



FAITH AND SOCIAL ACTION AT ST ANDREW'S MAGAZINE

WITH UPDATES ON THE CHARITIES WE SUPPORT

SUMMER ISSUE
JULY 2025



God comes to us disguised as our life.
Paula D'Arcey

Dear Friends

So often we think we need to 'great things' for the Lord, but as the bracing Christian writer Oswald Chambers points out, God comes to us in the very ordinariness of our lives, and we can serve him by responding with awareness and love in every apparently innocuous moment. You can find God while making a sandwich! And, of course, in responding to the needs of others.

Welcome to our Summer magazine, giving a brief outline of what St Andrew's Faith and Social Action are up to in the way of serving others.

Of course, the charitable work of St Andrew's isn't confined to our principal projects, and there are many people quietly doing good work out there in all sorts of ways. In this issue we introduce a regular HIGHLIGHT section to bring this into focus. Our first HIGHLIGHT writer is Kellie Symons, who tells us about her work at Send Women's Prison – thank you, Kellie.

We also have a separate section reporting on our fundraising events. Who said supporting charity had to be a chore? St Andrew's tries to put the 'fun' in fundraising!

And so, without further ado ...

May God bless us this summer and meet us in the ordinary.

Charleen

Rev. Charleen Hollington

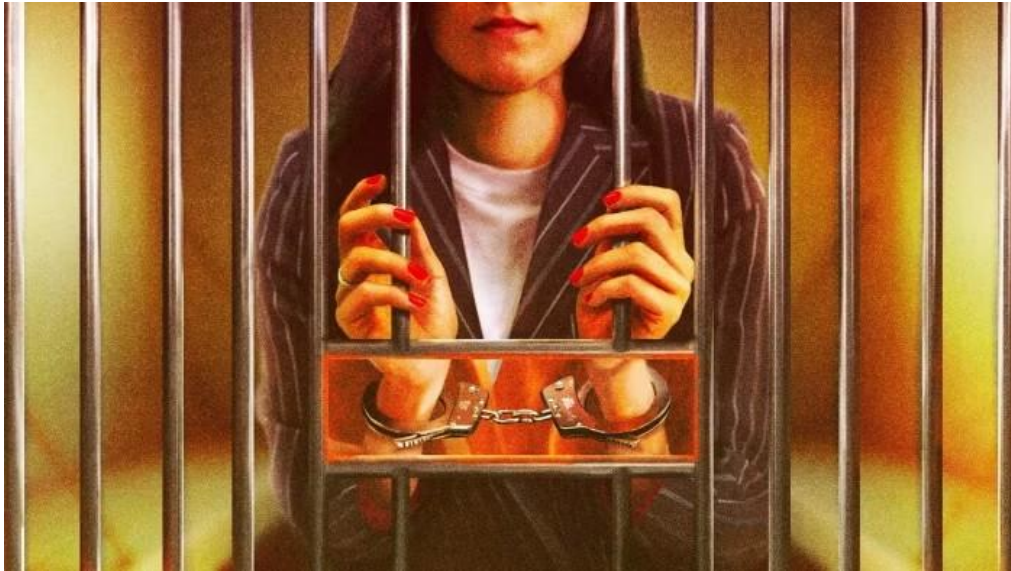
Associate Minister

Chairperson, Faith and Social Action Committee

HIGHLIGHT

VOLUNTEERING AT SEND WOMEN'S PRISON

Kellie Symons



Listening to a podcast one day, I learned just how few women's prisons there are in the UK. Only 4% of the country's prison population is female. And I was shocked that almost all of those women in prison – many of whom are from very poor backgrounds – are being held too far away from home for their family and friends to visit them.

This really broke my heart, and I wanted to find a way to help. I decided to volunteer at my nearest women's prison, HMP Send.

It turns out to be surprisingly hard to get into a prison! But one place that does make use of volunteers is the multifaith prison chapel. Thanks to a contact at St. Andrews, Judith Robinson, I met up with HMP Send's Managing Chaplain and soon started working in the chapel once a week as an administrator.

One of the main roles of the chapel is the pastoral and emotional care of the prisoners. For example, every prisoner speaks to a chaplain within 24 hours of their arrival. Our chaplains – full-time, part-time, and volunteers – give each of these women the time and space they need to talk through how things work in the prison, to talk about how they are feeling, and to find out all the ways in which the chapel can help them. The chaplains also provide support and encouragement in difficult times, allowing the prisoners to explore their faith, and to do things like light candles to celebrate important events.

