

# *ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE*

*MARCH 2008*

Dear Readers

By the time you read this Jeremy will be back from his study leave. Unfortunately, he was not in time to write the lead article for this magazine. Barbara, Colin and Rosemary put pen to paper last time and so it is my turn now.

Yesterday I watched the first round of the Six Nations – England vs. Wales at Twickenham. Wales had failed to beat us for the last 20 years – victory was certain for England. Wales had other ideas. Towards the end of the match the England pack was all over the place – not the team we have come to expect. Have you ever thought what it would be like if Manchester United took to the playing field but with 11 disparate players – each doing their own thing – each with their own idea of the best game plan. Or what would it be like if a band was playing a song but each member of the group starting at a different place, in a different key and playing at a different speed. If you came to the Youth Service at the end of January you would not have to imagine that – you would have experienced it. The band played “Bind us together Lord”, in six different ways all at the same time – utter chaos.

But if you looked at the band, not always a pretty sight, we are a motley group some young and others not so young, men and women from different backgrounds. I work in an office; Tracey is Head of Science in a secondary school. We have a librarian, a wine importer, a student, a carer and, rather worryingly for me, a musician. And yet, despite our varied backgrounds, we come together each month and do our best to lead the singing at the service. It is amazing what can happen when a group of people come together and focus on doing a particular job.

I wonder if you saw “The Choir” recently on television? A musician went into a school, auditioned children who had never sung before to join a choir, trained them and got them to such a standard that they were entered, and accepted, into a choir Olympics in China. Another amazing example of what can happen when a group gets together with a common purpose.

The Gospel at the end of the week of prayer for Christian unity was Matthew Chapter 4, where we read of Jesus calling some of his disciples. They were humble fishermen who left their boats and nets to follow him. And the other disciples were a mixed bunch as well. We don't know what they all did but we do know that there were at least five fishermen and, rather surprisingly, a tax collector. They were ordinary men who became extraordinary because of Jesus. Despite their confusion and lack of understanding during his lifetime they became powerful witnesses to his resurrection. Their lives, and the lives of others, were transformed. Their deeds are recorded in the gospels and then in the Acts of the Apostles and in many of the letters that make up the New Testament. Their story is another amazing example of what can happen when a group gets together with a common purpose. And their story was all the more amazing because they were focussed on and united by Jesus as the head of their group.

In the Church today we are called to be united. Think of the congregation that was at the last service you attended. So many people from so many backgrounds – each with their own list of likes and dislikes – each with their preferred way of doing things. And yet there we all were last Sunday with a common aim: To worship God, to give thanks for all the blessings he has given us, to pray for ourselves and for others and to witness to the world about our faith in the risen Christ.

If you are a member of a football club, you will be with other football supporters. If you are into steam trains, that club will be populated by others with a similar interest. Other than in a church, rarely will you get such a mix of people with a common aim.

At Elstow we have been given a bigger challenge – we have been given the task to be united, not only within this Church Family but also with the Church Families at Cardington and St Michael's in Bedford. It is sad, but maybe not surprising, that sometimes things do not go as smoothly as we would like either within the Church here, or within the united benefice, or within the Church of England as a whole. But remembering the cacophony created by the band at the youth service we were reminded what happens when individuals who should have a common aim go off on their own – chaos ensues.

I suppose we can get some comfort from the fact that the earliest Christians had difficulty being united. Paul wrote to the church he had founded in Corinth. After he had done all of the “Hello” and “Greetings” bits that are always at the beginning of such a letter he immediately started telling them off for breaking into little groups, one following one person and another group following someone else. Paul reminded them that they should concentrate on Jesus.

So let's just recap. Jesus mixed with all different types of people and he chose a mix of 12 people to be his disciples. When they followed Jesus they had to learn to forget their differences and work together. They were prepared to leave their homes and families and give up everything they had to follow him.

