

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

OCTOBER 2009

Harvest Festival – A cosy, warm, autumn glow?

Harvest Festival is one of those rare celebrations, perhaps second only to Christmas, that evokes warm, positive images of Churches filled with produce, people and the resounding chords of favourite hymns like “We plough the fields and scatter”. Perhaps that’s why harvest, like Christmas, is one of the times that people who do not regularly come to Church, do come to swell our numbers. Perhaps it is a time to connect with an instinctive “thanksgiving” to God for all good gifts around us – and a time when people know “the drill” – the readings, hymns, the underlying message and to bring a tin of something. Maybe Harvest is associated with childhood memories of coming to Church – and a desire to share this with the next generation.

For people, like us, who live at the heart of the city, it is a time to connect our food with its rural, agricultural source, to connect our weekly shop with soil rather than the need to find a car parking space or to carry heavy bags home.

The roots of the harvest festival service as we now know it are Victorian – and tell a more salutary tale.



The Reverend Robert Hawker was Vicar of Morwenstowe, a Cornish coastal village from 1834 to 1875. It might sound idyllic, but there had been no priest in residence for 100 years. The village was a place of rural poverty and a haven for smugglers and wreckers. The wreckers would wait for a ship to run aground, and rather than run

out the lifeboat to save sailors on the sinking boat, wait to for the boat to founder and collect the salvage. Robert Hawker would try to persuade them to run out the lifeboat to save the drowning men, even to the extent of bribing the wreckers with whisky – without success. He would collect the bodies of the drowned sailors and give them a dignified burial.

Robert Hawker introduced Harvest Festival as a way to encourage his poor parishioners to move away from smuggling and wrecking. He hoped that by celebrating the planting, growing and harvesting of food, people would turn to growing and farming for a living. He also hoped that having a celebration of Harvest in Church would divert them from the traditional autumn parties which involved large amounts of drink. The idea was circulated by articles in Church magazines and caught on. Robert Hawker’s instinct to reconnect people to the business of planting, growing, harvesting has proved a sound one to this day.

How connected are we with the reality of the business of planting, growing, harvesting in England today? The BBCI Sunday evening programme Countryfile is a welcome introduction for many people into the world of farming and the countryside and many live issues about our food. I wonder how many people celebrating the country living generally and harvest festival particularly are aware of today’s issues of stress and poverty within our farming community. In 1995 the Farm Crisis Network grew up as a Christian response to high suicide levels amongst farmers and was in place to support 7,000 farm households through the Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth outbreaks in 2000 and 2001 and it continues to support 1,000 families every year (for more information see www.farmcrisisnetwork.org.uk)

As we give thanks to God this harvest for all the good gifts around us, and seek to support those in need by our harvest giving, let's also learn about where the food we eat comes from, and the people, near and far, whose hands are instrumental in bringing good food to our table. May our thanksgiving to God be also for their lives and work be real and lifegiving.

Ruth Lampard

Deanery Synod meeting at St Mary's on 9 July 2009, and the Chelsea Academy

The Deanery Synod met at St Mary The Boltons on 9 July, when the main item outside the formal Synod business was a presentation by Andy Yarrow, Principal of the new Chelsea Academy.

He spoke about the wonderful opportunity provided by his appointment to lead a brand new school some time before it could start work. Bringing his experience of successfully leading a large London secondary school, judged as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, he said his ambition is to set the highest expectations and standards from the start, and to be creative. An inclusive Christian ethos, 'learning at the heart of all we do', and high standards of behaviour, with 'no excuses', will mark the school's distinctive ethos. A personalised approach will ensure no student is left behind. Much learning will take place in small groups, the school day with six hours of lessons will be longer than usual five -- and school will be fun. Traditional values will combine with 21st century facilities, curriculum and approaches to learning. Staff are being recruited who will be keen to promote all this.

The Academy will welcome those with different faith traditions and beliefs. All pupils will take part in religious education. Spiritual and moral development will feature strongly in the curriculum. The school timetable will be spread broadly across a wide range of subjects. All students will be offered the opportunity to be involved in activities which develop their wider educational skills and understanding. The science facilities will benefit especially from the Academy's subject specialism in the sciences, which qualifies it for extra funding, resources and activities relating to the sciences.

The Academy offers 162 places each year, building up over the first seven years to a total strength of more than 1,100 pupils. Half the places will give priority to those who attend Christian churches and Church of England primary schools. The other half will be 'community places' with priority for applicants from RBKC community primary schools and who live closest to the Academy.

