

# ***ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE***

**JUNE/JULY 2008**

As you can see, this month's issue of the parish magazine is a bumper edition; it's a two month summer special as I shall be away on my honeymoon when the next issue should be compiled! (It is exciting seeing our wedding in the church calendar!) Hope you enjoy two months' worth of news and features, and I look forward to catching up with church goings-on when I return.

Jacque x

PS - please continue to send articles and updates to me as usual, and it will all go into the next edition, which will be another double to cover August and September.

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## **THE ORIGINS OF ELSTOW ABBEY AND CHURCH**



What follows is a synopsis of TJ Elliott's recent researches for the Abbey website and of the address he gave at matins on the day of the Friends of Elstow's 2008 AGM. You will find the full text at <http://www.elstow-abbey.org.uk/> under the "History" tab.

Our Abbey was founded as a Benedictine house in 1078 by Judith, Countess of Huntingdon and Northampton.

The Order of St Benedict was one of several "Orders" in the Middle Ages and it included such as the Cistercians and the Trappists. The Benedictines were eventually exiled from England, along with all the other Orders, at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries (about which more in a moment), but returned in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century following

John Keble's famous sermon of 1833, which gave so much impetus to the revivalist Oxford Movement. The Benedictine Order was socially rather more practical than other Orders and, in contrast to the more austere and contemplative nature of such as the Franciscans, was noted for its sense of community responsibility. The aim of St Benedict was, to quote one authority, to create "*an organisation and a set of rules for the domestic life of such laymen as wished to live as fully as possible the type of life presented in the Gospel*". There are today in England some forty-one active Benedictine foundations and many more elsewhere in the world. The nearest to us is probably the convent in Turvey, to the North-West of Bedford.

Judith, a niece of William I and an heiress in her own right in Normandy, was by then the widow of the young but powerful Earl Waltheof of Northumbria, and thereby hangs a much distorted tale.

As a young man, Earl Waltheof, a northerner born and bred, had, in and before 1069, conspired unsuccessfully against the newly victorious William the Conqueror. To bring him to heel, William, with what he no doubt considered a judicious bit of bribery, married him off in 1070 to his niece, Judith of Lens. In 1072, Waltheof was sweetened with the additional earldoms of Northampton and Huntingdon. But three years later, he was fatally implicated in, but was not, I believe, the moving spirit of, yet another and equally unsuccessful rebellion against William. This time, he didn't get away with it and was duly beheaded outside Winchester in 1076.

After he died, Judith was allowed to inherit his estates in the Midlands, but not in the North, where his power base had been. This ensured for William a sort of buffer state between the ever-turbulent northerners and the more pragmatically peaceful southerners.

Some chroniclers suggest that Waltheof in fact brought about his own demise by unwisely confiding in Archbishop Lanfranc, standing in as regent for an absent William who, at the time, was dealing with some recalcitrant barons in Normandy. And this is where an unverifiable story intervenes. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states that Judith had been a material and damning witness against her own rebellious husband. This may or may not have been the case. The reason adduced for this tale is that she was so loyal a niece to William that she could not bear to let her husband get away with treason. In support of this, but not terribly convincingly, there was also a widely held theory that her subsequent refusal to remarry and her founding of the Abbey at the age of about 24 were acts of remorse.

The verifiable facts can be summarised as follows: In 1078 and two years after her husband's execution, Judith, along with some other like-minded people, founded an abbey at Elstow. Then, in the early 1080s, she refused her uncle William's demand that she remarry. This was to have been with Simon de Senlis, another Norman and the first Earl of Northampton. On her refusal to remarry, Judith was promptly stripped of all her titles and possessions in England, causing her to run for cover back to Normandy to her birthright properties in Lens, whereupon she drops completely out of sight.

The implications of all this are that, firstly, she was rather fonder of her husband than was often the case (they were more or less the same age, which may have had something to do with it) and secondly, that William did not feel himself under any obligation to her for anything. Which, of course, means that the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle may, and not for the first time, have been leading us up the garden path.

The Abbey was dedicated to St Mary, and Judith was the most notable of the several patrons, endowing it with property locally so as to secure its financial future.

The Abbey's main day-to-day duties as a Benedictine foundation were the observance of the daily offices, and the sharing with the laity of the celebration of the Mass. Senior members of the Abbey, and particularly the Abbess, were also closely involved in the supervision of the Abbey's various estates and properties. In case you are surprised, this was entirely in line with normal Benedictine practice. The vestigial remains of the once substantial buildings, meticulously excavated by David Baker OBE between 1965 and 1970, are a mute witness to the Abbey's erstwhile prominence.

