

ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE



A Time to Celebrate by Jeremy Crocker

At times I don't think it hurts to review and celebrate some of the areas that are good within a church. As a Church we can so easily move from one event to another without pausing and asking how did that go, and are we pleased with the way that event went. I would like to inform you, in case you haven't heard, to pay tribute and to celebrate some of the recent events that have taken place at Elstow Abbey:

- (i) The **Parish Holiday** was during the last week in July and included some 50 members of the Benefice Churches who spent a week in beautiful Whitby, where we could relax, tour, pray and share with one another. Next year's holiday is planned for the same week at Sandown in the Isle of Wight. I am hoping to publish the details of that trip in early December.
- (ii) The **Children's Holiday Club** where so many members of this Church and across the Benefice worked so hard to enable 50+ youngsters to have fun and to learn about the Christian Faith. It was lovely to see many of these families at the **Annual Hog Roast**, which again I am delighted to say brought together young, old and middling from the whole Benefice. I was delighted that nearly 200 people came and enjoyed the event. The next big event is the Bonfire Night on Saturday November 3rd from 6pm just by the Church Hall in Elstow.
- (iii) The **choir** has gone from strength to strength, and with the new Director of Music, I have been watching it grow week by week. There are enough members to have double sides, an amazing achievement in less than a year. If you are interested in joining the choir then please ring Stephen McDonald, whose details are at the front of the magazine.
- (iv) The **Mums and Toddlers group**, which meets every Monday morning 10-11.30am now achieves an average of 18 mums and children every week. So my thanks to Michelle, Barbara and Rita for all that they have done to make this such a friendly and worthwhile group.
- (v) **The Bereavement Team** has been running for a year now and with this group of volunteers I know that those who have lost loved ones are cared for if they would like it, and the Wednesday soup from 11.30am in the Church Hall also attracts between 15 and 20 persons each week. So I would like to pay tribute to Rosemary and all those who help to provide and subsidise this very worthwhile ministry - if you haven't been, please do come.

Daniel Interpreting the Dream of King Nebuchadnezzar

The Window at Elstow Abbey in the North Aisle

This is part of a memorial window to William Groome, the first Headmaster of Bedfordshire Middle Class Public School, later known as Elstow School. It is from the School Chapel, and was installed at Elstow Abbey in December 1962.

The scene shows a room in King Nebuchadnezzar's palace. The King is seated on his throne. He wears a gold crown, has fair hair and is bearded. His left hand is held against his chin and he has a thoughtful but puzzled expression. His right arm rests on the arm of the throne, loosely holds his golden sceptre, at the foot of which is an open scroll. Standing behind the King is a turbaned figure.

The standing main figure is Daniel: he is bearded with long brown hair. He wears a long gold gown, and has gold-strapped sandals. He faces the king with both arms raised up high, right index finger pointing upward.

We refer to the Biblical reference from Daniel, Chapter 2

1 In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep.

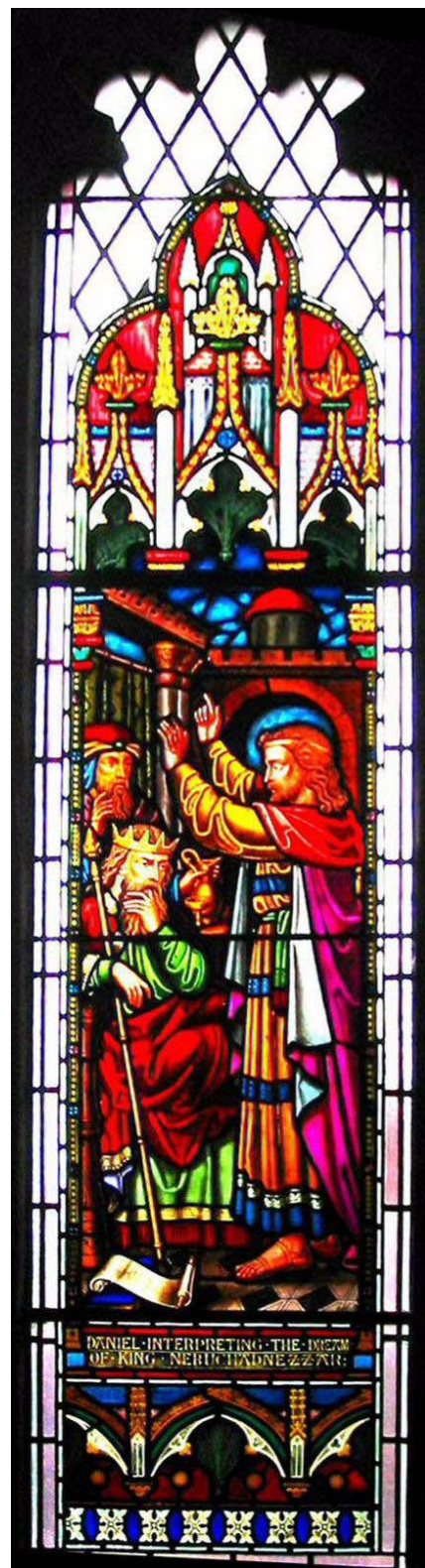
2 So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came in and stood before the king, 3 he said to them, "I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means."

