

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

rooted in faith

open in thought

reaching out in service

DECEMBER 2012 – JANUARY 2013



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and dwelt among us'**
(John 1.14)

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‘The Word became flesh and dwelt among us’ (John 1.14)

These eight words from St John’s Gospel concisely sum up what we celebrate each year at Christmas; that God took the radical and risky step of becoming a human being through his Son Jesus Christ. It is easy to relegate this extraordinary event to the past, to see it through the prism of history and to sentimentalise it. In doing so we are in danger of doing two things: forgetting that with Jesus’ birth God entered history in a decisive way to begin a new relationship with human beings and all creation, and disconnecting the reality of Jesus’ birth and life from the reality of our own lives at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Two thousand years ago life in Palestine was undoubtedly very different from life today. What remains largely the same are our human emotions and the messiness and complications of our daily lives; our hopes and fears; our ability to do good and evil; to love and to hate; to make mistakes; to hurt others, sometimes unwittingly; and to live thoughtlessly, often at the expense of others.

As God enters history through the incarnation of his Son Jesus Christ and as he takes on our human flesh to share our human lives, so he comes to show us how to live, how we might be fully alive. It was Irenaeus, one of the first great Christian theologians (he lived approximately from 130 to 200 AD), who in his work *Against Heresies* wrote:

For the glory of God is a living man (human being); but the life of man comes from the vision of God... the revelation of the Father which comes through the Word gives life to those who see God.

It is by looking at God in the face and life of Jesus Christ that we know what it is to be a human being who is fully alive. To be fully alive is to see and respond to God’s extraordinary love for the world. We respond by praising and thanking God and by seeking to follow Jesus Christ in our care and concern for others, especially those who are in need – often in desperate need – of God’s love and care.

With the birth of Christ God entered the world to do something new. In theological terms this is expressed as redemption, freeing the world from the ultimate consequences of our messy human lives, our sufferings and our deaths. No wonder that according to Luke’s Gospel at Christ’s birth ‘a multitude of the heavenly host’ praised and gave glory to God as they appeared to the shepherds near Bethlehem, who were the first to be told the good news of Christ’s birth.

The good news of Christ’s birth almost two thousand years ago is as joyful now as it was then. We may look at the world around us and be tempted to despair at the suffering and terrible things that happen daily around us, but it is when we turn to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ each Christmas that we are reminded of God’s astonishing love for the world, made real in his Son Jesus Christ, whose life and death have changed not just our lives, but the life of the world.

May you, your families and friends, celebrate Christmas with great joy and thankful hearts, and may you know God’s love for you and the world in his son Jesus Christ.

Ginny Thomas

Books for prayer and reflection

Advent starts on Sunday 2 December and so begins a new liturgical year. The following books offer ways to pray and reflect on our lives in the context of biblical readings and reflections.

Barbara Mosse, *Encircling the Christian Year: liturgies and reflections for the seasons of the Church* (BRF £9.99)

Beginning with Advent Sunday, the book presents a series of short liturgies for each week of the Church calendar, which includes a Bible reading, reflection and prayers. The book invites readers to grow in their relationship with the God who loves and accompanies us through all the seasons of our lives.

Reflections for Daily Prayer: Advent 2012 to the Eve of Advent 2013 (Church House Publishing £16.99)

Covering Monday to Saturday each week, the book offers stimulating and accessible reflections from the daily lectionary for Common Worship. Contributors include Rosalind Brown, Stephen Cottrell, Mark Oakley, Angela Tilby and Jane Williams.

Terry Hinks, *God's Embrace: Praying with Luke: Forty readings, reflections and prayer*; (Darton Longman and Todd £9.99)

In the new liturgical year, passages from St Luke's gospel will form the majority of the Sunday gospel readings. The book begins with an introduction to Luke's gospel, suggests a pattern for prayer and offers forty gospel passages for prayer and reflection.

(Note: the prices quoted are bookshop prices and may be lower if ordered via Amazon. However, please don't neglect to support your local bookshop; we depend on local shops to keep our shopping streets vibrant and lively.)

**Thursday 6 December
Taizé Service
at 7.30pm**



Come, be still, find peace.
A time of quiet contemplation with readings,
prayer and the beautiful songs of Taizé.

Upcoming dates for your diary

Thursday 6 December

7.30pm Taizé Service

Sunday 9 December

10.30am All-Age Worship with Nativity Play

7.00pm Carol Service

Thursday 13 December

11.45am Eucharist

12.30pm Thursday Lunch

Thursday 20 December

3.00 - 4.00pm Time for Tea

Monday 24 December Christmas Eve

4.00pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Tuesday 25 December Christmas Day

10.30am Sung Parish Eucharist

Sunday 6 January 2012

The Epiphany

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.30am Sung Parish Eucharist

Thursday 13 December: 11.45 Eucharist followed by Thursday Lunch at 12.30

Christmas Readings read by Paul Williamson and Clare Welch.

Paul and Clare are actors who have a natural love of language. They trained at RADA during the 1950s. They have acted in different parts of the world, and especially in the UK, including the West End theatres.

During the last five years they have joined members of our congregation to assist in the

reading programme at St Cuthbert and St Mathias' school.

If you would like to attend, please put your name on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church.

Forty-eight Hours in Poland; Despair and Joy...

One of the unexpected benefits of travelling with Ryanair is that you end up disembarking at unknown airports early in the morning! So it was that, well before 10.0am local time, a small group of friends were changing money into zlotys and wondering if SatNav would work in the hills of Southern Poland. We were in Krakow, one of the artistic treasure houses of Poland, but our destination was a rustic inn in Koniakow a few kilometres from the Polish, Slovak and Czech borders. We had gathered to celebrate the wedding of a friend and colleague to a Polish girl... in fact he had been married legally at a registry office in Kingston weeks before, but Poland still likes to observe proper marriage traditions and therefore a church ceremony was essential to ratify the bond before God. As we had a few extra hours to spend en route we set off for the Polish town of Oswiecim, better known and notorious under its German name, Auschwitz.