And that is what it is like for us too. God has brought us all together as part of his family. He wants us all to work together so that others can hear about Jesus and learn to follow him too in their daily lives. Opportunities will arise where we can work and play together. A joint magazine, the pantomime or the summer holiday clubs are examples of working together that immediately spring to mind, and we can often be found together on more leisurely pursuits (holidays away, hog roast etc). Like the disciples we, too, are learning to ignore our differences and concentrate on what unites us. Just like those original 12 disciples we all have different gifts and we are able to do different things.

In his letter to the Corinthians Paul asked the Christians not to waste time arguing. He urged them, and he urges us, to concentrate on what matters most – the good news about God's love and forgiveness for us. It can be all too easy to lose track of the fact that there is only one person that we should be following – and that is Jesus.

## **A LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF ST ALBAN'S**

**To all Clergy and Lay Readers of the Diocese of St Albans**

**THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S LECTURE**

### **Introduction**

You will have read or heard a number of comments made by the media and others following the Archbishop of Canterbury's lecture at the Temple Church on *Civil and Religious law in England: a Religious Perspective*. You may also have heard his interview on the BBC about the subject. A number of people have written to me, some expressing dismay, others expressing anger and confusion about what has been reported and I thought, therefore, that the following might be a helpful response.

1. The law in this country derives historically from three main sources: the Graeco-Roman classical tradition; the Judaeo-Christian tradition and, to a lesser extent, from ideas about law and justice brought into England via the Anglo-Saxons and at the Norman Conquest.

2. In a parliamentary democracy such as ours, laws are created by Parliamentarians drawing on these three traditions, but those laws are also addressed to changing cultural and social understandings and ideas.
3. The most recent major innovation in English law has been the incorporation of much Human Rights legislation, deriving from a long civil tradition within Western Europe and which, in itself, owes much to the Graeco-Roman and Judaeo-Christian tradition, as well as to the work of philosophers, particularly of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In other words, in the Parliamentary democracy of Great Britain, law, whilst drawing on long and careful traditions, is constantly subject to change, debate, reform and renewal.

I believe that all who live within these islands are enormously privileged to be able to live in a country where law is open to constant scrutiny and reform, where there is a careful boundary between law makers and the execution of that law, where there is freedom of speech and where everyone, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, social status, wealth or power, is subject to the same law. In Great Britain, the rich man in his castle and the poor man at his gate have the same rights and obligations and responsibilities under the law. I recognise, too, that the freedom we have under the law has been achieved over centuries not without struggle and suffering.

We are now in a situation in which the arrival within Great Britain of people from other legal and ethno-religious backgrounds inevitably gives rise to questions about how the law operates and how it should be applied.

### **The Archbishop's Lecture**

In his carefully constructed lecture the Archbishop highlighted a number of questions and issues:

1. What are the appropriate relationships between the law as understood and practised in a Parliamentary democracy and the rights and conscience of religious groups? The law already allows certain rights of conscience, for example, for medical practitioners over whether or not, for religious/philosophical reasons they should carry out abortions; should those rights be extended in other circumstances?
2. He highlighted the complex relationship between Sharia law as understood in some Muslim communities with its varied interpretation in other Muslim communities, and pointed out that there is no single law code that can be identified as the 'Sharia' law code. He said that Sharia is more like a method of jurisprudence governed by revealed texts rather than a single system.
3. He drew attention to those dangers which occur when assumptions are made that belonging to a religious group implies a betrayal of those laws and beliefs which govern the life of a nation, and similarly, he drew attention to the dangers when religious beliefs take no cognisance of what it means to live in a plural and tolerant society.
4. He argued that within a secular state the rights and sensitivities of religious groups should not be trampled over and that the law needs to develop sensitivity to such needs.
5. He asked therefore what it means for the law in a plural, secularist society, to pay proper regard to the religious beliefs of individuals and groups within that society, and what it means for religious individuals and groups to pay proper regard to the law.
6. Further, he asked how law should operate within a society where there are overlapping identities. He argued that one of the functions of the law should be:

*to prevent the creation of mutually isolated communities in which human liberties are seen in incompatible ways and individual persons are subjected to restraints or injustices for which there is no public redress.*

7. He argued that the function of law should be to:

*establish a space accessible to everyone in which it is possible to affirm and defend a commitment to human dignity **as such** ... so that when specific communities or traditions are in danger of claiming finality for their own boundaries of practice ... they are reminded that they have to come to terms with the actuality of human diversity.*

8. Very tentatively he suggested that it would be worth exploring whether or not individuals should have the right to choose, in certain very clearly defined circumstances, a particular jurisdictional system for the resolution of problems, for example, involving financial transactions or marital law. He wants to avoid what he sees as a potential clash between what he calls cultural loyalty and state loyalty.

In brief, then, the lecture is dense and complex. It raises an issue, which is a major one, about how competing rights and understandings in a multi-religious, pluralist society can function within a common legal framework. It is a question which we do well to ponder, whilst avoiding the more sensation-seeking headlines.

What has been revealed by the lecture, unwittingly, is the level of unease in Britain about how multi-faith and multi-cultural society can and should work. That unease needs to be treated very seriously, and requires dialogue on all sides but also a real commitment on all sides to live together in peaceful coexistence under the law, and to work together for the common good. It is neither an easy nor a simple task, and it should not require us as Christians to let go of what we believe to be the core tenets of our faith, nor the Judaeo-Christian underpinnings of our society.

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## **LESSON READERS MARCH 2008**

<b>March 2nd Purple</b>	10.30am 6.30pm	2 Corinthians Ch. 1 v. 3 - 7 Micah Ch. 7	Luke Ch. 2 v. 33 - 35 James Ch. 5	Ken Webb Glynis Annan
<b>March 9th Purple</b>	10.00am 6.30pm	Romans Ch. 8 v. 6 - 11 Lamentations Ch. 3 v. 19 - 33	John Ch. 11 v. 1 - 45 Matt Ch. 20 v. 17 - end	John Hinson Dorothy Steele
<b>March 16th Red</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Philippians Ch.2 v. 5 - 11 Zechariah Ch. 9 v. 9 - 12 Isaiah Ch. 5 v. 1 - 7	Matt Ch. 21 v. 1 - 11 Luke Ch. 16 v. 19 - end Matt Ch. 21 v. 33 - end	Peter Batiuk Miriam Clark Peter Moss
<b>March 23rd White</b>	6.30pm	Isaiah Ch. 43 v. 1 - 21	1 Cor Ch. 15 v. 1 - 11	Catherine Parrish
<b>March 30th White</b>	10.30am 6.30pm	Acts Ch. 2 v's 14 & 22 - 32 Daniel Ch. 6 v. 1 - 23	John Ch. 20 v. 19 - end Mark Ch. 15 v. 46 - Ch.16 v. 8	Colin Albon Barbara Routledge
<b>April 6th White</b>	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Acts Ch. 2 v's 14 & 36 - 41 Isaiah Ch.40 v. 1 - 11 Haggai Ch.1 v. 13 - Ch. 2 v. 9	Luke Ch.24 v. 13 - 35 1 Peter Ch.5 v. 1 - 11 1 Cor Ch.3 v. 10 - 17	Lynn Harris Stephen McDonald Margaret Eastwell

## **SIDESMEN'S ROTA** **MARCH 2008**

<b>March 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<u>10.30am</u> 6.30pm	<b>Mrs. A. Morris.</b> <b>Mrs. V. Whyatt-Routh.</b>	<b>Mrs. S. Brown.</b>
<b>March 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mr. P. Batiuk.</b> <b>Miss. M. Eastwell.</b>	<b>Mrs. S. Batiuk</b>
<b>March 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b> <b>11.15am</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mrs. R. Albon.</b> <b>Mrs. A. Knight.</b> <b>Mrs. G. Annan.</b>	<b>Mrs. J. Barnicott.</b>
<b>March 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>11.15am</b>	<b>Mrs. M. Crossen.</b>	
<b>March 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<u>10.30am</u> 6.30pm	<b>Mr. C. Albon.</b> <b>Mrs. C. Parrish.</b>	<b>Mrs. A. Morris.</b>
<b>March 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<u>10.30am</u> 6.30pm	<b>Mrs. B. Routledge.</b> <b>Mr. P. Moss.</b>	<b>Mrs. J. Barnicott.</b>
<b>April 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.00am</b> <b>11.15am</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mrs. S. Batiuk.</b> <b>Mr. F. Crossen.</b> <b>Miss. M. Eastwell.</b>	<b>Mrs. A. Morris.</b>

