

Moving On

Two hundred years ago William Wilberforce stood up in the British Parliament and persuaded the leaders of this country that the time had come to move on. For centuries the economy of this country, and especially its colonies, had been based on slavery. Despite the horrific suffering even some Christian clergy argued that slavery could be in the best interests of the slaves themselves. Not many slaves said that! Looking back today it is very hard to understand how Christians could justify taking away the freedom of a child, selling a woman, or using a man slave as a commodity. Despite huge 'vested interests' in British business this nation was persuaded to 'move on' and to discover new and liberating ways of relating to other human beings.

After the dark days of winter, spring is often a time for moving on, for doing new things, for facing change. My neighbours have just put their house on the market and will soon move on, a number of my colleagues at work are leaving us to move on to new employment, a housebound friend of mine has just decided that this spring she will move in to the 21st century and learn to email – at 85!

In the Christian tradition Lent, the period of spring leading up to Easter, is also about moving on. It's a time for leaving behind old destructive habits and discovering new ways to live in harmony with humanity, nature and God. It's a time for a little 'spiritual spring

cleaning' - for dealing with that hidden resentment, the pride we have been keeping safely, and the anger we did not dare to express. It's also a time for trying completely new things, things that might even seem a little crazy – like starting the day half an hour earlier with prayer, or beginning a conversation in the pub about global warming and how we care for the earth God has given us. Jesus was always ready to move on, to go to new places, to get deeper in to God. How about you?

As this is the first time I have written for Chronide let me introduce myself. As well as being a priest and a member of St. James, I am the International Mission Director of the Church Mission Society (CMS). CMS was founded in 1799 and now works in over sixty countries with offices in Oxford, London, Singapore, Seoul, Nairobi, Kampala and Ghana. One of our priorities this year is combating modern slavery – people trafficked for sex, for cheap employment and for profit. You can find out more at www.cms-uk.org After 208 years in London, CMS is also moving on. In June our British offices will open in a brand new Mission Centre on Watlington Rd. – just behind BMW. You will be receiving an invitation to visit us there very soon.



Chronide



From the Registers

Funerals

12 February Francis Goodall
28 February Susan Lilian Christina Turner
Norman Henry Weller

Baptisms

25 February Lily Emma Hall

Confirmation:

There was a confirmation service on the 18th of February. Beth writes...

Bishop Bill Down came to St James to confirm six people in their faith on the 18th of February. The confirmation promises were challenging to listen to as the candidates committed themselves to God, to follow him through their whole lives. The Bishop reminded us all to recall our own commitment to God, and more importantly, His to each of us. I'm sure that most left the church that evening greatly encouraged! Please continue to pray for those confirmed: Cameron Craig, Joshua Chand, Jennifer Craft, Louisa Emms, Charlotte Grant, Samuel Ribiero.

the Friends of St Francis

The meetings of the Friends of St Francis on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month are open to anyone. We begin with Prayer for the Day from the book of Common Worship Daily Prayers. We follow this with study and discussion of a given topic. At present we are looking at The Lord's Prayer, a section at a time. Then we may bring items of news from the media, news of members of our congregations or suggestions for future activities – all to be talked over with a cup of tea.

We have a tin for voluntary donations – some of which is retained for a flower fund and some is earmarked for the St Francis project in Cameroon. We take flowers and cards to members of the congregation who are ill or house-bound.

During the past year we have hosted a Garden Party, a Senior Citizens Party, an Epiphany Service and Tea as well as occasional lunches at the Fair View Inn. All these events have been attended on average by 40 members from both churches.

For further details please ring Thelma Telling (771567)





MOTHERING SUNDAY— 18th March

As Mothering Sunday approaches, plans are being made to prepare posies to give to the congregation during the service in our two churches. Children will give posies to their mothers and grandmothers to say thank you and convey their love, and adults will take a posy for many other reasons which are important to them.

Over the last 46 years I have been one of the many people who have arranged flowers in our churches, taking great joy in making our place of worship welcoming and beautiful. Flowers are beautiful in themselves and the most important message they give us when we see them in God's house is to remind us of God's love and generosity to each of us.

