

ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE

October



2005

TUNES OF GLORY

This month we will sing the favourite hymn No. 239 “*Lord of all hopefulness*” by Jan Struther. In our book it is coupled with the tune *Slane*, harmonised by Erik Routley. Jan Struther was the pen-name of Mrs Joyce Placzek (1901-53), and was adapted from her maiden name of Anstruther (see “A Hymn Companion” by Frank Colquhoun). Joyce was a Londoner by birth, and followed a literary career, frequently contributing poetry and prose to various periodicals. She became well known for her novel during the 1939 war entitled “*Mrs Miniver*”, which was later made into a film.

This hymn was written for the 1932 edition of *Songs of Praise*, to fit the Irish tune *Slane* (another case where the hymn was written for a great tune), This was at the request of Percy Dearmer, to bring this Irish folk-song into his hymn book. He described it as 'a lovely example of the fitting together of thought, words and music.' In each verse, the final line refers to day-break, noon, evening, and the end of the day, and within each verse is a prayer addressed to God in appropriate terms; e.g. the first to 'Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy'; the second to 'Lord of all eagerness', then 'Lord of all kindness', and finally 'Lord of all gentleness'.

Cyril Taylor, the hymn-tune composer (e.g. of *Abbots Leigh*) says in his book “*Hymns for Today Discussed*” that she wrote simply and freshly in language equally at home outside as inside church. In places she addresses God as 'you'. It was in this way that the famous melody became known to many people for the first time as gentle and homely. Others however, only a few years before, had met it in Ireland and Scotland as a big and assertive melody, fitting to No. 339 '*Be thou my vision*'. So it was that Cyril Taylor came to write the tune *Miniver* in the hope of reserving *Slane* for '*Be thou my vision*'. However we will sing the hymn as originally intended.

John Crookall

Webb Ivory

I always know when summer is coming because the **Webb Ivory Christmas catalogue** usually hits the doormat in the May. I am sure you are delighted that we don't release them until now. As you read this fund-raising catalogues are available in the back of the Church. If you have never looked at one before please pick one up. It is packed full of some beautiful Christmas cards, gifts, wrapping paper and loads more. The best thing (as far as the Church is concerned) is that everything you order results in a contribution towards the Church's work with young people.

Because of the pressures of time in December we will only be putting in a single order this year. If you would like to order something please fill in a form and get it back to me by Sunday, 6th November 2005 at the very latest. The order will be sent off the next day and, with a bit of luck and a following wind, the goods should be with you by the end of the month. If an item is not available we will not be putting in a subsequent order. I am sure that you will appreciate that Christmas is a very busy time for us all and that you don't want to be receiving your Christmas card orders on Christmas Eve (and we don't want to be delivering them then either!) If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact either Tracey or me. And can we be the first to wish you all a peaceful and merry Christmas?

John Hinson

Love in a Box

This year's **Love in a Box campaign** was launched at the Harvest Youth Service. It seems appropriate that when we are thanking God for all his blessings on us, we should begin to focus on those who will have very little at Christmas. If you have not heard of this project before it is really quite simple. If you wish to take part (or if you would like to get together with someone else and make a joint box) you are asked to fill a shoebox with small gifts for a child who, otherwise, would not receive anything at Christmas. We have so much in this country that it does us good to give to those less fortunate than ourselves.

As you might expect, the table at the back of Church has leaflets explaining how the scheme works. You can choose whether you make up a box for a boy or a girl, and also the age range of the recipient. Simple things to remember are – nothing that needs batteries – no books (the child most probably will not be an English speaker) No food. But you can put in paper, pencils, a small doll or some model cars, gloves, a hat and scarf, a comb or hairbrush. The leaflet gives far more details and some wonderful suggestions.

The boxes will be collected during October and November and it is hoped that they will begin their journey on 27th November from the Youth Service. This is the third year (I think) we have taken part. It is so easy to get caught up in the trappings of Christmas and to ignore those outside our immediate family. By filling a shoebox you will know that a child, somewhere, thousands of miles away will be having a happier time because of you. Thank you

John Hinson

Parish Holiday

For those of you who were not lucky enough to be able to join us on the Holiday this year we thought that you should know what you missed.

