

Church Newsround – June 2009

Bishop's Letter

Do not pass Go ...

Do you like to be a top hat, a flat iron or an old boot?

It is nearly 100 years since Lizzie Magie of Chicago invented Monopoly. Originally called "Landlord", it was the first continuous path game. Up until then board games started in one space, ended in another, with spaces in between e.g. Snakes and Ladders. But Lizzie's game was a continuous path of spaces to be traversed time and again – you go round and round the board, doing transactions on the way, until only one player is left in the game. Since then, most new board games have followed this model.

We can learn two lessons from Lizzie's invention.

First of all, Monopoly simply used the streets and stations of London to enable people to go round and round, ending up making money, but not much progress. Many would see this as a parable of life in the City of London over the past few years. Yet we would want to see the streets of London or Lincoln or Long Sutton as a means of progressing on a journey of living and learning and discovery. There is more to life than going round the track, and then going round the track again even if you are making shed-loads of money on the way. That "something more" is what the Bible sums up in the two great Commandments as love for God and love for one another.

This brings us to the second important lesson we can learn from Monopoly.

Before Lizzie Magie invented her game, board games were designed so that you eventually got from start to finish, and even if you were not the first to finish you could finish all the same. However, Monopoly meant you went round and round the streets of London and the winner is the only one left when everyone else has been eliminated through becoming bankrupt. In other words, winner takes all and the others end up empty-handed. Again, this could be a parable of modern times where Big Brother, Strictly Come Dancing and Britain's Got Talent encourage us to think in terms of processes of elimination until only one is left standing.

But God wills that no-one should be eliminated from the race of life, and that is why the woman goes in search of the lost coin, the father in search of the lost son and the good shepherd in search of the lost sheep. It is not only the winners who matter.

As a parable of how life should be lived in all its fullness (John 10 verse 10), Monopoly gets it wrong on two counts. Life is not circular, it is a journey ever onwards following the way of Christ until we enter God's eternal Kingdom. And no one is eliminated from this journey. There is no winner who takes all. All are equally loved and valued by God, and even if we don't come first in the race of life, at least we are given a chance to finish it.

So let us go on enjoying Lizzie Magie's invention, but as we do so let us remember that life is not a game of Monopoly but a journey of discovery, and whether you choose to be a flat iron, a top hat or an old boot, may you find the risen Christ, Jesus the Good Shepherd, leading you on to the place He has prepared for you at journey's end.

+ John Lincoln

Baptisms

We welcome into the family of the church

Brian Albert Webb.

John Samuel Kennealey

Funerals

We pray for those departed

Ethel Scott aged 87 years Died 16th April 2009.

Jean Andrews Died 4th May 2009.

Anglican – Methodist Prayer Breakfast in Metheringham

Beginning on 12 September there is to be a monthly Prayer Breakfast for members of Church and Chapel in Metheringham – and anyone else who would like to attend. It will be held on the second Saturday of each month from 8.30am – 9.30am at the Methodist Chapel – the Methodists having a warmer, more user-friendly building, particularly in the winter months!

Dennis Channon (378446) will be the contact person for the Methodists, John Tyrrell (322147) for the Anglicans.

Don't expect a full English but cereals, toast, good company and an hour to make a difference.

Another Chance

We are now in our 9th year and from the profits from our 8th year we have made the following donations:-

Metheringham & District Swimming Pool Assoc.	£100	
U S P G		£500
LIVES		£150
Air Ambulance	£200	
St Francis School		£50
Nomad Trust		£150
Meth. Hand in Hand Club		£100
St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy	£100	
St Barnabas Hospice	£100	
St Andrews Hospice for Children		£100

This is a total of £1550 for the year. This has brought the total given away since we opened the shop to £11720, this I believe is an excellent record and I thank all the volunteers who work in the shop week in week out.

On behalf of everyone involved I would like to thank all those who have donated goods to the shop over the years and that we continue to look for china, glass, jigsaws, books, CD's and DVD's etc. If you have anything that we can sell please bring it to the shop when open on Tuesday 2-4pm, Thursday 10-12noon and Saturday 10-12noon.

