

NEUCHÂTEL CHURCH MAGAZINE - JULY 2010

Chapelle des Charmettes, Rue Varroz 1

DURING THE MONTH OF JULY, no bible study groups, no debate @ eight

BUT.....Don't forget the picnic

Sunday, August 15th from 11 am at Colombier

when we bid farewell to Mieke and to Roy as minister in charge.

– see next magazine for details

From Roy and Mieke



As the second Alpha course has just finished, I have been reflecting on the effect that these courses have had on people's lives in Neuchâtel Church.

For some there have been 'life-changing' encounters with the Living Lord, just re-read Sonya's story in the February 2010 magazine. She had lots of awkward questions and was sceptical about God's teachings. But as she attended the Alpha course it became clear why she should believe in Jesus

Christ and in a small group of other church members. It became the turning point in her life.

Before she left Neuchâtel, there was no doubt in her mind that she wanted to acknowledge her new faith in Christ and be baptized. What a day that was in the life of the church.

In this month's magazine read Hazel's story, who has discovered much to her surprise, that God does indeed answer prayer and that He is concerned about real issues in our lives. The Alpha course has been part of her journey towards a living faith.

Someone else found the joy of praying to the Lord at any time or in any place and about anything, what a liberating freedom.

During one of the sessions when the group was learning to pray for healing, in the time of reflection afterwards, the question was posed "what was happening whilst we prayed?" The answer that humbled me was "Well - Jesus was here".

Another lovely comment was " I didn't realise that an Anglican minister prayed in tongues!"

For others it was a chance to look again at the basis of their faith and realise that we still have many questions this side of heaven.

The success of the Alpha approach, which has been used right across the world and across the denominations, is that it is firmly based on the Bible and a belief that it is directly relevant to the lives of people today.

Just as God gave the tablets to Moses and changed the course of history, so His word still speaks to us and His directions for our lives are still absolutely relevant.

Would **you** like to join the next Alpha course and gain a deeper understanding of God's word and His desire for your life?



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Thank God for Alpha (and thank God for Matt in the Daily Telegraph)

The Restauratrice's Tale

Reflections on an 'Alpha' Course



The second Alpha Course organised by Roy and Mieke for members of Neuchâtel Church is drawing to a close and I've been asked to write about my experience.

Actually it has been quite an experience, and as I look back and remember the motley crew who introduced themselves and explained why they were gathered in Roy's living room that first Thursday evening, I realise that I've travelled a long road like Chaucer's pilgrims.

«Then folk do long to go on pilgrimage, And palmers to go seeking out strange strands, To distant shrines well known in distant lands.»

Roy's introductory remarks included a reminder that what was said within the group remained within those four walls, so this is going to be a somewhat elliptical and entirely personal account because I found that while I went on a journey with the Alpha Course book «*Questions of Life* by Nicky Gumbel» as a guide, it was Roy's choice of Bible readings, his commentary and questions together with the tales of my fellow pilgrims which were the real eye openers.

So how did Chaucer's pilgrims feel as they disbanded at Canturbury?

We Alpha pilgrims have shared some intense moments. I have left far behind me the intellectually woolly humanist who thought that if we all tried to follow Christ's 'love thy neighbour' policy the world would be a better place, and that an hour of quiet reflection in Church on a Sunday was a good thing in a busy schedule.

Mieke's firm interjection «Jesus is so much more» is still ringing in my ears as I continue to struggle with the concept of God. You can tell I still have a long way to go, but I have really discovered the power of prayer and that's a sea change in my life.

How do I feel about bearing witness? To tell the truth, somewhat embarrassed and very hesitant, so I'm obviously not yet filled with the Holy Spirit but prior to the Alpha Course the idea would not even have crossed my mind.

Other members of the group, some of whom have been committed Christians for many, many years, will have very different pilgrims' tales. Perhaps for them this Alpha course will not have been such a milestone, such a defining moment.

For me it has been the road to Damascus in my own small way.

Hazel Moreau



Lucy, Tara and Johnny confirmed their commitment to Jesus Christ on Sunday June 20th at St Ursula's Church in Berne which was packed for the occasion. Several members of St



Ursula's were also confirmed by Bishop Geoffrey. The biting wind made several of us regret pretty summer outfits, but at least it didn't rain, and there was most certainly joy in heaven and also in our hearts. It was lovely that Johnny and Tara's grandparents were able to come over for the occasion.



All those who were able to come enjoyed the bring-and-share lunch at Roy and Mieke's flat afterwards.