It is always a bit of a lottery going away to a specific place on the recommendation of someone. But that is just what we did. I had never been on a "Coach Holiday" before as we normally drive for hours to wherever we are going but we decided to join Jeremy et al on the holiday to the Isle of Wight. I have to say (and no one is paying me to say it) I loved it. The Coach driver drove – I didn't have to. Coffee was available all the time on the journey. There was a loo on board and the kids (and a load of the adults) watched "101 Dalmatians" on the video and the journey flew past.

The hotel was very comfortable, the food good, the beer cold, the company most agreeable. For those who liked walking the beach was a good twenty yards from the Hotel door. And there was so much to do. Members of our group went to the many varied places including the Zoo, the Dinosaur museum, to Shanklin Chine (a deep gorge – beautiful) and some even went to a vineyard for a tasting session. (Actually I think they went to two vineyards – and they tasted at both of them and came back smiling!). Some of us also went to Osborne House – home of Queen Victoria, and on to the Needles where some brave souls went down to the beach on a cable car.

We had a quiz evening, a sandcastle competition (not everyone made sand castles!), a talent night (I will never forget the "Jack and the Beanstalk" in three minutes performed by only four of us!) and on the Friday we held a Communion service.

All in all, even though the weather was not exactly perfect for the duration, we had a wonderful time there. On behalf of the whole group, I must say a big THANK YOU to Jeremy for all he did in arranging the trip and for all that he did whilst we were there. I think he has already provisionally booked a slot for next year. Why don't you think about coming to join us? I don't think you will regret it!

ELSTOW PARISH COUNCIL

Problems at the Allotment Site are continuing. The Parish Council has tried to arrange a meeting between Westbury, the electricity company and ourselves to resolve the issue of the sub-station but Westbury would not come to a meeting. A planning application has now been submitted for the sub-station and we have strongly objected on the grounds that it is not sympathetic to its setting, it intrudes upon residents in the High Street, it will become a focus for vandalism and graffiti and there is no access. A retrospective application has also been received for the road and again we have objected on the grounds that all parties agreed the original road and there is therefore no reason to move it further into the Public Open Space. Wadsworth Court was suggested as the new name for the road in memory of a former head teacher at the Lower School and the Borough Council has agreed this.

RMC has yet to provide the additional information concerning the extraction of sand and gravel from Medbury Farm but residents will be given the opportunity to comment on this once it is available.

Our new Beat Manager is PC Guy Jessop and the next visit by the mobile police unit will be at 10.30 am on 12th October in the Playing Field car park. We have raised residents' concerns about the lack of police in Elstow and he advised that he is in Elstow most days but he has a large area to cover. Hopefully if the proposal for an additional Beat Manager for Shortstown is agreed, he will have more time to spend in Elstow. He also stressed the need to report all crimes because even if the police are unable to attend immediately, additional patrols are sent to areas which have reported the highest number of incidents.

Finally, Councillors Sharples and Oliver have resigned from the Parish Council due to study and work commitments so if anyone is interested in joining, please contact the Clerk on **01234-824852**. Councillors must be residents of Elstow and meetings are held monthly, except for August and December, on a Tuesday evening in the Playing Field Hall.

Ann Paice.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

This is a really luxurious pudding, which you should only attempt if you have an electric beater or feel in need of a lot of arm exercise.

Cream in Paradise

Pound 2oz crisp toffee nearly to powder.

Beat 3 egg yolks until light and fluffy.

Beat 3 egg whites until stiff.

Beat half a pint whipping cream until stiff.

Beat 4 oz butter until very light and almost frothy.

Mix the butter with the egg yolks and beat till completely mixed, almost spongy. Add the sugar and beat some more. Add the toffee and beat again. Then fold in the egg whites and cream and chill. My original version of this recipe suggested putting it in a mould and turning it out, but I have never dared to do so.

JMCE

BOOK REVIEW

“Dr Johnson’s Dictionary” by Henry Hitchings (John Murray £14.99)

We all take dictionaries and other works of reference down from our shelves from time to time without thinking too much about them. So what follows relates far more to Dr Johnson than to Henry Hitchings’ book, but that is the larger-than-life nature of Dr Johnson and the greatest compliment I can pay Hitchings for his delightful, illuminating – and short – book.

