

Challenging our Challenges

I was praying Morning Prayer with Howard Thornton and Richard Chand recently, and God reminded me of the story of Gideon. It is a great story from the book of Judges in the Old Testament, where Gideon and his carefully selected small army have to face what look like overwhelming odds: the large army of the Midianites. Gideon is anxious about the challenge that faces him and God tells him to go in the strength he has. The Lord urges Gideon on, saying "Am I not sending you?"

"This year our expenses are due to exceed our income and we cannot continue like this."

God seems to take a special delight in helping his people to face huge challenges. Think of David taking on Goliath, or the small band of disciples spreading the news of Jesus through the Roman Empire. A big challenge can make us more likely to turn to God in hope and trust, wanting to see God's power at work.

We are facing a big financial challenge: how to raise thousands of pounds in order to keep within our budget next year. This year our expenses are due to exceed our income and we cannot continue like this.

This can seem daunting, but it is also a challenge. We will need to deal with it in a range of ways: look at increasing our giving, reduce our spending where possible, increase our income from lettings, some fundraising activities and encourage legacies to the parish.

There will be a Pledge Fortnight from 9-22 November where we will look at the vision of our parish and encourage people to pledge regular weekly or

monthly giving to support this. Look out for invitations to tea parties to discuss where we are as a church and where we're going!

There are some great things going on in our parish. On 9 October we welcomed 180 children from St Francis School to St Francis Church, to pray and worship and to give thanks for the life of St Francis. St Christopher's School is keen to have frequent, regular assemblies led by people from our churches. Church Cowley St James School welcomes regular assemblies with Howard Thornton. This is just a picture of our work with schools – why not write to the Chronicle to say where you see God at work in our parish.

People often comment to me that they find our churches to be welcoming and friendly places. I am very interested in the wide diversity of people who worship together in our churches - God has blessed us with a fascinating mixture of people. Let's give thanks to God and pray that he will guide us through the challenges of the coming months.

Susannah Reide

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Chronicle

Cowley Team Ministry

November 2009

Editors' Letter

Dear Reader,

Due to a gremlin in our printing machine which coincided with May Morgan's well-deserved holiday, I found myself last month sticking most of the little name stickers to the top of the October Chronicles (May has taken on this task each month prior to issue.) How lovely it was to find that so many of our elderly housebound parishioners have ordered their monthly magazine and are anxious to keep up with the news from our two churches. Please be assured, dear elderly readers, that you are much in our thoughts and prayers and often spoken of with affection.

How are you getting on with your Christmas shopping? Well, don't forget that a whole host of Christmas goodies, gifts, food, decorations and much more will be on sale at the Craft Fair on November 14th in the Church

Centre. We attract stall holders from far and wide to say nothing of the skilful crafty folk from our two churches.

Following the remarkable success in recruiting a team of bell ringers for St James, (did you hear their magnificent ringing on the Proms evening?) there is a campaign a-foot to form a choir. No matter whether you are young or old(er), if you think you would enjoy singing during the weekly services do let us know. Choir practice would be midweek

Autumn in all its golden splendour is now upon us and we're wondering where the year 2009 has gone. How about you? But a year of activity it has been in our parish. More to come in 2010 we're sure.

God bless.

Rosanne and Carol

Parish Calendars 2010

Following the success of last year's calendars, Les Hemsworth has been out and about taking more fine photographs for this year's edition. The price has not changed since last year, namely £10.00, which for an exclusive edition is very good value.



There will spread sheets of the 13 photos (one for the cover plus one for each month) in both churches in the next few weeks to give you an idea of how the calendar will look. As last year we need money with orders, please, by the end of November so that we can get them to you by Christmas.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

I wonder how many of our elderly parishioners would love to come to Tuesday Lunch Club in the Church Centre, and/or to Bingo Club on Friday afternoons, if only they could get there? Do you know anyone like that? If you visit an elderly person, why not ask them? They can be sure of a warm welcome to either club, and now that the clocks have gone back, it could be the way to jolly up a long lonely week. Do let us know at the Chronicle and we'll see if we can organise lifts or Dial-a-Ride if required.

Chronicle

Details and Deadlines

The Chronicle is the monthly magazine of the Parish of Cowley Team Ministry. It is published ten times a year, with no publication in January or August. Issues going back as far as January, 2000 can be found online at this address: www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk/chronicle/index.php

The Chronicle is edited by Rosanne Butler and Carol Thornton, and published by Philip Hind. Material from St Francis church members is collected by

John Shreeve. This is the email address: chronicle@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Or you can ring the parish office on (01865) 747 680.

We encourage contributions from everyone at St Francis and St James churches. To have an item included in the December/January issue, please submit it by 22 November.

A Tribute to George Shallow

George grew up in Mesopotamia, St Vincent, in the West Indies. After leaving school he did an apprenticeship as a joiner and later took over his father's workshop as a carpenter. In 1961 George left St Vincent and moved to England. He lived in Aylesbury for a few months, then moved to Oxford where he met his wife Norah. They married in 1964 at St Luke's Church, and had three children, Movoney, Velma, and Andrew; four grandchildren, Carly, Nathan, Felicia, and Caroline; and two great-grandchildren, Elliot and Amelia.

In 1963 George worked as a carpenter for Laings, building the Cowley Centre shops, offices, and car-park. He moved on to the Zoology building at St Cross Road, Longwall. He worked as a carpenter and joiner in various colleges, before starting his own business, Derwent Construction and Plant Hire, where he had 150 employees. George's biggest contract was building the first phase of Oxford College. He had contracts for maintenance work in Rosehill, Littlemore, Barton, Wood Farm and Marston. Later he had building contracts building homes in Aylesbury, St Albans, London, Uxbridge, Abingdon and Basingstoke. He set up a letting agency which continues to operate some 25 years later.

