

CHURCH NEWSROUND SEPTEMBER 2009

Worship in Church - what's it really all about?

Many of us meet with others on a regular basis, often in a church building, to formally worship God. When we come together in worship are we taking part in an activity, adopting an attitude, or both?

Worship begins where we are and takes place in God's real world. It is about coming closer to God, but not just as an individual. We come as a community and the act of worship therefore needs to be right for that community. We venerate God and offer him praise, thanksgiving and petitions. We confess our sins and seek absolution, teaching, inspiration and blessing. Sometimes we come to Christ's table to share with and in the body and blood of Christ as one community and one church.

However, our collective worship activity may, in how it is carried out, or in the attitude we adopt before, during and after, include or exclude others. We may make assumptions about the value of how other people worship God based on our own familiar and comfortable way. We may believe our worship is the 'right way'.

John Robinson in 'Honest to God' wrote, 'The test of worship is how far it makes us more sensitive to the beyond 'in our midst'. To the Christ in the hungry, the naked, the homeless and the prisoner. Only if we are more likely to recognise him there after attending an act of worship is that act of worship Christian rather than a piece of religiosity in Christian dress' When we worship God with all our senses, with our whole body and mind, and invite the Holy Spirit to work within us, we can recognise and fulfil our role as the church in the world today, and come to people where they are when they are in need.

Elizabeth Goodridge and Ian Yearsley of Southwark Diocese.

BISHOP'S LETTER

Faith Forged on the Anvil of Doubt

This summer has seen celebrations in Lincolnshire to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Alfred, Lord Tennyson at Somersby Rectory near Horncastle.

Tennyson remains one of the greatest poets in the English language, and as Poet Laureate he was one of the stars in the Victorian literary firmament. Most people have read **The Brook** ("For men may come and men may go, But I go on for ever"). And his invitation to "Come into the Garden, Maud" is familiar to many of us. Lincolnshire is justifiably proud of one of its most illustrious sons, and interest in him is now as great as it has ever been.

But what about Tennyson's religious beliefs? Did he have any, and if so, of what kind?

Well, in many ways he was a man of his time embracing fairly conservative Victorian values and moral assumptions. But he was not a great Church-goer – perhaps his experience at Somersby when his rather perplexing father was the Rector, did little to encourage him in that respect. Yet his son assures us that Tennyson "studied the Bible, as all who knew his poems know", and he engaged readily with the liberal Christianity promoted by Charles Kingsley and F. D. Maurice.

However, the publication of Darwin's **Origin of Species** did cause him to doubt some of the central claims of the Christian faith, even though he never doubted the existence of God nor the reality of life after death. He wrote:

We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow".

In the light of these sentiments, T. S. Eliot was prompted to observe that Tennyson's greatest poem **In Memoriam** "is not religious because of the quality of its faith, but because of the quality of its doubt", and this is balanced by Kingsley's view that "Tennyson held to an orthodox Christian faith forged on the anvil of doubt".

It is this which makes Tennyson a man of our time as well as his own. He lived in an age of doubt yet it was his very struggles with doubt which convinced him that faith would see him through this life "to something better".

On the plinth of his statue in the precincts of Lincoln Cathedral the following lines are inscribed. They sum up Tennyson's faith in nature as a window into a divine mystery beyond our comprehension – but very real to us all the same:

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
little flower – but IF I could understand
what you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

+ John Lincoln

From the registers

Baptism

We welcome into God's Family

Sunday 29th July

Kyran David Houseman Millar at St. Oswald's Blankney.

Wedding

We Pray for those starting Married life together

8th August

Natascha Soper & Matthew Farmery at St. Oswald's Blankney

St Wilfrid's Church Metheringham

Unfortunately St Wilfrid's Church has suffered from an outbreak of dry rot. It was first noticed at a high level on the internal walls of the south side of the church.

David Glew, of the Lincoln firm Glew & Smith, is the inspecting architect for the church, and he arranged firstly ladder access, then internal scaffolding and an external cherry picker to investigate the problem. It was found that the gutter was blocked causing water to overflow onto wall below, which in turn had made the timber roof structure wet, following which the dry rot had started to grow. Emergency repairs are now being drawn up for the approval of the Diocesan Advisory Committee, before the actual works can be carried out.

This part of the roof may well have to be shored up to make it safe and then estimates of costs will be required, the early estimate given is around £20,000, but I will let you know once quotations have come in.

The church council have met to discuss the situation as this has come up unexpectedly and an expense not budgeted for. If anyone would like to give a donation towards this work please contact the churchwardens. Please support our fundraising events.

