

What's so important about Easter?

A series of events almost 2,000 years changed the course of human history. A young man from an obscure province in the Roman empire ran up against the most powerful government of his day. He was put on trial, found guilty of crimes he had not committed, and put to death in the most cruel circumstances. Extraordinarily, three days later he did something considered impossible, in his day and in ours. Although he had died, he came back from the grave and was seen by a few followers at first, and then by crowds of people.

What's so important about Easter? It proved Jesus was who he claimed to be – God in the flesh, come to earth to rescue us.

On Palm Sunday we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It was a welcome fit for a king. Thousands came out to see him, waving palm crosses and shouting, "Hosannah!" They spread their cloaks on the ground as a sign of honour. Yet within a week Jesus was put on trial (actually 6 trials) and the same crowds called for his execution.

On the night before he died Jesus was brought before Annas, Caiaphas (high priest), the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court of Israel), Pilate (Roman governor of Jerusalem), Herod (governor of Galilee), and then back to Pilate. Witnesses brought trumped up charges, but at the end of all the trials and questions and witnesses they found he had done nothing wrong. Finally they convicted him on one count: that he claimed to be the Son of God.

In a sense Jesus Christ is still on trial to Mere Christianity, CS Lewis makes this statement. "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said (about being the Son of God) ... would either be a lunatic – on the level with a man who says he is a poached

egg – or he would be the devil of hell. You must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us."

Jesus claimed to be the Saviour of the world. In John 12:47, he is recorded as saying: "I didn't come to judge the world. I came to save it." He claimed to be the "bread of life." He claimed to be the "light of the world." He said if you believe in him you would have eternal life.

"Easter proved Jesus was who he claimed to be – God in the flesh,"

Jesus allowed himself to be put on trial so there would be no doubt about who he was. He knew he would be proven guilty and put on the cross – but he allowed it to happen. It was all part of the plan.

If you saw Mel Gibson's The Passion of Christ or read articles about how crucifixion works, you will have some idea about how excruciating a death Jesus suffered. It was so horrific that the Romans passed a law that said no Roman citizen could be put to death that way.

Why did he do it? Why did he suffer death on the cross? He died so that we might have life. The first Bible verse I memorised was John 3:16, "God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only son, Jesus, so that everyone who trusted in him might have the gift of eternal life."

After Jesus died, they took his body down and put him in the tomb, and a giant millstone was set in front of

Chronicle

continued on page 2.

Cowley Team Ministry
March 2010

Editors' Letter

As you receive your March Chronicle we shall still be into Fairtrade Fortnight. The Big Brew at St James made 74.70 so far, with a bit more expected to come in. If you would like to do something more for Fairtrade Fortnight, they're asking people to support The Big Swap, swapping at least one item for its Fairtrade equivalent – a bunch of bananas, a pair of new cotton socks, or a cup of tea or coffee. "Use your wallet to make a stand" is their slogan. You can register your swap online at www.fairtrade.org.uk/thebigswap/register_your_swap_here.aspx

We have had responses from a number of tea companies who support Fairtrade. They are quite interesting. Typhoo trades with two estates fully committed to the movement including one in Malawi which has introduced good working terms, conditions, wages and even housing and clean water for their workers.

Yorkshire Tea says it respects the ethical trade of The Fairtrade

Foundation and pays 70% higher prices than the minimum price required by Fairtrade. The company is also committed to the Ethical Tea Partnership (ETA) implementing direct support projects for their growers. The makers of P.G Tips say that by 2010 all the tea grown for their brand will be from sustainable sources, and are proud of the fact that the scale and benefits of the Rainforest Alliance for farmers and their families is a large part of their policy. They also bear allegiance to fair prices. Twinings was a founding member of ETA which is not only committed to the growers but tea packers as well. The company quotes the standards it adheres to in the ETA. So you see, tea growers and coffee growers too are mainly getting a fair deal.

What then are we to do about our British farmers? I am still uncomfortable at being able to buy two litres of milk in Iceland for £1 when dairy farmers are receiving less than it costs to

produce their milk. Andrew Smith M.P has put our case to the government after we wrote to him but nothing appears to have changed. There, that's that. Now let's talk about the weather – Ughh! It seems to us that this dreary winter has dragged on too long.

Do you remember as a small child having a selection of pretty coloured plasticine to play with? As long as the colours were kept separate they were lovely to use. But gradually they got all mixed up and you finished with a lump of greyish modelling clay, and no matter how hard you tried, everything you made looked dull.

The lovely bright colours of Christmas, the sparkling snow and the frosty blue skies have all finished up in a February that looked like a lump of grey plasticine. Roll on March with its spring flowers and baby birds.

God Bless.

Rosanne and Carol

Rector's Letter continued from page 1.

the cave because the religious leaders worried that Jesus' body might be stolen. They didn't want him coming out. But of course, he did.

It's important to remember that Easter is not a memorial to a nice guy, or a good religious teacher who lived 2,000 years ago. It's a celebration of the fact that he is alive today. I'm living proof – and so are the approximately 1 billion Christians who will celebrate Easter this year.

"... by being raised from the dead he was proved to be the mighty Son of God, with the holy nature of God himself." (Romans 1:4, LB)

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, sceptics and critics mocked him. "If you're the Son of God, why don't you come down from that cross and show that

you're really God?" But Jesus proved he was God, who would suffer for us, and die on the cross, and three days later he was alive. That was far better proof of the legitimacy of his claims.

