

# *ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE*



## EDITORIAL

We are now a month past Easter, that annual celebration of Christ's glorious resurrection.

Just before Palm Sunday, the news broke on the radio and then in the press of the hailing, by some, of the relatively recently discovered original manuscript of the "Gospel of Judas" as being the fifth gospel. Judas, the commercially inspired reports said, was not the traitor depicted in the four canonical gospels we know so well, but a man who sacrificed himself for, and at the request of, his master, Jesus, so that He might fulfil His role in history.

Let us look at these two assertions in turn.

First of all, on a historical note and as an aside, there are in fact substantially only two gospels if the *synoptic* gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are considered as having a common source, which they have, and John's gospel completes the cycle for us. Any work attributed to Judas derives from a later manuscript dating from the mid-second century which was well known to, and rejected as heretical in 180AD by, Irenæus the contemporary, canonised and learned bishop of Lyons, in France. (There were other spurious "gospels" in vogue, too, by such as Thomas, Bartholomew and Thaddeus.) Irenæus was the foremost and most trusted theologian of his time.

The gospel of Judas starts as follows: "The secret account of the revelation that Jesus spoke in conversation with Judas Iscariot during a week three days before he celebrated Passover....." and it carries on in much the same vein. If you would like to read the full text, please contact the Editors to receive a free copy. It is stylistically uncharacteristic of the other gospels and of their period and contains unexpected language as well as anachronistic references. As Dalya Alberge put it in *The Times*, it is as though a speech by Queen Victoria had been "discovered" with references to "The Lord of the Rings and her CD collection".

The second assertion suggests that Judas was a very special disciple and was simply acting as Jesus' agent in the dealings with the Authorities, thereby exonerating and whitewashing him. The intention claimed was that Judas played a crucial part – and at Jesus' request – in ensuring the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies. In refutation of this, professor Geza Vermes (his book, "The Passion" was reviewed in this Magazine a year ago – copies of the review may be obtained free from the Editors) wrote the following day, in a scathing article, "Far from requiring a fundamental reassessment, the historicity of Judas' role, as attested in the New Testament, must be recognised as the lynchpin without which the Passion story would fall apart."

If you read the Judas gospel, you will see for yourself to what extent it is discrepant in content and style from what was written in the first century – the time when the four gospels were written down. It may have overtones of the Apocalypse ("A great angel, the enlightened divine Self-Generated, emerged from the cloud....."), but it has weird references ("Adamas was in the first luminous cloud that no angel has

ever seen among all those called 'God'.....) which are wholly uncharacteristic of the period it purports to come from.

There is absolutely nothing in all these hyped reports to prompt a revision of traditional thinking. Judas is still rated the world's most hated man behind Adolf Hitler. This sits uneasily in the Christian context of forgiveness, but that's mythology for you. Many people have supported the Judas theory, but none has succeeded in convincing serious students down the ages. Are you convinced?

## Elstow May Festival

This year we are reinstating the ancient fair which was once such a feature of Elstow Village. Records show that, some 880 years ago, king Henry II granted a Charter to allow Elstow to hold a fair during four days in May on the Green and that it was held annually (latterly usually on just one day) until it recently fell into abeyance. The Charter talks of "a yearly fair for the nuns at their manor of Elstow on the vigil, feast and two days following *the Invention of the Cross* on 3<sup>rd</sup> May."

Comments in *The Victoria History of the County of Bedford* suggest that it was, on occasion, a somewhat boisterous affair and widely popular in Bedford, which, perhaps explains its decline, if not its temporary demise.....

I hope that all the families of the community will come together and that visitors will enjoy the day. For those who remember the last fair, I hope you too enjoy this. I have tried as far as I can to re-create as much of the traditional festival as I possibly can, and I have enjoyed talking with many of the local residents, and am grateful to them for sharing with me memories from the past.

