

From the Revd Jeremy Crocker

Dear Parishioners,

Prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit mark the life and ministry of Archbishop Desmond Tutu with immense moral authority and personal warmth. As one of South Africa's leaders against the laws of apartheid, Tutu spoke as a prophet from within the Church, constantly telling the government of the time that its racist approach defied the will of God and for that reason would not succeed. I



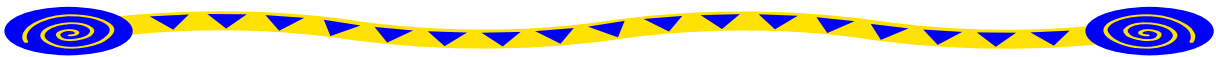
write this, and mention Archbishop Desmond Tutu, as this two month edition of the magazine covers the local elections in May, and with the forthcoming visit of Archbishop Desmond Tutu to St Albans Abbey on 23rd June.

With the Bible always as his text, Tutu taught that God decreed all people equal, all people as images of God. For him humanity was always measured by the humanity of Jesus Christ, and the freedom to be fully human. Many will remember his compassion and tears as he chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which heard so much pain from the apartheid years in his beloved country, and it was he who coined two terms for the new South Africa after apartheid. South Africans were to be 'the rainbow people of God', and to show that 'love is stronger than hate'. He encouraged hope in the face of injustice, life lived, as he said, within God's dream for his world.

Not all South Africans welcomed him, many believing that he was not speaking and acting as a priest of God should. God's ways are not always understood. The obedience of some may be taught disobedience of others, but the Spirit was in evidence when South Africa peacefully moved to democratic elections in 1994.

As history has shown us, great things have been done in our world through the testimony, conviction and guidance of the Holy Spirit within the community of believers. Just as those first disciples began to turn the world upside down at Pentecost, so we can be part of continuing to do so. The same Spirit that was in them is in us.

(Continued on page 2)



On Pentecost Sunday, I am very pleased that Captain David Wells, is being licensed by the Archdeacon of Bedford, on behalf of the Bishop of St Albans, as we mark the beginning of his ministry within this Team. The service will be held on Sunday 27th May, with a special Parish Communion at 11am. You are most welcome to come and share with us in this important chapter of God's ministry amongst us.

We are each required to have a dedicated focus on knowing and re-knowing God and sharing our 'knowing' with his people. It is our solemn privilege to pray for, and to be part of, bringing about God's kingdom in our parishes and beyond.

With Best Wishes,

Jeremy

Stop Press

I am very pleased to announce that Jacquie Pryce, a local journalist, and sub-editor for Northamptonshire Newspapers has kindly agreed to shadow the next edition of the Elstow Magazine, with the plan to gradually wean her into this new role. I am pleased to include an article that she has recently written, as we remember William Wilberforce, and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 200 years ago.

Jeremy



The Youth Club, on Wednesday's 6.30pm-8.00pm

This club is for 9 years olds and above. All are welcome. We are also looking for volunteers to help with the weekly running of the Youth Club. If you are interested please contact Ross, Margaret, Tracey or Jeremy for more details.

Christian Aid Week 13-19 May

Volunteers needed for the house to house collection. Please contact Sheila Batiuk on 01234 741112.

THEATRE COMES TO ELSTOW.....

FRIDAY 4 MAY 2007 7.30 PM

“ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE” At Elstow Abbey Church

A rollicking romp through the Golden Ages of British
theatre
From Middle Ages to Present Day!

From Shakespeare to Queen, Noel Coward to Abba
A hilarious mix of music, dance, stand-up and sketch
comedy!

“A brilliant evening of sheer entertainment”

BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW BEFORE THEY SELL OUT

Tel: 01234 261477, 01234 407084, 01234 854369

Adult £10 Child £7 Family of 4 (max) £25

Refreshments during Interval
and Raffle (prizes donated by local businesses)



Confirmation trip to St Albans

Picnic by the Lake

Feeding the Ducks!



Ice Cream Break!

Where did I put my last piece
of chocolate?



On page 2:
Greeted at St Albans Abbey

ELSTOW MAY FESTIVAL 2007

At Elstow Green, the Abbey, Moot Hall and the Church Hall

12th May from 12 noon - 4 pm

Master of Ceremonies: Mr Charles Whitbread Patron of Elstow Abbey

The Procession of the May Queen, her Maids of Honour, in the traditional decorated cart drawn by their Attendants, will leave from the old Elstow Lower School in the High Street at 2 pm, and the Crowning Ceremony will take place on The Green, followed by the traditional dancing round the Maypole by Elstow Lower School children. The Salvation Army Band will accompany them to the Green, where the Crowning ceremony will take place. The traditional Maypole dance will be performed by pupils from Elstow Lower School.

Stalls can be booked in advance for £8 each (non-refundable 01234 261477).

Charity stalls will be free, (donations welcome). Church has Bric-a-Brac, Book, Cake, Plant and Children's stalls. A Raffle will be held.

