

Trevor and Elizabeth Humber have been Lay Chaplains at the Naturist Foundation in Orpington since 1993, taking monthly services in the summer season clothed or unclothed according to the weather. Trevor tells his story...

Naked and unashamed

I'M A COMMITTED CHRISTIAN with Bible College training and overseas experience. I'm also a committed naturist! How do I equate the two? At first, with great difficulty. As a child, I attended evangelical Anglican and Baptist Churches and I came to believe that being naked was sinful; to see another person naked led to temptation and lust; even having sexual thoughts was wrong!

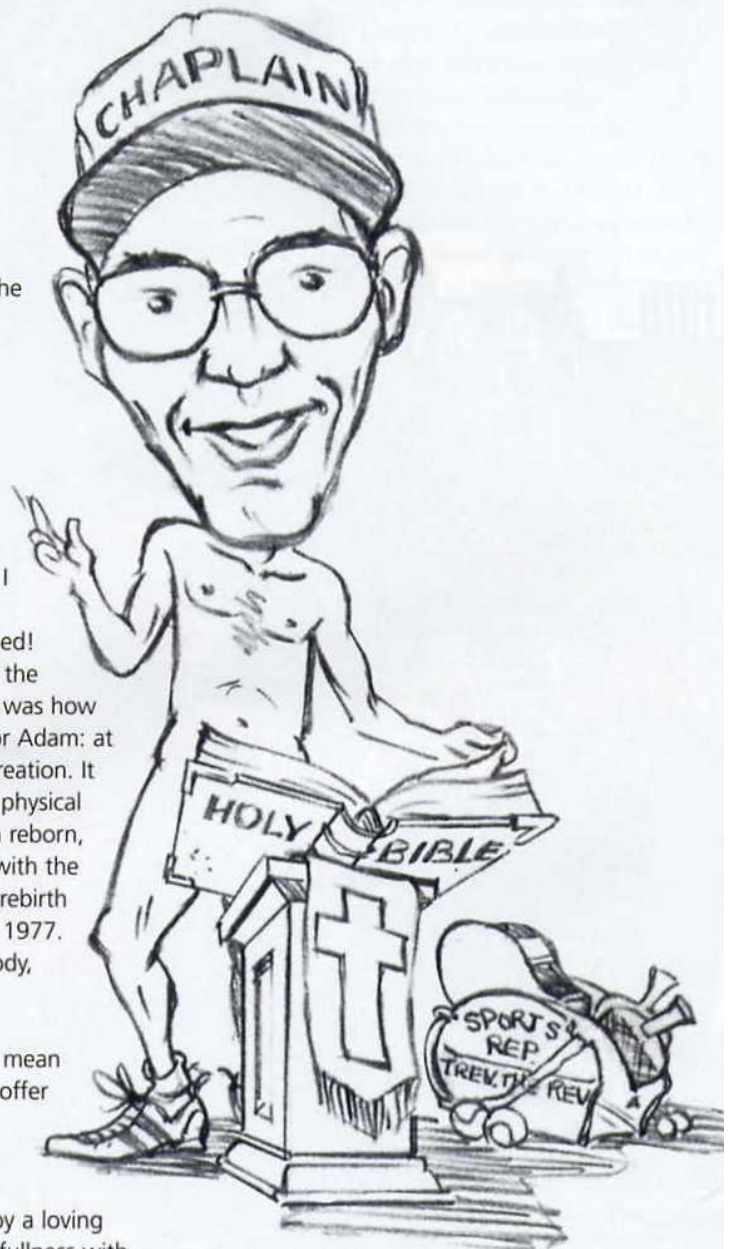
This caused great conflict in my mind. If God had created us as sexual beings with male and female genitalia, and saw that, 'It was very good', how dare the church presume to say that the pinnacle of God's creative activity was sinful and flawed. Did God sin, walking in the garden with a naked Adam and Eve?

In 1977, I received the infilling of the Holy Spirit. It was a life changing experience, but I was still fettered by not knowing how to deal with my body and my sexual nature. How could it be right for equatorial tribes to be unclothed, and for my children to run around unfettered under the African sun, yet be wrong for me?

My marriage broke down in 1982, and returning to England deeply depressed, I took the opportunity to investigate the naturist lifestyle.

I shall never forget the wonderful sense of liberation and exhilaration that enveloped me as I shed my clothes that first time. The chains of years of repression and guilt dropped away. Here I was, naked and completely unashamed! As I walked through the trees I imagined this was how it must have been for Adam: at one with God and creation. It was almost as if the physical part of me had been reborn, and had caught up with the spiritual and mental rebirth I had experienced in 1977. I was truly whole, body, mind and spirit!

What does naturism mean to me? Freedom: to offer praise for God's beautiful creation, including the naked human body; to enjoy a loving relationship in all its fullness with my second wife without shame or embarrassment; to enjoy playing sport unhampered by clothes; to be amongst other unclothed people without any sexual temptation, lust or sin. It has brought acceptance of who I am – there's no pretence when you are naked!



Useful reading: Karen Gorham and Dave Leal. *Naturism and Christianity: Are They Compatible?* Grove Books. Series E118. ISBN 185174438X

Websites: www.christiannaturist.org.uk
www.naturistfoundation.org