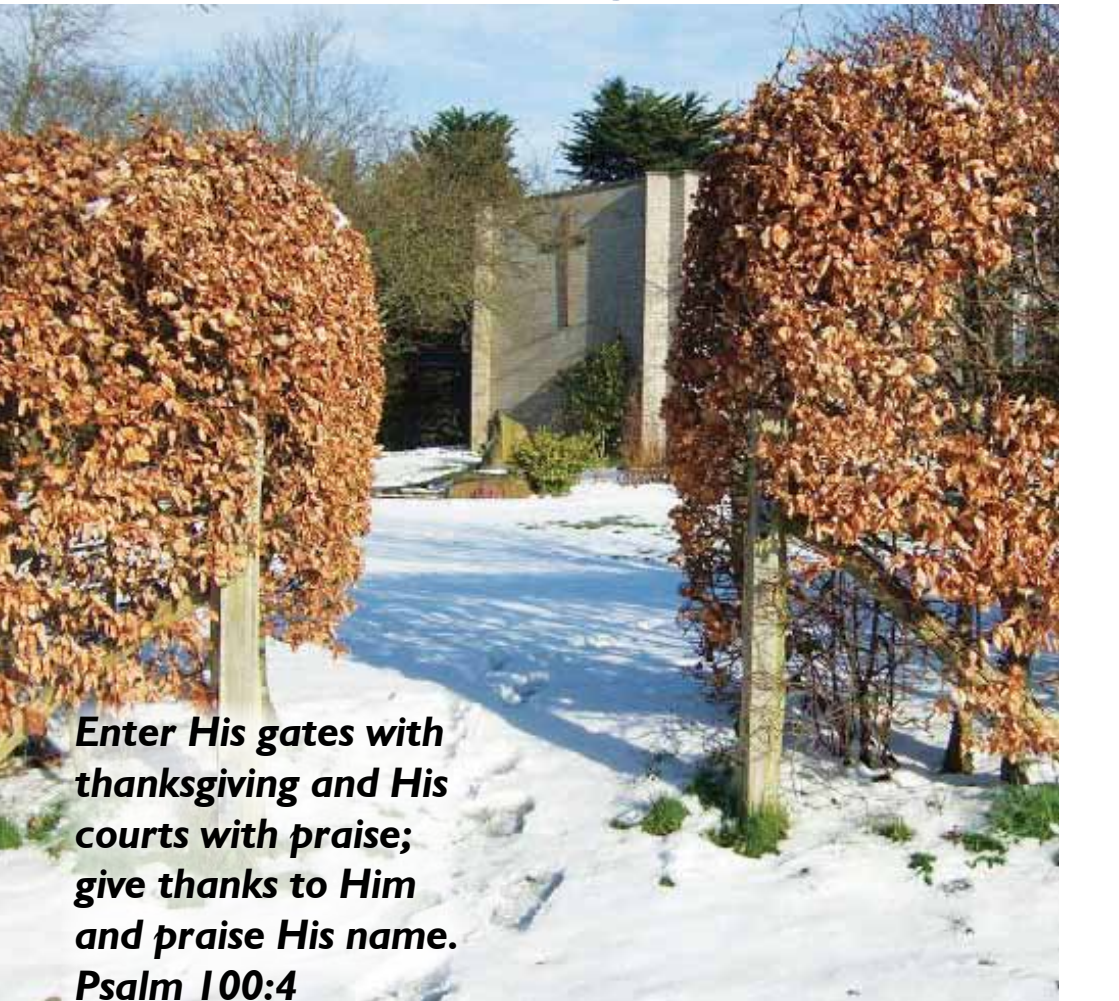

in His *Healing* steps

Winter 2013



***Enter His gates with
thanksgiving and His
courts with praise;
give thanks to Him
and praise His name.
Psalm 100:4***

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Although this magazine is a quarterly one, for those who are reading it in January or February, Christmas will be a fading memory, while for those reading in early December, it will be very much on

your mind! As I pondered to write my 25th editorial (I can hardly believe it!), I wondered what to say. While thinking about Christmas, and what it means to me, I felt prompted by the Lord to share my thoughts with you all, so here goes!

So what does Christmas mean to you? Stress, expense, busyness, family, loneliness, joy, wonder? The Christmas period will mean different things to different people, depending on their circumstances. It can be a difficult time, especially in our current financial climate and we can too easily lose sight of what the season is really about - the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Children are always excited and enthralled by Christmas. They love the twinkling lights and decorations, and the tree surrounded by presents, which they are always so desperate to unwrap before the big day!

The hype and build up (which seems to start earlier in the shops every year) culminates for children (and adults!) in the joy of unwrapping presents on Christmas morning. We all love to see children caught up in the excitement of Christmas. Reluctant to go to bed on Christmas Eve, they are often awake too early because of their anticipation at opening presents!

Christmas is a celebration, a time to spend with friends and family, a time to relax and enjoy a break from work, but it is also a time to thank God for His FREE gift to us,

His Son, Jesus Christ. This wonderful gift meant that God would lay aside His Glorious Majesty and enter the world, just as we do, as a helpless, tiny baby. *'The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.'* (John 1:14). No more 'seeing' God as a *Pillar of cloud by day or fire by night!* (Numbers 14:14).

This human God (Jesus) would eventually allow Himself to be crucified on a cross, dying in our place, taking the sin of the world upon Himself. All we have to do is accept this free gift and follow Him, not out of duty but out of love! *'For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.'* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ puts what can be a materialistic time in its rightful place. We buy presents for our friends and family because we love and care for them. God gave His Son for us because He loves and cares for His people, and for this love, He paid the ultimate price, crucifixion alongside two guilty criminals, even though He was innocent of any wrongdoing. I think of the stirring words from the hymn, *'You laid aside Your Majesty, gave up everything for me, suffered at the hands of those you had created.'* What amazing love and what a gift! Thank you Lord.



