

## MINISTER'S LETTER



Whenever we turn to the gospels and find a story about someone approaching Jesus for help, his response, almost without exception, is the same: he listens to the person's story and responds in the most appropriate way possible. Sometimes that involves the reassurance of a gentle touch when that is what is needed most, sometimes he utters the words that most need to be heard: sometimes words of comfort, sometimes words of challenge.

I say 'almost without exception' because there is one incident, at a point when Jesus is still struggling to understand the breadth of God's mission (and therefore his own), when his initial response to a non-Jewish woman is at best frosty and at worst downright rude. The woman is a Canaanite according to Matthew (15: 21-28) and a Syrophenician according to Mark (7: 24-30). Whatever the nationality of the unnamed woman, Jesus' initial response is difficult for us to comprehend. But as the conversation progresses, his understanding of the other is deepened, his prejudices are seemingly overcome and his eventual response is both affirming and caring.

As Jesus' own self-knowledge increases it becomes increasingly evident that it does not matter to him who approaches him. People find a welcome and love in Jesus whatever sex they are or race or creed. It does not matter if someone is struggling with a physical or a mental illness, Jesus will engage with that person. Jesus is more than happy to be a friend to those on the margins of society: he does not care what others might be saying or thinking about him (or them) and he steadfastly refuses to be embarrassed by the company of such people despite the demands of others.

Jesus calls us to be like him.

As we embark upon another Church year, may we, as a church community continue to strive to be as open and inclusive as the one we seek to follow.

With every blessing,

*Paul*

## **CHURCHES TOGETHER IN MERTON PARK**

Since last year's report the committee of the Churches Together in Merton Park have continued meeting every two months. There have been changes in the committee membership. Pastor In Jung Kim and his daughter Annie from the Korean Church were welcomed in September 2010. Sadly Anne Fleming has stood down in July and replaced by Lisa Ashby who was also welcomed as one of St James' representatives. Rev Tom Kavanagh continues his role as Chairman and Father Graham Derriman is now the secretary.

The **Service of Healing and Reconciliation** took place at St Mary's Church on the 18th October which happened to be St Luke's day. There was a good representation from all 6 churches but more especially from the Korean Church. It is hoped that these services will be a twice yearly event arranged by each of the CTiMP. The next healing service will take place at Martin Way. (Date and time to be arranged).

The **Good Friday Witness** of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches at St James' Church was relatively poorly attended. It was suggested that in future the Churches might consider joining the Act of Witness at the Civic Centre at 11am led by the Churches Together in Morden. As in previous years Merton Park Baptist and Martin Way Methodist have a joint Service with Morden Baptist and Morden Park Baptist Churches on Good Friday.

As Churches Together the committee is keen to celebrate the **400th Anniversary of the King James Bible** this year. There was an opportunity at the **Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** to use the authorised version with effect. This Service, which was well attended took place at St John Fisher RC Church on the 23rd January. The Bible Society website ([www.kingjamesbibletrust.org](http://www.kingjamesbibletrust.org)) revealed 23rd October as Bible Sunday so CTiMP will be presenting 'The Good Book' at St James' Church at 6pm.

At the beginning of this year a suggestion was made to support a '**Joint Venture**' (of the non-smoking type) as a fund raising event. St Mary's Church held an auction on the 5th February and offers or promises made from CTiMP and others helped raise more than £4000 toward St Mary's Scout project. It is one way in which each Church would benefit from

becoming involved in different fund raising activities as a way of working together.

**Proposed Homeless Shelter in Merton** has been discussed at the CTiMP meetings in the past and more recently following last winter's extreme weather. Faith in Action, YMCA South West London and Wimbledon and BE Church Wimbledon are all proposing a 7 nights a week facility during the coldest nights of the year. Volunteers will be required from the local Churches and it is hoped that C.T.M.P. members will be proactive in encouraging a response to the needs of the proposed shelter.

Since **Christian CARE** grew out of a Lent group of the Merton Council of Churches, the present CTiMP members have benefitted greatly having CC's chairperson Gillian Thick on the committee. At each meeting Gillian gives an update on the activities as well as needs that arise. As a response to the increased number of families in need of subsistence at the beginning of the year, each of the 6 Churches collected food items to distribute to these families in the borough and was greatly appreciated.