4 Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it."

5 The king replied to the astrologers, "This is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me what my dream was and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble. 6 But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. So tell me the dream and interpret it for me."

10 The astrologers answered the king, "There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer.

12 This made the king so angry and furious that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon. 13 So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to



death. ¹⁴When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact. ¹⁵He asked the king's officer, "Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. ¹⁶At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him. ¹⁷Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

¹⁸He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

¹⁹During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven ²⁰and said: "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his.

²⁴Then Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to execute the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not execute the wise men of Babylon. Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream for him."

²⁵Arioch took Daniel to the king at once and said, "I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can tell the king what his dream means."

²⁶The king asked Daniel, "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?"

²⁷Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, ²⁸but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you lay on your bed are these:

²⁹"As you were lying there, O king, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen. ³⁰As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than other living men, but so that you, O king, may know what went through your mind. ³¹"You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue - an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance.

³²The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay. ³⁴While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth. ³⁶"This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king.

³⁷You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; ³⁸in your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold.

³⁹"After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. ⁴⁰Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron - for iron breaks and smashes everything - and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others.

⁴¹Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. ⁴²As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay. ⁴⁴"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be

destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. ⁴⁵This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands - a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. "The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy."

⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel and paid him honor and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him. ⁴⁷The king said to Daniel, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery."

⁴⁸Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men.

⁴⁹Moreover, at Daniel's request the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the royal court.

What do we conclude from this?

1. Daniel showed great personal courage

Through his ability and God's blessing he rose to the post of prime minister of Babylon. Yet he remained an outsider. The higher he rose, the more prominent a target he became. Babylonians resented his foreign background and his political success. Their plots put him under pressure to compromise his faith, to fit in, to bend his principles. His life was often at risk. Daniel's career near the top lasted at least 66 years, so that by the time he was thrown into the lions' den (chapter 6), he must have been in his 80s. Throughout these years he labored with great effectiveness for Babylon.

2. The Shape of the Future

Near the end of Daniel's life God gave him a series of visions, described in chapters 7-12. In graphic images God showed Daniel the pattern of future history. He foresaw God's people thrown in between these nations, suffering through no fault of their own. They would be helpless until God himself rescued them from their troubles.

3. Spreading the Word

Daniel's people had thought of God in terms of their own small community, their own capital city and the temple there. Not only were the Jews God's chosen people, but (they tended to think) they held exclusive rights to him. But God had never intended his blessings to stop with them.