Death could not hold Jesus and at Easter the church celebrates His glorious resurrection, though, of course, this is something that we should be celebrating all the year round because **God is for life and not just for Christmas!**

The CCHC is a place where you will find God all year around too! If you have never been before, come and try one of our **FREE** two day Taster Retreats (see page 22 for further details). These were very popular during 2013 and are already booking up for 2014 as this magazine goes to print.

Our twice weekly healing services, with the laying on of hands (Tuesday 7.30pm and Thursday 10.15am, with Holy Communion) are also a good opportunity to see what the Centre has to offer. Thursdays in particular are a good time to come and worship the Lord, and share fellowship over lunch (do phone the office to pre-book though).

Children and well behaved puppets are more than welcome at our services! Here are Imogen and Amelia making friends with Danny after the Thursday morning Healing Service.



On behalf of the Crowhurst team, I wish you all a Happy and Holy Christmas, and a blessed New Year.

Mary Slater

Our Senior Chaplain Writes ...



Dear Friends,

As I was preparing for a recent Healing Retreat Weekend, I asked our Lord what should be the focus of the worship. Not

surprisingly, I believe our Lord said, "*Focus the worship on me.*" He then prompted me to look at the first few verses of Psalm 147. WOW! How great is our Lord!

¹ Praise the LORD! How good to sing praises to our God! How delightful and how fitting!

² The LORD is rebuilding Jerusalem and bringing the exiles back to Israel.

³ He heals the broken hearted and bandages their wounds.

⁴ He counts the stars and calls them all by name.

⁵ How great is our Lord! His power is absolute! His understanding is beyond comprehension!

Please notice what the Lord is doing in these verses; He rebuilds cities and nations, heals and bandages wounded people and He counts stars which He knows by name. How great is our God; nations, people and galaxies are all on His agenda.

My 'Pilgrims Guide to the Holy Land' reminds me that Jerusalem is one of the most ancient cities and during its long and turbulent history, the City has been besieged on more than 50 occasions, conquered 36 times, and has suffered no less than 10 total destructions. Where is God through this? I think of Zimbabwe, Syria, and not least of all England. Where is God in these countries and their histories? God is at work, rebuilding the cities and nations - to see His Kingdom come.

From a young boy in Zimbabwe to the present, my journey through life has seen people destroyed by addiction, succumb to cruel merciless diseases, ruthlessly bound by the evil one and robbed of their identity. Where is God in these people's lives? I think of the children, the poor, the elderly, and the innocent. Where is God? God is at work, healing the broken hearted and bandaging their wounds.

I believe God is at work every day to rebuild nations, to save and heal people, to bring His Kingdom to earth as it is in heaven. He calls us all (you and me) to help in this work. (I leave the counting and naming of stars to Him!).

How can I be so sure about God's rebuilding and healing work? Over the next few weeks we will remember that God came into the world, born of the Blessed Mary, seen by the excited shepherds and worshipped by the Wise Men. God came into the world in Jesus, to build, to heal, and to announce the Kingdom of God is among you. That is how I am so sure – Jesus is all the proof I need.

When I spend time thinking about what our Lord is not doing, it leads me to doubt and despair and decreases my faith. When I spend time thinking about what our Lord has done, is doing and can do, I find my faith is built up and I'm more useful to our Lord.

Please receive my thanks for all you do to help us in the work here, especially for your prayers and be assured of our prayers for you and your work there. May the kingdom of God be real in our lives today.

With love from us all.

Steve

Ted's Healing

There was snow on the ground and it was a dark, late afternoon in January this year when my husband, Ted, had the devastating news that he had cancer of the oesophagus. We went home in silence holding hands but I do remember saying, "We trust in God. We will get through this together." That night I could not sleep and I spent some of the night in prayer. The Lord said to me. "Go and pray over Ted." I knew what I had to do. I placed my hands on the area of the oesophagus and the Holy Spirit gave me the words.

A couple of weeks later Ted had a CT Scan and a little bit of me thought why did God not remove the tumour? After all I did pray over him. But of course I then realised that healing does not always come immediately. We thanked God that the cancer was contained and had not spread.

As the weeks followed, Ted had to endure nine weeks of gruelling chemotherapy, but during that time we were encircled in prayers in our parish and in the bidding prayers every week at Mass. With so many people praying for us, how could God not listen and answer prayers? Ted was prayed over at our quarterly healing and wholeness services, and anointed in oil.

After the chemo we had five lovely weeks for Ted to get strong before major surgery. We went to the Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre where Ted had ministry and was prayed over at the healing services. We never once doubted our loving God would not heal Ted. Our faith and trust in God was steadfast.

On June 24th, Ted had major surgery to remove the tumour. The surgeon said the tumour was smaller than he first thought. It was removed and Ted was now cancer free. "Praise God!" Recovery is slow but Ted has been **HEALED** and our faith is even stronger. God has done that for Ted and me, and also our children who went through so much. God can do that for you too.

Mary

Facebook and Feedback Form comments

Facebook

We had a wonderful stay with you a few weeks ago and each time I have a new anointing. Praise God!

Thank you all at the Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre, for an amazing weekend; fellowship, good food and peace and quiet. Looking forward to returning in the very near future!