Richard Brewin (Hon Treasurer)

SERVICES FOR SEPTEMBER IN THE THREE PARISHES

Sunday 6th

8.00am

13th Sunday after Trinity

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's

9.00am

Holy Communion – St. Peter's

10.30am

United Service – Metheringham Methodist Chapel

Thursday 10th (and each Thursday)

9.00am

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's

Sunday 13th

14th Sunday after Trinity

9.00am

Holy Communion – St. Oswald's

9.00am

Morning Worship – St. Peter's

10.30am

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's

Thursday 17th

2.15pm

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

Sunday 20th

15th Sunday after Trinity

9.00am Holy Communion – St. Peter's
10.30am Morning Worship – St Wilfrid's

Sunday 27th

16th Sunday after Trinity

9.00am Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion - St. Oswald's
10.30am Celebration of Holy Communion and Harvest Festival - St. Wilfrid's
6.00pm Choral Evensong St. Peter's with the Choir of Lincoln.

October

Sunday 4th

17th Sunday after Trinity

8.00am Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's
9.00am Holy Communion – St. Peter's
10.30am United Service – St. Wilfrid's

Earth our Home 3

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

Friday 2 October 2:30 to 7:30

Taking Action on Climate Change:

Looking towards the UN Copenhagen Climate Change Conference and celebrating St Francis.

Come to this free event; enjoy lots of exciting activities and exhibitions, explore Franciscan spirituality, walk the labyrinth, see the dance & drama.

Special Evensong at 5.30 with guest speaker Revd Dave Bookless of A Rocha UK, followed by discussion.

To book or for further information contact Terry Miller 01522 504072,

terry.miller@lincoln.anglican.org

(Chaplain for the Environment and Sustainable Development)

Shrinking the Footprint in every parish

The Church of England's environmental campaign is now three years old. To mark the recent event, the Shrinking the Footprint campaign has unveiled energy saving toolkits for every parish.

The Bishop of London, the Rt Revd Richard Chartres is urging the dioceses to go one step further in cutting the carbon, reminding them that caring for the planet is a Christian imperative for the sake of future generations.

He urged the church to campaign for change, both at local level, and in the international arena. Important climate change talks take place at Copenhagen in December.

New toolkits and resources with energy saving tips and guidance for the CofE's churches, cathedrals, schools and clergy homes are now available at www.shrinkingthefootprint.org. These include downloadable action plans and checklists along with advice on considering the appropriate use of renewable energy in church buildings.

Nearly all dioceses now have an environment officer with many promoting their own green policies to cut the carbon in every parish. PP

St Wilfrid's Parish Church Harvest Supper

Friday 25 September in the Church Hall at 7pm. Tickets at £8 are available from Margaret Amos, Ann DeVries or Another Chance Shop. All proceeds to the Church Fabric Fund.

St Oswald's Church Blankney Harvest Service at 6.30pm followed by the Harvest Supper at 7.30pm on October 8th. The preacher will be Rev John Patrick. Tickets at £10, and £5 for under 12s obtainable from the Estate Offices.

Dunston Scarecrow Weekend 26th and 27th September.

St Wilfrid's Parish Church St Andrews Night Supper

Friday 27 November at 7pm in the Church Hall. Tickets Available from Margaret Amos, Ann Devries or Another Chance Shop. All proceeds to the Church Fabric Fund.

WI Meeting August 19th

"The Drop of a Hat" was a talk and demonstration by Dorothy Wood about her hobby of hat making.

Not hats to deal with the weather but ones she made for family weddings.

They were made from layers of a material called sinamay – the bark of a plant similar to the banana - initially used as packing. Then they were covered in silk. Endless patience was needed, fitting, cutting, pinning, measuring, wiring, decorating. Apparently Luton is the home of hat making.

Also at this meeting The Darts Team were presented with their trophy.

Next meeting Sept 16th, Wood Turning – a talk and demonstration by Alan Haslam. This is an open meeting and visitors are welcome.

JS

Metheringham Over 60's Club

Sunday 14th June, a coach full of members of the Metheringham Over 60s Club departed for a short summer holiday at the Hedland Hotel, Torquay; we stopped for lunch at the Wyevale Garden Centre.

On arrival, we were warmly welcomed at the hotel and allocated our rooms. Over the week, the food was excellent with several choices for each course and the staff behaved wonderfully. The entertainment was very professional and most enjoyable.

Daily outings were to Dartmouth, Buckfast Abbey, Looe, Exeter, Dawlish and Teignmouth. Our Courier for the week, Jilly, was magnificent – she had a special hat for anyone having a birthday – we had two, Nora Creasey and Derek Bell. Also, she organised a free raffle with lovely prizes. Our driver was very helpful he had a good rapport with everyone on the coach and kept us informed of important sights and places of interest as we enjoyed our journeys. Apart from the Wednesday morning and early afternoon we enjoyed very good weather. A good time was had by all.

Next Holiday – Turkey & Tinsel, The Windermere Manor Hotel, 16-20 November 2009 cost £280 but this includes insurance, gratuities and there is no single room supplement. We have a few seats available. It is open to non-members of the Club. Anyone interested in joining us should contact me, Chairman Margaret Amos on Tel: 01526 321049.