Hitchings, a young and energetic lexicographer, has achieved what I thought to be impossible: he has written a book about the creation of the first memorable English Dictionary which is both entertaining and intelligible. Dr Johnson (1709-1784 and immortalised both by his work and by Boswell’s “Life”) was the compiler of that Dictionary. Amazingly, he went down from Oxford without completing his degree and was only awarded an MA years later, in 1755 and immediately prior to publication - and with the status of the title page in mind. His Doctorate was an honorary one from Trinity College, Dublin in 1765. But his erudition and assiduity were immense and it is his success in the face of enormous odds that Hitchings so enjoyably charts.

Because Dr Johnson is so well-known for his many definitions and aphorisms, I say little about this book and more about Johnson – which is perhaps the greatest compliment that I can pay to Hitchings. You see, dictionaries (some, anyway) can actually be FUN. Macaulay, for instance, described the Dictionary as: “*the first dictionary that could be read with pleasure*” In other words, it was much more than a dry work of reference. Johnson himself defined a lexicographer as a “*humble drudge*”. But then he compiled his dictionary as a single intelligent and thoughtful person and not as part of a formula-dogged committee, so that the whole work bears his stamp. Consider how delightful some of his definitions are, shorn of the potential bureaucracy of such bodies: “The field mouse: *burrows in banks and makes her house with various apartments*”.

Johnson came from a relatively disadvantaged background, suffered from depression and ill health, married a woman twenty years his senior and spent almost all the money he earned on helping others until he received the cushion of a Royal pension later in life (1762). (When his much-loved wife died, it triggered the well-known definition of second marriages: “*a triumph of hope over experience*”). He was an intensely Christian (that is Protestant, not Catholic) man, but his feuds with others were viperish. Yet he had and maintained a nucleus of solid support in a hostile Hogarth’s London. However, he was not keen on such subjects as music (he referred to a violin solo as follows: “*Difficult? I wish it were impossible*”) and, despite seeking help in this and other specialist areas, never received it. His dictionary is the less for this.

Now, a few facts. His fourth edition (1773 - the one most often referred to) contains 43,279 entries. The first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, a century and a half later, contained 414,825 words [Webster’s Third New International Dictionary nearly reaches the half-million mark and the editors acknowledge its incompleteness]. So it was very much a personal selection of words and one based not on contemporary language, but on carefully selected literary models. More, nearly 2000 of his definitions grace the modern OED. His garret at 17 Gough Square became an sort of crazy workshop as he read and snipped out quotations, aided by a shifting and motley collection of ne’er-do-wells that he rescued from total penury

Do not expect to find the Dictionary to be a work of reference: it is a work of art. You might, though, enjoy his definition of the word “bookworm”: “*a reader without judgement*”.



The Origins of the Gospels

In a recent address at Mattins, I talked about the origins of the Gospels and their role in providing a conclusive if untraditional proof of the resurrection of Christ. I condense what I said. The full text is available on request for anyone wishing a copy.

Have you ever had cause to wonder about the Gospels, what they are and where they come from? I have never been comfortable with the given thought that what we read was actually recorded by, or *directly* from, Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.

It is sensible, as in everything, to start at the beginning. And, immediately, we have a problem. There really isn't a beginning so much as an end. If there had not been the historically attested crucifixion of Jesus Christ – almost certainly for reasons of Roman political convenience – there would not have been the miracle of the resurrection and of the existence of the whole Christian faith. But the crucifixion was a very public climax, and the resurrection was an unheard of miracle; so its beginning had to be sought and found.



Moreover, it all had to be consistent with the many sayings of the ancient Jewish religious writings and most especially with the various prophecies contained therein.

No memoirs would have been written, or perhaps would have survived, about a mere Galilean carpenter. After all, Galilee was a second rank province which the Romans, instead of ruling directly, entrusted to one of Herod's sons, Herod Antipas; and a Galilean carpenter was just that: a Galilean carpenter. Small beer indeed.

But, as we know, the resurrection of Jesus Christ was to be arguably the greatest turning point in World history. It therefore became necessary for the early Church to create a pedigree and status for this man and so, from the reminiscences of those who had known him, a biography was created.

Apparent confusion starts, though, with the order in which the Gospels are given in most bibles. There is convincing evidence to show that the Gospels of Matthew and Luke derived from that of Mark, but we are traditionally given Matthew's Gospel first. These three Gospels share so much that they are lumped together under the description of the *Synoptic Gospels* because they share a common view, as well as a common narrative and structure and common linguistic characteristics. John's account, however, seems to come from a different source, one which operated on a different level and chronology from the other three.