Thanks so much for our five day break, we really enjoyed our stay. All the best to the Crowhurst team. From Claire & Tim

Feedback Forms

I have found empathy with the wonderful speakers, feel so refreshed and not afraid of the next few months. I haven't taken any pain killers all weekend as I haven't needed them. Praise the Lord!

It was like being in Heaven for a week. God's presence and glory is so real in this place. It shines through on everyone who looks after us.

I benefited from just being with God. As soon as I arrived, I felt His presence and how special Crowhurst will be for me in my journey ahead. This was my first stay and I don't want to leave. The staff were so kind and compassionate.

“What do you do?”



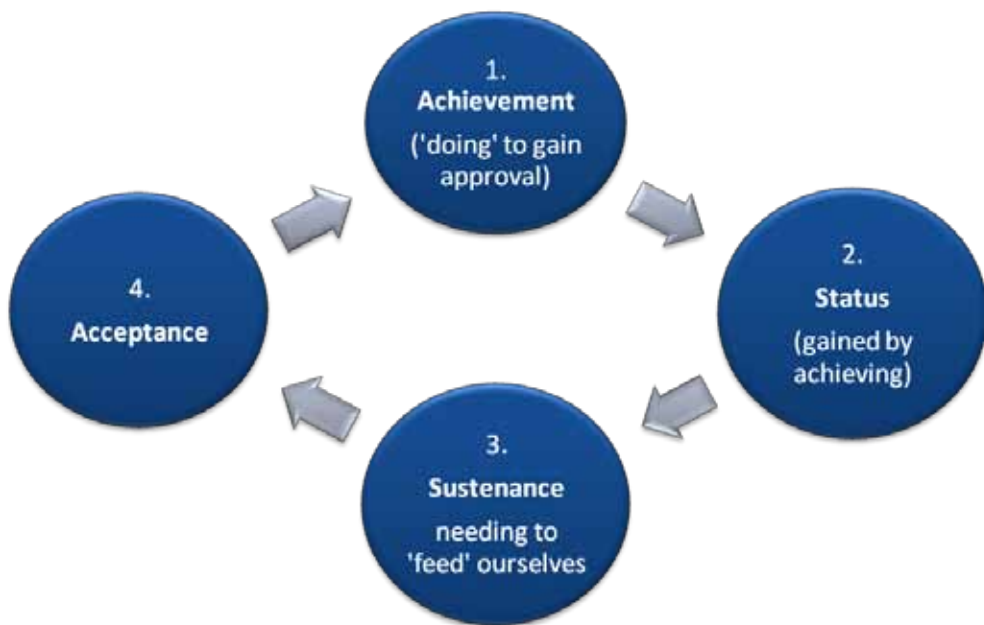
“What do you do? Where do you come from?”

Other people love to know our identity, probably so that they know which box to put us in. It's also a fundamental need for ourselves to belong, be known and be accepted.

In Ireland, anybody who was born even a few miles away was known as a 'blow in'. I was told by a lady who had married into the community that nobody would listen to her opinion as she was a 'blow in'.

Many of us struggle to be accepted and acceptable. Ministers will work their socks off to impress congregations; children of 50 years old will live their lives under the condition, 'if you are good'; others will struggle with winning the approval of their peers. **Jesus didn't!**

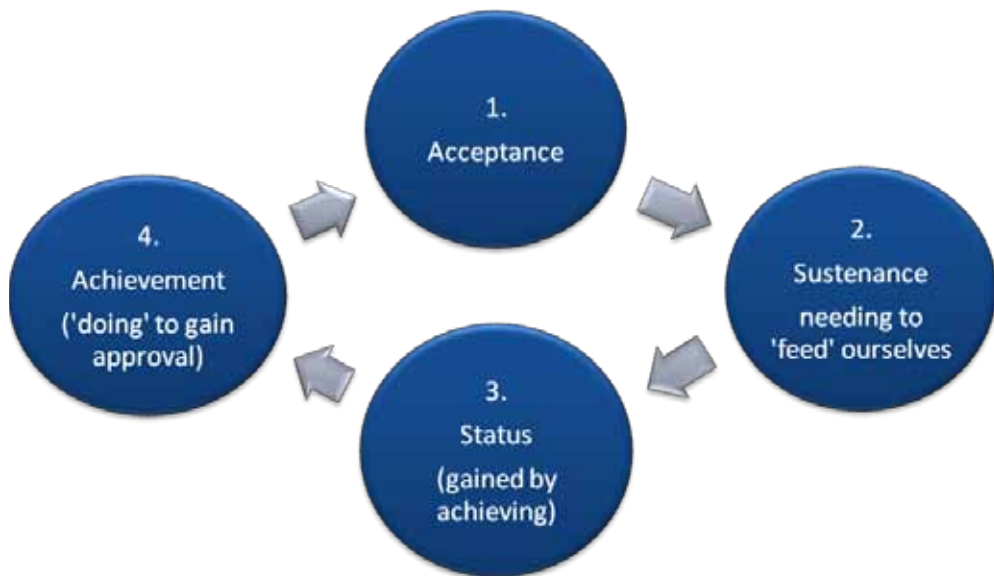
For us, life is often a struggle to find acceptance. Does the diagram below ring bells for you?



It's all such hard work. We have to keep achieving in order to maintain our status. We have to find things or people to nourish us. Working to be accepted is on-going hard work. **It's not what Jesus did.**

Several decades ago Frank Lake, a Christian Psychologist, explored how Jesus lived and ministered, and discovered that Jesus lived in an alternative way. He put the cycle above into reverse, like the diagram on page 7.

“Where do you come from?”



