

## Church Newsround – October 2009

### BISHOP'S LETTER

#### **Ready, Steady – Pray!**

Soon after I was Ordained I lost my kneecap in a motorcycle accident. It wasn't all bad news. The Insurance Company paid out an extra £500 in compensation for being a Clergyman who couldn't kneel down.

This incident raises all sorts of interesting questions about the place of posture in the practice of prayer. The Insurance Company seemed to think that my access to the Almighty had been irreparably damaged by my inability to kneel down! But is that so? Surely not. Yet posture does matter to most things we do, and whether we kneel, sit, stand or lay flat on our faces to pray does seem to matter.

Then there are the words we use. What part do words play in the practice of prayer? Will day to day language be OK or do our words have to be special words, preferably with an olde worlde feel about them such as we find in the Book of Common Prayer or a strong hint of mystery as in some modern liturgies ("The Silent Music of your Praise" – what does that mean?).

Or do we not need words at all? Silence has featured large in manuals of prayer, and practising the art of contemplation and reflection without words is no longer the preserve of those committed to the monastic way of life. So what part does silence play in the practice of prayer?

By no means least, what about corporate prayer as opposed to private prayer, and what's the relationship between prayer and Bible Study? Are there special times of the day for prayer, or is it really to do with praying as we go about our daily business? What part can music, icons or the natural world around us play in the practice of prayer – and however or wherever we pray, what should be the balance between praise, confession, thanksgiving and intercession?

Finding answers to these questions which are right for you is very important, and that is why I hope to see you at the Cathedral on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009 from 11am to 3pm to sample various approaches to prayer during our Taster Day. A variety of workshops, displays and literature will be on offer with the opportunity to sample and explore ways of praying which may turn out to be just right for you – and you may also discover why some of them are not right for you at all.

No need to book. Just come along, but bring a packed lunch. It will be fun – and it could also change your practice of prayer for ever.

+ John Lincoln

### **From the Registers**

#### Baptism

*We welcome into God's Family*

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August Amelia Anne Haley at St. Oswald's & William Oliver Marshall at St. Oswald's.

#### Weddings

*We Pray for those starting Married life together*

25<sup>th</sup> July : William Frederick Ward & Patricia Ann Elkington-Ball at St Wilfrid's

29<sup>th</sup> August : Kerrie Turner & Steven Mearns at St. Oswald's

5<sup>th</sup> September : Michelle Coster & Gavin Hutchinson at St. Oswald's

5<sup>th</sup> September Philip David Hill & Karen Lesley Collingham at St Wilfrid's

19<sup>th</sup> September Christopher Mark Adams & Hannah Theresa Owens at St Wilfrid's

## **From the Bishops of Lincoln, Grimsby and Grantham**

Dear Friends,

In the light of recent downward trends in the incidence of new cases of Swine Flu nationally, there have been calls for the Common Cup at the Eucharist to be reinstated in those Churches where it has been withdrawn as a precautionary measure. Indeed, this week the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln Cathedral decided that the Common Cup would be reinstated forthwith.

However, there are grounds for proceeding with some care as the decline in cases may be due to the precautionary measures that have been taken, and to suspend those measures just when they are proving effective might be thought unwise. Also, the authorities have consistently predicted that a significant surge in the number of cases is likely to occur as people return to schools and workplaces, and as the onset of winter approaches. This suggests that now may not be the time to lower our guard.

In the guidance we issued late July, we suggested that if you are minded to vary usual practice in response to the pandemic, then withdrawal of the Common Cup was probably the best course. Given current trends you may well decide to reinstate the Cup where it has been withdrawn, but if you do so then it will be important for communicants to be reminded that they are at liberty to continue to receive in one kind if they so choose, and if the rate of new cases of Swine Flu accelerates then withdrawal of the Cup may need to be reinstated.

Whilst we are clear that decisions of this kind can only be made locally and in the light of local circumstances, we felt that we needed to keep our guidance under review and advise you accordingly.