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

# THE CHURCH CALENDAR

## MARCH 2008

### MARCH

2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday	Mothering Sunday Lent 4 <u>10.30am</u> Family Communion (No Sunday School) (JRC) 6.30pm Evening Prayer (JRC)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Monday	10.00am Mums and Toddlers meet in the Church Hall 2.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse 7.30pm Lent Course at London Road Methodist Church
5 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall 6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
6 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am Holy Communion (JRC) 12.00noon Monthly Luncheon Club at the Red Lion, Elstow 7.30pm Benefice Churchwardens Meeting at 1 Bindon Abbey
9 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Passion Sunday Lent 5 10.00am Parish Communion (JRC) 11.30am Burial of the ashes of Doug and Bay Gautrey 3.00pm Baptism of Freddie Owen (JRC) 6.30pm Evening Prayer
10 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am Mums and Toddlers meet in the Church Hall 2.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse 7.30pm Final Lent Course at London Road Methodist Church  <i>Deadline for material for the April magazine</i> <i>e-mail to <a href="mailto:jakhat77@hotmail.com">jakhat77@hotmail.com</a> or write to Jacquie Pryce at</i> <i>13, Acorn Way. Bedford. MK42 0QN or pass to Colin or Barbara</i>
12 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall 2.30pm Meeting re proposed new Church Hall at the Rectory 6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
13 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
16 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Palm Sunday

		10.00am	Family Communion with procession and Sunday School (JRC)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (Group)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
17 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Monday in Holy Week	
		10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		7.30pm	Holy Week Devotion – St. Michael's
18 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	Tuesday in Holy Week	
		7.30pm	Holy Week Devotion – Elstow
19 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	Wednesday in Holy Week	
		11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
		7.30pm	Holy Week Devotion - Cardington
20 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Maundy Thursday	
		11.00am	Holy Communion (Canon Nigel Morrell)
		7.30pm	Holy Communion followed by the Stripping of the Altars, followed by a time of reflection until 9.00pm
21 <sup>st</sup>	Friday	Good Friday	
		10.00am	Young People's Service followed by a walk
		11.15am	One Hour Devotional Service
		12.30pm	Frugal Lunch in the Church Hall
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Saturday	Easter Eve	
		<u>NO CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP</u>	
		7.00pm	Service of Light and renewal of Baptismal Vows
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Sunday	Easter Day	
		<u>10.30am</u>	Family Communion with Sunday School (JRC)
		3.00pm	Baptism
		3.45pm	Baptism of George Edward Michael White
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
24 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Monday in Easter Week	

Youth Pilgrimage at St. Albans Abbey

26 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	Wednesday in Easter Week	
		11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
27 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Thursday in Easter Week	
		11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
29 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	<u>Summer time begins clocks go forward 1 hour</u>	
30 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Easter 2	
		<u>10.30am</u>	Joint Benefice Service of Holy Communion at Elstow
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion with the Laying on of Hands for Healing (JRC)
31 <sup>st</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers meet in the Church Hall
		10.00am	Visit by Covenant High School
		2.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse

**APRIL**

2 <sup>nd</sup>	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by 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 Club at the Red Lion
		8.00pm	Liturgy Committee meet at 43 Armstrong Close, Wilstead
6 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Easter 3	
		Stewardship Sunday	
		10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School (JRC)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)

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DID you see the story in the news recently about churches being invited to join the digital revolution by downloading digital hymn books?