There are various surviving written references to it in the years which follow its foundation. The earliest is Henry I's charter of confirmation, granted in about 1126 and as an indication of the Abbey's status, Henry became a patron himself. Later on, there is mention of various scandals over the not untypical but nonetheless unseemly behaviour of the nuns and of the consequential disciplinary action taken. There are inevitably records of lawsuits, one of which even led to Papal intervention before it could be settled.

But storm clouds were blowing up.

After, and before, the break from Rome in 1534, Henry VIII was particularly badly in need of cash. On account of the money which would in consequence revert to the crown, he caused the country's religious foundations to be dissolved on the technical, but questionable, grounds of treason. Some houses, such as the modestly wealthy Elstow, preferred to "surrender" rather than go to trial and risk losing everything if – or rather when – the courts decided against them. The end result was that, by about 1540, there were no monastic houses left in the country.

There was, at this point, a vote carried in Parliament to create a cathedral for Bedfordshire using the now available site but the successful motion never received the royal assent hoped for by its sponsor, Bishop Gardiner of Winchester. And that, really, was that, except that the Church, significantly reduced in size to what we have today, was to survive the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Abbey's consequent more-than-partial destruction in around 1580. Although the Abbey was closed down and virtually destroyed, the "laity" of Elstow did not go away, which explains why we still have the Church which was to become the "Bunyan" Church and, much later, to be graced with, in the South aisle, that chapel of remembrance for the Far East Prisoners of War from the 1939-1945 world conflict.

But there remains one major loose end in this story. Why is the Abbey Church dedicated not just to St Mary, but also to St Helena, mother of the first Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great?

The answer to this mystery lies in the fact that, in 1272, a man called Ivota, about whom nothing is known today beyond his name, built a chapel in the grounds of the Abbey and dedicated it to her. It is this which accounts for the dual dedication of the surviving Church to St Mary as the dedicatee of the Abbey and to St Helena as the dedicatee of the Abbey's Chapel. The Chapel itself no longer exists.

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**LESSON READERS JUNE/JULY 2008**

<b>June</b>	10.00am	Romans Ch.1 v.16&17 & Ch.3 v.22-31	Matthew Ch.7 v. 21 - end	Lynn Faulkner
<b>1st Green</b>	11.15am 6.30pm	Deuteronomy Ch. 5 v. 1 - 21 Ruth Ch.2 v. 1 - 20	Acts Ch.21 v. 17 - 39 Luke Ch.8 v. 4 - 15	Ann Knight Peter Moss
<b>June</b>	10.00am	Romans Ch.4 v. 13 - end	Matthew Ch.9 v's 9 - 13 & 18 - 26	John Hinson
<b>8th Green</b>	6.30pm	1 Samuel Ch.18 v. 1 - 16	Luke Ch.8 v. 41 - end	Glynis Annan
<b>June</b>	10.00am	Romans Ch.5 v. 1 - 8	Matthew Ch.9 v. 35 - Ch.10 v.8	Alastair Laverty
<b>15th Green</b>	11.15am 6.30pm	Deuteronomy Ch.10 v. 12 - Ch.11 v.1 <b>NO EVENSONG AT ELSTOW</b>	Acts Ch.23 v. 12 - end	Eric Crossen
<b>June 22nd Green</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Young People's Service Romans Ch.6 v. 1 - 11 1 Samuel Ch.24 v. 1 - 17	Matthew Ch.10 v. 24 - 39 Luke Ch. 14 v. 12 - 24	Lizabeth Burrows Margaret Eastwell
<b>June 29th Green</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	<b>JOINT SERVICE AT ST. MICHAEL'S AT 10.15AM</b> Isaiah Ch.49 v. 1 - 6 Ezekiel Ch.34 v. 11 - 16	Acts Ch. 11 v. 1 - 18 John Ch.21 v. 15 - 22	Miriam Clark Dorothy Steele
<b>July 6th Green</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Romans Ch.7 v. 15 - 25 Deuteronomy Ch.24 v. 10 - end 2 Samuel Ch.2 v.1 - 11 & Ch 3. V.1	Matthew Ch.11 v.16 - 19 & 25 - end Acts Ch.28 v. 1 - 16 Luke Ch.18 v. 31 - Ch/19 v. 10	Barbara Routledge Peter Batiuk Catherine Parrish
<b>July 13th Green</b>	10.00am 6.30pm	Romans Ch.8 v. 1 - 11 2 Samuel Ch.7 v. 18 - end	Matthew Ch.13 v's 1-9 & 18-23 Luke Ch.19 v. 41 - Ch.20 v.8	John Hinson Peter Moss
<b>July 20th Green</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Romans Ch.8 v.12 - 25 Deuteronomy Ch.30 v.1 - 10 1 Kings Ch.2 v.10 - 12 & Ch.3 v.16 - end	Matthew Ch.13 v's 24-30 & 36-43 1 Peter Ch.3 v. 8 -18 Acts Ch.4 v. 1 - 22	Ken Webb Organist Glynis Annan
<b>July 27th Green</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Young People's Service Romans Ch.8 v.26 - end 1 Kings Ch.6 v.11-14 & 23 - end	Matthew Ch.13 v.'s 31-33 & 44-52 Acts Ch.12 v. 1 - 17	Delphine Fordham Margaret Eastwell
<b>August 3rd Green</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Romans Ch.9 v. 1 - 5 Song of Solomon Ch.5 v. 2 - end 1 Kings Ch.10 v. 1 - 13	Matthew Ch.14 v. 13 - 21 2 Peter Ch.1 v. 1 - 15 Acts Ch.13 v. 1 - 13	Lynn Harris Ann Knight Barbara Routledge