Ice Cream and Burgers etc. will be on sale, and delicious afternoon teas will be available in the Church Hall. The Salvation Army Band will play at intervals throughout the Festival, and a School Choir will perform on the Green. Inside the Abbey there will be some stalls, the chance to become a Friend of the Abbey, and guided tours at both the Abbey and at Moot Hall for our very welcome visitors.

Programmes will be available at the entrance to Church End (by The Swan Public House) for 50p each, cheap at the price! St. John's Ambulance will be in attendance during the Festival, for First Aid and other medical assistance as may be required.

Mr Barry Fry, will be appearing to help guide our young people on their sporting and football skills.

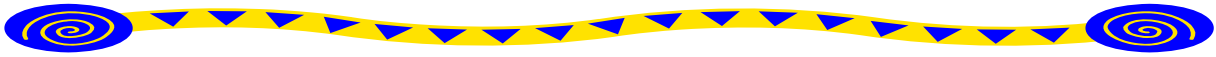
SITUATIONS VACANT Can you help us entertain you?

We need volunteer helpers – and the Red Lion pub has offered free breakfast on the day for the first 24 genuine helpers, and use of their car park all day. *We need Raffle Prizes and people to sell the tickets, programme sellers, manpower on stalls, setting up and selling, cake makers, bric-a-brac, books, plants.*

Please come to the Public Meeting on Wednesday 9th May in the Swan Public House, from 8.30pm OR ***Please contact Jeremy Crocker or Diana Hill 01234 261477***

Footnote: (Henry II granted the nuns of their manor at Elstow a yearly fair each May, causing discontent amongst the burgesses of Bedford, who appear to have harassed those persons passing through on their way to the fair.)

This will not happen to you!



Tunes of Glory

Recently we have sung Songs of Fellowship No. 19 “Amazing Grace (how sweet the sound!)” by John Newton, 1725-1807, with the famous words:

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

When John Newton wrote these words he was recording a piece of spiritual autobiography. Before his conversion he had been, on his own confession, “an infidel and libertine”, and had lived a godless and dissolute life. But now all that had changed. He had become a new man in Christ; and it was God's grace that had done it - John's free, unmerited, unlimited love to sinners. That was why the word sounded so sweetly to him.

To the end of his long and eventful life Newton never got over the wonder of what God had done for him. Like the apostle Paul he could say, “By the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor. 15:10). When a very old man he admitted that his powers were failing, and said, “But there are two things I can never forget, that I am a great sinner, and that Jesus Christ is a great Saviour.”

Through many a danger, toil, and snare,
I have already come;
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

Elsie Houghton writes that John Newton's life before conversion was one of interest, but his service for God after his conversion was outstanding. Calvin has been described as “the man God mastered”, and John Newton was also just such a man. His self-description as a “wretch” bent upon a “wild career” is true, because as a young man he was an uncontrolled profligate. So much so that the Lord in “mastering” him had to deal with him as a man might seek to tame a wild beast. He therefore knew suffering and distress, almost indescribable, before he was brought to the end of himself, and his headstrong character was mastered by One stronger than he.

John went to school for about two years, and when he was only 11 his father took him to the Mediterranean in his own ship. Before he was 15 he had made several voyages and after some restless years agreed to his father's proposal that he should go to the West Indies. But before he went something happened which was to influence his whole future career.

Distant relatives of his mother's invited him to visit them in Kent. He did so, and fell in love with their elder daughter, Mary Catlett, who was then only 14 years old. Before his father left for an appointment with the Hudson Bay Company, he had given consent to his son's marriage, and when Newton was 25 he married Mary Catlett, who he loved, and continued to love, with unflinching constancy.

Until 1754 Newton was actively engaged in what he did not then regard as an unlawful occupation - the slave trade - though later he did his utmost to expose its cruelties. Later that year, as he was about to set out on a voyage, he was seized with an apoplectic fit. This was the Lord's means of delivering him from slave-trading. He read a great deal, and met a man who was able to guide him. He then began to understand the security of the covenant of grace, and to expect to be preserved, not by his own power, but by the mighty power and promise of God, through faith in an unchangeable Saviour.

Robert J Morgan tells how John Newton's earliest memories were of his godly mother who, despite a fragile health, devoted herself to nurturing his soul. At her knee he memorised Bible passages and hymns. Though she died when he was around 7, he later recalled her tearful prayers for him. After her death, John alternated between boarding school and the high seas. Pressed into service with the British Navy, he deserted, was captured, and after two days of dispense, was flogged. His subsequent thoughts vacillated between murder and suicide. "I was capable of anything" he recalled. More voyages, dangers, toils, and snares followed. It was a life unrivaled in fiction. Then on the night of March 9, 1748, John, now 23, was jolted awake by a horrendous storm at sea that descended too suddenly for the crew to prepare. The next day, in great peril, he cried to the Lord. He later wrote, "That day is much remembered in me; and I have never suffered it to pass unnoticed. The Lord came from on high and delivered me out of deep waters."

