

How to be a bad Christian

“How to be a bad Christian.” It’s Dave Tomlinson’s critique of the way we do church and the way we portray our faith. The book isn’t so much about how to be a bad Christian, as it is about how to be a Christian who follows what Jesus said, not what we over the past 2000 years have come to think he taught.

Tomlinson is right, not about everything, but when he says that we should really think about what it means to follow Christ. Problems begin when we think of Christianity as a religion, instead of a relationship with God.

God’s not waiting to judge you.

God’s not waiting to condemn you.

He’s waiting to receive you with mercy, with love, with open arms.

Christianity is based on love. Love is at the very core of how we are to view God, our neighbour, our enemy, and ourselves. Our relationship with God motivates us to bring others into this relationship, not exclude them.

If we are followers of Jesus, our relationship with him does not depend on reciting creeds that were important to a lot of men who met in Turkey 1700 years ago, or reading prayers to God on a Sunday, or singing hymns that were written 500 years ago or last week. It depends on something much more profound. It depends on trusting God and loving God, because he loved us first. It depends on growing relationships of love with one another. It depends on discovering the freedom

we can have through our trust in God. God’s love does not turn us into prisoners; on the contrary - it sets free.

Several years ago I spoke with a young man who, as a teenager, had been sexually abused by a person who was in a position of authority and trust. The memories of those encounters and the feelings they produced of betrayal, darkness, shame, and rage almost drove him to suicide. They led him into a promiscuous life style in which he was never able to find love or enter into a deep and personal relationship. Over time he was able to tell me his story, to give voice to the ways he had been abused, to put an end to the bondage that had affected all his adult life and to be set free. The most difficult part was that he wondered “Where is God in the middle of all my pain?” He had tried to go to church, but had never discovered freedom from the prison he was in. He only encountered rules and formulas, and tradition – but had a hard time finding love, forgiveness, acceptance, peace or genuine relationship.

Christians are called to be people who follow Jesus. They are called to be students of Jesus. They are called to love like God loves. To be agents of forgiveness and restoration. The original followers of Jesus were not called Christians, they were “followers of the ‘way’”. Perhaps in the coming season of Advent we need to look for ways in which we might more fully follow Jesus’ way.

Howard

Chronicle

November 2012

Editor's Letter

Dear Readers

You probably noticed several of our regular monthly contributions were missing last month including our usual tongue-in-the cheek jokes. The joke was on us when I gave Sally a few silly stories in an envelope together with some other material. It wasn't until she had emailed everything to Phil and our deadline had passed that she found the little bundle of jokes still in the envelope. This month I have made sure she has received everything in a see-through folder!

We have, however, been lucky enough to persuade St Francis scouts and cubs to keep us up-to-date on some of their news. They have promised to do this from time to time. Not only do they meet regularly in the old hut at the back of the church but, in traditional Scout fashion, they have performed a huge good turn for the Parish. They delivered hundreds of the "Cowslip" leaflets around the St Francis area last month. So we want to say a big "thank you and well done" to them.

Another "well-done" pat on the back goes to Christine Woodman from St James. Chris, as almost everyone knows heads up the team of volunteer caterers for dozens of different "dos" at the Church Centre. Many a time I've heard people say, "I don't know how she does it", meaning all the shopping preparation, excellent menus and clearing up that she does, not to mention the efficient organisation of her team. Howard

Mothers' UNION News
Christian care for families

Although the attendance for the October branch meeting was smaller than usual we were treated to an excellent talk by Mrs Mariam Rhamzy about being a mother in a Muslim family. She spoke delightfully about the shared experiences of bringing up children in faith, teaching them to be strong in their identity and learning to be independent as they leave home. We also learned a lot about the commonalities we share as mothers and in our faiths.

Next month we are devoting our meeting to preparing for our contribution to the parish Christmas tree festival.

sent in a commendation to the Town Hall and she was chosen as one of this year's Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Award winners. Congratulations, Chris!

The decision about the Jubilee tree to mark Her Majesty's sixtieth year on the throne has now been made. We are going to plant a cherry tree in St James' churchyard, almost opposite the south door. It will be very pretty, in years to come, each spring and, we hope, produce fruit for the birds in the autumn. The date for planting has not yet been decided so watch this space for more news.

Our next Chronicle will be the double Christmas issue and we do like readers to contribute so have you got something you can offer? Perhaps a poem, perhaps memories of Christmases past, traditions, good stories, special recipes, something to spice up our magazine? I wondered if you would like to consider the question – if you could invite three famous people to your home for a special meal who would you choose and why? Let us have your answers as soon as possible please.

I am sure, when you read your Chronicle this month you will be amazed at all the events coming up soon in our parish. What a busy crowd we are but doesn't it add greatly to the quality of life to have nice things to look forward to? Happy times ahead!

God Bless

Rosanne

On 13th November members will be interested to know the North Oxfordshire Area's annual meeting will take the form of a Eucharist and shared lunch in St Mary's Church, Witney. Bishop Colin of Dorchester will preside. The service is at noon and the lunch costs £2.50. Anyone who intends to go should let John Shreeve know as soon as possible.

Another of our popular Quiz and puddings evenings will take place in the Church Centre on Friday, 16th November, beginning at 6.30 pm. Do bring family and friends for a fun evening. The cost is only £5 per table.

EAST OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

The project began as an idea in the summer of 2008 during a conversation between fellow archaeologists and East Oxford residents Jane and David.

Discussions with colleagues and other people with an interest in the area's archaeology and history revealed a major 'gap' in the public's archaeological consciousness of the area, even though it lends itself superbly to the kind of community archaeology initiative that has now become the "East Oxford Project".

Just on the basis of a website post, over 50 people turned up for a 2-hour walk and talk afternoon at Bartlemas Chapel, involving discussions on landscape, buildings and finds.

The University's John Fell Fund kindly gave a small start-up grant in 2008 which enabled the Department for Continuing Education to engage Jane part-time as a project developer, leading to Round One of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application, which was later supplemented by an HLF development grant in 2009-10, which led to Round Two. The Project was helped enormously throughout this process by Research Coordinator Sarah Knaggs and of course by the many volunteers who participated in the talks, visits and guided walks which were created to help demonstrate the level of public interest and potential in the area. From the outset the local support was hugely encouraging.

In October 2010 the project entered its current phase thanks to the success of grant applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund and Oxford University's John Fell Fund, which two dedicated project workers to be appointed to 'make the idea happen'.

The Official Launch of the project on 19th October 2010 was held in the Straw Bale garden workshop at Restore, Off the Cowley Road, and was attended by the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University Andrew Hamilton, Local MP Andrew Smith, and Heritage Lottery Fund Trustee Hilary Lade - who all gave speeches welcoming the project. Many of the people who had helped to make the first phase of the project a success, were also there. Articles appeared in the Oxford Mail, Oxford Times and on BBC Radio Oxford, where Jane was interviewed. The event was followed by a site visit to nearby St Bartholomew's Chapel.

The second big dig of the project is a dig in a piece of ground behind the Bowlplex/Vue cinema and next to the Priory Public house. It is where the Knights Templars went after leaving Temple Cowley. They have found medieval walls which could be part of the priory complex but also evidence of very much earlier times in a flint arrowhead.

Apart from these big digs, many test pits have been dug around the area and many volunteers have been trained to excavate, to record, to sort and record finds as well as to do landscape surveying. The project received a Highly Commended runner up award at the British Archaeology Awards 2012.

One group has been looking into the placenames of the east of Oxford and this should lead to a comprehensive mapping of the area giving clues to early land use, old routeways and core settlements.

If you want to know more or if you want to get involved please register on www.archeox.net.

CHRONICLE

Editorial Team- Rosanne Butler, Sally Hemsworth, Phil Hind, May Morgan

Deadline for the November edition: 24th November 2012

If possible, please send entries by email to Sally at chronicle@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

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37th OXFORD SCOUT TROOP

Our scout troop at the 37th Oxford is very active, and we are trying to get outdoors as much as possible! We have around twenty members of the troop, which is mainly aged between 10-14 years old, with some over-14s, who take on the role as regular young leaders.

Over the summer we attended a large summer camp in Essex (Essex International Jamboree), which was attended by over 10,000 other scouts from around the world. To get to the camp, we had been fundraising since the start of the year, raising nearly £3000 to help towards the cost (holding events like quizzes, sponsored bike ride, table tennis marathon (24 hours), and lots of bag packing at Tesco in Cowley).

We regularly do a range of different activities which might include: camping, sports, games, challenges, cooking, craft, team building and leadership skills.

Our latest camping activity was with our cub pack at the end of September, when we camped at Phasels Wood Scout Centre. Some of the activities included: archery, human table football, aeroball and rock climbing.