I suspect everyone at St Mary's will have heard of the Concentration Camp at Auschwitz, scene of some of the most sustained and depraved cruelty against Jews, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses and Homosexuals in the Second World War. From viewing films and reading accounts about the desperate struggle for survival we can only shake our heads at the inhumanity of man to his fellow man, but to stand at the gate with its Orwellian motto 'Arbeit macht frei' (Work will set you free) is to enter into a more physical relationship with suffering. As Christians we are called to remember innocent sacrifice every time we recall the crucifixion or take communion, but to see the banality of the gas chambers, which could easily double as a cattle byre, the neat rows of buildings where the prisoners were packed, starved and humiliated by guards, or the blocks where unspeakable experiments were carried out by Dr. Mengele, is to confront evil and misery in an uncomfortably close way.

We saw the courtyard where thousands were executed by firing squad, stripped naked before going to their death, and the punishment cells where conditions were so appalling that prisoners would die from cold and exhaustion overnight. In every building were files and dockets, all neatly typed, numbered and filed to document this dreadful but deliberate policy of extermination... it was the Kafka-esque bureaucracy that adds an element of the surreal to the gratuitous brutality that the German Reich insisted on.

The visit was less than ideal. We arrived on a holiday weekend (after All Saints) and there were crowds of people milling around with little guidance of what to do or where to go. The reception area for visitors seemed a throwback to the Communist times, with old scratchy newsreels being shown in an outdated cinema room, no context given to the situation and policies that led to Concentration Camps, and not even a clear overview of the site itself, which is very large and consisted of three separate camps, including Birkenau, which is where the railroad ended and the more 'efficient' gas chambers were built. The EU is helping to preserve the site and it was encouraging to see many groups of young people there, all more or less silent as they heard about life and death in the camp.

There was a small number of monuments, a group of Catholic priests holding a service, a few candles lit, but nothing can mitigate the stark horror of the electric fences and the crematorium ovens, and the very uncomfortable question of how we would have reacted or behaved as an inmate or a guard: would we have gone to the gas chambers singing psalms or crying out in terror and anger at the injustice, or would we have treated the inmates like sheep in an abattoir, rather than human beings made in the image of God? We are not called on to condemn but to try to understand, so that such awful acts do not continue to make a mockery of 'civilisation', even in our own time.

It was a rather subdued group that made its way to the mountaintop inn with its cosy log fires, dried herbs hanging from the ceiling and

sheepskins draped over the benches. However, the next day dawned sunny and cold and we set off to the Church of the Holy Cross, a small 17th century wooden church with a small onion dome, holding less than 100 people, with its saints, stations of the Cross, Baroque altar and carved pulpit – and no heating. The marriage service was quite different to an Anglican one, and was a full Nuptial Mass. The bride and groom entered together, accompanied by a folk quartet and the simple organ. There was no ‘who giveth this women?’, and no ‘those whom God has joined together let no-one put asunder’, no kiss for the bride or applause, no address from the priest and perhaps most surprising, the bride and groom were the last to leave the church so that they walked out through an empty church to be greeted by confetti and coins at the door. As the guests descended the steps to the car park they were confronted with two men in full Hussar uniform, blocking the way with axes and only once we had made an appropriate donation were we allowed to pass. Apparently this is local enterprise and the Hussars have nothing to do with the wedding party, but show up to exact their tribute on their own initiative.

Other customs that we then witnessed were that when the bride and groom reached the reception venue they were greeted by a lady holding a large loaf of fresh bread on a tray with some salt and two glasses of water. They have to eat some of the bread dipped in salt and then drink the water before entering; this will ensure that their home will never lack for food and drink. I was told that in North Poland one of the glasses would be vodka and one water and whoever chose the vodka to drink would be in charge of the family finances. Then one of the first ceremonial duties is for the bride and groom to drink a glass of vodka each, tied together with a ribbon, and then to throw the glasses over their shoulders without looking back, and hope that they smash, which brings good luck! They then jointly have to sweep up the pieces so that feasting and dancing can begin.

We had been warned that hospitality would be generous and we were not disappointed. I think every possible permutation of pork was set

before us, from cold cuts, to soup with bacon, with the climax of a whole roast pig served at around 2.00am. Vodka flowed, and although there were no formal speeches, the bride and groom visit each table and are liberally toasted. The vodka was served in half bottles, not to discourage drinking, but so that the constant supply of fresh bottles was always ice cold. The band played for 12 hours, ending at around 4.30am. I did not make it through to the survivors photograph, but two of our party did, and paid the price the next day. As you might imagine, we slept well on our Ryanair flight back to the UK, but the experience of both despair at Auschwitz and joy at the wedding will abide and give much food for reflection in all our lives.

Patrick Thomas

Confirmation 2012

On Saturday 3 November at St Paul’s Cathedral, the following parishioners were confirmed Miranda Loprimo, Cara Jackivicz, Hope Smith, Amelia Dass, Jakob Westin, and Mary Godwin.



Photo taken at St Paul’s Cathedral after the confirmation service on 3 November

Thursday Lunch Meeting Report 15 November: Chelsea Theatre and Community Centre

The speakers at this lunch, attended by twenty five people, were Francis Alexander and Michelle Abbey from the Chelsea Theatre and Community Centre. Their work combines brilliantly a busy programme at the Chelsea

Theatre with a seven day a week Community Centre covering a wide range of activities and classes from its premises on the World's End estate. Five paid staff are supported by many volunteers offering a great service to an area not without its difficulties.

Live performances at the Theatre under the banner 'Sacred 2012/2013' cover 'unique reflection on the people, places, ideas and beliefs we treasure', with new shows by artists 'presenting their take on relationships, meditation, silent movies and sheer inspiration'. This is 'a year long exploration of what contemporary performances can mean'.