We also continue to look for new volunteers and if you are interested please let us know.

RB

CHANGE OF DATE

Please note that St Wilfrid's Church Fete is now to be on Saturday 11th July.

Dunston News

The Federation with Digby Primary School has started well. We had a joint training day after the Easter holidays when all of the staff members from both schools had the opportunity to visit each other's schools and to get to know each other. It was a very positive day with lots of exciting ideas as to how everyone would like to work together in the future. Teachers have already started to share their good practice and the two Pupil Councils will shortly be getting together to plan out a "pen pal" system for all of the children in each school to have a partner in the other school, along with other developments.

On June 9th the children in Year 6 will be attending the Church Schools Festival at Lincoln Cathedral. This year our chosen activities are bee keeping and candle making. Should be very interesting! Finally, a couple of dates for your diary. The school Summer Fayre takes place on Saturday, June 20th from 1.00pm until 3.00pm. The village Duck Race takes place on Saturday, July 4th

Graham Boyall Head teacher.

SERVICES FOR JUNE 2009 IN THE THREE PARISHES

Thursday 4th (and each Thursday)

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Sunday 7th

Trinity Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am United Service – St Wilfrid's Metheringham

Thursday 11th

2.15pm Family Service at St. Peter's with St. Peter's School

Sunday 14th

First Sunday after Trinity

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Oswald's Blankney

9.00am Morning Worship – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Sunday 21st

Second Sunday after Trinity

9.00a.m Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am Morning Worship – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Sunday 28th

Third Sunday after Trinity

9.00am Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion – St. Oswald's

10.30am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

July

Sunday 5th

Fourth Sunday after Trinity

8.00am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am United Service – Metheringham Methodist

Metheringham WI News.

The meeting took place in the Village hall on the 20th May. We had one new member join us. May is usually the month we discuss resolutions to vote on at our National AGM early next year. This year we only had one resolution which will be to urge the Government to increase funding for research into bee health. Honey bees are essential for pollination of crops, they are a vital part of our environment and provide substantial revenue. The resolution was passed unanimously. We had an enlightening talk on personal finances from Ella Chapman. We still have some seats left on the coach for our outing to Harewood House.

JS

What the drain will cost churches, charities and clubs

The 'rain tax' is expected to cost the Church of England over £15 million a year, plus a further £10 million as churches employ professional services to appeal the initial bills. This is equivalent to the Church of England being permanently drained of the resources to employ 375 clergy (a loss of 10 clergy in every diocese), or being unable to support 3,000 community groups, or 7,500 pensioner lunch clubs, or the loss of 357 Church School teachers. Larger churches will see their bills rise from £140 to £8,000 and Cathedrals will between £5,000 and £71,000 a year. PP Will this "rain tax" have any effect on our local Churches ? – Ed.

Erasmus (d. c. 300)

Do you like messing about in boats? If so, then you'll have heard of St Elmo's Fire. It is the light that is sometimes seen on mastheads of boats after storms at sea.

St Elmo is another name for St Erasmus, a fourth century Syrian bishop who was not afraid of violent storms. Legend has it that one day when Erasmus was preaching outside, a thunderbolt hit the ground right beside him. That might have distracted many modern bishops, but not Erasmus – he just kept on preaching. His courage won him the respect of sailors, who also had to brave the elements of nature in their daily work.

But when Erasmus was made the patron saint of sailors, it led to a curious confusion. His emblem became the windlass, a kind of hoist used by many sailors at sea. So far so good, but many medieval Christians, seeing the windlass emblem, assumed it was some sort of torture instrument. They knew that Erasmus had died in the persecution of Diocletian, and concluded that a windlass had been used to hoist out his intestines (which it hadn't).

