

OCT - NOV  
2022

# Life.

## Home Groups!

Alan Cottenden sheds a light on what it means to be part of one!

## New Wine

United B Trip  
Review from July 22

## Tearfund Quiz Night

Sign up now! Don't miss out on the quiz of the year!

## Carbon & Trees

An Update from NMT!



**CHRIST  
CHURCH  
BEDFORD**

Living to love God and You



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**Thank you to all who have contributed to this edition of Life.** If you would like to contribute something to the next edition, the **deadline** for submissions for the **December/January** edition will be **11th November 2022.**

**Please email: [Editor@CCBedford.org](mailto:Editor@CCBedford.org)**



You can read this edition online, just go to our website: **[CCBedford.org/lifemagazine](http://CCBedford.org/lifemagazine)**

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# VICAR'S LETTER



Wow, what a couple of months! From the Institution, Installation and Induction Service on 20th July with Bishop Alan, to all the firsts; sermon, service leading, PCC, Morning Out, coffee at the tennis club, pint in the Dev, sausage in batter from the local chippy, Wild Church, and more.

But before I reflect, a lot of thank yous. To the Church Wardens and Curate who have been outstanding, to everyone who has made us

feel so welcome, to Pauline, Dawn and Ruth who have so graciously put up with all my questions, to all those who helped decorate the house and look after the garden. A big thank you to the community that is Christ Church, I feel so blessed to have been welcomed into this family. And a big thanks to my amazing wife, there is no me without her support, grace and long-suffering! And to Noah and Grace, you will probably never fully understand the joy and chaos



that you bring to my life and of those around you, which is a lot now as CCB is a big church!

So, what do I want to reflect on – change. For some it comes easily, for others it is a struggle. All of us face change, whether we like it or not. And Christ Church has gone through a lot of change in the last few years. The impact of Covid, a global pandemic touching all of us, and its lingering effects resonate on. The impact of a much loved and respected vicar leaving after 20+ years of service. A new vicar arriving who wears “funny” clothes, seems incapable of standing still, and keeps going off-piste. Another change of Prime Minister. And then the death of the Queen. A time of national mourning, something which has stirred up so much within us. Change, it’s all around us. But like the seasons, we know something of the faithfulness of God within the change. Autumn leads to winter which leads to spring which leads to summer and round and round it



Moving Day!!!



A meeting with Bishop Alan



It's Official!!!



goes. The God who promises to never leave us or forsake us, is here with us in the midst of the change.

For me, it feels like Christ Church is at the beginning of a new season. A lot of change has taken place and these words from Jeremiah 6 v 16 seem to resonate with where we are:

*This is what the Lord says:  
'Stand at the crossroads and look;  
ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is, and  
walk in it, and you will find rest for  
your souls.'*

I would like to invite you to join me in praying for God's wisdom as we discern together what is the ancient path which God wants us to walk in, what is the good way for Christ Church to walk in. That we and Bedford might find rest for our souls in the extravagant love of Jesus Christ.

David Thomas  
**VICAR**



"First day of School"



Pyramid Rocks Holiday Club!



R.I.P Queen Elizabeth II

# Home Group

**PAULINE BARBER**  
**HOME GROUP CO-ORDINATOR**

*Pauline Barber is Christ Church's Home Group Co-ordinator but what are Home Groups and why do they need co-ordinating?*

*So, what are Home Groups? What are they for? What do they do?*

The Christ Church family is far too big for any of us to know everyone – even by name – and our Home Groups aim to help us “do” church on a more manageable scale.

