

WELCOME

God is good, and we have lots to celebrate. If this is your first time here at Highworth Community Church, then you're especially welcome. We hope that you enjoy your time with us.

We start together with a time of worship, which is very relaxed and open for all to participate in. After the worship time, the children and young people will leave for their own groups (follow the crowd or look for the signs), whilst there's a time of teaching from the Bible, usually by one of the church leaders. On those weeks marked All Age Worship (AAW) we all stay in the service together.

We are really glad you're here and would like the opportunity to get to know you. We always have tea and coffee available before and after the meeting so please stay and chat.



ONCE UPON A TIME

by Matt Ford

Many years ago a small group of passionate Christians gathered in a room to pray.

Aware of their own frailty and yet longing for God to move in their day and in their time, they sought after Jesus like they had never done before. And so begins story after story after story of churches and Christians who changed their world.

Whether the Great Awakening, the Hebrides Revival, The Moravian Missions movement or that bit at the beginning of Acts. As J.Edwin Orr states:

There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality that did not begin in united prayer.'

It is the Christian equivalent of 'once upon a time'.

This December, we launch our **Upper Room**. We seek to embrace a lifestyle marked by

SUNDAY WORSHIP

02 December

Speaker: Jim Thring

Worship Leaders: Will Pearse/Dawn Golton

Set-up: Ian Coulson (BLUE)

09 December

Speaker: Andrew Wilson

Worship Leaders: Jim Thring/Janet Hodgson

Set-up: Ian Coulson (BLUE)

16 December

Speaker: Matt Ford

Worship Leaders: Will Pearse/Dawn Golton

Set-up: Phil Smith (RED)

23 December - check this

Speaker: Matt Ford (AAW)

Worship Leaders: Kathryn Ford/Tessa Hares

Set-up: Phil Smith (RED)

25 December Speaker: Matt Ford

Meeting at the Community Centre, 10:15am

30 December

Speaker: Matt Ford (AAW)

Worship Leaders: Jon Grant-Willson/Adrian Hill

Set-up: Adrian Hares (GREEN)

06 January

Speaker: Ken Ford

Worship Leaders: Kathryn Ford/Tessa Hares

Set-up: Adrian Hares (GREEN)

13 January

Speaker: Dave Day

Worship Leaders: Jim Thring/Janet Hodgson

Set-up: Matt Ford (YELLOW)

20 January

Speaker: Matt Ford (AAW)

Worship Leaders: Will Pearse/Dawn Golton

Set-up: Matt Ford (YELLOW)

27 January

Speaker: Andrew Price

Worship Leaders: Jon Grant-Willson/Adrian Hill

Set-up: Ian Couslon (BLUE)

prayer and of learning to be with God. This is not the beginning, but like tributaries flowing together into a mighty river, I believe this is the point where all the hours of prayer that have gone on individually and corporately over our lifetimes connect together to bring about a critical mass that will run over and breakout into our world.

This is for everyone of us. No one is excluded and none of us should leave this imperative to someone else. We will be starting gently as we are not after a flash flood of prayer but a rising tide.

Over these first couple months we will all be learning something of how to do this. How do I find the time? What changes do I make in my lifestyle? How do I pray beyond what I have known?

This vision may be something you have held for years or have never thought of or experienced.

Wherever we are at let us all say a humble 'yes' to Jesus and step in.

LOVING PEOPLE THIS CHRISTMAS

We have a couple great opportunities for you to bless someone this Christmas:

Bridge Meal

We are wanting to bless many of our regular Bridge visitors with a beautiful Christmas meal, something many of whom will not otherwise enjoy this year. It's a chance for those who often eat alone to be really valued and spoilt. If you would like to give to the costs of the food (we will be feeding around thirty-five people) that would be awesome.

CAP Hampers

Another amazing blessing to those who will otherwise go without.

Please see Kathryn or Ioli for how you can be a blessing.

What's your vision for the Upper Room?

'I would like to see
people transformed by the
Holy Spirit in a safe haven—the
Upper Room. I want to see
people confidently open up
and walk with Jesus at their
own pace.'