The new school buildings will not be ready until autumn 2010. There is a starter year for the first intake in temporary buildings in Hortensia Road from September 2009. Recruitment of staff, pupils and all the other necessary preparations were well advanced when he spoke to us.

There were 600 applicants for the first year's intake. Among the 162 selected pupils half will study English as an additional language, 77% come from ethnic minority groups, one quarter qualify for free school meals, 27% were on their primary school register for Special Educational Needs, and 12% were rated Gifted or Talented at primary school.

The Academy is sponsored by the Church of England through the London Diocesan Board for Schools and by RBKC.

There is a prospectus for the Academy at the entrance to St Mary's giving more information about this interesting new school.

Arthur Tait.

Eucharist and Thursday Lunch

The next Thursday Eucharist will take place at 11.45 on **Thursday 8 October**. This will be followed by our popular Thursday Lunch club at 12.30pm. The speaker this month will be The Revd. Rob Gillion who will speak about Intermission at St. Saviours Knightsbridge.

Miles Coverdale, the psalms and prayer. An article for the Clarion



Miles Coverdale was an almost exact contemporary of William Tyndale, but was less good-looking and is much less famous which is a bit unfair. He was a Yorkshireman, born around 1488, studied at [Cambridge](#), became a priest and entered the Austin Friars' convent at Cambridge. A man called [Robert Barnes](#) was prior in 1523 and probably influenced Coverdale towards [Reformation](#) theology. When Barnes was tried for heresy in 1526 Coverdale assisted in his defence. Shortly afterwards he left the convent and gave himself entirely to preaching and translating the bible. This was an unsafe activity in England and in 1528 he departed for the continent.

Tyndale had gone four years earlier. He was fluent in Greek and Hebrew (not to mention Latin, French, Spanish, Italian and German) and worked from the original texts. Living in Cologne, Hamburg and Antwerp, Tyndale completed his version of the New Testament in 1525, followed by the Pentateuch in 1530 and then the Book of Jonah. That was as far as he got before he was betrayed by a ghastly creep called Henry Phillips, arrested in [Antwerp](#), held in a castle near [Brussels](#), tried on a charge of heresy and 'strangled to death while tied at the stake' in 1536.

Coverdale did not know Greek or Hebrew, but he could translate from the Vulgate, (the official Latin version, commissioned by the Pope in 382 and largely written by St Jerome) and knew enough German to work from Luther's version. By 1537 he had produced the first complete

English Bible in print, and Henry VIII had a Coverdale Bible put into every English Church, chained to a bookstand, so that every citizen could read it.

Miles Coverdale returned to England three times: first in 1539, living briefly in [Newbury](#) under the protection of his friend Thomas Cromwell. But next year [Cromwell](#) was executed and Coverdale went abroad again. He lived for a time at Bergzabern in the Palatinate as a pastor and schoolmaster - very poor; but at least still alive! When Edward VI came to the throne Coverdale returned to England in March 1548. He was well received at court, being made king's chaplain and almoner to the queen dowager, [Catherine Parr](#). In 1551 he was made [Bishop of Exeter](#), but only two years later Edward died, Mary Tudor came to the throne and Coverdale lost his job. This time he went to [Denmark](#), where his brother-in-law was chaplain to the king, and finally back to Bergzabern. In 1559, once Mary had died, he came back to England for the third time, but was not reinstated in his bishopric, perhaps because of Puritanical scruples about vestments. From 1564 to 1566 he was rector of [St. Magnus-the-Martyr](#), in Thames Street near [London Bridge](#) and died in [1569](#).

Which brings us to 1662 and the Book of Common Prayer. The actual language was little changed from that of Cranmer. Some words and phrases which had become archaic were modernized and the readings for the [Epistle](#) and [Gospel](#) at the Holy Communion, which had been set out in full since 1549, were now given in the text of the King James Bible of 1611. But the [Psalter](#) had not been printed out in the 1549, 1552 or 1559 Editions. In 1662 the editors decided to do so, and by the grace of God chose [Coverdale's](#) translation. They thought it scanned better and was easier to sing. It is certainly not the most accurate translation of the psalms, but I think it is incomparably the best. I have known and sung it since I was eight years old; and for five years I was able to hear the choir of St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle performing it every evening. Whenever a modern translation is used I can hear what I call

the 'real words' going on underneath – which is a bit unsettling.

