



AUTUMN/WINTER NEWSlink

Keeping you in touch with Emmanuel Church, South Croydon

3,500 copies distributed throughout the South Croydon area

Autumn/Winter 2009

Issue No.12

Has Darwin killed God?



At the end of September 'Creation' appeared.

This is a new film about the life of Charles Darwin. Its release has been accompanied by the usual mixture of wishful thinking and lazy journalism about 'science and God' that the life and work of Darwin tend to evoke.

The sense of wonder we often feel when watching a David Attenborough programme, or when we see something as beautiful as a butterfly, raises questions for us about the origins not just of species but of life itself.

"You've killed God, sir," says Huxley to Charles Darwin in the film.

The president of the National Secular Society, Terry Sanderson, indulged in wishful thinking when he said in a recent newspaper article that Darwin delivered a fatal blow to religion. Sanderson's society has some 3000 members, compared to the 2 billion Christians worldwide.

Recently I heard someone say 'I believe in Darwin, not God'.

Leaving aside the fact that Darwin would have been horrified by such a profession of faith, the reality is that Darwin's theory

Continued overleaf

'All for Jesus - Jesus for All'

visit us: www.emmanuelcroydon.org.uk

In this issue ...

P3 Vilma Colucci

From Italy to Emmanuel to China - with love! Vilma Colucci is on a Mission.

P5 comparetheinterns.com

Tom, Harriet, Tim and James tell it like it is helping at Emmanuel. Simples!

P7 Young people at

Emmanuel - we know what did you did last Summer !!? What's happening in the year ahead?

P8 Back page, Advent:

It's coming, but what does it mean to YOU? Eight Emmanuel members face up to the question.

Has Darwin killed God?

Continued from front page

can't be used to prove the non-existence of God.

If it turns out that Darwin's theory is a true explanation of how biological diversity has come about, it does not begin to tackle other big questions such as: why is the universe here at all? How did life begin? What is the origin of consciousness?

There is an unfortunate myth abroad in our society which says that anyone who takes science seriously must become an atheist. But there are many examples of high level professional scientists who are also deeply committed Christians.

One such Christian is the geneticist Francis Collins, Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute. He has written, "The elegance and complexity of the human genome is a source of profound wonder. That wonder only strengthens my faith".

The question of whether there is a God, and what God might be like, has not gone away since Darwin. Indeed, many scientific discoveries in the 150 years since Darwin published 'On the Origin of Species' have only served to put the question of God's existence back on the agenda.

Are we here by chance, or on purpose? How we answer that question has far reaching consequences. Darwin doesn't answer it.

By Rev Trevor Mapstone

OUR SERVICES

If you don't already join us at our services, you are most welcome to visit at any time. Three services are held at Emmanuel every Sunday. It is a special time that we'd like to share with you.

9.30am All-age service

A lively, informal all-age service, using the best in modern worship songs. This service has crèche facilities and children's groups available.

11am Morning service

A more traditional service of worship, teaching and prayer with psalms, some of the best modern hymns and biblical preaching relevant to everyday life.

6.30pm Evening service

A less formal service that includes contemporary worship music, relevant biblical preaching and prayer ministry in order to help people engage with God.

Holy Communion

Services of Holy Communion are held on the first Sunday of the month at 9.30am, on the second and fourth Sundays at 11am, and on the third and fifth Sundays at 6.30pm.

Our services are held at Emmanuel Church, Normanton Road (off Croham Road), South Croydon, Surrey CR2 7AF. Church office: 020 8688 6676.

For more details, visit: www.emmanuelcroydon.org.uk

Baptisms

21st June - Emily Koch

28th June - George Heath

12th July - Benjamin Fraser

19th July - Madison Brett

26th July - Samuel Davies

13th Sept - Emma Farquharson

11th October - Theo Nnachi and Camron Lally

Weddings

11th July - Ricardo Chase & Modupe Victoria Munis

7th August - Gian Ciaglia & Angelique Powell

15th August - Bradley Soan & Helen Emmins

22nd August - Lewis Clarke & Lianne Francis

11th Sept - Brendan Lee & Bethany Campbell

19th Sept - Steve Goudge & Janette Cox

26th Sept - Robert Chown & Sara Hogley

Funerals

12th June - Evangeline Rainsbury

6th July - Arthur Stone

22nd July - Cynthia Fairburn

5th Aug - Betty Watson

23rd Sept - Anthony Lawless

To love & to cherish

Whether you have been married for a few months or many years, you can benefit from the Emmanuel marriage course.