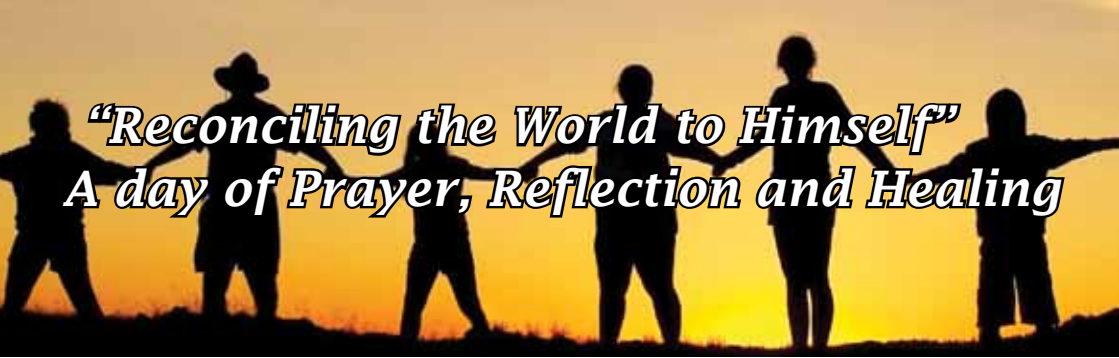
The starting point is **Acceptance**, and the key example is the Baptism of Jesus. Father speaks, “*You are my Son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased.*” Jesus’ sense of belonging, identity and acceptance are encompassed in this moment. Father said these words before Jesus had done anything! Father says the same to us, before we have done or achieved anything. That is awesome and on that rock we can build.

We don’t just need this sure foundation but need continued nourishment – we need to be sustained. Carol Dreeling, one of our prayer ministers, commented that many young people are sustained and nourished through the uncertain world of virtual relationships on social media. I wonder where we go for **Sustenance**? What do we depend on? For Jesus it was a total dependence on Father. Jesus spends a night in prayer, seeking out Father’s heart for Apostles. Father provides! “*All I have needed thy hand hath provided.*”

We live in a culture that craves for **Status** or significance through power, authority, position, celebrity etc, but these are phantoms that slip through our fingers like smoke. As we look at Jesus we find that He was totally sure of the reality of who He was. “*I am from above.*” “*I am the bread of Life.*” “*I am the good shepherd.*” All these spring from knowing Father’s view of Himself. We often live under a cloud of false and damaging descriptions of who we are that come from family, the past, work and any number of places. Transformation comes when we start hearing what God calls us. “*You’re not Simon, you are Peter, the Rock man.*” I think it was probably unbelievable to Simon or his friends at the time. Maybe we need Christian friends to be part of the source of re-education for us, as to our true identity.

For Jesus, it is from the foundations being **Accepted, Sustained** and **Status** that He lives and ministers, only ever doing what He sees Father doing.

Steve



“Reconciling the World to Himself”

A day of Prayer, Reflection and Healing

This was the title chosen by Bishop Martin of Chichester for his keynote speech at a day of healing for all denominations, which was held in September at the Charis Centre, Crawley.

On a lovely autumn day, about 150 people from all over Sussex gathered at this former school, which is now the home of Crawley Community Church. Together they shared a day of prayer, reflection and healing, and spent time thinking individually and collectively on the theme of the day - *“Reconciliation With God, Myself and Others”*, having been given on arrival a beautiful prayer card depicting the icon, *“Christ is our Reconciliation”*, and a prayer by Brother Roger of Taizé:

“O risen Christ, You breathe your Holy Spirit on us and you tell us: “Peace be Yours - opening ourselves to your peace - letting it penetrate the harsh and rocky ground of our hearts - means preparing ourselves to be bearers of reconciliation wherever you may place us.

But you know at times we are at a loss. So come and lead us to wait in silence, to let a ray of hope shine forth in our world.”

Everyone was also given a card to use for personal reflection with the questions, *“What have I brought to this day? Why did I come? Where do I need reconciliation? Where can I be a reconciler? What will I take from this day?”*

After a time of gentle Taizé worship, led by members of St. Margaret’s Church Rottingdean, Bishop Martin began by telling

us of his experience of the healing ministry during nine years working at the Pilgrimage Centre at Walsingham. He was often asked by journalists, *“Do you have healings? Do you have miracles?”*, as though they could be purchased off the shelf and handed out, which is how the secular world perceives the Christian experience of healing and reconciliation - neatly packaged with a price on it. He quoted 2 Cor. 5:19, *“God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself,”* and said that the vocation of the church – the company of the baptised - is to be the gathering of the whole human race, by nature togetherness, which is the complete opposite of the present culture of single unit dwellings, isolation and individualism.

The church is called to be open-doored congregations with space for the stranger and those who are different. We are called to be people seeking to open the windows into the reconciliation of God in Christ Jesus. The Bishop spoke about how those open doors in the past had disgracefully and tragically not offered freedom and liberation, but had been compromised by abuse. And how we are called as Christians to sit at the feet of those who have a narrative to tell, having nothing to say that can make it better, but to spend time to listen and allow God to heal, reminding us again of Paul’s words about God in Christ reconciling. There was time for a question and answer session, and we felt Bishop Martin had given us so much to reflect on.

After a delicious lunch prepared by the Centre Staff there was time to visit the ‘Market Place’, a variety of stalls in other rooms which offered different aspects of



reconciliation and healing. The CCHC's stall had a video presentation and display of Maggie's wonderful art.



At other stalls, there was an opportunity to have conversations about Healing on the Streets and Healing Rooms, Christian Aid, Centering Prayer or Forgiveness. The Mothers' Union had a display of their work with families and a detention centre, and the teddies they knit for comfort. Cursillo (a Christian outreach movement) had a very colourful stall, and the Shawl Ministry display attracted a great deal of interest.