There is a separate season of Children's Theatre for under-elevens and for teenagers. There is a 'Silver Screen' programme, typically showing older classical films, with refreshments before a 3.00 p.m. start, costing a nominal £2. The Over 50s club has a programme of history talks, to which those attending can make their own contributions. These are structured to enhance understanding of history, culture and the redevelopment of the area. They take place every Tuesday between 2.0 to 4.0 p.m. A wide programme of other activities in the Community Centre at various periods during the year include tea dances, a weekly walk-in market on Sundays, a fruit and veg market on Wednesdays, and 'Healthy at Chelsea' activities, including yoga, Pilates and belly dancing. There is an Asian Women's Café, a 'Food and Friends Lunch Group' at the Theatre Café, a dance group, and groups for bridge, art, and sewing and needle craft. There is a walk-in vintage market. The Intergeneration Group is an important piece of their work, to which everyone is welcome. Indeed, Francis and Michelle emphasised that everyone is welcome to any activity of interest, and they hope to see more people from our congregation.

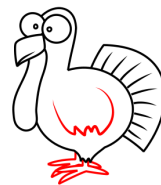
The Theatre and Centre are a Charity. Funding comes from various sources including RBKC, The Arts Council, and the British Council, the latter for overseas theatre trips, recently to Vienna and Brazil. Full public liability insurance is provided, with risk analysis. They link with other organisations such as Age UK.

Those of us who had no previous contact with the Chelsea Theatre and Community Centre were hugely impressed that so much wonderful work is taking place on our doorstep. One person present, who had experienced their work, commended it very highly. We were encouraged to join in, and to build links between them and our church.

Some events due soon are listed elsewhere in this issue with dates and times. Their telephone number is 020 7352 1967, and see <http://www.chelseatheatre.org.uk/activities-classes/>

Arthur Tait

Christmas Outreach: Sponsor a Turkey



The Earl's Court Community Protect is providing food over three days at Christmas this year. Instead of providing the Boxing Day meal (as we used to) we will provide the Christmas dinner.

We will provide six turkeys, all the vegetables, Christmas puddings and mince pies.

Please give generous donations to cover the costs of the food for people less fortunate than ourselves. No help is required this year.

Margarete Geier

Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop, 1489-1556



Cranmer was one of the most influential, and ultimately the most tragic leaders of the English Reformation. He was born in 1489 in Aslockton in Nottinghamshire. At the age of fourteen he was sent to the newly created Jesus College, Cambridge. For his Bachelor of Arts degree he studied logic, classical literature and philosophy. For his master's degree he concentrated on the humanists such as Erasmus. In 1515, he was

elected to a Fellowship of his College. He began studying theology and in 1520 he was ordained, the university already having named him as one of their preachers. He received his doctorate in 1526. When the Lord Chancellor, Cardinal Wolsey, chose several Cambridge scholars to be diplomats, Cranmer was picked to take a minor role in the embassy in Spain.

Henry VIII's first marriage had its origins in 1502 when his older brother Arthur died. Their father, Henry VII, then betrothed Arthur's widow, Catherine of Aragon, to the future king. This immediately raised questions over the biblical prohibition (in Leviticus 18 and 20) against marriage to a brother's wife. The couple married in 1509 and after a series of miscarriages a daughter, Mary, was born in 1516. By the 1520s, Henry still did not have a son and he took this as a sure sign of God's anger. He made overtures to the Vatican about an annulment of his marriage and gave Cardinal Wolsey the task of prosecuting his case. Wolsey began by consulting university experts and in 1527 Cranmer was enrolled to help with the annulment proceedings. In January 1532 he was appointed the resident ambassador at the court of the emperor Charles V and as Charles travelled throughout his realm, Cranmer followed him. In the Lutheran city of Nuremberg he saw for the first time the effects of the Reformation. When the Imperial Diet moved to Nuremberg in the summer, he met the leading architect of the Nuremberg reforms, Andreas Osiander. They became good friends, and in July Cranmer took the surprising action of marrying Margarete, the niece of Osiander's wife, setting aside his priestly vow of celibacy. He was, however, unable to persuade Charles V, who was Catherine of Aragon's nephew, to support the annulment of his aunt's marriage.

In October 1532 Cranmer learned that he had been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. The appointment had been secured by the family of Anne Boleyn, who was being courted by Henry. Cranmer was consecrated as archbishop on 30 March 1533 and continued to work on the annulment proceedings. These had acquired greater urgency when Anne became pregnant, Henry and Anne having been secretly married in January 1533. On 23 May Cranmer

pronounced that Henry's marriage with Catherine was against the law of God. Henry was now free to marry and on 1 June Cranmer personally crowned Anne as queen. Pope Clement VII was furious at this, and on 9 July he threatened to excommunicate Henry (and his advisers, which included Cranmer) unless he repudiated Anne. Henry kept Anne as his wife while Cranmer supported the principle of Royal Supremacy, by which the king was considered sovereign over the Church within his realm. On these largely dynastic grounds the English Church broke off communion with Rome.

On 7 September Anne gave birth to Elizabeth. Cranmer baptised her and acted as one of her godparents. In January 1536, when Anne miscarried a son, the king began to reflect again on the biblical prohibitions that had haunted him during his marriage with Catherine of Aragon. Shortly after the miscarriage, the king started to take an interest in Jane Seymour. By 24 April, he had commissioned Thomas Cromwell to prepare the case for a divorce, based upon Anne's supposed infidelity. Anne was sent to the Tower of London on 2 May, and Cranmer became resigned to the situation. On 16 May he saw Anne in the Tower and heard her confession. The following day he pronounced her marriage null and void. Two days later Anne was executed.

By now Cranmer had become responsible for establishing the first doctrinal and liturgical structures of the reformed Church of England. During Henry's rule Cranmer did not make many radical changes because of power struggles between religious conservatives and reformers. However, he published the first officially authorised vernacular service, the *Exhortation and Litany*, which survives to this day in the Book of Common Prayer.

Cranmer performed his final duties for the king on 28 January 1547 when he gave a reformed statement of faith, while gripping Henry's hand instead of administering the last rites. Cranmer mourned Henry's death and apparently showed his grief by growing a beard. Continental reformers grew beards to mark their rejection of the old Church and this significance of clerical beards was well-understood in England.