What's your verdict? Just as Pilate asked, "What shall I do then with Jesus who is called the Christ?" you also must decide who he was. Is he God? Or is he a lunatic or a liar? If he is who he says he is, how then will you live?

If you want to think more about the life, trial, and death of Jesus, come to one of the services of Holy Week. I especially recommend Palm Sunday (28 March), Maundy Thursday (1 April), Good Friday (2 April) and of course Easter Day (4 April).

Howard

Snowdrop Weekends

February is always such a dreary month and February 2010 was no exception – all that snow, deep frosts at night and cold, sleety days. So the task of organising our snowdrop days at St James seemed sometimes quite a chore. Drawing up welcomers' rotas, encouraging kind people to make cakes, and setting up a tea shop in church, to say nothing of gazing anxiously at the aconites and snowdrops in case they don't make a proper show for the visitors, sometimes seemed a bit too much.

And yet, when the weekends happen they are such fun and oh, so worthwhile. The posters this year (thanks, Howard!) were spectacularly good. We were featured on BBC Television and on Radio Oxford, and were advertised in the Oxford Mail, and all that publicity brought in the visitors.

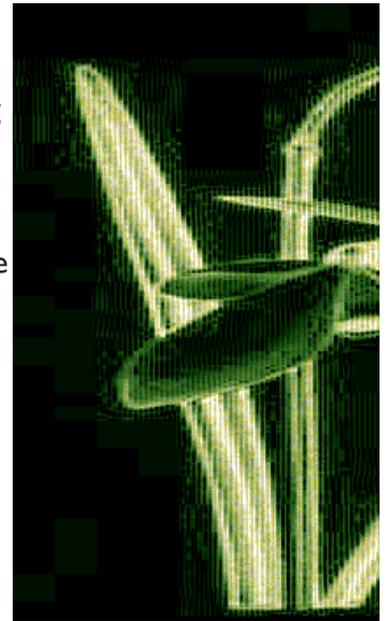
The donated cakes demonstrated the high skill of baking that thrives in our parish. The two organ recitals given by Brian Tidy were delightful. The church was warm and inviting and even the flowers did their best against all sorts of bitter winds and weather. We had a full complement of welcomers, and David Cook made some lovely packs of greetings cards from his excellent photographs.

And what of the visitors? Well, what fun they were and how thrilled most of them were to visit the

church. I met two couples, each of whom married at St James 56 years ago and another couple, with their children, who had tied the knot eleven years ago. The affection for St James' church was written all over their faces. One gentleman, recently widowed, remembered coming to St James as a youngster; another chap told me a wonderful story about Canon Whye; and a young man who lives in Beauchamp Lane said that since he has arrived in the area he has always found the church locked. One person came in looking for somewhere to pray. He was made so welcome that he has begun attending our weekly services.

There are quite a few more tales to tell. So you see, all the planning makes snowdrop days very worthwhile.

A big "thank you" is due everyone who helped in so many ways. The donations, and sale of cards and church guides, amounted to the wonderful sum of £133. What a way to cheer up two February weekends!



Templars Square Tenants and Residents Association (TRA)

As I recall the TRA has been in existence for about 12-15 years and I have been a member for much of this period. For a time, I took on the role of Secretary, recording the minutes of meetings. I also represented Templars Square TRA for the Oxford Tenants Panel held in the Town Hall formed in the late 1990s. This panel has since been disbanded and replaced by another association with a new title.

The Templars Square TRA initially met bi-monthly and has since switched to quarterly meetings. We abide by a Code of Conduct. Coverage is for Hockmore Tower, the flats above the shops in Pound Way and Pound House.

Complaints are aired about misbehaving occupants and suggestions raised for the improvement of the buildings, etc.

We meet in the Centre Management Meeting Room of Templars Square, usually accompanied by the Centre Manager, Aaron Bayliss, Val Churchill, Tenants Participation Officer (Oxford City Council) and if available an Estate Manager, all for liaison purposes. The TRA Chair is Audrey Baughan.

Prior to Christmas or early in the New Year we have a little party. Our next meeting is Monday, 10 May 2010 at 6.30 pm.

I have been asked to resume the post of Secretary, to which I have agreed.

Gerald Ives, Church Warden

First, I have to make a sincere apology to our former branch leader Pat Chung. Last month I reported that she had served our branch for six years when in fact, she was leader for nine years. Sorry, Pat, for selling you short.

Now I must report, sadly, of the death of one of our enthusiastic and devoted members, Jean Cox. Jean worked for many years on MU stalls raising funds for both the parish and our branch. She was an exquisite knitter and donated beautiful garments for our Christmas and summer markets. And many of our readers will remember her gorgeous homemade fruit cakes. We send our love and condolences to Arthur and the family.

Our March meeting on Monday 15th will be a quiet reflective afternoon for Lent. Tony Beetham has kindly agreed to lead this, so we know it will be a

very rewarding time and we will be happy to welcome anyone who would like to join us.

I remind both members and their friends that we intend to celebrate the festival of our patron saint, St George, with our annual lunch in the Church Centre on 19th April. More information about this next month, but do put the date in your diaries.

Finally, I would like to congratulate members on collecting enough funds to offer the Make a Mother's Day scheme a "Bandage up the World" package. The project provides resources and trains carers throughout the world to go to people's homes, and help people to take care of themselves, stay healthy, keep on track with their medicine and stay positive as they live with their condition. They work in areas where there are HIV/AIDS, malaria and other serious infections.