Typically, a group has around 10 members – some less, some a few more – which is big enough for there to be a lovely diversity of characters but small enough to get to know everybody and to make sharing life practicable. The New Testament encourages us to: love one another (John 13:34), encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11), carry each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2), serve one another (Galatians 5:13), be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32), forgive one another (Colossians 3:13), teach one another (Colossians 3:16), and so on, and that's a lot more doable in a Home Group of 10 than a church of 250. Each Home Group

has its own “flavour” and emphases (See the Home Group pages on the Church website at [https://ccbedford.churchinsight.com/Groups/325954/Home\\_Groups.aspx](https://ccbedford.churchinsight.com/Groups/325954/Home_Groups.aspx)) but getting into the scriptures is invariably central when they meet. Groups often focus on a recent sermon, teasing out what the teaching might look like for them in their everyday lives, and preachers generally provide helpful notes to seed discussion. Then there's praying for one another and for other people and situations beyond the group. There's also a lot of socialising involving – by all accounts – mountains of cake and gallons of coffee! Lots of learning, encouragement and challenge, but all in an informal and supportive setting.

*How many Home Groups do we have? Where do they meet? How often?*

Christ Church currently has 15 Home Groups. They all meet weekly – mostly for a couple of hours on a weekday evening – but some meet during the daytime. They often



# COFFEE, CAKES & CAKES!



meet in people's homes – around Bedford and the nearby villages - but a couple of them meet in the church building. The website page lists roughly where groups meet. Of course, Home Group members are also in touch between meetings, too. I like to think in terms of small, supportive communities, not just a weekly meeting.

## *What's your job as co-ordinator?*

It's mainly about suggesting to anyone who wants to join a group which one might work best for them in terms of where and when it meets, the make-up of the group and so on. I introduce them to the group leaders so they can explore further. Groups are generally very happy for new people to come along to a couple of "taster" meetings to help them decide if they want to stay. Of course, if I'm going to do a good job of advising people I need to keep abreast of what the various groups are doing, their age profiles, and whether they have space for more people. I also send pertinent information out to group leaders when needed and invite them to gather together occasionally for teaching and encouragement.

### *Do you enjoy your job?*

I do. The most enjoyable bit is getting to know people and working out with them which Home Group would work best for them. It's really encouraging when I hear that someone has settled well into a group.

### *Are some people reticent to join a Home Group?*

They are. I think that sometimes people imagine that Home Groups are just for those who are much more spiritually mature than they are. Or they might be worried that their unfamiliarity with the bible will be exposed: what if they take ages longer than everyone else to find the passage? Might they be expected to take their turn at leading or – worst of all – pray out loud! What if they say something daft: will everyone laugh? All these concerns are understandable but our Home Groups are much more “user friendly” than that! They all aim to be welcoming, encouraging and supportive. Don't be over-awed: give it a try!

### *Does the bible mention Home Groups?*

Not specifically, but you can't read far in Acts or the New Testament letters without hearing about the early Christians meeting in one another's homes for one reason or another. It's interesting that – in his short letter to a Christian called Philemon (Philemon 1:2) - Paul refers to the church that meets in his (Philemon's) home. Presumably, this was the way it usually worked given that church buildings didn't come till much later. When a new church was planted it may only have been about as big as one of our home groups, which is an interesting thought!

When Jesus was preparing his disciples for the future when he would no longer be around physically he said, “... where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” (Matthew 18:20). I love that: what an encouragement for our Home Groups when they meet. I also like the challenge from the letter to the Hebrews: “... and let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24)





### *Plans for the future?*

We need more groups to create space for those who want to join us, and that means more leaders. I'm working on it! One of the things I'm considering is arranging for a mentor to help new leaders at first, if they're a bit unsure. I'm also exploring the possibility of a daytime group for parents of small children. Another challenge that exercises me is how Home Groups can best be made to work for parents whose children are too young for husband and wife to go to meetings together.

*If someone wants to explore the possibility of joining a home group – or leading one - what should they do?*

Best thing is to contact me so we can chat. Find me after one of our 10:30 Sunday services, email me [homegroups@ccbedford.org](mailto:homegroups@ccbedford.org), or contact the church office.

*Thank you!*  
*Alan Cottenden*







Saturday 19 November

Doors open 7:45pm for an 8pm start

Hundreds of churches.  
Thousands of people.  
One big quiz.