After a candlelit meal at tables for two, there is a talk, which you can then discuss privately as a couple.

The sessions will be held from 7.30pm -10pm on 5th Jan, 19th Jan, 2nd Feb, 16th Feb, 2nd March, 16th March, 30th March in the Watney Room at Emmanuel Church. The cost is £50 per couple and includes two-course dinners and course materials.

For more information or to book a place, please contact Mike or Chris Millsted on: 020 8668 6915.



This new service is for 3 to 7 year olds and their parents, grandparents and carers.

It meets on the second Monday of every month, from 3.30–5.30pm in church (finishing up in the hall).

It includes games, music, stories, messy activities and finishes with a meal.

Younger and older siblings are also very welcome!

Upcoming dates:

- 9th November
- 14th December
- 11th January
- 8th February

Vilma Colucci

Vilma Colucci will soon be off to China with Overseas Missionary Fellowship, a big change from her career in nursing. Here she tells us what led to her decision...

Vilma was born in Ostuni, Italy, to a Roman Catholic family.

As a teenager, she began a 'spiritual quest' and spent a lot of time thinking about the problem of evil and suffering. This, and an interest in Florence Nightingale and Albert Schweitzer, led her to a career in nursing.

Vilma wanted to be a 'secular missionary', and decided to work overseas, so she spent a year in Switzerland, then came to England, where she married, had a son, and continued her spiritual journey by investigating a variety of religions and sects.

In 1988, however, Vilma ended up surrendering her life to Jesus in her hometown in Italy. Four years later, Vilma studied at a Bible

college in Rome.

It was at the 2001 TEMA conference that she promised to serve Jesus in mission for the rest of her life.

Later, after studying at All Nations Christian College, which included a six-week ministry placement in East Asia, Vilma went back to nursing before spending a further seven weeks overseas.

With the help of Emmanuel church she is preparing to return to Asia in October.



Plinth Prayers



On Sunday 2nd August, between the hours of 3 and 4am, one member of our Emmanuel congregation, Hannah Gordon, stood on the 4th plinth in Trafalgar Square. She had applied to be one of 2400 people selected at random to take part in Antony Gormley's One & Other project. This project ran continuously for 100 days and it was entirely up to each individual what they could choose to do with their appointed hour.

Once Hannah found that she had been selected, she found it hard to decide exactly what to do with her time slot – feeling the pressure to do something visually exciting and entertaining. But in the end she chose to do something profoundly moving - she decided to pray. In Hannah's own words.

"I admire the work of Antony Gormley, and love his praying figure in the crypt at Winchester Cathedral. I wanted to combine art and spirituality to challenge those who saw me. I wanted to use my hour on the plinth to pray for the city I live in. Sitting in the heart of the city gave me an opportunity to face each part of the city, North, South, East and West and pray for each in turn.

It was amazing to be part of such an innovative piece of art. It was an incredibly peaceful experience and a real honour to be able to stand so publicly and pray for my city."

If you would like to see the footage of her praying for London please go to: http://www.oneandother.co.uk/participants/Hannah_G.

Book early for Christmas



Peter Graystone, who has been a member of the Emmanuel congregation for over thirty years, has written a new book.

It is called Be Happy! A 40 Day Journey to Contentment, and it is published by Canterbury Press. It is about how you can choose happiness as the context in which everything else happens to you. Stories about

members of Emmanuel feature again and again! The chapters of Be Happy! are designed to be read one day at a time, which is a format that Christian books often have so that people can read them in the run-up to Christmas or Easter. But this one doesn't feel like forty days in the wilderness. It is far too cheerful for that. It is forty days in a circus – with gasps, laughter and discoveries, but never forgetting that there are caged lions somewhere in the background.

I love... training for ordination

This summer Helen Fraser moved to Trinity College Bristol to train to be a Church of England Minister.

I changed career after 10 years as a lawyer in the City. It was a very strong sense of calling by God which evolved over about 5 years.

I am excited about this new direction in my life.

I am surrounded by amazing men and women of faith who have so much experience to share. I am learning from some extremely skilled teachers.

My husband and children are very supportive.

Simon has willingly made some huge sacrifices as we try to be obedient to God's call. Ben and Caitlyn are at nursery on site at college so I get to see them quite a bit. Caitlyn loves coming up to "Mummy's big school" for lunch!

Theological college is a diverse community of men and women seeking to obey God's call on their lives, trying to live openly and honestly with each other and having fun along the way.