Our next meeting will be held at the Metheringham Village Hall, on Wed 2nd Sept, from 7-9.15 pm, doors open at 6.30pm, with entertainment provided by Lincoln Sounds. As usual, tea/coffee and biscuits will be served during the interval. Guests are welcome at a cost of £2.00 per person per visit.

The events we will be holding in the Metheringham Village Hall this autumn are as follows

Wednesday, 7th Oct. Harvest Festival with an auction.

Wednesday, 4th Nov. 'Shiny Stockings', will sing and entertain members.

Saturday 7th Nov. Coffee morning all members and non-members will be made very welcome.

Wednesday, 2nd Dec. Christmas Dinner & Draw for members.

Dave Williams,
Secretary

A Point of View :- (and just remember this is written by an American)

A journalist asked Billy Graham's daughter why God allowed all the problems in the world today. Here is what Anne Graham-Lotz replied:

I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives.

"And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us his blessing and his protection if we demand He leave us alone?"

In America some years ago people complained that they did not want prayer in our schools and we said OK.

"Then someone said 'you better not read the Bible in school, the Bible says thou shall not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbour as Yourself.' And we said OK.

"Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said OK,

"Then someone said teachers better not discipline our children when they misbehave. The schools feared bad publicity and said there was no difference between proper discipline and cruel humiliation. And we said OK.

"Then someone said, let's let our daughters have abortions if they want and they won't even have to tell their parents, And we said OK.

"Then some wise school board member said, 'Since boys will be boys and they're going to do it anyway, let's give our sons all the condoms they want so they can have all the fun they desire, and we won't have to tell their parents they got them at school. And we said OK,

"Then some of our top elected officials said it doesn't matter what we do in private as long as we do our jobs. Agreeing with them we said it doesn't matter to me what anyone, including the President, does in private as long as I have a job and the economy is good. And we said OK.

"Then the entertainment industry said, let's make TV shows and movies that promote profanity, violence and illicit sex. Let's record music that encourages rape, drugs, murder, suicide, and satanic themes. And we said it's just entertainment, it has no adverse effect, nobody takes it seriously anyway, so go right ahead.

"Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why our society is so violent and dangerous, why no one seems to know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother people to cheat, threaten and even kill each other.

"Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out 'I think it has a great deal to do with 'WE REAP WHAT WE SOW'."

Lioba (d. 782)

What really gets a woman remembered? Loved? Respected? Lioba the abbess of Bischofsheim is the patron saint for any woman who wants to make the most of her life.

Lioba was born in Wessex early in the 8th century. Her family was noble, her mother was a relative of the monk Boniface (the Billy Graham of the day, in that he was the apostle and then archbishop of Germany).

Lioba was educated first at the nunnery of Minster-in-Thamet and then at Wimborne, Dorset. She became a nun. After some years correspondence with Boniface, he invited her to Germany to help him evangelise the people by establishing convents. Convents were sort of the 'Fresh Expressions' of church in those days.

And so Lioba left Dorset with 30 nuns and went to Tauberbischofsheim, where she established a convent. She was a wonderful 'ambassador' of Christianity, for people found her both beautiful and accessible, intelligent and patiently kind. She became so highly esteemed that soon her advice was sought by magnates of both Church and State.

Lioba's convents followed the Rule of St Benedict: all her nuns learned Latin as well as manual work in scriptorium, kitchen, bakery, brewery, and garden. Above all, the regular public prayer of the Church was upheld.

Learning, hard work, and love of God: those were the factors that made Lioba who she was. Her walk with God was evident in her inner strength and dignity, her goodness and kindness. No wonder that even 50 years after her death, the local people were still talking of her with great affection.

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The Bible: there's nothing else like it....

Former Poet Laureate Andrew Motion says it is becoming increasingly difficult to teach English Literature because students don't know the Bible. Andrew Motion was taking part in a BBC radio interview when he said that students had a sketchy understanding of once familiar stories -- a depressing trend which threatened to leave future generations unable to fully understand the works of Milton, Shakespeare or more modern writers such as TS Eliot.

Literature is one of many aspects of British culture with roots in the Bible, but Bible reading is more than a cultural exercise. For millions of people across the globe, the Bible is the main reference point for life's biggest questions: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? What is the purpose of life? How should I live? That's why many Christians make Bible-reading a part of life's daily routine. It's as vital as eating and drinking.

The Bible is unlike any other book. People who read it find that often the words come alive to them. Millions of Christians around the world can look back on several key points in their lives when it has been as if God is speaking just to them about their immediate circumstances. This shouldn't be surprising. As the Apostle Paul wrote: 'Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way.'

