

KNOWING JESUS

THE FOCUS OF OUR teaching this year is going to be Jesus. He should always be our focus, but I believe we need to rediscover a confidence in the gospel and in our testimony as believers – the centre of that confidence and testimony is Jesus Christ. We will look at Jesus through the eyes of Matthew, examining his account of the life and teaching of Jesus, highlighting a story or principle from each of the twenty-eight chapters found in his gospel.

However, the essential point is not to simply fill our head with knowledge, but to actually know Jesus better. There was something magnetic about Jesus. His first approach wasn't to bombard the disciples with theological principles, but instead to invite them on a journey, which began with 'Follow me'. It was an invitation to a relationship that caused them to leave what they were doing.

I realise that the metaphor of being on a journey is over-used, but faith in Jesus is about a journey. It is about pilgrimage which starts (and ends) with knowing Jesus, and in knowing Him we learn truth. Jesus said that we would know the truth and as a result be free. The truth He was talking about was Himself. The exciting thing about this journey is that there is always more to discover. It does not matter how long you have been a believer, there is always room to grow – more to learn, more to understand. It's what discipleship is all about.

I would encourage you to read all of the gospels, but particularly Matthew, but keep reading them. What Jesus said and did will no doubt be encouraging, it will sometimes be challenging and maybe, on occasion, even shocking, but in it all I believe we will discover more about our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. I have read a few books recently about Jesus, one of which is written by Timothy Keller called 'King's Cross'. He writes this: 'We're not just made to believe in some general sense, not just to pray and get a bit of inspiration when things are tough. But we're made to centre everything in our lives on Jesus. To think of everything in terms of our relationship with Jesus. To serve Him unconditionally.'

My prayer is that in knowing Jesus better we increasingly make Him the centre of our lives.

The essential point is not to simply fill our head with knowledge, but to actually know Jesus better

Jonathan Jankowski

'EQUIPPED'

TRAINING ACADEMY



THE FOUR Assemblies of God churches in Maidstone are working together to run a Bible training academy. A curriculum is being finalised, but it will be run on a modular basis of six sessions per module, with the intention of running up to three modules per year.

There will be a fee of £50 which will include refreshments, lecture notes and other costs in running the course and will be held at The Life Church in Brewer Street. However, the vision is that people from across the churches will be equipped and be provided with an opportunity to delve deeper into Scripture and matters of faith.

Brochures and further details will be available soon, but the expectation is that the first module will begin on Tuesday 17th April.

THANK YOU

AT THE END OF last year Sheila Savage stepped down from helping to run Playhouse – something she had done faithfully for over ten years. Having thanked her publicly on a recent Sunday morning it's good to express our thanks to her once again. Jane Nagle and some local mums are running Playhouse and Caroline Daw is also looking to be involved. Pray for this outreach.

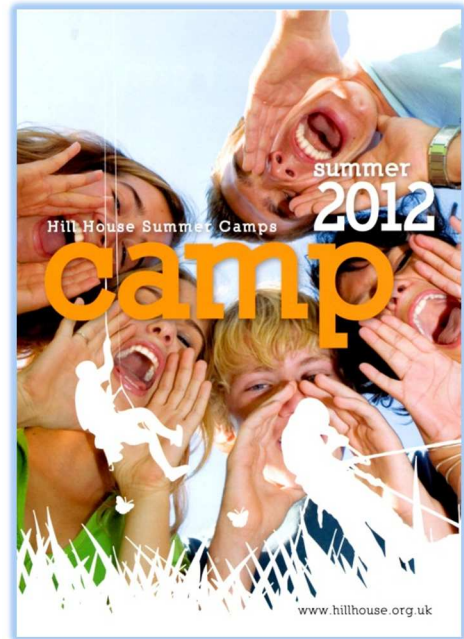
YOUTH EVENTS

DURING THE PAST couple of years several of our young people have attended the Hill House summer camps in Bridgewater, Somerset. They are held over five weeks and are for young people aged 11 - 25! Brochures are available and it would be great to see a bunch of our young people attending this year's camps - some have already booked in. Those that have been before have come back blessed and having made new friends. Camps of this type can be significant in young people's lives. The weeks are run as follows:

- *Week 1, July 23rd - 27th (18-25 years)*
- *Week 2, July 28 - Aug 4th (12-15 years)*
- *Week 3, Aug 4th - 11th (14-17 years)*
- *Week 4, Aug 11th - 18th (11 - 15 years)*
- *Week 5, Aug 18th - 25th (11 - 14 years)*

If you would like more information then speak with Alison Jankowski, who leads our youth work, or Richard Medlock, who has been to camp for the past several years.

Another event for the young people to look out for is the '**iheartjesus**' evening being held at The Life Church on **Friday 30th March**. This is being organised by several young people from churches across Maidstone with a vision to bring together young people for an evening of praise, ministry and friendship. Both Simeon Jankowski and Duncan Haslam are involved in organising the event.



IN BRIEF... IN BRIEF... IN BRIEF...

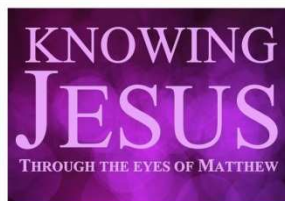
READING MATERIALS

As we embark on the Knowing Jesus series the following books are recommended:

- *King's Cross*, by Timothy Keller
- *The Life - A Portrait of Jesus*, by J John
- *Vintage Jesus*, by Mark Driscoll
- *The Jesus I never knew*, by Philip Yancey
- *A Glimpse of Jesus*, by Brennan Manning

They each provide a different perspective, but each will be a helpful tool alongside reading Matthew's gospel.

QUIZ EVENING Our first quiz evening for 2012 will be held on **Saturday 18th February**. They are ever-popular, draw a good crowd and tend to be lots of fun - even if quizzes aren't your favourite pastime. The evening begins at 7pm



and refreshments will be served. Get a team together and come along.

MINISTRY IN FEBRUARY Derek Savage has a preaching engagement at Staplehurst Free Church on Sunday 19th February. Andrew Parfitt will be speaking at GCC on Sunday 5th and The Church on the Rock, Brighton on Sunday 19th.

INFORMATION SUNDAY Over the past few years we have had *Information Sunday*, which is a time of inspiration and encouragement as we think about the ministries and activities we are involved with as a church. This year's will be on **Sunday 25th March**. The church accounts for 2010/11 will also be available. Lunch will be served after the meeting.

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