— Jasmine Cairns

'My hope for the Upper Room
is that the Holy Spirit will always feel
welcomed and that we would be continually
humbled by God's presence. To expect the
unexpected!' — Carole Brewster

'I long for a space for individuals and groups to go deeper in prayer to our Father, see more of Jesus, and receive power from the Holy Spirit to effect change in their lives and the lives of those around them.'

— Jim Thring

'My hope for the **Upper Room is for** God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to be present there at all times, for everyone; that our wonderful God would show his power and glory in healing and other wonders in people's lives as they interact with JESUS. My vision is for people to come to talk and listen to **God and experience** his Presence.'

Maureen Griffiths

WEEKLY EVENTS

Every Tuesday

Tuesday Group for school years 7-9 (term time)

6:30-8pm, St Michael's Church

Tuesday Group for school years 10+ (term time)

8-9:30pm, The Bridge Centre

Every Wednesday

Bible Study

9:30-10:30am, The Bridge

Nursery Rhymes with Jon (term time)

11-11:30am, The Bridge

Every Thursday

Little Treasures Toddler Group (term time)

9:45-11:15am, Community Centre

Every Friday

Friday Blessings

9:15am, Highworth Methodist Church

'GIVE ME THIS MOUNTAIN' MEMBERS MEETINGS 2019

'Give me this mountain!' This was the impassioned cry of the ageing, yet vigorous, Caleb as he sort to pursue the inheritance, the call, that God had for his life (Joshua 14).

Back in February we met for what I believe was a significant evening under the title *Base Camp*. Taking the picture that church is a lot like Everest Base Camp—a place of relaxation, restoration, refuelling and relationship, but with a purpose—Base Camp enables you to conquer mountains and exists to facilitate that adventure.

Church was never supposed to have its goal as meeting together. Meetings and services are not its purpose. They should enable us to see, understand, prepare for and step into our purpose. Church is Jesus to the world.

In 2019 we want to continue to discover our purpose individually and together, and we were really excited to welcome Andrew Price and Dave Day to travel deeper into that journey with us.

As a part of *Give me this Mountain* will be two evenings (13 February and 27 March) at Warneford Library where we will collaborate and be inspired together for what lies ahead.

Book the dates and look out for more information in the new year.

WHO IS ANDREW PRICE?



Andrew Price has been working with HCC for more than ten years, helping the church, its trustees and leaders to

cope with—and even love—the challenge of continual transformation. Originally introduced to HCC by Dave Day, Andrew's goal is to see a fully mobilised church, where every single member shares the joy of a God-filled, purpose-filled life.

Andrew works as a leadership developer in organisations in the private and public sectors, as well as in churches. He has worked with churches in Guyana, Zambia, USA, France and South Korea. Along with his wife Ruth, he has been involved in church leadership and worship leading for over thirty years. As a family, Andrew and Ruth and their daughters, Abigail and Roanna—plus Roanna's husband Owen—increasingly work together to encourage people to see and inhabit the richness of their divine calling.

WHO IS DAVE DAY?



Dave Day has been working with HCC for about twenty years. Dave spent several years teaching in schools before

becoming the leader of Bristol Christian Fellowship. Part of Dave's work was to connect with and advise churches. Working with HCC has been a very fulfilling aspect of that work. He has seen many changes in the life and structure of HCC and is happy and privileged to continue working with the leadership and church. He loves the life and growth he sees at Highworth.

Since stepping down from leading BCF, Dave and his wife Rhi run The Bridge Trust Ltd (www.thebridgetrustltd.org) working with churches and charities in the UK, USA and developing leaders and relief work in India and Zambia.



WHAT IS GOD SAYING IN THE GAP?

Our gap year students have already had some amazing experiences. As 2018 draws to a close, Hannah and Lucy share with us something of how God is speaking to them.