Training will involve a lot of listening, reading and writing. There are lots of practical elements such as doing placements in churches and working with the homeless.

My hopes for the next two years are that I will be equipped with whatever I need for the work God wants me to do! I also hope to enjoy spending time in Bristol. We've just bought an annual membership to the local zoo which we hope to use as much as possible!



comparetheinterns.com



Tom Grant
Music and
Worship Intern

Why Emmanuel?

Tom: I love playing the guitar in the evening service so when the Worship and Music Coordinator suggested the intern position it felt like the right thing to do!

Harriet: I've always enjoyed volunteering with Emmanuel's children's work and considering I am interested in a career working with children, the internship struck me as a great opportunity.

Tim: Having just graduated from university I wanted to take a break from study and do something different while serving God for a year.

James: International Christian Youthworks (the organisation I'm spending a year with) handed churches my portfolio. Emmanuel expressed an interest and I liked what I saw!



Harriet Smith
Children's Work
Intern

Describe an average 'intern week' in five words

Tom: Unpredictable, enjoyable, eventful and awesome!

Harriet: Fun week being a kid!

Tim: Avoiding awkward silences with vicar!

James: Too hectic to describe sorry!

What are you most looking forward to about this year?

Tom: Improving on the guitar and seeing the 6.30pm service develop into a more culturally relevant service that helps people connect with God.

Harriet: I'm looking forward to helping with Messy Church and getting to know the parents and the children. I'm also excited for the children's weekend away!

Tim: Being relatively new to Emmanuel I'm looking forward meeting lots of new people. I'm also really enthusiastic about the fast growing Messy Church service!

James: Getting alongside young people and seeing them grow in their faith, whether that's starting on the journey or progressing.



Tim Warren
Children's Work
Intern

How do you spend your free time?

Tom: Hanging out with friends. As a member of the cadets I also try to fit in as much flying and shooting as I can!

Harriet: Watching films with friends and going to the theatre. I also enjoy playing various sports.

Tim: Most of my free time is spent relaxing at home playing computer games or reading a book.

James: Keeping in touch with my family, friends and the other people on my course. Oh and watching sports.



James Yielder
Youth Work Intern

Who has the messiest desk in the church office?

Tom: I would have to say Kris. He likes to think he can hide his mess away in the upstairs office.

Harriet: Hard to say, I think it's an equal effort.

Tim: Not sure about the messiest desk but Tom's experiences the most lunchtime games.

James: Kris or mine but that's only because we are constantly in and out of the office.

Faith at Work

At Emmanuel we believe that Christianity is a 24/7 business. All Christians are called to live out their faith in their professional lives.

Tom Coningsby has had a long and interesting career both as a barrister, a QC and a judge of the Crown Court and as a legal adviser to the Church of England. He told us how it all began.

I first came to Emmanuel in 1956 when I began to bring members of my youth club to Guest Services at which the great Bertie Rainsbury was the preacher. From 1963, when I had been married for 3 years, Elaine and I became regular attenders. I joined the PCC (a group of church members who work with the vicar to oversee the life of the church) and Elaine became a Sunday school leader and helped run the Womens Fellowship. We continued our membership after we moved to Chipstead in 1973, not least because of the excellent youth work for our children. We have seen five vicars at Emmanuel since Rainsbury, all in different ways excellent and have valued the teaching.

In the late sixties several people suggested I stand for the new General Synod of the Church of England. I became a member from 1970 until 2008. In 1975 I was asked by Archbishop Stuart Blanche to be the Diocesan Chancellor of York, involving matters like faculties for alterations to churches and until recently



presiding at hearings involving allegations of misconduct by clergy. Subsequently I was asked to be the Vicar General of York, the legal adviser to the Archbishop of York, presiding over legal procedure for making new diocesan bishops and certain disputes between bishops and deans (and chapters) of cathedrals.

In 1979 I took on a second chancellorship, this time in the diocese of Peterborough, where I had very cordial dealings with Bishop Ian Cundy and his wife Jo, who I had known through the Lawyers Christian Fellowship. As a result I had to become something of a specialist in ecclesiastical law, and as an ex-officio member of Emmanuel's PCC, my contribution was often to open up the wider church perspective. Perhaps Emmanuel can soon provide another member of the General Synod.

I know what you



In the summer, several of Emmanuel's young people gave some of their holiday to work on short term mission projects around the world and in the UK.

In July a team of eight young people from Emmanuel went out to Poganesti in Moldova, one of the poorest countries in Europe, to help run summer camps for children, families, and to serve the local community.