John Crookall

THE CHURCH CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2007

OCTOBER

1 st	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	Prayer group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Annual Meeting with the Caretakers
3 rd	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
4 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		12noon	Monthly lunch at the Red Lion – all welcome
		7.30pm	Youth Leaders Meeting in the Vicarage
		8.00pm	South Bedford Council of Churches meet at London Road Methodist Church
6 th	Saturday	3.00pm- 8.00pm	Bellringing Meeting, Service and Ringing at Elstow
7 th	Sunday		Pentecost 19
		9.30am	Family Communion with Children's Groups (JRC)
		11.00am	Morning Prayer (Group)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
8 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	Prayer group meet in the Summerhouse
		7.45pm	Joint Benefice Churchwardens meeting at Bindon Abbey
10 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group Meeting – Swimming

11 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		6.00pm	Wedding Rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
		7.00pm	Licensing of the Reverend Mary Railton-Crowder as Priest in Charge of St. Philip the Apostle, Birchencliffe
			And Vicar designate of The Benefice of St. Phillips and St. Cuthbert, Birkby by the Bishop of Wakefield
13 th	Saturday	3.30pm	Blessing of the Marriage of Peter Boland and Helen Craven (JRC)
14 th	Sunday		Pentecost 20
		10.00am	Family Communion with Children's Groups (JRC)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (JRC)
		4-6pm	Pantomime Rehearsal in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
15 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Young People's confirmation class, Cardington
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Adults confirmation class, Cardington

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR THE NOVEMBER MAGAZINE

17 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group Meeting – Beetle Drive in the Church Hall
18 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		8.00pm	Liturgy Committee meet at 43 Armstrong Close, Wilstead
20 th	Saturday pm		Tour of Elstow Abbey from St George in the East, London
21 st	Sunday		Pentecost 21
		10.00am	Family Communion with Children's Groups (NM)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (Group)

		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
22 nd	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group in the Church Hall
		2.00pm	Burial of Ashes – Yvonne Braybrook
		6.30pm	Young People’s confirmation class, Cardington
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Adults confirmation class, Cardington
24 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group ‘Special Event’. Meet in the Church Hall
		8.15pm	Wedding Rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
25 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		8.00pm	Finance and Standing Committee meet at 43, Armstrong Close, Wilstead
26 th	Friday	1.30pm	Wedding of Nicholas Ellis and Sarah Mann (JRC)
27 th	Saturday	2.00pm	Children’s Workshop in the Church Hall
<u>SUMMERTIME ENDS – CLOCKS GO BACK 1 HOUR</u>			
28 th	Sunday		Bible Sunday
		10.00am	Young People’s Service (JEH)
		11.15am	Parish Communion (JRC) with the service concluding with the Burial of Ashes of Doug and Bay Gautrey (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion and the Laying on of Hands for Healing (JRC)
29 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Young People’s confirmation class – Cardington
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Adults confirmation class – Cardington

31st Wednesday 11.30am Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
6.30pm Youth Group – “Light Party” in the Church hall

NOVEMBER

1st Thursday All Saints Day
11.00am Holy Communion (JRC)
12 noon Lunch at the Red Lion – all welcome

3rd Saturday 6.00pm **Bonfire and Fireworks Party in the field behind the Church hall**

4th Sunday 4th Before Advent
10.00am Family Communion with Children’s Groups (JRC)
11.15am Morning Prayer (JRC)
3.00pm Baptism of Marcus Edgar John Hawkins (Family priest)
6.30pm Annual Commemoration Service (JRC)

	Communicants	Attendance	Collections £
June 2007			
3 rd	41	93	353.66
7 th	11	11	4.25
10 th	61	101	220.05
14 th	8	8	3.00
17 th	30	88	494.08
21 st	8	8	4.00
24 th	12	112	242.07
28 th	9	9	24.50
	180	430	1345.61

July 2007

1 st	43	134	295.36
5 th	14	14	4.00
8 th	24	46	210.55
12 th	9	9	6.00
15 th	31	89	302.57
19 th	8	9	3.00
22 nd	-	92	309.75
29 th	51	70	192.03
	180	463	1323.26

August 2007

2 nd	14	18	10.00
5 th	38	72	163.95

9 th	6	6	8.00
12 th	25	106	156.87
16 th	9	9	4.00
19 th	38	76	344.19
23 rd	10	10	2.50
26 th	12	94	324.15
30 th	7	7	22.00

