

## Our Vicar writes .....

I've just been reading a funny story of someone's experience with Sat Nav and I remember what happened to us on our summer holiday. Chris and I and family drove off the ferry at Calais, having set up this wonderful gadget, visible to the driver, and waited expectantly for it to guide us to Vezelay in northern Burgundy. Quelle horreur! It did not respond. We drove hastily into a side street for further investigation. No amount of coaxing could persuade those welcome lights to appear on the screen. "Tell us the way to go" we pleaded, but it's dark screen merely reflected our anxious faces! It began to dawn on us that a tense journey lay ahead - we had failed to bring an Autoroute printout as a back up, such was our confidence in the Sat Nav. Fortunately, the rather outdated map and 4 pairs of 'peeled eyes' – the more conventional skills of navigation - got us round the baffling outskirts of Paris and back onto the motorway – what a relief!

When something we've come to rely upon fails, it's the conventional skills that we fall back on: picking up the phone or writing a letter by hand when the computer crashes. Irritating and strange at first perhaps, but also reassuring when we discover that those skills are still with us. In our current worrying climate, the things that we assumed would always be there for us – jobs, banks, credit, the means to buy what we want for our families now – can no longer be taken for granted by many of us. The 'thrifty tips' and stories of how life was good even with very little from the mature members of the community take on a new relevance – perhaps there are some ideas we could adapt from their wealth of wisdom and experience. Personal challenges can be a catalyst to remind us of what is good and important in life. In their own way, church communities are good at holding together beliefs and practices handed down from generation to generation and using them to find meaning for the present.

Our Confirmation group had a lively conversation recently about the traditional words of the Creed which we say together in our Sunday services. This statement of belief was put together 1600+ years ago to help people be clear about God as Creator and Saviour who renews us through the Holy Spirit. Not surprisingly most of the group preferred a contemporary version because it was easier to understand, but the original we agreed, was our 'standard', by which new interpretations should be measured.

We've all got a 'creed' and it's good for us, like this group, to check our beliefs and attitudes against the eternal truth that God's presence is with us through Christ, bringing us peace with God and each other in life, in death and beyond death – a truth the Church is called to witness to everyone through acts of kindness and service.

May this eternal truth become more real and relevant to each of us as we navigate our way through the times ahead – individually, as a community and as God's people together.

With love and prayers

Sally Davenport

## Significant Services and Events



### **All Souls Service** **Sunday 2 November** **at 4pm**

*Names of those who have died recently,  
and others we wish to be remembered,  
will be read out in the Service.*

### **Christian Ethics :** **Sunday 26 October** **“Debt”**

The Rev'd Richard Pyke leads a discussion on this highly topical subject!

6.00pm for approximately 1 hour  
Refreshments provided

### St Mark's Colney Heath

Our neighbouring church, St Mark's, are currently having extensive refurbishment of their 1840's building. Their aim is to create a lighter, warmer more flexible space which will better suit their worship, as well as enabling them to welcome and serve their community more effectively. The work is scheduled for completion in Spring 2009.

In the meantime, St Mary's are pleased to help The Rev'd James Spanner and St Mark's by offering the use of our church. We welcome couples being married here and families and friends who attend funerals of those for whom they mourn.

## The Church has often provided a scene for crime writers..

**The Rev'd Mary Robins describes a recent article in the Church Times.**

Imagine my surprise when, a few days after a TV episode of Agatha Christie's Miss Marple was filmed in St Mary's, North Mymms, an article appeared in the Church Times about crime novels, churches and priests.

Kate Charles, author of the Callie Anson series, featuring a young woman curate, wrote the article. She points out that Agatha Christie is part of the Golden Age of crime fiction that happened in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Others of that era include G. K. Chesterton with Father Brown - 'human and humane, a wise man and a scholar, Father Brown was a successful sleuth largely because of the understanding of human nature, and the possibilities of human evil, he had gained through his experience as a priest.'

Dorothy L. Sayers sent Lord Peter Wimsey off to a church in the wonderfully atmospheric 'The Nine Tailors'. As with Agatha Christie's Miss Marple these and many others detective novels of that time inhabit a cosy world. 'They feature straight forward murders solved by amateur detectives within the confines of a closed circle of suspects, usually in rather genteel surroundings.