Apparently, the innovation could spell the end for the traditional hymn book and church organ.

Publisher HarperCollins is launching a digital version of Mission Praise, the best-selling collection of worship songs. Song sheets and accompanying musical backing tracks will be available for download.

Churches will be able to create electronic playlists for their orders of service!

The words can be printed off and handed out to the congregation or displayed on video screens, while the music can be played via iPods or computers.

The 1,800 songs on [www.missionpraise.com](http://www.missionpraise.com) include *The Lord's My Shepherd*, *Amazing Grace*, *Abide With Me* and *Rock Of Ages*.

"Church services are set to be revolutionised," a HarperCollins spokesman said.

"The site will provide an invaluable resource, enabling quick and simple access to material electronically.

"We're hoping this will be a really cost-effective offer to churches, schools and Sunday schools who can use the resource and tailor it to their specific needs."

## Tunes of Glory

An excellent hymn in our book is No 443, Charles Wesley's "*Rejoice! the Lord is King*" to G F Handel's famous tune "*Gopsal*". Their dates are, Wesley 1707-88, and Handel 1685-1759.

Wesley's hymn is usually associated with the ascension, but it appeared in his *Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection*, 1746. The resurrection and ascension are closely linked in the New Testament, especially in the fourth Gospel, and both bear witness to Christ's sovereignty. He who was raised from the dead as the Prince of Life was also raised to the throne of heaven as the King of Glory. As the hymn states, '*Jesus the Saviour reigns*' - victorious over sin and death and all his foes. That is why we *Rejoice* - the opening word and the keynote of the hymn. It rings out in the refrain, which is based on Philippians 4:4, '*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.*' The original hymn consisted of six verses, although in our hymnal only the first four occur.

Charles Wesley was never a writer who sat down to compose hymns. Often he was compelled by delightful necessity to give expression to the thoughts and words that burned within him. This agrees with what is known of the history of his hymn-writing. Some of his hymns were written on cards as he rode on horseback, and sometimes he would hurry home and call for pen and ink lest the moment of inspiration should pass. Truly he said of himself: "*My heart is full of Christ, and longs, Its glorious matter to declare! Of Him I make my loftier songs, I cannot from His praise forbear: My ready tongue makes haste to sing The glories of my heavenly King*".

This hymn has the distinction of being one of three of Wesley's hymns for which George Friderich Handel composed tunes. The tune "Gopsal" is so called after the name of the house near Atherstone, formerly the residence of Charles Jennens, who wrote the libretto of the *Messiah*, and they are all to be found in Dr Mann's *Church of England Hymnal*.

Handel's first visit to England did not take place until 1710. It is well known that the Wesleys and Handel were contemporaneous. Some of Handel's oratorios were produced at Covent Garden Theatre, the proprietor of which was a man named Rich. His wife came under the influence of Charles Wesley, and the great hymn-writer became a frequent visitor at their house. Here he met J F Lampe and Dr Pepusch, both distinguished musicians of the time, and it is probable that he met Handel under the same roof.

At least three of Wesley's hymns were submitted to Handel, who wrote original tunes for them. These tunes were lost sight of until 1826, when Samuel Wesley, son of the poet, discovered the original manuscript in the FitzWilliam Museum at Cambridge. In a letter dated September 14, 1826, Samuel Wesley, writing to his wife from Cambridge, says, 'I have already copied six famous fine hymn-tunes from Handel's own manuscript, and what is uncommonly fortunate is that they are all set to my father's own words, so that my dear father's poetry must have highly delighted Handel'. Three of these tunes were soon after published. They subsequently appeared in several collections.

John Crookall

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## Free insulation for over 70s

Good news for county energy-savers - 100% grant funded loft and cavity wall insulation is now available to all residents aged 70 years and above. This offer, which became available earlier this year, is made irrespective of your income and savings and whether or not you are in receipt of benefits. In fact, the only requirement is proof of age and name and address.