159	398	1035.66
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Burials

June	19 th	Kenneth Raymond Collins (ashes)
	23 rd	Brenda Frances Waby (ashes)
July	16 th	Jane Hevgrin
	18 th	Freda Olive Wildman (ashes)
	18 th	Pamela Violet Gadsby (ashes)
	19 th	Lilian Pauline Hellingsworth (ashes)
August	11 th	William Astle (ashes)
	11 th	Stanley Thomas Wright (ashes)
	11 th	Doris Nellie Murphy (ashes)
Sept	4 th	David Reeve
	6 th	Jane Carol Rimmer (ashes)

Baptisms

July	1 st	Reagan Higham
	1 st	Jamie Ward
	1 st	Katie Ward
	1 st	Oliver Harry Steven Bedford
	15 th	Ellie-Mae Jean Ruby Goodman
	29 th	Mya Daniels

29th Cai Dean Daniels
29th Alexandra James Burdett
August 5th Denni Jemma Sammy Anthony
26th Lucy Mae Bromfield
26th Olivia Marie Savalli
26th Robyn Scott
26th Aaron Peter Scott
26th Ella Jade Scott
26th Joshua Charlie Ford
26th Thomas Mitzel Kemp
Sept 9th Max David James Duffy
9th Edward Stanley Rushbrook Walker

Marriages

June 22nd Edward Peter Dixon and Janine Emma Harwood
23rd Simon Robert Gordon Harper and Felicity Jayne Freeman
23rd Martin Philip Greyson and Emma Jane Shields
30th Phillip James Straccia and Kara Ann Hawkins
30th Jonathan Paul Barron and Emma Louise Belchamber
July 7th Prospero Perchinelli and Michelle Craven
7th Carlo Borromeo and Louise Ellen Gulliver
14th Timothy Andrew Spencer and Naomi Jane Evens
21st Stewart Sneddon and Charlotte Louise Moon
August 25th Michael Gallagher and Kerrie-Ann MacDonald
25th Matthew Aitchison and Sandra Dixon
25th Ian Tomlinson and Hayley Samantha Abbs

Sept 8th David Stephen Nagel and Samantha Michelle Thornley
 8th Matthew Robin Gerard Ryall and Suzanne Campbell
 15th Pietro Panarisi and Lisa Jane Towell
 15th Gerald Stanley Odell and Norma Morgan (Blessing)

LESSON READERS OCTOBER 2007

	<u>SERVICE</u>	<u>1ST LESSON</u>	<u>2ND LESSON</u>	
October	9.30am	2 Timothy Ch 1 v 1 - 14	Luke Ch 17 v. 5 - 10	Lynn Faulkner
7th	11.00am	Isaiah Ch 49 v. 13 - 23	Luke Ch. 12 v. 1 - 12	Ann Knight
Green	6.30pm	Nehemiah Ch 5 v 1 - 13	John Ch 9	Barbara Routledge
October				
14th	10.00am	2 Timothy Ch 2 v. 8 - 15	Luke Ch 17 v. 11 - 19	Ken Webb
Green	11.15am	Nehemiah Ch 6 v. 1 - 16	John Ch 15 v. 12 - end	Glynis Annan
October	10.00am	2 Timothy Ch 3 v. 14 - Ch 4 v.5	Luke Ch 18 v. 1 - 8	Lynn Harris
21st	11.15am	Isaiah Ch 54 v. 1 - 14	Luke Ch. 13 v. 31 - end	Miriam Clark
Green	6.30pm	Nehemiah Ch 8 v. 9 - end	John Ch 16 v. 1 - 11	Peter Moss
October		BIBLE SUNDAY		
28th	11.15am	1 Kings Ch 22 v. 1 - 17	Luke Ch 14 v. 1 - 14	Lizabeth Burrows
Green	6.30pm	Jeremiah Ch 36 v. 9 - end	Romans Ch 10 v. 5 - 17	Margaret Eastwell
November	10.00am	Ephesians Ch 1 v. 11 – end	Luke Ch 6 v. 20 - 31	Colin Albon
4th	11.15am	Isaiah Ch 35	Luke Ch 9 v. 18 - 27	Ann Knight
Green AM	6.30pm	Lamentations Ch 3 v's 17 - 26 & 31 – 33	John Ch 6 v.37 - 40	Barbara Routledge
Purple PM				

If any of the dates is not convenient please arrange an exchange and please let Colin Albon know that you have done so.