We are always on the lookout for new members, both young people who can join in with the fun, and leaders who are able to join in and make the fun happen! We currently have scouts meeting on Tuesdays 7-9pm, and cubs meeting Wednesdays 6:30-8pm during term time, and after October half term, we are hoping to set up an explorer scout unit at the group too, which will cater for 14-18 year olds too. In addition to the scout nights, we regularly provide weekend activities and camps which are always great experiences for everyone involved!

David Nutt

COWLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE NEWS

Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at St James' Church Centre, starting at 2 pm.

Our September meeting once again was very enjoyable. We had a talk by Rosanne on Victorian Cowley. How Cowley has changed since those days!

In October our speaker was Mrs Wiseman on 'The Ladies of Blenheim'. She kept us all spell-bound with the history of Blenheim ladies. We all felt we were lucky to be living in this century.

On November 7th we are planning to have our lunch at the Long Wall.

For our next meeting on November 21st our speaker will be Miss A Withes. "Here and There" is her subject.

December 12th is the date of our Christmas Party (Gosh, another year has gone by!)

Quite a few of our members also enjoy their monthly walks. They meet up and go for a walk to a different place each month. It depends on the weather, how far they get before stopping for light refreshments. They would welcome anyone who would like a leisurely walk and talk. Just contact one of our Committee members or President, Madge Hitchcox, Telephone 778781.

Jean Chilton

RIDE AND STRIDE

The support given to the Ride and Stride this year has been quite splendid and I will be able to give you the final total raised in the December Chronicle – so watch this space!

June Smith
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FLOWER OF THE MONTH – CYCLAMEN

It is at this time of the year that the garden centres and shops are full of enticing pot plants to decorate our homes or offer as gifts at Christmas. Among these are cyclamen. These pretty flowers are very hard to maintain as they really do not enjoy central heating. Nor do they need too much water.

The big bold versions of the species in pots are relatives of the tiny wild cyclamen seen growing in profusion in Mediterranean countries and now introduced to our own parks and gardens. Their name comes from the Greek word for circle (kyklo) and refers to the seed stalks which after flowering curl up tightly and ripen. The Greeks themselves thought the tubers (or roots) looked like little turtles or tortoises and so they call them chelonion (their name for a tortoise).

In his first century work, "Natural History", Pliny the Elder claimed that the roots of the plant were used by fishermen to poison fish. This was disputed by the Renaissance botanist Nicolo Leonico but the debate at the end of the fifteenth century defended Pliny and it was declared more than possible. In those days, too, the medicinal uses of plants were explored. Theories as to their value sometimes led to disaster and often led to quaint superstitions. Because of the shape of the cyclamen's petals which fold back like ears the leaves were used to produce

a cure for earache!

An English botanist, William Turner, warned that cyclamen were a potent aid to childbirth. He advised pregnant women not even to step over the root of the plant as it might cause a miscarriage. However it would be helpful to do just that if you were hoping to conceive. He gave the plant the name "sowsbread".

Apparently pigs are very partial to cyclamen tubers and in 1895 an English clergyman, Canon H. N. Ellacomb, complained that some pigs had broken into his garden and dug up all his cyclamen roots. So the name sowsbread seems to hold some authenticity.

Our handsome pot-grown plants actually originated in Persia and arrived in Britain in the 1650s. Their popularity was at its height in Victorian times when gigantic specimens of all kinds were prized. It is said that at that time as many as eighty blooms could result from a single plant. A lovely old head gardener friend of my father was an expert cyclamen grower right up until he died ten years ago and I was once presented with a plant which produced yearly fifty flowers. Like many other people, though, I am afraid I loved it too much, kept it warm, watered it too often and it, sadly, died.

A Date for your Diary!

WELCOMING THE LIGHT

A Parish Quiet Morning at St James celebrating and reflecting on the season of Advent on Saturday 1 December from 10am. Come and go as you can!

For more information contact Helen Beetham (01865 770923) or Christine Woodman (01865 778078)

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Rosanne Interviews **FRANCINE ABITABILE**

When you read the name at the top of this article you will probably envisage a dark-haired exotic character from far flung foreign climes. However, you'd be so wrong. Those of you who already know Francine will be aware that she is a local girl and as much a part of Cowley as the clock on St Luke's Church tower.

She was born in Fairfax Road, the eldest child of Rita and Charlie Auger. She has a sister, Ruth and two brothers, Philip and Michael with whom she is very close. Sadly her dad died not so long ago but her warm family-oriented personality extends to her mum with whom she attends church at St James. She also "shares" her two lovely grandchildren with their great-grandmother, Rita, on a regular basis, but more of that later.

As a little girl of five she started infant school at St Francis and hated it from the word go. She never did enjoy school though she tolerated it as a teenager. She made up her mind she was going to leave the minute she could. She confessed that she simply did not like being told what to do. At eleven she moved on to Temple Cowley School where she told me her favourite lessons were domestic science and playing tennis. Not that she had a problem with the academic side of life, she learnt to read as a very young child and enjoyed reading and writing stories.

However, true to her early promise to herself, as soon as she turned sixteen she shook the dust of the schoolroom from her heels and joined the world of work.

Her first job was as a receptionist at a dental surgery in Oxford.

Being a "people person" the interaction with patients suited Francine very well. She stayed in this job for about five years and really enjoyed it. As a teenager during those years she had much to tell about her social life but also about her involvement with St Luke's Church.

She began attending church when she was about 13, encouraged by a school friend who already worshipped there. Father Patrick Parry-Oakden was the rector and John Gawne-Cain was the curate. Both of these gentlemen had quite an influence on the young people in the parish as they ran a flourishing youth club at St. Luke's. Francine and her friend joined. Another person involved in the club was Charles (Charlie) Smith whom many of our readers will remember. As she grew a little older, "fun days" were organised and Francine recalled Father Ian Knowles recruiting not just the young group to help organise activities for the children but many of our parish stalwarts in their younger days. Names like Alan Howells, Margaret Martin as well as Francine's mum, Rita, were recruited on to the "fun days" team.

Another social activity which she enjoyed was ballroom dancing. Classes and dances were held when she was a teenager at Florence Park Community Centre. I asked if she still dances but she said, "No, strangely enough I don't, though I cannot think why". Maybe it is because ballroom dances are out of fashion. Nowadays where could you go locally for a dance?

For most young people of her age clubbing was beginning to be the "in" thing and she and her friends

would meet up on a Saturday evening at "The Original Swan" for a drink or two before catching the bus into town. One evening when Francine was seventeen, she met and fell completely in love with a handsome young Sicilian man. She demurred a little when I asked if it was love at first sight for both of them, and then admitted that it was, though she smiled quite a lot about meeting her future husband in a pub!

Giacomo is the name of that stunning man who was living in Cowley with his aunt and uncle. He started to call on Francine and (how lovely for her) her father took to him straight away. He comes from a big family in Sicily so it soon became time for him to take his lovely girl to meet his parents and the rest of the family. Auntie and uncle travelled with them. Francine described her first meeting as a culture shock. The house in Sicily could hardly have been more different from her home in suburban Cowley. The house was way out in the countryside surrounded by its own piece of land. On this land were olive trees and all the beautiful herbs, fruit and fresh vegetables that flourish in the warm Mediterranean climate, grown by the family and cooked by Giacomo's mother. Francine was overwhelmed by all of this together with the welcome she received. She also told me that the house was always full of people and that meal times included a noisy crowd of people who were drawn together as a family.

It soon became clear that a wedding would be planned and Francine wanted to be married at St. Luke's. She had never been

baptised so her first move was to talk to Father Parry Oakden and find herself some godparents. Guess who she found? Her fiancé, Giacomo, stood as her godfather and Connie Uren was her godmother. Determined to do everything “properly”, she followed up her baptism by becoming confirmed a year later. Then she felt ready to make her marriage vows. These she took before a large family gathering many of whom had travelled over from Sicily to celebrate the occasion. It was a very happy day concluding with a great reception and party in Cowley Community Centre.

Francine and Giacomo first set up home in a small house in Leafield Road. He was working at the car factory but was so unhappy there that he went back to the trade which he knows and loves, ceramic tiling. At first he worked with friends doing shop-fitting work all over the country only coming home at weekends. Francine gave birth to their first son, Daniel, and found herself quite lonely at the time. Now her husband is running his own tiling business in partnership with his brother.

Two and a half years after Daniel's birth a baby girl, Gemma, added to their family and four years later another son, Nicholas completed it. Francine became a full-time mum until the children were older. She celebrates the fact that she belongs to a close and loving family made even closer when her own sister married Giacomo's brother.

As the family grew the need to move to a larger house was evident. They found one in White Road with a big garden for the children but with much-needed repairs and renovations required

to the building. Over the years they have extended the house and now have plenty of room for the first grandchildren to visit and for entertaining friends.