There was also a popular bookstall and a quiet room, where there was a beautiful display of icons. During the afternoon, a couple of sessions led by Father John Wright on praying with icons were packed out, with standing room only!

Dawn Allan, the Chaplain at The Martlets Hospice, Brighton, brought her card game 'Conversations for Life', a tool for helping people come to terms with approaching death, and Peter Wells the Lead Chaplain for Brighton and Sussex Hospitals Trust, had

conversations on reconciling our personal relationships.

Minsters of Healing had a busy time praying with those who requested it, and the day concluded with a peaceful service of Evening Prayer in the Iona tradition, led by Revd Gail Souppouris and Revd Helen Rose.

Almost two years of planning, and much prayer support from Crowhurst, made this a day to remember and one which introduced many more folk to the wonderful place which is Crowhurst.

*Sheila Powell, Chairman, Planning Team
Brighton & Hove Deaneries Healing Group*



Bishop Martin's Visit to the CCHC

On Wednesday 23rd October we were pleased to welcome our new President, Bishop Martin Warner of Chichester, for his first visit to the Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre. The Vicar of the Parish of Crowhurst, Fr. Michael Brydon (far left), whose visits we value greatly, was with him.

They joined new Chair of the Trustees, Martin Granger, Steve G, Steve C and Penny for lunch, during which various subjects, ranging from garden maintenance to ministry supervision and boundaries, were discussed.

After lunch the Bishop was shown some rooms, the offices, kitchen and the Chapels before enjoying a short walk around the grounds. A highlight of the Bishop's visit was kneeling together in prayer in the Chapel of Christ's Glory (Big Chapel), during which he prayed for the Lord's blessing on us and the ministry here. We look forward to welcoming Bishop Martin back on another visit.

Crowhurst
Christian Healing Centre
Healing Services - Retreats
Prayer Ministry - Quiet Days
Personal Space
Founded in 1928
The Old Rectory
Tel: 01424 620004
www.crowhursthealing.org
a place of Christ's healing

Increasing Boundaries

We are enjoying the Lord frequently asking us to trust Him with new ministry opportunities and ask for your on-going prayers for the ministry here! However we have a surprising development to consider. The neighbouring property, Mead's End, is up for sale! (on the right of our main entrance as you drive in). This piece of land used to belong to the Centre and was sold in the early 1930's. Is the Lord prompting us to re-acquire it and if so how?

Please join with the Trustees and Chaplaincy Team as we prayerfully consider this issue before the Lord.

Steve (Senior Chaplain) and Martin (Chair of Trustees)



OUR VISION STATEMENT

The Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre is a non-denominational, residential place with a vision to continue the healing, preaching and teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, both at the Centre and in the wider context of the Church of Christ.



Prayer Requests for Winter 2013

Please pull out and keep for the coming months

Prayer Requests for Winter 2013

PRAYER FOCUS

"Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; for you are God my Saviour."

Psalms 25:4 & 5

PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING

"You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God, and I will exalt you." Psalm 118:28

PRAYER

- Give thanks and praise for all the blessings of the past year and for the way in which the "two Steves" and their wives have settled into the Crowhurst family. Pray for them as they seek the Lord's will for the future of the CCHC. May the Lord show us how best to use the resources we have and to find ways of promoting the Centre to the wider world.
- Give thanks for the increase in numbers, especially at the Thursday morning Healing Service. Give thanks and pray for the Ministry Team, that the Lord will strengthen and uphold them. They are always available to comfort those who are hurting and to minister, through prayer, the blessing and peace of Christ's healing love.
- Give thanks for the growing popularity of the Centre's Facebook page (207 'Likes' now). Our special thanks to Esther, one of the office staff, who keeps everyone up to date.
- Pray for all the staff at the Centre. May the Lord bless, strengthen and keep them in good health during the months ahead.
- Pray for the safety of staff and visitors when travelling to the Centre during the winter months. May the Lord guard, protect and bless all who "come aside and rest awhile."

*"How good it is to sing praises to our God;
how pleasant and fitting to praise Him."*
Psalms 147:1.

December Prayer Focus

***"For unto us a child is born, to us a Son is given. He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* Isaiah 9:6**

DECEMBER

3 - 6	Advent Retreat
4	Advent Quiet Day - Open to all
19	<i>LAST HEALING SERVICE OF 2013</i>
22 - 28	House closed
30 - 3 Jan	New Year Retreat

***"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us."* John 1:14**

January Prayer Focus

“Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.” Luke 4:8

JANUARY

- 8 Editorial Board Meeting
- 9 **FIRST HEALING SERVICE OF 2014**
- 10 - 12 Healing Retreat Weekend
- 15 Guided Quiet Day
‘Signposts for the Journey’. Exploring biblical aspects of guidance
Led by Bridget Jenkinson
- 21 - 22 Chaplains at Christian Healing UK Conference
- 24 - 26 Teaching Weekend
‘Moving deeper into God’s heart.’
Led by Jennifer Rees-Larcombe
- 28 - 31 Prayer Partners Retreat

“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” Philipians 1:6

February Prayer Focus

“In Him and through faith in Him, we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” Ephesians 3:12

FEBRUARY

- 1 Teaching Day
Led by Revd Sarah Chapman
‘Breaking out of the abuse cycle’
- 7 - 9 Healing Retreat Weekend
- 15 Guided Quiet Day
‘Step out where kingdoms meet’
Led by Margaret Stredwick & Pat Lockley
- 17 - 21 Prayer & Painting week

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me ... for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11: 29 & 30

Prayer for The Centre

PRAYER FOCUS

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28

PRAYER FOR THE TRUSTEES

Martin Granger (Chair), Jim Beveridge, Shirley Dawson, Paul Raynor, Jane Thomas and Mavis Williams.