The following years were a slow spiritual growth in John, but in the end he became one of the most powerful evangelical preachers in British history, a powerful foe of slavery, and the author of hundreds of hymns in The Olney Hymns of Olney, with William Cowper. The hymn we have sung was not originally called "Amazing Grace" but "Faith's Review and Expectation." It comes from Newton's study of 1 Chronicles 17:16-17. The equally famous tune is also named "Amazing grace", and is an early American folk hymn melody. Of course no other tune will do for this most famous of hymns, and on both sides of the Atlantic.

John Crookall



A Sermon by the Bishop of St Albans Blessing of Oils and Act of Commitment to Ministry St Albans Cathedral: Maundy Thursday 2007

The opening sentences of any book have to be crafted with great care; they set the tone for what follows. And when it comes to autobiography, the opening sentences have an even greater importance:

I was set down from the carrier's cart at the age of three; and there with a sense of bewilderment and terror my life in the village began.

The June grass, amongst which I stood, was taller than I was, and I wept. I had never been so close to grass before. It towered above me and all around me, each blade tattooed with tiger-skins of sunlight.

You will recognise that as coming from *Cider with Rosie* by Laurie Lee, and within seconds we know we are in the hands of a master storyteller - in this case, one who is telling the story of his own life, with romantic flourish and bravura.

Compare it with this, the opening sentences of Douglas Hurd's memoirs:

We thought at the time we lived an ordinary life in an extraordinary place. Going back there, I can see now that this semicircle of downland is not extraordinary, just pleasant, as many landscapes in England are pleasant.

The language is measured, steady, unforced. They are the words of a man who is not out to grab attention. He is going to bring a fine and balanced judgment to things.

And now, my third example:

He was guilty. There was no doubt about that. He was only eight or nine years old, but guilty he certainly was. He had remained silent and, in consequence, the gardener's boy got the blame.

Those are the opening lines of the autobiography of the theologian, Harry Williams. In fact he's not describing himself but the memory of a story read to him by his mother. Nevertheless, it's revealing - and, again, deliberately selected.

This may be a slightly odd way to begin an address on Maundy Thursday, but let me explain why I've done so. A few days ago I was reading Adam Sisman's biography of Wordsworth and Coleridge. It's the story of the friendship and interrelated lives of the two late eighteenth-century poets. In that book I came across a statement which stopped me in my tracks. It said that the word 'autobiography' was not invented until the first decade of the nineteenth century, that is, sometime between 1800 and 1810. Well, the word may not have been invented until then but certainly before that date men, like Lord Herbert of Chirbury, in the seventeenth century, and Clarendon, had written about their lives, had written their autobiographies. And much, much earlier, in the late fourth century, Augustine had written his powerful autobiography, known as *Confessions*.

What each of those authors does, whether it be Augustine in the fourth century or Douglas Hurd in the twenty-first, is to shape their material. They choose what to highlight and what to omit - none of us would do any different - but what the most insightful autobiographies do is highlight certain aspects of the life, so as to reveal or keep secret other parts. A good biography is a work of art, requiring discipline, skill and a compassionate judgment.

Well, we can read Laurie Lee, and Douglas Hurd, and Harry Williams, and William Wordsworth's *Prelude*, and, through their writings, get some glimpse of who they are. Now a question: why hasn't God written His autobiography? It's an awkward, naive question, verging on the ridiculous - but the very asking of it, naive and primitively innocent though it may seem, raises some very interesting issues.

I can imagine some of your responses:

*But He **has** written it, hasn't He, in the works of Creation? Look on the sunset, a rose, a spider's web bedecked with dew, the ocean - and there, for those with eyes to see, is the autobiography of the Creator.*

Yet others will want to argue that the closest we shall ever get to an autobiography of God is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ - a biography, of course, not written down by Himself and therefore, strictly speaking, not an autobiography at all, but placed into the hands of others, like Mark and Matthew, Luke and John.

And it's this that I find so illuminating and so deeply, deeply, humbling because whilst, of course, I believe that God was in Christ, the fact remains that He was so self-effacing, so self-emptying, that He trusted His Word to a few writers and a handful of friends, and wrote not a word about Himself.

Now let me push this a bit further: God not only entrusted His very life and purpose to others all those centuries ago, He continues to do the same now. He does not write His own story which we are then required to discover and decipher, as though it were written in a foreign language, He asks us to continue to write His story for Him and with Him. It is a massive, daunting and terrifying task, because we are asked to help Him write that story not only in the words of our sermons, our articles and our prayers, but in our very lives. Like Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, we are called to be co-authors; the Word entrusts Himself to our words.

It is a dangerous exercise for God - think how often we shall, as it were, get God wrong - but it's also a dangerous exercise for ourselves, for we are all too prone to mistake our own egos and our own agendas for God's. God does not write His own autobiography, therefore; instead, thousands upon thousands of biographies are written, in which His infinite beauty and truth are mediated through our finite ineptitude and partial sightedness.