On 31 January, he was among the executors of the king's final will that welcomed the boy king, Edward VI.

With Edward on the throne, Cranmer was able to promote major reforms. He wrote and compiled the first two editions of the *Book of Common Prayer*, a complete liturgy for the English Church. With the assistance of several Continental reformers, to whom he gave refuge, he developed new doctrine on such things as the Eucharist, clerical celibacy, the role of images in places of worship, and the veneration of saints.

After the accession of the Roman Catholic Mary I in 1553 Cranmer was put on trial for treason and heresy. Imprisoned for over two years under pressure from Church authorities and skewered by his own belief in Royal Supremacy, he made several recantations. The last, on 18 March 1556, was an abject confession of his sinfulness. However, Mary was determined to make an example of him, arguing that 'his iniquity and obstinacy was so great against God and your Grace that your clemency and mercy could have no place with him', and pressed ahead with his execution. He was burnt at the stake at Oxford on 21 March 1556. On the day of his execution, Cranmer withdrew his recantations, to die a heretic to Roman Catholics and a martyr to Protestants. When Elizabeth I came to the throne in November 1558 she restored the Church of England's independence from Rome. This church was, in effect, a re-creation of Edward VI's Church and the Elizabethan Prayer Book was basically Cranmer's work.

Cranmer's greatest concerns were the maintenance of the royal supremacy and the spread of reformed theology, but he is best remembered for his contribution in the realm of language and culture. The *Book of Common Prayer*, alongside Shakespeare and the King James bible, helped to form the English language and guided Anglican worship for four hundred years. Catholic biographers sometimes depict Cranmer as an unprincipled opportunist and a tool of royal tyranny. Protestant biographers sometimes overlook the times that Cranmer betrayed his own principles, but no-one can doubt his devotion. As the flames rose around

him he said 'Lord Jesus receive my spirit... I see the heavens open and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.'

Hugh Beach (with due acknowledgement to Wikipedia)



Children's Heart Federation

The Children's Heart Federation (CHF) is the leading national charity supporting children and their families with heart conditions all across the UK. This year, 28 'heart children' and siblings aged 8-11 got to take part in a wonderful, fun and unique experience at the London Science Museum.

Each year we arrange this fun trip for heart children where they take part in experiments and meet other children who like them have a heart condition. They had an exciting time, allowing them to forget about their life-changing and often life-limiting conditions and just enjoy being children. Most of them have never been on a sleep-over or many have not even been on a school trip. With our dedicated team of medical and social volunteers and the knowledge that the children will be looked after, this is a huge opportunity for the children to take part in.

Also, crucially, their families and carers got to have some much needed respite. St Mary's has supported the event each year by generously allowing us to use their hall the next day, when parents came to collect their children and have a cup of tea and breakfast, which is provided by Entrées on Tays www.entrees-ontrays.com for us.

The provision of this safe and secure space meant that parents could get some help and support from our staff and volunteers, and their children had more time to play with their new-found friends. We also give each young explorer a certificate, gift bag and medal for taking part!

As well as direct support, CHF is the leading voice for children and families on a national platform, and works tirelessly to support and

protect the rights and care for children with heart conditions. We really could not run this trip without the help of volunteers, St Mary's team, Entrées on Trays and Addison Lee car company. CHF relies solely on donations to undertake its vital work supporting children and their families through events, information, medical equipment, grants and helplines. If you would like to help us with any of our work please get in touch.

This was the first time I have stayed away from home apart from at the hospital, it was so much fun I got to do everything just like everyone else and I met a friend who has a scar just like me.
Sarah aged 10

A huge thank you to John and Dave the verger at the church, every year you make our trip easier to arrange!

Samantha Johnson Operations Manager CHF
www.chfed.org.uk 020 7422 0630

A summer to be remembered



This August we were fortunate enough to spend two weeks in Brazil. We spent the first ten days in Buzios, a popular coastal resort near Rio de Janeiro. The last few days were spent inland in the

wetlands of the Pantanal. The two areas offered a clear contrast as well as emphasising the variety of ecosystems within Brazil. More of that later.

With the Olympic baton passing from London to Rio this summer, our visit provided an early opportunity to check on Rio's readiness for 2016. There can be little doubt that Rio will be able to provide a welcome and party atmosphere to rival that of London. However, it was apparent that the airport needs much work before 2016. In particular, the facilities at and condition of the international airport and the connections between the airport and the

city centre (we were stuck in a traffic jam for almost an hour) require significant improvement. Nevertheless, I am sure that four years ago many of us were wondering whether London would be ready for 2012!

While both Buzios and the Pantanal are dependent on tourism to ensure their financial viability, Buzios focuses on the 'St Tropez' vision of tourism, whereas the Pantanal is a true ecotourism destination. Transport around Buzios is achieved with gas-guzzling beach buggies while the Pantanal uses horses and canoes.

This is just one example of the Pantanal's commitment to limiting the effect of climate change. This could also be seen in the way that they conserve water through water harvesting, electricity by not allowing the fan and air conditioning to be on at the same time, and the use of recycling bins in the middle of the jungle!

This commitment could be seen most clearly in the building regulations and fishing restrictions. The former resulting in the obligatory abandonment and demolition of certain expensive hotels and villas that were not constructed from sympathetic local materials. Additionally, the government has demanded that no luxury 5* hotels are built that would destroy the biodiversity of the area as it would require the destruction of the habitat of a number of endemic species. The fishing restrictions were imposed when it was discovered that local people were participating in commercial fishing. Now they are only allowed to catch what they will eat.

Now to the question that is on everyone's mind: would we recommend the Pantanal? The answer is a whole-hearted yes! The trip enabled us to see a wide range of animals (pictures displayed in the transept), which can best be seen in the Pantanal, such as toucans, the vermilion flycatcher and a family of capybara: the largest rodents in the world. Yes, the journey is long but it is definitely worth it. While we were there our guide (himself an Amazonian) told us that the Pantanal was in fact better than the Amazon as the vegetation there is too dense for easy viewing and photography

of the wildlife.