But no matter - Erasmus was still adopted by another set of suffering people. Not only did sailors remember the thunderbolt, and look to him, but soon, anyone with gut ache as well. PP

Petroc

If you are going to Cornwall this summer in search of peace and quiet, Petroc is the saint for you. Especially if you find Padstow a bit too crowded for your liking! He would have sympathised. This 6th century abbot is Cornwall's most famous saint. Petroc set sail from South Wales, landed at Haylemouth, and founded a monastery as Lanwethinoc – now called Padstow, after him (Petroc's Stow).

Padstow must have been popular even in those days, because about 30 years later Petroc, in search of some peace and quiet, moved on to build another monastery at Little Petherick (Nanceventon). Here he must have decided to try some 6th century equivalent of 'Fresh Expressions', because he engaged with his local community by building a mill and a chapel. In time, Petroc began feeling crowded again. So he tramped off to the remote wilds of Bodmin Moor, where he lived as a hermit – until some 12 monks turned up to join him. Firmly Petroc kept them all housed in a monastery on a hilltop, while he enjoyed his private space in a cell by the river.

But even here Petroc was not alone. One day a terrified stag came rushing through the woods, pursued by the hunt. Petroc flung open the door of his cell, and the panting animal took refuge. When the huntsmen arrived on the scene, they did not dare to argue with the famous holy man, and went their way. The stag's gratitude made him tame, and Petroc would come to be portrayed with a stag as his special emblem.

Petroc was buried in the monastery in Padstow, but in c.1000 his shrine and relics, including his staff and bell, were translated to Bodmin. Here they have stayed ever since, except for a short, unplanned trip to Brittany in 1177, when they were stolen and carted off by a naughty canon. Henry II intervened, and everything but a rib of Petroc was eventually returned. PP

Trinity Sunday

Trying to explain the doctrine of the Trinity has kept many a theologian busy down the centuries. One helpful picture is to imagine the sun shining in the sky. The sun itself – way out there in space – unapproachable in its fiery majesty – is the Father. The light that flows from it, and which illuminates all our lives, is the Son. The heat that flows from it, and which gives us all the energy to move and grow, is the Holy Spirit. You cannot have the sun without its light and its heat. The light and the heat are from the sun, are of the sun, and yet are also distinct in themselves, with their own roles to play.

The Bible makes clear that God is One God, who is disclosed in three persons: Father, Son (Jesus Christ) and Holy Spirit. For example:

Deuteronomy 6:4 'Hear O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one..'

Isaiah 45:22 'Turn to me and be saved... for I am God, and there is no other'

Genesis 1:1-2 'In the beginning God created.... And the Spirit of God was hovering...'

Judges 14:6 etc 'The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power...'

John 1:1-3 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.'

Luke 24:49 actually manages to squeeze the whole Trinity into one sentence. Jesus tells his disciples: 'I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power (the Holy Spirit) from on high.'

In other words, the sun eternally gives off light and heat, and whenever we stand in its brilliant light, we find that the warmth soon follows. PP

Prayer: a beginner's guide

The good thing about prayer is that there's only one way to go wrong, and that's not to do it. The best way to do it is to just get on and do it. If prayer at its simplest level is listening to God and talking to him, you don't need long books to tell you how to do it, you just need a conviction that prayer is a good thing to do, that you're someone God wants to hear from and that he's worth talking to.

Is prayer a good thing to do? Never mind for the moment about whether prayer 'works' or not: Jesus prayed and he encouraged his disciples to pray too, so if we're following him, we need to be praying. Full stop.

Are you someone God wants to hear from? The message of the Bible is that however unworthy, sinful and useless we may feel as human beings, God can't wait to hear from us and is sitting on the edge of his seat like a lovestruck teenager, hand poised ready to pick up the phone the second it rings.

Is he worth talking to? He's the one person who knows us inside out, the one person with infinite power at his fingertips, the one who has the true perspective on an entire world's story. Not a slot machine to pay into in the hope of one day getting 'an answer to prayer', but a person. Who likes us.