(Continued on page 20)



THE CHURCH CALENDAR

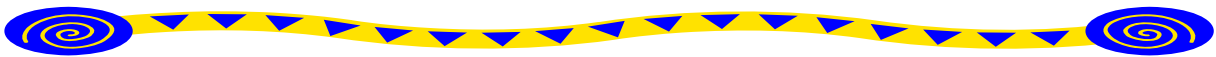
MAY 2007

- Wednesday 2nd 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
- Thursday 3rd 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
12 noon Monthly Lunch in the Red Lion – all welcome
- Friday 4th 7.30pm Time of our Lives Music Theatre present
'ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE' in the Abbey.
An evening of entertainment not to be missed,
in aid of The
Friends of Elstow Abbey
- Saturday 5th 2.00pm Wedding of Benedict Sanderson and Faye Humphries
3.30pm Wedding of Rance Attwaters and Emma Gaunt
- Sunday 6th Easter 5
9.30am Family Communion with Children's Groups (JRC)
11.00am Morning Prayer (Canon Philip McDonough)
3.45pm Baptism of Malaeki Spencer
6.30pm Evening Prayer (JRC)
- Monday 7th BANK HOLIDAY NO PRAYER GROUP
NO MUMS AND TODDLERS
- Wednesday 9th 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth group meet in the Church Hall
- Thursday 10th 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
7.30pm Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
in the Church Hall
- Saturday 12th 12.00noon to 4.00pm Elstow May Festival
- Sunday 13th Christian Aid Week Begins, Rogation, Easter 6
11.00am Parish Communion (The Revd Stephen Smith)
12.15pm Wedding Rehearsal (JRC)
1.00pm Wedding Rehearsal (JRC)
2.00pm Concert by Jacqui Frost
6.00pm SBCC Christian Aid Service at the
Howard Chapel, Cardington.
NO 6.30pm Evening Prayer at Elstow Abbey

- Monday 14th 10.00am Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
- Wednesday 16th 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
- Thursday 17th Ascension Day
11.00am Holy Communion (The Revd. Peter Littleford)
- Saturday 19th 12.30pm Wedding of Glen Lowe and Karen Styles (JRC)
2.00pm Wedding of Kevin Gray and Heather Cullit (JRC)
3.30pm Wedding Blessing of Philip Dixon
and Lisa Clark (JRC)
5.00pm Supper in the Rectory in aid of Christian Aid,
all welcome, *please sign the list at the back of the Church.*
- Sunday 20th Sunday after Ascension Day
9.30am Family Communion with Children's Groups (JRC)
11.00am Morning Prayer (Mattins Group)
3.15pm Annual Meeting of The Friends of Elstow Abbey
3.45pm Talk by The Reverend Canon Stephen Lake
Sub-Dean of St. Albans Cathedral
4.10pm Tea in the Church Hall
5.00pm Annual Friends Service everybody is most welcome
Preacher The Reverend Canon Stephen Lake
- Monday 21st 10.00am Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
7.30pm Clergy and Churchwardens meeting with
Captain David Wells at 1 Bindon Abbey
- Wednesday 23rd 11.30am Coffee morning
followed by Soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
- Thursday 24th 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
7.30pm Elstow Team Council meeting in Elstow Church Hall

Monthly Luncheon Club

A new luncheon club will meet on the first Thursday of each month, after the 11am Holy Communion, in the Red Lion, the menu will appear on the weekly notice sheet. Next Date is Thursday 3rd May. All Welcome, just turn up. There is a choice of main course, desert and coffee, for £5.99.



Saturday 26th 2-4pm Children's Workshop in the Church Hall

Sunday 27th Pentecost

9.30am Young People's Service (JEH)

11.00am Family Communion (JRC)

with the licensing of Captain David Wells by the
Archdeacon of Bedford, The Venerable Paul Hughes.
Followed by bring and share lunch in Church Hall.

3.00pm Baptism of Benjamin Beal (JRC)

3.45pm Baptism of Ebony-Mae Sells (JRC)

6.30pm Evening Prayer (Robert Heley)

Monday 28th BANK HOLIDAY NO MUMS AND TODDLERS
NO PRAYER GROUP

Wednesday 30th 11.00am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall

Thursday 31st 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
3.30pm Afternoon Tea at the Rectory, all welcome
8.00pm Meeting of the Finance and Standing Committee

Summerfields

Miniature Railway, Haynes.

(A600 south from Cotton End Summerfields Farm on the right at the top of the hill)

Looking for somewhere to take the children or grand children or just yourself? Come and ride on a railway hauled by a scale steam locomotive, one and a half miles of real steam!

At the other end of the railway on top of the Greensand Ridge you can enjoy unparallel views of Bedford.