Kate Charles continues, 'Some might find it incongruous even bizarre, that crime novels set against the background of the Church number in the hundreds. What is it about the Church that attracts crime writers to step within its hallowed doors and poke about its dark corners? Some of it may have to do with the convention of the closed community in detective fiction. What more convenient closed community could there be than the cathedral close, the monastery, or even the PCC ?'

She continues, 'Certainly in the Golden Age of crime writing, and even to this day, crime novels inhabit a moral universe. They are undergirded by the writer's unspoken contract with the reader: whatever terrible things may happen in this book, I promise that a resolution will be reached. Evil may prevail for a little while, but good will triumph in the end. Loose ends will be tied up, and the murderer will receive his just deserts. In our increasingly untidy - in the moral sense - world, what better background for that moral framework than the church?'

..../Cont.

In more recent times, crime novels in Churches and of priest include P. D. James's 'Death in Holy Orders' and 'A Taste for Death', as well as Peter Lovesey's 'The Reaper'. Kate Charles observes, 'In these novels 'sacred' and 'profane' are always invoked together - flip side of the same coin. It is the contrast between the two that is so effective: the contrast between the sacredness of the Church and the ultimate profanity of murder. It intensifies the readers horror, as well as the satisfaction when it all comes right in the end.'

She continues, 'There is another contrast that interests me as a writer: the contrast between the ideal of holiness that the institution of the Church represents, and the imperfection of the people who make up that institution. In that gap between ideal and reality resides dark secrets, and things that Church people want to hide from each other. All this provides a rich vein of motivation for the crime writer to explore.'

I look forward to bearing some of these thoughts in mind as I watch Miss Marple filmed in our Church of St Mary's North Mymms.

#### Next Copy Date

**Contributions for the November 2008 magazine edition please by  
FRIDAY 24 October to the Editorial Team:**

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North Mymms Park**

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**or: Lynda Potter at the Parish Office  
northmymmschurch@btinternet.com**

**PLEASE CAN WE ENCOURAGE OUR PARISHIONERS TO  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE MAGAZINE BY SHARING THEIR STORIES  
OR NEWS.**

**IT IS THROUGH YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS THAT THE MAGAZINE  
SERVES THE PARISH, AND ENSURES THAT THE EDITORIAL  
TEAM DO NOT DRY UP OF INTERESTING THINGS TO SAY!!**

## **Summary of PCC Meeting held on 8 September 2008**

### **St Mary's Church School**

We were joined for the first part of the meeting by Mrs Jane Guy, headteacher at St Mary's Church of England School, with whom the church of course has close links. Mrs Guy outlined the principal aims of the school which is to provide the best possible all-round education, equipping the children for life and within the distinctive learning environment that a Christian school can offer. This included the priority of supporting the families and building good relations with the community. In the summer holidays significant building, plumbing and electrical work began and was now nearing completion; the children had new washbasins, a dedicated library, the staff new facilities and this was already making a significant difference to the function and appearance of the school. PCC members found Mrs Guy's report most informative and pledged on-going commitment and support of St Mary's church to the school.

### **The Bevington Pipe Organ**

The Victorian organ had been re-commissioned at the cost of just over £1,000 for cleaning and tuning, the cost of which would be met from the Organ Fund account. An anthem and hymn had been played on the Bevington at the 9.30am service the previous Sunday which had been well received. It was agreed that for the time being St Mary's could benefit from having 2 instruments available which together had complementary merits.

### **Churches Together in North Mymms**

The PCC noted with sadness the imminent departure of The Rev'd Martin and Mrs Margaret Truscott of the United Reformed Church. Sally undertook to convey our good wishes on behalf of St Mary's PCC and congregation.

.../Cont.

## PCC Meeting

### **Fabric Matters**

The PCC agreed to the proposed plans to change the layout and position of a path adjacent to the north east end of the church, leading to the kitchen of St Michael's Room. The necessary permission had been received from the Diocesan Advisory Committee. It was hoped to get this under way before the end of September.

### **Amber Tankard**

A request had been received from the V&A Museum for the loan of the Tankard (currently on long-term loan to the British Museum) for an exhibition March-July 2009. Subject to the provision of suitable insurance and undertakings for its transportation, the PCC were prepared to agree to the temporary loan.

### **Finance**

The Diocese indicated a projected 2.9% increase in the 2009 budget which will reflect a small increase in the Parish Share. However, the Treasurer felt confident that St Mary's would be able to meet this increase.