**SIDESMEN'S ROTA**  
**JUNE/JULY 2008**

<b>June 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mrs. A. Morris.</b>	<b>Mrs. B. Routledge.</b>
	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. E. Burrows.</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mrs. V. Whyatt-Routh.</b>	
<b>June 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mrs. S Batiuk.</b>	<b>Mrs. Brown.</b>
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mr. P. Moss.</b>	
<b>June 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mrs. R. Albon.</b>	<b>Mrs. J. Barnicott.</b>
	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. A. Knight.</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>NO EVENSONG AT ELSTOW OPEN AIR SERVICE AT CARDINGTON AT 6.00pm</b>	
<b>June 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>The Young People.</b>	
	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. M. Crossen.</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mrs. G. Annan</b>	
<b>June 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. E. Burrows.</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Miss. M. Eastwell</b>	
<b>July 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mr. C. Albon.</b>	<b>Mrs. S. Brown.</b>
	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mr F. W. Crossen</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mrs. C. Parrish.</b>	
<b>July 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mrs. S. Batiuk.</b>	<b>Mr. P. Batiuk.</b>
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mr. P. Moss.</b>	
<b>July 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mrs. R. Albon.</b>	<b>Mrs. J. Barnicott.</b>
	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. A. Knight.</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mrs. V. Whyatt-Routh</b>	
<b>July 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>The Young People</b>	
	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. M. Crossen.</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Miss. M. Eastwell.</b>	
<b>August 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mrs. A. Morris.</b>	<b>Mrs. S. Brown.</b>
	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. E. Burrows.</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mrs. G. Annan.</b>	

**If any of these dates are inconvenient, please would you arrange a swap and let Colin Albon know that you have done so.**

**THE CHURCH CALENDAR**  
**JUNE/JULY 2008**

**JUNE**

1 <sup>ST</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 3	10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School (JRC)
		11.00am	Coffee, Cakes, Ploughman's lunches in Tony and Margaret Baron's garden - 209 Church End.
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (JRC)
		12.30pm	Wedding rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers meet in the Church Hall
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Sing and Sign in the Church Hall
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall
4 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
5 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		12.00noon	Monthly Lunch club in the Red Lion
		8.00pm	Meeting of the Finance and Standing Committee at 43 Armstrong Close, Wilstead
6 <sup>th</sup>	Friday	2.30pm	Visit to Southill Park House and Gardens with Tea by kind invitation of Mr & Mrs Charles Whitbread. Cost £10.00. Names MUST be given in beforehand. Please either sign the sheet in church or telephone the Secretary to The Friends of Elstow Abbey, Derek Norman on 01234 262325
7 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	12.30pm	Wedding -Steven Waterfield and Jacqueline Pryce
8 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 4	10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School. (JRC)
		12.00 noon	'Couples' Sunday Lunch at The Red Lion
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (David Wells)

9 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers meet in the Church Hall
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
10 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	9.30am	Bedford High School visit
		10.00am	Sing and sign in the Church Hall
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall
11 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
		1.15pm	Bedford High School visit
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
12 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	9.30am	Bedford High School visit
		11.00am	Holy Communion (Stephen Smith)
14 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	9.30am	Working Party in the Churchyard
15 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 5	10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School (SS)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (Group)
		6.00pm	Open air service at Cardington.
			NO EVENSONG AT ELSTOW
16 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
17 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Sing and Sign in the Church Hall
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall
18 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
19 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Wedding Rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
21 <sup>st</sup>	Saturday	2.00pm	Children's Workshop Picnic
		2.00pm	Wedding of Jason Parke and Donna Reed (JRC)
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 6	10.00am	Young People's Service (JEH)
		11.15am	Parish Communion (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)