## **Future plans and Dates for your diaries**

**Special Service** to present 'The Good Book' and celebrate **the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible** to be held on **Sunday 23rd October 2011 at 6pm.**

The next **Church Unity Service** will be held at St Mary's Church on **23rd January 2012** during which members of the CTiMP group will be commissioned. As in previous years it will include invitations to a Service in each of the Churches during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18th-25th January 2011

Dates for the next Taizé meetings held at St John Fisher Church at 8pm: Autumn term: 12th Sept; 10th Oct; 14th Nov and 12th Dec (shared meal)

Dennis Clark and Gwen Wildman are presently the representatives from Martin Way but anyone with an interest in ecumenicalism or have ideas about working together as Churches are most welcome. The next meeting will be on Thursday 15th September 2011



**CHRISTIAN  
SOLIDARITY  
WORLDWIDE**  
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

## **NO WAY OUT**

Andrew Johnston, Advocacy Director of CSW (Christian Solidarity Worldwide), will cycle from John O'Groats to Land's End, covering 888 miles over ten days, to raise money for CSW's No Way Out campaign for Egyptian Christians.

Andrew said, "No Way Out and the plight of Christians in the Middle East really struck a chord with me, having met so many Christians fearing for their future across the Middle East. Working for CSW I am privileged to see up close and personal, the difference that CSW's support makes to so many people's lives and the importance of supporting Christian communities that don't enjoy the same freedoms we take for granted that in Europe. I am delighted to support Egyptian Christians and to help them play their role in the new Egypt."



His journey begins in John O'Groats on 21st August, taking in Glasgow on 23rd August and Manchester on 26th August, with a stopover at the Greenbelt Festival at Cheltenham Racecourse on 28th and 29th August, where Greenbelters with bikes will join him on a ride to Strood. He will then continue his cycle, aiming to reach Land's End by 31 August. So hopefully as you read this he is taking a well deserved break from the saddle.

His plan is to raise £1,000 for CSW's No Way Out campaign, which aims to support Egyptian Christians through prayer, solidarity and action. Christians in Egypt have lived with the threat of discrimination, harassment or violence for decades, and CSW's campaign aims to support them as the vital political reform process begins.

For more information about CSW and the Now Way Out campaign visit their webpage at [www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk)

# SURREY CHURCHES PRESERVATION TRUST

## **RUXLEY CHURCH RIDE & STRIDE SATURDAY 10th SEPTEMBER 2011**



### **Background**

Most counties in England have annual 'Bike Rides', on the second Saturday in September, to raise money for the restoration and repair of buildings for Christian Worship.

The idea is that cyclists (and walkers) are given a list of churches and chapels in the area of their choice. They map out their own route to visit churches by bike or on foot, and then get friends to sponsor them for a fixed amount per church visited.

The money that is collected is divided into two. This year Half the monies go to Ruxley Methodist Church; the other half is retained by the Surrey Churches Preservation Trust for distribution to churches in need. In the dozen or so years that the Bike Ride has been running in Surrey, over £250,000 has been raised.

### **Organisation**

The umbrella organisation is the **Surrey Churches Preservation Trust**, with trustees from most Christian denominations. The Trustees give out grants twice a year to deserving applicants from the monies collected during the Bike Ride.

### **Dust off your bike and come and join us...**

Members of Ruxley have been taking part in this for many years, with varying numbers of riders. In the past we have had both a men's group and a ladies group.

Many churches provide drinks on the way, and you can have a look inside. It's a very sociable time and fun to discover hidden routes round the neighbourhood.

For more information about the ride or to say you are coming please contact Chris Meineck on (020) 8394 2101. To find out more about the Surrey Churches Preservation Trust visit their website at [www.surreychurchespreservationtrust.org](http://www.surreychurchespreservationtrust.org)

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## **BIG BRUNCH**

Come and join us for Big Brunch on Saturday 17th September from 10am until 1pm. Not only will you be able to get a Full English for only £4 but you will be helping us raise money for the Spring Harvest Fund.