Many of the children in the region belong to desperately poor families. Over 170 children turned up each day to the camps, which was far more than the team had expected. Each morning the team ran various activities and games as well as teaching some of the children to speak English. In the afternoons they worked in the village painting people's fences and going on home visits delivering fruit baskets. Through all of this,

did last Summer!



the aim was to show God's love in action.

The team were also able to give £4,400 which had been raised by Emmanuel to support the ongoing work in Moldova. The organisers of the camp, an English couple called Chris and Helen Ducker, wrote a letter of thanks in which they said, 'We'd like to stress how much difference has been made by your team serving here, and how much work they have been able to fund. The equipment that we've invested in will be used on summer camps for years to come. The local church here in the Hîncești region has been tremendously encouraged by your support'.

There are plans to return to Moldova next summer with a new bunch of young people from Emmanuel who are willing to use their free time to make a difference.

By Trevor Mapstone

Young People at Emmanuel

The new school year is under way and children and teenagers are settling into new routines and facing new opportunities and challenges.



At Emmanuel Church, the same thing can be said for ongoing and new opportunities with our work among young people.

This Autumn, we are opening the church basement so that after school young people can come and relax. From

3:30-5:30PM on Tuesday afternoons, the basement is open to young people ages 11-14 to come enjoy a snack, play some board games, video games, or a craft in a safe friendly environment while supervised by an adult.

We also continue to develop *TGIF* which is our Friday night drop-in club for 11-14 year olds. It runs from 8-9:30PM in the church hall.

Connexions is our Sunday night club for 14-18s that runs from 8-9:30PM. If you want to know more, please call the church office and ask for Kris or James.



Another exciting development this Autumn, is a partnership between a number of local churches, an organisation called Ascension Trust, the local police and some local schools to establish a programme called School Pastors. This is a schools based initiative that is based on the 'Street Pastors' programme that has been working in Croydon for some time. The idea is to place caring adults

in high traffic locations after school to help create a safer environment for children of all ages that will also benefit the community as a whole. This is a new initiative that was tried with great success in Purley last year and that is also being piloted in 5 other locations in the UK. If you would like to hear more about the School Pastors or would like to get involved please contact the church and talk with Kris.

By Kris Fernhout

What does Advent mean to you?

Displaying 8 quotes

See All



Matt Baker, Emergency Medical Technician

Every year I see so much commercialism. This makes me determined to focus on the message of the birth of Christ and his second coming. I try to allow myself time to think, pray and contemplate the real meaning of advent.



Richard Woodman, Solicitor

Coming from a more mainstream Anglican background Advent is a season I am used to the Church celebrating but, in all honesty, I have associated it with little more than candles and calendars. By contrast Lent is to me a far more significant season in the way it prepares for Easter. Since joining Emmanuel I understand the greater focus on Advent and appreciate that this is helpful as an antidote to the commercialisation of Christmas.



Stella Orazulume, Teacher

Advent to me means a time of renewed joy, thanksgiving and worship to God. It is a time of remembering (as if anew) God's awesome redemption plan for mankind. It means that during my family devotions we focus and reflect on Jesus' birth, life and his obedience to the cross. As well as his spectacular resurrection, the victory that is ours as Christians and the hope we have in His second coming.



Go to Advent Conspiracy website
www.adventconspiracy.org



Jonathan Cooke, 8 Years Old

It's my birthday in December so it reminds me of Jesus' birthday at Christmas. At home we have an advent calendar and every day we add an object to the nativity scene and Mum hides chocolates in the pockets. I get excited that it is getting closer to Christmas.



Rosh Gillam, Doctor

From when I was a child, advent has always been an exciting time looking forward to presents and spending time with my family at Christmas. Now I have children, it is great to share in their excitement as well. More importantly, Advent is a special time about reflecting and preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus.



Sarah Blackburn, Mum

There's a real sense of anticipation during Advent. The challenge as I strive (and fail) to live out my faith by being loving, joyful and kind in my preparations for all the Christmas celebrations. I want to be productive during advent but I also want to reclaim precious moments of hard won peace to remember that Jesus' coming is a gift not a burden.



Kate Chapman, Student

Advent is an exciting few weeks where I get to spend time with family and friends, preparing for the celebration of Christmas. It's also a time when I can reflect on God's love through the gift of his Son, which has and will continue to determine the way I live.



Peter Mantle, Emeritus Professor, Imperial College

Advent represents the journey towards celebrating God's personal intervention to provide the basis for a relationship, applicable to all human kind. It is good annually to focus on this.