Free admission and parking

Station Buffet & BBQ

Public Running takes place between 11.00 and 16.30

Sunday May 6

Monday May7 Bank Holiday

You can also have great birthday parties at the railway; speak to the Station Master who will be pleased to help you make a booking.

The membership of Bedford Model Engineering Society embraces all ages with a complement of retired engineers of many disciplines with even the odd clergyman to be seen waving a flag and blowing a whistle!

Do visit soon, you will find a warm welcome.

Nigel Morrell

at 43 Armstrong Close. Wilstead

JUNE 2007

- Sunday 3rd Trinity Sunday
 9.30am Family Communion with Children's Groups (JRC)
 with the Baptism of Regan Higham
 11.00am Morning Prayer (Mattins Group)
 3.00pm Baptism of Megan Caimino
 6.30pm Evening Prayer (JRC)
- Monday 4th 10.00am Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
 7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
- Wednesday 6th 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
 6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
 8.00pm Deanery Synod @ Bromham Village Hall
- Thursday 7th 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
 12 Noon Monthly Luncheon at the Red Lion – All Welcome
 7.30pm RAF Bi-Annual Concert at Elstow Abbey
 Tickets from Peter Kemp 01234 267948)
- Saturday 9th 9.30am Churchyard Working Party,
 followed by lunch in the Church Hall
 2.30pm Abbey Tour by the 'Confraternity of St James'
- Sunday 10th 11.00am Parish Communion - we welcome back three
 years since moving to the Isle of Man The Revd
 Mary Railton-Crowder. Coffee will follow service.
 6.30pm Evening Prayer (The Revd. Peter Littleford)
- Monday 11th 10.00am Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
 7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse

Material for inclusion in the July/August magazine to Revd. Jeremy Crocker or jeremy.crocker@tesco.net

- Wednesday 13th 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
 6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
- Thursday 14th 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
 7.30pm Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
 in the Church Hall



- Sunday 17th Father's Day
9.30am Family Communion with Children's Group's (JRC)
11.00am Morning Prayer (JRC)
6.30pm Evening Prayer (JRC)
- Monday 18th 10.00am Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
- Wednesday 20th 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
- Thursday 21st 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
5.00pm Wedding Rehearsal (JRC)
6.00pm Wedding Rehearsal (JRC)
7.00pm Wedding Rehearsal (JRC)
- Friday 22nd 1.00pm Wedding of Edward Dixon and Janine Harwood
- Saturday 23rd 10.15am Wedding Rehearsal (JRC)
11.00am Wedding Rehearsal (JRC)
12.30pm Wedding of Simon Harper and Felicity Freeman
2.00pm Wedding of Martin Grayson and Emma Shields
2-4pm Youth Workshop in the Church Hall
- Sunday 24th 9.30am Young People's Service (JEH)
11.00am Morning Prayer (Mattins Group)
6.30pm Evening Prayer with Holy Communion and
Prayers for Healing (The Revd. Peter Littleford)
- Monday 25th 10.00am Mums and Toddlers in the Church Hall
7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
- Wednesday 27th 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
- Thursday 28th 11.00am Holy Communion (The Revd. Stephen Smith)
- Saturday 30th 12.30pm Wedding of Philip Straccia and Kara Hawkins
2.00pm Wedding of Jonathan Barron and Emma Belchamber
- JULY 2007**
- Sunday 1st 9.30am Family Communion with Children's Group (JRC)
11.00am Morning Prayer (JRC)

The Church of St. Michael and All Angels
Faldo Road, Bedford
The Garden of Remembrance

The Garden of Remembrance is the section of the church grounds at the junction of Barford Avenue and Faldo Road and has been used for the burial of ashes of people whose bodies have been cremated for many years

The church leaders want to improve the appearance of the Garden and have received permission to build a memorial wall and a raised flower bed, where people will be welcome to plant flowers in memory of loved ones. We also intend to restore and widen the footpath which is in the Garden.

The Garden has always been available for people who live in the area for the burial of the ashes of loved ones, and we hope that by improving the appearance of the Garden, and enabling people to fix memorial plaques to the new wall, more people will feel that they would like to use this facility.

The Garden would continue to be available for use by anyone living in the area whether or not they come to St. Michael's regularly.

The church members have calculated that the cost of this improvement will be £8000.00 and have raised half of the sum required already.

Would you be prepared to help us raise the remaining £4000.00 by:

Donating £1.00 to sponsor a brick or

Donating £5.00 to sponsor a yard of foot path or

Giving a donation of however much you can afford?

If you feel able to contribute towards the Garden would you please place it in the an envelope and post it through the door of St. Michael's Vicarage in Faldo Road, next to the church.

Should you have any question about this, then please do not hesitate to contact;
Rita Harris 300743 Jane Hughes, 303960, the Vicar, Peter Littleford, 356645 or Nigel Morrell 743202

Would you like to get into regular Bible reading?

The Bible Reading Fellowship can help

New Daylight

Ideal for those looking for a devotional approach to reading and understanding the Bible. A regular team of contributors, representing a stimulating mix of church backgrounds, cover four months of daily Bible reading, providing helpful comment, prayer and thoughts for reflection.