### **This is an appeal to all preserve makers!**

Once again we are having a home-made preserve stall at the Hatfield House Christmas Market in November. Unfortunately our wonderful team of Eve Bowring and Joan Barnes can no longer help us, so donations to our small stock would be much appreciated. Surplus fruit, sugar and clean 1lb jam jars with lids would also be gratefully received.

Please contact Jean Holford 01707 656640

### **General:**

Enquiries concerning Baptisms, Marriages, Blessings of Civil Marriages and publication of Banns of Marriage should be directed to the Vicar, who should also be contacted for all matters concerning Communion of the Sick and Confessions. Bodies of all parishioners may be brought into their Parish Church for a Funeral Service, prior to burial or cremation.

## Parishioners Pages

### **Bike Ride by Car!**

This year, and last year, I took the opportunity of the Beds & Herts Church Preservation Trust Bike Ride to visit some interesting churches not normally open. This year Patricia Cook, Pat Bacchus and I embarked on a pilgrimage to six churches off the A10 in the Buntingford area.

We undertook this by car, not on bikes or walking; by this “cheating” we were able to go much further afield and visit more churches. We didn’t ask for sponsors [!], but gave donations ourselves, and spent a very splendid day out, including a pub lunch.

The churches we visited were Sandon and Reed, both with Saxon work; Barkway, a beautiful 15C church in a lovely village; Anstey and Meesden, both ancient churches and full of interest, and finally Little Hornead which is cared for by the Churches Conservation trust. This too, is an ancient church with, possibly, Saxon and Norman features, somewhat reminiscent of St Leonard’s, Bengoe.

We all had a fascinating day discussing the architectural features, Pevsner in hand, and taking some wonderful photographs---if anyone would like to see them, please ask.

Di Lee

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October - 12.00 noon-5.00pm  
North Mymms Youth and Community Centre  
**Autumn Craft Fair**  
Enquiries Tel: 01707 657576

**Saturday 4th October**  
**11.00am - 3.30pm.**

The St. Michael's Parish Ramblers are having a ramble around North Mymms Park with a stop at the Woodman Pub for lunch. They leave from the car park at St. Mary's at 11.00am and all are welcome.

## **HARARE CATHEDRAL, ZIMBABWE**

The September issue of the magazine carried an account of problems at Harare Cathedral.

Ruth Hutchinson (Tower Captain) reported back that following her appeal there had been a swift response from British ringers, both individually and by bands.

This had enabled her to help the injured Zimbabwean Deputy Captain get back into business. However, at the time of her contact the Cathedral was still locked.

Jack Southam

### ***The vicar received this letter following last month's article***

Dear Sally,

It is always a delight to receive your Parish Magazine, but especially so today.

You might like to add this footnote to the story of "A Bishop, a Cathedral & a Ringer" in your next Magazine...

Ruth Hutchinson, Tower Captain of Harare Cathedral, Zimbabwe is my mother's cousin. Ruth is a remarkable lady, over 80, unmarried, a Doctor and Consultant Anaesthetist at Harare Hospital. She is a devout Christian, and her life is dedicated to the Zimbabwe people.

She can and does come home from time to time, but always insists on going back. She will stay with them come what may, although she does not seem to be "top of the pops" with the current regime. The last I heard she was existing on tomatoes and peppers grown on a scap of land behind the Hospital.

It was lovely to read her story, distressing though it is.

All the best Margaret Cotton

## A word from your editor

This has been a particularly busy month. It was only a few days ago that I was hinting to Reverend Sally that edition may not go out on time!

My husband was away for a week in Scotland playing golf leaving me in charge of our son, 2 dogs and the house, not a task I combined well with working full time. At the same time my secretary, not just an employee but a friend, was also away for a week on a family holiday. I quickly realised that I rely on her as much at work to keep me together as I do on my husband at home. Needless to say, having had both of them unavailable for a week, I am still getting over the stress and it is therefore not surprising that I am behind with everything else!

It has reminded me just how much I need their help and support to be able to do all the other things I enjoy - in the spare time they free up for me.

As I reflect on just how difficult that week was I realise how rarely I actually vocalise my appreciation. 'Thank you' is such an easy way to convey genuine sentiment but is often forgotten around those with whom we are most familiar comfortable. 'Please' is also frequently missing, not through lack of politeness but just through familiarity. It makes me smile to think how often I would drum into my own child the need to say please and thank you and yet forget myself around those who deserve it most.