Indeed, the best way to see everything was on horseback and by boat. The day after we arrived, the local people watched as the Nichols' struggled onto the back of the horses shortly after dawn. After a shaky start due to our lack of horse riding skills, we managed a three hour round trip, returning exhilarated from all that we had seen, if a little saddle sore.

The trip on the boat was sensational, though too hot and uncomfortably humid. We saw osprey taking a fish, cayman sunbathing at the water's edge and howler monkeys high up in the trees lining the river. Yet, the best was still to come. As dusk fell we sat in the middle of the lake waiting as we dangled our lines over the boat side. Eventually, we got a bite and there it was... our first piranha. We caught a few between us so we could feed the cayman on our return to the lodge, as well as ensuring everyone had piranha soup that evening, which was surprisingly tasty.

On our final morning we woke early and paddled our canoes out into the river before dawn. We were able to catch some great photos of the sunrise and the wakening wildlife, including a river otter. So ended a memorable holiday that will stay with us all for a very long time.

Emma Nichols and Isabelle Howe

PCC Updates

The PCC Meeting took place on Thursday 22 November 2012 at the Church.

We discussed:

The Craigie Window: it is hoped that the secondary glazing will be in by Christmas. The original company has gone out of business and we have accepted a quote of £8,600 plus VAT from another company, called Rainbow Glass.

The Planned Giving Programme: we raised £2,620 plus gift aid, along with new pledges and increased pledges. The Vicar thanked the Wardens for their assistance.

The Licence Agreement concerning the Redcliffe Gardens property: this matter is all but complete and a motion was passed confirming that we pursue our current course with regards to the enfranchisement of the lease.

We discussed and adopted:

A new Legacy Policy. Legacies are always very welcome.

The new Diocesan Safeguarding Policy: there will be a Church Safeguarding Officer and a Children's Champion in situ.

The PCC is to instruct the Communications Committee to look into our website provider and we are also considering the possibility of sending out weekly email updates.

The PCC discussed the vote against women Bishops. The PCC was unanimously pro women Bishops and were very disappointed at the failure to secure the vote. The Vicar has received a letter of commiseration regarding this matter from the Bishop of Kensington.

Ann Mulcare

Clothes for Earls Court Community Project

If you have any unwanted clothes in good condition please put them in the box at the back of church.

Shop for Christmas, give to charity

If you are shopping online for Christmas presents this year, then link through the Easyfundraising site. Easyfundraising is the simplest way to raise funds for your good cause. You shop online with your favourite stores and you raise money at the same time. For more information go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk

Sustainability Group Top Tip

Christmas tree lights left on for 10 hours a day over the 12 days of Christmas produce enough

carbon dioxide to inflate 12 balloons (*Source: Nigel's Eco-store*). Enjoy Christmas tree lights, but like everything else that uses energy, turn them off when you are not enjoying or using them. The carbon dioxide once released will remain in the atmosphere for 100 years or more.

Christmas Cake

From a young boy growing up on a farm in Northern Ireland I have fond memories of big family Christmases with my mother baking in the kitchen a variety of cakes and puddings. The Christmas cake recipe, which my mother and I use, is from Delia Online. I have donated one such cake to be raffled at the Parish Lunch on 2 December. I hope that whoever wins the cake enjoys it as much as I have enjoyed making it.

Raymond Kyle

Recipe

Ingredients

1 lb (450 g) currants
6 oz (175 g) sultanas
6 oz (175 g) raisins
2 oz (50 g) glacé cherries, rinsed, dried and finely chopped
2 oz (50 g) mixed candied peel, finely chopped
3 tablespoons brandy, plus extra for 'feeding'
8 oz (225 g) plain flour
½ level teaspoon salt
¼ level teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
½ level teaspoon ground mixed spice
8 oz (225 g) unsalted butter
8 oz (225 g) soft brown sugar
4 large eggs
2 oz (50 g) almonds, chopped (the skins can be left on)
1 level dessertspoon black treacle
grated zest 1 lemon
grated zest 1 orange
4 oz (110 g) ground almonds
2oz (50 g) chopped dried apricots

Method

You need to begin this cake the night before you want to bake it. All you do is weigh out the dried fruit and mixed peel, place it in a mixing

bowl and mix in the brandy as evenly and thoroughly as possible. Cover the bowl with a clean tea cloth and leave the fruit aside to absorb the brandy for 12 hours.

Next day pre-heat the oven to gas mark 1, 275°F (140°C). Then measure out all the rest of the ingredients, ticking them off to make quite sure they're all there. The treacle will be easier to measure if you remove the lid and place the tin in a small pan of barely simmering water. Now begin the cake by sifting the flour, salt and spices into a large mixing bowl, lifting the sieve up high to give the flour a good airing. Next, in a separate large mixing bowl, whisk the butter and sugar together until it's light, pale and fluffy. Now beat the eggs in a separate bowl and add them to the creamed mixture a tablespoonful at a time; keep the whisk running until all the egg is incorporated. If you add the eggs slowly by degrees like this the mixture won't curdle.

When all the egg has been added, fold in the flour and spices, using gentle, folding movements and not beating at all (this is to keep all the air in). Now fold in the fruit, peel, chopped nuts and treacle and finally the grated lemon and orange zests. Next, using a large kitchen spoon, transfer the cake mixture into the prepared tin, spread it out evenly with the back of a spoon and, if you don't intend to ice the cake, lightly drop the whole blanched almonds in circles or squares all over the surface. Finally cover the top of the cake with a double square of silicone paper with a 50p-size hole in the centre (this gives extra protection during the long slow cooking).