May God bless you in your ministry at this time of concern and uncertainty, and we hold in our prayers all those affected by this pandemic, and those bearing burdens of responsibility for the health of our nation at this time.

With all good wishes,

+ John + David + Tim

## Dunston School News

The school year has started well with our ten new Reception children settling in very quickly. We now have 74 children on roll which is remarkable. Our new library extension is complete and we are using it already. It is wonderful to have an extra space to use for group work, music lessons, meetings and, when we have organised all of the books, a library! We have also started up a Breakfast club and they are using this room. We are very pleased with the mosaic on the wall which is based around designs about St. Peter drawn by the children from Class 3.

We have invited Sue Hampton, the author, to come and officially open the library on October 6<sup>th</sup>. She has written five novels and the latest is called "The Lincoln Imp". You may have heard her being interviewed on Radio Lincolnshire by Melvin Prior recently.

Graham Boyall

Headteacher

## **SERVICES FOR OCTOBER IN THE THREE PARISHES**

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> ( and each Thursday )**

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity**

8.00am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metherringham

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am United Service – St. Wilfrid's Metherringham

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup>**

6.30pm Harvest Festival at St. Oswald's Blankney

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity**

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Oswald's Blankney

9.00am Harvest Festival – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metherringham

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>**

2.15pm St Peter's School Harvest Festival Dunston

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Anglican – Methodist Prayer Breakfast**

8.30 am to 9.30 am in the Methodist Chapel.

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity/ Luke the Evangelist**

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am Morning Worship – St Wilfrid's Metherringham

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> Last Sunday after Trinity**

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

10.30am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metherringham

**November**

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> All Saints Day**

8.00am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metherringham

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

10.30am United Service – Metherringham Methodist Chapel

**W I Report**

There was an Open Meeting on September 16<sup>th</sup> where a line of a hymn came into mind after watching the wood-turning demonstration by Alan Haslam. "Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe"

His hands were skilled as he made two wooden vases on his lathe using a gouge (a concave bladed chisel) They were sanded, varnished and polished to show off the grain of the wood. Our names went into a draw and were offered as prizes. He also demonstrated the making of handles (turning between two centres) Yew was his favourite wood to work with but was not used for making food implements – too poisonous. Sycamore was used for knife handles etc. Safety glasses were essential when working and there was only a little sweeping up to do – he was a very tidy worker !

It was an interesting and enjoyable evening and we hope our visitors enjoyed it as much as we did.

There was a stall of objects we could purchase – plates, stands bowls etc.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October – a craft evening taken by some of our members.

JS.

### **Student numbers grow for sixth year running in Religious Studies A-Level**

The number of students taking Religious Studies A-level continues to rise. 2009 saw the highest-ever number of students taking the course at A and AS Level, and more than 21,000 students gained an A Level in Religious Studies.

As one leading Anglican educationalist explains: "Young people are saying that matters of faith really are worth studying. The popularity of RS is an inconvenient fact for those who seek to portray the world in purely secular terms." PP

### **Pray now with your mobile phone**

To sign up to receive free prayer texts on your mobile phone, text PRAYNOW to 82088.

### **Lambeth Palace bees buzz for miles – why shouldn't ours?**

Lambeth Palace, the Archbishop of Canterbury's London home, has 12 beehives, who help to pollinate plants and flowers across a seven mile radius in the capital. Not only does this help the capital stay green, but each hive provides around 60lbs of honey a year – more than enough for the Archbishop's toast each morning! Wax from one hive has even been used to make a small model of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Now the conservation watchdog Natural England has urged more city dwellers to keep bees, and the Church of England is behind the idea. Bees are in drastic decline, but still essential to the survival of plants and crops. Although traditionally bees are associated with rural life, they can also thrive in inner cities – in Lambeth's case, only a stone's throw from Parliament.