The commissioning editor of the daily devotional series Day by Day with God (BRF), Catherine Butcher, says that she always challenges the contributors to let the Bible speak for itself, so that God can speak into readers' lives. Wherever possible contributors she wants to use contemporary examples to bring the Bible to life so that readers can root their own lives in the Bible's teaching.

Day by Day with God is written mainly for women by Christian women at different stages in life. Some contributors are single women, some are mums or grandmothers, some are career women, several are Christian leaders or are married to a church leader, some are homemakers, some face disability, all draw strength daily from a living relationship with God. If you would like to receive a free sample of Day by Day with God phone 01865 319700 or Email: enquiries@brf.org.uk or visit www.daybydaywithgod.net. PP

On the peculiar stains and smells of old choir robes

The Rectory St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Your withering comments, saying that our choir robes, were "surplice" to requirements did not go down well at last week's practice. I will concede that Mr Baddeley's robes smell somewhat kippered and are laced with burns - but you can expect little less from 40 years of enjoying a final cigarette behind a gravestone before the start of Mattins.

Certainly, Mr Timmins' surplice has that strange series of red and blue polka dots, but that is only because he uses his time in the choir stalls when not singing to catch up on marking his pupils' essays. And we are only too conscious of Miss Thrupp's red gash down her front, making it look as if the choirmaster has just stabbed her for coming in one bar too soon - but trying to eat a jam doughnut just before that wedding five years ago was an unwise decision. But you have no right to disparage choir uniforms. Your own music group's T-shirts, jeans and baseball caps are no different from our robes - even though, unlike ours, they haven't seen their way through the death of Queen Victoria, the relief of Mafeking, and two world wars.

Our robes are steeped in history – which can have unintended consequences. There has always been keen rivalry between our two tenors. Some weeks ago one was given an elaborate solo, much to the other's disgust. Come the Service, as Major Clough warbled his way through his party-piece, Admiral Flagg developed an ostentatious cough. In an attempt to silence him, I found a cough sweet in my cassock and gave it to him. After the Service, he commented that it had a strange taste; I pointed out that it was not surprising, as it was in the pocket when I was given the cassock 50 years ago from Canon Ball's widow after he died. In an attempt to improve the look of the surplices, Mrs Wigg offered to starch them all. Unfortunately, her enthusiasm is only surpassed by her ineptitude. She worked on the principle that if one packet of starch was good, ten would be better. When the choir arrived the following Sunday, they found twenty surplices standing round the vestry floor looking like a circle of tents at Scout camp. I half suspected that they would sit on the floor in the centre round a fire and roast sausages. Once the choir had struggled into them, they had to process up the aisle in single file, as they were all about 6 feet wide. The choir stood rigidly throughout the Service, knowing that any rapid movement risked severing a major artery. But our style of choir dress has one advantage which yours can never equal. Within our choristers' voluminous robes, there is ample space for peppermints, packs of cards, the Sunday newspapers and balls of wool and knitting needles. Your music group must feel utterly bereft during the sermon. Your loving uncle, Eustace, GOD IN THE ARTS

St Matthew

Matthew was one of 12 apostles. But he began as a publican i.e. a tax-collector of Jewish race who worked for the Romans, before he left all at the call of Christ. From earliest times, he was regarded as the author of the first of the four Gospels. The Gospel of Matthew is in correct, concise style, very suitable for public reading.

His usual emblem as an evangelist is a man, because his genealogy emphasised the family ties of Christ.

In art, he has been represented as either an evangelist or as an apostle. As an evangelist, he has been depicted sitting at a desk, writing his gospel with an angel holding the inkwell. In the Middle Ages he was even given a pair of spectacles. (Today he would shown listening to his iPod)

Matthew was martyred by a sword or a spear, some think in Ethiopia. PP

Beware the wheatbag bed-warmers

As the cooler evenings approach, be careful that you don't over-microwave a wheatbag bed-warmer. One family who bought one for their 82 year old granny was horrified when she over-microwaved it, and set the bed on fire. PP

Danger: women keeping fit!

Women who exercise in front of their TVs with the help of games consoles such as the Nintendo Wii can do a lot of damage – both to themselves and their homes. Their accidents cost an estimated £1.3billion in the past year alone, according to one insurance company, Sheila's Wheels.

Home exercise has become very popular: nowadays about 13 million women exercise in front of a TV set or computer monitor, as opposed to 8.7 million women with a gym membership.

Gyms may be expensive, but what cost the partial destruction of your living room? A survey for Sheila's Wheels found that a fifth of the 13 million women have had an accident in the past year alone. PP

When the sun goes edgewise – and daytime equals night

September 22 is the autumnal equinox (if you live in the northern hemisphere) or the vernal (Spring) equinox (if you live in the southern hemisphere) The equinoxes occur in March and September, when the Sun is 'edgewise' to the Earth's axis of rotation, so that everywhere on earth has twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of darkness. PP