

Keeping in Touch K.I.T.

Our Aim: To know Christ and make him known

No 85: Spring 2016



Are you switched on?

THERE WE WERE sitting in a nice corner, sipping on a hot chocolate and a skinny cinnamon latte. Thankful for having been able to occupy the good seats around a small round table, our eyes were glued to a mobile phone and an iPad. My daughter Melody was scrolling through her personal music files, searching for the right track to listen to while enjoying her cuppa. At the same time I was checking my multiple emails, deciding which ones were first priority and which ones could be dealt with at a later time or date.

It had been a good weekend. Experiencing the positive thrill of another Dialogue Cafe, dedicating a baby to the Lord, joining the worship team while supporting the rhythm section of the band, enjoying the unpredictable but fun interaction by the children of our congregation during the children's story, connecting with part of our sisters during their women ministry, and delivering a sermon. Funnily enough, I can't recall the topic of the sermon, but surely it must have included the thought that *Church must happen each day as we rub shoulders with other people in our circle of influence*. Never to forget that we are the hands and feet of Jesus as we reach out and connect.

Yes, it had been a good weekend, and life was good as I was sipping on my take-away foam cup and searching through the digital mail. Out of nowhere she appeared as my eye caught her silhouette. An old lady, holding several bags in one hand, and balancing a tray with a cup of tea and a sandwich in the other. She looked at the one vacant chair situated right next to me, and then she looked at me. With a quick nod I gave her the go ahead to join us at the table. Gladly she placed the bags on the floor and carefully took her seat. Adding sugar and milk to her tea, carefully taking her first sip, she now scanned her surroundings. With a smile she acknowledged my daughter, sitting on the opposite side of our table. She took another sip from her tea, and then it happened....

Turning her right shoulder, she made a deliberate decision and took a look at me. After a few seconds she straightened her back and returned to her tea, looking straight ahead. Perhaps a minute later she repeated the same actions. Sipping her tea, turning her right shoulder towards me, and again looking at me. During the 5 minutes it took her to drink her cup of tea, several times this old lady turned and looked at me...

And I did not notice! I had decided not to notice! It had been a busy weekend and I longed for some *me-time*. The Dialogue Cafe was all about connecting and having meaningful conversations with each other. While dedicating the baby I encouraged the parents to spend time with their child as it would grow up. I invited the children to reach out to their school friends. The preaching.... And yet, sitting at this table, I did not notice...

How easy it is for us to disconnect. To shut out the world around us. To switch off. My daughter was the one who was *switched on*, recognising that this lady was longing for a moment of connection with someone. She told me how this woman had tried to connect while joining us at the table. How easy it would have been to switch off my iPad, and for a couple of minutes connect with this lady in the coffee shop. Who knows where the little chat might have led us? Well...God knows! In the book of Luke, chapter 10, Jesus told Martha she was *distracted, because of all she felt she had to do*. Through my daughter Jesus was telling me the same.

Just the other day I passed a restaurant which had placed an interesting sandwich board outside its doors. On it were written the words *We do not have internet here, but you are welcome to talk with each other!* I have decided to be more intentional. To be more *switched on* as I spend time in public places, where there could be a lady or mister looking for a moment to connect and share life, and in that moment share God. What about you? Will you switch on?

By Pastor Geert Tap

ARE NOT two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground without the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Matt. 10: 29 and 30. NIV

NEWS, NEWS, NEWS!

SADLY 2016 started with news of the death of **Sister Betty Cooper**. I heard of Betty decades ago when my mother met her and told me how lovely she was. She died on January 10 and our sympathy goes to her husband, **Pastor Arthur Cooper**, and his children, grandchildren and the extended family.

On Monday afternoon 11 January, after 20 years leading the Stanborough Park Church Seniors' Club, **Rosemary Barham's** term of office as leader came to a close. To show appreciation **Jean Hinks**, on behalf of the club, presented Romy with a bouquet of flowers and a huge vote of thanks for her dedicated and enthusiastic care of the club over so many years.

The club meets fortnightly and has proved very popular with two-thirds of the members coming from the local community. According to residents of a nearby residential complex, Romy has done a splendid job in her time as leader. She took over following her retirement as a local physiotherapist and has certainly been the longest serving leader in the history of the club. She will continue to support the club as a member of the team. Romy is definitely switched on.



Jef's photos are of Romy, and of **Purity Gekara** and **Deelan Espinal** with **Pastor Jacques**. Purity and Deelan were baptized on January 16.

In regard to Purity, her husband and children are from church but she wasn't. They attended Sabbath school for many years and she attended with them.

Deelan is 13 years old. He has the ambition to be an architect or a dentist in future. Deelan plays rugby and enjoys helping out at church with messy church, collecting offerings, etc. He also has taken active part in the pathfinders'

club and has been working really hard studying the book of Exodus in preparation for PBE (The Pathfinder Bible Experience Quiz.). This drew him nearer and nearer to the God of the Old Testament and make him come to the decision to be baptised.

The other photo, by Jef, is of **Florence Allen** who has led the Adventurer/Pathfinder Club for many years. A lovely Investiture Service on February 6 gave tribute to Florence Allen's leadership. The certificates were issued by **Pastor Kevin Johns**, South England Conference, Pathfinder Director and the Investiture Charge was given by **Vernon Noel**, Area 7 Pathfinder Coordinator.