We give flowers to convey messages on special occasions.

When someone is ill or unhappy we give flowers to say we are thinking of you and hope you will soon feel better. When someone dies we have special flowers to remind us of the new life that begins with death. Often giving flowers is a way of saying thank you to someone who has done something for us. Giving and receiving flowers from a loved one gives an unspoken message of love for each other.

My father was a horticulturist and grew flowers for market. My mother arranged flowers in our village church and became really interested and decided to train in floristry in London and for a number of years went into business doing wedding bouquets and wreath making. My love of flowers came of being surrounded by so many varied colours and shapes that my father grew and the beautiful arrangements my mother created.

Traditionally, the maids and farm workers who went home to visit their parents on this day are said to have picked bunches of primroses and violets as they went along the country lanes and gave them to their mothers.

Mothering Sunday comes half way through Lent and is a feast day to help us on our way to Good Friday, a day when families try to get together. Many of us will go to church and thank God for their families on this day. Another tradition is to eat a special cake on the day, called a simnel cake. I have often wondered why it was called a simnel cake – have you?

I came across this story in a book the other day which I now quote.

Parents would prepare a special meal when their children such as maids, grooms and farm workers were allowed to have time off to visit their parents.

The story tells how a husband and wife called Simon and Nellie decided to make a special cake for their children for their visit on Mothering Sunday. They found ingredients and mixed them up. They had a terrible argument about how to cook it. Simon wanted to boil it and Nellie wanted to bake it. They realised that there would be no cake if they did not settle their argument, so they calmed down and decided to do both. First they boiled the cake and then baked it in the oven. They decided the cake needed a name, so they called it Sim-nel cake from their two names.

G M Ranklin

Rosanne Interviews Nathan Phillips

Now come on, be honest, how many of us, when we have gone out for a walk have paused at the front gate and asked God whether to turn right or left? Well, certainly not me! But I'm about to introduce you to a young man who told me he often does. Not only that but his life until now has been lived in the same way. He puts himself totally in God's hands and waits to be told where he should go.

Although his parents lived in Abingdon when he was born (and he was a JR baby), by the time he was three years old his father's work in civil engineering took the family first to Yorkshire and then to Norfolk. It was there that young Nathan spent most of his schooldays. At primary school, he told me, he was the leader of the gang. His parents were regular attenders at their local Methodist church and he remembers as quite a tiny child listening to the Bible stories, joined a little later by his

younger sister, and that he had his own childish concept of God. However, as he reached his teens he began to change. At the age of fourteen he went on several Young Methodist away-days and realised that 'his' God was of his own making. He learnt that the real God was someone way outside this. Soon after, with a friend he joined a group called the Norwich Youth for Christ and realised that some of the people he met really knew God and had a personal relationship with Him. At that point he became a Christian. As young as he was he was swept along with this new-found relationship and being 'a bit of a doer', as he describes himself, he started organising services at his local church for fellow youngsters. He was very naïve but it was all part of the learning process. He recalls that at sixteen he was given a prophecy which said that by the time he was 23 he would find out what God wanted of him.

On leaving Thorpe St Andrews High School in Norfolk he came up to Oxford to study for a degree in computation. The years of university, he felt, were a resting time, not quite so restless. At St Aldates, he 'found' the Church of England. He returned to Oxford for his graduation and met an old friend of his father's who worshipped at St Aldates, Chris Scruby. Over tea at Chris' house he was offered a job at A.E.A Technology. But 'oh dear, not for me!' thought 22-year-old Nathan. Instead he decided that God needed him to do youth work on a council estate in Norwich. Whilst he was putting all his efforts into this he was told by God to come back to Oxford, so he took the job at A.E.A. that he had been offered just for the time being. He had planned to set up his own computer software company. At first this didn't seem to be working but a year later material just seemed to turn up on his

doorstep and so began his company – Noble Technology. This involved selling disks of ‘Songs of Worship’ to a variety of Christian organisations. After several other ventures into computer software development Nathan is now a freelance consultant.