Bake the cake on the lowest shelf of the oven for 4½-4¾ hours [but check after 3 hours]. Sometimes it can take up to ½-¾ hour longer than this... Cool the cake for 30 minutes in the tin, then remove it to a wire rack to finish cooling. When it's cold 'feed' it – make small holes in the top and base of the cake with a small skewer, then spoon over a few teaspoons of brandy, wrap it in double cling paper secured with an elastic band and either wrap again in foil or store in an airtight container. You can now feed it at odd intervals until you need to ice or eat it.

Tin

You will also need an 8 inch (20 cm) round cake tin or a 7 inch (18 cm) square tin, greased and lined with silicone paper (baking parchment). Tie a band of brown paper round the outside of the tin for extra protection.
<http://www.deliaonline.com/recipes/cuisine/europea/n/english/the-classic-christmas-cake.html>

Saturday 8 December

The Nonsuch Singers (performing with a guest conductor following Graham Caldbeck's departure) will be singing the Arvo Pärt setting of the Advent Antiphons, at St James' Piccadilly at 7.30pm. £15 (£12 concs), under 16s free.

Last posting dates



The last posting date for second class this year is Saturday, 18 December. The first class cut-off point is Thursday, 20 December. Parcels must be sent by

Thursday, 13 December, while special delivery packages can be sent up to Saturday 23 December. SANTA MAIL Friday 14 December. When posting, don't forget to check that your cards fit in to the right postal category: letter, large letter or packet. Your Post Office has a sizing chart which can help.

Hark The Herald Angels Sing



It is hard to imagine Christmas without *Hark, the herald angels sing*. Since it was first sung, probably at Christmas 1738,

Charles Wesley's carol has become one of the best-known and best-loved in the world.

The story goes that Wesley was on his way to church on Christmas Day, and the sound of the Christmas bells filled him with joy; he wrote the hymn out of a full heart as his response. It was one of his first; he was to write more than 6,000 over the course of his life.

As Christmas gets closer and closer, we hear it blasted out of speakers in shopping centres, sung by wobbly-voiced carol singers and given

the Salvation Army brass band treatment, but it is a deeply theological, profoundly meaningful hymn. It is in the context of a service of worship – sung by those who understand its message – that it is sung as it was meant to be. It is just as well, though, that we do not sing the original. John Wesley complained bitterly about the way people changed the words of hymns written by him and his brother. George Whitefield, the other great name in 18th century Methodism, changed the first line from 'Hark! How all the welkin rings'; surely an improvement.

However, Charles knew exactly what he wanted to say, and arguably he got it right and Whitefield got it wrong. The welkin is heaven; he was saying that all heaven rejoiced at the birth of the Christ-child. Whitefield's version is responsible for all those Christmas cards with pictures of singing angels; but in Luke's gospel they were saying 'Glory to God in the highest', not singing it. Perhaps it does not matter very much, but both Wesleys believed that one of the functions of hymns was to educate the people in theology and biblical knowledge. *Hark the herald* certainly does that. The hymn as we sing it today has usually only three verses, though Wesley's original had 10, of four lines each. Yet, our three verses are enough. The first states the grand theme: God and sinners are reconciled through Christ. The second lays out the doctrine of the Incarnation: 'Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;/ Hail th'incarnate Deity'. The third is about the mission and ministry of Jesus: he is 'Born to raise the sons of earth/ Born to give them second birth'. It might not be great verse, but it is great theology.

Part of the mystique of the hymn today is its tune; it is almost always sung to *Festgesang*, by Felix Mendelssohn, who wrote it in 1840 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Gutenberg's printing press. In 1855 the English musician William Cumming altered it to fit the words of the hymn.

What we sing every Christmas is quite a long way removed from what Charles Wesley originally wrote; we have it thanks to

Whitefield, Mendelssohn and Cumming, and we are very glad of it:

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the newborn King!'*

Mark Woods © 2011 Thesheepdip.co.uk/Phil Creighton

Book review

Jonathan Sacks, *Genesis: the book of beginnings. Covenant and Conversation.*

2009. 978 1 59264 020 1

The Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, is in the process of writing about the five books of the Torah; Genesis and Exodus are available, Leviticus is out soon, and Numbers and Deuteronomy are awaited. Genesis is divided into the weekly Torah readings, with four or five 'essays' per portion. Torah means 'teaching' and these essays lay out the teaching contained in the first book of the Bible, written by someone who is familiar with the language, culture and tradition of the texts. Sacks seems to draw out of the text huge stores of wisdom that normally passes Christian readers by.

Sacks believes that the whole of Genesis is a tale about sibling rivalry and how to understand this most fundamental relationship in living together. The book was for me an exciting journey of discoveries at every turn, and here I can only highlight some of the unexpected teachings.

The first four big stories of Genesis are about responsibility. Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah, and Babel are all about denials of responsibility. Thus Adam and Eve denied *personal* responsibility: it wasn't me. Cain denied *moral* responsibility: I'm not here to look after my brother. Noah failed the test of *collective* responsibility: he saved himself, not humanity. Babel is about the failure of *ontological* responsibility: the builders of Babel were in fact saying, we are going to take the place of God. 'Other is replaced by Self', says Sacks, denying that something beyond us makes a call on us.

Then comes Abraham. His entry onto the scene is the dramatic watershed. God tells him to leave his land and family and go where God shows him. The Hebrew words for this leaving are *Lekh Lekha*, which can literally translate as

'go (in)to (by) yourself'. Abraham is asked to leave his familiar surroundings and go into himself where he will find the Other who has a claim on him. Thus Abraham meets the 'real' God. The story of Sodom and Gomorrah represents that meeting. Abraham argues with God about destroying the cities even if there are only 40 righteous people left. God says, no. If there are 30, then 20, and finally five. Abraham has recognized what God is and says to God, 'Are you the God of justice, and you are going to destroy whole cities when there are good people in it?' (In the Bible, 'justice' always means social justice and the concern for equality and the need to care for people who are poor, vulnerable and unjustly treated.)

