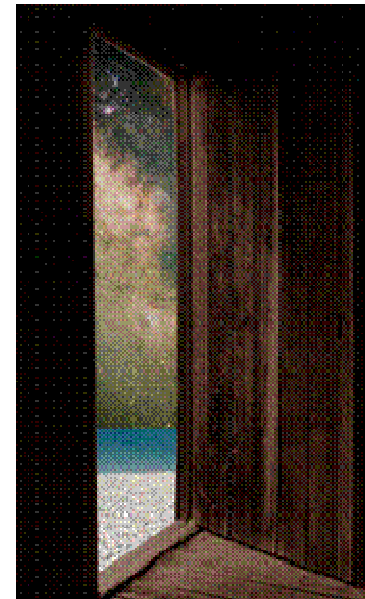


What of tomorrow?

These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. Revelation ch3 verse8



This verse has been on my mind for a number of weeks now. There are many changes taking place at The Family Trust some of which is detailed in the following pages. We are seeing numbers of opportunities from new schools, new areas (Sittingbourne and Swale) and increasing numbers of schools requesting Easter lessons for the first time, plus changes in staff. Chequer Tree Camp spaces are filling with staff and children at quite a fast rate.

There are unprecedented numbers of young people coming to us to be involved as volunteers with our work amongst children & young people. CAST is planning a trainee/ intern scheme in partnership with South West Youth Ministries (www.swym.org.uk). God is providing workers as sowers and we pray they will also harvest.

I consider that there are great opportunities at this present time to influence this generation of children and young people to bring them the message of the good news of the risen Lord. This picture of the open door opened by God is vivid in my mind. What should our response be? I believe it is our duty to step out in faith through the door and actually engage with children and young people. This is not just the work for Family Trust teams, but for every Christian in our churches. If our investment is nothing, we can anticipate an equal return to our churches which will steadily decline.

Steve Knowles - Executive Director for Family Trust and CAST

Don't forget
Chequer Tree Camp
Week 1 -
24th - 30th July

Week 2 -
31st July - 6th Aug



JACK

I have been helping at three different Kingsquads and it has been amazing fun and wonderful to help in God's work in the children's lives.
- Jack, our newest volunteer

Thanks to the supportive work of Richard Colpus we now are now booked into 4 new schools in the Sittingbourne area with the possibility of 2 more!

Richard has been working with two local churches as an assembly worker for the past few years but is now moving on and has kindly arranged a meeting with the heads of these schools so that we can continue the good work he has started. We wish Richard and his family every blessing in their future!

Annabelle says, "The last 15 years have been the most exciting and fulfilling of my working life, I know God had prepared this in advance and am so often amazed at how He uses my life experiences to teach and encourage.

There have been many changes and developments in the Family Trust during this time but I believe God has kept us on the right path. Children and young people need to hear the Gospel and be informed about Christianity. Where better to do this than in school? They will not necessarily come to the church, the church must go to them! If we don't tell them, who will? What a privilege to be the voice of truth!

Moving on to a new challenge, to be able to share these experiences and develop the work of "Splash" is a new and challenging chapter in my life!"



Richard will stay on with the Family Trust until after CTC, by which time they should have moved! Semi-retirement beckons although he is sure there are plans for him to continue serving God, there is life in the old dog yet!!

Mike Haslam

We welcome Mike Haslam to The Family Trust team. Mike is married with two grown up children. He lives in Gillingham with Wendy his wife and is an active member of St Mark's church working for many years with children and young people.

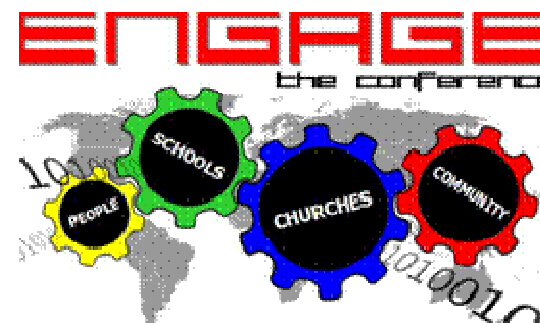
Mike's past career has taken him from a being an analytical chemist for a paint company to his most recent post teaching in a primary school at St Mary's Island.

Mike says: 'For some time Wendy & I have felt that God might be wanting me to move away from teaching. I rewrote my CV and was about to write a job description of what I enjoy doing and then stumbled on the vacancy on the Family Trust website.'

Mike is a 'Scouser' and an Everton supporter so Sandra now has a ready made pal!



On Tuesday 16th March CAST delivered a conference called 'Engage' at St Luke's Church, Maidstone exploring how The Church can engage proactively with it's local communities through the Government's Extended Services agenda.



We drew together contributors: Gill Marchant (from Scripture Union, National), Matthew Mallet (Extended Schools co-ordinator from Kent County Council) and Dave Barker (minister at Cheriton Baptist Church) whose church is fully engaged with practising in this area - to provide opportunities for leaders and lay people to understand, be encouraged and to engage in dialogue around how their churches might grasp this opportunity.

We're pleased to report that 24 people attended, representing 20 different churches and Christian organisations locally and we have already received really positive feedback as people have begun to explore how this might affect their church's work locally.



Discussion rages at the conference!

Sandra and Debra were privileged to attend a children and youth leaders retreat at The Oasts in Northiam, run by the Diocese. We met amazing people whose hearts were on fire for spreading the Word of God. We ate delicious meals and enjoyed fellowship with a variety of characters, both young and a little older! The countryside was stunning; we were able to explore the nearby farms and fields before the six inches of snow arrived!

With teaching from the author Ruth Hassle and encouragement from Rob Dillingham, we felt not only refreshed but able to view our futures at The Family Trust with a new excitement and vision.

When Rob Dillingham spoke about Joshua's mission he also gave each of us a word from God. Sandra was told she was a jewel, ready to shine God's light (everyone who's ever met her will nod in agreement that she's already doing that!) Debra was told to go on armed for the fight. So now we're both ready to do battle against the evil one; to bring more children to God and to lead our army forward to new ventures.

Retreat? Never! The Family Trust will march on, just like Joshua. Watch those Jericho walls fall!



Times they are a changing! We are saying goodbye to Annabelle at Easter and Richard a little later!

How it began:-

Richard, taught modern languages at Cornwallis for 17 years. God had other plans and he joined the Family Trust in 1992 as an associate and became full time on 1st June 1994. Richard says, "When I became a Christian in 1989, it seemed as if my whole life turned upside down! I no longer felt content in my job, tried other avenues which all ended up to be cul de sacs! When I came across the Family Trust and got invited to help at Chequer Tree Camp, my life turned a corner. I began to see the big picture, how God would use me and my experience of teaching. Not to teach French and Spanish, but to tell children about Jesus! I have been totally committed to this ever since and will continue to teach and encourage children and young people to find their own identity in Christ. My desire is to help others excel in this vital ministry and be the best communicators and children's workers they can be!"

Annabelle's involvement with FT started at the same time when she and Richard started to run a Kingsquad at their children's school. She was working in a number of schools as learning support for children with dyslexia and doing some assemblies with the Trust, but felt God leading her to serve Him in a more full time way! After a lot of prayer, she applied for a job and was initially turned down! Convinced this was still what God wanted, she continued to pray and lay it before the Lord. Eighteen months later in September 1995, she began working for the FT!