*pp Jeremy Crocker*

# ELSTOW MAY FESTIVAL

Saturday May 20th 2006

**Elstow Green - 11am to 4pm**

**Abbey and Moot Hall will be open - with tours  
Many stalls and choices of food will be available**

**2pm - 3pm**

**Traditional May Day Procession**

**Crowning of May Queen (Abbey Middle School)**

**May Pole Dancing (Elstow Lower School)**

**Brass Band concert (Biddenham Upper School)**

**Patrick Hall MP will be at the Festival to lead the proceedings from 2pm.**

**A chance for us to celebrate being part of an ancient village - and to bring the community together.**



# THE ABBEY CHURCH OF ST. MARY AND ST. HELENA ELSTOW. ANNUAL MEETING - MARCH 30<sup>th</sup> 2006

At the meeting held at Elstow Abbey on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2006 the following were elected to serve during the year 2006/2007.

## Churchwardens

Mr. Colin Albon  
Mrs. Barbara Routledge

## Deputy Churchwardens

Mr. John Hinson  
Mrs. Tracey Hinson

## Members of the Parochial Church Council

Mrs. Rosemary Albon  
Mrs. Glynis Annan  
Mrs. Margaret Baron  
Mrs. Lizabeth Burrows  
Mrs. Miriam Clark  
Mr. Eric Crossen  
Mr. Jon Finch  
Mr. John Hinson  
Mrs. Tracey Hinson  
Mrs. Lynn Mallett  
Mr. Ross Millar  
Mrs. Anne Morris  
Mrs. Catherine Parrish

## Sidesmen

Mrs. Rosemary Albon  
Mrs. Glynis Annan  
Mrs. Janet Barnicott  
Mr. Peter Batiuk  
Mrs. Sheila Batiuk  
Mrs. Lizabeth Burrows  
Mrs. Judy Carpenter  
Mr. Eric Crossen  
Mrs. Mavis Crossen  
Miss. Margaret Eastwell  
Mrs. Rita Haines  
Mrs. Ann Knight  
Mrs. Lynn Mallett  
Mrs. Anne Morris  
Mr. Peter Moss  
Mrs. Catherine Parrish  
Mr. Norman Thompson  
Mrs. Vivian Whyatt-Routh

The Rector is Chairman of the Parochial Church Council and the Churchwardens are ex-officio members. Also members are the Elstow Deanery Synod representatives, Mrs. Sheila Batiuk and Mrs. Ann Knight.

The Parochial Church Council are grateful to Mrs. Clare Lammin for all her help and support over the last few years. Sadly she was unable, for family reasons to seek re-election to the Parochial Church Council for the coming year.

*Colin Albon*



## TUNES OF GLORY

This series goes back to the Dec/Jan 2001 edition, starting with Hilary Jolly's hymn "*Through the Darkness of the Ages*". Hymn authors having more than one mention are Henry John Newman (2), William Cowper (2) and Charles Wesley (3), and, for the tunes, Ralph Vaughan Williams, J B Dykes and Gustav Holst at 2 each.

The late Kenneth Lysons wrote under the title "Hymns in a man's life": "*Nothing is more difficult than to determine what a child takes in, and does not take in, of its environment and teaching. This has brought home to me the hymns which I learned as a child, and never forgot. They mean to me more than the finest poetry, and they have for me a permanent value*".

A Jewish teacher in the Cambridge Theological federation, after a visit to a Christian Church, once remarked: "Christians often seem to offer their children worship to grow out of, whereas we offer our children worship to grow into". Especially through its hymnology, much of what Lysons experienced in his formative years represented worship that he could grow into. He had a great love for Rudyard Kipling's patriotic "Land of our birth we pledge to thee", regarded by many as nationalistic. The distinction is that nationalism is mindless loyalty to a nation, whether it is right or wrong, but patriotism is a genuine love for country that is not blind to the nation's sins. This is true of a hymn that we often sing, "I vow to thee my country all earthly things above" by Sir Cecil Spring-Rice to Gustav Holst's tune (reviewed in the Elstow Magazine of May 2003).

A tune which ideally complements the words, a bishop once said, took him to the outskirts of heaven: "*Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing...*". Charles Wesley's hymns show that there is little likelihood of a great silence following their announcement and questioning whether the organist has fallen asleep, or off his perch. Remember, organists always have the last chord.