The church played a great part in George's life. He loved going to church and strongly believed in his faith. As a little boy he served as an altar boy in his little village of Mesopotamia. When he came to England he went to several churches in Oxford, worshipping regularly at St Luke's.

When he and his family moved to Leiden Road, one Sunday he decided to attend St Francis Church with the three children. When they walked into the church, every member of the congregation turned to look at them, as there were no other black members in the church.

After the service, Father Randel, the priest in charge, introduced himself and his wife Felicity. He made them feel very welcome. Everyone was friendly and they felt at home. Within a few months, Father Randel asked George to be a server. George was honoured and pleased to be working within the church again. He served on the church committee, social committee, and PCC, and became church warden in 1986. He was a member of the Guild of

Servant of the Sanctuary, and served in the church until his death.

George was a family man. During these past weeks, his family have cried, smiled and laughed a lot as they shared memories of him and the lifestyle he worked so hard to provide for us, the family he had raised and watched grow. As children, they wanted for nothing. He was a generous man; if he had it, they could have it. He taught them to work hard, play hard, and enjoy the best things in life. They had many hard times but along with them, there were many good times...

They met every other Sunday at their family home for dinner. The children and grandchild often turned up with friends and children of friends George and Norah had never met. George would always make them welcome. He sat at the head of the table, and after saying grace and a few brandies, with his boyish grin or serious fact would tell them how he prepared the meat and vegetables and peeled the potatoes for dinner (the rest of the family knew that George didn't know where the kitchen was, and it was Norah who had spent hours after church cooking, but their friends were fascinated.)

Most of you have heard George's stories of St Vincent, maybe more than once (maybe more times than you care to remember.) Stories of his beloved hometown of Mespo and his boyhood days, liming along the Mespo highway. Mesopotamia or Mespo sits high in the hills, an area full of banana trees, slopes and hidden valleys, but it has no highway.

This family will look back with joy at our days out to Blenheim Palace, picnicking by the lake, Beale Park and Windsor. These daughters often joked with George and Norah about our plans for their old age. Norah would live with Movoney as she would be easier to look after – ask Norah what she wanted for breakfast; she eventually would make up her mind in time to have it the following morning. George would live with Velma. He would be happy as long as he had three meals a day, his brandy, and a bell or stick to bank on the floor if he needed anything else.

Sadly this was not to be. Over the last few months before his death, George was brave in the face of in-

tolerable pain and discomfort. Always a proud man, the effort it took to try and hide that pain from his family was immense.

So how does one begin to describe this extraordinary man? Caring, strong, and courageous, with a heart of gold. He was always ready and willing to help those less fortunate than himself. George touched lives in a profound way, and his nurturing

extended beyond his family, helping many young men into a craft and employment.

George had a love of life and people that transcended barriers. He had great courage, faith and deep belief in Christ. Time may pass; however the pain of his not being here with us grows. The pain of loss hurts, but the love of his memory grows.

Flowers of Remembrance

Throughout the Middle Ages the flower which symbolised remembrance was rosemary – that lovely fragrant bush with tiny flowers shading from the palest to the deepest blue. In early times it was often planted in graveyards as an act of remembrance. My favourite legend of rosemary is that because it is a native of the Holy Land it was the bush upon which the Virgin Mary used to spread her veil to dry in the sun. The heat of the sun would activate the oils in the leaves giving her veil a unique fragrance. It would therefore have been the first sweet perfume experienced by the baby Jesus as he lay in her arms. Hence the name of Mary's rose.

By the early nineteenth century the language of flowers was very important and a posy of flowers which included the little blue myosotis would tell the recipient "forget-me-not." The name came over from France and Germany with a sad little legend.

The tale tells of a knight who picked a bunch of myosotis for his lady as they strolled together by a river. As he reached for the deepest blue flowers he slipped and fell, and as he was swept away by the current, cried out to his love "My love, my love, forget me not." The poet John Clare included this pretty stanza in his poem "On May Morning"

*The little blue forget-me-not
Come too on friendship's gentle plea
Spring's messenger in every spot.
Smiling on all – Remember me.*

In this month of November, though, the flower of remembrance which means so much to so many is the deep red field poppy. Wild poppies grow best where the earth has been disturbed. That is why they grow so successfully along the verges of new motorways and would spring up amongst the cornfields where crop spraying had not taken place.

We wear our poppies now to remember all who have given their lives in times of war. The terrible battlefields of the First World War were churned up plains of mud, trenches, pits and every horror imaginable, but in the spring of 1919 poppies bloomed all over those fields of destruction. Their glorious silky red petals are a reminder of the spilt blood of so many men. Since then the poppy is our flower of remembrance.

Of course many of our young men and women are still fighting a war in Afghanistan and in Iraq to free the world from terror. Many have died; many come back home with terrible wounds. Let us not forget the work of the Royal British Legion when we buy and wear our poppies.



Rosanne

SAINT OF THE MONTH Saint Martin of Tours

We know a lot about St Martin, because Sulpicius Severus wrote about him, the first Western biography of a monastic hero. Martin was born in 316 AD in what is now Hungary. He began to study Christianity before he was in his teens, and at about 15, he joined the Roman army.

His regiment was sent to Amiens in Gaul (now France), and on a freezing night he rode through the gates of the city and saw beggars huddled against the cold. Martin had no possessions except for his weapons and his soldier's cloak, but he cut the cloak in two with his sword and gave half to the beggar. That night in a dream he saw Christ, wearing half a cloak, saying, "Martin the catechumen has clothed me with this mantle."

He was baptised at 18. He spent two more years in the army, but did not feel able to square his Christianity with being at war, and left it. When Emperor Julian accused him of cowardice, he said he would defeat the enemy with the sign of the Cross instead of

with a sword.

He studied with Bishop Hilary of Poitiers and was ordained. He went to an island near Milan to live in solitude, but many disciples came to learn from him, and the monastery of Liguge grew up around him. It is on the island that the first of many miracles is thought to have taken place. He remained on the island for about ten years, but left often travelled to the central and western regions of Gaul to preach to the rural peasants who were steeped in superstition.