23 <sup>rd</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall	
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse	
24 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Sing and Sign in the Church Hall	
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall	
25 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall	
		3.30-6.00pm	Afternoon tea in the Vicarage - all welcome	
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall	
26 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)	
		7.30pm	Meeting of the Parochial Church Council in the Church Hall	
29 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday			
		Pentecost 7	10.15am	Joint benefice Service at St. Michael's
			11.15am	Morning Prayer (Group)
			6.30pm	Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion and the Laying on of Hands for Healing (JRC)
30 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall	
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse	

## JULY

1 <sup>st</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Sing and Sign in the Church Hall
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church hall
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		12.00noon	Lunch @ the Red Lion - all welcome
		8.00pm	Finance and Standing Committee meet at 43 Armstrong Close, Wilstead
5 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	2-5pm	Cardington Fete
6 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday		

	Pentecost 8	10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School (Revd Colin Davey)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (Group)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (Robert Heley)
7 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		7.45pm	Bedford Archdeaconry Budget Presentation at Elstow (SS)
8 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Sing and Sign in the Church Hall
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall
9 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Wedding Rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
10 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		7.00pm	Wedding Rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
		7.45pm	South Bedford Council of Churches AGM at London Road Methodist Church
11 <sup>th</sup>	Friday	1.30pm	Wedding - Jonathon Prior & Dawn Mather (JRC)
12 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday		Bedford River Festival
		2.00pm	Wedding - Daniel Hicks & Georgina Walker (JRC)
13 <sup>th</sup>	Sea Sunday		
	Pentecost 9		Bedford River Festival
		10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School (JRC)
		11.30am	Church Picnic @ the Embankment
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
14 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Elstow Team Council meet in Church Hall

*Deadline for material for August/ September magazine*

15 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Sing and Sign in the Church Hall
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall
16 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
		3.30-6.00pm	Afternoon tea in the Vicarage - All welcome
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
17 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		7.30pm	Meeting of the Parochial Church Council in the Church Hall
20 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 10	10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School (JRC)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (JRC)
			Benefice Holiday leaves for the Isle of Wight
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (Mrs Jane Findlay)
21 <sup>st</sup>	Monday		No Mums and Toddlers
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Sing and Sign in the Church Hall
		4.00pm	Dance Club in the Church Hall
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	No Youth Group
24 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (Revd Len Moore)
26 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday		NO CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP
			Benefice Holiday Home
		6.00pm	Wedding Rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
27 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 11	10.00am	Young People's Service (JEH)
		11.15am	Parish Communion (NM)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion and the Laying on of Hands for Healing (PL)
28 <sup>th</sup>	Monday		No Mums and Toddlers (until 1 <sup>st</sup> September)

		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
30 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning and soup in the Church Hall
31 <sup>st</sup>	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (SS)

AUGUST

1 <sup>st</sup>	Friday	2.00pm	Blessing of the marriage of Kieron Mitchell & Melissa Jones (NM)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 12	10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School (JRC)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
4 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Holiday Club at Elstow
5 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	10.00am	Holiday Club at Elstow
6 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	10.00am	Holiday Club at Elstow
			NO COFFEE MORNING AND SOUP
7 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	10.00am	Holiday Club at Elstow
		11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
			NO THURSDAY LUNCH CLUB
8 <sup>th</sup>	Friday	10.00am	Holiday Club at Elstow
9 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	6.00pm	Holiday Club BBQ in the 'Barons' Garden
10 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday		
	Pentecost 13	10.00am	Holiday Club Celebratration - The Team
		12 noon	No 'Couples' Lunch
		2.15pm	Baptism of Isabella and Olivia Caimino (JRC)
		3.00pm	Baptism of Charlie Robinson (JRC)
		3.45pm	Baptism of Harmony Sarfas (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion and the Laying on of Hands for Healing. (JRC)

**DETAILS FROM THE REGISTERS**

**APRIL 2008**

Date	Communicants	Attendance	Collections
3rd	10	10	4.00
6th	43	91	255.55
10th	7	7	3.00
13th	52	72	193.35
17 <sup>th</sup>	7	7	2.00
20 <sup>th</sup>	35	83	366.20
24 <sup>th</sup>	8	8	12.00
27 <sup>th</sup>	28	71	272.91
	<u>190</u>	<u>349</u>	<u>1109.01</u>