Get together with your friends, family and community  
for an epic evening of poverty-beating fun  
at Christ Church, Bedford.

### Your To-Do List in 4 easy steps!

1. Select your Team (no more than 6 people)
2. Create your Quiz Team Name
3. Sign Up at [editor@ccbedford.org](mailto:editor@ccbedford.org)
4. Organise your snacks and drinks for the night!

Come and join us for the Quiz of the Year!

Every pound raised at the Big Quiz Night will help transform the lives of people living in poverty. Visit [tearfund.org/quiz](https://tearfund.org/quiz) to find out more.

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**tearfund**



# GO 4 GOLD

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2022

14.00-15.15



**Friday 21st October**

**Wild Church - A visiting speaker to share about the exciting woodland adventures**

**Friday 18th November**

**Hello newcomers... To be confirmed who they are!**



**Friday 16th December**

**Christmas Celebrations - Sing along, quiz, games etc!!**

Do come and join us if you can for our Seniors' Social.

Cuppa and cake with chat is included and all for £1!

Christ Church - 14.00 - 15.15ish, entrance through The Hub!



**FILM CLUB...**

**This runs on the first Friday per month. 14.00 - 15.15. Do join us and enjoy a film plus refreshments of Popcorn, drinks and Ice Cream and all for a £1!!!**





AN UPDATE FROM THE NENO  
MACADAMIA TRUST (NMT)

# CARBON & TREES

By WILL RAWES

NMT IS SUPPORTED BY  
CHRIST CHURCH VIA MIG  
(MISSION IMPACT GROUP)

We need more trees throughout the world - planted and maintained in ways that are biodiverse and beneficial in multiple ways. The Western mindset over generations has often seen answers in a mono-cultured fashion. Often “magic-bullet” solutions which have led to large-scale monocultures that over time are often not as constructive as originally dreamed. In fact the impact of large scale mono-cultured activity over many decades has now impacted our climate so much that even last



month Europe experienced a static hot air mass directly from North Africa giving us the highest temperatures on record. Two factors that have been involved include (though not exclusively!):

- i) Very high concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere – globally – and very clearly and accurately measured since 1958. CO<sub>2</sub> is a greenhouse gas.
- ii) High levels of deforestation in Africa - a lot of which is due to non-indigenous mono-cultured farming throughout the continent where indigenous trees and plants are destroyed to grow crops such as maize or tobacco.

NMT, established in 2004, has been working with a large number of smallholder farmers in Malawi who are planting and maintaining macadamia trees within their fragile, exposed and deforested environment. Their priorities for these trees is to provide food security and developing a sustainable economy, where subsistence life is never far away from hunger. In Malawi it is called “hunger periods” which occur every year. In the most severe times it is famine and 2002 was one of the more recent occurrences and portrayed in the eye-opening film *“The Boy Who*

*Harnessed the Wind”*.

Christ Church is supporting NMT’s work through the carbon damage mitigation scheme we run. The scheme is about starting to repair the effects of the huge amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> that are in the atmosphere – globally. Every day we will see the word carbon and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in our news – yet we can’t directly see it. So what are the facts about this CO<sub>2</sub> and carbon damage?

Our carbon page...

[www.nenomacadmiastrust.org/carbon](http://www.nenomacadmiastrust.org/carbon) provides an overview of the issue and our work with graphs and data – such as how much CO<sub>2</sub> has been scientifically measured since the late 1950’s as well as UK temperatures measured monthly for the last 150+ years. It is this data and these graphs that highlight the reality of carbon damage and is why you see the word “carbon” so much now.

You may ask “So how are NMT and Christ Church directly helping deal with this global issue?”

The answer is by taking responsibility for our carbon emissions. NMT links the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> our “developed-world” lifestyles emit directly with macadamia trees in Malawi that are planted and maintained for many

years (at least 25 years). We survey and register trees annually belonging to smallholder farmers. Starting in 2017 with about 70 farmers we registered over 6,000 trees which absorb / “sequester” over 120 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (tCO<sub>2</sub>) during 1 year of tree growth from the atmosphere. Our surveys have expanded steadily each year since then to the point where in 2021 with 300 farmers we registered 15,000 trees sequestering over 300 tCO<sub>2</sub> during the year of 2021.