So, we seem to have two differing traditions relating the life and times of Jesus. Perhaps this is the moment to take a step backwards and to consider a couple of points which are more general in nature before homing in on the particular.

Firstly, oral memory was very much more highly developed in those days than it is now. Not so very long ago and in the wake of the invention of printing, the written word was predominant. Before that, literacy levels had been extremely low and it had been the habit of oral transmission which had ensured the survival of early tales such as, in western Europe, the Icelandic sagas, the European bardic tradition and the Arthurian romances: all these, and many, many more, offered oral narratives, before being written down, recounting physical or psychological realities. Because of those realities, they were very much alive for centuries, and still are today, even though perhaps only in a rather rarefied and scholastic sphere.

But it is this tradition that ensured that the story of Jesus the Crucified would survive.

Secondly, we have to account for the fact that this oral tradition found a written form. In the examples to which I have alluded, the stories told were stories at the very centre of their times and countries. These issues *really* mattered to people.

So, what, in Palestine, was spoken in public places and around the hearths of homes found a permanence precisely because of its relevance to ordinary folk.

Because oral memories were so highly developed and accurate, what was written down later on could be relied upon to be a faithful rendering of what had been said and done at the time. Thus, when we come to the Gospels, whether the synoptic three or the Gospel according to St John, we can be entirely confident that what we read will very closely concord with what really happened and was said, even if presented differently.

It would be unrealistic to think that one or more of the contemporary followers of Jesus wrote down anything structured at all. But it IS realistic to believe that they talked a lot about this remarkable man, Jesus, and this, coupled with the extraordinary events which followed the crucifixion, led eventually to what they said, as passed on with faithful accuracy, being given a more permanent and shiftless written form in the Gospels some 40 to 70 years later. This is how important and relevant matters were given permanence.

As to there being two traditions, the one as recorded in the synoptic Gospels and the other as recorded in St John's Gospel, I can see no problem. The awe in which Jesus came to be held was what led to his life being reconstructed, his death recorded and his miraculous resurrection as carefully narrated as the passing of time permitted.

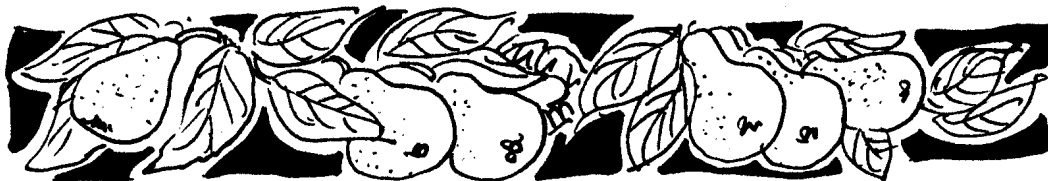
Whilst still wondering about those who wrote down the texts of the Gospels, I no longer have concerns about the fullness and accuracy of their content.

TJE

THE CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday 2nd October		Pentecost 20
	9.30am	Family Communion with Children's Groups (Revd. Jeremy Crocker). <i>Launch of the Diocesan Mission Strategy 'Vision for Action', Guest Preacher Canon Philip Lovegrove</i>
	11.00am	Morning Prayer (Revd. Jeremy Crocker) <i>Launch of the Diocesan Mission Strategy 'Vision for Action', Guest preacher Canon Philip Lovegrove</i>
	3.00pm	Baptism at Elstow Abbey. (Revd. Jeremy Crocker)
	6.30pm	Evensong (Mr. Robert Heley)
Monday 3rd	7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
Wednesday 5th	11.30am	Tour of the Abbey by the English Experience (Dr. John Crookall)
Thursday 6th	11.00am 7.45pm	Holy Communion (Revd. Jeremy Crocker) Meeting of South Bedford Council of Churches at London Road Methodist Church.
Sunday 9th October		Pentecost 21
	11.00am	Parish Communion with Baptism (Revd. Jeremy Crocker)
	6.30pm	Songs of Praise - favourite Wesleyan hymns
	8.00pm	<i>A Concert by Hemel Hempstead Brass Band in aid of The Friends of Elstow Abbey (7.45pm for 8pm)</i>
Monday 10th	7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
Thursday 13th	11.00am 3.00pm	Holy Communion (Revd. Jeremy Crocker) Meeting of the Elstow Churchwardens
Sunday 16th October		Pentecost 22
	9.30am	Family Communion with Children's Groups (Revd. Peter Littleford)
	11.00am	Morning Prayer (Revd. Peter Littleford)
	6.30pm	Evensong (Mr. Peter Moss)
Monday 17th	7.00pm 8.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse Launch by the Bishop of St. Albans of 'Vision for Action', at St. Andrew's Church, Kimbolton Road. Bedford.
<i>Monday 17th October</i>		<i>Deadline for material for the November Elstow Parish Magazine</i>
Tuesday 18 th	7.30pm	Joint meeting of Benefice Churchwardens.
Thursday 20th	11.00am	Holy Communion (Revd. Jeremy Crocker)