**BAPTISM**

March 23<sup>rd</sup> William Edward Rayson White  
 George Edward Michael White  
 Anthony Paul Richard Rowley

April 13<sup>th</sup> Erin Ann Stokes

April 27<sup>th</sup> Rebecca Annabel Wood

May 11<sup>th</sup> Joseph Watson  
 Shannon Byrne

**BURIALS**

March 26<sup>th</sup> Charles Sidney Scarlett  
 Kenneth Reginald Rogers

May 7<sup>th</sup> Yvonne Braybrook (Ashes)

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**CHRISTIAN AID EVENT**

In last month's magazine there was a notice about a Christian Aid event. Apologies for not making it clear that a vacancy exists for someone to set up and dismantle the Christian Aid Exhibition in the Central Library on

**May 5<sup>th</sup> and May 16<sup>th</sup> 2009**

**For more details, please contact S. Batiuk on 01234 741112**

Many Thanks to everyone who helped (donators and collectors) during  
 Christian Aid week.  
 Elstow raised approximately £900

## Tunes of Glory



*Stand up and bless the Lord*, No 452 in our New English Hymnary is by James Montgomery (1771-1854), and the tune '*Carlisle*' by Charles Lockhart, 1745-1815. It is worth delving into the history of the writer.

James Montgomery was born at Irvine in Ayrshire, where his father was a Moravian minister. When he was five he went with his parents to Grace Hill, a settlement of Moravians near Ballymena in County Antrim, Northern Ireland. Two years later he was sent to the Moravian seminary at Fulneck in Yorkshire, the chief Moravian settlement in England. In 1783, when James was 12 and still at Fulneck, his parents were sent as missionaries to the West Indies, where they both died. Elsie Houghton gives an account which is important to us. At Fulneck young James received a good education and was under true Christian influence. He acknowledged that his first poetic attempts were sacred poems after the manner of the Moravians. He was a mere 10 years old when he began to write such poems, filling a small volume before he was 13.

He was destined for a preacher, but his early devotion to poetry diverted his attention from serious study. It was a happy circumstance that he early recognised his own bent and saw that he could serve the cause of Christ better as a poet than as a preacher. Nevertheless his poetical bent met with sharp reproof at Fulneck!

The Brethren saw with concern the visionary habits of their pupil. He was a dreamer who never worked at the proper time! He was warned, exhorted and threatened, and at last it was decided to 'put him out to business, at least for a time'. He became assistant to a baker at Mirfield, near Wakefield. The work was easy and even allowed him time to write verses behind the counter. But after 18 months, one Sunday morning when his master was at the Moravian chapel, he packed his manuscripts and set out with a few shillings in his pocket in search of more congenial circumstances. He soon repented of his impulsiveness and accepted a similar situation at the village of Wath, near Rotherham. A year later he went to London, taking some of his early poems to offer to publishers. But their coldness destroyed his dream of sudden fame, and he went, almost broken-hearted, back to his work at Wath.

In 1792, James Montgomery went to Sheffield as assistant to a Mr Gales, auctioneer, bookseller and the printer of a newspaper entitled the *Sheffield Register*. In 1794, when Mr Gales left England to avoid persecution for his political principles, Montgomery took over the paper, changed its name to the *Iris* and edited it for 31 years. As the principles of the paper continued to be too liberal for the government of the day - he had, for example, reprinted a song commemorating the Fall of the Bastille - he was fined £20 and imprisoned in York Castle for three months.

He was a very gentle person, so it is amusing to learn that the jury found him to be 'a wicked, malicious and seditious person who had attempted to stir up and excite discontent among his Majesty's subjects'. He found imprisonment less irksome than he had feared, and was able to write poems, which were published in 1797 under the title *Prison Amusements*. He wrote many poems, some of considerable

length, but apart from the hymns of his boyhood, does not seem to have written many more hymns till much later in life.

Montgomery lived for many years at the *Iris* office, an old house in the middle of Sheffield, but in later years he went to live at 'The Mount'. He had achieved literary fame by then and many eminent literary people visited him. Like William Cowper, Montgomery never married. Also like Cowper, he often speaks of unbelief and despondency, and in fact he has been described as 'the Cowper of the 19th century'. An unpublished letter of 1839 indicates that his times of depression continued throughout life: 'From whatever cause, I have suffered so much from mental depression that I have spirit for no undertaking beyond daily occupations - and even these are indifferently performed - so that I am compelled to decline every engagement which comes upon me not as an absolute obligation'.