Sacks brings out countless ways of understanding the sacred texts, and even giving just a few examples barely gives an impression of the depth of understanding in this text. The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, play major roles in the understanding of what it means to be God's people. The stories of Joseph and his brothers, which take up so many chapters of Genesis, are one long and painstakingly detailed account of forgiveness. The roles of Sarah, Ruth, Leah, Tamar and other characters are considered and compared. Sacks writes with such clarity and understanding that this book presents a completely new way for Christians to understand their 'beginning' (Genesis), presented in a way that makes one want to read the Bible again with completely new eyes.
Verena Tschudin

A fact for each day of January 2011

- 1 New Year's Day was first recognised as 1 January on this day in 1651, as the Gregorian calendar was adopted by France, Italy, Portugal and Spain.
- 2 On this day in 1997, Patrick Chaplin was accepted by the University of East Anglia. His degree subject? Darts.
- 3 On this day in 1962, Fidel Castro was excommunicated from the Catholic Church by Pope John XXIII.
- 4 The first 1999 edition of Countdown was broadcast today, and marked by Carol Vorderman getting her sums wrong in a numbers game!

- 5 In 2001, the Government announced that cod stocks were dwindling because the fish could not swim very well.
- 6 Today is Joan of Arc's birthday; she was born in 1421 and canonised in 1921.
- 7 Heavy flooding on this day in 1915 cut off Windsor Castle. Milk and post were delivered by a punt.
- 8 Eleven years ago today, David Beckham turned down an offer of £80,000 a week to play for Manchester United, claiming it was not enough.
- 9 Christopher Columbus discovered sea cows – manatees – on this day in 1493.
- 10 Moscow authorities banned the Salvation Army on this day 11 years ago. They said the organisation was a dangerous threat to the state.
- 11 Church attendance figures released in the year 2000 revealed that just 7.5% of the UK were in church on Sunday, down from 10% in 1989.
- 12 On this day in 1966, Batman made its debut on US television.
- 13 In 1979, the Young Men's Christian Association announced plans to sue the Village People over the song YMCA. The case was later dropped.
- 14 On this day in 1901, an explosion at a Manchester hat factory killed 12 people.
- 15 The BBC ended a ban on this day in 1963: now, comedy programmes could discuss politics, sex, religion and royalty in its shows.
- 16 Animal rescuers in Rio offered urgent advice on this day in 2001: if people found penguins washed up on the beach, they should not put them in a fridge.
- 17 American President Benjamin Franklin was born on this day in 1706.
- 18 Pilgrims living in Boston reported seeing a UFO on this day in 1644, the first such sighting.
- 19 On this day in 1348, the Order of the Garter was established by Edward III.
- 20 In 1981, Keith Richards' neighbours in New York attempted to get him evicted for playing music too loud at night.
- 21 Pinball machines were ruled illegal by a Bronx magistrate on this day in 1942.
- 22 On this day in 2001, footballer Rio Ferdinand damaged a tendon in his knee – by watching television.
- 23 The Arctic Monkeys were at number one in the charts on this day in 2006. Their hit record was *When The Sun Goes Down*.
- 24 Conscription ended in Britain on this day in 1960.
- 25 The classic Disney movie *101 Dalmatians* was released 51 years ago today.
- 26 On this day in 1986, Halley's Comet was visible in the night sky as it passed earth in its 76-year orbit. It is next due to appear in 2061.
- 27 The high street store C&A closed its doors for the final time on this day 11 years ago. The chain continues to operate in Europe.
- 28 On this day in 1921, the tomb of an unknown soldier was installed underneath the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, to honour the unknown dead of the First World War.
- 29 On this day in 2001, actor Leonardo Di Caprio announced that his middle name was Wilhelm.
- 30 Charles I was executed and the Commonwealth of England founded on this day in 1649.
- 31 The space race hotted up on this day 50 years ago when a chimpanzee was sent into space by the US: he came back down to earth safely.

December and January's

Year's Mind

Ethel Doris
Angela Raynor
Margaret Payne
Alexandra English
Antony Gowan
Patricia Coghill
Harry Dwight
Kathleen Mundy
David Lidderdale
Victoire Ridsdale
George Priest
Jacqueline Lewis
Edward Sloane
Doris Stone
Charles Foster-Taylor
Georgina Davson
Ethel Sutcliffe
Beatrice Spicer
Basil Robinson
Albert Beauchamp
Alice Wood
Keith Kerry
Timothy Pringle
Elizabeth Graham
Anstice Goodman
Tilly Halliwell
Mary Millbourn
Dorian Chinner
Clarissa Morse
Frances Perry
Noel Patrick
Leonard Waight
Emily Greenland
Francis Mundy
Margot Macpherson
Francis Spicer
Anthony Glynn
Alexander Fleming
Harry Dwight
Ffreebairn Simpson
Violet Berry
Joan Ommanney
Jane Hawker
Ellen Payne

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am Eucharist

10.30am Sung Eucharist

4.30pm Evening Prayer.

The meeting room at the back of the church is available for people with pre-school children. There is a baby changing facility in the wheelchair accessible toilet in the hall.

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Usually Morning Prayer is said daily at 8.30am

(Eucharist on Feastdays); Evening Prayer is

usually said at 5.30pm on Monday, Tuesday,

Wednesday and Thursday except Public Holidays.

Wednesday 7.00pm Eucharist

Readings in December 2012

Sunday 2 December First Sunday of Advent

Readings at 10.30am *Jeremiah 33. 14-16;
1 Thessalonians 3. 9-end;
Luke 21. 25-36*

Wednesday 5 Eucharist

Readings at 7.00pm *Isaiah 25. 6-10a;
Matthew 15. 29-37*

Sunday 9 December Second Sunday of Advent

Readings at 10.30am *Baruch ch5;
Philippians 1. 3-11;
Luke 3. 1-6;*

Wednesday 12 Eucharist

Readings at 7.00pm *Isaiah 40. 25-end;
Matthew 11. 28-end*

Thursday 13 Lucy, Martyr at Syracuse

Readings at 11.45am *Isaiah 41. 13-20;
Matthew 11. 11-15*

Sunday 16 December Third Sunday of Advent

Readings at 10.30 *Zephaniah 3. 14-end;
Philippians 4. 4-7;
Luke 3. 7-18*

Wednesday 19 Eucharist

Readings at 7.00pm *Judges 13. 2-7, 24-end;
Luke 1. 5-25*

Sunday 23 December Fourth Sunday of Advent

Readings at 10.30am *Micah 5. 2-5a;
Hebrews 10. 5-10;
Luke 1. 39-45*

SAVE THE DATE

Summer Fair Saturday 15 June 2013

Monday 24 December Christmas Eve
4.00pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Readings 11.30pm *Isaiah 52. 7-10;*
Hebrews 1. 1-4;
John 1. 1-14