Day by Day with God

With a regular team of contributors, these are Bible reading notes especially for women by women. Each four-monthly issue offers daily Bible readings, with key verses printed out, helpful comment and a prayer for the day ahead.

For more information please contact Rita Haines your Church Representative Bedford 304773.



Lesson Readers List

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

May		Easter 5		
6th	9.30am	Acts Ch.11 v. 1 - 18	John Ch. 13 v. 31 - 35	Barbara Routledge
White	11.00am	2 Samuel Ch. 7 v. 4 - 13	Acts Ch. 2 v. 22 - 32	Peter Batiuk
	6.30pm	Daniel Ch.6 v. 6 - 23	Mark Ch. 15 v. 46 - Ch.16 v. 8	Glynis Annan
May		Easter 6		
13th	11.00am	Acts Ch. 16 v. 9 - 15	John Ch. 14 v. 23 - 29	Ann Knight
White	6.30pm	No Service		
May		Sunday after Ascension Day		
20th	9.30am	Acts Ch. 16 v. 16 - 34	John Ch. 17 v. 20 - end	John Hinson
White	11.00am	Deuteronomy Ch. 34	Luke Ch. 24 v. 44 - end	Miriam Clark
	5.00pm	1 Kings Ch.8 v. 20 - 30	1 Peter Ch.2 v. 4 - 10	Colin Albon
May		Pentecost		
27th	11.00am	Acts Ch. 2 v. 1 - 21	John Ch.14 v. 8 - 17	Barbara Routledge
Red	6.30pm	Exodus Ch.33 v. 7 - 20	2 Corinthians Ch.3 v. 4 - end	Peter Moss
June				
3rd	9.30am	Romans Ch. 5 v. 1 - 5	John Ch. 16 v. 12 - 15	Colin Albon
White	11.00am	Isaiah Ch. 6 v. 1 - 8	Revelation Ch. 4	Lizabeth Burrows
	6.30pm	Exodus Ch. 3 v. 1 - 15	John Ch. 3 v. 1 - 17	Margaret Eastwell
June	11.00am	Galatians Ch.1 v. 11 - end	Luke Ch.7 v.11 - 17	Ann Knight
10th	6.30pm	Isaiah Ch.42 v. 5 - 12	Acts Ch 14 v. 8 - end	Dorothy Steele
Green				
June	9.30am	Galatians Ch.2 v. 15 - end	Luke Ch.7 v.36 - Ch.8 v.3	John Hinson
17th	11.00am	Deuteronomy Ch.10 v. 12 - Ch 11 v. 1	Acts Ch. 23 v. 12 - end	John Crookall
Green	6.30pm	Genesis Ch. 13	Mark Ch 4. V. 21 - end	Peter Moss
June				
24th	11.00am	Deuteronomy Ch 11 v. 1 - 15	Acts Ch 27 v. 1 - 12	Peter Batiuk
Green	6.30pm	Genesis Ch 24 v. 1 - 27	Mark Ch 5 v. 21 - end	Glynis Annan
July				
1st	9.30am	Galatians Ch 5 v's 1 & 13 - 25	Luke Ch 9 v. 51 - end	Barbara Routledge
	11.00am	Deuteronomy Ch 15 v. 1 - 11	Acts Ch 27 v. 33 - end	Lizabeth Burrows
Green	6.30pm	Genesis Ch 27 v. 1 - 40	Mark Ch 6 v. 1 - 6	Catherine Parrish

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

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

May 6th
 9.30am Mrs. R. Haines. Mrs. A. Morris.
 11.00am Mr. P. Batiuk. Mrs. M. Crossen.
 6.30pm Miss. M. Eastwell.

May 13th
 11.00am Mrs. A. Knight. Mrs. L. Burrows.
6.30pm No Service

May 20th
 9.30am Mrs. R. Albon. Mrs. J. Barnicott.
 11.00am Mr. F.W. Crossen. Mr. P. Batiuk.
5.00pm Mrs. C. Parrish.

May 27th
 9.30am The Young People
 11.00am Mrs. M. Crossen. Mrs. A. Knight.
 6.30pm Mrs. G. Annan.

June 3rd
 9.30am Mrs. A. Morris. Mrs. R. Haines.
 11.00am Mr. F W Crossen. Mrs. L. Burrows.
 6.30pm Miss. M. Eastwell.

June 10th
 11.00am Mrs. M. Crossen. Mrs. A. Knight.
 6.30pm Mr. P. Moss.

June 17th
 9.30am Mrs. R. Albon. Mrs. J. Barnicott.
 11.00am Mr. P. Batiuk. Mrs. S. Batiuk.
 6.30pm Miss. M. Eastwell.

June 24th
 9.30am The Young People
 11.00am Mr. F.W. Crossen. Mrs. L. Burrows.
 6.30pm Mrs. G. Annan.