When choosing hymns for a service a vast array come tumbling out for attention. "Use me please", they plead, and the risk of indigestion is great. Authors range in age from about 21 to 94, and at least half are over 75. Hymn writers have come mostly from clerical households, and hymn writing, it seems does have its protective effects. The inference is that hymn writing itself helps to prolong life: or is it that anything can be proved with statistics?

And what about hymns in the headlines? Last November and as reported in the Press, the Honorary President of The Hymn Society, Archbishop Rowan Williams, struck either a chord, or a raw nerve, by apologising for the 19<sup>th</sup> century export of Hymns Ancient and Modern to remote parts of the mission field. Hymns still have the power to fill a page in the press!

In October, BBC Songs of Praise broadcast the Top 20 hymns selected by viewers. Indeed three members of The Hymn Society contributed to the programme, and I note that all of these hymns feature in our own choices from time to time, yet only one of them was included in Elstow's choice on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2006 (*How Great Thou art – [Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder Consider all the works thy hand hath made...]*). Clearly we have very wide tastes!

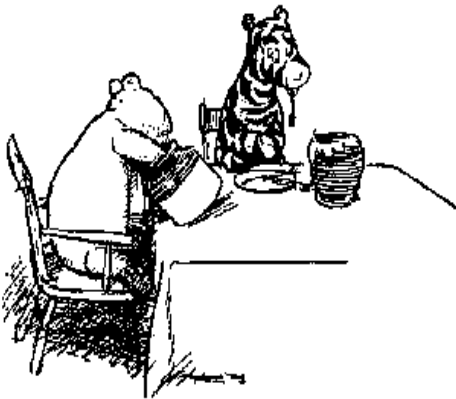
Finally, it has been said that the Christian Church started on its way singing. In response to such a statement we might well ask what was the nature of its song in those early days of the Faith. Hymn-singing is common to most churches, and as such is one of the factors which helps to unite them. They may differ from one another on points of doctrine and in modes of worship, but they all sing very much the same hymns. This in itself is a significant and encouraging sign. There is no doubt that hymn singing has a wide appeal and that this is by no means limited to those within the churches. I have mentioned the popularity of such BBC programmes as *Songs of Praise* and *Sunday Half-Hour* as evidence of this. Clearly all sorts of people enjoy singing hymns, indeed listening to them, and watching others singing them.

**John Crookall**

## BOOK REVIEWS

### “Winnie the Pooh” and “The House at Pooh Corner” by AA Milne

I have, over the years, reviewed so many serious books that I felt it was time to look at one of the great classics of our age which is utterly undemanding and which sits at the back of our minds as part of our heritage. Even “Gemma Boverly” (“*The story is the very modern one of bored adultery*” – February 2000) and “Asterix in Britain” (“*there is a more serious side [to this book]*” – June 2003) had their objectives beyond mere entertainment. The Pooh books have no such objectives. They are a totally superficial set of stories, so why is it that we remember them? The answer has to lie mainly in the quality of EH Shepard’s drawings – which is ironic because Shepard always somewhat resented his association with Pooh, in fact modelled on his own son’s bear, Growler. [He was, one gathers, much happier with his illustrations of “The Wind in the Willows” (reviewed in April 2000)]. We have the bonus of such pleasant inventions as Pooh-sticks and heffalumps and, of course, the need to have a little something from time to time...., but our abiding pleasure remains the drawings. I reproduce two below for you to enjoy.



### “Scott of the Antarctic” by David Crane (HarperCollins - £25.00)

In January 2002, I reviewed “The Coldest March” by Susan Solomon and, in late 2003, Sir Ranulf Fiennes’ effusive rebuttal of what I called “Roland Huntford’s hurtful, biased and damning book ‘Scott and Amundsen’ (1979 and republished in paperback [and then televised] in 1986 as “The Last Place on Earth”) in which he maintained that Scott was a muddle-headed bungler of epic proportions even though a masterly leader of men.” Crane’s painstaking biography is an attempt to rehabilitate Scott and is written with sympathy and warmth. I mention it here because I have reviewed the other two books and, in a sense, it completes the cycle. But Crane fails in his task for two reasons: firstly, he cannot disguise the sheer ability and efficiency of the winner of the “race” to the South Pole, Roald Amundsen, and, secondly, he is never really convincing in his attempt to depict Scott as anything other than a wonderfully great and heroic and charismatic loser. Crane dwells tellingly and rightly on the incredible fortitude of the men and his extremely hefty biography is admirably structured as it leads with a kind of ghastly inevitability to its doomed climax in the frozen wastes of Antarctica.