When she did return to work Francine took a post as a classroom assistant at St Francis First School. She worked there for eleven years. Now she has a part-time job as receptionist for a doctors' surgery in Headington. On her two days off a week she often cares for her grandchildren, sharing them with her mum, Rita. She loves every minute of it. She did mention how much she regrets that Giacomo's parents see so little of baby Nico and three-year-old Molly but said that they do try to get over to Sicily for holiday visits as often as they can. When I first asked Francine if she would be interviewed for our magazine she said she did not think she had a story to tell. Well, I think her life so far is so much part of Cowley that I found it quite delightful. I wonder what you think.

How would you describe yourself as a small child?

I think I was a bit rebellious. I was polite. I was rather sensitive and did not like anyone being picked on.

Have you a never-to-be-forgotten childhood memory?

On my first day at school I was dragged to the school gates by mum. When it was time to line up I would not. I lay on the floor and screamed. Mrs Harris came over and with mum made me do as I was told but I thought to myself, “I'm not going to stay here”. I took the first opportunity (playtime) and snuck out of the gate, ran home and banged on the door. Of course,

mum took me straight back!

Has there been anyone who has had a strong influence in your life?

My parents. We were taught to respect people, work hard and get on with life.

Has your faith been with you since childhood?

We had Bible stories in the house when we were young but my faith started to grow when I was about thirteen.

Do you have a treasured possession?

Yes, my family photographs and my wedding ring (very special)

What is your opinion of present-day society?

People have drifted away from family life. There is a lack of respect and good manners.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

I like the theatre and the cinema. I enjoy cooking at home, especially entertaining friends and family. I read, in particular biographies and factual books. I listen to music of all kinds (Dad was a big fan of classical music so I learnt that from him). I really enjoy a day in London with my husband.

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

The birth of our three children and bringing them up. I have also had an amazing time enjoying my lovely grandchildren.

What hopes and plans for the future?

I am looking forward to more grandchildren. I just want to stay healthy and continue to enjoy my family.

NEWS FROM ST FRANCIS

Things are still moving ahead here, we have just had a very successful Halloween Party for the children (with a Christian flavour), which was Skye's idea. It went well, in spite of the shortage of helpers, which is a perennial problem at St Francis. How can we motivate people to step forward and give us a hand?

Plans are already afoot for a special crib service nearer Christmas, which looks like being something special. Sadly our proposed Craft Fair never got off the ground. Not enough craft experts were available on the date proposed.

Our Sunday School is slowly getting stronger in spite of the loss of one of its key leaders, James Lord, who has moved away from Oxford. Jane Coutanch, an ex- teacher, has stepped into the breach, which is a great help. As a result the children usually have some very talented Art work to show us at the end of the service.

However, we are not just concerned with events but also with people. Our chief subject of cancer and prayers over recent months has been Maggie Giles. A lady who has had such a burden of worry

to bear with her daughter Sheila terminally ill with cancer and her husband also poorly and in and out of hospital. Sadly her daughter has just died after a monumental fight with the disease over many years. Her funeral takes place shortly and our hearts go out to her at this time.

One other person for prayers has been Diana Pope who has been very poorly for some time. Here we have a bit of good news, for she has recently taken a turn for the better and has actually managed to attend one or two of our Sunday Services. We hope and pray that this improvement will continue.

Patrick Gilday (our ex-organist) has managed to get to a couple of our services recently accompanied by his dear wife, Lydia. It is very good to see him and to hear that his Ordinand's course is going well. He is hoping for a placement at St Christopher's school soon, which will be good practical experience for him.

May the good Lord continue to bless our efforts at this little church of ours.

John Shreeve

Little Sam and his family were about to have Sunday dinner at his Grandmother's house. Everyone was seated but when Sam received his plate he started eating right away. "Sam, please wait until we pray over our food, like we do at home". "But we do not need to pray here" Sam objected, "This is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook."

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'LET'S LIGHT UP CHRISTMAS'

Cowley Festival of Christmas trees 2012

7-9 December in St James Church

Friday 7 December 10.00am-6.00pm

Saturday 8 December 10.00am-6.00pm

Sunday 9 December 2.00pm-5.00pm concluding with a
Festival Carol service 5.30pm

Proceeds this year will be shared between ROSY and SeeSaw, two Oxfordshire charities supporting children in difficult circumstances – more information on both in the 10.00 am service on Sunday 25th November and in next month's Chronicle

We are aiming to fill the church with 40 trees, each representing a Christmas carol or song. Would you like to be involved? It's not too late to sign up so if you have contacts in a local organisation or business and could make a personal invitation, please ask Lesley for the letter and form. We plan to finalise the list in order to prepare the programme by mid November.

Advertising the event is key: we want to put small, table top size trees in all the shop windows in Templars Square, with a poster. If you have one you could lend during the lead up and over festival weekend, please bring it to the church/Church Centre or let Lesley know.

Then you will soon be asked if you can help by delivering flyers (possibly with the next Cowslip), setting up, stewarding, providing some seasonal refreshments – it will again be a big team effort!

Lesley Williams 01865 779 562 07982 439 828 ctf@cowleyteamministry.co.uk



COWLEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Tuesday, 20th November 2012

commencing at 8.00 pm

TALK: VICTORIAN COWLEY

A Talk by Rosanne Butler

At United Reformed Church, Temple Road, Cowley

Membership fee £15 (OAP £13)

Visitors welcome £3 per meeting

APPEAL

More members are needed to make this club viable – please join to support this Society and hear some interesting talks

OUR FORGOTTEN HEROES

It is right and proper that as Remembrance Day comes up again we should remember those of our armed forces who have been killed or injured in the various conflicts over many years.

Yet we tend to forget the many members of our civilian population who were killed or seriously injured in times of war. At one time during the Second World War the people of London suffered 57 consecutive nights of serious heavy bombing on their city. That meant a lot of grief and anguish for those that lost not only their homes but family loved ones as well. And there were many quiet heroic deeds done at those times. After a night spent in the shelter or the underground with little proper sleep, people gritted their teeth, cleaned themselves up and went to work as usual. Shops prided themselves on staying open even under Blitz conditions. One London shop in the East End that had had their display windows blown out put up a sign "Even more open than usual". The Londoners had not lost their sense of humour. On top of all this people had to contend with all the rigours of Food Rationing that made life difficult especially for those with families. For those whose homes were blitzed relief did not always come quickly and they suffered as a result of this.

It was not always the private homes that were affected. Churches were damaged as well. One London priest who had his church blitzed to the ground got the whole thing up and running in the Church Hall within a fortnight. That takes guts and courage plus a lot of determined effort as well. We also tried to protect our key heritage church buildings as well. During the worst of the bombing extra special fire watching teams were on duty in St Paul's. They were determined to stop incendiary bombs spreading fire throughout this famous building and they succeeded. There was an iconic picture taken at this time showing St Paul's silhouetted against the night sky with great flames burning behind it. Somehow that became symbolic of the country's struggles at this time.

John Shreeve

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MY DAD

Let's see, he would be eighty,
No ninety, this year, or more,
The dad I never knew because
Our country was fighting a war.

John was his name, an airman,
Only twenty in '42
Who went off to fly a bomber
With his young and valiant crew.

They'd only been married a year
When a baby was on the way.
Mum told me dad was excited,
"The first of our fam'ly", he'd say

But one fateful day they told her
Her darling John and his plane
Had gone missing on a night raid
And might never return again.

A couple of months or so later
She gave birth to a baby girl (me!)
How tough it must have been knowing
A family we never would be.

As I grew up she told me
All about my lovely dad
So young, handsome and carefree
And, I guess, a bit of a lad

Now, every year in November,
When Remembrance Day comes round
I stand by mum, an old lady now,
Hold her hand and gaze at the ground.

I know in her head she's still young,
In love with her wonderful John,
And me, I just ask God to
Look after my dad so long gone

I pray that one day in heaven
We'll be together, we three,
Dad will hold mum close in his arms
And reach out to his daughter (me!)

Rosanne Butler

Myanmar – a window opens

As I stood to preach in a village church just outside Yangon last month I was glad the window beside me was wide open. The small wood and grass-mat church was packed full of people of all ages. The temperature outside was in the high 30s and I was feeling very hot but the window let in a gentle breeze – fresh air drifting into a room full of expectant eyes. I mention the open window because it not only helped me survive the sermon but it was also symbolic of what is happening in the country right now.

The mention of Burma (the old name of the country) awakens, for many of us, memories of a dreadful war, and for those younger a whole series of war films. In more recent years the country has been in the grip of military dictators who, to a large extent, closed off the country from the rest of the world. The best known opposition politician in Myanmar is, of course, Aung San Suu Kyi, who spent almost 15 years under house arrest until her release exactly two years ago on 13 November 2010. Her release was like the opening of a small window and gradually other windows are opening and the people of Myanmar are finding their freedom. But they still have a long way to go.