BE INTERRUPTED

by Hannah Thring

'Be interrupted.' When I really narrow it down, that's what most of it boils down to. This year has been a massive change for me. My normal way of doing things is usually quite structured, based around a routine, partly because of being in education and being used to following a timetable, but also because that is just generally the way I like to do things. This way of doing stuff doesn't really work when you transition from lectures and exams, to working with church. It's totally different! It all revolves around people so it's all unpredictable, and I'm having to get used to turning up and not always knowing exactly what I'll be doing just trusting that whatever I end up doing will result in God teaching me something new. Lucy and I went to a church in Hitchin a couple of weeks ago and this was reinforced by the pastor as he prayed for me, 'God is asking you to wake up each morning and say, 'Interrupt me today'."

I also feel that God is gently teaching me to receive. This is really hard for me. I hate feeling that I'm dependent on others or that I'm a burden, and I think this year God's really pushing me to accept his help through other people. This is definitely a work in progress! I'm having to really consciously think through what it means to receive. If I'm praying for things and God is providing for me but I keep not accepting the help he is giving me, what kind of faith do I have? I'm actually disregarding what God is doing and that A) is disrespectful and B) just doesn't make sense! I love giving to others and focusing on myself doesn't come naturally to me, but I feel that setting a whole year aside to just focus on growing my relationship with God, and learning about myself and my faith, is something I'll probably never do again in this way, so God is encouraging me to really take hold of it and get as much from it as possible so that it sets me up for a future where I can give back!

SURRENDERED

by Lucy Tltcombe

Sometimes it can be hard to listen to what God is saying, our own plans and ideas get in the way of what God has really planned for us. To surrender all of our own personal hopes and dreams in order to live a life that is full of God and his purpose. I can often feel as if God isn't speaking to me clearly enough...or I'm just not listening! However, I have learnt that God doesn't always speak to us directly. God can reveal something to me when I'm meeting with people or reading my bible. Words that stand out, emotions I feel or actions I take. God has recently been calling me to trust him more, to let him take complete control of my life instead of me trying to control every aspect of my life. He has an amazing, purposeful life laid out ahead of me, I don't have to fear the unknown and uncertainty of the future.

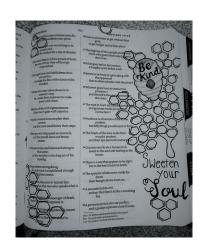
In my nearer future, God has been speaking to me about is university. God is definitely calling me to a future full of loving and nurturing people. So I have decided to apply to university as I believe it will be a time of growing for me. I'm hoping to study Criminology and Psychology. It's a course full of things I'm very interested in. These are just a few (!): justice; human trafficking; refugees and asylum seekers; sex workers, and political crime. These are the people I would love to work with in the future. It seems like a great course that I believe would helpfully equip me for the future. To be able to have a greater understanding of how people work, and how the justice system works. I'm not putting any pressure on myself to go to university. If I reach the end of my year out and believe that God is calling me a different way, opening a different door, I will gladly walk through it.

My future in the long term? Well, I believe that I am being called to be a missionary for my long term future. I love working and spending time with people, the fortunate and the less fortunate. I also have a great love for languages. It is a love that I have only recently gained over the last year or so. I find that I am able to pick up languages a lot more quickly than I used to be able

to. For me there is something so powerful about having the ability to communicate with people all over the world. Through this comes the ability to be able to spread the word of Jesus! I also enjoy being able to worship in different languages—there is also something so powerful about that. I also believe God is calling me to be a warrior for those whose cannot speak, to be comfort to those going through trials and challenges. I was given a picture by someone quite a few months ago now. It was an image of me weeping into a pillow and then pulling out a sword from beneath it. I believe that this sword was the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, part of the armour of God. This is a future full of excitement and I can't wait to step into it!

Alongside this God has really been drawing me to my bible journaling. It allows me to read a passage in depth, and ask God what specific part he wants me to take from it. From that (I try) to create an artistic design to express that verse. I'm a visual learner, so being able to create a visual image of a Bible verse really helps me to understand it more. Proverbs 16:24 is a verse I am particularly drawn to at the moment. 'Gracious words are like honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.' I love the way this verse really emphasises the impact the words you speak can have on people, how your words can be positive and encouraging but they can also be harsh and negative. This has made me more aware of the impact my words have. I want the words I speak to people I meet to be gracious and healing to them.