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## **SIGMA CHRISTMAS PRODUCTION**



Once again 'SIGMA' are going to put on Christmas musical production. As yet all is veiled in secrecy but a little mouse has told me the performances will be on December 16th & 17th.

Rehearsals will be on Sunday afternoons from 4pm, starting in September at Martin Way Methodist church.

SIGMA is a Greek letter meaning 'All things coming together'. SIGMA is open to all actors, singers, people who love to help backstage. The group is made up of mixed ages from the whole circuit, so if why not come along and join us.

For more information please contact Anne Conquest.  
Tel no: (020) 8942 7147 or Email [aconquest@btinternet.com](mailto:aconquest@btinternet.com)

## DROUGHT IN EAST AFRICA



Communities in East Africa are currently facing the worst drought for 60 years. More than 10 million people are thought to be affected across the region, with Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia hardest hit. Two successive failed rainy seasons have meant lost harvests and the decimation of livestock. Soaring food prices have exacerbated the situation, leaving many people hungry and unable to meet their basic needs. The World

Food Programme has warned that desperate hunger threatens millions of lives.

MRDF (Methodist Relief and Development Fund) has launched an emergency appeal fund to support people facing drought and hunger in this region. Working through MRDF's emergency partner network, the ACT Alliance, support will be targeted at the most vulnerable groups, in particular children, the elderly and nursing mothers. The appeal will also aid relief efforts in the Dadaab refugee camp on the Somalia Kenya border, which is experiencing a massive increase in the number of new arrivals each day as people leave their homes in search of food. In addition to meeting immediate needs, the appeal will support projects which aim to provide vulnerable communities across sub-Saharan Africa with food security in the longer term.

"Urgent action is needed to prevent this crisis from becoming a famine," said Kirsty Smitt" MRDF's Director. "Donations to our appeal fund will help us to meet people's immediate needs and crucially also ensure that long-term issues are addressed as well. As the situation develops we will continue to work in conjunction with partners and churches in the region to identify and respond to the highest priorities."

MRDF envelopes have been in the church recently but if you have missed them you can still make a donation. To donate by telephone using a credit or debit card, call 020 7224 4814. Alternatively you can donate by cheque payable to 'MRDF' and post to MRDF, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

For more information about the MRDF, please visit their website at [www.mrdf.org.uk](http://www.mrdf.org.uk)



## **The Methodists' Handwritten Bible goes online**

The complete Methodists' Handwritten Bible, created by tens of thousands of people across Britain and Northern Ireland, is now online and accessible via [www.deepeningdiscipleship.org.uk](http://www.deepeningdiscipleship.org.uk). It will also be available for display at churches, Bible Fresh events, anniversaries and museums up until the 2012 Methodist Conference.

The Handwritten Bible contains 7,000 pages of text and illustrations transcribed by people from every part of Britain and further afield. More than 30,000 volunteers joined in from across communities - including prisons, schools, colleges, libraries, nursing homes, airports and shopping centres - to copy the whole of the NRSV translation of the Bible after Methodists voted to transcribe the Scripture at the Conference in Portsmouth last year.

Since the first volume went live on the Deepening Discipleship website last month, the Handwritten Bible has been viewed more than 1,000 times. Most of those readers accessed the site from within the UK, but there have been visitors from 76 other countries, including the United States, Malaysia, Australia and South Africa.

Revd Jenny Ellis, Co-ordinator of Evangelism, Spirituality and Discipleship, said: “We have already had many people asking to display the hardbound copies of the Bible, including a request from the Caribbean. The Handwritten Bible has been divided up into 31 volumes; some of those volumes are currently on display at the Liskeard Methodist Church in Cornwall while others are on show at Worcester Cathedral. Now that all the volumes are online, people can view the whole Bible. It’s a way of connecting us all together as we value and celebrate the Scriptures.”

As part of the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible, people were invited to join in handwriting verses from the Scripture. Verses have been written in English, Chinese, Welsh and Braille with accompanying illustrations. The London Districts were responsible for Ezekiel and Revelation.

Dave Webster, Internet Communications Coordinator who was responsible for uploading the Handwritten Bible online, said: “The Handwritten Bible has the human touch. The care and love that people put into it are expressed in the ever-changing handwriting and illustrations. This makes reading it a unique and moving experience.”