Because we are working in the long-term with the farmers and because the trees provide food security, environmental stability and income from nut harvests these trees will be sequestering CO<sub>2</sub> for a minimum of 25 years. In fact we have surveyed some healthy macadamia trees that are over 30 and 40 years old. All the farmers are members of cooperative community groups which are managed by a national coop group called HIMACUL (Highlands Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited, Malawi).

The secretary of HIMACUL, Ken Mkengala, who is an expert in smallholder macadamia tree farming, visited us at Christ Church :-

[www.nenomacadamiastrust.org/news.html?20](http://www.nenomacadamiastrust.org/news.html?20)



## The Environmental Challenges



Smallholder farms flooded in Storm Ana  
January 2022

A typically beautiful but deforested landscape





# Nursery Development



**Preparing seed beds Spring 2019**



**A full young nursery Autumn 2019**



**Home of Hope nursery trees arriving from HIMACUL 2020**

## Tree Survey Photos 2021

Images on the left explained:-

Top Left: Surveyed macadamia trees amongst homes and a banana tree to the left.

Top Right: Healthy macadamia in a maize field with base protected by stones.

Bottom Left: Probably the most beautiful tree survey photo 2021.

Bottom Right: A tree with soil arranged for irrigation.







Our vision is to expand the cooperative groups so that more farmers can develop this macadamia agroforestry at a very grass-roots level – which ensures that it provides for the diverse needs of smallholder communities. It means that the trees are integral to the biodiverse requirements of those communities. The farming activities are diverse and often include maize, beans, sweet potatoes, cassava, banana, avocado and live-stock management. The more diverse the farming then the more resilient the local environment is to the climate extremes that are now occurring even more regularly in these last years. Trees in an agroforestry system play a huge role in stabilising the very deforested and vulnerable environment.

Our mobile phone tree survey software that I have learnt to develop over my career here in the UK collects tree and farm data and more recently live tree photos from Malawi. The technology works in a tough environment where electricity supply and data access is limited and intermittent. The initial benefit of the surveys means NMT can provide us in the “developed-world” with a way of taking more responsibility for our carbon emissions by purchasing carbon damage mitigation certificates. All the funds from the certificates go first to the farmers who maintain surveyed trees and then to HIMACUL and the coop business centres who are developing nurseries to enable those and other farmers to plant more trees and extend local macadamia agroforestry.



The partnership with Christ Church has meant that the church has purchased a voluntary carbon damage mitigation certificate registered to offset 20 tCO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the duration of 2021. For any of us who are able to and want to take more responsibility for our complex lifestyles in this modern world and our large scale emission of CO<sub>2</sub> into the Earth's atmosphere, you can purchase certificates from the NMT carbon calculator here:

[www.nenomacadamiastrust.org/NMTCarbonCalculator.html](http://www.nenomacadamiastrust.org/NMTCarbonCalculator.html)

Feel free to ask me about this work. I am also going to be running an introductory science course at Rothsay Education Centre, titled "Carbon" starting Spring 2023 which will cover some of the science of carbon, environmental aspects and dealing with the issues we now face. Follow this link for more information on this course:-

<https://recbedford.co.uk/courses>

Two Scriptures from Genesis 2 which are ever present with me in this work are:

**The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground - trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.**

**The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**

As members of the human race we have all got much to improve upon in terms of how trees have been used over the last 2022 years.