July 1st
 9.30am Mrs. A, Morris. Mrs. R. Haines.
 11.00am Mrs. A. Knight. Mrs. M. Crossen.
 6.30pm Mrs. C. Parrish.


Mums and Toddlers, (Free) meets at Elstow Church Hall every Monday from 10-11.30am for more details please contact the co-ordinator Mrs Michelle Tuck on 01234 305153 or michelleandstanleytuck@ntlworld.com



From the registers

	Communicants	Attendance	Collections £
March			
1 st	13	13	4.20
4 th	36	92	260.91
8 th	8	8	3.00
11 th	40	72	174.27
15 th	6	6	2.50
18 th	63	101	260.21
22 nd	6	6	1.50
25 th	15	78	252.08
29 th	8	8	3.00
Totals	195	384	961.67

Burial

- 5th April Veronica Wagstaff (Ashes)
- 5th April Harry Hornsby (Ashes)
- 5th April Mary Elizabeth Crouch (Ashes)

Church organist required for jungle meteorite hunt

From The Times, 12 March 2007

I came across this advertisement, which seemed to promise considerable interest to an organist, and indeed excitement in a number of ways, and explored it further.

Wanted: One organist for a con-cert in remote Bolivian jungle accessible only by raft. Must be prepared to face rapids, alliga-tors, and 30°C temperatures. Ability to swim a bonus.

My understanding is that a team of scientists is about to embark on a journey to a far-flung meteorite impact site in Bolivia, and they believe that an organist accompanying them will be key to achieving their mission. Colonel John Blashford-Snell (age 70) a professional adventurer who you may remember made headlines in 2000 when he took a grand piano 350 miles along the Amazon River as a present for the Wai Wai tribe in Guyana, intends to deliver a pedal organ to the isolated Ojaki community as a way of persuading its people to help his expedition. The colonel's team, which will also help to install a clean water supply and perform medical duties for the Ojaki people, are reliant on local expertise to build bridges to the impact site, which is five miles wide. The locals are religious and have asked the visitors to install an organ in their newly built church.

The organ is a pedal-powered Harmonium (a bit like our old one at Elstow Abbey) donated by St James's church, Milton Abbas, Dorset, and will be flown to La Paz, and then transported by lorry 120 miles over the Andes to the Beni river. It will then be loaded on to a 59ft boat for a 430 mile journey over rapids and more dangerous man-made hazards. Blashford-Snell considers that the main obstacle would be the logs floated down the river by timber companies. "You get around those by gunning the engine before pulling the prop out of the water," he said: "your bow then comes out of the water and you shoot over the log and land on the other side." More natural hazards include alligators, although they are not a problem "unless you step on them", he said. The explorer made a reconnaissance expedition two years ago, but had to stop within seven miles of the crater when his party got down to their last bottle of water.

He suggests that any organist willing to join should also be prepared to face such discomforts as swarms of bees, be fit enough to catch a bus, and it would be very nice too if he or she could swim. The successful applicant will also be expected to pay a share of the costs of about £12,000 (note: not mentioned in the advert). I understand that a suitable applicant has now been identified. The team hopes to be the first to bring back traces of the meteorite, which is estimated to have hit the Earth between 5,000 and 30,000 years ago. They will also try to formally identify the Andean double-nosed tiger hound, a dog first observed in Bolivia in 1915.

Thinking carefully about it, I suppose a favourite hymn for the trip would be "O God our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come", but I would welcome any other suggestions.

John Crookall, Organist

Bedford Domestic Cleaners

Time is precious to all of us in this busy world we live in which is why more & more people are approaching Bedford Domestic Cleaners to provide them with our specialised cleaning services.

We are a family run business and take pride in our personal but professional attitude to all our clients' requirements.

We provide our cleaning services for homes; businesses; rental cleans & after party cleans

For more information please contact us today for a free quotation

Tel: 01234 219970 Mob: 07926196733

Bedforddomesticcleaners@fsmail.net

Jokes Jokes Jokes...

Adams Rib

In Sunday School, they were teaching how God created everything, including human beings.

Little Johnny seemed especially intent when they told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs.

Later in the week, his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny what is the matter?"

Little Johnny responded, "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Pearly Gates

A minister dies and is waiting in line at the Pearly Gates.

Ahead of him is a guy who's dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket, and jeans.

Saint Peter addresses this guy, "Who are you, so that I may know whether or not to admit you to the Kingdom of Heaven?"

The guy replies, "I'm Joe Cohen, taxi driver, of Noo Yawk City."

St. Peter consults his list.

He smiles and says to the taxi driver, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The taxi driver goes into Heaven with his robe and staff, and it's the minister's turn.

He stands erect and booms out, "I am Joseph Snow, pastor of Calvary for the last forty-three years."

St Peter consults his list.

He says to the minister, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Just a minute," says the minister. "That man was a taxi driver, and he gets a silken robe and golden staff. How can this be?"