When the Bishop of Tours died in 371 or 372, the people of the town tricked Martin into coming to the town to pray with a very sick woman, and then inveigled him into taking on the post. Turning down the offer of a palace, Martin stayed in a small cell, but again many came to be near him, and the monastery of Marmoutiers developed, which is still there.

Martin lived to some 80 years,

continuing to travel from place to place telling people about God, converting many. He died in about 397, and is buried in the Cemetery of the Poor in Tours.

St Martin's day is celebrated on 11 November. St Martin's Feast, also called Martinmas, falls at the beginning of the wine harvest, and also when livestock were butchered to provide meat for the winter. It was the last festive meal before Advent, so it became a custom to have St Martin's Goose and the new wine (St Martin's Wine) on the feast day. St Martin is often shown holding a goose. Some stories say that when he gave away half his cloak, the clouds broke up and the sun shone so hotly the frost melted. A spell of warm weather around this time is sometimes called "St Martin's Little Summer."

Martin is the patron saint of geese, horsemen, innkeepers, wine growers and makers, and against poverty and alcoholism among other things.

Churchwarden's Report

Supplemental to my previous report, I state that the tidying up of St James churchyard has been successfully completed by Oxford City Council Cemeteries Division. In addition to this we require a working party to clean the guttering around the church. This includes removing pine needles and other debris.

The Men's Breakfasts have been taken under advisement, with the possibility of changing the venue.

As regards the Old School, we are trying to acquire use of it for our parish.

All future events are advertised in The Link.

I wish you all a peaceful and happy Harvest Time in the run-up to Christmas.

Sincerely yours,

Gerald Ives, Churchwarden

Letter

I would like to thank Alice Watkins of 5th Cowley Guides for writing to tell us about their camp and their celebration day at the Cotswold Wildlife Park.

It is always good to have news of our Guides, Brownies and Rainbows from 4th or 5th Cowley. A happy Centenary Year to you all!

Maureen

Rosanne Interviews **Richard Chand**

Were you amongst the congregation in St James a few weeks ago for Richard's induction service? If so, I'm sure that like me you could not fail to be moved by the complimentary remarks from the pulpit about his tenacity on his journey towards ordination. The warm welcome extended to him by Bishop John was moving too. But most of all I got the impression at the reception after the service that Richard, his wife Rebecca, their family and friends certainly know how to party. In fact he told me that one of his favourite leisure pursuits is partying! What makes me think that he is going to fit into our parish like a hand in a glove?

It is some years now since I interviewed Revd Wazir Chand, Richard's father, and so I felt very privileged to sit in the lounge of Moore House (the pretty house next to the Church Centre) and chat to his son on your behalf.

Richard was born in the Punjab area of India and lived there with his mother and two sisters until he was three. He told me he remembers nothing of those early years and his earliest memories are of his mum, Joyce, bringing her young family to England to join her husband in Birmingham where he held a teaching post. Richard speaks enthusiastically about his childhood in the Handsworth area of Birmingham. They were very happy years with great friends, good schools and a secure Christian family life. He told me, with a grin, that as a little boy he was "a bit of a handful." However, most of his teachers were nice personalities and knew how to cope with him.

From a very early age he has been mad on all sports, especially cricket and football, and nowadays will watch any sport on TV except horse-racing. Handsworth he remembers as a quiet area where little boys could kick a ball about or set up a cricket pitch in the street. By secondary school days he had settled down a little and developed a love of history and geography. He 'grew into' science but when I enquired about maths his answer was, "Oh, no!"

While he was a student at Handsworth Secondary School his father was invited to come to Oxford to teach. The family moved to Cowley, leaving Richard behind with his grandmother in order for him to complete his GCSE exams. At seventeen, by now living with his parents, he decided to begin a career rather than join a sixth form class in Oxford. After several interviews, which resulted in offers of various posts, he plumped for the Post Office, and has been working for them ever since. He recently received recognition of thirty years service and now holds a position as a supervisor in the Central Post Office in Oxford where he works part-time. The rest of the week he works as a member of our clergy team.

After leaving school he continued his studies at evening classes taking more GCSE exams in several subjects, gaining a BTEC in business studies and qualifying as a certificated accountant. He also developed a strong interest in world affairs. He is arguably the BBC World Service's most avid listener.

He met Rebecca at a party in London and told me that they both knew almost immediately that it was 'the real thing.' Their early days together were not easy because in order to marry she would need to convert from her Hindu faith. She was living with her sister who quickly realised that the two were in love. So it was Rebecca's sister who negotiated with their family back in India. The situation was apparently smoothly resolved, Fr Wazir instructed her in the Christian faith and Richard's lovely bride was, in fact, confirmed into the Church of England on their wedding day. Richard is the proud father of two teenagers, Daniel, who is a student at Cheney School in Headington, and Elizabeth, who is reading Business Studies at De Montfort University in Leicester. So was his vocation to the ministry influenced by his father? Not so. He told me of the dramatic moment when he knew God was calling. It came in a dream in which he saw a flaming cross with a figure standing nearby. He heard a powerful voice saying, "I need you. I need you." The same dream has recurred several times since. Following what he described as a 'lean time' spiritually, it had a huge impact. He spoke to our curate at that time, Fr Simon Grigg, who gave him great encouragement, but it was Fr Ian Knowles who took him under his wing. He was confirmed in SS Mary and John Church. Fr Keith Haydon helped by organising short preparatory courses of study which led to a certificate in Theology. After a period as a licenced lay minister at St Mary's Church in Barton, he began his studies leading to ordination. Rebecca gave him complete support throughout.

He completed his course at Ripon College. In 2005 Bishop Richard Harries commissioned him to lead the Asian Christian Church in Oxford, and finally he was ordained in 2006.