SIDESMEN'S ROTA OCTOBER 2007

October 7 th	9.30am	Mrs. A. Morris.	Mrs. S. Brown.
	11.00am	Mrs. L. Burrows.	Mrs. M. Crossen.
	6.30pm	Mr. P. Moss.	
October 14 th	10.00am	Mrs. R. Albon.	Mrs. A. Knight.
	6.30pm	Mrs. G. Annan.	
October 21 st	10.00am	Mrs. J. Barnicott.	Mrs. S. Batiuk.
	11.15am	Mrs. M. Crossen.	Mr. F.W. Crossen.
	6.30pm	Miss. M. Eastwell.	
October 28 th	10.00am	Mr. C. Albon.	Mrs. R. Albon.
	11.15am	Mr. P. Batiuk.	Mrs. L. Burrows.
	6.30pm	Mr. P. Moss.	
November 4 th	10.00am	Mrs. R. Haines.	Mrs. S. Brown.
	11.15am	Mrs. A. Knight.	Mrs. M. Crossen.
	6.30pm	Mr. C. Albon.	Mrs. B. Routledge
		Mrs. R. Albon.	Mrs. C. Parrish.

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

***** NEWS *** NEWS *** NEWS *****

Those of you who remember Mary when she was Curate at Elstow will be delighted to hear some 'News from the Crowders':

"After over 3 years on the beautiful Isle of Man, we are on the move again. Mary has been appointed Vicar of two parishes in Huddersfield and as from September 25th our address will be:

Mr G Crowder & Rev'd M Railton-Crowder
The Vicarage, 4, Brendon Drive, Edgerton, Huddersfield, HD2 2DF
We send our best wishes to you all
Graham and Mary

TUNES OF GLORY

Hymn 381 "*Jerusalem the golden*" is set in our New English Hymnbook to the wonderful tune *Ewing* by Alexander Ewing, written in 1853. The hymn was originally by Bernard de Cluny in the 12th century, and has been translated by J M Neale. Frank Colquhoun writes that the hymn is a very small part of an extraordinary poem, written about 1145, of nearly 3,000 lines entitled *De Contemptu Mundi* ('On Contempt of the World') written by Bernard of Cluny. Early in the 12th century he became a monk and entered the great Abbey of Cluny, the largest, wealthiest and most powerful religious establishment in France, and remained there until his death. His poem is a burning invective against the wickedness, vices and follies of the world. And by the "world" Bernard meant not simply society at large, but the religious world as he encountered it within his monastery! From the distressing spectacle of what he saw around him he turned his thoughts to the heavenly realm where such evils are banished for ever, and God reigns supreme. From this long poem Dr Neale made translations of selected passages and published them in 1858, and they now appear in our hymn books as four separate hymns: but "*Jerusalem the golden*" is by far the best known. Dr Neale wrote that this hymn opens with a description of the peace and glory of heaven, of such rare beauty as not easily matched by any medieval composition on the theme. Its imagery is borrowed from the book of Revelation.

Lightwood writes that many tunes have been named after their composers, though this custom was more common in former times than the present day. A more modern instance however is "Ewing". Alexander Ewing was born at Aberdeen in 1830, and brought up to the law. He achieved considerable distinction as an amateur musician, and was an able performer on more than one instrument. He was connected with a body of singers who, under the title of "The Harmonic Choir" devoted themselves to the study of old English music, sacred and secular. The conductor was William Carnie, a name held in honour by all sections of the Church for his life-long efforts to improve psalmody.

He tells us how one night, at the conclusion of the rehearsal, Alexander Ewing came forward and told him he had tried his hand at a hymn-tune, and would like to hear it sung by the choir. So began the career of this tune which speedily obtained great favor, and still finds a place in all the important collections of tunes. It was first printed about 1853, in triple time, but the first edition of *Hymns A & M* contained the tune in common time, and this is now

universally used. However the composer himself never approved of the change, of which he used to say, "It now seems to me a good deal like a polka". Ewing afterwards entered the army and served in the Crimean War, and also in China with General Gordon. He left the army and spent the last years of his life at Taunton, where he died in 1895. His tune was sung at his funeral two days later.