As well as all their faith-based services, the chapel manages a variety of learning courses throughout the year. Besides the Alpha Course (an introduction to Christianity), the chapel runs courses supporting people with grief, forgiveness, parenting, personal development, and more.

In addition, prisoners at HMP Send access important services through the chaplaincy. These include:

- Official Prison Visitors
- pen pals (through the Prison Fellowship's Letter Link scheme)
- support for prisoners 6 months or less from release, to help them get ready for this major change (through Making Connections)
- grants for people having money troubles (through Nazareth Way)
- help and advice for people in debt (through Frontline)
- free card-making and craft sessions (through the Mother's Union)
- craft items available for free and to purchase from the chapel
- a Family Tracing Service (through the Salvation Army)

These services all help improve the prisoners' quality of life. For example, the Official Prison Visitors and Letter Link schemes both provide companionship to people with nobody else in their lives, or whose friends and family are not able to travel to visit them.

It's amazing how important the chapel is to the prisoners' wellbeing. There are always so many things going on, and I and the other 3 admin volunteers are always busy! I also recently started training with Frontline to become a debt advisor, so I can offer more direct support to people struggling with their finances.

Knowing I am helping to keep all these things running, and that I can share God's love with these ladies in both large and small ways, makes volunteering at HMP Send a real joy.

Prayer points

Please pray for:

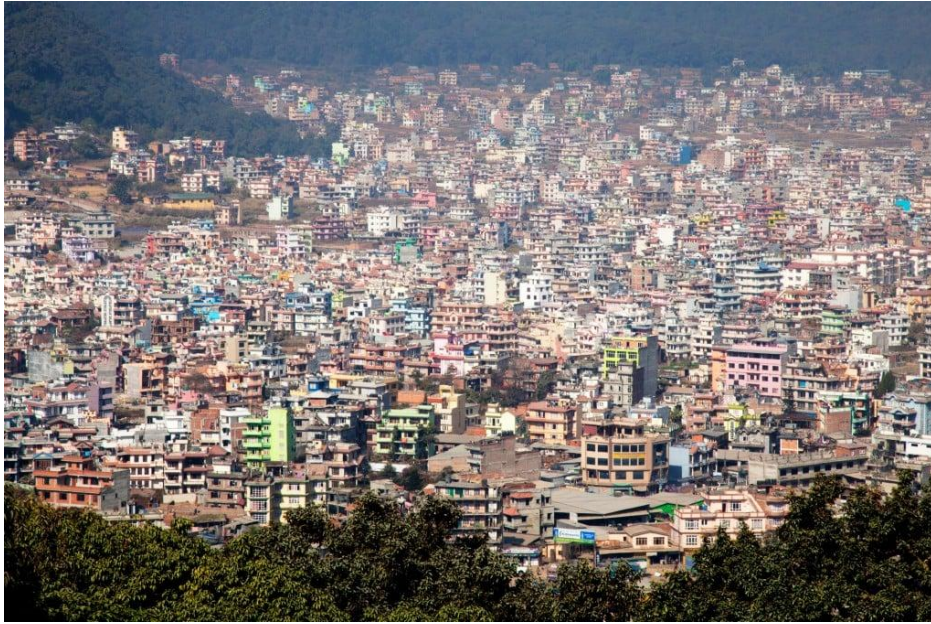
✓ *the 150+ people who work and volunteer at the chapel at HMP Send – that they feel God's guidance and strength.*

✓ *the prisoners at HMP Send – that they feel known, seen, heard, and loved.*

✓ *more volunteers to join in the incredible work being done at the chapel at HMP Send.*

OPERATION MOBILISATION HIMALAYAS

Report from Peter Kelly, champion for OM Himalayas



Picture: Kathmandu

The team from Kathmandu and throughout Nepal and the broader Himalayas send their greetings and thankful messages for the faithful, loving support and the prayer and generosity of the people of St. Andrew's Church.

It is the onset of the monsoon season in Nepal and for many, this is a welcome respite from the heat of this time of year. However, the intensity of the rains can lead to flash floods, and in some cases, dangerous landslides which take place with no warning. Team members who visit local in-community OM workers are a vital part of the OM support structure, and they travel a great deal in this work.

The AidsLink and Agricultural training programmes are going well, and many families are being served. A recent initiative to help local farmers raise passion fruit as a cash crop has met with success and local villagers and farmers have proven to be very receptive to community workers helping in these ways.

