

Summer 2016

**From the Revd Alan Combes
to the Churches of Christ in
Goffs Oak, Ordnance Road,
Ponders End, St John and
Edmonton...**

Grace and peace to you in the
name of our Lord! ☺

In this time of transition it
seems appropriate to send a
letter in the style of Paul, that is
passed around our churches and that seeks to
bring Good News, reflection and encouragement
to our respective communities.

As you read this Revd Valentin is on sabbatical
until late September. He goes with our good
wishes and prayers that he may be richly
blessed by the plans that have been put in place
for the next three months. A sabbatical is a
gracious gift from the church. It is not a holiday
but rather a structured time of discipleship with
space to explore new areas of God's work and
mission and above all a time for spiritual
refreshing. Our ministers can only serve us if
they themselves remain strong in faith, rooted
in Christ and open to the Holy Spirit.

By now you will also know that dear Revd
Louise is leaving us. She has worked hard for
the circuit over many years and we have been
blessed by her ministry.

And to cap all this you will also know that our
wonderful Emily - who has sought to inspire us
and guide our children and young people's work
over the past five years - is leaving us in the
summer for a new post. (Her farewell service is
August 21st at 6.30pm at Edmonton.)

In the short term this means that we are
stretched a bit thin in terms of ministers and
preachers. In Revd Valentin's absence, Revd
Papa and I will work jointly to look after
Edmonton & St John, working closely with the
excellent steward teams at both churches. Revd
Kathleen will kindly be supporting Trinity.

All will be well as we travel together on this
ever changing pilgrim journey of faith. So
enough of news - what about our faith...?
God is good and there are many exciting things
happening. The key seems to be to open our
eyes to see God at work and join in.



I recently had the privilege of
being with a local family as they
faced the death of their dear
daughter to cancer. God made
the connection between us and
has brought blessing to terrible
and difficult situation. In fact
recently I have found myself in
the midst of a few unexpected
moments that God has provided,
bringing together strands of
different lives to enable grace to
flow amongst the mess and the
muck of life.

Meanwhile I have been reading and reflecting
on Mission in recent weeks - indeed we are
looking forward to 10th July at Ponders End
where there will be a special guest service, the
gospel will be preached and an opportunity to
respond provided. So PLEASE PRAY for all
involved there...

One thing has become clear to me. Mission is
not some aspect of church life done by a few and
mission is not the church saving people, nor is it
achieved by our words or actions alone. God is
a God of mission - mission is the outpouring of
God's love to all people and all creation
ultimately expressed as God sent his son Jesus
to bring good news to the poor, healing,
freedom from oppression, justice and
forgiveness. Go and read Luke 4 and we see that
we cannot be Christians without loving our
neighbour. God is love and so mission as the
flow of love to all sits at the heart of God's being.

Some may say - I do not have the words, I don't
know the theology, how can I share God's love?
But in truth, if God has touched your life in some
way in the past, if you believe in Jesus and
follow him then all you have to do to share the
Gospel is to tell our own story... Jesus is
important to me because... I love God because...

That's it and we can all do that can't we?

And so we pray:
*May you know God's love protecting you, God's
Spirit equipping you and God's presence guiding
you down Christ's narrow way as together we
step out with faith. God bless you.*

Alan Combes - Circuit Minister