John Crookall



AN A-Z OF UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSITY – FOR YOU!

NO doubt many of you will have sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters, nephews, nieces of brothers and sisters who have just set off for university, taking those first steps into the big, wide world of independent living. There are many useful guides out there for THEM, from how to avoid getting into debt to how to cook a three-course meal on a shoestring without a baked bean in sight. But here, we present an A-Z survival guide for YOU, the anxious relatives left behind...

A - Is for Alcohol. Any way you look at it, booze is a big part of university life. And since your little baby will be by themselves, it's up to them to make sure they don't over-indulge too badly. Don't freak out if they sound hungover every time you speak to them, but do keep a close eye. The good news is that much important bonding with future life-long friends is done over those first few sips of beer at their new Students Union

B - Is for Bicycle. It may well be the perfect going-away present. Cars are expensive to run and getting a parking permit if you are a fresher can be tough. A bicycle is cheap, easy to store and will provide valuable exercise. Although it's important to steer clear if a couple of pints have been downed. Oh - and get them to wear a helmet (it is cool to wear one, honest) and make sure they have lights.

C - Is for Cash flow. You might as well get used to it now; the next three or four years are going to be a permanent round of loans, scraping, penny-pinching and outright begging for just a bit more money to get them through the week. Why not pre-empt them – and earn their undying gratitude – by slipping the odd £10 into a letter for them. You never know, some of it *might* get spent on books...

D - Is for Dating. So many new people, along with the heady atmosphere of being away from home, often for the first time, means you might be hard pushed to keep up with your loved-one's latest boyfriend/girlfriend/oh-we're-just-friends... Many people meet the love of their life at uni but if you're struggling to keep up, or can't stand the zombie your darling daughter brings home for Christmas, just take a deep breath and try to get the right name if and when you're allowed to meet them.

E - Is for Exams. They normally occur twice a year but in the increasingly modular education system, where degrees are garnered from three years of tests and coursework, one slack term can ruin their final mark. So make sure there are some essays coming as well as escapades...

F - Is for Friends. It recently emerged that American parents were using internet networking site Facebook to vet their kids' college roommates. Don't be quick to judge the other students in your child's house or on their course. Uni is all about reinvention and sometimes that takes a little practice.

G - Is for Good times. There will be plenty of them at uni, from summer balls and hall water fights to the infamous charity extravaganzas of Rag Weeks. Be prepared for many hilarious stories, obscure photos and the feeling that you really had to be there...

H - Is for Homesickness. Even the toughest kid suffers from homesickness. A new place and new people can throw anyone off guard and a few tears are natural. However, it's probably best to convince your charge to avoid coming home for at least a fortnight and don't visit too soon either. They're adults - they will adjust.

I - Is for Independence. Don't be miffed if they barely speak to you for the first month or so. They are finding their way in the world, after all. If all your messages are ignored for two weeks you can always embarrass them into contact by calling the warden at their residence.

J - Is for Junk Food. Booze and pizzas mean that, before long, your son/daughter will have gained more than just the so-called Freshers' 15 (the name given to the weight gain in pounds suffered by almost all new undergraduates). There are plenty of handy and healthy guides that might be worth stowing in their backpack. And you can always sort them out with some good, home-cooked food when they do come home!

K - Is for Kabbalah. College is an experimental place and it's inevitable there will be some kooky residents. Whether it's Kabbalah or Scientology, your child will likely be searching for spiritual enlightenment and the meaning of life at some stage. Be reassured it's probably just a phase.

L - Is for Laundry. An oft-neglected chore, saved up for the mid-term trip home and the holidays. But the uni laundry is a perfect socialising/pick-up area and thus clean sheets are imperative! Remind boys in particular, and send them off well stocked.

