

2006

SUMMER OUTREACH

Proverbs 10.5 tells us that *the person who gathers crops in the summer is wise*. That was a sound piece of advice for an agricultural community. But on a spiritual level, the verse reminds us that our summer months have traditionally been a time of special outreach initiatives. Dozens of Christian holidays for children and young people will be taking place in UK; and teams of students will be travelling all over the world to take part in overseas mission trips. We will want to support all of these initiatives in our prayers so that the summer of 2006 produces a bumper harvest for the kingdom of heaven.

Here is news of some of the activities that our own church members and young people will be engaged in over the coming weeks.

➤ **Helena Simmonds - NE1**

3,000 young people from the Northeast of England, from other parts of the UK, and from overseas will be gathering in the Sunderland area for a week of Bible teaching, social action projects and evangelistic meetings from **23rd - 29th July**. The young people will be based at Hetherington for their morning Bible teaching and worship times, and then fan out across the Northeast for their social action projects. These will take a variety of forms in Gateshead – sport, art, catering and environmental care. Our Church will be hosting a team of 10-15 young people who will be involved in litter picks, ground clearance projects, and garden maintenance for the elderly. On Monday evening, there will be a prayer walk around Gateshead. Then from Tuesday to Thursday, there will be creative programmes of music and Gospel messages in Saltwell Park. The week will finish with a large-scale evangelistic event at the Penshaw Monument in Sunderland on the Friday evening. For further details, see Helena Simmonds or the NE1 website, www.ne1online.org.

➤ **Andrew Hunt – Iwerne camp**

From **24th July - 4th August**, Andrew Hunt will be helping to lead a Iwerne camp in Norfolk for about 100 pupils from schools around the UK. Every day, the children will hear more about Jesus and be encouraged to think about the claims he made. The afternoons are full of great fun activities like kayaking, football and other sports. The camps are the focal point of a work that goes on throughout the year with camp leaders going into various boarding schools to help lead meetings for groups of Christians and their

friends.

➤ **Richard Hunt – Cornhill Trust Summer School, Christians in Sport camp, IFES Belarus training team**

This summer I have two months off before starting work as a *Parish Assistant at St Andrew the Great Church* in Cambridge for a year, starting on **1st September**.

During this time, I will be attending the *Cornhill Summer School* in London, from **3rd -7th July**. It is aimed at helping young people handle and teach the Bible properly.

From **4th -11th August**, I will be helping out at a *Christians in Sport* camp for teenagers in Edinburgh. This will involve a healthy balance of sport and Bible teaching for the young people. Personally, I will probably be involved in the technical support for the week - setting up PowerPoint presentations and sound for meetings - as well as befriending and encouraging the young people.

My third activity of the summer is a trip to *Belarus*, from **15th -28th August**, as part of a team of nine. The visit is being organised by IFES (the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students). For the first week, we will be teaching English to a group of non-Christian students and looking to share the gospel with them through that. During the second week, will be running a conference for the leaders of Christian Union groups in the country, seeking to encourage them as they work against a background of persecution from the state authorities.

➤ **Christopher Hunt, Philip Pearson, Thomas Johnson – Transmission SU Camp**

Three Rock Solid boys enjoyed this holiday so much last year that they are going back for more of the same this year! They will be trying their hand at go-karts, motorbikes, radio-controlled cars, miniature rockets, radio and video production, and plenty of other fun activities on the site at Shipdham, Norfolk. Dates: **12th -19th August**.

VACANCIES BEING FILLED

Following our *40 Days of Purpose* Ministry Fair, and the display of a *Situations Vacant* board in the church, I am pleased to be able to report that many of the previous 'job' vacancies are now being filled. However, gaps still remain, so take a good look at the display and see if there are any areas of church life where you could lend a hand. For instance, we still

need another driver to help out with the transportation of our five-a-side football teams for next season.

And it would be good to form a team to look after our *Fun and Food for all the Family* programme of monthly outreach events. Perhaps our Small Groups have a role to play in this regard, by taking it in turns to plan and organise the monthly events.

BUILDING REFURBISHMENT

We are delighted to be able to report that we have received £10,500 in grants and pledges for the next phase of our building refurbishment project – structural repairs to the roof and front pediment of the Church, and a re-roofing of our Small Hall and Storage Annexe. Together with £10,000 committed from our own General Fund, this means that we are two-thirds of the way towards our target figure of **£31,376**.

At our most recent Deacons Meeting, we looked at all the figures very carefully and feel we are now in a position to give the go-ahead to our builders, at least for the first part of the project.

The balance in our Building Fund currently stands at £22,644 (including pledges; a small balance was carried forward from the first phase of our refurbishment work). In addition, we are expecting a VAT refund of £1,102 for roof repairs that were carried out during the first phase of the work. This would bring our Building Fund total to **£23,746**.

The projected cost of the work includes a refundable VAT element of £3,814 (bringing the net cost down to £27,562), plus our own built-in reserve of £2,181 (calculated at 10% of the building cost). If this was not needed, the cost of the work would come down to £25,381. Furthermore, the quotations we have received contain a builder's contingency of £3,000. So, if this wasn't needed either (!), the cost would be reduced to **£22,381**, on a best-case scenario.

This is the basis on which the deacons feel it is right to give the go-ahead for the first part of the work to proceed (the church roof and pediment), with the expectation that we will be able to complete the rest of the work soon after. We are keen to get the Parlour and Annexe re-roofed before the autumn and winter rains descend on us! We give our heartfelt thanks to God for his abundant provision to us!

TAKING STOCK

The month of July is a good one for taking stock of how we are progressing as a church. The **average weekly attendance** figures for the first half of the year (with comparable figures for the first half of 2005) are

as follows.

Average attendances (Jan-Jun)	2005	2006
Sunday mornings	43	44
Sunday evenings	26	23
Total per Sunday	55	52
Midweek meetings	14	26

The biggest change has been for our midweek meetings, with the large rise being due to the excellent turnout we have had for our Small Groups during the *40 Days of Purpose* programme and for our *Lost for Words* course. Attendance on Sunday mornings is about the same as for the first half of last year; but our Sunday evening attendances have decreased slightly, leading to a slight overall fall in the average number of people attending DRBC each Sunday.

The next table (below) shows the **total number** of people who have attended a Sunday service this year so far, compared to equivalent figures for the first half of last year. There has been an overall drop of 14%, but this is due to a sharp fall in the number of adults with other church connections ('non-DRBC'). The number of people for whom DRBC is their only church connection ('DRBC') rose by 31%. On average, during the first half of the year, 78 people attended a Sunday service each month, compared to 86 per month in 2005, a fall of 10%.

Total Attending (Jan-Jun)	2005	2006
DRBC adults	60	73
DRBC children/yp	20	32
non-DRBC adults	72	27
non-DRBC children/yp	1	0
TOTAL	153	132

The number of **first-timers** in the first half of this year shows little overall change compared to the first half of last year (see the table below). But once again, this masks the fact that there have been more people for whom DRBC is their only church connection, but fewer with other church connections.

Newcomers (Jan-Jun)	2005	2006
DRBC adults	5	12
DRBC children/yp	5	17
non-DRBC adults	32	11
non-DRBC children/yp	0	0
TOTAL	42	40

Please use these statistics to fuel your prayers.

Pray that we will **retain more of the newcomers** who visit our church, and that our **Sunday evening services** will pick up to the levels they were at three years ago, when we averaged almost 30 for the first six months of the year.

David Hunt