SAINT OF THE MONTH St Joseph

Saint Joseph is recorded in the Gospels as the husband of Mary, mother of Jesus. Very little is known about him; we don't know when or where he was born or died. He lived in Nazareth before Jesus' birth, spent time in exile in Egypt, and lived for a time in Bethlehem. He was a worker in wood, or stone – the word for his work is not as specific as our word, carpenter, but that is how we often refer to him.

But we do know some important truths about him. God trusted him. He had the responsibility of caring for Jesus and his mother in a dangerous time. He trusted God and obeyed him, taking Mary as his wife, leading his young family to refuge in a foreign country when an angel told him they were in danger, and waiting there until God let him know it was safe for them to return.

He was not a wealthy man – when he went to the Temple with Jesus

and Mary, he could not afford a lamb for sacrifice, but only two doves or pigeons. But he was descended from royalty – his ancestor was King David.

He doesn't appear in any of the bible's stories about Jesus in adulthood, and many historians believe he may have died before Jesus' public ministry began.

St. Joseph is celebrated on 19 March. He is the patron saint of many countries and causes, including carpenters, families, and social justice.

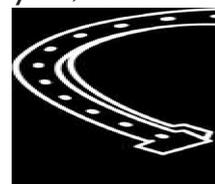
The Gospels do not record a single word spoken by Joseph. But they contain many examples of how he listened to God, and then completely altered his life and that of his family, in obedience to God's word. How willing are we to listen to God, and act on what we believe him to be telling us?

Curiouser and curiouser

I don't know whether it is oral history or whether there is documentary evidence, but the Reverend Georgie Moore, Rector of Cowley from 1875 to 1928, is said to have buried a favourite horse in the far corner of the churchyard of St James. He was a real character, apparently, and famous for all kinds of irascible and eccentric behaviour.

Last autumn, that corner of the churchyard was cleared of a lot of ivy and other vegetation to clear the 19 iron crosses marking military burials. With these was found a smaller iron marker inscribed COB 8th April 1886. Could this be the horse burial? A cob is a horse that would probably have been used to pull a trap or float but I would have thought that if it was an animal favoured enough to bury in the churchyard, it would have a particular name. Any ideas, anyone?

Joan Coleman



Do We Care?

Last month's article "How to make Cowley Parish (even) better" has prompted one of our correspondents to compile her own list of ideas which we will present to you in a moment. Before we do, though, we must point out that the emphasis on making and/or saving money has been a rather intrusive priority recently. Slipping into the red has been a real issue and without proper financial stability very little of our other parish work would be possible.

However, there are issues which we can now address since the cushion of security that comes from a balanced bank account is now a reality. So here are some more ideas on how to make Cowley (even) better. Would you like to consider taking up any of the following?

- Help in a charity shop
- Make a regular visit to someone elderly, housebound, or lonely
- Offer to change library books for someone who is housebound
- Tidy up someone's garden
- Shop regularly for someone who needs help
- Knit garments for the charity Children in Distress
- Provide wool for those who knit
- Save pennies for the Rehabilitation Centre in Cameroon
- Volunteer to help at the Child Contact Centre which meets in John Bunyan Hall (Pat Curtis has details)
- Train to provide a footcare service for the elderly (Age Concern has details)
- Offer car lifts for non-drivers for hospital appointments
- Volunteer as a driver or befriender for Archway (Chris Hurdley has details)
- Train as a bereavement counsellor
- Tutor a child or student in an subject you know
- Offer a single mother childcare for an evening out
- Offer a busy couple childcare for an evening out

Some of these suggestions require a listening ear to identify the need or passing on information that you might have to the right person. Caring seems to be the main issue here, doesn't it? So Chronicle readers, over to you, and if there are more suggestions out there do let us know.

Rosanne and Carol

News from the Schools

St Francis C.E. School

This term the children have continued developing their skills and knowledge through a range of exciting activities.

All the children in Years One and Two visited St. Francis Church to learn more about places of Christian worship. It was lovely for the children to see the Reverend Susannah in her church, as she regularly visits the school to lead our assemblies.

Key Stage Two had a Kite Day during which they wrote poetry, learned maths and made their own kites that they then flew in the school grounds.

The week beginning the 8th February was our school's International Week. Each class studied the geography, customs and culture of a different country. The children were able to share what they had learned by performing, songs, dances, art work, needlecraft and writing at the whole school assembly on Thursday. Many parts of the world were represented, including France, Italy, Hungary, Australia, South Africa, Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana, China and India. On Thursday, Key Stage Two pupils took their St Francis passport to a different classroom to visit and learn about another country. During the week many children were able to share information about their family's home country.

On Friday we celebrated the wonderful diversity within the school, as many children wore traditional costumes from their family's home country. After school on Friday families came into school to sample a fantastic spread of international food, which was prepared by parents.



Rosanne Interviews **Jonathan Walker**

This month I want to introduce a young man who is a newcomer to our neighbourhood, and who is going to have a big influence in the parish. At least that is the plan, because he is the new headteacher at Cowley St James School. I'm sure readers will be fully aware of the impact that a Head and his (or her) staff can have on an area and upon, not just their pupils, but entire families. It's reassuring, then, to learn that Jonny (as he likes to be called) is a Christian with firm views on the ethical as well as educational standards of his school. This makes him sound rather sombre and unapproachable, but not so. He is a person with a ready smile, and to see him praising his young pupils for their successes, be they large or quite small, soon confirms what a pleasant personality he certainly is.