We all have our own cross to bear and no one is free from the stress and strains of life. We do not expect every action and re-action to be greeted by please or thank you, and more often than note they are missing, but I pray that I never take for granted the things right under my nose; I might be noticing the effects of the 'credit crunch' yet I am surrounded by God's gifts that can not be influenced by governments or global economies — I have a wonderful family and fantastic friends. They truly are His gifts to me and I am truly blessed.

A cheeky P.S. - Congratulations to Debbie and Richard on their marriage, it was truly beautiful and I was honored to be part of your special day, both at the Church and after for the celebrations!

Tracy Hatswell

## MOTHER EARTH (global warming)

Robin Elgar, our junior church leader, has an eleven year old niece 'Natchya' or plain 'Honey' who lives in the north of Thailand near the Loas border. She entered an English speaking competition in Thailand and this was her talk!!

Good morning everybody. My name is Natchaya. You can call me Nampung, or "Honey". For my talk today, I'm going to talk about...MOTHER EARTH .....

I live in Phrae..... I love the sea views & riding my banana boat out to sea!..... Can you believe that the ice around the world affects the sea level in the Gulf of Thailand, & it affects all of our family on Earth too?

Meme or 'Nampung' is my brother, and .... the air, ice, rivers, sea, soil, trees, flowers, fish, birds, insects, animals, Africans, Americans, Eskimoes, Thais, Chinese & all the chain of life. We are all inter-related... "a chain is as strong as the weakest link"?..... right or wrong?!!!! And a family is about loving & helping each other? .... right or wrong?!!!!

Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! Are you dizzy?? Look how fast everything is zooming ahead in the last 20 years?! The technology, the changes!

Hey you!! watch it!! ..... What happens if you drive too fast??!!!!.....

You have lived on Earth for 3 million years , .... right? ... Well... look at the last 20 years,!!!! For the first time, our sea ice has suddenly melted. Why? Because of air pollution .... by our own beautiful hands!!!!.....

.../CONTINUED OVER

R-R-R .....1. Reduce, 2. Re-Use, 3. Re-Cycle - Re-cycle our rubbish at home. Change our house lights to special light bulbs. Listen to our world's best scientists, crying out again & again "Don't Throw Away Or Burn Plastic Or White Foam. It Makes Air Pollution!!! It causes Global Warming!"

Is it too prehistoric to carry our food home in a shopping basket or cloth bag, like 20 years ago!!!. And is it so ancient to put our fast-food in banana leaf or re-usable box??!!! Another thing...in our garden, let's plant lots of trees & flowers.... It's Mother Nature's way to make oxygen for us to breathe Is that the mother-of-all-magic, or what?!!

"Honey, where are you from? I come from my mother, of course!!!" Does the Earth come from us or do we come from the Earth? If we take care of Mother Earth, will Mother Earth take care of us? Please put the Earth 1st in your life!!!!!!!!!!

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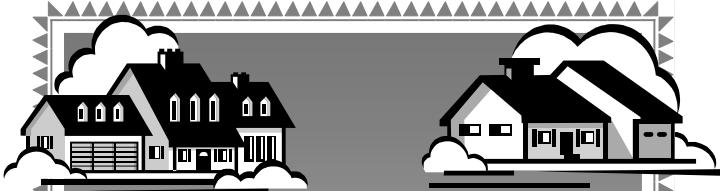
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## From the Parish Church Registers

### Baptisms

21 September      Jake George Bridges  
                             Lucas Harry Hooper



### Weddings

6 September      Duncan John Sands  
                             & Jemma June Setterfield

13 September     Richard Augustus Stapleton  
                             & Deborah Jane Wiggs

20 September     Ryan Kevin Stewart  
                             & Stacey Deborah Boys

### Funerals

4 September      Phyllis Nora Chandler

26 September     Phyllis Denny

### Ashes

2 September      Boris Sommers

18 September     Edward (Ted) Harry Fordham

Only the current registers, (Baptisms from March 1980; Weddings from January 1999, Burials from March 1984 and Services from July 1996) are stored at the church.

All previous church registers, and parish magazines, are stored at the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, County Hall, Hertford, SG13 8EJ. (01992) 555105, to ensure they are adequately preserved.