He began his ministry as a curate in Barton and now here he is on the Cowley parish team. He leads his Asian flock in worship at the United Reformed Church at the moment but is in the early stages of transferring them to integrate with St James. He plans a weekly Sunday service for them at 1 pm in the parish church. I asked if there was anything else he would like our readers to know about him and this is what he said: "Tell them that since that very first dream my ministry comes from my heart."

How would you describe yourself as a small child?

Very active and cheeky.

Is there an incident in your childhood that you will never forget?

We played cricket in the road. One day my best friend and I were playing and I hit the ball and it went through someone's window. We scarpered! In the holidays when the school grounds were locked we used to climb over the fence to play football.

Has God been part of your life since childhood?

Oh yes, due to my father's and mother's faith. Our roots are in St James Church in Handsworth.

Which period of your adult life has given you the most satisfaction?

When I met Rebecca.

Are there any aspects of modern life that disappoint you?

School assemblies. The children's day needs a good start. It unifies the school in one act of worship.

What makes life good for you?

The Lord's hand in my family's and my ministry. I feel we still need to

sort out the pick'n'mix culture in our society – take what suits you and forget what doesn't.

What do you enjoy doing in your leisure time?

Watching films with the family. I love to watch sport on TV – also news, current affairs – also visiting friends, especially parties.

Do you have a treasured possession?

Apart from my mobile, my old radio.

If you were not doing what you are doing now, what would you choose?

I would like to live in a bungalow in the country with Rebecca.

Looking to the future, what do you hope to be doing in ten years' time?

I want to leave the Asian Church in good vibrant shape. My successor could take a strong active church.

Notes from the October meeting of the PCC

The Revd Richard Chand was welcomed to this, his first meeting of Cowley PCC.

Rosanne Butler was welcomed to report on behalf of the editorial team about recent developments regarding the Chronicle. She asked the PCC to consider the possibility of selling advertising space. After discussion it was agreed that two members should meet with the editors to establish terms of reference.

Joan urgently needs the help of a volunteer to work along with her in her tasks as Treasurer.

PCC members were very pleased and relieved that St Christopher's School is no longer under threat of closure and discussed ways in which

we might support them. Members are very worried about the state of our finances. A Gift Day was suggested to help our immediate need, but in the longer term we need individuals to increase the level of their regular giving. The possibility of establishing a Friends group is also being explored.

Reports were received from St James and St Francis Churches.

The Asian Anglican Church continues to hold its Sunday services at the URC for the time being.

Lesley presented the policy on Child Protection and Criminal Records which was accepted unanimously.

A November Invitation

There will be several opportunities for each of us to attend a meeting at which we will think about our purposes as a church, and how we might contribute to the fulfilment of those purposes.

The times and locations of the meetings are as follows:

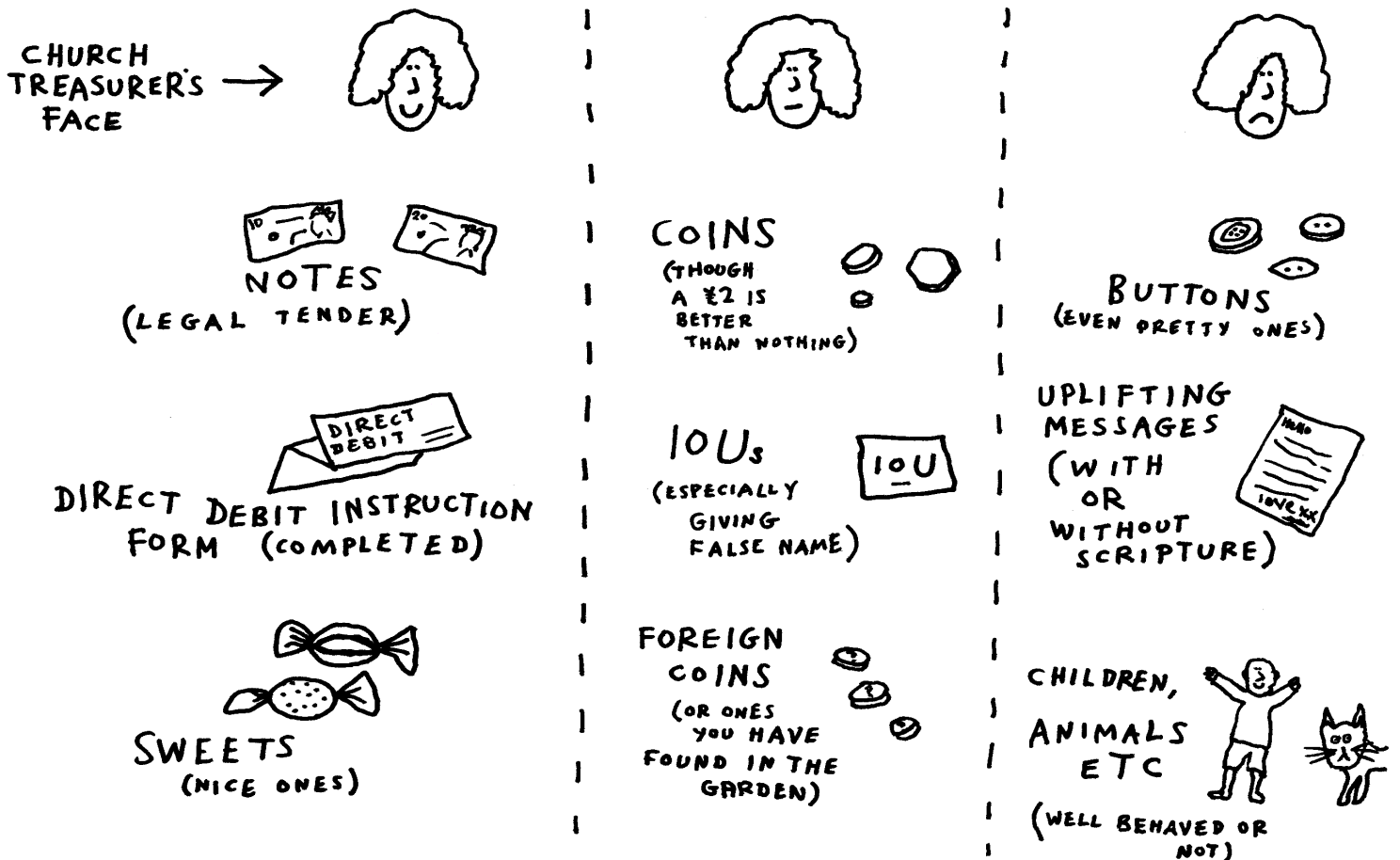
Wednesday, 11 November at 2:30 pm	Host: Joan Coleman, 95 Crescent Road
Thursday, 12 November at 2:30 pm	Host: Joyce Titchell, 15 Rupert Road
Sunday 15 November at 11:45 am	St Francis Church
Tuesday 17 November at 7:30 pm	Host: Norah Shallow, 108 Leiden Road
Wednesday 18 November at 2:30 pm	Host: Chris Woodman, 43 Littlemore Road