Where Crane adds to the Scott canon is in his access to hitherto unpublished material about Scott’s earlier life. There is nothing in Scott’s background which is shameful or unfortunate: he was an officer and a gentleman of the old school through and through – which was, of course, his great weakness. Amundsen was a hard-bitten and successful pragmatist and Crane is forced, through honesty, to highlight this. Read the book, but make sure you’ve been down to the gym regularly: it is very heavy.....

*Bookworm*

## ATHEISM 2

“Rabbit,” said Piglet, “has brains.”

“I suppose,” said Pooh, “that’s why he never understands anything.”

The Paradox of Epicurus is the most notorious of the arguments in favour of the idea that there can be no God. In my first article, I refuted it by turning its own weapon of simple logic against it. This time, I want to take a different approach and refute it by invoking what I shall call human nature.

Let us remind ourselves of that treacherous Paradox.

Its basis is: **“If God existed, there would be no Evil in the world.”**

- **If the Premise that God exists is true, then the Conclusion must be true.**
- **However the Conclusion is false: there is Evil in the world. Therefore, the Premise is false: there can be no God. OED.**

We read in St Luke’s Gospel: “*Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*” and I would like, with human nature in mind, to elaborate on this point, stressing the word “heart”. It was, you see and as Luke suggests, not so much the disciples’ minds but their hearts which had become, or were expected to be, engaged.

There was once a notable French scientist and thinker called Blaise Pascal. He was born in 1623 and died in his late 30s. He was the archetype of the apparently soulless intellectual – until he underwent a sort of Damascene conversion after his life was miraculously saved during a coaching accident when he was about thirty. Thereafter he wrote at length and persuasively about Christianity. To pick up my earlier point when quoting from St Luke, he once wrote, in one of his later essays, words to the effect: “*The heart has its reasons which Reason itself cannot recognise*”. What he is trying to say, in the light of his own experience, is that it is impossible and downright wrong to intellectualise and rationalise everything in the way that people like Epicurus did.

As a second example, I would like to quote from a well-known book, “The Little Prince”. This is a children’s story with an adult theme written by one of the great pioneering aviators, Saint-Exupéry, who was also a talented novelist and considerable thinker. It tells the tale of how, one day, he had to bring his plane down for emergency repairs to a recalcitrant engine in the middle of the Sahara desert and miles from anywhere. It was a simple case, all too familiar to him, of mend the fault rather quickly, and before his water ran out, or die.

There, in the middle of nowhere, he meets a delightful young personage – the Little Prince of the title – who has come from the tiny Asteroid 621-B. At one point, the Little Prince tells of his meetings and conversations with a wise, if wild, fox. When he finally leaves the fox, he does so with the following words of wisdom ringing in his ears, words he considers so important that he repeats them to himself so as to be sure to remember them: “*It is only with one’s heart that one can see rightly.....*”. Once again, and in a most unlikely context, we have a statement which throws into confusion Epicurus’ purely intellectual approach to religion in his Paradox.

As a final example, I would like to borrow from Pope Benedict XVI’s first encyclical, “Deus Caritas Est” (“*God is Love*”), signed on Christmas Day 2005 and promulgated a month later.

The main drive of the encyclical concerns Love in its different forms of physical, spiritual and, most difficult of all to analyse, social existence. It is both a philosophical tract and a political statement and certain affirmations in it stood out for me in the context of this month’s article. The first, which is “*Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea*”, comes in the introduction. The second, buried in the middle of a dense paragraph about the interface between politics and faith, is:

*“Faith liberates reason from its blind spots”*; and the third, taken from Pope John Paul II, is: *“The Christian's programme ... is ‘a heart which sees’”*.