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## **WOULD YOU FALL FOR IT?**

Several years ago the New Statesman had a competition for its readers to suggest misleading information for tourists visiting this country.

Gerard Hoffuung submitted 'Try the famous echo in the British Museum Reading Room.'

Another was: 'On first entering an Underground train, it is customary to shake hands with every passenger.'

And for the drivers: 'A single yellow line along the side of the road means you can park there. A double yellow line means you can double park.'

## **THE METHODIST CHURCH RESPONDS TO THE RIOTS**

Methodist churches in their local communities have been working and praying hard in the aftermath of the riots across England last month. There have been prayer vigils in Tottenham, Wolverhampton, Central London, Manchester and Birmingham, and many other locations.

Street pastors, town centre and retail chaplains have been out on the streets; Methodist ministers have been interviewed on local radio stations; Wolverhampton churches are helping small businesses which have lost all their stock; The Nexus Fresh Expression in Central Buildings, Manchester has been offering free coffee to people helping with the clean-up.

Commenting on the events, the chair of the London District, the Revd Jenny Impey said, "A number of our people live close to the hot spots and have spoken of their shock at what they have witnessed, but are responding in positive ways by helping with clean-up operations, calling together people for prayer and positive action and contacting church members to ensure that they are OK.

"Many people across London and elsewhere are counting the cost of the destruction on our streets. Our churches, which are at the heart of the communities affected, want to play their part in partnership with others to bring healing and peace to those areas, and demonstrate that this city is a place of peaceful, diverse and vibrant communities."

If you would like to make a cheque donation to the Mission in Britain Fund which makes grants to local churches and circuits. Please make it payable to 'Mission in Britain Fund' and send it to The Mission in Britain Fund, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

### **A Prayer for broken communities in UK cities**

*Loving God, you call us into community, and we only become truly ourselves as we are for others.*

*Forgive us for our brokenness and heal the hurts of communities damaged in the recent troubles in our cities in the United Kingdom.*

Help us to restore the harm to neighbourhoods, buildings and relationships and to rekindle hope where fires of anger and disappointment raged.

Give to the Church in areas of trouble the courage and creativity to be there for others, and to be part of your gracious work of restoration and recovery.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is our peace and who keeps breaking down the barriers that divide us from each other. Amen

*Prayer by Revd Mark Wakelin*

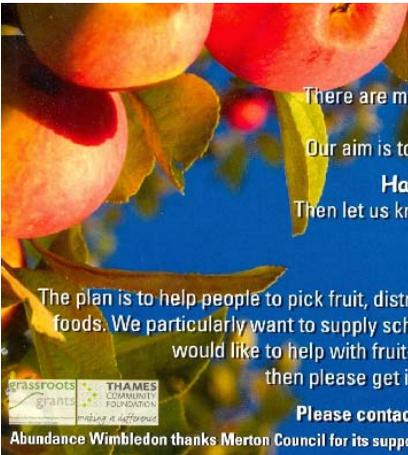
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## **WIMBLEDON FRUIT DAY**

On Saturday September 17th Abundance Wimbledon will hold a Fruit Day in Wimbledon. There will be a fruit press and fruit related stalls at St.Marks Church, just behind Wimbledon Library, from 11am - 2pm.

Have you got any ideas about what to put on a stall?  
Do you have skills in baking with fruit or preserving it?  
Let us know!

Phone Juliet 8946 2514 or Joyce 8946 3750  
Or drop us an email [abundancewimbledon@gmail.com](mailto:abundancewimbledon@gmail.com)



**ABUNDANCE WIMBLEDON**

This is a project to encourage people to pick fruit and to eat it. There are many fruit trees around Wimbledon in gardens and public places, but every year a lot of the fruit goes to waste. Our aim is to help people harvest the fruit and use this wonderful, free food.

**Have you got a fruit tree in your garden or near you?**  
Then let us know about it and donate surplus fruit to Abundance Wimbledon. If you need help to harvest, we may be able to lend a hand.