For most households, insulating has never made better financial sense. Following autumn's record oil prices and surging wholesale gas and electricity prices, insulation could be our last best defence against rising energy bills in 2008.

All homeowners and private tenants qualify for discounted loft and cavity wall insulation. Fully insulating your home could easily reduce your fuel bills by £100 a year. The payback time is typically short and the long term financial and environmental benefits are high.

For more information, contact

the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on 0800 512 012.

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# FRIENDS FOR LIFE

## North Bedfordshire Churches Care Home Support.

This service was launched on Thursday, January 31st at Priory Methodist Church to reach out to befriend residents in care homes or sheltered flats throughout Bedfordshire.

Special training is being given to those who wish to participate by Margaret-Anne Tibbs.

This is a very worthwhile venture as there are many lonely people in care homes that would like a befriender.

If you would like to be a befriender or would like more information please contact Rosemary Albon, either at church or telephone 01234 407084.

## JANUARY 2008

	Communicants	Attendance	Collections
3rd	13	13	£3.00
6th	34	59	£248.66
13th	36	57	£157.00
20th	32	63	£218.65
27th	32	81	£313.24
31st	7	7	£2.00
	<b>154</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>£942.55</b>

Burial      January 13<sup>th</sup> 2008    Sabina (Sheila) Bellow

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## MOTHER'S DAY

Mothering Sunday is the more formal term for what we have come to know as Mother's Day, which is celebrated around the world.

It has been celebrated in the UK on the fourth Sunday in Lent for at least the past 400 years, which explains why it is so early this year - March 2<sup>nd</sup>, hope you remembered! - as Easter also falls early in 2008.

### The history behind Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday was also known as Refreshment Sunday or Mid-Lent Sunday, because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed. No-one is really certain how the tradition of Mothering Sunday began, but back in the 16<sup>th</sup> century it used to be a day when, instead of going to their small, local church, parishioners would gather at their nearest big church, which was known as the Mother Church. People who did this would say they had gone "a-mothering". Young boys and girls in service would also only be allowed one day a year to go home and visit their families, which was on Mothering Sunday. They would often bake a cake to take with them, or gather some flowers – which helps explain the traditional Mother's Day gifts!

One of the most popular cakes was – and still is! – the Simnel cake, which does the double job of honouring both mother and the church. Here is a recipe:

### SIMNEL CAKE

The marzipan balls on the top of the cake are said to represent the true disciples.



#### **Ingredients**

110g/4oz butter or margarine  
110g/4oz soft brown sugar  
3 eggs, beaten  
150g/5oz plain flour  
pinch of salt  
½ tsp ground mixed spice (optional)  
350g/12oz mixed raisins, currants and sultanas  
55g/2oz chopped mixed peel  
½ lemon, grated rind only  
1-2 tbsp apricot jam  
1 egg, beaten for glazing

#### **For the almond paste: (Marzipan)**

125g/4oz caster sugar  
125g/4oz ground almonds  
1 egg, beaten  
½ tsp almond essence

#### **Method**

**To make the almond paste:**

1. place the sugar and ground almonds in a bowl. Add enough beaten egg to give a fairly soft consistency. Add the almond essence and knead for a minute until the paste is smooth and pliable. Roll out a third of the almond paste to make a circle 18cm/7in in diameter and reserve the remainder for topping of the cake.
2. Preheat oven to 140C/275F/ Gas 1.

**To make the cake:**

1. cream the butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well incorporated and then sift in the flour, salt and spice (if using) a little at a time. Finally, add the dried fruit, peel and grated lemon rind and mix into the mixture well.
2. Put half the mixture in a greased and lined 18cm/7in cake tin. Smooth the top and cover with the circle of almond paste. Add the rest of the cake mixture and smooth the top leaving a slight dip in the centre to allow for the cake to rise. Bake in the preheated oven for 1½ hours. Once baked, remove from the oven and leave to cool.
3. When you are ready to decorate the cake, preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 3. Brush the top of the cooled cake with the apricot jam. Divide the remainder of the almond paste into two; roll out a circle to cover the top of the cake with one half and form 11 small balls with the other half.
4. Place the circle of paste on the jam and set the balls round the edge. Brush all the top with a little beaten egg.
5. Return the cake to the preheated oven for about 10 minutes or long enough for the almond paste to brown.