The day I called at the school to chat to him, Jonny invited me to sit in on his celebration assembly, an invitation I accepted with much pleasure. (You can take the teacher out of school but you can't take the school out of the teacher). So what were we celebrating? Jonny was giving out half-termly certificates to praiseworthy pupils who had succeeded in all kinds of ways. I wish you could have seen the little ones swell with pride as they were handed their certificates for "trying really hard to be polite" or "lining up particularly well" or "being a good friend at playtime". You see now what I was talking about earlier – kindness, self-respect and responsibility go hand-in-hand with fluent reading and learning multiplication tables.

However, what of Jonny as a person? To begin with, let me explain that he is quite a young headteacher, whose first headship was at a small village school at Lewknor on the edge of the Chilterns. He told me he applied for the post at Church Cowley St James because the area is so different from a village community and he felt ready to meet the challenge of such an ethnic mix of children. Although he has only been in his new post since Christmas, he told me, with one of his smiles, that he can see the "green shoots" of change which he is hoping to bring.

Born in High Wycombe, he has a twin sister and an elder brother. All three of them attended their local primary school. He describes himself as a bright, well-behaved boy who was given responsibilities. He was a creative child. His one pet dislike was sport. This presented quite a problem when he passed his 11+ exam to attend High Wycombe Royal Grammar School where prowess in sport, particularly rugby, was highly rated. Still he achieved good GCSE results and passed A-level exams in music, English literature, religious education and (anonymously) business studies. Although at that stage he had no idea that he might go on to his present position, the latter qualification could not be more useful, given the demands and expectations heaped upon headteachers these days.

He chose Southampton as his university where he did a four year BA(QTS) in theology and education. He also met and fell in love with a fellow student, Melody,

whom he married in 2001. Mel has since presented Jonny with two lovely daughters, Amelia and Lilian. A photograph of them holds pride of place on his office desk. Mel is now planning to return to her teaching career. The family home is in Aylesbury, and Mel and Jonny take their little girls to a nearby church for Sunday worship.

You will probably have noticed that he studied music at school so it comes as no surprise that playing and singing are important aspects of his life. He is in charge of music at Church Cowley St James and he is convinced that the joy of singing is vital in the life of a happy school. At church he leads worship, and plays cello and oboe. He is a self taught pianist and sings as well.

His teaching career began in various schools in Buckinghamshire in Amersham, Aylesbury and High Wycombe. During this period he became involved in religious education in schools. He was invited to sit on the panel of SACRE which oversees the teaching of RE in the diocese. Feeling ready to move on to further responsibilities, he looked around for a suitable post as deputy head. However a friend advised him to leap-frog that step on his career ladder and apply for a headship in a small school. I got the impression that he was quite surprised when he was appointed. Now of course he is here in Cowley.

Readers will be pleased, I'm sure, to learn that he is keen to maintain strong links between the school and the church. He is very interested to know as much

as possible about the little old school next door to the parish church. He rightly feels that the historical roots of his school lie there. So if you would like to share with him memories or experiences of St James School I know he would appreciate it.

In closing our interview he asked me to pass on to you his vision for the school. "An outstanding school develops each person – child and staff member – personally and academically; it is a place where leadership grows and where spirituality and emotion thrive."

Was there one particular person who had a strong influence on your early life?

Auntie Lily (and Uncle Fred) were responsible for a big part of a very happy childhood. (Jonny and Mel's daughter is named after Auntie Lily.

Can you remember any incident in childhood which holds special significance?

I have fond memories of holidays on the Isle of Wight. My elderly Auntie Lily and Uncle Fred provided lots of old-fashioned end-of-the pier seaside fun, with ice creams and everything.

What sort of child were you?

Always the tidy one in the family. I was thoughtful, and entrepreneurial too. When I was a young teenager I set up a little gardening and household repair business. I kept it going right up to university.

Has your faith been with you since childhood?

Yes, it has grown from small seeds; it was nurtured when I was about eight and I had a life-after-death experience. I knew a friend of my mum's was dying, and someone at church spoke about resurrection, and that was my first deep spiritual experience.

Which period of your adult life has given you the most satisfaction? Now, really! Being in headship, marriage and having a family are at times highly stressful but with the stress comes huge satisfaction.

Are there any aspects of modern life that upset you?

Lack of care and protection of children. Children not knowing that they are loved.

And what is the best about life today?

I find the vast majority do care

about each other. People do support each other.

When you find time for leisure how do you like to spend it?

Church, walking in the countryside, inviting friends round for a meal, listening to and playing music, the radio (from 4 to 2) and gardening. I am quite good at DIY too.

Do you have a treasured possession?

I have a beautiful piano which I bought with my grandmother's bequest.

If you could make a spectacular change in the world, what would it be?

I would resolve all wars and injustice and establish peace.

If you were not doing what you do now, what might be the alternative?

I would probably be a gardener or a builder.

What plans do you have for the future?

I see myself continuing in education, possibly still in Cowley or working in a similar school.

Parish Easter Lunch 18th April

(This is to replace the Christmas Dinner that was cancelled due to the weather.)

There will be a three-course Sunday lunch beginning at 12:30. It will feature a starter, a main course of roast turkey with all the trimmings, and dessert (a choice of Christmas pudding, fruit salad, or cheese and biscuits). Coffee will follow. There will be a raffle, and to add to the festive atmosphere of the afternoon, we'll have a party-type quiz with prizes.

Tickets cost £7.50, available from 28th March from Rosanne. Only 60 tickets will be on sale so book early.

Help!

Someone has taken the pan from the kitchen scales in the Church Centre thus rendering

them unusable. Please, please return it a.s.a.p, or maybe one of our readers has a set

of scales they no longer use. The catering ladies would be delighted to find them a home.