Saturday 22 nd	2.00pm	Children's Workshop. <i>Come and make some Christmas crafts to sell on the Children's stall at the <u>Christmas Bazaar</u>. (Saturday 3rd December at 2.00pm in the Church Hall.)</i>
Sunday 23rd October.		Bible Sunday. Last after Trinity.
	9.30am	Young People's Service (Group) <i>Jesus the Healer.</i>
	11.00am	Morning Prayer (Morning Prayer Group)
	6.30pm	Evensong, Holy Communion and the laying on of hands for healing. (Fiona Wheatley and the Revd. Stephen Smith)
Monday 24th	7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
Thursday 27th	11.00am	Holy Communion (Revd. Jeremy Crocker)
Sunday 30th October		4th Before Advent
	11.00am	Holy Communion (Revd. Jeremy Crocker)
	6.30pm	Annual Commemoration Service (Revd. Jeremy Crocker)
Monday 31st	7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
<u>November</u>		
Tuesday 1st		Feast of All Saints
	10.00am	Visit by Southland's Lower School, Biggleswade
Thursday 3rd	10.00am	Visit by Southland's Lower School, Biggleswade
	11.00am	Holy Communion. (Revd. Jeremy Crocker)
	8.00pm	Meeting of the Finance and Standing Committee. 43. Armstrong Close, Wilstead
Saturday 5th	5.30pm	Firework Night celebration in the field behind the Church Hall



Autumn Fayre
St Michael and All Angels
22nd October 2005
2-4pm
Scott Hall

FROM THE REGISTERS

July-September 2005

Baptisms

July 3rd Carl Marshall Payne
July 17th Nathan James Aulsberry
Natori Aulsberry
William Oliver Fletcher Cook
Ethan Thomas Nearn
July 31st Jessica Amie Carroll
August 7th Ella Rose Bronfield
Reece John Bullen-Cutting

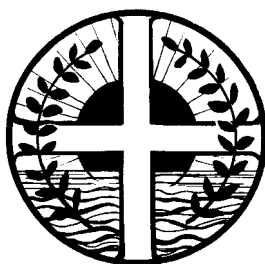
September 4th Aston Leonard-Glasgow

Marriages

July 2nd Kevin Michael Ellis & Clare Emma Dear
July 9th David John Blanchard & Andrea Elizabeth Wiggett
July 29th Simon William Litchfield & Tracey Fiona Hedley
July 30th Magnus Philip Giles Witheat & Louise Martin
Jonathan Nokes & Victoria Anne Maddocks
August 6th Jonathan Weller & Ngozi Uzoamaka Onyekwuluje
Deniz Ahmet & Joanne Helen Scott
David Whittington & Katie McTaggart
August 13th Matthew Martin Haines & Rebecca Clare Johnson
Sept. 16th Kenneth Collins & Louise Bowden
Sept. 17th Anthony John Thomas Higham & Donna Gribble

Burials

July 13th Marguerite Edith Blundell
August 4th Vera May Blachard
August 11th Vera Evelyn Violet O'Connor



A Meditation by Cardinal Newman

God has created me to do Him some definite service;
He has committed some work to me
which He has not committed to another.
I have my mission –
I may never know it in this life,
but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain,
a bond of connection between persons.
He has not created me for naught.
I shall do good.
I shall do His work.
I shall be an angel of peace,
a preacher of truth in my own place
while not intending it –
if I do but keep His Commandments.

Therefore I will trust Him.
Whatever, wherever I am,
I can never be thrown away.
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him;
in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him;
if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him.
He does nothing in vain.
He knows what He is about.
He may take away my friends.
He may throw me among strangers.
He may make me feel desolate,
make my spirits sink,
hide my future from me –
still He knows what He is about.