These meetings will be followed by a Pledge Sunday on Sunday, 22 November, when we will be encouraged to pledge our support of God's work through St Francis and St James churches, through regular giving over the coming year.

Please give some thought and prayer to this matter, and come to one of the meetings.

THE COLLECTION

WHAT SHOULD YOU PUT IN?



A Calling to Nature and a Calling to God

It is a well-known fact that our Lord often calls the most unlikely people to do his work. Bramwell Evans was just such a person, for he was a true Romany Gypsy – and came from a Romany family – not one of these imitation Travellers we see nowadays. The difference with Bramwell's background was that his parents were not only Romany Gypsies, but also fine and committed Christians – an unusual combination. They did much evangelical and mission work in many areas. Bramwell followed in their footsteps, and was also a committed Christian. He found his calling quite late in life, when he

was ordained a Methodist minister – serving mostly in the Midlands and the North of England.

However he also had another calling – as a naturalist, and this was to make him famous and well-loved by people from all walks of life – particularly young people. Perhaps it was his background that gave him his close affiliation to nature and knowledge of wildlife. Yet he also had the rare ability to communicate this to others in an attractive and effectual way.

He started by writing a regular nature column for one of the larger national newspapers. Then he was headhunted by the BBC to do a regular slot in their famous 'Children's Hour' programmes. He chose the simple name of 'Romany' and his programme, 'Out with Romany,' became very well known. It was first broadcast from the north from BBC's Manchester studios. However, it quickly became so popular that it was put out nation-wide.

His simple formula of short journeys into the countryside, with his commentary and information given in a rich deep voice, worked tremendously well, both with young and older listeners. He never talked down to people and his information was given in a gentle and natural way. His deep knowledge of all wildlife shone through very clearly. Also his love of all creatures, whether fur, fish, or feather, was very evident. He was broadcasting during the war years when people realised that they didn't know much about the wildlife on their doorstep, and feared that they might lose much of it through hostile action.

When he died quite suddenly in 1943 at no great age, the BBC was besieged by hundreds of callers expressing extreme grief. He brought the countryside right into our homes. He was a man to be honoured.

Editor's note: Apparently Romany's vardo (caravan) can be seen in the Romany Memorial Garden in Wilmslow. Anyone who would like to share their memories of Romany, or know more about him, might be interested in The Romany Society, 62 Thornton Avenue, Macclesfield, SK11 7XL.

Autumn Holiday 2009

A very enjoyable holiday at Boscombe was had by all although the weather was not very kind to us. The hotel was excellent, including the food. On Wednesday a trip to the Isle of Wight and a tour of Osborne House was very interesting. The crossing over was very smooth in spite of the weather.

Thursday a day trip to Beaulieu was lovely; the sun shone for us all day; the Motor Museum is a place worth visiting.

On Friday we started our journey home, calling in at Bournemouth on the way; umbrellas very much in use again.

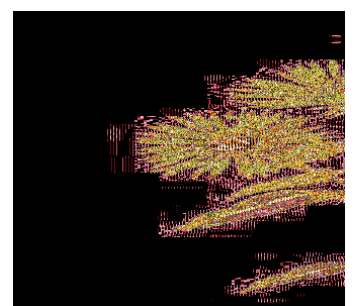
Next year Barbara has a provisional booking for the 20th to 24th September at the same hotel. Please support our parish holidays.

Harvest Supper

On Saturday 10 October, 42 friends of St James and St Francis spent a pleasant evening at the Harvest Supper. It was another occasion when we could all get together for a good chat and catch up with one another. It is such a lovely time of year and the Michaelmas daisies were prominent in vases on the tables together with touches of Autumn by way of cones and conkers from nearby trees.

The raffle raised £48 and this money is being put toward refurbishing the hatch in the Centre. Wood is being placed on the wall underneath the opening as it is becoming marked. Dave Stanley has kindly agreed to do this for us. Thank you for supporting another happy event.

The Catering Team



Holiday with a difference in the south of France!

A Rocha, meaning “the Rock” in Portuguese, is a Christian environmental charity started in Portugal in 1983 by an Anglican pastor and his wife. It has centres all over the world and works through education and direct conservation to raise awareness of and concern for the environment.

It was with a fair amount of trepidation that I volunteered with a group from Christ Church Abingdon (through a local Christian environment group called sage) to assist in renovating a property called Les Courmettes that A Rocha France has recently acquired. It is situated about an hour from Nice in a 600 hectare estate ranging from 800m high and rising to a 1200m mountain overlooking the Cote d’Azur – how could I resist?

We went to bed every night to the sound of the red deer rut and crickets chirping! Every day a herd of goats from the local goat farm passed through the grounds.