Garden Manager at Lambeth Palace Alistair Cook says the honey from the bees always proved very popular with visitors to Lambeth, particularly at the garden open days. The bees live at the back of the gardens, near to a small pond which enables them to collect water to cool down their hives.

Experts say that bees are under threat world-wide – particularly honeybees.

Honeybees are now in danger of extinction, unless beekeepers care for them in domestic environments. Natural England says that an increase in UK bee colonies could make the insects more resistant to the current killer diseases affecting the bees.

PP (Do we have any Bee keepers in the Parish ? – Ed)

### **Next time you feel like GOD can't use you, just remember...**

Noah was a drunk, Abraham was too old, Isaac was a daydreamer, Jacob was a liar, Leah was ugly, Joseph was abused, Moses had a stuttering problem, Gideon was afraid, Samson had long hair and was a womaniser, Rahab was a prostitute, Jeremiah and Timothy were too young, David had an affair and was a murderer, Elijah was suicidal, Isaiah preached naked, Jonah ran from God, Naomi was a widow, Job went bankrupt, Peter denied Christ (3 times!), The Disciples fell asleep while praying, Martha worried about everything, Mary Magdalene was the Samaritan woman who was divorced, more than once... , Zaccheus was too small, Paul was too religious, Timothy had an ulcer... AND Lazarus was dead!

Now! No more excuses!

God can use you to your full potential.

Besides, you aren't the message, you are just the messenger...

### **Angels Not Pumpkins!**

31<sup>st</sup> October has become an evening which many people fear, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, who are uneasy about opening the door on a dark night. Many worry about the kind of trick which might be played on them.

Now a Christian company, Silent Lights, is offering free ways to help people to celebrate the positive aspects of All Hallows Eve, the night before All Saints Day.

A number of churches and families now arrange alternative parties for their children, so they can dress up as angels or in bright colours and have fun without any of the risk or offence of trick or treating. An outline of craft ideas based around the theme of Light is available free from [www.silentlights.co.uk](http://www.silentlights.co.uk)

Many people have 'trick or treaters' arrive at their front door. Silent Lights has designed a gift tag which can be attached to some gift wrapped treats. The gift tag has a simple message stating the Christian view point. There is space on the tag to print your own message or local organisation contact details. Sheets of gift tags and leaflets can be downloaded free from the 'get involved' section of their website

[www.silentlights.co.uk/tags](http://www.silentlights.co.uk/tags)

For anyone who likes to bake, Silent Lights even offers a pumpkin muffin recipe. PP

### **On what to do about swine flu in church**

The Rectory

St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

The concern you show for the welfare of your parishioners during the current 'flu epidemic does you credit – although I am unsure of the continued effectiveness of your 'ministry of welcome', when those beaming smiles of your 'welcomers' will be hidden behind surgical masks. And surely, disinfecting the hymn books after each service is a little too enthusiastic? Won't the pages simply dissolve in the end?

Also, must you condemn those with even slight sniffles to sit encased in large plastic bags behind glass screens? That is unlikely to make newcomers feel that they are being warmly greeted. And I have never before heard of passing the peace with gardening gloves on. Won't people think it odd?

Finally, I must observe that obliging your entire congregation to paddle through a disinfectant pool as they leave the church is unusual practise. It will make people feel they are in the public baths – although I concede that the architecture of the two buildings has much in common.

We take a rather more robust attitude to viral attack here at St. James the Least. The use of the chalice was only reluctantly suspended during the Black Death and – apart from the one Sunday when Mrs Clapton lost her teeth in it, has been used at every service since. Colonel Addleshaw is safe from the virus, since it could never survive the alcohol levels in his blood stream and a glare from Lady Millcheam would freeze any unwelcome visitor at a hundred yards.