How might you begin to pray? What sort of a person are you? Do you like a good gossip? Then gossip to God. Are you the strong silent type? Then be silent in his presence. Say hello... say the Lord's Prayer ... say 'Oh God' and mean it... deliberately be silent and still for one minute ... read a story from a Gospel and imagine what you would say to Jesus if you were there... tell him about what is worrying you or thrilling you ... copy the great pray-ers of the Bible and of the Church... write a letter to him ... listen and look for a few moments in a place you consider holy... You can't go wrong. Prayer is good. God longs to hear from you. He's worth it. PP

Best for breakfast

Want your breakfast to make you feel full for longer? Eat porridge. Now scientists at King's College London have found that foods with a low glycaemic index (GI), such as oats, trigger the release of greater amounts of a hormone in the gut, which delays hunger pangs by creating the 'full' sensation.

As well as porridge, try also brown bread and most fruit and vegetables, which stimulate the release of 20 per cent more of the GLP-1 hormone than food with a high GI ratio.

How will the recession affect society?

A recent survey has found that one in four of us (25%) have questioned our personal values since the economic downturn began. Around a third of us believe that society will emerge more caring and compassionate (34%), 45% of us say we will be more concerned about world affairs, 37% of us think we will place less importance on possessions and two-fifths of us (43%) think we will have a greater appreciation of the role that charity plays in society.

The survey was carried out by carried out by GfK NOP on behalf of the Charities Aid Foundation. It also discovered that despite the current economic crisis, 77% of us are giving as much to charity as before - with eight percent of us giving even a bit more!

John Low, Chief Executive of the Charities Aid Foundation said, "It is heartening to see that some good is coming out of these very difficult times... After the US 1930s' Great Depression it is estimated that charitable giving doubled. This is probably because people saw up close the suffering caused by a major economic crisis and how charities could help. "

The Charities Aid Foundation is a registered charity that works to create greater value for charities and social enterprise. For more information on how Charities Aid Foundation can help your personal charitable giving, visit: www.cafonline.org PP

On the road this summer?

Are you going to be in the car a lot this summer? Consider the following tips to keep your fuel costs down...

1. Lose weight. Do you really need all that stuff that has built up in the back of your car? You are paying to move it around... pound for pound, is it worth it?
2. Roll on.... keep your tyres at the maximum recommended pressure. Have the wheel alignment checked so the car runs easily, straight and true.
3. Make it slippery.... at least as far as aerodynamic drag is concerned. Remove roof racks, top boxes, cycle carriers, and watch those open windows and sunroof... they do not help!
4. Cool isn't so cool... air conditioning can increase fuel thirst of a small engine ... by up to 10 per cent. So – how cold do you really need to be?
5. Choose your petrol station.... you'll find the cheapest local petrol or diesel at www.petrolprices.com. Or better still, support your local retailers !!
6. Drive like one of the good guys: accelerate smoothly up to a safe and legal speed, select as high a gear as possible, keep the revs down to minimise. Don't coast in neutral; idling uses more fuel than running in gear on a closed throttle.
7. Avoid the brakes - they turn fuel into mere waste heat. Instead, reduce your speed in good time by lifting your foot off the accelerator, and aim to roll to a stop at the right place. Make your driving an enjoyable game of shrewd accuracy, like bowls, rather than a test of nerve, like the Grand Prix. PP

Cadbury Dairy goes Fairtrade

The Fairtrade Foundation has announced that Cadbury Dairy Milk, the UK's top-selling chocolate bar, is to achieve Fairtrade certification. The move is expected to result in the tripling of sales of Fairtrade cocoa for farmers in Ghana. PP

Garden warning

This is good or bad news depending how much you like your garden: now doctors have warned that pruning, mowing and weeding can be just as dangerous as playing competitive sports.

Apparently too many of us rush at our gardens in a fit of mad enthusiasm... digging the whole allotment at one go, laying a lawn in a day, hauling the rocks for the rockery in a couple of hours. The results are a painful mix of gardener's back, weeders' wrist, pruner's neck, extensive damage to lower backs, and strains to ligaments and joints.