This, of course means that, based in Cowley, he is still able to call St Aldates Church ‘home’ and worship there frequently. He is also within easy reach of The Bridge nightclub in Hythe Bridge Street where he loves to dance the night away most Friday and Saturday nights. Another dimension of dance which keeps him fit and happy on a Monday evening is streetdancing. Either you know or you don’t what that is. I’m not about to try to explain so track him down and ask him!

And where might you track him down? At St James Church every other Sunday morning. Last year he visited a small church in Ware in Dorset (so different from St Aldates) and God told him to find a small church near his home where he could work

with young people. So he came to our parish church. He found a warm and friendly welcome and now wants to set up a team of people to continue the work he feels God is asking him to do in our midst. You remember that he believed that at 23 God would tell him where he should go and what he should do? Well, he was sent back to Oxford and was told ‘Raise up an army for me’. So eight years on, that is what he is striving to do.

How would you describe yourself as a child?

Up to the age of eight I was the leader of the gang. Between eight and fourteen I was rather suppressed. At 14 I became a Christian and became what I was meant to be.

Has God been a part of your life since childhood?

Yes, He was working on me before I was aware of it.

In modern society is there anything which disappoints you or makes you angry?

I feel angry that the people I meet at the nightclub don’t know how precious they are.

They’ve learnt to look upon themselves as worthless.

Is there anything in modern life which you find positive or encouraging?

I think the Church has rediscovered its potential to change the world.

Do you have a treasured possession?

Not a thing. I wish there was less junk in my life.

Do you have a hero or heroine, past or present?

If I could take a week to shadow someone else and become more like him it would be Gordon Hickson at St Aldates.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

Dancing and hanging round with friends.

What makes you laugh?

Eddie Izzard and ‘I’m Sorry, I Haven’t a Clue’ on Radio 4.

Do you have ambitions for the future, say in ten years’ time?

Changing the world – preferably with a good wife!



If you watched the recent programme showing the children of Romania living in the sewers, maybe you wondered how you could help?

The charity Children in Distress has been working in Romania for many years. A few knitters in the parish make garments for the children in that country.

In the latest letter of thanks from the Sponsorship Administrator, she writes that 'Apart from our children in our hospital we are very active in the Romanian community, where children live in extreme poverty, living down sewers with literally nothing but the clothes on their back. With your help we are able to supply them with nice new warm woollies and I cannot begin to tell you how grateful they are for this.'

If you are a knitter and would like to help or perhaps give wool, please ring Thelma (771567).

Thelma Telling

The new Rector and his family look forward to a new life in Cowley.



Howard writes:

"I take very seriously the idea of having fun. We are all very excited about coming to the parish and getting to know you and having fun together. I can hardly wait."

The next healing service is at St Francis on 5th April at 7pm

Memorandum

To: Jesus, son of Joseph, Woodcrafter, Carpenter Shop, Nazareth

From: Jordan Management Consultants, Jerusalem

Dear Sir,

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the twelve men you have picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have now taken our battery of tests; we have not only run the results through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capability.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus, definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Yours faithfully

JORDAN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Unearthed by Gwen Fancutt

Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist (<i>exc 2nd Sunday</i>) All Age Eucharist (<i>2nd Sunday</i>)

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am	Parish Eucharist <i>[Family Eucharist – 2nd Sunday of the month]</i>
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Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Group – <i>St Francis</i>
	2.30 pm	Parish Mothers' Union – <i>St James (3rd Mon)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Seashells Toddler Group – <i>Church Centre</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Service – <i>St Francis</i>
	12.00 pm	Eucharist – <i>St James</i>
	12.30 pm	Tuesday Lunch Club – <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Friends of <i>St Francis</i> – <i>St Francis (2nd & 4th)</i>
5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>	
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Tea Break – <i>St Francis (1st Wed)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Thursday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	11.00 am	St Francis Prayer Group
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Eucharist – <i>St Francis</i>
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Saturday	9.15 am	Morning Prayer & Breakfast – <i>St Francis</i>

Day Off

Lorne and Michael can be contacted in the evenings and at weekends. Beth can be contacted during the day as well.

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