

IT'S NOT FAIR!

WE ALL KNOW THAT England was robbed of that goal against Germany. Lampard's shot clearly landed behind the line... it just isn't fair. And, of course, the British are born with an innate ability to recognise unfairness when they see it!

Now there really are huge injustices in the world, and tragedies, sicknesses and 'the unwelcome unexpected' touch all our lives at some time or other. Our initial response is often, 'Why me, Lord?'

As always in life, it's our reaction to such events or circumstances that determines whether we end up bitter in spirit or strengthened in faith. I believe the Bible can help us to maintain a right attitude when disaster strikes and when bad things happen to good people.

Andrew Parfitt reflects on the World Cup – and other disasters

In the first place, when things go wrong, it is worth remembering and being thankful for all the material and spiritual blessings that we *have* received (John 1:16). Most of us in the western world live truly advantaged lives. Maybe we should compare ourselves with the less well-off rather than with those who seem to be trouble-free; as an old proverb says, 'I cried because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no feet'.

We should also remember that God is with us in all those unfair circumstances. He has promised never to leave us (Hebrews 14:5) and has told us that nothing can separate us from His love (Romans 8:38-39). More than that, God knows – from experience – just how we feel. The execution of Jesus was the gravest injustice the world has ever known. Not only was He innocent of the charges levelled against Him, but He was totally sinless. The Righteous One died for the unrighteous (us) in order that we might be reconciled to God (1 Peter 3:18). That is not fair – but it gave us salvation.

Finally, we know that whatever injustices we may suffer in this life there will come a day when God will judge the world with total impartiality and justice (Psalm 9:8). I am not sure that England will be retrospectively awarded the World Cup, or that by then it will seem worth worrying about. But everyone will have to bow in awesome acknowledgement that God's ways are perfect and that 'fairness' has finally won.

THE FUTURE IS NOW

LIZ SHAH heads up the AoG Children's Department (TK:UK) and at a recent Regional Day she spoke with great passion about children's ministry and its importance in the life of the church. I then heard of a well known theologian who every week teaches in a children's Sunday School class. It has given fresh motivation as we think about our children's and youth ministries.

We are blessed with a great bunch of children in *Treasure Kids* and a growing group of young adults in *The Chill*. Equally, there is a great team of people serving in these various ministries – pray for them as week by week they teach and disciple. This generation isn't just the future of the church it's part of the church now. We want to see young people baptised and filled with the Spirit.

This has come at a time when numbers have dropped at Kids Club to the extent that we have cancelled the programme until after the summer when we will be relaunching this ministry.

One statistic says that one out of two children who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour will do so by the age of 12. It simply serves to remind us of the great opportunity there is among children and young people – now.

Jonathan Jankowski

Beside the seaside

THE SUN SHONE brightly and a fantastic day was had by all at Joss Bay (near Broadstairs). At the end of last month, following Sunday's meeting forty of us headed to the beach – some of us sacrificing what we thought was the opportunity to watch the now infamous and hugely embarrassing England – Germany game. As the score came through on mobile phones and radio we sat by the tranquil sea, under a gloriously blue sky, happy in the knowledge we had made the better choice! (Though it can't be denied some of us were somewhat unhappy).

A good number ventured for a swim, picnics were consumed and all in all a good time was had by all (despite the footy). Same place next year – and who knows? The same glorious weather (without any need to concern ourselves with how England might be doing!).



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

HOE DOWN The evening held at the beginning of June was a great success. This was a ticketed event and the church was full as we line-danced and enjoyed some excellent food provided by our ever willing Catering Team. Once more the sun shone (great!), resulting in a



very warm building (not so great!), but it did mean a fair few calories were burned. Many came dressed for the occasion including a good number of children (pictured).

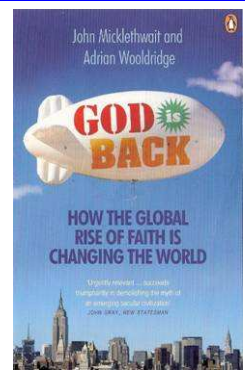
FRENCH CHOIR On Saturday 19th June we welcomed the choir from the AoG church in Dreux, France. Friendships were made and we look forward to ongoing fellowship with the people there. Thanks to Olu Adepoju for her help with translation.

MINISTRY IN JULY Andrew & Ann Parfitt will be ministering here at GCC as well as Burgess Hill, Brighton and Allington Baptist Church. Derek Savage has preaching engagements at The Life Church, Brewer Street, Twydall Evangelical Church, Staplehurst Free Church and New Life Church, Canterbury

QUIZ EVENING Saturday 17th July at 7pm is our next quiz and as we look forward to the summer holidays the theme is *Life's a Beach*. Invite friends, get and team together and enjoy.

BOOK REVIEW *God is Back*

In its millennium edition, the *Economist* was so confident of the demise of the Almighty that it published His obituary. Now, ten years on, its present editor and his Washington bureau chief (one a Catholic and the other an unbeliever) have written this book



about how healthy He seems to be! Their study is meticulously researched and their findings particularly encouraging to Pentecostals and charismatics (there are about 500 million of us worldwide). We may feel that the Church is not making much headway in the UK but the authors show us the wider perspective. They not only do some impressive number crunching but also recognise the transformational influence of Christianity for good in the world. It's not an easy book (I'm reading it for the second time), but I think it's worth the effort.

Andrew Parfitt

JUNE INCOME Giving and other income for last month was 3619.62. There was also a gift of £15 sent to the Starfish Malawi project from the loose change that is donated every month. Thank you for your generous giving.

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