- We welcome Martin Granger as the new Chair of the Board of Trustees. Please pray that the Lord will bless him as he takes on new responsibilities. Give wisdom and discernment in the days ahead.
- With Colin's departure, our numbers have decreased. Continue to pray earnestly that the Lord will provide people of His choice, with a heart for the healing ministry, to join the Board.
- We give thanks and praise for those who have contributed so generously to the fund to rebuild the Art Room. The Lord continues to provide for all our needs and we are well on the way to reaching our target. Praise His holy name.
- The Project Team has received five quotations from possible contractors for the Art Room. Pray for wisdom and guidance for the Trustees as they have to give their approval before a planning application can be submitted.
- Diane, our cook, is still unwell and only able to work part-time. Pray that she will be restored to full health and that the Lord will provide a full-time cook to join the team. We give thanks for Ollie's help during the summer holidays. May the Lord bless him as he returns to university.

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Galatians 6:10

Prayer for staff at The Centre

"In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts according to the grace given to us." Romans 12: 5 & 6

SENIOR CHAPLAIN: Steve Gendall

DEPUTY CHAPLAIN: Steve Clark

ASSOCIATE CHAPLAIN: Penny

MINISTRY TEAM: Andy, Brenda, Carole, Colin, Gwen, Hildegard, Jenny, June, Maggie, Margaret, Mike, Nigel, Olive, Paul, Pippa, Stephen, Veronica, Vivien and Yvonne

CENTRE CO-ORDINATOR: Hilary Clark

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR: Chris

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR: Jayne

HOUSE MANAGER: Heidi

MAINTENANCE MANAGER: Geof

MAINTENANCE ASSISTANT: Brian

OFFICE STAFF: Esther, Gillian, Juliette

HOUSE STAFF: Abigail, Chrissy, Clare, Julian, Justine, Sarah and Steve

COOKS: David and Diane

GARDENER: Desmond

PIANISTS: Pippa and Stephen

FLAUTIST: Vivien **DRUMMER:** Pete

VOLUNTEERS: Cliff, Diane, Jenny, Marion, Margaret, Mavis, Michal, Rosemary and Shirley

MAGAZINE EDITOR: Mary

"Share with God's people who are in need. Practise hospitality. Live in harmony with one another." Romans 12:13 & 16

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Stop, Look, Listen!

This is the remainder of the Thanksgiving Day article which featured in the autumn magazine, which due to lack of space, I was unable to fit in, so enjoy part two!

In his talk, Steve said, “Crowhurst is a Stopping, Looking and Listening place for folk to ...



Stop

Come aside and rest awhile, a place to be nurtured by God. One's physical needs are bountifully taken care of by the hospitality, dining and kitchen teams. A place to stop close to God, to feel Him breathe into one's spirit and whole being. A place to be nourished by bread and wine daily and with spiritual food from His word, from His servants, the Chaplains, prayer ministers and musicians.


Look

Coming to Crowhurst gives one time to look at one's journey with the Lord, releasing one's innermost self to Him. To look at His detailed marvellous creation. Refocusing on Him - seeing His answers in pictures, creation and art.

Listen

Listening to the Lord speak into one's life. Hearing Him gently deal with sins, the past, the present and the future. Our times are in His hands. Listening to His current, relevant word. Listening to His way forward, not mine. His timing is perfect. Submitting to His will and being ministered to by music.”

As we come to the end of 2013 and look ahead to the New Year, it is a good time to stop, look and listen to God. We thank the Lord for all His provision at the CCHC this year and look forward to all He will bring about in 2014. To hear God speaking to us, we do need to sometimes just stop, reflect and ponder on what he might be saying to us. Then we need to look at whatever the Lord prompts us to see, visibly or within. And we need to be quiet and listen, be it in silence or through music, where God can so powerfully speak and bring us into His presence. Stephanie Bentt-Dale has written this lovely prayer, which I found when browsing the CCHC's Facebook page.



***As I listen to you Lord
I find it best not to rush and do
But to spend time in the NOW with you
And I feel the blessing
And experience the peace
Of enjoying and using
This present moment
For I will not visit
This NOW time again.***

2013 at the CCHC

It has been another blessed year at the Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre. After the Christmas break, the year began with the New Year Retreat and January was busy as guests took up the 'Buy one, get one free'

offer, where one full paying guest could bring another for free. In February there was a 'Buy two nights, get one night free' deal. For those who had never been to the Centre before, these offers were an ideal opportunity



A snowy water feature!



Ducks and Daffodils in spring



Geof, Steve G and Steve C hard at work



Renovated water feature

Folk really enjoy sitting by the water feature but for a while the water had stopped flowing, and in March this year, during a Teaching Day, Steve Clark was prompted by God to get the flow restored. So in the summer it was taken apart, cleaned and the edging slabs replaced. Steve felt God calling him to this small act of obedience, and that in obeying God, something greater might be released at Crowhurst. Both the Chaplains felt it important to be involved hands on with the work and alongside Geof, Andrew Dreeling and Gwen Fayle, the fountain has been restored to its former beauty. All praise be to God.



Communion around the water feature in summer

Captured on Camera!

to experience what this special place has to offer. Later in the year **Free** 'Taster Retreats', were introduced, which also proved to be very popular. There has also been a variety of themed retreats, Teaching

and Guided Quiet Days, monthly Healing Retreat weekends, a joint conference with the Rochester Diocese (Great Expectations) and our annual Thanksgiving Day. There has been much prayer, but also much fun, see below!