I was in Myanmar during October to meet with the General Secretary of the Myanmar Council of Churches, Archbishop Stephen of the Anglican Church and a number of Independent Church leaders, to see how we can help them 'open a few more windows'. Visiting one of the small Bible Colleges where church leaders are trained I learnt that whenever they order textbooks and other Christian material from overseas they are still confiscated at the border. The only way they can receive the books they need is when foreign visitors carry them in for them. Christians still have many restrictions on their activities. (In fact I was told afterwards that the village where I preached was a 'restricted area' where foreigners are not allowed. I wondered why they asked me to run from the van into the church!)

As we enjoy our freedoms in Britain can we please pray for the Christians of Myanmar who have so little freedom, and a great deal of poverty and suffering. Pray for the opening of many more big windows, and the breath of fresh winds of the Spirit.

This year Cowley Parish has generously supported Faith2Share with a grant of £1,000. We will use part of this to support work in Myanmar. Thank you.

Mark Oxbrow

International Director, Faith2Share

Money from heaven – A small boy stunned his parents when he began to empty his pockets of coins. Finally his mother asked him where he had got all that money. “At the church” the boy replied nonchalantly, “They had plates of it.

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A WELL DESERVED AWARD

Many of you will have seen the announcement that groups from across the county have been given honours at this year's Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action Awards, which included awards to a number of individuals who were honoured for the voluntary work they undertake. Amongst those given awards was Mrs Christine (Chris) Woodman, who does so much voluntary work in Cowley Parish, and we thought you would enjoy seeing the award she has received.

Congratulations Chris – this award is so well deserved, not only because of the amount of voluntary work you undertake, but also because always a willingness to you truly

of the manner in which you do it. Always a smile, help – you are a joy to know and this award is one deserve.



The Bathtub Test: During a visit to the doctor I asked him 'how do you determine whether or not an older person should be put in a care home?' 'Well' he said 'we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the person to empty the bathtub' 'Oh I understand' I said 'a normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the teaspoon and the teacup'. 'No a normal person would pull out the plug. Do you want a bed by the window?'

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MISSION GIVING IN 2012

Times are hard but times are much harder for some people in this country and abroad. This year we, as a parish, have pledged to give £2581.00 to those that need a leg up. This amount is equivalent to 5% of the planned giving received by the parish in 2011. The charities we are supporting are:

Faith2Share:	£1000
Community Emergency Foodbank:	£200
Oxford Youth Works:	£300
Cowley Child Contact Centre:	£200
Archway:	£300
Viva:	£100
PACT:	£100
Asylum Welcome:	£100
Tear Fund:	£281

Here are some details of the less well-known charities:

Cowley Child Contact Centre: This is based down the road at the John Bunyan Baptist Church opening on two Saturdays per month where children can meet one or both parents and other family members in a safe and comfortable environment to relieve emotional distress caused by family break-up. Like many charities, grant funding has been cut, and the Contact Centre, which has been going for 16 years, continues to get new referrals.

Viva: This is an international charity with its base in Oxford. It helps traumatised or at-risk children across the world. For example on the border of India and Nepal, help is given to vulnerable Nepalese families to stop girls being trafficked to work in dangerous situations. In Guatemala, confidence –building sessions help sisters who have been abused within the family and are now receiving care in a safe home.

Asylum Welcome: This charity works with asylum-seekers and refugees in Oxford and Oxfordshire. They support those in the community and those who are detained at Campsfield House with advice on social, legal, educational and health services and help them understand their rights and to find legal representation. “As an asylum seeker here you have no identity; you are always waiting. I want to be recognised as belonging; to be able to make my contribution,” says Najaf, a young asylum seeker from Afghanistan.

PACT is a short for Parents and Children Together: It runs children’s centres across Oxfordshire, which support vulnerable children and families on topics such as domestic violence, parenting, housing and debt. Their sessions build self-esteem and extend life chances by helping families identify solutions to their problems. They also are a voluntary adoption and fostering charity where therapy services help children come to terms with any trauma experienced prior to adoption so that any placement is less likely to break down.

Joan Coleman



The Beauty Room
Katie Boyd
Beauty Therapist and
Electrologist
07912 546099
9 Copcot Place
Horspath, Oxford
OX33 1FW
katie.thebeautyroom@hotmail.co.uk

The Origins of Cowley

Part Twenty Six : Father Benson

As a sequel to last month's article about Father Benson it seems important to me to catalogue the many schemes he initiated in the second half of the nineteenth century to make life more tolerable for the ordinary people of Cowley. It is important to note that it was at this time that the new parish of Cowley St John was formed. However, the rest of Cowley would certainly have benefitted from the following schemes.

Before Oxford began to expand eastwards the area was mainly orchards and fields and there were few facilities for residents. Shops and other commercial enterprises gradually became established. As there was no welfare state at the time, health care, education, housing and other welfare services were usually provided by the church, charitable organizations, private individuals and provisions under the Poor Law. Some people fell between these stools and barely survived. Father Benson saw the need for action.

Fee-paying schools had been set up in the area but many local families could not afford to send their children to them. Father Benson established four schools: the Robin Hood School (now SS Mary and John Primary School), an infants' school, a boys' school and a girls' school. Much smaller fees were asked than private schools but even these were abolished after the Free Education Bill in 1891.

In January 1867 a coal and clothing club was started. By paying a weekly amount subscribers were guaranteed coal and clothing. Payments spread over weeks made this easier for those on low incomes. The cost was 6d per week for 24 weeks for coal and 3d per week for 48 weeks for clothing. A Mr Castle delivered coal free of charge for poor people.

There was a lying-in club for pregnant women. This was started at the same time as the coal and clothing club and worked in much the same way. The cost was 3d a week for 24 weeks which entitled a mother to loan a complete pack of baby linen. This pack was required to be returned, clean, at the end of the first month after the birth.

A soup kitchen was opened in 1867 at Mr Castle's Brickyard in Stockmore Street (the same Mr Castle who delivered the coal). Soup was served three times a week for 1d for a quart.

Adult education was organised in a variety of ways. The venues were in the classrooms of The Robin Hood School and both the boys' and girls' schools (at the bottom of James Street). Lectures and concerts were held in the school room in Princes Street where the East Oxford Community Centre now has its home. In the evenings the schoolroom was open as a reading room for men. This was open from 6.30 – 10 pm for 1d per evening, 2d a week, for 1s.6d. a quarter. Newspapers, books, magazines and games were available. Members had to be over 16 years of age and for an extra 1s.0d. per quarter reading, writing and arithmetic lessons were on hand on Wednesday and Friday nights.

A parish room was set up and weekly mothers' meetings were held. The local Temperance Society and Junior Temperance Society were formed and not only did they hold regular meetings but concerts, magic lantern shows and celebratory teas as well to celebrate anniversaries, Christmas and Easter.

Local societies were also instigated by Father Benson. He founded the Horticultural Society, the Musical Society and, later, the Vocal Society all with the good Father as president. The Needlework Society was established, too, "to provide industrious women with employment" and to sell work, properly done, at a cheap rate.

A great believer in social activities and fun, Father Benson organised parish outings including visits by the choir to other parishes. Sunday School trips included taking a party of 500 children on two houseboats from Folly Bridge to Nuneham Courtenay. Summer celebrations in South Park saw East Oxford and Cowley children enjoying swings, merry-go-rounds, Mr Punch and all kinds of games. Each child received a bun and a packet of sweets to take home.

As I mentioned last week Father Benson usually had a pocketful of sweets and handed them out frequently to the children when he visited "his" schools. He was a much-loved character who went on to spread the Christian message to the wider world but he certainly holds an important niche in the development of life (religiously and socially) in Victorian Cowley.

FAMOUS HYMNS : MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE

This modern hymn which we often sing at our Patronal Festival is based on a prayer attributed to St Francis, and has an interesting story behind it.

Most of the Modern Hymns which have received widespread popularity in recent years have come from the Evangelical wing of Protestantism. This simple, but highly effective adaptation of the prayer of St Francis comes from the pen of a South African born Catholic and has been popularized throughout the world by the Franciscan Communications Centre in Los Angeles, California.

The author, Johann Von Templehoff, who writes under the name Sebastian Temple was born in Pretoria in 1928. He started writing books at the age of nineteen and lived in England for seven years before moving to the USA, living in California until he died in 1997. He now has 12 albums of songs and hymns to his credit.

He wrote these verses in response to a request for a collection of songs for the Franciscans Third Order Church in Los Angeles. In a letter he says as follows:

“I wrote so easily that I took it for granted that I could write music to the prayer of St Francis. The Album’s other 12 songs fell out of my lips and on to the tape recorder very easily and I wrote them in two days. The third day was left for the Peace Prayer. Though inspirations for all came easily its strange form drove me crazy. I could not come up with anything that sounded like music. I tried for a whole morning but nothing came. Finally, disgusted I looked at the little statue of St Francis on my shelf, and said angrily ‘Well if you want to write it, You do it – I can’t.’ I got up, went to the kitchen, made a cup of tea and drank it. When I returned to the guitar, I picked it up, had the tape running and the song fell out of my mouth as it was recorded a few days later.”