Dear, romantic Miss Mompesson suggested we hold future services in the open air, but the thought of Mr Charnley losing his wig yet again in anything greater than a light breeze and the choir looking like galleons in full sail, made the idea unworkable – especially as it would oblige Lord Melchett to sit with everyone else and not in the family pew, where he can read the Sunday papers unobserved by the rest of the congregation. There have, however, been some unintended benefits to the health scare. It has enabled me to cancel the coming visit of the bishop, explaining that we are far too concerned for his health. Also, as a way of containing the spread of the contagion, I have stopped visiting parishioners and do not allow anyone to call at the rectory. All evening meetings are suspended, I refuse to visit the village school and risk contaminating the children and I have made it clear that not stopping to talk to villagers in the street saves them from being ravaged by the disease.

Should the 'flu epidemic continue for some time, it would be a sadness I could learn to bear.

Your loving uncle, Eustace

### **Edward the Confessor (1003 – 66)**

If you approve of giving money to help cathedrals survive, then Edward the Confessor is the saint for you.

This early King of England was the virtual founder of Westminster Abbey. And never mind entrance charges - at one point in his life, Edward was giving a full tenth of his income to Westminster Abbey.

Edward was the son of King Ethelred the Unready and his second, Norman wife, Emma. After various ups and downs which included a brief exile in Normandy, Edward was made king of England in 1042.

As King, Edward had a tricky time of it – trying to keep the peace for over 20 years while various Danish and Norman magnates struggled for power (which eventually led to the Norman Conquest). Scholars have argued over how much of a success he was as a king.

As a Christian, there is no doubt: Edward's holiness was evident to all. He made himself accessible to his people, he was generous to the poor, and chaste. He was also reputed to have seen visions and even achieved miraculous cures for people through prayer.

Edward did much to help the Church in many ways. His lasting contribution was the original Westminster Abbey - a huge Romanesque church, 300 feet long, with a nave of 12 bays. Westminster Abbey became the place of coronation and burial of kings and queens of England. It was finished and consecrated just before his death. Edward was buried there, and his relics are undisturbed to this day.

During the Middle Ages, Edward was a very popular saint: along with Edmund of East Anglia he was widely considered to be England's patron for a time. PP

### **Why Study the Bible?**

Bible study. Those two words alone can conjure up images of dour-faced people brooding over large black leather bound books in old English discussing things which have no relevance at all to real life today – not really something most of us want to spend our valuable time on.

Yet it need not be like that. After all, the word 'Bible' itself simply means 'the books' (coming from the Greek, *biblia*). The plural reminds us that it is not a book at all – but more like a library. Most English translations contain 66 books (39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New), written by a wide range of authors from a variety of cultures and social settings in several languages over many centuries. It tells the story of how individuals, tribes, and several nations understood themselves and their relationship to a God who had brought them into being and wanted them to respond to him.

In fact, so important was this last point that people began to see how these human words about God could even become God's word to the human race. Yet eventually of course, what human beings really understand best is other people – and so the second half, the New Testament, is about how God communicated finally with a word which became flesh, speaking to us in the life and ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

So perhaps it is not surprising if we need a little help to read it properly and fully understand what these books are saying. However, there is no shortage of Bible commentaries! Yet some are very academic, going through these old books word by word, while others simply read off the surface of the text to apply it today with little recognition of the great differences between the ancient world and life today. That's why the *People's Bible Commentary* from the BRF seeks to combine good scholarship from around the world with a reverent approach to what it means for us today – 'to instruct the head and warm the heart'. You can use it to study the Bible on your own or in a group, on a daily basis or in preparation for a special service or event. The important thing is to get reading – and see what God might have to communicate to you through these extraordinary books! PP

### **Dust – and smile!**

Some research is so wacky that you wonder why they bothered: it seems that doing housework helps you fight depression.