But in this I am not alone. It was the 1662 edition which was the official Prayer Book during the growth of the British Empire and, as a result, has been a great influence on the prayer books of Anglican churches worldwide, [liturgies](#) of other denominations in English, and of the [English language](#) as a whole. How can I say that? Well, the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations devotes 21 columns to quotations from the Coverdale Psalter, compared with only 37 for the whole of the rest of the Old Testament. A scholar called Richmond Noble has tracked down 157 allusions to the Psalms in the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, taken from 62 different psalms, all but one from the Coverdale's Psalter

Why do I love the psalter so much? Because it covers the whole range of human feeling: from the depths of despair to the heights of exaltation, sometimes in a single verse. 'Though you have lien among the pots yet shall you be as the wings of a dove: that is covered with silver wings and her feathers like gold.' (Ps. 68:13) 'For his wrath endureth but the twinkling of an eye and in his pleasure is life: heaviness may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning.' (Ps 30:5).

A distinguished American Old Testament scholar called Walter Brueggemann finds three major divisions in the psalms: Psalms of Orientation (reaffirming tradition), Psalms of Disorientation (the prophetic recognition of things not working or not being true) and Psalms of Reorientation (the Wisdom level of a new faith-synthesis). It's very neat and I offer it for what it is worth. For me each psalm speaks for itself. Let's dwell for a moment on some of the psalms that talk about me.

'The lot has fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage' (Ps 16:7). A fair cop. My mother once described me as having been born with two silver spoons in my mouth. They were only teaspoons but still a great help. The psalmist allows me to rejoice in that fact. 'Thou also shall light my candle: the Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light' (Ps 18:28) 'All my fresh springs shall be in thee'. (Ps 87:7) More encouragement.

'Thou art a place to hide me in' (Ps 32:8). 'I waited patiently for the Lord: and he inclined to me and heard my calling'. (Ps 40:1) 'Under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, until this

tyranny shall be overpast'. (Ps 57:1) These are words for a bad time.

'I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner as all my fathers were.' (Ps 39:14). Actually my father, both grandfathers and all known uncles were military men, like me: two of us engineers, a horse gunner, an aviator, a doctor, a cavalryman and a clergyman. Strangers and pilgrims all.

'My tongue is the pen: of a ready writer'. (Ps 45:2) I am not so sure about that. Often nowadays I find myself tongue-tied, particularly with the young. A ready writer? Yes, but that's so easy nowadays just downloading from the web!

'Thou tellest my flittings; put my tears into thy bottle: are not these things noted in thy book'. (Ps 56:8). Yes, I am afraid they are. It reminds me of a little wooden plaque with dried flowers attached to it that I got in Argentina. It says 'Dios es testigo de nuestras acciones'. The best I can say about the awful things He has seen me doing is that the recollection of them helps to keep me humble.

'Lord I am not high-minded: I have no proud looks. I do not exercise myself in great matters: which are too high for me. But I refrain my soul and keep it low, like as a child that is weaned from its mother: yea my soul is even as a weaned child.' (Ps 131:1-3). Would that it were so. I have had to concern myself with some great matters (like buying all the tanks and guns and ammunition and stuff for the British Army) and probably they were too high for me. But nothing is more nauseating than the assumed humility of Uriah Heep. Can one go through life trying to keep one's soul as a weaned child?

'O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the enemies.' (Ps 74:20). 'The plowers ploughed upon my back and made long furrows' (Ps 129:3). Actually it was a bullet from a German sub-machine gun which made a long furrow on my back. It was entirely my own fault and I was incredibly lucky to get away with it. Or could it have been God's hand at work? One way of looking at life is to regard it as a series of small miracles every day.

'He hath no pleasure in the strength of a horse: neither delighteth he in any man's legs. Certainly not in mine. My father used

to say about a horse that was past its best 'He's gone at the knees' I am afraid that I have. 'The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years: yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow; so soon passeth it away and we are gone'. (Ps 90:10) Six years past my final sell-by date I certainly look very old, but at least the marbles have not finally shaken loose, as my son delicately put it the other day. The psalmist has some lovely expressions to describe how it feels:

'For I am become like a bottle in the smoke' (Ps 119:83). 'I am become like a pelican in the wilderness : and like an owl that is in the desert. I have watched and am even as a sparrow: that sitteth alone upon the housetop'. (Ps 102: 6,7) 'O spare me a little that I may recover my strength: before I go hence and am no more seen'. (Ps 39:15)

I hope this is not too much of an ego-trip. These verses can apply to everyone in different ways. But I will finish by suggesting how we can use the psalms in our devotions. One way is simply by using the psalms, a little at a time, as daily bible reading. You need to fasten your seat belts sometimes. Even the wonderfully moving psalm 137: 'By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept: when we remembered thee O Sion' finishes with the not very edifying verse 'Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children: and throweth them against the stones'. And there are more bloodthirsty bits than that. I hope that, if we do use the Psalms for bible study, we don't just cherry-pick the ones we like and ditch the rest.