Farewell to the PCC

(Written for PCC friends, past and present)
 I've been PCC Secretary for some time as you know
 But now I have decided that it is time to go.
 When I've laid aside my pen, whatever will I do?
 Perhaps I'll find there's something else, move on to pastures
 new.
 I've no plans at the moment, I can't see beyond today,
 But tomorrow's always new and maybe I will find a way.
 We know that there's a time to reap, another time to sow,
 A time to start on something new, a time to let it go.
 My dear PCC friends, I will miss them very much,
 But when I've laid aside my pen I hope they'll keep in touch.
 I hope I'll still be welcome in the parish at both ends,
 St James', St Francis', matters not – I know I'll be with friends.
 I'm very thankful for the friends who've helped me recently,
 Offers of lifts to meetings were extended generously,
 I didn't need to ask because a friend would always come
 To drive me to the meeting or to bring me safely home.
 And some have done deliveries – they said they didn't mind,
 So the minutes and agendas were in church for you to find.
 I'm very grateful to them all, and now as I depart,
 For all their kindnesses to me I thank them from my heart.

Maureen

London Maration

I will be running the London Marathon on Sunday 25th April in aid of Sobell House Hospice. It's my fourth time in the race, and the third time I've run for this charity. The event is always an amazing experience and being able to help Sobell House and the fantastic work they do makes it even more special.

The parishioners of Cowley have always been most generous in helping my fundraising efforts and I really hope some of you will consider supporting me again in 2010. If you would like to sponsor you can go to my fundraising website: www.justgiving.com/robbutlerlondon2010

Or you can contact my mum, Rosanne Butler, who has some sponsor forms.

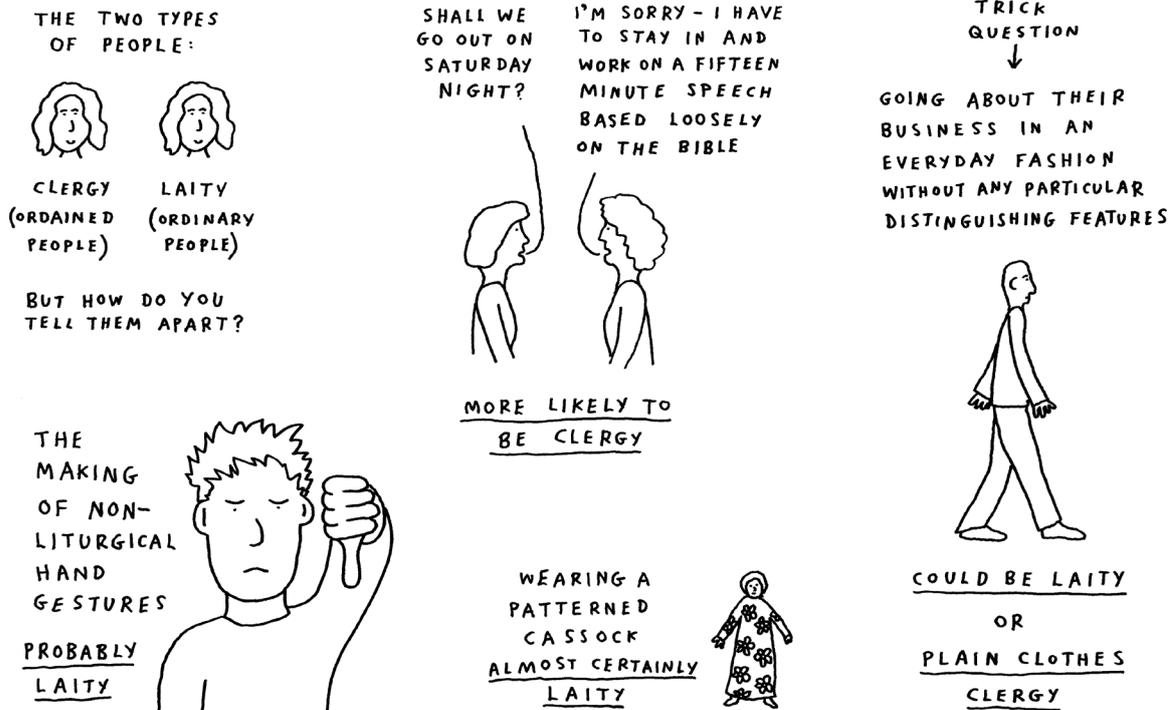
Thanks very much again for all your support over the years; it means such a lot to me and to Sobell House. I'll let you know how I fare on the big day.



Rob Butler

THE LAITY

HOW TO RECOGNISE THEM



CartoonChurch.com

This CartoonChurch.com cartoon originally appeared in the Church Times and is taken from 'The Dave Walker Guide to the Church', published by Canterbury Press.

Canon Tom Moffatt

Some of our older readers will remember Bruce and Norah Moffatt. They lived in Westbury Crescent and threw themselves enthusiastically into the affairs of the parish. Bruce was a long serving church warden and Norah was Secretary of the PCC for many years. They took part in many church activities, and Bruce was one of a team of men who undertook the care of the churchyard in the days before the local council took over. Bruce and Norah have two fine sons, Ian and Tom, who were both as bright as buttons and talented sportsmen. Ian became a sports master in big secondary schools. Tom went into the church, going on to have a distinguished career.