Researchers in Scotland have found that just 20 minutes of brisk mopping, sweeping and polishing even once a week will give you enough exercise to reduce your stress levels – though it is hard to see how a house can be kept tidy on 20 minutes a week.... PP

### **The story behind Harvest Festivals**

Who began Harvest Festivals? Have you ever wondered? It seems pretty obvious to thank God for the harvest, but actually, it is a comparatively recent church service. Less than 200 years ago, harvest was not formally 'celebrated' in church, but in the taverns and on village greens of the countryside, with wild drinking and eating before the harshness of winter set in.

Then in 1834 an eccentric clergyman called the Rev Robert Stephen Hawker arrived in Morwenstowe, a tiny hamlet of a few farms perched high on the windswept cliffs of the north Cornish coast. The church had been without a vicar for years, but now Robert Hawker strode the lanes of Morwenstowe in a bright purple or red cassock.

Rural life in those days was harsh, and Hawker soon realised the sheer effort needed to survive in those parts. Harvest was the only thing that got people through the winter: a poor one meant starvation. Each bad year Hawker buried some of his congregation.

But the summer of 1843 was perfect, and the harvest that year was exceptionally bountiful. The people of Morwenstowe were getting set to celebrate with their usual abandon, when Hawker stepped in. Who, he asked, did they think had given them the harvest? Were they not going to even say 'thank you' to Him?

Abashed, the people came to church, and Hawker led them in giving thanks to God for his rich blessing upon them. The 'Christian' Harvest Festival had arrived – in Morwenstowe.

Nowadays Harvest Festivals are enjoyed by both regular church-goers and visitors, making it one of the most popular services in the church year. PP

### **Family Bible surprise**

A little boy opened the big family Bible. He was fascinated as he fingered through the old pages. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible. He picked up the object and looked at it. What he saw was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages. "Mum, look what I found," the boy called out.

"What have you got there, dear?"

With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered, "I think it's Adam's underwear!" PP

## **When Insults Had Class**

*These glorious insults are from an era before the English language got boiled down to four-letter words and a "you":*

The exchange between Churchill & Lady Astor: She said, "If you were my husband I'd give you poison." He said, "If you were my wife, I'd drink it."

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: "Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease." "That depends, Sir," said Disraeli, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."

"He had delusions of adequacy." - Walter Kerr

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire." – Winston Churchill

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure." Clarence Darrow

"He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary." - William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway).

"Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it." - Moses Hadas

"I didn't attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it." - Mark Twain

"He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends." - Oscar Wilde

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend.... if you have one." - George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill

"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one." - Winston Churchill, in response.

"I feel so miserable without you; it's almost like having you here." - Stephen Bishop

## **Feel sorry for their teachers....**

TEACHER: Maria, go to the map and find North America.

MARIA: Here it is.

TEACHER: Correct. Now class, who discovered America ?

CLASS: Maria.

\*

TEACHER: John, why are you doing your maths on the floor?

JOHN: You told me to do my multiplications without using a table.

\*

TEACHER: John, how do you spell 'crocodile?'

JOHN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'

TEACHER: No, that's wrong

JOHN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.

\*

TEACHER: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?

DONALD: H I J K L M N O.

TEACHER: What are you talking about?

DONALD: Yesterday you said it's H to O.

\*

TEACHER: Winnie, name one important thing that we didn't have ten years ago.

WINNIE: Me!

\*

TEACHER: Sam, why do you always get so dirty?

SAM: Well, I'm a lot closer to the ground than you are.

\*

TEACHER: Millie, give me a sentence starting with ' I. '

MILLIE: I is...

TEACHER: No, Millie..... Always say, 'I am.'

MILLIE: All right... 'I am the ninth letter of the alphabet.'

\*

TEACHER: Now, Simon, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?

SIMON: No sir, I don't have to, my Mom is a good cook.

\*

TEACHER: Clive , your composition on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's. Did you copy his?

CLIVE : No, sir.. It's the same dog.

\*

TEACHER: Harold, what do you call a person who keeps on talking when people are no longer interested?

HAROLD: A teacher