Such direct feedback from an original writer is very rare, and I find it quite fascinating, and hope you do too.

This is indeed a lovely and meaningful hymn and I shall think of this story now every time I sing it.

John Shreeve

PS For full text of hymn see English Hymnal or similar book

PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

8 July 2012: Verity Prudence Instone
Frankie John Smith

12 August 2012: Alyssa Mary Boyce-Hall
Jayden Dale Charlie Boyce-
Hall

9 September 2012: Lexie May Kerry
Jonathan Cleminson

14 October 2012: McKenzie-Lee Tyler
McNamara
Nicole Courtney Norwood-
Clark

Weddings

10 August 2012 Jonathan Woodhams & Sarah
Danes

11 August 2012 Andrew Griffiths & Kathryn

Breeze

25 August 2012 David Brewerton & Charlotte
Turner

Funeral Services

21 March 2012 Fredrick James (Jim)
Thompson

11 June 2012 Christine Orman

13 June 2012 Philip John Norris

10 July 2012 Wayne Robert Morgan

18 July 2012 Frederick Charles (Vin)
Vincent

3 October 2012 Italia Iolanda Mafalda
Mastroddi

8 October 2012 Esther Mary Kemp

1 November 2012 Sheila Manyon

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The last meeting of the PCC was held on the 19th September 2012 at St Francis's Church, when the following items were discussed:

- The financial position of the Cowley Parish was discussed fully, especially because there were increased demands on the money it raised and its reserves were being used at an alarming rate especially as the Parish Share and the cost of services were increasing.
- In addition, the PCC had received permission to proceed with the repair work needed at St James' Church. A grant of £2,000 has been obtained from the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, but as the total cost was in the region of £25,000 further applications for grants were being made.
- There was discussion on possible ways on supplementing any grants received and improving the reserves held by Cowley Parish, and it was agreed to set up a small committee to look into "giving" and fund raising.
- A leaflet is being produced on Legacy Giving. The possible content of such a document was considered, and work is continuing on the production of a leaflet for wide circulation.
- It was noted that the quinquennial inspection had taken place at St Francis' Church, and the outcome was awaited. However, it was noted that more work needed to be undertaken on the electrical circuits which would be considered in more detail at the next PCC meeting. In addition, a number of improvements needed were discussed,
- The Old School Building, Beauchamp Lane, had been gutted inside to remove dry rot and fungus, and the building will now be made watertight. This will allow discussions to proceed on its future use, and a number of ideas had already come forward.
- The Church Office was hoping to set up an electronic diary so that all events at St James' Church, St Francis' Church and St James' Church Centre can be recorded centrally.
- Safeguarding: There had been changes to the Regulations on the way the Parish deals with checking those who had dealings with children. The necessary amendments will be made to the policy and this will be displayed in the church buildings.

The next PCC meeting is on the 20th November 2012 at 7.30 pm at the St James' Church Centre

THE NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND WORSHIP AT WEMBLEY STADIUM

Wow!, I never thought I would have the opportunity to shout and cheer at Wembley stadium among thousands of fans (Jesus fans that is) but that is what happened on Saturday 29th September at The National Day of Prayer and Worship. Ed and Jill Ling kindly gave us a lift to the event on a beautiful, sunny, Saturday morning and on arrival the stadium was buzzing.

Soon the stadium swelled with approximately 32,000 Christians from all denominations from all over the country. The atmosphere was electric as worship bands including Matt Redman, Tim Hughes, Hillsong, Noel Robinson and LZ7 sang out well known Hymns and songs accompanied by the All Souls Orchestra and choir. What an awesome sight it was to see and hear thousands of Christians worshipping God, singing and dancing on a sea of Mexican Waves. Prayers went up for the whole nation and the world. The Lord's Prayer was read

out in many different languages from every tribe every nation and every language. It was like a foretaste of heaven! How did this all come about? Well the Convenor of this event and speaker, Jonathan Oloyede, said this:

'Today marks the partial fulfilment of a number of dreams and visions I received from the Lord over the period of some eighteen years. Early in the nineties, I was granted a vision where thousands were gathered in a massive stadium. The atmosphere was filled with worship as we waited the Lord's arrival. The stadium was Wembley. The Lord said, "When my people gather, I am the One who speaks..." "The essence and spirit of today is Unity in prayer towards revival, renewal, restoration, and reformation."

What a privilege it was to be a part of this amazing vision.

Beverley Hughes

RECIPES

Parsnip and Apple Soup

Ingredients

1 oz butter
1 tbsp sunflower oil
2 medium onions, chopped
1 lb 5oz parsnips, cut into 1 inch pieces
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 lb 5oz Bramley apples, peeled, quartered and cut into chunks
1³/₄ pints vegetable or chicken stock
5fl ozs milk
flaked sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Melt the butter and oil in a large saucepan. Gently fry the onions and parsnips for 15 minutes, or until the onions are softened. Add the garlic and apples and cook for a further two minutes, stirring regularly.

Pour over the stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for about 20 minutes, or until the parsnips are very soft. Remove from the heat and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Blend the mixture in a food processor until smooth.

Stir in the milk, adding a little extra if required. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Bacon Clanger

This is a very old regional dish very much part of traditional food in the Oxfordshire area. It is a real winter comfort food and a great way to use up odd pieces of bacon. You may persuade the butcher to save some for you.

For the pastry crust:

8oz plain flour
4oz shredded suet
About 5fl ozs cold water

For the filling:

6oz uncooked bacon (smoked or unsmoked)
1 large chopped onion
1 teaspoon dried mixed herbs
Ground black pepper

Mix the flour, suet and water to a dough in a mixing bowl. Wrap the dough in greaseproof paper and chill in the 'fridge while you chop the bacon and onion for the filling.

Grease a large pudding basin and roll out the suet crust into a round about the size of a dinner plate (use a little flour on your rolling pin and board)

Cut a slice from the pastry circle (about 60 degrees like a slice from a cake. Reserve this slice for your lid. Moisten the cut edges of the remaining circle and gently ease this into the pudding basin to make a lining. Seal the cut edges.

Fill the middle with layers of chopped bacon and onion and sprinkle in the herbs. Season with ground pepper.

Use the slice of pastry to form a round lid for your clanger. Moisten the circumference and press firmly over the top to seal.

Put a large saucepan half-filled with water on the stove and bring to the boil.

Cover the basin with greaseproof paper and tie with string. Tie a pudding cloth over the whole basin or failing this sit the basin on a large sheet of kitchen foil and seal it completely.

A good tip here is to make a strap of several thicknesses of kitchen foil which will fit right under your basin and up each side. This makes it easier to lift out of the hot water after cooking.

Lower the clanger into the pan of boiling water, making sure that the water does not reach the top of the basin. Turn down the heat and simmer gently for at least 3 hours with the saucepan lid on. Keep checking to see if there is still enough water to reach up the sides of the bowl.

Remove the basin from the pan, remove all the foil, paper, string etc and turn the clanger on to a serving dish. You may need to loosen round the edges with a knife.

Serve with parsley sauce and vegetables. This dish can be made with shortcrust pastry for a lighter meal but the suet crust is the way my Granny made hers!

REPORT FROM ST CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL

It has been a really busy term here at St Christopher's. In September we welcomed a number of new members of staff, who have all settled in really quickly and been made to feel welcome by all the children.

There have been some interesting and exciting topics taught in school this term, which have also meant some trips out. The children in Year 5 and 6 have been looking at local history with their 'My Oxford' topic. This also meant a trip into Oxford on the bus with a visit to the Ashmolean museum and a walking tour around the city centre, sketching architecture and gargoyles. They have produced some beautiful artwork inspired by their visit. Year 3 have been studying Romans and spent a day at Chedworth Roman villa, learning how the Romans would have lived. They have made mosaics, Celtic roundhouses, gladiator armour and even practised weaving. Year 2's topic has been 'Robots' and the children hugely enjoyed a visit from an Oxford University team who brought a full-sized robotic car. Year 4 are working hard on their Egyptian topic and they will be visiting Highclere Castle in December

to see the Egyptian display there (the teachers are looking forward to seeing the home of 'Downton'!). Year 1 have been looking at 'Journeys' and have been out on local walks. They had a visit from Science Oxford to do a workshop on 'Pushes and Pulls' which was really enjoyable.

As a school, we are determined to give our children every opportunity to help them succeed. We have signed up to the Oxfordshire Reading Campaign, which has received much publicity in the local press. The staff involved will begin their training for this after the half term break and we will be looking to involve as many volunteers as possible to help with listening to the children reading.