Lastly, back here at home, our partnership with OM is expanding as we are sending a short-term summer missions team to Moldova to assist the OM community workers there in children's summer camp ministry and family aid support and visitation. We have a team of 11 people going for a week in August, many from our teen Discipleship group. Please pray for the fundraising efforts to be a success and for the safety of all travelling, including Sean and Shirley, our

adult chaperones, who so generously have given a week of their summer to lead this trip to Moldova.

Blessings to all of you who hold the OM partnership in your hearts,

Prayer points

Please pray for:

✓ *the safety of OM team workers as they travel to remote areas, as well as for the safety of people living in mountainous villages, which often take the brunt of sudden floods or landslides.*

✓ *for continued success in AidsLink and agricultural services and receptive hearts on the part of people receiving these services.*

✓ *a safe and fruitful trip for St Andrew's youth going to Moldova*

If you would like to learn more, connect directly with the ministry or make a financial contribution to OM, please contact Peter Kelly at pjk207@me.com.

TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR GOOD

Report from Carrie Taylor, St Andrew's project champion for TLG



We have reached the end of the school year and this is often when we say 'Goodbye' to our Year 6 coached pupils. However, this year we are coaching a range of children from Years 4, 5 and 6 so some coaches will welcome their pupils back in September. Whatever their age we wish them a restful time over the summer break. We would love to see some of them join us at the church Party in the Park in August and would welcome your prayers for this.

We are pleased that we have a new coach attending the training in July, which is an answer to our prayers. If you think you'd be interested in becoming a coach, but are in full time work, TLG posted the following on the website recently:

We have been seeing more people approach their employers with the idea that some time at work be allocated to supporting children facing struggles in their community. You'd be surprised how many employers are warm to this idea. We have created a letter to support people in your church who may feel inspired to ask the question of employers. It is simple to download and edit and the contents can be sent in email if easier....

Please do consider whether God is nudging you to become a coach. And if so, come and chat!

Prayer points:

Please pray –

✓ *For children at the school who are experiencing problems, at home or at school;*

✓ *For more coaches to come forward*

If you are interested in becoming a coach please speak to Carrie. via parishoffice@sac.church.

OASIS FREEDOM PROGRAMME

Report from David Taylor, project champion for Oasis



Among the many services that Oasis provide, St Andrew's supports in particular the Oasis Freedom Programme which helps victims of domestic abuse. Oasis says the following about the Programme:

Amongst the traits we see in clients are shame and guilt; that the harm which has come their way is somehow 'their fault' and any confidence and self-esteem they have had has been eroded. Our aim is to help them overcome these feelings of shame, guilt and fault, rebuilding their self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Counselling and Therapeutic Arts are two of the ways we tackle this. This month, one of our clients took the huge step of presenting in front of an audience, sharing her experience of how attending Therapeutic Arts sessions over the last 18 months has truly benefitted her. Her story is horrific and heartbreaking in equal measure, but the work she has done together with Therapist, Jo Alam, has helped her recognise the impact of her trauma. We are very proud of the strides she has made in her healing journey. It took many months for her to come to terms with what had happened to her, and to take step changes to overcome her challenges. It underscores the fact that the difficulties faced by our clients cannot be 'fixed' in a limited number of sessions. Every client is different, and their problems are often complex and entwined. Rebuilding their lives can take months - if not years. That is why when it comes to our work with clients, to have a long-lasting impact, we will always ensure we are supporting them for the long-term.

Prayer points:

Please pray –

✓ *For energy and vision for the Oasis team;*

✓ *For the very many Cobham families requiring assistance in these difficult days, whether this is through the Fresh Food Programme or where there is domestic abuse and other areas of social concern.*

If you would like to make a donation or get involved in the Oasis Freedom project or any other work of Oasis, please contact David Taylor via parishoffice@sac.church.

GARDEN ROUTE CHILDREN'S TRUST

Report from Paul Hurrell, project champion for the GRCT



The need is getting greater! The number of children being fed in the pre-schools supported by the GRCT is increasing, particularly in areas in the Western Cape such as Hout Bay near Cape Town. The higher populations in townships and informal settlements in these regions are primarily a result of workers migrating from areas with high unemployment rates in South Africa, and neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe and Malawi.

The influx has put enormous pressure on the pre-schools and the need to feed more children a nourishing breakfast of e'Pap. To give these youngsters a chance to be educated and healthy, we need to provide more e'Pap and this requires additional funding. The GRCT needs to raise at least £100,000 per year just to sustain its current programmes.

The support from St Andrew's is truly appreciated by all Trustees. The charity will mark its 20th anniversary in 2026, and several fundraising activities are being planned.

If you wish to learn more about the GRCT, please do contact me by email at paulh@sac.church.