He married Emma. Some of our Mothers Union members will recognise the name, because she has been a prime mover in establishing the worldwide M.U literacy programme, which helps illiterate women gain the skills to help their husbands with the business side of their agricultural and industrial projects. Emma also writes for our diocesan journal. However this is more about Tom. Back in late January, Frank and I were offered the opportunity to attend Evensong at Christchurch Cathedral during which service Tom was inaugurated as an honorary canon to the diocese. It was a lovely occasion; as ever the singing was wonderful. Afterwards we were invited

to join the Moffatt family and friends at a small reception. We were able to reminisce with both Tom and Ian about their days in Cowley, and both expressed their deep affection for our parish. Bishop John was on great form, describing Tom, who leads the clergy team of Thatcham, as a “Rolls-Royce” clergyman. What praise. Tom and Emma send warmest wishes to all in Cowley who remember them and Ian, and of course, Bruce and Norah. I promised to convey these wishes and thought this would be the best way to do so.

Rosanne

Lent and Easter Services at St James Church

14 March – Mothering Sunday

8:00 am – special service for mothers
10:00 am – flowers to celebrate mothers

28 March – Palm Sunday

8:00 am – Palm crosses and Holy Communion
10:00 am – Palm crosses and Eucharist
10:00 am – Church at the Centre – a celebration of Jesus and the Last Supper for all ages

1 April – Maundy Thursday

7:00 pm – St Francis Church, Hollow Way – a simple shared meal with Holy Communion
8:30 pm – St James Church, candlelight, prayer and remembrance of Jesus’ last night

2 April – Good Friday

12 noon to 3:00 pm – sing hymns, read the story of the crucifixion, explore the meaning of the cross

4 April – Easter Sunday

8:00 am – Holy Communion and Easter Celebration
10:00 am – Sung Eucharist and celebration – “The Lord is risen, indeed!”

God in my life: Christine Woodman

God has always been in my life, but as I have become older I am more aware of his presence. When I was at school, Scripture was a major part of the curriculum. The school was founded by Anglican nuns, and religious teaching was very important. Scripture was my favourite subject, and I remember my teacher, Miss Richards, always saying at the end of our lessons, "He will come again; we don't know when, but he will come again." This has always stayed with me.

The Alpha course that Vernon led in Benson Cottage renewed many religious thoughts which had laid dormant in my mind for some time. Since I have retired and can give time to things I enjoy, I have found God helping me in many ways. The friends I have made through church and at social gatherings have been through God working with me. He has broadened my life and helped me to

embrace new ideas that I wouldn't have thought about if I hadn't allowed him into my life.

There have been many times when I have been worried or concerned and asked for God's help and guidance and he has sorted things out. He may not have answered immediately, but over a period of time I have received an answer to my problem.

I am very fortunate in having the beautiful St James Church on my doorstep, and also belonging to a lovely Home Group which explores so many aspects of Christian life in a very thought-provoking way.

I have written this during a Quiet Day at Highmoor Hall near Henley. In a beautiful, tranquil setting I was able to reflect on "God in my life" and write a few words for the Chronicle.

Thinking Day Centenary

If you were going to gather a huge congregation of girls from the ages of five up to about 20, and if you were going to choose the hymn "All things bright and beautiful" to open your service, where would you choose as your venue? Of course your first choice would be St Francis Church under those beautiful painted beams depicting St Francis himself and his love of all the plants, animals and birds of the natural world. Well, that is exactly what Oxford City Division One of the Girl Guides did.

The Girl Guides celebrated their centenary Thinking Day with a service led by Rev. Susannah Reid, herself a former Guide. The church was absolutely packed not only with Rainbows, Brownies, and Rangers but, very importantly, with former Guides and Guide Leaders plus families and friends. As every Girl Guide knows, a supportive family is essential throughout your Guiding years, especially when you arrive home from camp or pack holiday with a kitbag full of muddy, grass-stained clothes!

Thinking Day is held every year on February 22nd to commemorate the foundation of the Scouting movement by Lord Baden Powell. It is the date of his birthday and that of his wife, Lady Olave, who was the first Chief Guide. Prayers were said for sister Guides around the world in over 140

countries, and a renewal of promises made. The colour parties carried their flags and pennants with pride and the unaccompanied singing was redolent of campfire prayers. It was all quite moving for this former Girl Guide.

This lovely hymn, sung to the tune of "Puff the Magic Dragon", was included in the service:

God's love is like a circle
A circle big and round
And when you have a circle
No ending can be found
And so the Love of Jesus
Goes on eternally
For ever and ever
I know my God loves me

Do try it; it really is delightful.

From the Parish Registers

Funerals

Olive Bushnell	5 February 2010
Jean Cox	22 February 2010
Charles Augar	24 February 2010

Gardening : March could be a busy month

Are you sure that it is a new month? The garden looks pretty much as it did last month – a mess! Yes, there are some aconites (from the churchyard) and the snowdrop clump has grown a bit, but the dead foliage and weeds are still there. I've not yet been able to prepare properly. I have put some potatoes to chit and bought some new seeds, but the ground is too wet and cold.

Is my memory at fault or has gardening altered? Many years ago my grandfather said that he sowed onions on Boxing Day and planted his potatoes on Good Friday. I am not sure that this is wise now. I also remember other ideas from him. Each winter, under the bed in the spare room, sat boxes of apples and trays of dahlia tubers (sprinkled liberally with yellow Flowers of Sulphur). I never remember eating these wizened apples or putting the dahlias to grow again, but I do remember the huge dahlia flowers he grew. I was not very keen on them – they were too big to be picked for vases! March would be a good time to start the tubers into growth in a frost-free area. I have two tubers in the kitchen hoping for some return of life. I am keeping them just damp and not buried completely in compost. Come on, you experts – am I right?