On the sporting front, we have taken part in 2 partnership sports events at Oxford Spires. The Year 5/6 team participated in an Indoor Athletics Event. 3 teams of children from Year 3/4 entered the 6-a-side football event. The teams were placed 1st, 4th and 5th, with the 1st placed team progressing through to the City Finals in March. Well done to all our sports teams!

Sheenagh Broadbent – Deputy Headteacher

FILM AT THE CENTRE

The new film club got off to a flying start on Friday, 12th October when members enjoyed a showing of "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel". The film, which was chosen by Howard, was much appreciated even by those people who had already seen it.

The allocation of 50 membership places is now full and most members have received their cards. Those who have not will be able to collect theirs on future club nights. The cards entitle members to bring along a guest to any performance thus reassuring all our readers that this is not an exclusive club, we welcome visitors.

The next club night is on Friday, 9th November when the film will be "**Mamma Mia**" starring Meryl Streep, Julie Walters, Colin Firth and Pierce Brosnan and many more. It has a PG certificate. Many members will have already seen the film but it has such a feel-good factor that we feel sure it is worth another showing.

The film we have chosen for pre-Christmas showing on 14th December is "**It's a Wonderful Life**" starring James Stewart and Donna Reed. A classic Christmas film with a U certificate it is suitable for all the family and requires a pocketful of tissues.

In response to popular suggestions we are showing "**The Help**" on January 11th – more details about this in next month's Chronicle.



ANGEL TREE – REMEMBER THE CHILDREN

Angel Tree is a Prison Fellowship programme that enables those in prison to send a gift to their child/children at Christmas. For someone in prison Christmas is one of the most difficult times, and for their families. It is the season when the divide the prison walls bring can seem too much to bear. The Angel Tree programme seeks to lessen the devastating effect of this divide, by helping families to stay in touch. A prisoner can apply to the Chaplaincy team to have a gift sent to their child. Gifts are then bought, wrapped and sent by prison fellowship volunteers and Angel Tree supporters around the country. The prisoner has an opportunity to send a hand written message to accompany the gift to make it extra special. My Prison Fellowship team and I are co-ordinating the Angel Tree Project in Oxford through our Prison Fellowship prayer group ministry. I am aware that our congregations at St. James and St. Francis Church have already given to a number of charities already and may feel anymore giving too much to bear in this difficult financial climate. However if you would like to contribute either by a small donation towards posting the gifts or would like to be a sponsor of a child by purchasing a suitable gift for us to send to a child then please contact me for info on how you can make a contribution. Thank you.



Beverley Hughes

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

OCCASIONS FOR ALLELUIA

by David Adam. (SPCK. 2012).

As the cover blurb says “This is a captivating book” and I certainly found it so. The author David Adam (for many years Vicar of Holy Island, Lindisfarne) explores in turn our natural ability to rest, to see, to know, to love, and to enjoy – first in relation to our surroundings and then in relation to our Creator. By the end of the book his hope is that a deepening awareness of the glories of the world around us will lead us time and time again to delight in exclaiming “Alleluia”.

A taster from the chapter on the Joy of God. “There are some pretty dour and grave Christians who appear to say ‘If it is joyful, it is sinful’. I like to remember the words of a short prayer attributed to St Theresa of Avila; ‘From silly devotions and from sour-faced saints, good Lord, deliver us!’”

For me this book is a ‘must read’ – perhaps one chapter a day as part of a time of reflection and quiet. But I have also read extracts at 12noon Holy Communion at St James instead of a sermon and I expect you will hear me quote it again in a sermon. But better you get a copy and read it yourself!

Tony Beetham

THE ISLAND

by Victoria Hislop

A very readable book, a book which once started is difficult to put down. It is the first book by Victoria Hislop and has been very well reviewed. It tells the story of Alexis Fielding, a young woman trying to sort out her own feelings and, while doing this, finds out the story of her mother’s past which she has hidden from her daughter. It gives a good insight into the life of lepers up to the middle of the 20th century with visits to Spinalonga, Greece’s former leper colony, off the coast of Crete. It is an absorbing tale which carries real emotional involvement, showing how families were affected when family members had leprosy both the loss of that person and the stigma attached to it from the larger community. A friend of mine spent her holiday on Crete whilst reading the book and actually visited Spinalonga, seeing the ruined houses which had been deserted since the late fifties - I can only imagine what an experience this must have been.

Sally

Gardening

By now all our daffodils should have been planted in the gardens to give their early roots time to develop. It is now time to plant the tulips for a lovely display in the spring. I prefer to grow short tulips so that they do not get blown over by the wind. Choose carefully, and we can have tulips from March to May. I like the botanical tulips, which are often multi-headed and shorter as well as being early and bright.

It is really too late to plant bulbs for indoor flowers at Christmas, except for the tall scented Paperwhites (daffodils) which will flower in 6 to 8 weeks from planting. Amaryllis (hippeastrums) may still be planted for those glorious rich trumpets to brighten the room in spring. Each year I try to keep my amaryllis bulbs, drying them off, and then starting them back into life in autumn, but sadly they seldom produce those big fat buds, only leaves. Has anyone got the secret? Or shall I continue to feed the molluscs with the leaves after flowering?

The autumn is time to plant new fruit trees, planting them level with the soil and staking them well before the gales rock them. Clematis can also be planted

in autumn. They need to be a few inches deep to avoid clematis wilt and to keep the roots cool and moist. They prefer water-retentive soil and so need rotted compost added to the planting hole, and then mulched well. Clematis then benefit from stones or other plants to keep the root area cool. More planting that we can do now is that of rose trees. They need to be 1 inch deep.

Mycorrhiza are the new things I have considered for my rose plantings. Just sprinkle a little into the planting hole, so that they are in contact with the root ball. These are various fungi which help plants to take nutrients like phosphates and other minerals from the soil. The mycorrhiza receive carbohydrates in exchange. The fungi, in association with roots, have been noted in 400 million year-old specimens. So the fungal/root association is not a new development!!!

Press on this autumn, don't clear out all the leaves – leave some to keep others warm, and do look forward to a colourful spring.

Diana Pope

Have you ever been lost in a plum tree?

I have a large Victoria plum tree near the bottom of my garden. If I go down the garden further than the end of the garage I carry a sweep stick, a long white cane with a roller ball at the far end, this keeps me on path. One day last month I decided to investigate the plum tree to see what sort of crop I had. Several people told me I had a good crop which seemed to go against the general run of things this season. I arrived safely on the grass by the plum tree meaning to walk round the tree feeling for fruit.

After a short time I was blocked by a branch. I thought I was near the fence and ducked under the branch. I found myself hemmed in by branches and I could not find my way out. I climbed over low branches, ducked under higher ones but I could not get out onto the clear grass. I was using my sweep stick all the time but to no avail, I could not find a landmark. I struggled round for what seemed a long time and I began to get apprehensive. My neighbours were out so there was no one in the adjoining gardens. I have an emergency pendant - could I press that and admit to being lost in a plum tree in my own garden? I did non-stop climbing and ducking and I began to think I would have to press the button when my sweep stick hit something solid. It could have been the fence or maybe the shed or perhaps just the path. I struggled to follow the direction blocked by branches all the way. I ducked, I wove, I broke through, I climbed over and eventually I broke out and I was by the shed and after that all was well and I was very relieved.

I do not recommend getting lost in a plum tree. My children and grandchildren are still laughing about it. Incidentally I had a massive crop of plums.

Una

GOLDEN NOVEMBER?

It may seem early but we tenants of Elder Stubbs allotments have already perused the seed catalogue for next year and had to get our orders in by 10th October. The seeds are very much cheaper than bought in any garden centre or from other mail order companies and the Elder Stubbs Trust gets a percentage of the prices. So it is win win. But it certainly means you have to think ahead. However, having the remains of this season still with us, it is easy to think what varieties worked and which did not but I am always tempted to give something new a try.

We had a good year with runner and broad beans but very poor for potatoes, onions, peas, sweet corn and butternut squash but I have got ornamental gourds rampaging as I write.

Growth is slowing and, weather permitting, now is the time to tidy up the plot, getting rid of diseased foliage and digging over bare areas in preparation for next spring. I am trying to get a load of manure delivered this autumn so it can be dug in at the same time.

A lot of stuff can be composted but also it is great to have a bonfire to get rid of woody material, perennial weeds like couch and disease problems. In a built

up area it is not very neighbourly to have a smoky conflagration and it can be rare that you have a pile dry enough to burn quickly with little smoke and with no wind to blow smoke around! My, but don't we all love a bonfire!

I shall be buying fewer seeds this year as I am not growing for a plant sale in 2013. I thought I would give it a break. Anyone like to give it a go?