New Year Retreat buffet



Healing Service



Easter Retreat group photo



Justine & Steve G having fun on Red Nose Day



Breakfast is served!



Staff Painting and Pizza day in June



A little, almost detached, wooden cabin, just to the right of the Centre's large Chapel, has been in existence on that site at least since the thirties. Its name is *Poustinia* - a word full of resonance, conjuring up something exotic and mysterious. The name in fact is Russian, and means solitude or desert. I had the privilege of living in this unique abode, whilst serving the Lord as a 'Resi' from between 1995 and 1998. It was really good being there and this was so notwithstanding the lack of a bathroom, and some testingly cold conditions in winter! At that point in my life, *Poustinia* was exactly what I needed for drawing closer to Jesus. For it was a big antidote to stress and tiredness - after long days of service in the main house - to be able to retreat back there; and then learn to trust the Lord for recharging in His presence.

It has to be said that being still and knowing that God is God is not an easy process (no wonder it's a command - *Psalms 46:10*). Like prayer itself which it is part of, it requires serious determination - and yes, love and desire. It is always sheer grace to know these exquisite moments when the Lord's love feels so close and real. That for me was the heart of the *Poustinia* experience.

All this was framed by the visible, daily aspects of life in a simple and homely cabin. There was in fact a toilet and a washbasin, so the basics of physical dignity could after all be maintained! And as regards the cold, I finally did something about it, in that I followed some advice to put a blanket under my bed's bottom sheet, and I also accepted the loan of a friend's electric heater. The kind friend was to become my wife!

There is something about living a semi-solitary existence and at the same time being close to creation - feeling the full impact of the four seasons, along with their endlessly changing patterns. How can one not fail to see the glory of a most wise and caring God, in having such exposure! I remember my heart thrilling to the sight of the spring flowers near the cabin; and to the pink and yellow roses in the summer, along with an exquisite purple and white stripey clematis (pictured right) growing up one of the hut's outside corner posts (part of the verandah area).



The three years I spent in *Poustinia* changed my life. I thank the Lord so much for what He taught and showed me there. A '*poustinia perspective*' is now a permanent part of my outlook. Let me encourage you to search for places (these could include a quiet church, a favourite room, your garden shed, a wood, a beach, or downland) that are conducive to stillness beyond the norm; or to more deeply engage with them. For although we don't ultimately depend on such settings, in them we find God more easily, and are blessed beyond our imaginings.

Ronnie Carless



Audrey Cowie, one of our Prayer Partners, has also sent in an article about Poustinia, which she found in a past Crowhurst magazine; here are some extracts below:

Poustinia has been on this site from well before the Second World War. Until now it has acted as a place of accommodation for the Old Rectory staff, locums and others, over the years. During Howard Cobb's time (the first Warden) a married couple, Mr and Mrs Stretch, lived there. Despite the lack of space, they enjoyed the experience.

This is therefore a much loved and prayed in place. Much heart-felt honest prayer has been poured out to the Lord here in Poustinia over the years. In it you will find His presence and His peace. Do try it on your next visit to the Crowhurst Christian healing Centre.

Prayers of love and trust

Openness to the God of Grace

Understood and accepted

Sustained by the Saviour

Trusting Him alone

Interceding

Never without hope

Inspired from above

Adoration offered up

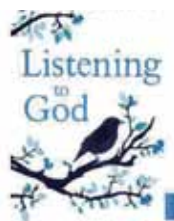
And a final word from Mary Hollingdale, who (coincidentally or God-incidentally!) wrote about Poustinia on Facebook after a recent stay, unaware that this little sanctuary was going to be featured in the winter issue!

I often find I can be very prayerful and have an encounter with God in my room, Chapel, along the Prayer Walk, or even in the quiet of the Library, but this time it was in Poustinia. I kept being drawn there several times.

During my stay I bought the book 'Listening to God' by Joyce Huggett. When I started reading it after my stay, I found on page 19 the meaning of Poustinia, 'desert or hermitage'. Wow! How awesome is our God. I am always wanting to get closer and closer to God and I am really enjoying the book. God Bless you all.

Mary Hollingdale

Listening to God was reviewed by Steve G in this year's spring issue. It is available for purchase from the CCHC's bookstall.





Art, Music & Reflection Day



The New Art Room

Seven folk were booked on this day, which was held during October. Some of the resident guests also joined in for parts of it.

The day consisted of worship, listening to songs and learning new ones. We even learnt an African song, 'Come all you people, come and praise your Maker' sung in its original language, which Steve Gendall translated for us.

There was a quiet time for reflection, an opportunity to be creative in the art room, and a chance to walk in the grounds.

Although we were only a few, we felt God's blessing over the day and some were deeply affected by the power of God's presence with us.

The day finished with Holy Communion and was followed with tea and cake.

Stephen & Maggie.

As many of you will have read in the last magazine, our much loved Art Room needs replacing. Thanks to your generosity and two significant legacies, at the time of writing we have received donations of £57,000. This is a brilliant response and has enabled us to engage a builder and work on the design for the new room.

The building will be similar in style to the old one, with wooden clad walls and roof. However it will have much better insulation, be accessible to all, have a WC, a large prep area and probably most striking of all, floor to ceiling windows and doors across the back of the building, overlooking the magnificent view over the fields.

The total cost is to be £100,000 to cover all the groundworks, connecting water, electricity and landscaping as well as the building. Thank you Lord that we are well on the way; we look to you Lord, in faith, for all that is needed.