M - Is for Medical Emergencies. Chances are there will be an outbreak of something while your offspring is in halls of residence. Ensure the fruit of your loins isn't bashful about heading to the college infirmary if they are feeling under the weather. After all, it's better to be safe than sorry. They should be registered automatically with a doctor when they arrive.

N - Is for Neighbours. Your child will become an expert on the show. But don't fret that he/she is watching this rather than that documentary about Iraq - it's important to be up to speed with Harold and Lou's exploits for conversations over dinner.

O - Is for Overdraft. New students are both broke and have the most disposable income they will ever have in their entire lives, thanks to interest-free overdrafts. Check out the banks with your kids - they all have different deals and finance is (hopefully) one area where you can advise.

P - Is for Peer Counselling. Starting a new stage in life can be stressful and confusing. If you don't have the closest relationship and think they might not want to spill, suggest peer counselling, which

enables a confused kid to work through their problems, however major or minor. The university union welfare officer is a good first point of call.

Q - Is for Quitting. Your child might want to do so and you should listen to what they have to say. It might be the right decision, but don't just give in because you're missing them. The first term is not always a good indicator of how the rest of the course will pan out. If in doubt, you can always suggest they defer their place and have a year to think about it.

R - Is for Rag Week. Charging around in fancy dress, ostensibly raising money for charity is de rigueur for most universities in the first couple of weeks. Just so you know what they're on about.

S - Is for Societies. There are loads of new opportunities from The Fantasy Football Society to Flower Arranging. It's always a good idea to join lots. Some will fall by the wayside, but that one day on the radio station each week could turn into a career.

T - Is for Travelling. Uni offers many students an opportunity to visit places they have never been too before, vastly subsidised or totally free. It might involve some research on your child's behalf, but well worth it.

U - Is for Union. Student information, subsidised drinks, and a meeting place. The union is a crucial part of undergraduate life. Your son/daughter will probably be spending a fair bit of time here, so make sure they make friends with it early doors.

V - Is for Vacation. With fairly short terms or semesters, vacation time seems to take up more of the year than actual study. It's important to make the most of it, whether gaining work experience, getting a job, or keeping up with schoolwork. Don't let the sofa acquire a student-shaped indentation.

W - Is For Work. It is necessary to open the books every so often. Gentle reminders are acceptable, nagging will get you nowhere.

X - is For X-aggeration. Whatever happens, everything your kid tells you about their uni experience will always be OTT - whether they hate it or love it.

Y - Is For Young Ones. The Young Ones is a television show from the Eighties. In no way does it equate to modern-day university living. Honest.

Z - Is for Zzzzzz. Often, not enough of these are had at uni, because of all of the above. When your little darling does come home for the first holiday, don't be at all surprised if they spend much of the first day back catching up on sleep. You probably ought to check after a week though...



JOKES JOKES JOKES

A Sunday school teacher was giving her class the assignment for the next week. "Next Sunday," she said, "we are going to talk about liars, and in preparation for the lesson, I want you all to read the Seventeenth Chapter of Mark."

The following week at the beginning of the class, the teacher said, "Now all who have prepared for today's lesson by reading the Seventeenth Chapter of Mark, please come to the front." Half the class stood up and came forward.

"The rest of you may leave," said the teacher, "these students are the ones I want to talk speak to. There is no Seventeenth Chapter in the Book of Mark!"

A woman went into her kitchen to find a burglar loaded down with her possessions that he was stealing. Not having any kind of weapon to scare him off, she raised her hand and said "Acts 2:38," and proceeded to quote scripture.

The burglar froze in place and didn't move. The woman called 999; the police arrived and were amazed to find the burglar still frozen where he stood.

"What did you say to him that kept him from moving?" they asked the woman.

She told them that she had simply said Acts 2:38 and quoted scripture.

The police chuckled and escorted the burglar out to the police car. "Why did the woman's quoting scripture scare you so much?" they asked.

"Scripture?" said the burglar, "I thought she said she had an axe and two 38's!"

A priest and pastor from the local parishes are standing by the side of the road holding up a sign that reads, "The End is Near! Turn around before it's too late!"