It is dangerous to take remarks out of context, but these statements by such different people, a scientist, an aviator and two Popes, are consistent with the Christian tradition and underscore my thesis. It is not the intellect which should drive thinking in this matter, but the heart.

This, unexpectedly, and I am sure unintentionally, strengthened by AA Milne's bear, serves as my second refutation of Epicurus' Paradox. You cannot approach God just by using your mind.

*Tim Elliott*

## PARISH PUMP

### News Items

#### Churches welcome VAT scheme extension and expansion:

The Church of England has warmly welcomed Gordon Brown's announcement to substantially expand the scope of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and extend its operation for a further three years until 2010-11. The move will save churches millions of pounds on the cost of major repair and maintenance work.

#### Archbishop of Canterbury to visit Rome

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, is to visit His Holiness Pope Benedict XVIth in Rome later this year. The visit will mark the 40th anniversary of the Archbishop Michael Ramsey's meeting with Pope Paul VIth in 1966 and the founding of the Anglican Centre in Rome in the same year. Dr Williams met the Holy Father's predecessor, Pope John Paul II, in the autumn of 2003; he travelled to Rome in April 2005 for the funeral of Pope John Paul II and returned for the Inaugural Mass of his successor.

#### Alpha Course as popular as ever

Alpha Course take-up continues to increase, according to the latest research of Alpha courses just carried out by Christian Research. The number attending courses in the UK during 2005 went up by four percent to 182,000. Nearly two million people have now completed the course. There is also encouraging take-up of courses for established Christians from organisations like York Courses who estimate that up to 50,000 people use their materials each year.

The websites for Alpha and York are: <http://uk.alpha.org> and <http://www.yorkcourses.co.uk>

#### Christianity and Islam - religions of peace?

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, has said that the claims of both Christianity and Islam to be religions of peace need to be demonstrated through practical trust. Addressing the Sudan Inter-Religious Council in Khartoum recently, Dr Williams said that trust was essential when people with different views had to work together for peace. Both religions, he said, pointed to peace with God as a necessary starting point. "To be at peace with God means knowing that we do not have to strive all the time for power over each other". He warned that trust had to be built: "Among these things which most stand in the way of peace is the suspicion that comes from the way people exercise power; when power is shared then trust is built."

Dr Williams said that Sudan's own situation pointed to being honest with one another; to face their failings, to listen to one another's fears. "So peace comes when we are at peace with God; we are at peace with God when we face our failings with honesty, we are at peace with one another when we share our power and resources..."

### Methodist Church backs call for right to clean water

The world is facing a growing water crisis, with one billion people currently lacking access to safe, clean and sufficient water. Annually over 1.4 million children - more than the population of Birmingham and Newcastle combined - die of diseases caused by unclean drinking water. At the same time, economic growth is often dependent on increasing the availability of water to agriculture and industry. And so, as the 4th World Water Forum (WWF) was recently convened in Mexico, the Methodist Church warned that the need for a safe, reliable water supply for everyone is one of the major issues of our time. An initiative of the World Water Council, the WWF forum brings together a variety of organisations, including water companies, water engineers, academics, NGOs and various United Nations agencies, all seeking to influence water policy at a global level. Key issues addressed this year were access to water in rural communities and the privatisation of water in developing countries.

### Worship: See and Be Seen!

What type of corporate worshipper are you?

Do you arrive at church early to get a good seat, worried in case someone else sits there? And when you praise God, listen to the readings and sermon, and pray, do you thank God that you are not like those other people who for example cannot control their children or who talk whilst people are receiving communion? Or are you the person who comes in hurriedly, head down, and sits at the back or sides, not wanting to catch anyone's eye? - who focuses intently on all that goes on, then leaves right at the end so you do not have to face anyone?

Most Christians are probably somewhere in between in their approach to worship.