— Lucy Titcombe



KETCH IS ON THE MOVE!



Natalie, tell us a bit about what's happening for you right now?

In the next month I will be embarking on an amazing Jesus-filled adventure where I will be receiving teachings to prepare me to go out on mission. I will be studying in Kona, Hawaii, doing a Crossroads Discipleship Training School (DTS) which is aimed at over 25's, couples and families who are at a crossroads in their life and want to experience a season where they can lay down their everyday lives in order to go deeper in their relationship with the Lord and hear what He has in store for the next season

The course comprises of a ten-week teaching stream, a two-month outreach in Fiji, Israel, China or India, concluding with a two-week debrief in Germany.

What's been your journey leading up to this next step?

In 2016, I went to visit my parents in Jackson, Mississippi who were serving as missionaries. During this time I got to experience mission life firsthand and felt God restoring something within me and releasing a sense of purpose and a calling on my life. I have always had a heart for young people, America and the marginalised ,and I got to experience all three.

I returned the following year and was able to get involved with tutoring/sharing bible

time with the children, helping to provide food and clothing to the community and, on a Thanksgiving Day, serve dinner to the homeless, poor and wider *We Will Go* family.

Between these mission trips, I began having visions of fire, volcanoes and silhouette beach scenes and prophetic words relating to fire were being shared within church. Initially I was going to apply to do the Fire and Fragrance DTS in Kona but subsequently applied for the DTS I'm now attending.

How does the future look to be shaping up?

I would describe the future as an exciting unknown! I have stepped out in faith several times but this is taking me completely out of my comfort zone. God is calling me to go and be His hands and feet and shine a light into our broken world.

I have been a youth leader for about five years and I believe that I am being called to go into youth ministry. The dream would be to come alongside homeless/at risk children and young people to encourage and support them, see them grow in their faith, to help them discover their worth, value and potential, and to help educate them both spiritually and academically.

As a church family, how can we support you?

There are several ways that you could support me during this time.

If anyone feels led to or would consider supporting me financially, my *GoFundMe* page will be ongoing until the end of my DTS and the link for this is:

www.gofundme.com/ketch-on-mission.

Without your backing, encouragement and support I would have struggled more during this time. I will be keeping a blog and sharing regular updates of my mission experiences—all the highs and lows and day to day realities. I would love to hear from you when I'm away. My e-mail address is cirennat@aol.com. Similarly, if you feel God giving you any words, pictures or affirmations I would love to receive those. Your prayers will be really valuable during this time, both for me and for Mum and Dad back home.

And if anyone can help practically in the run up to me leaving—either painting, little odd jobs or moving or suggestions for last minute fundraising—that would be fab.

I feel blessed to be part of a church community that feels like family and I am so grateful for you all.

DECEMBER AT A GLANCE

06 December

Worship Choir rehearsal 7:30pm, The Bridge Centre

09 December

The Spring (school years 7+) 6:30pm, The Bridge Centre

10 December

Small Groups meet this week

12 December

Worship Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm, The Bridge Centre

23 December

Carols on the Podium

5pm, Market Place

Christmas Service

6pm, Highworth Methodist Church

25 December

Christmas Morning Service

10:30am, Highworth Community Centre

EDUCACIÓN PLUS VISIT 2019

by Sally Willson



Mike and I will be in Costa Rica in January. Whilst we are there we will be visiting the three shanty towns around San José in which the

charity, *Educación Plus*, works. We are also going to help with the boys' camp which happens each year, as well as having a lovely two-week holiday in the middle of our time there!

Keith and Joy Holder left HCC on Boxing Day 1989 with three very young children, to work with *Latin Link* in South America. Initially, they needed to do a year of language training and acclimatisation in Costa Rica. Having then worked in Lima, Peru, in the shanty towns and with the street children in the city, they felt drawn back to do a similar work in Costa Rica where, although there was missionary work happening, no one was doing what they were proposing.

So, in 1992, the family stepped out to Costa Rica with no mission base or organisational support other than church connections, friends, and family in the UK. They invested time running bible studies, football teams, and visiting, caring for and feeding a growing network of families and young people in the shanty towns. This work grew, connections were made with Costa Rican workers who joined them, and the work of *Educación Plus* started.

