestic Abuse Working Group meeting at which Tony Cornfield represents Churches Together.

A subsequent conversation with Alison Gilmour the Police co-ordinator led to the conviction that this was a need, waiting to be met by a Churches Together initiative led by SCGSC.

The first visit to see a working Child Contact Centre was made in July 2008. Within 6 months there was a team of 12 volunteers from local churches in training, anticipating the launch in early 2009.

It wasn't until May 2009 that word had filtered through to the appropriate authorities and the first families visited the centre in Vine Evangelical Church (VEC).

Such is the demand for supported visiting for children to see their non-resident parent, that by the summer of 2009 there were 16 children from 9 families using the scheme and a waiting list has now been implemented.



When the need for a local Child Contact Centre was first raised through this Compassion Newsletter, only two people responded, indicating an interest in becoming involved. But it only takes one person to catch God's heart and be inspired by His Spirit to continue the ministry of Jesus ... and lives get changed as a result.

What a delight it is to see what happens when the body of Christ responds to an invitation from the Head to participate with Him in transforming circumstances,

bringing light and restoring relationships especially, though not exclusively, between fathers and their children.

The team led by Sally Stiven from VEC with deputy Brenda Clayton from Vineyard, facilitate Contact on the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month between 2.00pm and 4.00pm so that a visiting parent gets to spend quality time with their child(ren).

From him [Christ the Head], the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.  
Ephesians 4:16

Thank you for your gifts to SCGSC that meet their needs for both training and materials.

Thank you to VEC for donating your premises for free.