



With all best wishes for Christmas  
and the New Year  
from Crossways Community

### **Joy to the world the Lord has come ...**

Once again we are soon to celebrate Christmas and that means different things to different people. As with many things in life, to make sense we often have to go back to the beginning to understand what was first intended.

When the angel proclaimed God's intention to the shepherds around Bethlehem they said "I bring you good news of great joy ... today a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord". As Christmas draws near let us rejoice that it is an expression of God's love and goodwill to all people. Of course that means each one of us, so this year allow God's goodness to transcend what the world makes of the festive session and, like Mary, wonder again at all God is doing in the lives of so many people.

### **Fortieth celebrations**

The reason for sending out a Christmas Newsletter this year is to bring to a close the anniversary celebrations and to thank God for his great faithfulness to us at Crossways. The two events at St John's Church were wonderful occasions; they were well attended and we had the joy of seeing so many former residents, staff and people who have supported us over many years - yes, some for forty years!

We started with a lunch at a local hotel to say thank you to two groups of people without whose support Crossways would not be able to do the work that we do. They were local church leaders and mental health team professionals whom we work with. The event gave us the time to catch up with one another; it was good to see friends from the past and to make new contacts. Dr James Thallon, Medical Director for West Kent PCT and GP to many of our residents, spoke about the need to have value for money but also to maintain compassion for those we have responsibility for.

## Family Day

It was lovely just to have the time to be with people on this particular day. Many came, and there were opportunities to hear about Crossways, look at pictures from the past, to be prayed for, or to just relax and eat lunch and look around the stalls which had such lovely hand-made items for sale - including one that was selling produce that residents and staff had made.

There were photographs from the past for people to look at, some projected onto the wall and others in albums on a table. All through the day people were looking at them, stirring memories, some sad but mostly happy.

## Thanksgiving Service

What a day! Many friends joined us at St John's to celebrate God's love and faithfulness. It was a privilege to have the Deputy Mayor, Mike Rusbridge, and his wife Chris, join us for the service. Also, to have Marilyn Baker ministering to us again; God touches the hearts of so many people through her songs

Lilla, Doreen and Bob, founder members of Crossways, along with Christine, Leslie and Lilla's daughter, were able to share with us about the early days of Crossways. It was fascinating and exciting to hear what they had to say and, although Crossways is very different forty years on, it is still the same God to whom we look to show us the way forward.

Brian Woodgate, our speaker, picked up on the theme of God's faithfulness and had a prophetic word for Crossways, for which we would appreciate your prayers as we consider what God is saying to us for the future.

After the service we all went into the Church hall for refresh-

ments and there was a lot of talking and laughter - just how it should be when family and friends are celebrating.

We are grateful to a large number of people who gave up their time to help us make these events so successful, we could not have done without them. Special thanks to Katy Webster, the events manager, for the months of hard work she put in and to St John's Church for making their wonderful facilities available to us.

*Martin Granger*



A delegation from the Tunbridge Wells Rotary Club was made warmly welcome

Family old and new enjoying each other's company at St John's Church hall





Folk enjoying reliving memories with Elaine at our photograph table, St John's Church hall

**We are delighted to reproduce below some of the many responses we received after the Celebrations:**

A big thank you for the 40th anniversary lunch you put on and invited me to ... I made some very helpful contacts and learnt more about your community.

*Gill Baker, Tonbridge Baptist Church*

These events don't just happen and I'd like to thank you for all the hard work which went on both in front of and behind the scenes.

*Dilys Critchley*

It was such a privilege and inspiration to be with you all and together just to stop, appreciate afresh the goodness and greatness of our God.

*Lilla Moxham*

The 40th Anniversary lunch ... was a really lovely occasion. We wish you many more happy and successful years: we are very blessed to have you all.

*Mary and David, Psychiatric Liaison Team, Kent & Sussex Hospital*

Thank you for the lovely celebration lunch ... I did enjoy relaxing with my colleagues from Highlands House. It was very interesting to hear Dr Thallon speak too, the whole event went by very quickly.

*Jenny Cox, Town Medical Centre, Sevenoaks*

Thank you so much for having us at your 40th Birthday Service, we were truly moved by the inspirational testimonies and music included in it.

*Mike Rusbridge, Deputy Mayor, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council*