2019 is the 25th anniversary of the official start of the charity and the *Educación Plus* team are busy planning how best to mark the occasion. So, having been supporters of *Educación Plus* for many years and never having had the opportunity to visit the project, we felt that this was a key year to visit, celebrate all that God has done through the work, and perhaps flag up the work afresh with HCC. We as a church supported the Holder family financially for all the years they worked out there, and whilst we no longer provide that financial backing, this has been a big part of our missional giving over the years.

The exciting news is that there is a planned trip to the UK in September next year. Juan Carlos, who has worked with *Educación Plus* since 1998, Oscar who is one of the boys who was sponsored through the project and now works for the charity, and possibly one other leader, plan to bring six of the current sponsored children (a small football team) to the UK, spending some of the

time in Highworth and some of the time in Orpington, visiting supporting churches and hopefully having a life-changing experience.

We will let you know how these plans develop and get dates in the diary as soon as they are known.

http://www.educacionplus.org



Carols on the Podium

with Highworth Churches Together

Free event for all the family

* hot chocolate and mulled wine * christmas choir * seasonal drama *

Highworth Community Church

Registered Office: The Bridge Centre, 8 Sheep Street, Highworth SN6 7AA T: 01793 765060, W: highworthcommunitychurch.org, E: admin@highworthchurch.co.uk



Beginning Thursday 17 Janury, 12:45 - 3pm, at The Bridge Centre—six sessions plus the Steps to Freedom Day.

The course is for new Christians and longer term Christians, helping us grow in our relationship with God, and learning more about:

- our true identity in Christ
- understanding the battle we are in
- resolving issues from the past
- living in freedom

...so that we become more fruitful disciples!

Thirty-one people from our church have already taken part in the course.

If you are involved in helping people in any caring capacity the course is a great tool that will enhance your input into others, as well as benefitting you.

Sign up, or to know more speak to Heather Ford or email heatherfford @hotmail.co.uk

MY WORLD AS A CAP DEBT COACH

Hi. Most of you will know me by now, but

for those who don't my name is Eoli, said exactly how it is spelt! I am a CAP Debt Coach working in Highworth. I work twelve hours a week, Monday



Tuesday and Thursday mornings generally.

There's no typical day. I think that's why I enjoy my job so much: every day is different with highs and lows, just like life!

I've decided to tell you about the enjoyment I get from coming alongside the people I meet.

In the twelve months I've been working for CAP Debt one of the things I've regularly done is given lifts to new befrienders. What is a befriender you may well ask? A befriender is a Christian who volunteers their time to in the hopes of becoming a friend to the client. My first experience involved picking up a befriender on a street corner (who was a stranger to me I might add) to go and visit a new client in a strange town! I don't normally pick up strangers from street corners! I also have had my shoe chewed by a dog, been checked out by noisy neighbours, and even met Members of Parliament!!

Above all, I absolutely LOVE bringing HOPE to the people I meet.

Those of you who know me well know how much I feel the cold! But when I am wearing my Christians Against Poverty Hat I am also clothed by God. I like to think of myself wearing his coat, keeping me warm and safe, like a big cosy blanket wrapped around me. When I meet a new client I then give threads of my coat to our new CAP friend and they can begin to weave their own coat with God's hope. Without his love, guidance and protection I could not do this job, so I am passing on God's love and protection to them.

Working with people at a very vulnerable time of their lives is a great privilege, and sometimes challenging, but the rewards far outweigh the responsibility of the role.

The most difficult part for me was overcoming my fear of technology which meant learning a new skill! Those of you of a certain age will remember the good old typewriter which I could just about use, so using the CAP computer system was a real challenge for me! But with the patience of my lovely colleagues, especially Kathryn and Mike, I am more confident.

I am backed by a great team and together we make a difference.

I know this because in my first year I have seen two clients go debt free and I must admit the first time I told my client they were free from debt was absolutely amazing!

I thank you all for holding us up especially in prayer as I know without your support and

lovely cups of coffee and encouragement I couldn't do this.