It was not until Montgomery was 43 that he became a member of the Moravian church, having been influenced by the printed sermons of Cennick, under whose ministry his father had been converted. As the Moravians had no chapel in Sheffield he worshipped with the Methodists. He was always in sympathy with philanthropic and spiritual movements and occupied himself with them in his later years. He died at the venerable age of 82 "amid universal tokens of esteem from his fellow townsmen, among whom he had lived and worked and sung, and who recognized: "that his life and his hymns had one music".

James had laid the Christian Church under great obligation by his hymns. In 1825 he published his *Christian Psalmist, or Hymns Selected and Original*, and of the 562 hymns, 103 are by him. It is from this work that most of his hymns are taken. In his '*Introductory Essay*' - which was actually the first English work on hymnology - he has given his account of what a hymn should be. He calls for unity in hymns, gradation and mutual dependence in the thoughts, a conscious progress, and at the end a sense of completeness, and he insists that hymns ought to be easy to understand.

An important thing about his hymns is that they are very suitable for congregational singing. As a poet, Montgomery stands well to the front. His poetic genius was of a high order. His ear for rhythm was exceedingly accurate and refined. His knowledge of the Scriptures was extensive. With the faith of a strong man, he united the simplicity of a child. He was richly poetic without exuberance, dogmatic without uncharitableness and tender without sentimentality. He bequeathed to the church wealth which could only have come from a true genius and a sanctified heart.

Charles Lockhart, who wrote the tune '*Carlisle*', was the first organist of the Lock Hospital, being for some years associated with the Rev M Madan in the musical arrangements there. Though blind from infancy, he was noted for his success in training children's choirs, according to James Lightwood. His earliest tunes were printed on separate sheets in 1791, priced 3d. each. He was a clever musician. The tune '*Carlisle*' was originally named '*Invocation*', and by which it is still known in some places. Lockhart published another set of hymn tunes about 1810.

*John Crookall*

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Our bellringers have been hard at it again, as this report shows:

The Bedfordshire Association

Elstow, Beds, at the Abbey Church of Ss Mary and Helena

On Saturday 3 May 2008 in 2hrs and 43mins (Tenor 9cwt)

A Peal of 5040 Minor in 2 methods

being one extent of Cambridge Surprise and 6 of Plain Bob

- 1 Steven J Spencer
- 2 Christopher M J Spencer
- 3 Sarah-Louise Ward
- 4 Susan J Spencer
- 5 Michael J Matthews
- 6 Stephen H Stanford

Conducted by Stephen H Stanford

With congratulations to Christopher Spencer on his 21st birthday (28 April); also with best wishes to Hazel Spencer (grandmother of 1 and 2) on her birthday today.

On Saturday 10 May 2008 in 43mins

A Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Minor (1260 changes)

- 1 Sarah-Louise Ward
- 2 Jennifer S Thompson
- 3 Richard D J Marshall
- 4 Melvyn Potts
- 5 Ann Desics
- 6 Stephen H Stanford

Conducted by Stephen H Stanford

First QP for 17 years - 3.

To mark the start of the May Festival held on the village green.

Also birthday compliments to the ringers of 3 (8 May) and 6 (13 May)



## Tunes of Glory (2)

We often sing *Immortal love for ever full*, No. 246 by J G Whittier, 1807-92. John Greenleaf Whittier, the American Quaker poet, is most widely known as the author of '*Dear Lord and Father of mankind*'. He was the son of a New England farmer, but as a young man - and much against his father's wishes - he forsook the land and turned to literature, especially poetry. As a Quaker he was not accustomed to singing hymns in worship, but some of his verse quickly found its way into the hymn books, and there they have remained.

John Whittier's Christian faith was of a simple, mystical character. He had no interest in institutional religion and cared little for dogmas. For him, what mattered was not the Christ of the creeds, but the Christ of experience. This is reflected in the present hymn, which is part of a long poem entitled '*Our Master*'. The supreme emphasis throughout is on the inwardness of true religion. The '*immortal love*' of God which '*our outward lips confess*' can only be comprehended by the love of the heart. Also, Christ is not past history, nor have we to seek his presence in the heights or depths. The hymn beginning '*O Lord and Master of us all*' is a further selection of stanzas from the same poem and pursues much the same theme.