I had gone prepared to garden but after a couple of days hacking back overgrown roses I resorted to the more exciting job of digging in goal posts and laying a concrete slab – I have discovered a new joy of mixing mortar!

The house of Les Courmettes has an interesting history as does the surrounding countryside with ancient archaeological and Roman remains.

We shared communal meals (including home made pizzas cooked in a traditional 200 year old bread oven) with the current community and had a wonderful experience worshipping one night overlook-



A ROCHA

Christians in Conservation
ing the whole of the Cote d’Azur.

The aim is to use the centre to encourage people to visit for a day or longer, enjoy the local countryside and catch some of A Rocha’s vision and hence understand God’s care for creation and His created beings.

Unfortunately like most charities, A Rocha is suffering from lack of funds; the small resident community members are not paid and thus need to supplement their work at A Rocha by working outside or have to move on. Presently there are only two French couples, a man and a long term volunteer. We were lucky enough to meet Les Courmettes’ newest addition; Levi, the two-day-old baby of one of the couples.

I was touched by the people I met and new friends I made notwithstanding the beautiful scenery, unfamiliar animals, birds and reptiles.

If you would like a holiday with a difference or indeed feel called to volunteer somewhere different do speak to me or look at A Rocha’s website.

Susie Pavelin

Mothers’ Union News

Mothers’ UNION
Christian care for families

Our September meeting saw Clare Edwards speaking about the administration and background of Helen and Douglas House. Because of her role in the management of the two hospices her talk was wide ranging and included details such as fund-raising initiatives, caring and even the decor of the new areas. One of our long-standing members remarked as Clare finished that it was the best talk we’ve ever had. Our sincere thanks to her for sparing the time to come in the middle of her busy working life and family life too.

Having said that we are looking forward to the Sub-dean of Christ Church Cathedral’s visit this month and the return of Mark Oxbrow in November. We certainly seem to have succeeded in booking some very able speakers this year.

The M.U. Christmas party for members and friends will be on December 21st. This is always a fun afternoon with carols, Christmas readings (Biblical and secular) and lovely seasonal food. We are looking for lifts for some of our housebound members – any volunteers? Please!

Joy Harbison

News from St Francis

Our two main events at St Francis recently have been our Patronal Festival, presided over by Howard, and a week later the baptism of our rector's daughter, young Otilie Rose, presided over by our Archdeacon. Both were very happy and relaxed occasions.

The bring and share lunch on St Francis Day seemed to be enjoyed by all who stayed on after the service to take part in it. As usual, it was a chance to have a good chat and get to know one another better.

Young Otilie was in fine form for her baptism, and seemed to enjoy every moment of it. After the ceremony, she wanted to go walkabout from time to time, and had to be rescued and returned to the bosom of her family. And although we had quite a number of youngsters milling about at the time, the Archdeacon kept a firm hand on the service and moved it on smoothly and quickly, so that it didn't seem overlong. At the end of it all, we were treated to slices of a beautiful fruit cake baked specially for the occasion, which went down well with a cup of tea.

I'm sure we wish Otilie every happiness in her future life. We know that she will be in good capable hands with Susannah and Fergus as her parents.

John Shreeve

News from St Christopher's School

St Christopher's School set up a Garden Club two years ago to improve the school and grounds and involve the children in their care. A Courtyard area made about 15 years ago had become colourless and full of weeds and dead plants.

The first year, 11 children joined the club where they grew flowers and vegetables from seed; this was to allow the children to understand how things grow and change.

The "Gardening Club" joined the Royal Horticultural Society Club and received a small grant from a local Science Trust and from B

& Q; we used this to buy tools, seeds, compost and shelves.

This year 36 children joined the club and the whole school joined in to grow vegetables.

The Gardening Club entered "Oxford in Bloom" both in 2008 and 2009. In 2008 the children were invited to attend the awards ceremony held at Roman Way and were thrilled when it was announced that St. Christopher's C of E Primary School had won Gold in the category of "Best Schools Environmental Project". This year the children were again invited to attend the ceremony and were thrilled and very excited

when it was announced that the school had for the second year running been awarded Gold in "Best Schools Environmental Project".

The competition provides a great incentive to the children but the experience of watching the seeds grow into amazing varieties of flowers and vegetables is for the children the greatest reward. It gives the children an understanding of where food and plants come from – not just from the supermarket.

Mrs Sue Johnson

Reception Class Teacher, Teacher in charge of the Gardening Club



November Harvest

Come for a walk around my garden this month. We live on a corner so there are distinct areas, most of which are easily seen, except where my shrubs obscure the view.

We can start with the back triangle which is private and most secluded. Here I grow my tomatoes, seedlings and cuttings. Here too is the cold frame, still in need of its new coat! This is the area which The Man of the House uses for his deck chair! The grass (lawn?) is getting smaller as the soil encroaches further onto the grass. This is one job for the winter – to make a proper edge for the border. This walk will show rather a lot of jobs, I fear.

The front of the house I usually refer to as my jungle to suit my tabby cat. Alan has just trimmed the lilac and allowed more light in. He has made a good job of it – anyone need the prunings? The garden needs a good tidy up and some feed. I think that I shall remove most of the Iris foetidus which is doing very well so that I can plant more hellebores. (I have three waiting for permanent homes.) The solidago (golden rod) is also too happy and will be cut by half when the seed heads stop looking good. The white phlox will be cut down and the roots dug up and replanted in smaller pieces to revive it and produce more plants for our plant sale (if we have one again). What eats the leaves of the berberis every year? All three now are completely bare. (No, it isn't because it's autumn!)

The side front garden is overhung by two flowering plums and a rosa rubrifolia. One of the plums desperately needs pruning to revive it and keep it safe – maybe next spring when the sap rises! The raspberries need to be cut down and the new shoots tied in. It surprises me each year where the new shoots come up. Some slow release fertiliser may help here, unless I leave it until the spring. If there is enough compost, I will mulch the new shoots to keep them damp and protected.