I actually started working with CAP in September 2016 when I went to the head office to become a Life Skills Manager. I feel very passionate about helping people gain confidence, make better choices, and survive life on a low income.

We are now at the end of our recent Life Skills course and are doing a special Life Skills on 05 Decemberwhere we are asking everyone who has been involved, both members and helpers, to come and be blessed. Lunch will be provided and we will look at 'The Value of Christmas', where we will enjoy meeting everyone, making cards, festive decorations and have lots of fun.

For those who do not know about CAP Life Skills it is a course that empowers members to be able to meet life's day-to-day challenges. We look at subjects such as making your money go further, cooking on a budget, and a healthy you, We build new friendships over a light lunch and together learn new skills. The next course will be running in February 2019.

I am looking forward to the future and helping more people to find Light in what can often be a dark place.

f anyone is interested in offering their services as a volunteer, please contact Kathryn or myself.

Kathryn Ford: 07885579876 kathrynford@capuk.org

Eoli Pieri:07753627049 eolipieri@capuk.org



FAMILIES AND YOUTH UPDATE

by Jon Hares

'We thought the church groups wouldn't be as good, but we have found them the most friendly.'

A parent recently shared their confounded expectations of what church has to offer. They turned up to 'church groups' for toddlers fearing that they would feel awkward, be twee and stingy with snacks. Instead, they found generous people, kind hearts and understanding!

That is the Gospel. Our expectations are transformed by our God, who will not be put in some neat, stereotypical box. The witness of God's people (that's you and me by the way) is what God uses to transform these experiences of him. If we do this, we know that the yeast will leaven the dough!

Here's a few things that are going on over the next two months. If you can help, please get in touch! If you are a parent, please encourage your children to get involved. If you are a Christian, please pray!

Young Families Afternoon Tea!

In a few weeks, as well as end of term parties etc., we are having an afternoon tea at one of the local cafes to spread some Christmas cheer amongst the young families we work with. This is a bit of an experiment that came out of a conversation with the café owner. Pray as we seek to develop

friendships with families we know through things like our *Little Treasures* toddler group!

Christmas Workshops

Starting Monday 03 December!

Somewhat unbelievably, 600-700 children of primary and pre-school age are taking part this year in our seasonal activities! Even years 7 and 10 at Warneford are getting in on the action with a few cheeky workshops! Thank God for the openness we are now experiencing with the schools, which seems to be a response to years of prayer and, in the case of Warneford, the boldness of a young person! Our theme for this year is *Jesus*, *Light of the World*, and we will be exploring Christmas symbols and why Christmas gives us hope.

How can I do my bit?

PRAY!

These workshops are a natural evolution of our work for the past few years on the seasonal trails. There will be a prayer calendar at church over the next couple of weeks. Sign up at the admin table at the back of church.

HELP!

Many hands make light work, and if you can help with craft or would like to support the sessions, please get in touch. We are hoping for a natural link with the *Carols on the Podium* on 23 December this year!

Residentials

We have a few residentials coming up over the next few months for young people.

Macaroni Wood Residential 25-27 January 2019

HCC young people aged 14-18 are invited to a weekend of adventure at Macaroni Wood, an outdoor adventure centre near Eastleach in Gloucestershire. We'll be doing this in partnership with our friends from the Anglican South Cotswolds Team led by Chris Saunders. Letters are coming out now so save the date and let me know if you're interested!

Normandy24: Lads and Dads 20-21 February 2019

A group of fathers and sons aged 14-18 are off to the Battlefields of Normandy, France, for an unforgettable twenty-four hours with Steve Lee. We will be exploring themes like sacrifice, freedom and courage, and calling young men into their God-given identity!

Look out for more information about this coming out soon. For now you can check out Steve's vision for this at:

http://www.miraclestreet.com/battlefields



Soul Survivor 2019

We've started planning our trip for next year's Soul Survivor!

If you're currently of secondary school age up to 19 then please let me know if you are interested in going! A booking letter will be out soon. Please could you book as soon as possible so we can plan well.

The first price rise is midnight on January 31 2019.

Thanks!

Jon