Valerie Ruddle writes engagingly about the Yorkshire place Bishopthorpe, having visited it and the area. She says that the only way to get a good view of Bishopthorpe, the Palace of the Archbishop of York, is from the river, so she boarded '*The Duchess of York*' for a pleasure cruise from York to Bishopthorpe and back. Setting off from Lendel Bridge, they passed the Castle, The New Walk (300 years old!), a Roman Well, Rowntree Park, and Terry's Chocolate factory with its clock tower disguising the chimneys.

After half an hour they reached the Palace, stretched along the west bank of the River Ouse. The 13<sup>th</sup> century, 40-roomed Palace was an impressive sight. Cameras clicked as they paused to take the scene in before the boat turned round. At times, when the level of the river rises, the lawns are waterlogged and cellars flooded. On the day of the visit, ducks occupied the lawns, guarded by a stone eagle, a sign of nobility, on the corner of the roof. Here is personal experience!

The original melody of Bishopthorpe is attributed in our New English Hymnal to Jeremiah Clarke. It has appeared, with changes, in several publications from the late eighteenth century onwards. However, one of these was '*The Psalms of David for use in Parish Churches, the Music Selected, Adapted and Composed by Edward Miller*'. The tune *Bishopthorpe* by Jeremiah Clarke, 1673-1707, is a great favourite in Britain. James Lightwood says however that Miller's dissatisfaction with the state of the church led him to publish his "*Psalms of David*" above. The book was a great success, the numbers of subscribers being nearly five thousand, from the King downward. It even spread to the Isle of Man. Enthusiastic Manxmen subscribed to provide a barrel organ to play Miller's tunes. King George III marked his approval by sending Miller a present of £25. Miller wrote some original tunes for his book; one, now known by its original name of '*Rockingham*', was destined to become one of the most popular tunes ever, taking its name from the Marquis of Rockingham, a patron and friend of Miller, and a well-known Whig statesman of the period, who was three times Prime Minister!

*John Crookall*

TOGETHER IN PRAYER?



Christians across the UK will be able to join in prayer simultaneously from now on thanks to a new text alert service.

The company which last year offered Bible downloads for mobile phones has recently launched 'prayer alerts', which will eventually be available to around 500,000 Christians.

At the drop of a text, tens of thousands of people could be praying about terrorism, homelessness, the credit crunch or any other matter of current concern.

Last October, Monmouthshire-based company Teimlo developed a religious line of products for mobiles called Ecumen.

The Welsh Christian charity Prayer in Action has now teamed up with Ecumen to offer the alerts.

Erik Fok, Ecumen's head of sales and marketing, said: "Within the next two to three years, this service will be offered to about 500,000 Christians.

"With a world in turmoil, it's amazing to think that we could soon have half a million people in the UK alone, joining in focused prayer on an issue of national concern.

"This will be a force for positive change in our nation."

Carl Brettle, Chief Executive Officer of Prayer in Action, said: "In a world of uncertainty it's great to know that the Prayer in Action mobile texting service will be able instantly to mobilise thousands of people to pray into the key issues that face society today.

"With over 90% of the UK owning a mobile phone, gone are the days when we have to wait for a letter to arrive or an email to be opened.

"The Prayer Mobile text service pulls together one of the oldest traditions known to mankind with one of the newest, most prevalent technologies available. Prayer is only a text away."

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## DO I SPY A PIC-A-NIC BASKET?



In case you didn't spot it in next month's calendar listings, Jeremy has organised a Church Picnic at the Embankment on Sunday, July 13, during the Bedford River Festival. It's always a fun weekend of entertainment and, weather allowing, what could be nicer than sitting out on the grass by the river and taking in the sights and sounds? Now that's what I call smarter than the average bear...

## ELSTOW MAY FESTIVAL

I know many of you will have been out last month celebrating the May Festival on the green, but in case you missed it, here is the report that appeared in the *Times & Citizen*:



Celebrating some spring sunshine, Elstow residents gathered for the village's annual parade and festival last Saturday.

The crowning glory came when eight-year-old Kelly Ayres was named as the May Queen and Kieran Howlett-Smart as her coachman, see left. Opening this year's festivities was mid-Bedfordshire MP Nadine Dorries with entertainment coming in the shape of the Equinox Cheerleaders, Hemel Hempstead Band

and traditional Maypole dancing by children from Elstow Lower School. Tours of Elstow Abbey were also on offer and a whole host of food, drink and craft stalls were available to those just wanting to enjoy the spring sun. For a slideshow of event go to our website at [bedfordtoday.co.uk](http://bedfordtoday.co.uk) The event - and the green and church themselves - look wonderful on the website's slideshow - if you have pictures of the event you'd like to share, do send them in for the magazine!