Some Christians profess all the good works that they do and how much they contribute to church and charity; in other words saying, 'Look what a good Christian I am!' They focus on the rituals of worship and comment when something is not done 'quite right' and then self-righteously criticise others as they leave. They wear an outward badge of virtue, like the Pharisee in Jesus' parable in Luke chapter 18.

Yet many people come to worship searching for something. They feel unworthy to receive any blessing and long for something to take away their low self-esteem, guilt, sadness or fear. They find comfort in the unity of corporate worship, even without understanding the rituals. These too are the people, like the tax collector in the parable, whom Jesus came to save.

And somehow this experience of one hour a week of being together at the feet of Jesus has to set the pattern for all the other hours we spend. An experience of blessing as well as forgiveness; an experience to share, a way of life to live.

### Driving the gospel home

Premier Christian Radio has decided to spread the gospel across London by designing its own taxi. The single hackney cab will tour around the central London area, with its radio securely tuned into Premier 1305 MW. A Christian has been selected to drive the cab, offer literature and attempt to answer questions on Christianity and the station's output. There's no chance customers will not realise the taxi's theme; the bright blue and green cab carries Premier's frequencies and their slogan 'Inspiring, uplifting, rejoicing radio'. So far the taxi has proved popular with several Members of Parliament, and various singers and musicians. Dubbed The Holy Cab by locals, the Premier taxi appears to be gaining attention. One of the cab's regular drivers, Ian, enjoys driving the only Christian taxi in London. "A ride in the Premier taxi is just that little bit special. Often our customers comment how relaxing the radio is or ask how they can keep listening to the station at home. It's a great conversation starter. I've even had customers tell me they've chosen to flag down the Premier cab rather than a boring plain one."

Source: [www.parishpump.co.uk](http://www.parishpump.co.uk)

## Christian Aid Week: 14<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2006

“We suffer from drought and landslides as well as emergencies from everyday poverty.” So says Maritza Sevilla, a young mother who, through Christian Aid partner Community Movement of Matagalpa (MCM), has taken on a vital role in her community in Nicaragua. Maritza lives in Nuevo Amanecer, an hour’s drive from Matagalpa. Her community is in a mountainous region, with a river winding through it. The single hillside road wends its way through a harsh landscape. Deforestation and drought have devastated what was once lush, dense forest. When the river breaks its banks, as it often does, the community here at Nuevo Amanecer can find themselves stranded for weeks, as happened during Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

In response to this vulnerability MCM, with help from the local people, built a community centre where people could meet and learn how to protect themselves better from the vagaries of unpredictable weather. In the absence of emergency services it’s vital that local communities take action themselves.

Christian Aid has been supporting MCM, a grassroots organization working with rural and urban poor people to improve living conditions in 150 communities, since 1992. A partnership of more than a decade has meant that Christian Aid has been able to give crucial support at some very difficult times. For example, in 1998 Hurricane Mitch hit the country, killing 3000 people, making even more homeless, and devastating the economy. Like Maritza, Lilian and Lucila most Nicaraguans were unprepared for it. Then a drought in 2002 dealt a further cruel blow, halting much of the progress made in the years after the hurricane. MCM works hard to make sure communities have the best chance of protecting themselves and rebuilding after floods, landslides, droughts and hurricanes.

Christian Aid Week begins this year on 14<sup>th</sup> May, involving more than 300,000 Christian Aid collectors who will encourage their friends, colleagues and neighbours – almost two thirds of UK households – to put some of their hard- earned cash into the famous red envelope. What each person adds Christian Aid will multiply, and so will help more people to live life to the full.

By supporting Christian Aid Week, you are among millions of people who think poverty is a scandal we do not have to accept. Your actions, commitment and contributions will bring about a better life for people in poor communities all over the world.

To find out more go to [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk) ... or call 020 7523 2225

### **Christian Aid Week prayer**

Composed by Friewion Aregaw, a trained HIV/AIDS youth counselor in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia.