Operating under the theme, *Consecrated for God's Service*, 2015 was a year of endless, exciting activities. Topping the list was the club's excelling at Area Level in the Pathfinder Bible Experience and continuing with that outstanding performance right up to the International Level in Texas.

To God be the Glory, for the baptism of Pathfinder, Deelan Espinal culminating in 12 baptisms over a four year period.

Another big event the following week was the dedication of baby **Isaac Issaquah**, the son of **Monic** and **Femi** shown with him in the photo. Isaac was dedicated by **Pastor Geert Tap**.

PAT's SUNDAY SALE on January 17 raised £1000 towards the running of the Soup Run. The Soup Run is in urgent need of men's warm clothing plus bedding for the homeless people.

On February 6, we gained two members and lost one through transfer. We gained **David Future** from Lupton church and **Terence LeCorre** from Zurich Church, Switzerland. We welcome David, and welcome back Terry. Sadly we have lost **Alice Crooker** who has transferred to Washington Conference in the USA.

Pastor Jacques Venter is available to meet with members on Wednesdays between 10am and 1pm. For an appointment, please email Beatrice@stanboroughpark.org

Edward Hammond and **Colin Robertson** are continuing their Sabbath afternoon walks on March 26. Details from Colin on 07943 574 445.

There will be two regular concerts held on the first Saturday and third Sunday of each month. Saturday Evening Concerts will start at 7.30pm, and Sunday Afternoon Teatime Concerts will begin at 3pm followed by tea and cakes. Free entry, but a voluntary collection will be taken up for church development funds.

DIRECT COMMUNICATION **Richard J B Willis MA MSc FRSPH**

BRIGHT PEOPLE have often been described as *switched on*, and it has had a positive connotation in the mind of the observer. Perhaps one of the greatest observable trends in society today is the mobile telephone. Who hasn't walked down a busy street without encountering people with one hand clamped to the ear (the other carrying a plastic cup of coffee!), or heard someone apparently speaking to themselves, only to discover that they are using a hands-free device? Clearly people from shoppers to disembarking migrants are switched on to something. Even talking has become *passé* as users prefer to text or email rather than speak, and the shorter the text the better.

Research shows: the likely length of a reply is just **five** words; c90% of replies are sent within a day; youth and brevity of response go hand-in-hand; and weekday mornings get the fastest responses. Girls text for social connections, boys to convey information; although boys send the same number of texts, girls are more likely to become compulsive; texting compulsively has shown lower academic grades; compulsive texting has led to mental health problems, particularly in girls who may dwell on any negative feelings generated. To texting can be added all the problems associated with other mobile applications and functions. The behavioural effects persist but can be changed by switching to direct communication. Certainly, older adults who have face-to-face interactions with family and friends have a lower risk of depression compared with those who keep in touch via phone or email. Get switched on!

KIT Flashbacks from 2015

THE MOLINA FAMILY had a very happy day in August last year when their son **Vincent** (who was born in Watford and attended Stanborough Church and our school) married **Xira Ortega Gomez** from the city of Bilbao. The ceremony took place in Cantabria, northern Spain and was attended by family and friends from near and far. The couple have settled in a village not far from Bilbao. Photo from left to right: Joe, Xira, Vincent and Maryline.

December 5 brought tears and joy our way. Tears because **Sister Mary Dyason** died that day in Australia. Mary, her husband **Lin** and their children, **Arthur, Cheryl, Scott**, and later **Emily**, planned to stay two years in England but that turned into 29. During that time, Mary used her considerable talents to win the church's children for **Christ**. So many must have wonderful memories of her and our sympathy goes to Lin and all the family.





Our joy was because it was Baptism Day for three of the church's young people. The photo by **Jef Nascimento** shows Pastor **Jacques Venter** with **Luke Stickland, Ben Elias, Amy Cornwall** and one other. Our mystery lady is **Draupadi Ruiz**. Draupadi was baptised at Stanborough School on September 18, 2015, but joined Stanborough Park church with the others on December 5. Two others were voted into fellowship about then. They were **Miss Alia Heck** from Berlin-Waldfriede Church in Germany (November 28); and **Mrs Bellal Rajasekaran** from Chelmsford Church (December 5). We welcome all our new members.

As usual, Christmas at Stanborough Park was wonderful. Like Watford's mayor, **Baroness Dorothy Thornhill**, for me it started with the **Toy Service** on December 12. KIT's lead picture by **Costa Vaggas** shows many of the church's children with the platform party after the service. That was very varied and we have included three pictures to give you a flavour of it. The first one by **June Coombs** shows **Lara, Layken and Jaymee Venter** praying the family prayer with Pastor Jacques giving support in more ways than one. The others by **Dan Sabatier** show a Japanese group called **Destiny** (I couldn't understand a word but appreciated the music and the lovely blend of their voices); and a few of the **Messy Church** leaders leading the children in singing. The song leaders are **Caitlyn Balderstone, Charlotte Fidelia, John Cooper** and **Dr Grant Elias**.



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WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY EASTER.