ELSTOW ABBEY HOLIDAY CLUB 2008

## Junior Heroes

Forget Superman, Batman or Wonder Woman

You don't need to be a Superhero to do God's work

August 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>

10am - 12 noon

Elstow Abbey Church Hall

For all Children and Young People aged 5+

## EASTER LILIES

Once again this year we invite you to buy an Easter lily in memory of a loved one. If you would like to take part please place £1.50 in an envelope for each lily you wish to purchase and write the name of your loved one on the outside of the envelope.

The names of those remembered will be displayed on a board at the back of the Church on Easter day.

Last year, despite Margeret's best efforts, the lilies were still in bud on Easter day and so this year we will be placing the order earlier. Would you please arrange for your envelope to be placed in the box at the back of the Church on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March or delivered to Margeret by Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March at the very latest.

If you are not able to get to Church please give Margeret a ring on 218762 and it may be possible for her to pick it up from you.

Thank you.

## Prayer group

You may not be aware but there has been a prayer group at Elstow for 16 years. It started as a house group meeting once a fortnight in the caretaker's cottage. The summerhouse was built in the garden and the group decamped there – it was quiet with no phone calls or interruptions.

They now meet once a week on a Monday afternoon at 2pm in the Summerhouse for a time of silent prayer together. Every other week this is followed by a bible study and a cup of tea. Numbers have fluctuated over the years but at the moment there are 6 "regulars"- Rosemary, Rita, Barbara, Terisa, Miriam and Margeret.

If you (male or female) would like to join the group you would be most welcome. If you have any concerns or people you would like prayers for please speak to one of the group.

Each week the prayer time starts with the following prayer.

Loving Father, help us to abide in you during this time of silent prayer. We give you thanks and praise for all our answered prayers. As we bring you the people and concerns uppermost in our hearts give us an awareness of your wisdom, peace and strength. Show us the way to love wisely, compassionately radiating your love.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

May our Lord be your friend, your guide, to care for you today and everyday.

Amen

Margeret Baron



## NOAH AND THE ARK - MODERN VERSION...

At a time when we are thinking about plans for our new Church hall here is a modern take of an old story. There may be stormy seas ahead!

In the year 2007, the Lord came unto Noah, who was now living in England and said, "Once again, the earth has become wicked and over-populated, and I see the end of all flesh before me. Build another Ark and save two of every living thing along with a few good humans."

And He gave unto Noah the Computer Aided Design drawings, saying, "You have 6 months to build The Ark before I will start the unending rain for 40 days and 40 nights."

Six months later, the Lord looked down and saw Noah weeping in his Yard - but no Ark.

"Noah!" He roared, "I'm about to start the rain! Where is the Ark?"

"Forgive me, Lord," begged Noah, "but things have changed. I needed Building Regulations Approval because the Ark was over 30m<sup>2</sup>."

"I've been arguing with the Fire Brigade about the need for a sprinkler system. My neighbours claim that I should have obtained planning permission for building the Ark in my garden because it is development of the site even though in my view it is a temporary structure, but the roof is too high. We had to go to appeal to the Secretary of State for a decision.

"The Local Area Access Group complained that my ramp was going to be too steep, and the inside of the Ark wasn't fully accessible. Then the Department of Transport demanded that I pay now for the future costs of moving power lines and other overhead obstructions, to clear the passage for the Ark's move to the sea. I told them that the sea would be coming to us, but they would hear nothing of it.

"Getting the wood was another problem. All the decent trees have Tree Preservation Orders on them and we live in a Site of Special Scientific Interest set up in order to protect the owls. I tried to convince the environmentalists that I needed the wood to save the owls - but no go!