Instead, here's how to survive your garden this summer: do some gentle stretching to warm up muscles and joints; keep it to two hours a day until you are fit; kneel down when planting, with both knees on a cushioned pad; if digging, use a small spade, and move less at a time. When lifting anything heavier than a slug, bend your knees and keep your back straight. Finally, don't stick at any one thing for long – keep moving around. Repetitive movement can be dangerous! On the bright side, medical studies also reveal that even half an hour of gardening a day can reduce blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and aid your mental health. PP

Beware the summer strawberry tea

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Never, ever feel aggrieved that your summer strawberry tea has to be held in the church hall rather than on a lawn, since there isn't a single blade of grass to be found in your entire parish. You have no idea of the potential calamities you are avoiding. Here, during the previous week, the organisers will be desperately asking the opinion of local farmers about the weather. In doing so, they forget that for the farming community, it is always the wrong sort of weather anyway. I once received a heartfelt plea from the staff at Heathrow airport for our ladies to stop calling them at hourly intervals to find out if hurricanes may be imminent.

Naturally, the day will start out warm and sunny and so all the tables will be arranged on the vicarage lawn. By 10am, tablecloths will have been laid. By 10.10am, a brisk breeze will have sprung up and someone will be delegated to retrieve them all from deep within the nettle patch. By 11am, clouds will gather and a decision will be made to transfer everything into the church hall. Once that is completed, just when it is almost too late to change, the sun will re-emerge and there will be a frantic dash to put everything back on the lawn. This ensures that by 2pm when teas start, the ladies will already be in a state of collapse.

Last year, the dowager duchess of Trilby graced us with her presence. As she sat with her entourage, elegantly sipping tea under a giant parasol over the table, the thing – equally elegantly – closed around her, leaving her looking like one of those unfortunate insects trapped by a carnivorous plant. To emerge from its depths looking entirely unflustered was beyond even her social skills.

Fortunately, attention was diverted from her predicament by the wife of one of our farmers. This substantial lady had been sitting in a chair with slightly too thin legs for the damp lawn. The rear two slowly sank into the grass, eventually catapulting the dear lady backwards into the lap of the local mayor. Disentangling red flannelette from mayoral chains took some time, and delicacy.

At least when I have had enough, the lawn can be cleared in minutes by drawing the raffle. The moment the last rubber shower cap and set of Christmas doilies has been awarded, there will be a dash to get home, giving my dog the opportunity to retrieve remnants of cream cakes from the flower beds.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Signs and symbols: alpha, omega and other Greek letters

This month we'll look at a few more symbols to help us think about God using abbreviations from ancient Greek words. The most common and often the most misunderstood is this one - IHC. People sometimes think they come from the Latin 'Jesus Hominum Salvator' meaning, 'Jesus, saviour of the world', or even 'In his service'. But they don't. They are the first three letters of the Greek for JESUS - which in Greek was IHCOYC.

Just to confuse you, Greek has two ways of writing the sound 's' as in the middle of Jesus. It can be either a 'C' or what looks like a rather stylised 'E'.

To confuse you more, when you translate the Greek letters IHC into Latin they come out as 'IHS'. So you can see both spellings that mean the same thing.

In many churches this abbreviation has been repeated and used to decorate the whole length of the white cloth covering the altar.

A much easier abbreviation is the next one which is the first and last letters of the Greek capital alphabet - Alpha(A) and Omega (a funny-looking O or Q). In English it would be 'AZ'.

Alpha/Omega is used to mean the infinity of God, that he is eternal; from the beginning to the end.

You'll sometimes also see AW, because this was the lower case Greek..

Another Greek word used is NIKAI which means 'Victor'. So sometimes you'll see a cross with the four corners having two letters in each: IC meaning Jesus; XC meaning Christ; NI being the first two letters; and KA the last two letters of NIKAI. So you get: 'Jesus Christ, the Victor'.

Sometimes the alpha and omega will be placed either side of another letter or letters. One example is with the letter 'M' which is sometimes used to mean 'found blameless'. So AMQ

comes from Philippians 2:15. 'So that you may be innocent and pure as God's perfect children ...'
' PP