Grandad had a large garden and, apart from me planting his precious lettuce seedlings upside down, I don't remember helping him except when he needed a potato picker. It is a miracle that my fingers survived, because I remember rummaging in the loosened soil as he dug for more potatoes. He must have been a very careful man.

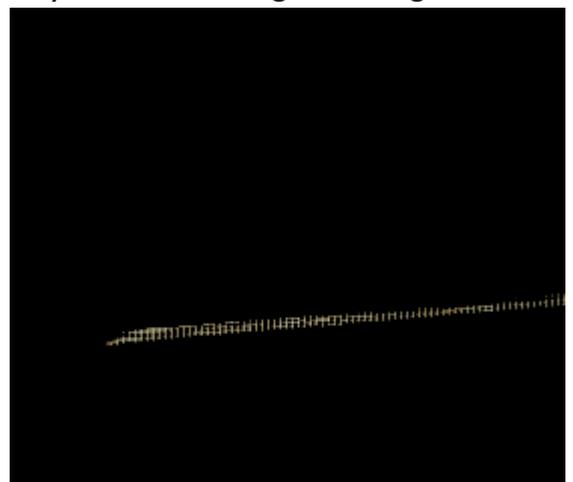
Strangely enough, some years later, I too had a grandchild helping me plant pansy plug plants, and was astonished that he couldn't see the difference between the root end and the plant, but he was much better with the daffodil bulbs!

This March could be a busy month. Greenhouse owners will be able to sow all the half-hardy annuals which the rest of us sow on the kitchen or spare room windowsills. Sow begonias and lobelias for your hanging baskets, and tomatoes for the greenhouse. Outdoor tomatoes will need to be left for a few weeks or they will become too large for the windowsill before the weather warms up. French marigolds also need to be left for a while. They are said to keep blackfly off your crops, but the slugs got mine last year.

I like the idea of feeding wildlife - birds, hedgehogs and even the occasional squirrel, BUT NOT SLUGS. I usually have frogs living in an upturned dustbin lid, but they cannot cope with the monstrous slugs and snails that I feed up. Incidentally, did any one watch slugs climbing their windows? The animal who now climbs my window is a huge fluffy cat who would dearly like to come in and stay for a while, but the resident beast utters unladylike language which chases him away. When the doors are open this summer (if we get one) I think a feline war will break out, and our visiting cat has two companions!

Make the most of every good day.

Diana Pope



Jewel Easter Eggs

You might enjoy trying this recipe during Holy Week. It is intended for the children, but they will need adult help. By the way, if you're serving an Easter meal for a family, these eggs look very pretty in a dish and are gorgeous with ice cream.

First you need to blow some hens' eggs (about 4 large eggs for each colour). To do this, at the large end of the egg, prick a hole about the size of a drawing pin head. Holding the egg over a basin, make a similar-sized hole at the other end. Blow gently through the second hole and the contents of the egg will fall into the basin. When you have done all your eggs, seal up the larger end with masking tape (I don't think sellotape works very well) and stand the empty shells in an egg carton with the open hole at the top ready to take the jelly.

Make up packets of jelly in various colours, at double strength, using $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of boiling water – this will give your eggs a nice firm shape. Pour in the jelly when it has cooled a little. Then pop the whole box of eggs into the fridge to set. When you're ready to serve them, remove the shells very

gently and out will come a set of "jewel" eggs. You can get creative with your colours of course!

You will also have lots of lovely eggs to scramble, for omelettes, or to use for a gorgeous cake for Easter tea.



Upcoming events in Cowley

On Thursday, 11 March The Crowther Centre will host "Questions from Faith to Politics." It will be a panel discussion chaired by the Revd Helen-Ann Hartley, with questions from the audience exploring the issues that people of faith should raise during elections. It begins at 8 pm at The Auditorium, CMS, Watlington Road, Oxford. Preceding the discussion, a Kenyan meal will be available at 7 pm for those who book and pay £10 in advance. To RSVP or book a meal, please contact Cathy Ross, on 01865 787 400.

The Church of the Holy Family, Cuddesdon Way in Blackbird Leys is sponsoring a roadshow, Growing up without violence, on Tuesday, 16 March. There are activities for children, resources for parents, activity packs, and positive parenting information. The roadshow is open from 10 am until 5 pm, with after-school activities and refreshments at 3:30. At 6:30, there will be a vigil with candlelight procession, with the Rt Revd John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford. For further information contact Revd Roger Burne on 07901 882 957.

The Cowley Local History Society holds a monthly local history talk on the third Tuesday of each month. On 16 March at 8 pm, Malcolm Graham will give an illustrated talk on Henry Taunt, Oxford photographer, whose house in Cowley Road has been commemorated with a Blue Plaque. The society meets in the United Reformed Church, Temple Road, opposite the Police Station, and the cost for non-members is £3.00.

Pilgrimage to Walsingham

St James has been invited to join St Mary and St John on their weekend away trip to Walsingham from 3-5 September 2010. It will begin with prayers at SSMJ at 10 am on Friday, 3 September and the coach will depart for Bicester at 10:30. We hope the party will arrive in Walsingham in good time for supper at 6:30.

The coach will leave for home on Sunday, 5 September after the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament, Benediction and Last Visit, and will be back in Oxford for 10 pm.

The cost will be £110 for full board plus approximately £80 for travel costs.