Many Thanks to all the people who helped make this day so successful and raised around £1000. Thank you to those who donated raffle prizes, their time, hard work, teas and scones, strawberries and cream, cakes, bric-a-brac and jumble. Thank you to the stallholders, programme sellers and children and to everyone who moved tables and chairs. Thanks to the ladies who decorated the float and the men who pulled it along; to the fairground rides the ice cream man, and the Red Lion for Breakfast and to everyone who came and supported on the day. And a big Thankyou to Diana, Barbara and Jeremy for making it all happen.

We look forward to the next May Festival on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

## SOME FACTS AND FOLKLORE ABOUT JUNE AND JULY

June marks the beginning of Summer in the Northern hemisphere

June is the month of the Wimbledon tennis tournament

It takes its name from the Roman goddess Juno, the goddess of marriage. For this reason, the month of June has always been regarded as the best month in which to marry! The saying goes:

*Married in the month of roses - June*

*Life will be one long honeymoon*

The longest day of the year is on June 21<sup>st</sup>. Hundreds of people gather at Stonehenge in Wiltshire on this day to watch the sun rise

Weather sayings associated with June include: *A calm June puts the farmer in tune* and *June damp and warm does the farmer no harm*

At midnight on Midsummer's Eve, girls were supposed to scatter rose petals before them and say: *Rose leaves, rose leaves, rose leaves I strew; He that will love me, come after me now*. Then the next day, Midsummer's Day, their true love was supposed to visit them

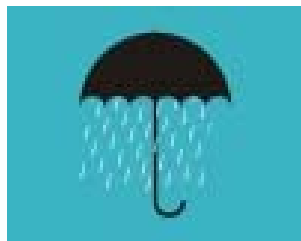
July was the fifth month of the Roman calendar, so they called it Quintilius, which means "fifth". A Roman Senate renamed the month Julius (July) in honour of Julius Caesar, who was born on July 12

July is traditionally the month when strange 'crop circles' begin to appear in fields of standing corn. The phenomenon started being noticed in the early 1970s

The Henley Regatta takes place during the first week of July, along a stretch of the River Thames at Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire. The regatta began in 1839 with a single afternoon of rowing races; now the event lasts for five days

Weather sayings about July include: *If the first of July it be rainy weather; 'Twill rain more or less for four weeks together*

July 15 is St Swithin's Day - if it rains on this day, it is said it will rain for 40 days! The rhyme goes: *St Swithin's Day if thou dost rain, For forty days it will remain, St Swithin's Day, if thou be fair, For forty days 'twill rain nae mair*



## JOKES, JOKES, JOKES



As my mind is running on all things wedding-related just now, here is a selection of jokes about marriage!

Wife: What do you mean coming home half drunk at this time of night?

Husband: It's not my fault - I ran out of money.

Husband: Let's go out on the town tonight and have some fun.

Wife: Yeah, but if you get home before me, remember to leave the front door open.

It first occurred to me that our marriage might be in trouble when my wife won an all expenses paid trip for two to Hawaii - and she went twice.

An insurance salesman was trying to persuade a housewife to buy a life insurance policy. "Just imagine if your husband was to die tomorrow," he said. "What would you get?" "Oh, a Labrador dog, I think," replied the housewife. "They're so well-behaved."

I still miss my ex-husband - but my aim is getting better.

Man to marriage counsellor: "My wife and I can't agree on our holidays. I want to go to Bermuda and she wants to go with me."

Missing: wife and dog. Reward for dog.

It used to be wine, women and song. Now it's beer, the old lady, and TV.

Marriage - a three ring circus:  
engagement ring,  
wedding ring,  
and suffering.

Matrimony isn't a word, it's a sentence.

Last weekend my credit card was stolen but I decided not to report it because the thief is spending less than my wife does.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Walt Disney's first cartoon character was called Oswald the Rabbit

New Zealand's national bird, the kiwi, can't fly and lives in a hole in the ground

The colours and patterns you see when you rub your eyes are called pressure phosphenes

Dimples are hereditary

Ergophobia is a fear of work

The lowest temperature ever recorded was 129 degrees below zero, at Vostok, Antarctica, in July 1983

A pineapple is actually a berry

Uranus is the only planet that rotates on its side

A 'blue moon' is the second full moon in a calendar month

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Pope Benedict IX was Pope at 11 years old

The Sun is 93 million miles away

Malta holds the record for having the lowest number of road accidents

There are giant waterfalls under the ocean

The composer Chopin used to wear a beard on just one side of his face because he said the audience only saw that side

Statistically, the safest age in life is 10 years old