*Lord God,  
this disease is beyond us alone.  
Please, Lord, help young people to rid Ethiopia of HIV.  
Give us the will and the ability to bring about change.  
You can do anything,  
so let all people pray for this.  
And as we have received your love,  
so may we love one another and support one another.  
We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.*



# THE CHURCH CALENDAR

## MAY 2006

Monday 1 <sup>st</sup>		BANK HOLIDAY: NO PRAYER GROUP
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by a light lunch in the Church Hall
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am 2.00pm	Holy Communion (The Revd Jeremy Crocker - JRC) Inspection by the Archdeacon of Bedford
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Easter 4</b> 9.30am 11.00am 6.30pm	<b>Vocation Sunday</b> Family Communion with Children's Groups (JRC) Morning Prayer (Mattins Group – Tim Elliott) Evening Prayer (JRC)
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm 7.45pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse Bereavement Supervision in the Hall
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	11.30am 6.00pm	Coffee Morning followed by a light lunch in the Church Hall Wedding Rehearsal in Elstow Abbey
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am 7.30pm	Holy Communion (JRC) Meeting of the Parochial Church Council in the Church Hall
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Wedding of Spencer James Digby and Kirsty Louise Ames (JRC)
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Easter 5</b> 11.00am 6.30pm	<b>Christian Aid Week begins</b> Parish Communion (JRC) Christian Aid Service organised by the South Bedford Council of Churches (JRC). Preacher the Revd Brian Trudgian
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse <u><i>DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR JUNE MAGAZINE</i></u>
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	2.30pm	Tour of Elstow Abbey until 3.30pm
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	11.30am <b>6.00pm</b>	Coffee Morning followed by a light lunch in the Church Hall. <u><i>Christian Aid meal in the Rectory, donations to Christian Aid. All welcome</i></u>
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am – 4.00pm	Elstow May Festival on the Green
<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Easter 6</b> 9.30am  11.00am <b>3.15pm</b>  <b>5.00pm</b>	<b>Rogation Sunday</b> Family Communion with Children's Groups (the Revd Stephen Smith) Morning Prayer (JRC and the Revd Stephen Smith) The Annual Meeting of The Friends of Elstow Abbey and the Annual Lecture (the Revd Stephen Smith) The Friends Annual Service (JRC) Preacher the Revd Larry Wright, Chaplain at Yarl's Wood Immigration Centre
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by a light lunch in the Church Hall

Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ascension Day</b> 11.00am Holy Communion (JRC) 6.00 – 8.00pm Wedding Rehearsals in Elstow Abbey
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup>	2.30pm Blessing of the marriage of David Reynolds and Angela Lavelle (JRC)
Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup>	12.00 noon Wedding of Graham Leslie Kester and Haley Marie Grant (JRC)
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sunday after Ascension Day</b> 9.30am Young People's Service 11.00am Morning Prayer (JRC) 2.00pm Wedding of Lee Watson and Clare Leanne Bonwick (JRC) 3.30pm Baptism of Jack and Thomas Passonage 6.30pm Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion and The Laying on of Hands for Healing (JRC)
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup>	BANK HOLIDAY: NO PRAYER GROUP
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>4.00pm</b> <u><i>Afternoon tea in the Rectory.</i></u> All welcome
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup>	11.30am Coffee Morning followed by a light lunch in the Church Hall
<b><u>JUNE 2006</u></b>	
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup>	11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Pentecost</b> 9.30am Family Communion with Children's Groups (JRC) 11.00am Morning Prayer (Mattins Group – Ann Knight) 6.30pm Evening Prayer (JRC)
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	11.30am Coffee Morning followed by a light lunch in the Church Hall
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am Holy Communion (JRC) 8.00pm Meeting of the Finance and Standing Committee at 43. Armstrong Close. Wilstead
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup>	3.00pm Burial of the ashes of Alfred and Phyllis Lawrence (JRC)

## *MUSIC AT ST ANDREW'S*

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at 7.30 pm**

**O DUO ~ a dazzlingly virtuosic percussion duo**

***Workshop at 3 pm ~ Free entry with evening ticket***

*2006 brochures with tickets at £6/£5 from*

**St Andrew's Church Centre Office**

**Kimbolton Road ~ Bedford**

**01234 216881**