Application forms can be obtained from Chris Woodman. To book your place, please return the application form to Chris asap, plus a cheque for £20 deposit, made payable to J.R. Buxton. If you would like to join this trip with SSMJ please sign the list at the back of St James Church.

C Woodman
R Chand

Recipes

Welsh Bara Brith

- ¼ lb soft margarine
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 lb mixed fruit (add a few cherries)
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups self-raising flour
- 1 cup cold water
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate soda

Grease and flour a large bread tin.

Put margarine, brown sugar, fruit, bicarbonate of soda and mixed spice and a cupful of water into saucepan. Bring to boil and simmer for five minutes. Leave to cool.

Then add 2 eggs and 2 cups of flour. Mix and pour into bread tin.



Cook for 1 – 1½ hours at 300F, 150C, Gas mark 2.

Cool, slice thinly, and butter.

Doreen Bushnell, Isle of Anglesey



Palm Sunday in Kuala Lumpur

Some years ago I and a friend were in Kuala Lumpur on Palm Sunday. We attended morning service in the cathedral, and it was an experience new to us both. To start with, we had palm crosses made of green palm leaves, and the palm plumes carried in procession were palm branches from the trees around the cathedral. To our English eyes, it looked very different.

We felt very welcome at the service, but we did blot our copy books. The minister announced the peace in the usual way and Joy and I turned to each other and hugged and kissed our wish of peace. We then turned to our neighbours, only to be met with stony silence from eyes-to-the-front rigid outraged people. We turned back only to realise that the minister was progressing slowly down the aisle, shaking hands solemnly with the first person in each row. The handshake and the wish of peace was then slowly and solemnly passed along the row. It was all so serious and stiff, and nothing like the chaos in our churches when we try to exchange the peace with as many of our friends as possible.

The congregation obviously thought we were quite mad, but they forgave us and made us welcome for coffee and cake after the service. We did feel silly for a while.

Una



Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday this year happens on Sunday, 14 March. Last year's Chronicle reminded you of the history of the celebration, so we won't repeat ourselves. But some people wonder why Mothering Sunday doesn't have a fixed date. For around 500 years, Mothering Sunday has been celebrated on the fourth Sunday in Lent. Since Easter and Lent move about the calendar, so does Mothering Sunday.

A bishop writing in the 16th century thought the origin of "Mid-Lenting" or "Mothering Sunday" might come from the readings then appointed for that Sunday. The Epistle spoke of Jerusalem as the Mother of all, and the Gospel story was of the feeding of the five thousand.

One of the traditions of Mothering Sunday is that of "clipping the church" (from the Anglo-Saxon "clyp-pan" meaning to embrace). Members of the congregation form a ring around the church building, holding hands, and embrace it. There are only a few churches that still practice this tradition. Rosanne, Howard, with Cowley's Saxon origins, should this be on our calendar next year? Hugging-the-church Sunday!

Finally, here's a verse from Robert Herrick, 1648.

*'I'll to thee a Simnell bring
'Gainst thou go'st a mothering,
So that, when she blesseth thee,
Half that blessing thou'lt give to me.'*

Maintaining the Church Centre Garden

We have John and Catherine Gawne-Cain to thank for the lovely landscaped grounds around our Church Centre. Now that they have left the Parish we have a question to ask. Can you help to keep the Church Centre garden looking well cared for? Perhaps you would be able to weed and look after a small plot or two, and come and tend it in your own time. The idea is that if there are enough takers, we would divide the garden into manageable portions. You would decide which piece or pieces you (and your family maybe?) could cope with, and then it would be over to you.

If you are interested get in touch with Rosanne Butler (453257) or Grace Richards (716862). A bonus would be that there would be people in the garden at odd times – a deterrent to unwelcome intruders.

How about it? Are you game to give it a go? We would have a plan of the plots for people to make their choice during coffee after Sunday morning 10 am service on 28 March (Palm Sunday) or at Lunch Club on the following Tuesday.

Grace Richards



Lent – A Time for Waiting

In this day and age when everything is hustle and bustle and done at speed, we in the church are called to a spirit of repentance, to set aside some time to wait upon the Lord. We were told by our Heavenly Father, “Be still and know that I am God,” and the great Old Testament prophet Isaiah told his people, “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength.”

Contrary to the world’s thinking we know that being still and waiting upon the Lord is never a waste of time; on the contrary – it is time very well spent. As the good book says, “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings of eagles – they shall run and not be weary – they shall walk and not faint.”

With all the stresses and strains of modern life we certainly need a renewal of our strength, both physical and spiritual. This is where our Home Study Groups and Lent Courses come in. They give us the opportunity to draw aside for a while and gather our inward resources. We hope and pray that more people will join with us during Lent and learn and prepare ourselves for our glorious Eastertide.

John Shreeve

Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Sung Eucharist
Every fourth Sunday: *Church at the Centre*
Every third Sunday: *Sunday Lunch*

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am Parish Eucharist

Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	8.15 am 2.30 pm	Morning Prayer – St James Parish Mothers' Union – St James (3rd Mon)
Tuesday	8.15 am 10.00 am 12.00 pm 12.30 pm 2.30 pm	Morning Prayer – St James Seashells Toddler Group : St James Eucharist – St James Tuesday Lunch Club – St James Friends of St Francis – St Francis (2nd & 4th)
Wednesday	8.15 am 9.15 am	Morning Prayer – St James Morning Prayer – St Francis
Thursday	8.15 am	Morning Prayer – St James
Friday	8.15 am 5.30 pm	Morning Prayer – St James 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.

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Elaine Ulett

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