The vegetable garden – what a mess! Weedy strawberries etc. Usually I cut the strawberries down after fruiting, but this year I failed. The whole bed is now awash with forget-me-nots and teasels. The phlomis has collapsed over them as well. The Autumn sedum has collapsed outwards. After flowering, and when the new shoots just start to come, I shall dig them up and split them, replanting them with some home made compost and more space (more plants for the sale!)

Rest assured, this is not all. No way shall I be idle this month. Somebody whispered to me that a Craft Sale and Christmas are also in the diary. Nonsense! I haven't got time for them! The peonies need cutting down and the leaves used to protect the crowns. Bulbs must still be planted, especially the tulips, and maybe broad beans and sweet peas sown. I may keep the seeds in the cold frame if I ever get round to washing it and putting the new plastic on. Grass still to cut.... I must not write anything else – I am getting into a panic... and I used to think that an allotment would be nice!

Diana Pope

From the Parish Registers

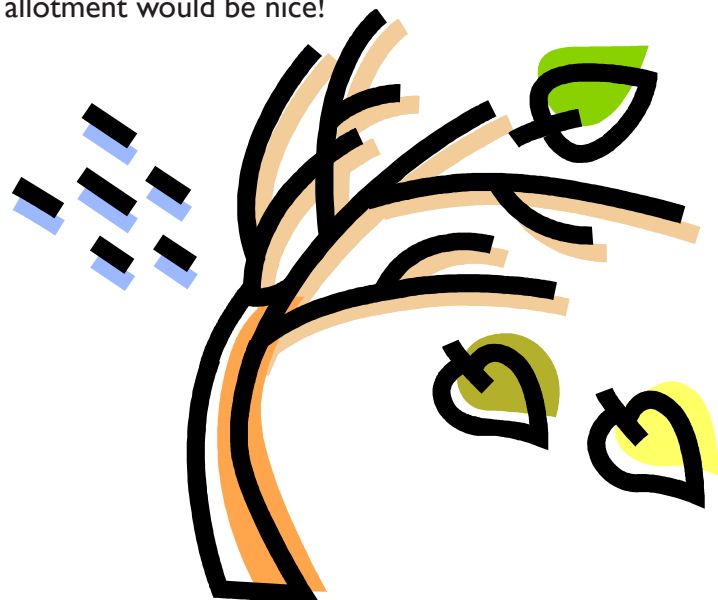
Baptisms

11 October

Amelia & Aidan Saxton
Ottilie Rose Campbell-Reide

Funerals

5 October Barbara Haren



Something Sweet for a Chilly Day

This recipe originates from a Guide friend whose camp name was Sigma; she was known as Siggy to the girls. Our children loved this cake and always called it Siggy cake. Its official title was "Chocolate Layer Cake."

It should be cut fairly thinly with a sharp knife

Una

Siggy Cake

Ingredients

- 1 packet plain or digestive biscuits
- 4oz margarine
- 3oz cocoa
- 3oz sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 egg

Method

Mix together all ingredients except for biscuits and margarine.

Melt the margarine and add to the mixture.

Line a lunch box or loaf tin with greaseproof paper.

Spread with a layer of chocolate; then layer with biscuits.

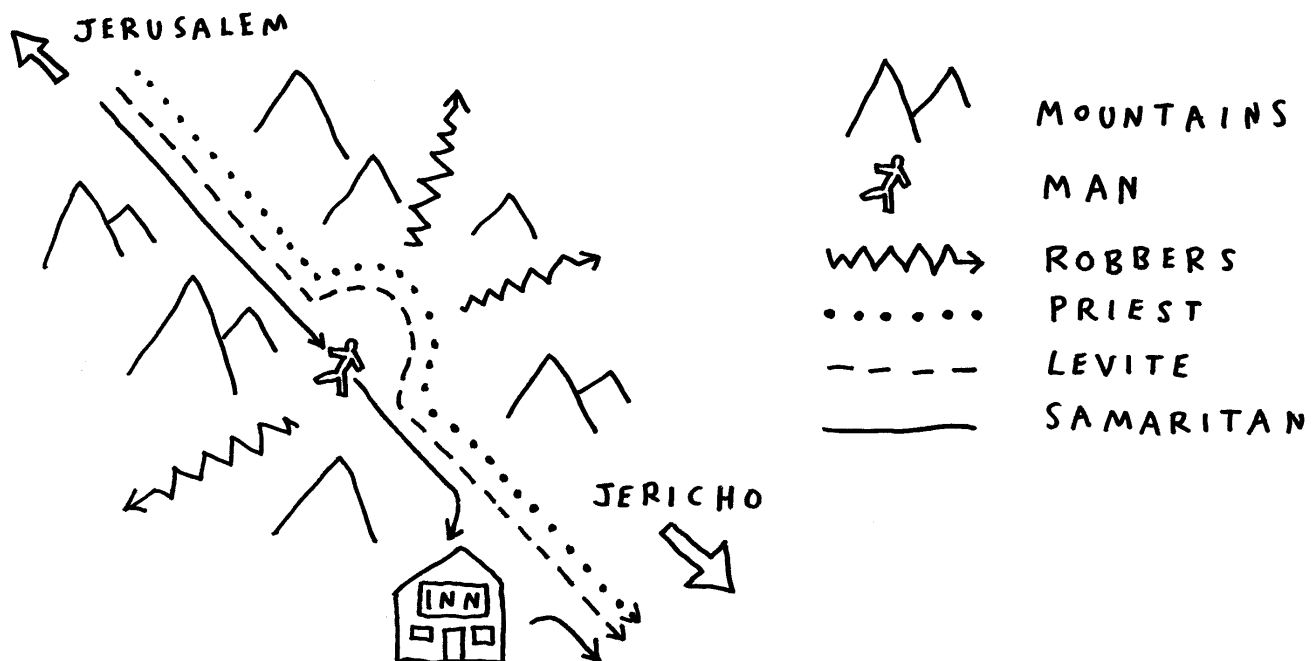
Alternate these layers, finishing with a layer of chocolate.