**Volunteer to harvest, distribute and process fruit**  
The plan is to help people to pick fruit, distribute the surplus to the community and to make juice and other foods. We particularly want to supply schools, care homes and people who can't afford fresh fruit. If you would like to help with fruit-picking this summer and/or with finding ways of using the fruit, then please get in touch. The more people involved, the more things we can do.

**Please contact:** Joyce 020 8946 3750 [abundancewimbledon@gmail.com](mailto:abundancewimbledon@gmail.com)

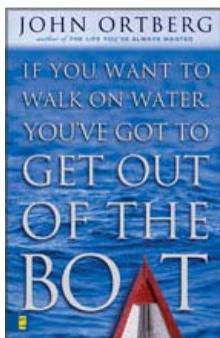
Abundance Wimbledon thanks Merton Council for its support.

grassroots PARTNERS THAMES COMMUNITY FOUNDATION make a difference

## BOOK REVIEWS from RE:FRESH BOOKS

### Summer Book Sale

Re:fresh books are offering a number of books at less than the RRP, here are their top 6 best-selling books.



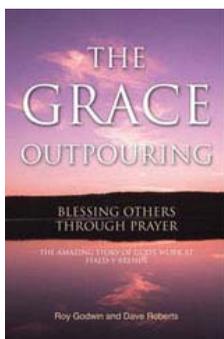
#### *If you want to Walk on Water You've got to get out of the Boat* by John Ortberg

416 pages paperback, RRP£6.99

The book that inspired the launch of re:fresh books & christian resources is still a best-seller.

John Ortberg challenges us to step out of our comfort zones and experience the tremendous potential of the life of faith.

Winner of the 2002 Christianity Today Book Award!

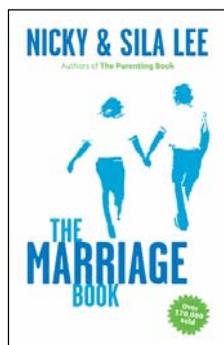


#### *The Grace Outpouring*

by Roy Goodwin and Dave Roberts

192 pages paperback, RRP£7.99

The story of how Roy Goodwin and his wife established the Ffald-y-Brenin house of prayer in a remote corner of Wales and of the many people who have been blessed through this and other prayer initiatives including the Caleb Prayer movement



#### *The Marriage Book*

by Nicky and Sila Lee

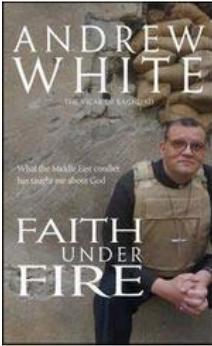
346 pages paperback, RRP£7.99

From the *Alpha* stable, this popular book is described as "great to give to friends who are getting married or those already married."

How can we stay happily married to one person for the whole of our lives? How do we resolve conflict?

Nicky and Sila Lee have been married for over 30 years and have four children. They are on the staff of Holy Trinity Brompton in London.

The Marriage Book is designed to prepare, build and mend marriages.

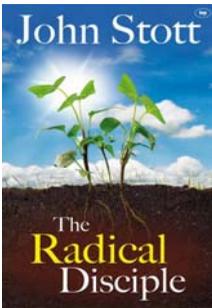


### ***Faith under Fire***

by Andrew White ("The Vicar of Baghdad")

160 pages paperback, RRP£8.99

Andrew White has seen the best and worst of humanity: articulate, agreeable imams and rabbis; Christian venality and dishonesty. What has kept him willing to see the best? Every time he returns to Iraq he may be saying goodbye to his family for the last time. What do they think? He suffers from MS. How does he remain cheerful despite his physical weakness, and its progression? What does he say to God, alone in his study?

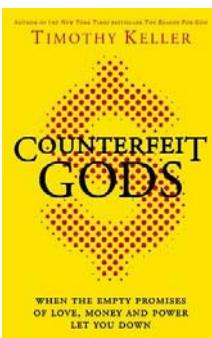


### ***The Radical Disciple***

by John Stott

160 pages paperback, RRP£9.99

The last book from the Christian statesman who was once billed by *Time* Magazine as one of the world's 100 most influential people. The book is a call to God's people to live fully-committed lives. He examines eight neglected areas of discipleship - non-conformity (to the world), Christlikeness, Christian maturity, Creation-care, a simple lifestyle, balance (individual discipleship and corporate fellowship, worship and witness, pilgrimage and citizenship), and an awareness of our mortality.