But there is a way of using the psalms which is rather different – the folding of the psalms into the act of praying, something the Benedictines call *Lectio Divina*. In my prayer time every morning I allot about 15 minutes to this kind of prayer – or try to. I sit well back in an upright chair (easy chairs are too relaxing) with the spine vertical and the head held high. I once saw this recommended as the best posture for typists! The feet firmly on the ground and the legs uncrossed. (I dare say that if you are well advanced with your Yoga classes, you can use the Lotus position. I wish I could). The hands folded on the lap or held together for prayer. Then there is the breathing; one does not want asphyxia from holding one's breath or hyperventilation. Gentle regular breaths. It is good to dwell on these bodily matters because, for humans, body, mind and spirit are

inextricable. Then comes the problem of stilling the mind - shutting down the ceaseless babble that passes for thought most of the time! One can start with a single verse: 'O how amiable are thy dwellings: thou Lord of Hosts' (Ps. 84:1) and then come down to a single word. 'A one-syllable word such as *Love* or *God* is best.' I am quoting now from a famous fourteenth century anonymous English mystic: 'Yes, beat upon that thick *cloud of unknowing* with the dart of your loving desire and do not cease come what may. ... Use it to beat upon the cloud of darkness that is above you and to subdue all distractions, consigning them to the *cloud of forgetting* beneath you. Should some thought go on annoying you, demanding to know what you are doing, answer with this one word alone.' It is so easy to say and so difficult to do. Distractions, or at my age dozing, take up much of the time. But one must not be discouraged. I recently heard on Radio 4 that Michael Ramsay was once asked for how long he prayed each day. He said 'Two minutes, but it takes an hour to get there'.

Hugh Beach

Children and Stress: A talk and discussion led by Paul Keogh, Thursday 8 October, 7.30-9.0pm in the Church Hall

Paul Keogh is a Family Therapist who works in a child and adolescent mental health service. Over the years he has noticed significant improvement in the quality of parenting, yet at the same time children are more stressed. He will offer some explanations why this is so and what parents can do to ease the stress on themselves and their colleagues. The evening is open to all who are interested in this topic.

Thursday lunch meeting 10 September 2009

The Thursday lunch season started again on 10 September after the summer break. 22 people attended, enjoying the lunch and a talk by Malcolm Connell about the Earls Court Festival. Malcolm is the full-time Director of the Earls Court Community Trust which runs the Festival and is one of the Charities supported by St Mary's charitable giving this year. They helped to organise and publicise two events at St

Mary's this summer – a concert and the 19th July Big Lunch.

Malcolm described how the Festival has grown from humble beginnings as a half-day event more than 25 years ago to this year's programme with 34 events in 20 local venues and spaces over 4 weeks. The Community Trust is run by eight Trustees, all local people. With himself and a part-time administrator as the 'office' staff the Festival relies heavily on volunteers for its success, over 200 helping this year in many ways such as planning, advertising, mailing and stewarding.

The Community Trust now seeks to maintain activity throughout the year, and especially in the summer period. The main focus of the work includes facilities for leisure time and for arts, education and entertainment. Special attention is given to the needs of elderly and young people and the homeless. Opportunities are sought for people to participate as well as to watch or listen, as are activities which can benefit small local businesses.

Funding comes mainly from Bloomberg, the Chelsea Football Club and Earl's Court & Olympia Exhibition Centers, with contributions also from many local organisations.

Events being canvassed provisionally for 2010 will focus on --

- ** young people and citizenship
 - ** education and the environment
 - ** major peripatetic drama with supporting workshops in Brompton Cemetery
 - ** book events including a first young people's literary festival
 - ** classical, contemporary and urban dance
 - ** cultural and environmental programmes hopefully involving organisations such as the V and A and the Natural History Museum.
- Malcolm's talk was very well received, and we look forward to more involvement of our church in the Festival next year.

Arthur Tait.