"Leave us alone you religious nuts!" yelled the first driver as he sped by.

From around the curve they heard screeching tyres and a big splash. "Do you think," said one clergy to the other, "we should just put up a sign that says 'Bridge Down' instead?"

A Sunday school teacher began her lesson with a question. "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?"

A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said a young boy.

"Really?! How do you know?" asked the teacher, impressed by his appreciation of the wonderful world around him.

"You know – Our Father, who does art in Heaven."

Did You Know?

Glass never wears out and can be recycled an infinite number of times.

Forest fires move faster uphill than downhill.

There is one slot machine in Las Vegas for every eight inhabitants.

It takes glass one million years to fully decompose.

A New York restaurant created the world's most expensive pizza - £500 for a 30cm creation topped with fresh lobster, six varieties of caviar, crème fraiche and chives.

A crocodile always grows new teeth to replace old ones.

The sloth moves so slowly that green algae can grow on its fur.

Windmills always turn anti-clockwise – except in Ireland.

A Chinese man who let his fingernails grow for 15 years now has talons one metre long.

A hippo can open its mouth wide enough to fit a 4ft child inside.

The average person has more than 1,460 dreams a year.



RECIPE TO TRY

Roasted Lemon Bay Scented Cod

Ingredients:

4 garlic cloves

1tbsp chopped parsley

1tbsp olive oil

4 x 150g cod fillets

2 lemons, sliced

10 fresh bay leaves

Salt and pepper

Method:

Preheat oven to 220C/Gas Mark 7. Mix together

the garlic, parsley, oil, salt and pepper.

Rub the mixture over the fish and leave for 10mins

Arrange lemon and bay leaves on a baking sheet.

Place cod on top and bake for 10mins.

Thirty four Churches visited in eight hours

On Saturday 8th September a small team of riders from Elstow Benefice Youth Club took part in the Annual Historic Churches Bike and Hike.

Cyrus and Ashley, together with leaders Ross and David managed to visit a staggering thirty four churches between ten o'clock and six o'clock. They cycled an estimated 18 miles., The journey began at St Michaels Church. Then they cycled to Elstow Abbey . From the Abbey they visited Churches in Kempston; Bromham; Oakley; Clapham; Brickhill; Putnoe; Goldington, and the Town Centre. Finally they had a mad dash to arrive at St Mary's Cardington at five to six! The ride was done on behalf of the Historic Churches Trust; half of the money raised goes to all the three Churches in the Benefice. If you would like to donate towards this ride please contact David Wells on 838279.

From Stephen Smith, Team Vicar of Cardington

'At least the slugs are enjoying the weather', ran the headlines to a newspaper article which continued: 'plentiful rain, warm temperatures and a shortage of summer sun have provided perfect munching conditions for the slimy creatures'. An estimated 15 billion will be active in fields and gardens. A farmer from Truro shared his concerns that this could result in serious damage to his crops.

In contrast, I have received a postcard of the perfect agricultural scene. 'Norfolk harvest' is a water colour of a vast open sky above a brick barn and a lush field of corn, ready and ripe for everything to be safely gathered in. It is a popular image repeated in many of Norfolk's holiday art galleries, perhaps as a hope and reminder of the way we would wish it to be for every golden harvest.

It is part of the Old Testament Jewish Law that the first fruits of the harvest should be offered at the Altar in gratitude and thanks for God's provision for us. Our decoration of the Church and Harvest Festival celebrations is an echo of the same idea.

Yet harvests take forms. This harvest has coincided with a 'bumper crop' of good examination results in many of the nation's schools. We talk of plans, ideas and hopes as 'bearing fruit' using the imagery of the harvest at any time of year. In this way our Harvest Services act as a thank you to God for 'all good gifts around us'. As the experience of some people may be less than a picture of post card perfection, we too may sometimes feel plagued by slugs; it is then that we bring to a harvest celebration our future hopes – in the words of 'we plough the fields and scatter' – to plant good our seed in the ground that WE may be 'fed and watered by God's almighty hand'.

With Best Wishes,

Stephen.