Steve (Senior Chaplain)



Garden News



Well, here we are again – leaf clearing time! This task will take Cliff and myself virtually up to Christmas. The song ‘*The Autumn leaves fall by my window*’ is not our favourite

at this time of year!

Along with leaf clearance, I will also be planting Pansies and Polyanthus. Next year’s spring bulbs will also have been planted in anticipation of spring colour. Next year’s planting of summer bedding will have to be planned, as well as the hanging baskets.

Prior to this taking place, there is still plenty of work to be covered within the grounds – strimming, hedge trimming, and branches to be cut down, dead wood and small branches to be removed and the bonfire will be kept going for as long as possible!

With regards and a Happy Christmas to you all, Desmond.



I write this in autumn for the winter issue of the magazine. It’s that time again when out come the rakes to clear up the debris of fallen leaves, dead wood and acorns from the oak trees, in

preparation for new life next spring.

Last minute hoeing and digging has given me the chance to put down a thick bed of wood-chippings along some borders to try to stifle the growth, only to find badgers digging it up in their quest to find their nightly food, before they start digging up the grass for worms and grubs!

Tidying up part of the two Steves’ gardens, which are visible to our visitors is also an enjoyable part of my work.

So let the leaves fall; we’re ready for you!

Blessings, Cliff



A day in the life ...

Chrissy (House Team)



Chrissy is pictured here with some of her artistic napkin shapes, which are so cute, that when guests sit down to eat, they don't want to unravel them!

- 1. How long have you worked at the Centre?**
- 2. What does your day include?**
- 3. What gives the you most job satisfaction?**
- 4. What makes you smile?**
- 5. What would you like other people to know about this special place?**
- 6. Anything else you would like to say?**

1. Five years, but, I did take a six month break in 2011.
2. Generally I look after guests in the dining room, but as part of the 'House Team' I could be ironing, washing up, making beds or cleaning. Oh and I'm also a relief cook. Busy, busy, busy!
3. Getting to know each guest and their individual needs.
4. When guests say nice things about us at the Centre and they don't know I am within earshot!
5. Everything and nothing! If you've not stayed before, come with no pre-conceived ideas to rest in God's love and see what we're all about.
6. Although the CCHC is my place of work, it is just one big family and I feel very blessed to be part of it.

An explanation of 'weird splodgie squares' – or QR codes

QR code stands for Quick Response Code and is a way to help people get to a particular page on the internet at the touch of a button. Unfortunately the button in question is on a smart phone and requires a simple free App to work. Fortunately an increasing number of people have smart phones as prices now start at about £60.

We are now including a QR code on all our publicity as it is an easy and increasingly used way of getting to our website. You scan the Code with the phone, and this will turn the black 'splodgies' into our web address, which will lead you to our site.



QR Codes are very easy to make, do not require our resident artist, Maggie, to work with great precision with pen and ink, and can be generated to lead people effortlessly to a particular page or feature on our website. On the other hand just sit back, enjoy the magazine and the tactile pleasure of turning pages!

Steve Clark

FREE TASTER RETREATS

These two day Taster Retreats are an ideal opportunity for folk who have never stayed at the Centre before to try it out free of charge! The Retreats begin on a Tuesday afternoon and finish on the Thursday after lunch. There are certain criteria which need to be met so please ring the office for further details. Available dates at time of print are as follows:

February: 4 – 6, 11 – 13, 25 – 27

March: 11 - 13, 25 – 27

April: 8 – 10, 15 – 17, 22 – 24.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEW YEAR RETREAT 30 Dec to 3 Jan

December

- 3 - 6 Advent Retreat
4 Advent Quiet Day - **open to all**
19 **Last Healing Service of 2013**
22 - 28 House closed
30 - 3 Jan New Year Retreat

January

- 8 Editorial Board Meeting
9 First Healing Service of 2014
10 - 12 Healing Retreat Weekend
15 Guided Quiet Day
'Signposts for the Journey'
Exploring biblical aspects of guidance.
Led by Bridget Jenkinson
21 - 22 Chaplains at Christian Healing UK Conference
24 - 26 Teaching Weekend
Led by Jennifer Rees-Larcombe
'Moving deeper into God's heart.'
28 - 31 Prayer Partners Retreat

February

- 1 Teaching Day
'Breaking out of the abuse cycle'
Led by Revd Sarah Chapman
7 - 9 Healing Retreat Weekend
15 Guided Quiet Day
Led by Margaret Stredwick & Pat Lockley: *'Step out where kingdoms meet'*.
17 - 21 Prayer & Painting week

At the time of print, there are a few places left on this popular retreat. Here are a few comments from last year's guests to tempt you!

- ♦ *I felt a deep sense of peace and being loved and cared for. The communion was special and felt very close to God.*
- ♦ *A wonderful four days. The presence of God is felt immediately you enter the building. Lovely times of worship and teaching. The joy of the Lord fills the place. Thank you.*
- ♦ *A lovely stay – I go away with a lifting of the burdens with which I came. Praise God.*

PROGRAMME 2014

Next year's programme will be sent out with the magazine. If you don't receive one, or would like extra copies, please call the office or pick one up when you next visit the CCHC. There is a variety of themed retreats, with leaders such as Adrian Plass, Jennifer Rees-Larcombe and Russ Parker, all of whom have spoken at the Centre in the past. There are also Guided Quiet Days and Teaching Days, but of course you are always welcome to come and stay without booking onto a particular course or retreat. This special place is here to meet your needs.





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Monday to Friday and 9am - 4pm Saturday

For a brochure, programme or further
information please contact the Secretary

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Healing ^{in His} steps