Harvest Festival Sunday 11 October

This year we will be supporting the Earls Court Community Project, The Upper Room and St. Andrews Fulham Fields Homeless project. All three provides services for the homeless, vulnerable, and socially disadvantaged of West London

We have asked for donations of food and toiletries:

Tins:

- Soups
- Chopped tomatoes
- Sweet corn
- Peas
- Tinned Fruit, apple pie filling,
- Baked beans
- Tomato puree
- Carrots
- Tomato sauce (Bolognese, etc)
- Tuna
- Tinned meat

Other:

- Pasta
- Rice
- Biscuits
- Coffee, tea, sugar
- Pepper, salt, seasoning, vegetable stock cubes.
- Mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard
- Oil

Toiletries:

- Soap
- Tooth brush/Tooth paste
- Disposable razors
- Body Wash

Can you please put these items in the boxes at the back of the church. They and the fresh produce will be distributed on Monday 12 October.

Why do the clocks go back?

On Saturday, October 24, we get the luxury of an extra hour in bed as the clocks go back. But have you ever thought about why we carry out the biannual ritual of going back and forth through time? When the clocks go back, we'll be back on Greenwich Mean Time and it will get darker earlier in the day, although it will also be lighter in the mornings. And it's all the idea of a builder from Kent.

William Willett, from Petts Wood, wrote a pamphlet in 1907 which suggested that the health of the nation could be improved if over four successive Sundays in April and September the clocks would go forward and back respectively. Longer daylight hours would mean more sunshine, more sunshine more happiness.

He himself had adapted the idea from a satirical letter Benjamin Franklin wrote in a French magazine in 1784.

These ideas would have come to nothing if it hadn't been for the First World War. In 1916, wartime economies meant that having the lights on for minimal time would conserve energy and thus Daylight Saving Time was introduced.

After the war, most countries that had introduced Daylight Saving Time abandoned it, with some US states adopting earlier working hours to see if the same effect could be achieved. Only the UK stuck with it, despite some opposition from farmers.

Most countries have since reintroduced some measure of Daylight Saving Time, giving us those extra hours of daylight.

The UK made an additional change during the Second World War, keeping British Summer Time all year round, but during the summers it added an additional hour on top – so it was two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. This ended in 1945, although it was tried again during 1947.

A further experiment between 1968 and 1971 saw the UK try British Summer Time all year round, but it disadvantaged farmers and people living in Scotland and Northern Ireland, so it was discontinued.

Since 1981, European countries have all put their clock forwards on the same Sunday in March, but it wasn't until 1996 that the end date was standardised to the fourth Sunday in October and a further 1998 amendment to European law changed it to the last Sunday in October.

So as you enjoy your extra hour in bed, enjoy the lighter mornings – and try not to think about the clocks going back on March 28 next year!

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Upcoming dates for your diary

Sunday 11 October Harvest Festival;
All-Age Worship

Sunday 18 October St Luke the Evangelist:
Preacher: The Rev. Robert Thompson, Lead Chaplain
at Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust

Wednesday 28 October Kensington & Chelsea
Music Society Concert. The Rautio Piano trio
playing Haydn, Beethoven, Glika and
Shostakovitch

Sunday 1 November All Saints

Sunday 8 November Remembrance Sunday

Tuesday 17 November Kensington &
Chelsea Music Society Concert. Giovanni
Guzzo, violin and Luis Pares Piano. Mozart
Beethoven, Debussy, Gershwin and
Ginastera

Monday 7 December 10am Mother &
Toddler Group Nativity Play

Sunday 13 December

All-Age Service Nativity Play

7.0pm Carol Service: 'Twixt Heaven and
Earth'

Thursday 24 December Christmas Eve
4.0pm Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Mass:

Friday 25 December Christmas Day

**St. Giles, Cripplegate, Fore Street,
Barbican**

Saturday 24 October 2009 7.30pm

Nonsuch Singers

Richard Pearce organ & piano

Graham Caldbeck conductor

The English Genius

PURCELL

O Lord God of Hosts

Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes mei

Thou tun'st' this world

Soul of the world

Close thine eyes and sleep secure

BRITTEN

Rejoice in the Lamb

Missa Brevis in D

The Ballad of Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard

RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT

A Good-Night

JONATHAN DOVE

The Passing of the Year

Tickets £15 (£12 concessions) available at the
door.

Nearest Underground stations: Moorgate &
Barbican

www.nonsuchsingners.com

October's Year Mind

Mary Challen

Charles Lawther

Margaret Singer

John Marryat

Mary Proctor

John Williams

Anne Williams

John Symons

Sandra Ockwell

Florence Payne

Mary Pretyman

**Contributions for the November Clarion
should be sent in to the church office by 27
October**