### ***Counterfeit Gods***

by Timothy Keller

240 pages paperback, RRP£8.99

Three thousand years ago, the most developed nations in the world worshipped idols, gods of wood and stone. Today we may laugh at their ignorance but the modern manifestations of idolatry are no less foolish and just as harmful. Timothy Keller looks at the empty promises of love, money and power.

*All of these books are available from re:fresh books & christian resources, 23 The Broadway, Tolworth, Surbiton KT6 7DJ*

# CHURCH DIARY

# SEPTEMBER



Sun	4	10.30 am	All Age Worship led by Mark Williamson
		6.30 pm	Welcome Service at Ruxley for Rev Dr Martine Stermerick
Tue	6	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Sun	11	9.45 am	Food with Friends (before the service)
		10.30 am	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	13	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Leadership Meeting
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	14	7.45 pm	Midways Group - Welcome Back - Informal Evening
Thurs	15	8.00 pm	Circuit Meeting at Wimbledon Church
Sat	17	10am-1pm	Big Brunch
Sun	18	10.30 am	Morning Service
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	20	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club - <i>Silvia Baxter</i> - Christian Care
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thurs	22	7.45 pm	Midways Group
Sun	25	10.30 am	Harvest Festival led by Rev Paul Timmis
Tue	27	10.30am-noon	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thurs	29	8.00 pm	Church Council Meeting

*Please refer to the Website ([www.martinway.org.uk](http://www.martinway.org.uk)) or Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information*

## **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

We have many new additions to the church family recently.

If you wish to have your child's birthday mentioned in the Newsletter please pass the details to our Editor, Andrew Fox.

He can be contacted via email at roife@hotmail.co.uk or by phone on (020) 8330 7917.

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We wish all of those who celebrate a birthday this month a very

*Happy Birthday*

and especially to:

**Abigail Fuwa on 15th September**

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## **FOOD WITH FRIENDS**

This is a very special invite from the Sunday Club for everyone in the congregation to join them for breakfast on Sunday 11th September. We will be starting before the service at 9.45am and then any families, young people and children can stay out while the service is on - sharing activities, games and more food together.

Please join us and invite friends, family and Neighbours to come along too.

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## **WELCOME TO MARTINE**

On Sunday 4th September at 6.30pm Ruxley Methodist Church will be holding a special service to welcome Rev Martine Stemerick to the Wimbledon Circuit as minister at Ruxley and Stoneleigh churches. Everybody is more than welcome to come along.

## LOOSE WEIGHT AT CHURCH



Did you know there is a Rosemary Conley class held in the Martin Way Methodist Church Hall every Thursday morning?

My name is Natasha Murray (I am the one on the right) and in 2005 I joined my local Rosemary Conley class to lose weight. I changed my life by losing over 3 ½ stone and found that I enjoyed the diet & exercise so much that in 2007 I trained to become an instructor. And earlier this year I took over the franchise for the Merton area.

Every Thursday morning at 10am everyone rolls up to join in the fun and to lose weight at Martin Way Methodist Church, We start with the weigh-in session which is a one to one at the scales, I then give a five minute talk to the group on various aspects of diet & nutrition and we finish with a 45 minute exercise session.

The exercise session is for all levels from beginner to the more seasoned exerciser, the idea is to burn calories and hopefully have a bit of fun whilst doing so. We have all levels attending our class. We start with a warm up & stretch, with an aerobic section in the middle, followed by 5-10 minutes of toning and ending with more stretches.

I hold other classes in Merton Park, Raynes Park & Mitcham. If you join now and lose 7lb you will be entered into our Christmas Prize draw.

You can just turn up on Thursdays or if you would like more information please feel free to contact me on 07830 240 120 or email me at [natasha.murray@rosemaryconley.com](mailto:natasha.murray@rosemaryconley.com)

*Natasha*

Items for the **October Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: [roife@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:roife@hotmail.co.uk)) by **Sunday 19th September** at the latest