**Harvested Macadamia Nuts**

# NewWine

**What a blessing New Wine is! For me, this was the best year yet. Kay, Amy, AJ, Matt, Laura, Joshua and myself were camping. It was a hot day to pitch a tent. No rain yet!**

**We went to the Arena on the first evening for worship and Bible study. The band was excellent and it was lovely to dwell in the presence of the Lord. Paul Harcourt, leader of New Wine network, was speaking on the theme of deeper intimacy with the Lord, and how we should seek that from the very first day of New Wine. Kay had brought an 'events tent' which was such a blessing. After the evening sessions had finished we gathered there for a glass of wine and debrief of our New Wine experience so far.**

**The following days followed a pattern; Bible study in the morning with Amy Orr-Ewing, then a seminar chosen from a range of topics. There was an excellent range of speakers and topics to choose from. I heard Daniel McGinnis talking on Missional Acts, Mark Cartledge (London School of Theology) on Spirit Empowered Witness: the message of John's Gospel and another on God in the Workplace. The evening meetings we tended to go to the Annex, a**

**smaller worship band and space. There were some excellent after hours events too. Busy days, star filled nights.**

**It was lovely to have visitors from Christ Church on Monday, and afternoon art and craft events like bottle painting were enjoyed by some. (Hope you will share at Church family weekend?).**

**The best part for me this year was sharing breakfast and other mealtimes and chats with our fellow campers. Joshua was an absolute delight and made friends with children from other churches around our little encampment. He also enjoyed great kids sessions in the mornings, with amazing equipment and experiences.**

**We don't yet know what is happening in the future for the New Wine United conference. They will not be at the Peterborough Showground next year. Either way, it is always great to get away from the normal daily routine and dwell in God's presence and get to know our church family a little better.**

**Written by: Sue Marshall**



”