Prayer Points

Please pray that-

✓ *our generous donors, we whom we give grateful thanks, will be blessed by your Holy Spirit.*

✓ *our fundraising efforts in 2025 and beyond are successful and fruitful*

✓ *we raise enough money to be able to support the growing need to feed hungry children in South Africa.*

FOODBANK

Report from Alison Greenwood, project champion for the Foodbank



It is hard to imagine that families can't afford food in leafy Cobham but Cobham does still need its Foodbank. Times are getting tougher for the unemployed and those on low incomes.

Food donations have been consistently low for some time now and we regularly give out a lot more food than we receive in donations. Thanks to the kind monetary gifts we receive we are able to top up the lack of food donations.

Not only do we give our clients food, but personal hygiene and household items, which they find invaluable, as these items are generally quite costly.

A previous report mentioned the miscellaneous table, the table from which clients can choose extras that are not generally considered essentials. At this time

of year this table is supplemented with delicious looking fresh vegetables donated by the Horsley Community Garden, who give us their surplus stock. The picture below shows the fresh produce received recently, and bread that was donated by the Bakery in Hollyhedge Road from fresh bakes that weren't sold the day before.

A list of items most urgently needed is published every week in the Community news section of the church's weekly email.

For those that would like to make financial contributions, you can donate directly into our [bank account](#). Details can be found on the website.

Prayer points:

Please pray that

✓our community will continue to be generous financially and especially with food donations.

✓we find an accessible community space from which the warehouse and distribution centre can operate on the same site.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Report from Helen Goddard, Christian Aid Week Co-ordinator for St Andrew's



The work of Christian Aid and other charities working to end poverty injustice globally has never been more necessary. In our unsettled world the humanitarian needs caused by conflicts, natural disasters and the effects of climate change continue to increase.

Christian Aid currently has 4 emergency appeals open (alongside the DEC)

- Myanmar earthquake
- Sudan Crisis
- Middle East Humanitarian Crisis
- Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis

They are also working in other areas where there is conflict or drought due to global warming across Africa, Asia, South America, the Middle East and the Caribbean.

As you remember, this year's CA Week appeal focussed on Guatemala, helping the indigenous communities there to combat the effects of climate change enabling them to grow food to feed their families and even extra crops to sell to pay for schooling and health care. They are also working with the indigenous communities to enable them to stand up for their rights against the commercial farms who divert and pollute the rivers and cheat people on land deals.

At St Andrew's we raised £1,039.95 this year from the Church Collection, the e-envelope and 3 small local house-to-house collections. Thank you if you took part and made a donation.

Nationally the funds are still being counted and sent to Christian Aid. A national total will be released later in the year.

If you would still like to make a donation, please do NOT use our E-envelope as it has closed. Either donate directly via the Christian Aid website (christianaid.org.uk) or contact Helen (helen@sac.church).

Prayer points

Please pray for

✓ *the CA team as they decide how best to use the funds raised*

✓ *those in leadership nationally and globally to honour pledges to reduce global warming*

✓ *peace in the many conflict zones around the world.*

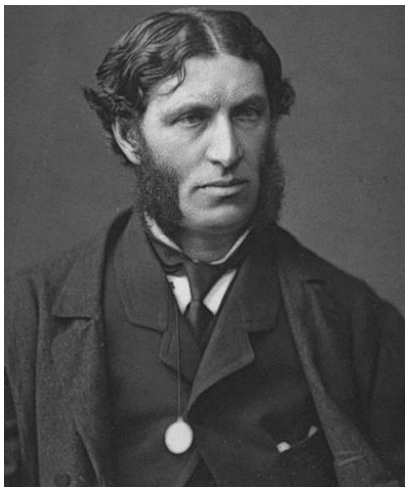
FAITH AND SOCIAL ACTION FUNDRAISERS AND EVENTS

Hit and Hope Golf at Patchesham course, Friday 25 July.

All places are booked but please feel free to join us at the club for prizegiving and a delicious special offer meal from Hogans Restaurant. Please contact Charleen if you have any questions about the event.



Faith & Social Action in Victorian Cobham: Matthew Arnold at Painshill Cottage Saturday 18 October at Churchgate House



**An Illustrated Talk by Local Historian & Author Dr David Taylor, FSA
to raise funds for Local & National Charities**

Sponsored by

Aspire Luxury Properties

Church Gate House, Cobham, KT11 3EJ

Saturday 18th October 7pm

Tickets: £20 (to include wine & canapes) from Church Office

Elaine@sac.church or via website (www.sac.church)



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