Refrigerate.

Slice with sharp knife to serve.



THE GOOD SAMARITAN



News from St Francis School

The following pieces were written by pupils after a trip to St Francis Church.

The children also wrote some prayers.



On Friday 9th October we walked to St Francis church where we sang *From the tiny ant* and *When your Father made the world*.

Reverend Susannah talked about St Francis and how St Francis was fascinated about how God made the world and all the animals. We prayed and went through the stages of his life. We also talked about how St Francis wanted to follow God and Jesus. We also sang Thank you Lord.

Abigail

On Friday 9th October we walked over to St Francis Church for our School Assembly. Reverend Susannah told us about all the different animals. We prayed a lot and sang a few songs. The songs were: '*From the tiny ant*' '*When your father made the world*' and our own version of '*Thank You Lord*'. She also talked about Saint Francis and the decoration in the church of Jesus.

Thank you from St Francis School.

Karis

Dear God,
Thank you for all our lovely animals from small to big. Please help us to look after our beautiful green planet. So we do not pollute it and instead we want it to thrive with all the wonderful animals and plants.

Amen

Dear Lord,
Thank you for all of your lovely animals and the whole human race and help us to keep our planet safe.

Amen

Luan

Thank you God for the animals that roar.
Thank you for the water that flows.
Thank you for the plants that grow
Thank you for fantastic nature.

Amen

Oliver

Dear God ,
Thank you for all the interesting animals you brought into our world.
We appreciate all the lovely plants and creatures you put in our care.
We wish that everyone would look after these brilliant things. So that people many years to come can see the world as we do today.

Amen

Nyah and Tia

A CHRISTMAS GIFT

Do you think it's too early for us to mention Christmas? In "my" shop I'm trying to avoid starting it too early, but since this is the last issue before our deluxe Christmas edition, I'd like to invite you to share some Christmas memories with other readers. I've looked at all the Christmas Chronicles published this century(!) and discovered that in that time, we haven't asked you to tell us about your best-ever Christmas gift.

We'd love to hear about a favourite Christmas gift that you've given or received, and why it was precious. As a special treat to thank you for sharing, we'll make a draw from all the stories submitted, and one lucky writer will receive a gift from Dave Walker, who is the cartoonist featured each month. I can't wait to read your stories!

Carol



IN HONOUR OF WORLD AIDS DAY

CANON BRIAN MOUNTFORD

INVITES YOU TO

“BREAKFAST WITH THE BISHOP OF OXFORD”

THE RIGHT REV'D JOHN PRITCHARD

TO MARK THE LAUNCH OF AN HIV/AIDS PROGRAMME AS PART OF THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD'S
PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DIOCESE OF KIMBERLEY AND KURUMAN

SATURDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2009
THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH,
ST MARY THE VIRGIN, OXFORD



PLEASE DIRECT ANY QUERIES TO:

THE REV'D CHARLOTTE BANNISTER-PARKER
TEL: 01865 557947
EMAIL: CHARLOTTE@THE6BPS.CO.UK

ALL WELCOME
10AM TO 11.30AM
COFFEE & CROISSANTS



Buy a bus stop for Christmas

Churches across the UK are being invited to buy the advertising space on their local bus stops in the run-up to Christmas. The church-sponsored bus shelter would then carry a special poster of the nativity with the message **'Christmas Starts with Christ'** and would be displayed over the last three weeks of December 2009.

It is hoped that a total of 2000 bus shelter ad spaces will be bought. By visiting www.ChurchAds.net and entering the church postcode, churches can buy bus shelters for just £105.

Recent research by Theos reveals that 85% of people agree that 'Christmas should be called Christmas because we are still a Christian country'. But, research also shows that only 12% of adults know the facts of the Christmas story in any detail.

The bus shelter posters feature a painting by the renowned artist Andrew Gadd, depicting the traditional nativity scene in a modern-day equivalent of a stable – a bus shelter. Radio commercials cleverly and light-heartedly set the nativity in the context of a soccer match, a horse race, a police car chase and the Christmas pop chart countdown.



Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist
Every fourth Sunday:	<i>Church at the Centre</i>
Every third Sunday:	<i>Sunday Lunch</i>

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am Parish Eucharist

Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	2.30 pm	Parish Mothers' Union – St James (3rd Mon)
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
Tuesday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	10.00 am	Seashells Toddler Group : St James
	12.00 pm	Eucharist – St James
	12.30 pm	Tuesday Lunch Club – St James
	2.30 pm	Friends of St Francis – St Francis (2nd & 4th)
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
Wednesday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
Thursday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
Friday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James

**The Parish of Cowley office
in St James Church Centre is
open**

Tuesday 12.30 pm to 3 pm
Friday 9.00 am to 3 pm
and by appointment.

Parish Secretary:
Elaine Ulett

Ministry Team Telephone:
01865 747 680
parishofcowley@hotmail.co.uk

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Revd Howard Thornton
Cowley Rectory
11 Beauchamp Lane
Oxford OX4 3LF
Howard has Friday as his day off.

Team Vicar
Revd Susannah Reide
27 Don Bosco Close
Oxford OX4 2LD
Susannah has Monday as her day
off.

Non-Stipendiary Ministers
Revd Canon Mark Oxbrow
13 Annesley Road
Oxford, OX4 4JH
Tel: 01865 461953
markoxbrow@aol.com

Revd Amanda Bloor
Diocesan Church House
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Gerald Ives
Tel: 07972 833 060
Norah Shallow
Tel: 765199

Deputy Wardens:
Margaret Martin Tel: 718532
Pat Chung: Tel: 773792

www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk