

A Bright Future?

Just a week ago, the parish of Cowley hosted a time of prayer, worship and sharing with the teachers, head-teachers, governors, and support staff of St James, St Christopher and St Francis schools. Almost 1,000 primary pupils attend these three Cowley schools. Increasingly, schools are being asked to take on greater roles as carers, teachers, moral arbitrators, surrogate parents, and after school child-minders. Schools and education are an integral part of every community. We have emotional connections with schools because they are the places where we send our children and grandchildren. They are the places where we, as children, learned many lessons of life. However, within education, Christian values are being eroded.

Within our Church Aided Schools at least two competing "religions" work against the teaching of the Good News that Christians have to offer. The first is the performance culture of the workplace. Within the workplace, employees and business are valued according to what they accomplish. A good business is seen to be the one that produces the most profit; a good employee is one who achieves something important for the company. Government policy increasingly demands that the religion of the work place become the foundation of school operations. Pupils, teachers, head teachers, support staff and entire schools are graded according to what they produce. The result is that pupils are subjected to increasing pressure to produce. There are more and more tests, and less time to explore ideas, identity and val-

ues. Children learn that their significance depends on their SATs results and A* grades. But children need to know that they are valued by their parents and their teachers and God, not because of their achievements, but because they are created in God's image.

"Secular liberalism" is a religion based on the belief that God does not exist and sees it as wrong to speak of Christianity in our schools. It is a belief system that tries to demand that schools give up Christian celebrations like Christmas and Easter. It also presents greater and greater objections to the idea of teaching about faith in anything except the most academic and skeptical sense.

Within our church schools these two influences, "performance culture" and "secular liberalism," are countered to an extent. The Diocese of Oxford is committed to the Christian ethos within schools and has developed many positive links with the board of education. But it is essential that the Christian faith continue to make a major contribution to education and to our moral identity as a nation.

The question is: are you content to allow our children to be disciplined into the performance culture or secular liberalism, as state schools increasingly do, replacing the Christian God with the god of the individual?

Within Cowley we have good working relationships with our church schools. Several of our members serve as school governors. Some members of our churches work within the school system. We have something to

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offer every aspect of educational life in Cowley. As part of God's call to actively serve within our community, I want to ask you to prayerfully consider using your talents and gifts to be an influence for Christ. You could be a governor (we have vacancies at two of the schools in the parish), or you could volunteer to help at our schools in other important ways. Would you volunteer to pray

every day for our head-teachers, teachers and other staff who need to know they are supported? We are also exploring the opportunity to have a youth worker in the parish beginning in January. Please pray about this and let me know how you might consider supporting this project.

Howard

Letter from **one of** the editors

Rosanne is away at the moment, enjoying a trip to India with Frank. I'm sure India will enjoy meeting both of them!

There is a disadvantage to being part of a parish with two churches and it is this: It is not possible to be fully a member of both churches, to attend all their services and events, and to know well everyone in the churches. When Howard and I spent our first day in the parish and he was interviewed for the post, we met and fell in love with members from both St James and St Francis, and immediately were faced with a dilemma – in two lifetimes we would never be able to get to know everyone as well as we would like to. For each of us in the Parish of Cowley, there are two possible responses. We can decide to be a member of one of the churches exclusively, or we can be part of the larger parish, attending one of the churches and taking part in joint activities or activities offered by our neighbouring church when we are able to.

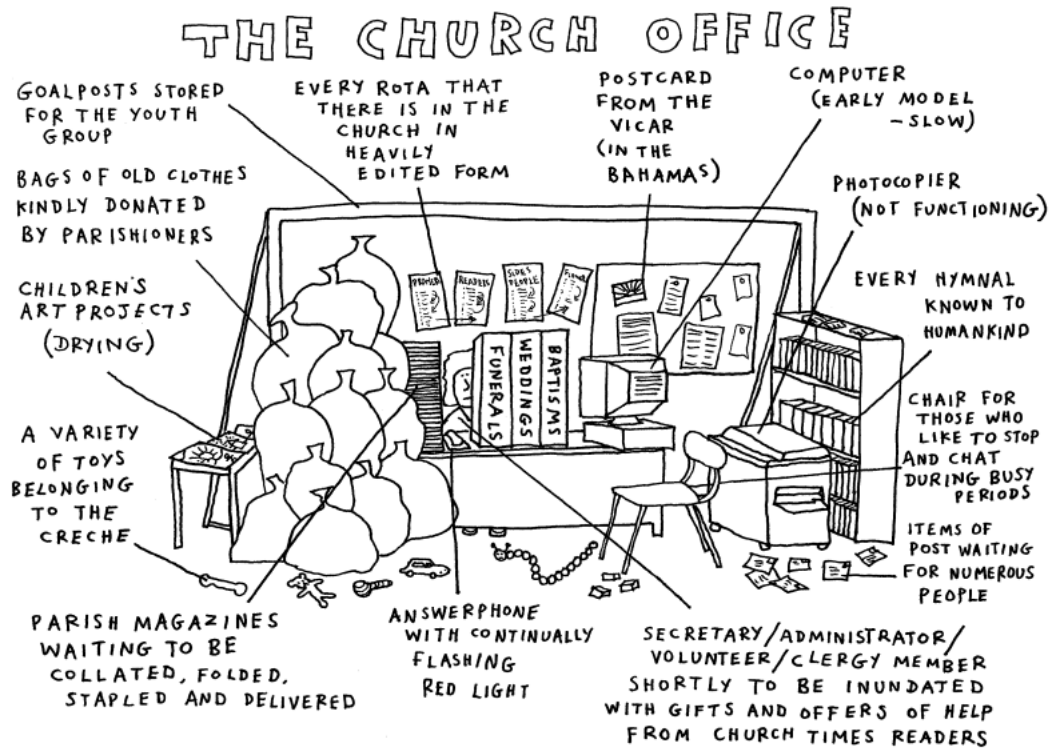
So I also believe there is a great advantage to being part of a parish with two churches: We have not one, but two church families. In October I was able to attend services at both St Francis and St James churches, as well as the Patronal Festival and lunch at St Francis and the Mothers' Union Puddings Evening at St James, walking to one and driving to the other, although both are within walking distance for many of us.

The joys and demands of living in this parish of two churches were put into perspective when we received the monthly newspaper of the Anglican church in Canada. We lived in the Diocese of Qu'Appelle, which has an area of 197,000 square kilometres. This is larger than England – 130,410 km² – but slightly smaller than the UK – 245,000 km². (These numbers are approximate.) According to the most recent statistics I could locate, the diocese has 36 parishes and 15 full-time clergy.

The Diocese of Oxford, among the largest in the country, has 300 benefices, 623 parishes, and 814 churches served by almost 900 stipendiary licensed ministers. An article in that newspaper featured a joint celebration at a Saskatchewan parish which has two churches.... **150 miles apart!** Imagine having to travel that distance to visit your sister church. Imagine the mileage that the vicar must accumulate on his car every year. We are blessed in the Parish of Cowley to have two churches nearby, such wonderful people, and so many opportunities to celebrate individually and together!

Carol

It's true – the new parish office has been in operation since mid-October when BT hooked us up to the internet and the telephone began ringing. The office opened without much fanfare, as we're still in the process of setting things up and getting organised. This will take some time but we are seeing progress. Having an office is a great step forward in ensuring that the parish runs smoothly, and that things that need to be done are done.



CartoonChurch.com

Another step forward in the life of the parish was the arrival in the office of Elaine Ulett as the new Parish Secretary. Elaine has been a member of St Francis Church for some time. She is treasurer of the Community Emergency Food Bank and helps out in the church in many ways. Elaine also teaches IT at the mental health charity Restore. Elaine is in the office Tuesdays from 12:30 to 3:00 and Friday from 9:00 to 3:00. If you would like to drop by to meet Elaine, speak with Howard or just see our new digs, we would love to see you.

Keeping in touch

It will soon be time to start writing and sending Christmas cards, especially those which need to be posted early to friends living abroad. Queuing in the post office is no joke for the best of us, but is impossible for our housebound or disabled readers. So here's a possible solution: My husband, Frank, (well-known to lots of you) has offered to do any Christmas posting necessary in the next few weeks. Just give us a ring on '453257 and he'll pop round, collect your cards ready to post, stick on the required stamps and post them for you.

There are quite a few elderly folk who would love to be able to get to church and to some of our social functions around this time of the year, so if you are a car driver and could possibly offer a lift, please do offer. Several people have told me recently that they "don't like to ask". Thank you so much to those who already offer such kindness, by the way. Also thank you to everyone who now takes The Link and The Chronicle to our housebound parishioners on a regular basis – that's really keeping in touch.

SAINT OF THE MONTH

St Andrew

Saint Andrew was the younger brother of Saint Peter. They were born in Bethsaida, a fishing port on the Sea of Galilee, to Jonah, or John, and Joanna, between 5 and 10 AD. As a young man Andrew would have studied scripture and astronomy and arithmetic at the synagogue school. John's family, and his friend Zebedee with sons James and John, were all fishermen.

Andrew and his brother were disciples of John the Baptist, who told them about Jesus. When he saw Jesus, Andrew at once recognised him as the Messiah, and became the first disciple and apostle. He brought his brother to Jesus, who "said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter.)" (John 1:42) Jesus told the two brothers that they would be fishers of men, and also called James and John.

After Jesus' crucifixion, according to tradition and early Church writings, Andrew travelled the world to preach the gospel, from Greece and Asia Minor to Scythia along the black sea. He founded the church at Byzantium (now Turkey), seat of the Eastern Orthodox Church. In some of those places he suffered great hardships. Finally, persecuted for his faith by the Roman Emperor Nero, he was given the choice of being offered as a sacrifice to the gods or being scourged and crucified, in Patras, Greece.

Some texts describe Andrew being bound, not nailed, to a Latin cross, but he has traditionally thought to have been crucified on an X-shaped cross, now commonly known as

"Saint Andrew's Cross." Like Peter, he felt he was unworthy to be crucified on the upright cross on which Christ had died. He hung for three days on the cross, even there continuing to preach.

Some 600 pre-Reformation churches in England are named after him. Scotland adopted Andrew as patron saint and the Saltire (or St. Andrew's Cross) is the national flag of Scotland.

And Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Russia, Romania, Greece, Amalfi, and Luqa in Malta. He was also the patron saint of Prussia. Among other things, he has been adopted as patron saint of fishermen, singers, and unmarried women.

St Andrew is celebrated on his feast day, 30 November, in many ways around the world. The day marks the opening of the traditional German Christmas markets.

A BBC article says this: "Saint Andrew was a 'networker' - a fisherman but also the one who brought the Gentiles (non-Jews) to Jesus and preached about him as far as the Black Sea. The saltire cross is a multiplication sign - reminding us that it was Saint Andrew who brought the little boy and his loaves and fishes to Jesus."

Perhaps that is the best way we can remember and celebrate St Andrew – by networking with all those with whom we interact, and showing them the way to Jesus by the way we live our lives.

THE PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

5 October – Janet Rowlin Namuleme – St Francis Church

Around Cowley

News Reports

Autumn Craft Fair

Only a few days to go now to the Craft Fair in the Church Centre on 8th November. It starts at 10.30 a.m. and if you want the pick of the lovely items for sale, roll up early. At lunchtime – gorgeous snacks, soup, hot drinks etc. – there will be a demonstration of the traditional art of pillow lace making. In the afternoon, by popular request, the young hand-bell ringers from St James Primary School will be on hand to entertain. This is a great opportunity to get Christmas shopping underway without the hassle of the big stores and, of course, to buy gifts which are well made and different.

Parish Calendar

As a result of the beautiful photographs of our two churches by local photographer, Les Hemsworth, a parish calendar has been suggested by a number of people. We only need to have orders for eleven copies to be able to sell them at the price of £10 each. I am sure that far more than that will be required once you've seen the pictures. Parchments, the printers, have assembled the pictures into a composite front cover, examples of which are on display in each church. It has to be money with order as we have to let the printers know the exact number we require. Stella will be collecting names and orders at St Francis and Rosanne at St James. Orders must be in by the end of November, so that they will be ready well before Christmas. Cheques can be made out to: Cowley (Oxford) P.C.C.

While we may not subscribe to all the traditions, if we're going to make Christmas puddings, it can't hurt for everyone in the family to pitch in and help, and if we take turns stirring up the ingredients, we can remember that our hearts should be stirred up in preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth. Prepared with some good things of the world, the pudding can remind us that Christ brought with him the good things of heaven.

Stir-Up Sunday

On the 30th of November we will begin our Advent journey to Christ's birthday. The Sunday before that is traditionally known as "Stir Up Sunday". The name comes from the opening words of the collect for the day in the Book of Common Prayer. Adapted, the prayer is now used as the prayer after communion for this Sunday:

*"Stir-up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works,
may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."*

A tradition evolved that Stir-Up Sunday was the day for making Christmas puddings, and like any tradition, others grew up around it.

- The pudding is made with 13 ingredients to represent Christ and His Disciples.
- Everyone in the family should have a turn at stirring the pudding, whilst making a wish.
- The pudding is stirred from East to West in honour of the three Wise Men.

•A coin (a silver sixpence or threepenny bit) was added to the ingredients and cooked in the pudding. Whoever found it in their serving would have wealth. Silver tokens were produced that could be added to the pudding to predict the fortune of the recipient: a ring or a bell for a wedding; a button for a bachelor; a thimble for a spinster; a boot for travel; a fiddle for a musician; a horseshoe for luck; or a wishbone to grant a wish.

And what tradition would be complete without a rhyme?

*“Stir up, we beseech thee,
The pudding in the pot;
And when we get home
We'll eat the lot.”*

While we may not subscribe to all the traditions, if we're going to make Christmas puddings, it can't hurt for everyone in the family to pitch in and help, and if we take turns stirring up the ingredients, we can remember that our hearts should be stirred up in preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth. Prepared with some good things of the world, the pudding can remind us that Christ brought with him the good things of heaven.

A message to churchgoers

*If after church you wait awhile
Someone may greet you with a smile,
But if you quickly rise and flee
We'll all seem cold and stiff, maybe.
The one beside you in the pew
Is perhaps a stranger too.
All here, like you, have fears and cares.
All of us need each other's prayers.
In fellowship we bid you meet*

With us around God's Mercy Seat

This poem is printed on a card and left in the pews for churchgoers at Grasmere Methodist Church, and was passed on to the Chronide by Mary Briggs.

Florence Park Family Centre Honoured

When the Oxford Preservation Trust presented its annual Environmental Awards, one of the recipients was Florence Park Family Centre, an organisation that has for some time been active in the Parish of Cowley. The centre was established in the 1980s. Eventually the building where it was based became unusable. Construction on a new centre began in July 2007, and while works were taking place, the centre operated from St Francis Church. The new centre opened on 5 June this year.

The Trust said, “The building is designed to blend in with its context, with cedar cladding and a ‘green’ roof, and a timber roof structure supported by columns providing an outdoor play area. The project has been very successful in creating a very good community building which respects the scale and character of its park setting.

Our “Other” Church

There is an exhibition running at the Oxfordshire County Record Office entitled “The History of St Luke's Church.” Most Cowley people will know that St Luke's Church was part of the parish. It served workers from the Cowley car factory and many others, from 1938 until 1993, and was deconsecrated in March, 1994. Several of our members were regularly part of the congregation there, and others will have attended St Luke's for various services or events.

Oxfordshire County Council Archivist Linda Haynes says: "We are delighted to celebrate the history of this building, which has served the local community so well in its various incarnations.

"I'm sure anyone who remembers the church as it was, will be interested in taking a look, and for those who do not there will be even more to discover."

It continues until 24 December, and is open Wednesday through Saturday, 9 am until 5 pm. John Shreeve has visited the exhibition and heartily recommends it, and reports that wonderful, and reasonably priced, coffee is also available there.

It is sobering to read the bishop's address at the consecration of St Luke's. He reflected on the generosity of Lord Nuffield and all who had given of their talents to the building, and added, "They have trusted us with this beautiful church, and it is for us to show ourselves worthy of that trust. If you set yourselves to supply the needs of the church and see to its maintenance, then you will have shown yourselves worthy to be trusted with the building which has been put into your hands tonight." This is a message which might be worth taking to those who want a church in their town, village, or neighbourhood, but never attend or support it!

Home Groups – Get stuck in!

Home groups have for some time been an important part of church life in the Parish of Cowley. You may wonder, "What is a home group and what does it do?" A home group is a meeting of 6 to 10 people who come together to have fun getting to know one another and God.

If you sometimes think, "I'm not as connected as I'd like to be with other members of the church," a home groups is a great place where that can happen, with conversa-

tion, alongside a biscuit and tea or coffee. If you've ever thought, "I don't feel really close to God these days," a home group can help there too. Most home groups encourage everyone to express an opinion about some part of the Bible that they look at together. By sharing what we have experienced as Christians, we learn from each other, and discover how to place God in the centre of our lives.

If you'd like to be a part of a home group, speak to one of the leaders listed here. We also hope to begin new groups over the next few weeks, so if the present groups don't line up with your schedule, speak with Howard Thornton, and he can help organise one at a time that works for you.

Monday morning (3, 17 November) 10:30 am Leader: Una Dean

Tuesday afternoon (4, 18 November) 2:30 pm Leader: Connie Uren

Tuesday evening (4, 18 November) 7:30 pm Leader: Tony Beetham

Thursday morning (13, 27 November) 10:30 am Leader: Rosanne Butler

Addresses for Previous Cowley Team

The Rev ds Michael and Beth Spence and Family

3/159 Victoria Road,
Bellevue Hill
NSW 2023
Australia

Father Lorne Denny

The Vicarage,
Vicarage Road,
Milton Regis,
Sittingbourne,
Kent.ME10 2BL

Rev d Stephen Hartley

St Peter's Rectory,
Charles Street,
Coventry, CV1 5NP

ROSANNE INTERVIEWS KATIE THORNTON

You could be forgiven for thinking that a girl who is growing up in a close-knit and loving Christian family, who was taught at home by her parents until she was eight and has to cope with the scrutiny of a parish environment, would be a sheltered violet. Well, not so. Katie is an independent street-wise teenager who, at barely sixteen, took herself off to stay with her brother in Canada this summer, changing planes and dealing with airport check-ins, managing luggage and so on completely unaided. Shopping, dancing, clubbing, modern music and shoes, all these subjects lit up her eyes when we chatted recently. She told me that since arriving in England she has 'bumped' around a variety of schools. She was a very special baby because after Carol and Howard had brought three sons into the world, Jordan, Adam and Christopher, little Katie was born (after a gap of ten years). Apparently her big brothers spoil her beautifully, and her holiday with them this summer was 'the best ever'. She was taken all over the place, to the theatre, the movies, and the beach and to add to all this pleasure, she had a new nephew to cuddle. Jordan and his wife had their first child about a year ago. Katie

explained that she holds a unique position in her family – the only daughter, a kid sister to her three big brothers and big sister to David, her younger brother. She and David, by the way, have a great relationship.

At the age of eight she experienced a huge change in her life when her dad brought the family to Oxford to begin his training for the ministry. Of course she and David attended school for the first time, which she said was quite scary. However she soon learnt the joy of making new friends and she transferred from Cutteslowe First School to St Frideswide's Middle, happily enough. There she was taught by a teacher described as wonderful. Within a few years, though, the family had moved again, this time to Luton. Katie, aged eleven, was in for a culture shock.

She went to a big comprehensive secondary school where the pupils were very different young people from any she'd ever encountered in her life. Always encouraged to share her experiences with her parents, she came home with stories of children the same age as herself, who smoked, drank alcohol and 'did' drugs. "I couldn't believe it," she said and went on to tell how

street-wise these youngsters were in so many ways. A multi-cultural school, it taught her a lot about many things. It was where she learnt the fun of dancing, her first 'crush' and using make-up. On this last subject I was impressed to hear that when Howard was finally resigned to her using make-up, he decided she wasn't going to put 'rubbish' on her face. So he took her out and bought her a range of some of the best products on the market ("Good for him," I thought). From what I have written so far you might think that school work played a minor role but that was far from true. At fifteen Katie came to Cowley and transferred to Cheney School in Headington. There she sat for her G.C.S.E exams this summer and got such good results that she is now studying for her 'A' level courses in English, history and theatre studies, and religious studies. She has moved on from Cheney to St Helen and St Katherine's School in Abingdon. The girls there come, mainly, from fairly privileged backgrounds, another big change for her.

Katie's first love is drama. She started with Stagecoach in Oxford, then did several plays with a Bedfordshire drama group called Applause.

In her first year at Stage-coach Harpenden, she was awarded the Student of the Year trophy. Her high school drama teacher recommended that she should take her studies to a higher level. For some time she travelled to London each Saturday to the Sylvia Young Theatre School where she had lessons in scripted drama and street jazz. At the moment, due to a change of schools, she is taking a break from her regular Saturday excursions to London, but very much wants to resume in the spring. Incidentally, the head of drama at Cheney, whom she appreciated enormously, was Aldyth Thompson, daughter of Fr. Ross. Many readers will remember her as a little girl in the parish.

Determined to achieve the necessary qualifications for her future career, Katie has set her sights very high. She passionately wants to study at Oxford University because she knows that a degree in English from there would open many doors. She then plans to move back to Canada to take a second degree in speech pathology. Her ambition is to become a speech pathologist, believing that speech therapy is so important particularly for children with difficulties in communicating.

Her social life is very full. She has a wide range of friends, including a special boyfriend (nothing serious) who has a strong Christian

faith. She has a group of girl friends with whom she goes dancing at the Park End nightclub. She describes herself as 'a bit of a chavv' musically enjoying hip-hop, R and B, in fact anything she can dance to. And shopping? Ah, well, Katie knows her London stores such as Selfridges and Top Shop, but she also loves the smaller shops tucked away down side streets which specialise in vintage clothes and shoes. Oh, and whilst on the subject of shoes, she was thrilled to tell me she bought six pairs while she was on holiday in Canada this summer!

How would you describe yourself as a little girl?

I was so imaginative. I loved music; even when I was really small I needed to dance. I had a really good childhood, I was so happy.

Have you any special childhood memories you'd like to share?

We've got a picture of David and me in Canada. Outside the window there is deep snow. Inside, David and I are 'sunbathing,' lying on towels in our swimsuits and sunglasses under a parasol.

Has God been part of your life since childhood?

Yes, definitely, but I want the world to know me not as a vicar's daughter (they sometimes have preconceived ideas) so at my school Alpha course I've introduced myself

just as Katie. I want to express my ideas my own way about my faith and not the way people expect.

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

I guess bumping around a few schools I've found that stereo-typing can be so demeaning and make people feel so insecure. So I'd like to eradicate all preconceived ideas about social class.

Is there anything about the modern world which you consider to be positive?

I think just PEOPLE. I love connecting with people. That moment when you know you're talking about the same thing – great.

Do you have a treasured possession?

I have a big stuffed dog called Toffee. He was sitting in a store when I went to spend my Christmas money and I decided I wanted him. Some woman came in and picked him up and I thought that was it – I was so upset. But she didn't buy him so he was mine and I love him to pieces.

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

Ann Frank.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

Rock-climbing, swimming, cycling and, dancing of course. I love reading (had

an obsession with Harry Potter). Now I'm reading 'Persuasion', I really love Jane Austen.

Are there any places in the world you'd like to visit?

I would love to go to Africa because it is so different – the animals and the people.

Do you have any plans for the future?

Two degrees, a career in speech pathology and maybe end up living in Canada.

Getting to know you

A new vicar for the Parish of Cowley

The Revd Susannah Reide has been confirmed as the new team vicar for the Parish of Cowley, with responsibility for St Francis Church. She and her family will soon move into the parish and Susannah will be installed in January. We are pleased to be able to introduce her to you through this letter recently received. And we all look forward to getting to know her in person very soon! – Howard

We are very much looking forward to moving to Cowley. Benjamin is doing a countdown ("only 6 weeks to go!") Marlborough has been a beautiful place to live but is a fairly small market town and we are looking forward to being part of a big city with a greater variety of people. The Cowley Road takeaways look inviting (no Caribbean takeaways in Marlborough.)

My husband Fergus works part-time for Oxfordshire County Council in the city centre. He is pleased that he'll be able to cycle to work instead of driving.

We have three young children: Benjamin, Max and Otilie. Benjamin is five and excited about the move, but we are not yet certain which local school will have a place for him. Max is just three, very cheerful, and loves digging

sandcastles. Otilie is 6 months old and finds her brothers entertaining.

We have gained a new perspective on life in the last few years. One of the main things we have been spotting on visits to Cowley is where the best playgrounds are. We look forward to getting to know the rest of the local area and community once we have come to join you.

In my previous parish, I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with people of many different ages and backgrounds. I am inspired by church as a place where God brings together very different people to grow in love and understanding of God and the world. I like the way that church introduces you to all sorts of places, and I like taking assemblies and getting to know pupils and staff at schools, and understanding how different school communities work.

Before being called to work in the church, I worked for Voluntary Service Overseas, helping people to find places where they could train teachers in Africa and Asia. Mostly I was based in London and I also spent 2 ½ months working in Cambodia.

I look forward to meeting you and discovering what our shared vision for St Francis and St James will be.

Susannah



© Dave Walker

The Unknown Warrior

As we come up to the time of yet another Remembrance Day, it is difficult for us to imagine the strength of feeling there was throughout all of our nation about the appalling carnage and loss of life during the First World War. There was hardly a family in the land that hadn't been touched by tragedy, in one way or another. Many families had lost several sons during the conflict and were swamped with grief and sorrow.

Then someone in the army came up with the idea that one dead soldier should be chosen to receive special honour, and to represent in the nation's consciousness all those soldiers, especially those who had been lost without trace. Surprisingly, those in authority quite quickly gave their approval to this plan. Then came the question of how they should make the selection. It was important that it should be seen to be impartial. An officer was chosen to do the honours, and before him were placed the bodies of three unknown soldiers. He made his choice completely at random, and the body was brought to the coast of France and transported across the Channel. Upon arrival in this country it was put on a special train and sent to London. Although all of this had been done without any publicity, somehow word had got out, and all along the journey to the capital, people from all walks of life came and stood in silence beside the railway line to pay their respects. Two or three weeks later, in the presence of the Royal Family and thousands of onlookers, the body was lowered with great ceremony into a tomb in Westminster Abbey, where we can still visit today.

Then came the idea of a National Memorial in central London which everyone could visit, and the Cenotaph was designed and put into place. The original one was made of wood, later replaced by the stone one that is there in Whitehall to this day. After the Last Post was sounded on that first Armistice Day, it was said that the silence was so palpable, you could almost have cut it with a knife, as people stood in their thousands shaken by grief.

At this time there were no local memorials throughout the land, but such was the strength of feeling that those who had given their lives in battle should be named and remembered in their own locality, that crosses and memorials began to spring up in towns and villages everywhere. Now these include those killed in the Second World War also. People wanted a focal point where they could stand and remember, just as they did in London. Of course Christian churchgoers wanted the names displayed in their own churches and have memorial services there, which is what we do today. And so we can repeat once again the immortal words by Lawrence Binyon.

"They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning –

"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!"— John Shreeve

Remembrance Sunday services will take place on Sunday, 9 November, at 10:00 am at St James and 10:30 at St Francis.



Lorna Hind



Mary and Martha: a tale of two sisters

November is a very busy month in our house, with the birthdays of three daughters, two grandmas and a nephew, a gymnastics competition, concerts, school parents' evenings, and the start of baking for Christmas events season, all to be slotted in amongst the usual work, school run and shopping, cooking, cleaning, tidying and washing. I feel exhausted just thinking about it, and it's only just begun!

At times of domestic stress I often find myself wondering about the story Luke told of Mary and Martha, and the visit Jesus made to their home. Martha was a busy bee, bustling about trying to rustle up food and make sure the place looked presentable enough to receive an important guest, while lazy Mary didn't lift a finger to help her. Luke paints a very vivid picture of the two sisters, one practical, organised, efficient – perhaps bossy, definitely resentful; the other maybe more thoughtful, contemplative, and a listener rather than a talker. As Jesus knew, Mary just had her priorities right at that moment. The housework will always be there, but Mary seized her chance to sit as close to Jesus as possible and to soak up his teaching. Reading the story again, it seems to me that Jesus was full of compassion for Martha and valued her company more than the 'service' she provided.

We can all feel like Martha sometimes – overworked and underappreciated – but as we start the countdown to Christmas, let's remember the lovely example of Mary, who forgot about her domestic duties for a while and just wanted to concentrate on loving and serving Jesus.

Luke 10: 38-42 (New International Version)

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Oops. Unfortunately we missed off the end of last month's God in my life. It concluded: My experience of coming to St James has certainly enhanced my sense of God in my life, but I have also seen God working in the lives of many people I have come to know. This is not a church where people take a back seat (including those who sit at the back of the church!) It is a church where the Spirit is working (and with gusto!)

December events and services

It's never too early to think about Christmas. At least that's the view of the shops, and also of Scrooge by the end of *A Christmas Carol*. So here are some parish dates for your December diary.

Invite your friends to something new: the Parish of Cowley Christmas Concert will be held in St James Church on Saturday 13 December at 7:00 pm. The event features the Jubilee Brass Band (who performed at the Cowley Proms) as well as music from our own Patrick Gilday. It promises to be a fine evening. After the concert we'll have mulled wine and mince pies. There will be a retiring collection.

We are looking forward to Christingle Services on Sunday 14 December at 4:00 pm, at both St James Church and St Francis Church. We are inviting students and parents from St Francis, St Christopher and St James schools to enjoy this service. We hope you might come to this service that invites us to show our support for children all over the world.

Our Christmas Carol Services take place on Sunday 21 December at 7:00 pm in St Francis and in St James churches. The service, based on an idea from the chaplain of Kings College, Cambridge, features Good News for everyone. It tells the story of our faith, from Creation to the birth of Jesus. Come and enjoy this service and sing some favourite Christmas carols.

Advent and Christmas Schedule

30 Nov - 1st Sunday in Advent	10:00 am St James 10:30 am St Francis
7 Dec - 2nd Sunday in Advent	10:00 am St James 10:30 am St Francis
13 Dec - Christmas Concert with Jubilee Brass Band - 7:00 pm St James Church	
14 Dec - 3rd Sunday in Advent	10:00 am St James 10:30 am St Francis
- Christingle Service	- 4:00 pm in both St Francis and St James Churches
21 Dec - 4th Sunday in Advent	10:00 am St James 10:30 am St Francis
- Carols by Candlelight	7:00 pm St James 7:00 pm St Francis
24 Dec - Crib Service	4:00 pm St James 4:00 pm St Francis
- Midnight Service	11:00 pm St James 11:00 pm St Francis
Christmas Day - Holy Communion	10:00 am St James 10:30 St Francis

What's the Jam For?

Since the summer, jam has been for sale some Tuesdays at the Lunch Club. People have asked where it comes from, and where the money goes.

In 2007 I was part of a group that travelled to Tinca, Romania, to do building work, mural painting, and work with children with disabilities in two safe homes. The kids and their carers crept into my heart, and I wanted to do something to support them. I don't have a lot of spare money, but I do love to make jam, and so I decided to make jam as a way to raise funds.

Romanian Relief (RR) was begun when two teenaged girls went to Romania on a short-term project. They found such great need that when it came time to return home, they stayed. They've shown that when you open your heart and tell God, "I'll do whatever you help me to do," much can be done.

The first project was to build two family Safe Homes. The live-in parents and staff treat these children with the loving care they would give to their biological child. All the children are special,



but I'll tell you about Lydia.

She was born to a mother in a psychiatric hospital. She was a perfectly normal child at birth, but the hospital had no facilities for babies, in a culture where paying bribes gives access to care, and having no money means having no care. She spent eight years in the psychiatric hospital and an orphanage, tied to her bed.

When RR met her, they thought perhaps she was beyond help. She was extremely aggressive, especially against herself. She was still in nap-

pies, and when the orphanage had none, she might spend all day in her wet clothes on her wet bed. RR spent time with her daily at the orphanage. One day when they visited she had a huge bump half the size of her head, caused by internal bleeding from bashing her head on the wall. She had not received medical care.

When RR took her into one of their safe homes in January 2006, she still had a bump on her head, and sores on her hands from biting them. She now had a mum and dad, but didn't know the meaning of the words. They didn't dare hope for improvement. But they loved her and cuddled her, and provided professional care.

When I met her she could walk and had a loving relationship with her new parents and siblings. She will probably never be able to speak, having been left without care for so long. She had learned to use the toilet, feed herself, and communicate using simple sign language. In many ways she is now a happy, healthy child. Romanian Relief has changed her life.

When I stayed there, I heard her crying out in the night from the nightmares she still has. While her new grandmother soothed and comforted her, I wondered what life is like inside Lydia's mind, in her room, in the night, with the memories she must carry.

Twelve children with disabilities, who had been abandoned, are being cared for in the two Safe Homes. In each home, a couple has taken these children as their own, and will be their family for the rest of their lives. The children receive medical care, physiotherapy, and other professional help as required.

Romanian Relief helps in three other ways. They constantly meet mothers who want to abandon a child, usually because they have no means of caring for the newborn baby. RR supports families with donated food and clothing, and sometimes by improving living conditions by fixing a roof or cementing a floor. They help the families get ID papers and birth certificates, so they can have access to state support and education.

They run long-term foster care placements, finding families for children who would other-

wise spend their lives in institutions.

And they are building a medical clinic that will provide vaccinations, contraception and prescriptions, and teach pregnancy and postnatal care. It is hoped that this will result in a community of 3,000 men, women and children receiving medical care; with family size better controlled; babies being born healthy; babies going home rather than being abandoned; and children protected from disease by vaccinations.

All this life-changing work, because two “ordinary” teen-aged girls with no particular training or special skills made a commitment to do what they could, with God’s guidance and provision, to help some kids they met. Isn’t this an example of God can do, through people who are willing?

So if you come to the Tuesday Lunch Club and buy a jar of jam, you will be helping these projects, because all the profits go to Romanian Relief. Thank you!

Carol Thornton



Gardening Notes

On dry brisk mornings there is great enjoyment in working in the garden, tidying up for the winter, or turning the soil for the winter frosts to break the clods up. On foggy days when the garden is dripping and cold it is much nicer indoors where you can prepare for your luncheon sandwiches and stews in comfort and warmth. So try using your windowsills as your garden, and grow fresh healthy salads ingredients for the winter.

Remember mustard and cress on damp flannel or as hair on egg shell faces? Yes? Try them again on tissue [not compost, they get mucky!]

Sprouting Seeds.

There are many other sorts of seeds which can be grown for your sandwiches and salads, sprinkled into your soups and stews, or tossed in stir fries. Different seeds are hot and spicy, or sweet and not full of forbidden calories, or nutty with no allergy fears. They will grow in 2 to 7 days unless your windowsill is very cold. Put a few into a jam jar, cover the top with a piece of muslin and an elastic band. Then rinse with water twice a day until the jar has a nice crop in it. Then eat and enjoy. [The sprouts will keep in the fridge for a few days if you are not very hungry, still rinse daily]. Sprouting seeds grown like this include mustard and cress, aduki beans, broccoli sprouts, fenugreek, mung beans, radish, rocket, and even sunflower. Special mixtures will also be available if you cannot choose

Living Greens.

These are also called microgreens, and all you need is a tray of vermiculite to grow them. This is clean and lightweight so a better option than compost. Seeds need to be generously sprinkled over the surface, not too thickly, [doesn’t that sort of advice annoy you? How thick, how generous?] Then they need to be kept moist. A spray mister is helpful here. When the little seedlings are about 2 inches high [OK – 5 cm for you younger ones], cut them and use them whole. Try mustard and cress, broccoli, chervil and rocket.

Do let me know how you get on with these seeds. Which ones are the most tasty, which are most versatile. Have any of them given you a new lease of life with all those tasty vitamins?

Diana Pope

Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Sung Eucharist
"Church at the Centre" every fourth Sunday
Also Sunday Lunch : every second Sunday

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am Parish Eucharist

Mid-Week Services & Meetings

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

Team Rector

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The Chronicle

Deadline for stories: 27th Oct.
Next issue out: 2nd Nov.

Rosanne Butler : Tel: 453257

Carol Thornton : Tel: 747680

Wanted

Your Christmas Dinner Guest!!!

December's Chronicle will be a bumper double issue, as it won't be published in January. As a special Christmas feature, we'd like to hear from you. If you could choose from among everyone who ever lived, at any time in the past, present, (or future) who would you invite to share your Christmas dinner, and why? It can be someone famous or influential or beautiful, or someone who would think of themselves as very ordinary – although we know from Rosanne's interviews that everyone is extraordinary in some way. Please share your thoughts with our readers! It doesn't have to be long; a paragraph or two will do nicely. You can hand them in person to Rosanne or Carol, or email Carol at parishofcowley@hotmail.co.uk, or post them to Benson Cottage, 11 Beauchamp Lane, Oxford OX4 3LF.