I suppose we shall be putting away the lawn mower for the winter soon as the cold weather is coming. It need not be all doom and gloom. I remember a mid-October weekend in Yorkshire a few years ago when we were in t-shirts and the temperature was in the high 70s! So I am looking forward to gorgeous autumn colours in that sunshine that might come.

24th November to 2nd December is National Tree Week and near that week we will be planting a tree in the churchyard at St James' to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee. Did you know that it is now current wisdom to dig a square hole for a tree? Apparently, this encourages the roots to extend outwards rather than being confined to going round in circles.

Joan Coleman (hopefully not going round in circles!)

SIGNIFICANT DATES IN NOVEMBER

Wilfred Owen, the famous poet of World War I was killed in action on 4th November 1918. He led his company across a canal but was cut down by machine-gun fire. The war ended just one week later.

The man who invented the saxophone, Adolphe Sax, was born in Belgium on 6th November 1814.

One of history's most famous quotes, "Dr Livingstone, I presume", was said on 10th November 1871. The journalist Henry Stanley finally met the African explorer and missionary in the Tanzanian bush and Stanley greeted his quarry with those words.

The Suez Canal connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea opened on 17th November 1869. The canal did, in fact, turn the continent of Africa into an island.

November 21st 1911 saw women of Britain rioting in Whitehall when they were yet again refused the vote by Parliament. The women smashed the windows of many government buildings as hundreds of suffragettes went on the rampage. Women were not allowed to vote until after the end of World War I.

The telephone number 999 was given a new meaning on 29th November 1937. From 8 am on that day on dialling that number you got straight through to Scotland Yard.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Extracts from The Cowley Chronicle September 1965 RECEPTION DATE FOR NEW PRIEST AT ST FRANCIS

The Reception Service for the new priest-in-charge at St Francis' will be held on Friday, September 17, at 7.30 pm. The new priest, Fr. Hilton M Carty comes to Cowley after being in the Diocese of Bristol since 1960, where he was doing general pastoral work as assistant priest of St Agnes' Church.

Before this, Fr. Carty ministered in the West Indies. He was born in Antigua, educated there and then

at Codrington College, Barbados, and ordained in British Guiana by the Archbishop of the West Indies.

In British Guiana, he served as assistant priest in New Amsterdam and Georgetown, priest-in-charge in Demerara and was parish priest of several churches, the last of which was St Paul's, Plaisance.

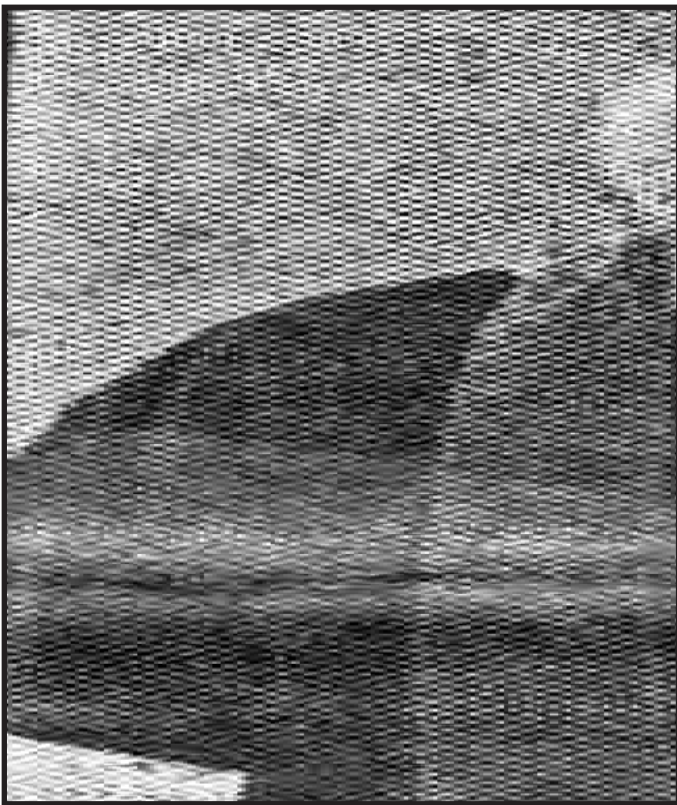
He will, of course, be living in St Francis' House with his wife and their four children. He says that he is especially interested in religious plays and pageants as a means of teaching the Christian Faith, (as well as providing entertainment).

September will be a busy month for St Francis. As well as welcoming their new priest, they will be saying goodbye to Fr. And Mrs Wall and their family. The farewell will be on Thursday, September 2, at 7.30, with the presentation at 8.30 pm.

Refreshments will be served.

This year, the eve of St Francis and Harvest Festival fall on the same day. There is to be a Harvest Supper, after the Evening Service at about 7.45.

Only 80 tickets are being printed, due to limited accommodation, and it is hoped to fill the hall and to sell all the tickets.



A new business was opening and a friend of the owner wanted to send him flowers for the occasion. However, when the flowers arrived the owner read the card in horror: "Rest in Peace". The owner rang the florist to report the obvious mistake, and added how angry he was. The florist replied calmly "Sir, I am really sorry for this mistake, but rather than get angry you should imagine that somewhere there is a funeral taking place today, and they have flowers with a note saying 'Congratulations on your new location'"

FROM THE ARCHIVES

THE FRANCISCANS

Many people know something about the Franciscans who are coming to lead the 'Learning to Pray' in September. The printed leaflet that has been handed out has inside it the story of the beginnings of the Society of St Francis in the Church of England.

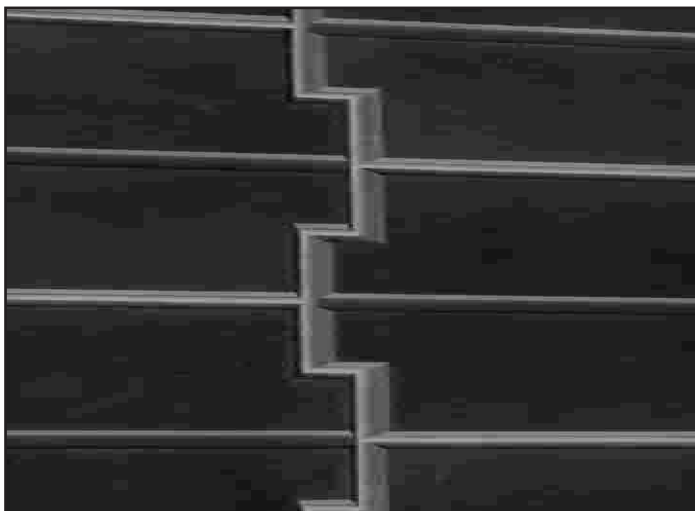
It all sprang from the handful of priests and laymen who wanted to help the unemployed during the depression in the late 1920's and early 1930's. They tramped the roads without money or work, in the same way as those they were trying to help had to. Then they were given an old farm near Cerne Abbas, where unemployed men could be helped; in some cases they trained them for a new job in which they could work. These priests and laymen eventually took the vows of poverty, celibacy, obedience and inspired by the example of St Francis, they took the name of St Francis. They did anything that seemed right for the society. They helped soldiers during the war, displaced people in Europe afterwards, seamen of other nations in East London. They helped with missions and special campaigns in parishes all over the country.

Now there are Franciscan Friars in New Guinea, Australia and Africa. There are about 70 friars and about 25 novices who hope to become professed friars in due course. About a quarter of them are priests and called "Father" and the rest are laymen and are called "Brother". They all wear a brown habit (ankle-length) with a white rope girdle, with its three knots which represent the three vows they have made of complete personal poverty, celibacy and obedience to the Father Minister.

The Sisters are coming from the Society of St Margaret, East Grinstead. This community was founded in 1855 by Dr J M Neale (the author of many hymns) and at first the Sisters used to nurse people in their homes (a thing unheard of in those days), and take charge of the family if need be. Soon a small orphanage was started as well and today the community still concentrates chiefly on the work of nursing and caring for children. They run the school of St Agnes and St Michael at East Grinstead, the Hostel of God on Clapham Common for those who are dying and in need of nursing care, and at the Convent in Chiswick, they have a guest house for elderly women and a hospital ward for them.

At Ventnor in the isle of Wight, 150 delicate children, most of them asthma cases, are cared for and educated until they are strong enough to live a normal life at home. The sisters also work with children in schools, orphanages and hostels in South Africa and Ceylon.

Right at the root of all that, the Franciscans and the East Grinstead sisters work to a strict rule of prayer and worship. These are ordinary men and women who know that for their work, nothing is more important than the prayer from which they derive their strength and inspiration. They will have much to teach us.



HOW IS YOUR LOCAL KNOWLEDGE?

Each month we are going to challenge our readers to identify a Cowley landmark. Our roving photographer, Les Hemsworth, will choose a local view to get you thinking. Answer next month.