Tuesday 25 December Christmas Day

Readings at 10.30am *Isaiah 9. 2-7;*
Luke 2. 1-14;

Wednesday 26 **No** mid week Eucharist

Sunday 30 January First Sunday of Christmas

Readings at 10.30am *1 Samuel 2. 18-20, 26;*
Colossians 3. 12-17;
Luke 2. 41-end

Readings in January 2013

Wednesday 2 *Basil the Great*
Readings at 7.00pm *2 Timothy 4. 1-8;*
Matthew 5. 13-19

Sunday 6 January The Epiphany

Readings at 10.30am *Isaiah 60. 1-6;*
Ephesians 3. 1-12;
Matthew 2. 1-12

Wednesday 9 *Eucharist*
Readings at 7.00pm *1 John 4. 11-18;*
Mark 6. 45-52

Sunday 13 January Baptism of Christ

Readings at 10.30am *Isaiah 43. 1-7;*
Acts 8. 14-17;
Luke 3. 15-17, 21-22

Wednesday 16 *Eucharist*
Readings at 7.00pm *Hebrews 2. 14-end*
Mark 1. 29-39

Sunday 20 January Third Sunday of Epiphany

Readings at 10.30 *Isaiah 62. 1-5;*
1 Corinthians 12. 1-11;
John 2. 1-11

Wednesday 23 *Eucharist*
Readings at 7.00pm *Hebrews 7. 1-3, 15-17;*
Mark 3. 1-6

Sunday 27 January Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

Readings at 10.30am *Nehemiah 8. 1-3, 5-6, 8-10;*
1 Corinthians 12. 12-31a;
Luke 4. 14-21

Wednesday 30 *Charles, King & Martyr*
Readings at 7.00pm *Hebrews 10. 11-18;*
Mark 4. 1-20

Sunday 3 February Presentation of Christ in the Temple

Readings at 10.30am *Malachi 3. 1-5;*
Hebrews 2. 14-end;
Luke 2. 22-40

Upcoming in December 2012

Sunday 2 11.45am Advent Course
Monday 3 7.00pm Advent Course
Wednesday 5 10.30am Advent Course
Thursday 6 7.30pm Taizé Service
Sunday 9 10.30am All Age Worship with
Nativity Play
12 noon Advent Course
7.00pm Carol Service
Monday 10 7.00pm Advent Course
Wednesday 12 10.30am Advent Course
Thursday 13 12.30pm Thursday Lunch
Sunday 16 2.30pm Baptism of
Nicholas Basirov
Tuesday 18 5.30pm Music Concert
Wednesday 19 11.00am Home communion
St Teresa's
Thursday 20 2.30-4.00pm Time for Tea

Upcoming in January 2013

Thursday 10 7.30pm Taizé Service
Thursday 24 2.30-4.00pm Time for Tea
Friday 25 11.30am Memorial Service
of Michael Gabriel
Saturday 26 PCC away day?

Parish Office

St Mary's Church House, The Boltons, London
SW10 9TB Tel 020 7835 1440
www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Vicar The Revd Ginny Thomas
020 7835 1440, mobile 07590074951.

Day off: Tuesday
ginny@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Associate Vicar The Revd Ruth Lampard
mobile 07870 651240

Days off Friday & Saturday
ruth@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Director of Music John Ward
07853 406050 (mobile)
boltonsmusic@gmail.com

Parish Administrator
John McVeigh 020 7835 1440 (church office)
Mon to Fri 9.15am-2.15pm
john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Verger / Caretaker David Ireton
020 7244 8998 / 07881 865386

day off: Tuesday

Churchwardens
Leo Fraser-Mackenzie 020 7384 3246
Ann Mulcare 020 7937 2005

*The PCC of St. Mary with St Peter & St. Jude, West Brompton is a
Registered Charity, No 1133073*

**Members of the Parochial
Church Council**

Revd Ginny Thomas (Chair)
Mr Philip Bedford-Smith,
Mr Leo Fraser-Mackenzie,
Miss Margarete Geier
(Deanery Synod Representative),
Mrs Mary Godwin,
Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary),
Revd Ruth Lampard,
Mr Kevin Loprimo,
Mr Timon Molloy,
Mrs Ann Mulcare
(Deanery Synod Representative),
Mr David Parsons,
Mrs Katrina Quinton,
Miss Camila Ruz,
Mrs Ann Tait

Treasurer Carolyn Stubbs 020 7835 0074

Assistant Treasurer

Bill Gallagher 020 7384 3246.

Electoral Roll Officer Ann Mulcare

Gift Aid Secretary

John Barker 020 8571 0737

Children's Advocate

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Co-ordinators:

Monday Bible Study Group

Pat Schleger 020 7589 2359

Wednesday Bible Study Group

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Clarion Editor

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Flowers Boo Simpson 020 8878 9898

Prayer Network

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Readers & Intercessors Rota

Mary Meeson (call Parish Office)

Reading at St Cuthbert's

and St Matthias School

Sheila Gibbs 020 8788 9744

Thursday monthly lunch

June Brudenell 020 7352 7815 &

Ann Tait 020 7352 5127

Social Secretary

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Sunday School Jane Dass 020 7370 5309

***Wishing you all a
Happy and Blessed Christmas
and a
Joyful and Peaceful New Year***

**Contributions for the February Clarion
should be sent in to the Parish Office by
18 January 2013**