"When I started gathering the animals, the RSPCA sued me. They insisted that I was confining wild animals against their will. They argued the accommodation was too restrictive, and it was cruel and inhumane to put so many animals in a confined space.

"Then the County Council and the Environment Agency ruled that I couldn't build the Ark until they'd conducted an environmental impact study on your proposed flood.

"I'm still trying to resolve a complaint with the Equal Opportunities Commission on how many minority groups should be represented in my building team. The trades unions say I can't use my sons. They insist I have to hire only Construction Skills Certification Scheme accredited workers with Ark-building experience.

"To make matters worse, Customs and Excise seized all my assets, claiming I'm trying to leave the country illegally with endangered species.

"So, forgive me, Lord, but it would take at least 10 years for me to finish this Ark."

Suddenly the skies cleared, the sun began to shine, and a rainbow stretched across the sky. Noah looked up in wonder and asked, "You mean you're not going to destroy the world?"

"No," said the Lord. "The Bureaucrats beat me to it."

P.S. Apparently, after the first ark was built Noah was ordered to construct a second.

It was to be fifteen floors high and filled only with fish.

They say it was the first multi-storey Carp Ark.

(Sorry)

*John Hinson*

.....  
A young lad was visiting a church for the first time, checking all the announcements and posters along the walls.

When he came to a group of pictures of men in uniform, he asked a nearby usher, "Who are all those men in the pictures?"

The usher replied, "Why, those are our boys who died in the service".

Dumbfounded, the youngster asked, "Was that the morning service or the evening service?"

**The following are actual church bulletin board bloopers found in churches across the United States:**

- Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.
- The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.
- The Pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday morning.
- Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Please use the back door.
- Ushers will eat latecomers.
- The third verse of Blessed Assurance will be sung without musical accomplishment.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.
- The pastor will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, "Break Forth Into Joy."
- Next Sunday Mrs. Vinson will be soloist for the morning service. The pastor will then speak on "It's a Terrible Experience."
- Due to the Rector's illness, Wednesday's healing services will be discontinued until further notice.
- Stewardship Offertory: "Jesus Paid It All"

- The music for today's service was all composed by George Friedrich Handel in celebration of the 300th anniversary of his birth.
- The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7 p.m. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- A song fest was held at the Methodist church Wednesday.
- Today's Sermon: HOW MUCH CAN A MAN DRINK? with hymns from a full choir.
- Hymn 43: "Great God, what do I see here?" Preacher: The Rev. Horace Blodgett  
Hymn 47: "Hark! An awful voice is sounding"
- On a church bulletin during the minister's illness: GOD IS GOOD. Dr. Hargreaves is better.
- Potluck supper: Prayer and medication to follow.
- Don't let worry kill you off - let the church help.

### DID YOU KNOW?



On a clear night the human eye can see between 2,000 and 3,000 stars in the sky

Water is the only substance on earth that is lighter as a solid than a liquid

The loudest sound in history was recorded in July 1883, when a volcano erupted in Krakatau

Ergophobia is a fear of work

The first full-length movie made in Hollywood was *The Squaw Man*, produced in 1913

Until 1796, the US state of Tennessee was called Franklin

It's illegal to drink beer out of a bucket while sitting on a kerb in St Louis

Every day 20 banks are robbed

In 1961, Matisse's *Le Bateau* (The Boat) hung upside-down for two months in the Museum of Modern Art, New York - none of the 116,000 visitors had noticed.

Sumerians invented writing in the 4th century BC.

The oldest surviving daily newspaper is the *Wiener Zeitung* of Austria, first printed in 1703.

The first novel sold through a vending machine - at the Paris Metro - was *Murder on the Orient Express*.

Esther is the only book in the Bible that does not contain the word "God."

Sheep are mentioned 45 times and goats 88 times in the Bible. Dogs are mentioned 14 times and lions 89 times, but domestic cats are not mentioned.

To win a gold disc, an album needs to sell 100,000 copies in Britain, and 500,000 in the United States.