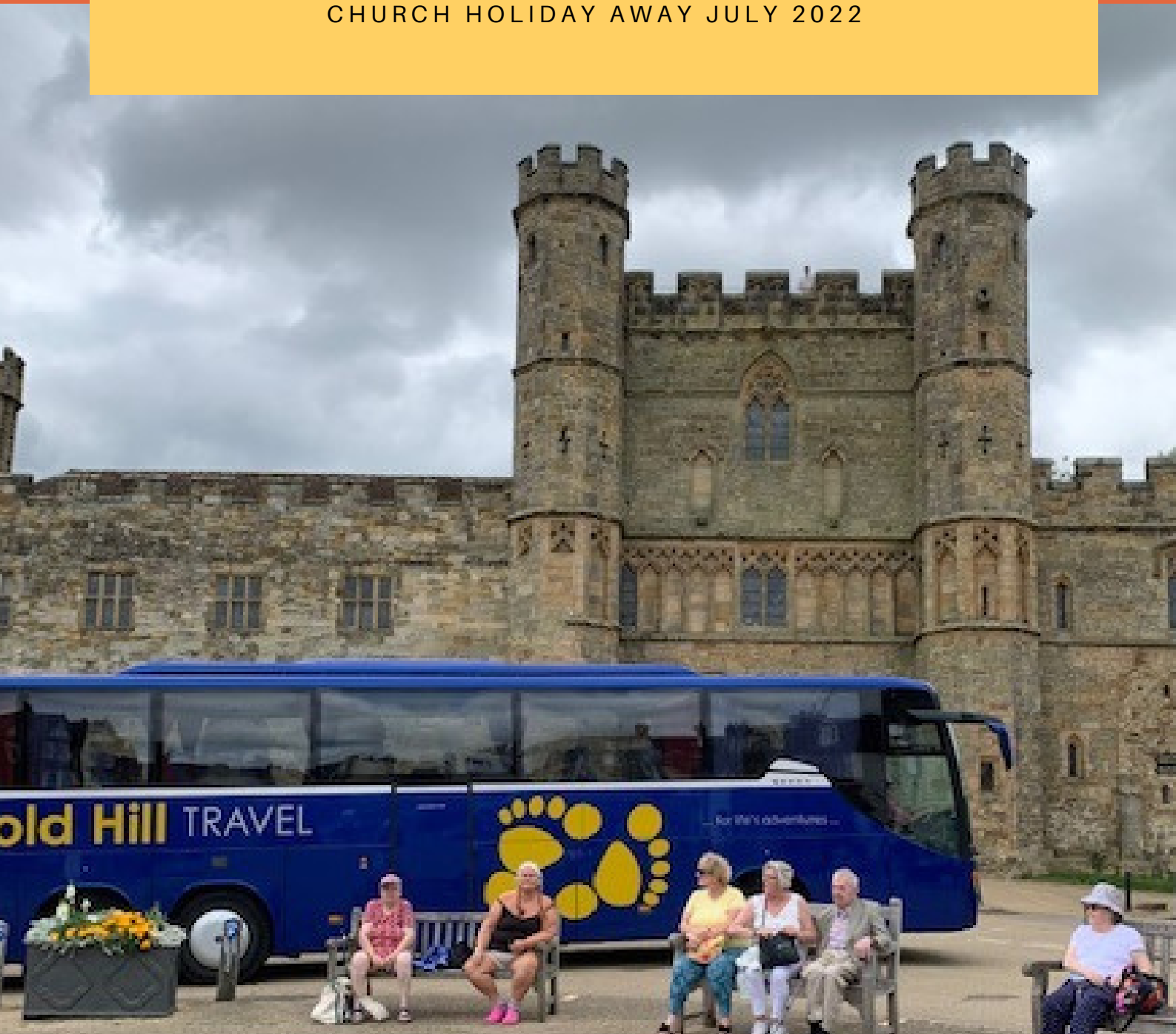
***JESUS CHRIST IS  
THE SAME  
YESTERDAY,  
TODAY, AND  
FOREVER***

“



# Eastbourne

CHURCH HOLIDAY AWAY JULY 2022



ANOTHER WONDERFUL CCB HOLIDAY AND THIS TIME WE WENT  
TO EASTBOURNE, STAYING AT THE BURLINGTON HOTEL



*"Excellent value as everything was included, trips, coach, meals, hotel, speaker and even coach sweets!!"*



## Enjoying a steam train ride!



### WRITTEN BY RACHEL BENNETT

Our daily coach journeys, with Gold Hill Travel as our coach company again meant that, as ever we cruised along beautifully on all the trips we took! There was much to do in Eastbourne itself with the open top bus, funny little toot toot motor train along the Esplanade, the glorious gardens along the sea front just opposite the hotel and not forgetting, the delightful Victorian pier to take an afternoon tea in! Two other fun trips that some of us took was a boat cruise around the harbour with a

*"All companions were full of natural friendly Christian conversations"*

commentary to help us understand the harbour's history and recent development. To complete the Eastbourne outings there was an opportunity to have a Miniature train ride, well, that certainly was different!

Being in Sussex, we definitely needed to visit Battle Abbey and then Hastings, wow, what history, even the Hastings Funicular West railway has history to it but sadly no cuppa at the top!

*"I loved the end of the day Evening Prayer time"*

Brighton Pavilion was fascinating too and, on our way back we took a detour via Beachy Head for something called an 'ice cream stroll'!!!

On route to Eastbourne on our first day, we stopped off at Michelham Priory, a wonderful ancient site with fascinating history. And at the end of our holiday, we of course just had to take a steam train ride on the Bluebell railway, which was great fun and very relaxing, worth every hoot from the engine!!





*"Definitely coming again."*

*"Starting to save for the next one!"*

We were joined, on Tuesday evening, by a young evangelist, Martin Povey. He shared his Christian faith story with us and explained about the work he is involved with through the universities and churches both in Sussex and around the country. What an encouragement it was for us to hear what God is doing among the younger generation. It was also good to have some helpful suggestions,

comments about how the next trip could offer a few improved changes, thank you!

We praise God for safety, fun, fellowship and good food but most of all it was a time to know Jesus more in all we saw and did on the holiday. Look out for the information, this autumn, that will say where we plan to take our next church holiday away. We would love to have you join us!



## Sunday Services

9am & 10:30am Morning Worship

7pm Sundays@Seven

## Wednesday Service

10am Holy Communion



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