Last month's answer:

Fire station garage doors, The Slade

DIARY DATES TO REMEMBER

Women's Institute

Monthly meetings on 3rd Wednesday of month
from 2 – 4.30 pm

November Meeting: Talk: "Here and There"

Speaker: Miss A Withes St James' Church
Centre

Mothers' Union

Monthly meeting on 3rd Monday of each month
November Meeting: Preparing contribution to the
parish Christmas Tree Festival

St James' Church Centre

Christmas Gifts and Craft Fair

Saturday, 3rd November 2012, 10 am – 2.00 pm

St James' Church Centre

All Souls Service, remembering departed loved
ones Sunday, 4th November 2012

See Link for times

St James' and St Francis' Churches

Film Club

Friday, 9th November 2012 6.30 pm

Mamma Mia, Cert PG St James' Church Centre

Remembrance Sunday

Sunday, 11th November 2012 St James' and St
Francis' Churches

Mothers' Union Quiz night with puddings

Friday, 16th November 2012, 6.30 pm

St James' Church Centre

£5 a table

Cowley Local History Society

Tuesday, 20th November 2012, commencing at 8.00
pm

Talk: Tales from Victorian Cowley

Speaker: Rosanne Butler

United Reformed Church, Temple Road, Cowley

Membership fee £15 (OAP £13)

Visitors welcome

£3 per meeting

National Tree Week

24th November to 2nd December 2012

Tree will be planted in the Churchyard at St James
to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee during this
week

Parish Quiet Morning – Welcoming the Light

Saturday, 1st December 2012, from 10 am St
James' Church

More Information contact:

Helen Beetham (01865 770923)

Christine Woodman (01865 778078)

'Let's Light up Christmas' – Cowley Festival of
Christmas Trees – Theme Christmas Carols Friday,
7th to Sunday, 9th December St James' Church

Cowley Local History Society

Tuesday, 11th December 2012, commencing at 8.00
pm

Talk: Oxford Gaoler, Engineer, Builder, Architect and
Artist

Speaker: Mark Davies United Reformed Church,
Temple Road, Cowley

Membership fee £15 (OAP £13)

Visitors welcome £3 per meeting

Film Club

Friday, 14th December 2012, 6.30 pm

"It's a Wonderful Life",

U Certificate St James' Church Centre

Film Club

Friday, 11th January 2013, 6.30 pm

"The Help"

REVIVAL ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

The end of August saw Ed, me and 3 friends in Birmingham, along with 2,500 other Christians gathered together for the 'Revival Alliance' Conference, held at New Bingley Hall, Birmingham.

Maybe you'd like to hear some highlights?

- The first speaker, John Arnott said that the world today is not the same as it was 20 years ago, and he spoke of multitudes of people becoming Christians world-wide, in countries such as China, Indonesia, India, even Iran where there are thought to be half a million secret believers. His main message was how lives are transformed as people encounter Jesus and become 'thrilled beyond measure'.
- Bill Johnson encouraged us all to 'camp around the presence of God' and he continued to speak of how there's an oak tree in the acorn, so as we give thanks for the answers we see to our prayers so those small seeds can grow into an almighty kingdom.
- Gerald Coates popped in to encourage us to continue praying for Parliament with his news that of the 200 new politicians 50% are born again Christian believers.
- Many of the Intercessors present declared their belief that the tide in the UK had turned and that the Kingdom of God was beginning to grow again, that revival is stirring.
- It was amazing worshipping with 2,500 people passionate for Jesus; at one point the worship band (led by Martin Smith) were on their knees and the awe inspiring sound of angels singing could be heard!
- Healings and miracles occurred during this event, with many people leaving crutches and even mobility scooters behind to leap and jump and touch their toes on the stage in front of us all.
- Carol Arnott spoke about how we, the Bride of

Christ, have become wearied, discouraged, hurt and disappointed but that God is in the process of restoration of His people in the UK. She pointed out that none of us can escape the tests of life and how we all have 'desert experiences' but if we, like Joseph, keep our hearts right with God then he restores once we have been made ready by the painful experiences.

- Randy Clark ministered healing to many people present with 'metal' in their bodies, those who had had operations and procedures for artificial joints or repaired, pinned fractures etc and as we prayed scars and other signs of these ops disappeared with much joy and delight!
- Georgian Banov played his fiddle with such glee everyone ended up dancing in whatever space they could find!
- Che Ahn encouraged us to be sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who, she said 'is always speaking but we are not always listening.'
- Heidi Baker shared about her work in Mozambique with orphans. She has some tremendous stories!

So much happened that amazing weekend! It is wonderful to hear how God is working in the UK as well as around the world.

One thing Ed and I have started doing with some friends, is praying in St James' Church on Thursdays while the bells are being rung. We simply pray as the Holy Spirit leads, asking blessing on Cowley as the sound of the bells fills the air. We start at 7.30 and pray for about an hour, although it seems like 10 minutes! If you feel moved to join us, please do – everyone welcome! If you can't physically come on Thursday evenings but you can hear the bells from your home, then pray as you listen to them.

God Bless

Jill Ling

SAINT OF THE MONTH Edmund of Abingdon

In the early days of Oxford University students were accommodated in halls (think of New Inn Hall Street) but very little of these ancient premises now survive except the college of St Edmund Hall. This is known affectionately as “Teddy Hall”. The St Edmund to whom the college is dedicated is this month’s Saint of the Month.

In the Oxford Dictionary of Saints he is known as Edmund of Abingdon and was, very much, a local character. Edmund was born around 1175 AD (not long after our parish church was built), the eldest son of a wealthy merchant Reginald Rich. He was educated at Oxford in grammar and then took a course at Paris in the Arts. On his return to Oxford in 1195AD he taught in the new Arts faculty at a time when the new logic was becoming known at the university. By this time Edmund had decided to become a monk and returned to Paris to study theology. After living for a year with the Augustinian monks at Merton Abbey in Surrey he took his degree in theology at Oxford. He studied the Bible closely and between his induction into holy orders and his rise to the priesthood he pioneered the philosophy of the equal importance of the literal historical and spiritual nature of Biblical writing.

In 1222 he transferred to Salisbury and lectured at

the cathedral school. He preached in support of the Crusades. He also was given the important role of Treasurer of the cathedral. This was not the easiest of tasks at that time as the building work on the great church was not yet complete.

In 1233 he was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. He was not particularly keen on church administration and politics but turned out to be a remarkably effective reforming bishop. He gathered round him men of talent and intelligence. He resisted a certain amount of interference from the Pope and mismanagement of the church by the crown. By mediating between the king and barons he united the Church in England and thus averted civil war.

He was on the way to Rome in November 1240 to invoke the pope’s help with his disputes with the king when he was taken seriously ill. He died in Soissy in France on 16th November at the age of sixty-five. To mark the first celebration of his feast Henry III offered a chalice, a vestment and 20 marks for candles at his shrine in Pontigny Abbey where he was buried, a mark of royal respect.

At Salisbury a collegiate college and an altar in the cathedral are dedicated to him and Abingdon, his birthplace, also reveres one of its most notable sons.

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
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MID-WEEK SERVICES & MEETINGS

Monday	8.30 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	10.00 am – 11.30 am	Little Stars Playgroup – St Francis
	2.30 pm	Parish Mothers' Union – St James (3rd Mon)
Tuesday	8.30 am	Morning Prayer – St Francis
	10.00 am	Seashells Toddler Group – St James
	12.00 pm	Eucharist – St James
	12.30 pm	Tuesday Lunch Club – St James
Wednesday	8.30 am	Morning Prayer – St James
Thursday	8.30 am	Morning Prayer – St Francis
Saturday	10.00 am – 12 noon	Coffee Morning, St Francis (2nd Saturday)

HOME GROUPS

Leader	Time/Venue
Connie Uren:	Alternate Tuesday afternoons at 2.30 pm, St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Friends of St Francis: (John Shreeve)	2nd and 4th Tuesday afternoons at 2.30 pm, St Francis Church
Tony Beetham:	Alternate Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm, St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Rosanne Butler:	Alternate Thursday mornings at 10.30 am, St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Mark Oxbrow:	Alternate Wednesdays evenings at 7.30 pm, Mark's Home
Helen Beetham:	Alternate Friday mornings at 10 am, St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room

The Parish Office in St James Church Centre is open:

Tuesday, 2 – 5 pm
Wednesday, 10 – 1 pm
Friday, 9 – 2 pm

The Parish office is currently staffed by volunteers and members of the ministry team, and is open most office hours.

Contact details: Tel: 01865 747680
Email: parishofcowley@hotmail.co.uk
Out of Hours Tel: 07501 908378
Website: www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

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Howard has Friday as his day off

Team Vicar:

Revd Skye Denno
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Skye has Friday as her day off

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