"Up here, we work by results," says Saint Peter. "While you preached, people slept; while he drove, people prayed."

The Confession Session

The new priest is nervous about hearing confessions, so he asks an older priest to sit in on his sessions.

The new priest hears several confessions, then the old priest asks him to step out of the confessional for a few suggestions.

The old priest suggests, "Cross your arms over your chest and rub your chin with one hand."

The new priest tries this.

The old priest then suggests, "Try saying things like, 'I see, yes, go on, and I understand, how did you feel about that?'"

The new priest says those things, trying them out.

The old priest concludes,

"Now, don't you think that's a little better than slapping your knee and saying, 'No way!'"

What happened next?"



200 Years Ago

A FORMER slave trader turned abolitionist has been remembered recently on the bicentenary of his death and the culmination of the anti-slavery campaign. Two hundred years ago the Act of Parliament abolishing the slave trade was passed and John Newton, a leading light of the abolitionist movement, passed away and was later laid to rest in the town of Olney.

Newton, perhaps best known as the author of the hymn Amazing Grace, was a former slave trader, preacher and leading abolitionist who converted to evangelical Christianity in 1748 after an adventure-filled life as a master of a slave ship.

Born in 1725, Newton spent his early years at sea before being ordained as a priest in the Church of England. Newton accepted the curacy of Olney, where he lived until 1780 when he became Rector of St Mary Woolnoth in London.

Newton's work in the anti-slavery movement occupied much of his later life. Amazing Grace was one of more than 200 Olney Hymns, written in collaboration with William Cowper, and at the Cowper and Newton Museum in Olney, opened in 1900, the stories of both men are told.

But although Newton was an influential figure, his conversion was a gradual process rather than a thunderbolt of realisation.

When he found God, he didn't stop being a slaver straight away. Although he did get to be fairly uncomfortable with it, he still had to eat and make a living and giving up may eventually have had more to do with his love for his wife.

But to give him due respect, no-one was really questioning slavery then, and as soon as he started meeting up with such people he started to change his perspective.

The recent film, also called Amazing Grace, about abolitionist MP William Wilberforce, features Newton as a character played by Albert Finney. Newton was Wilberforce's spiritual counsellor and inspired him to stay in Parliament and become a reformer.

Unlike Wilberforce, who was a politician and had to consider factors such as the economic argument, Newton was able to take a moral stand and encouraged Wilberforce to use his political power for good.

The Newton Room of the museum contains many of Newton's books, letters and trinkets brought back from his voyages as well as his Bible. In the parish church of St Peter and St Paul in Olney, where he preached, his pulpit still exists.

Newton spent 16 years at Olney, during which time his preaching was so popular that the church had a gallery added to accommodate the large numbers who flocked to hear him. His enduringly popular Amazing Grace has stood the test of time, not only as a religious hymn, but has also been taken up by the civil rights movement.

It was sung when Nelson Mandela was released; after the terrorist attacks of 9/11; after Hurricane Katrina when the American football team came back to the city and were welcomed into the stadium by the crowd singing it; when the Berlin Wall came down - it has such resonance for many people.

It is also a reflection on the life of John Newton, especially the line 'I was blind but now I see'." The Act of Parliament abolishing the slave trade was passed on March 25, 1807, and John Newton died on December 21, 1807. His Times obituary stated: "His unblemished life, his amiable character, both as a man and as a Minister, and his able writings, are too well-known to need any comment."

Jacquie Pryce

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)
That sav'd a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears reliev'd;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believ'd!

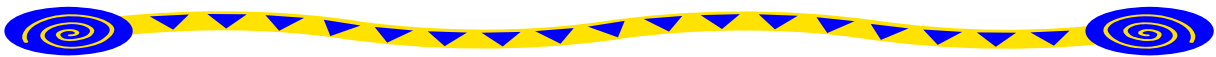
Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promis'd good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who call'd me here below,
Will be forever mine.

**John Newton, Olney Hymns
(London: W. Oliver, 1779)**



Su-Doku – TOUGHIE!

				6	5			7
	3		2			4		
							2	
9		2		3				4
			9		4			1
4				8			5	
3	1	6			9			
		5					9	
7		9	6		8			

Recipe for salt play dough

Ingredients

2 cups plain flour (32 table spoons or 480 mls)

1/2 cup salt (8 table spoons or 120mls)

1 cup water (with added food colouring if desired) (16 table spoons or 240 mls)

1 Table spoon Cooking Oil (15mls)

1 Table spoon Hand lotion (15mls)

Method

Mix the flour and the salt together in a large bowl.

Gradually add the hand lotion, oil and water mixing well until all dry ingredients are combined and it forms a soft dough.

Knead well.

Roll out as desired or use for modelling or cutting out shapes.

Keep it in an air tight container at room temperature.

It should keep for around 6 weeks before getting too hard. (or it can be baked in the oven and then painted (around 20 mins 100oc, gas 1/4, 200of)