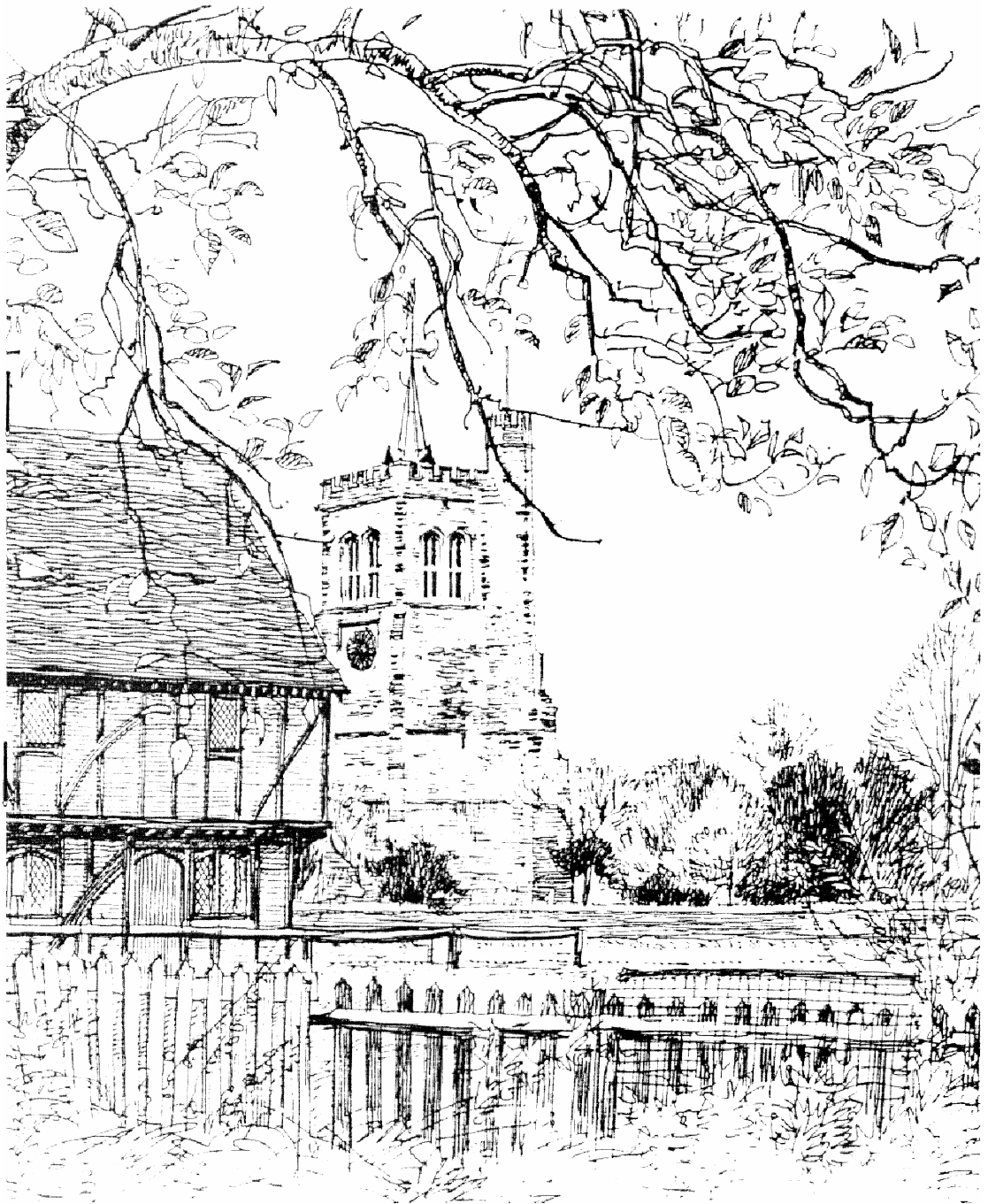


ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE



April/May 2011

ELSTOW & ST MICHAEL'S MAGAZINE APRIL/MAY 2011

Dear friends,

I am conscious, writing this article, that at the end of March, those with analogue televisions will have to change over to the new digital televisions, or do without. My friend Gareth has already made his decision - to do without!

And even the Roman Catholic Church has embraced video-sharing to spread the Word, and they have recently turned to social networking. Now the Roman Catholic Church has given its blessing to an iPhone application for religious guidance on the go. Described as the "perfect aid for every penitent", *Confession* takes sinners through the sacramental process towards divine forgiveness. It also provides an "examination of conscience" about worshippers' adherence to the Ten Commandments and responsibilities to God.

Confession: A Roman Catholic App costs £1.19 from the iTunes store. And, in what appears to be a first, a senior Church official in the U.S. – Bishop Kevin Rhodes, of the Diocese of Fort Wayne, in South Bend, Indiana – granted it an official endorsement. Each user of the appliance must first enter their name, age, marital status and date of a last confession. The confession part begins with text on the screen reading "In the Name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit". The user is then asked about their sins. Questions include, "Have I wished evil on another person? And "Do I not seek to love Him with my whole heart?" The application then suggests an act of contrition to absolve sins. It is not intended as a substitute for confession in a church but an addition to the act, insists Patrick Leinen of Indiana-based developer of Little iApps. "Our desire is to invite Catholics to engage in their faith through digital technology" he added. The official approval of the application comes after Pope Benedict XVI has urged young Christians to embrace digital communication and make their presence felt online. In his World Communications Address last month, he said it was not a sin to use social networking sites. In 2007, the Vatican launched a YouTube channel and, two years later, created a Facebook profile for people to send postcards to the pontiff.

I read in the *Daily Mail* recently that the Vatican will unveil the latest instalment in its social media transformation – a Facebook page dedicated to the upcoming beatification of Pope John Paul II. The site, which will link to video highlights of John Paul's 27-year papacy, is designed to promote the beatification on 1st May. But it may continue beyond that because of the enduring and global interest in the late pontiff, Vatican officials said. The Vatican's first attempt on an event-themed Facebook page – to promote Pope Benedict XVI's September trip to the United Kingdom – is still active and updated near-daily with 10,000 to 15,000 regular fans, said Monsignor Paul Tighe, the number two in the Vatican's social communications office. "What we found is Facebook doesn't just share information, it creates community" Mgr Tighe said. "People begin talking to each other and sharing ideas".

I personally find all this quite ridiculous. Jesus, when he went out and about, met people face to face and that is the meaning of our faith, 'God with us'. We can either confess through a priest, or through Jesus directly, the reformed tradition gives us a choice, so I will not be suggesting that this is a way forward for the Elstow Benefice!

With Best Wishes

Revd Jeremy Crocker

THE CHURCH CALENDAR

APRIL 2011

1 st Apr	Friday	09.30-11am 7pm 8pm	Scripture Union at the Abbey Choir Practice Bell Ringing
2 nd	Saturday	10.30am 1pm	Preparation of Mothering Sunday poses in the Vestry Wedding of Gemma Edwards and Paul Lawrence (JRC)
3 rd	Sunday	10.00am <i>10.15am</i> <i>11.20am</i> 6.30pm	Holy Communion. No Sunday School (with band) (JRC) <i>St Michaels Holy Communion (Bishop of Bedford)</i> Mattins (Group) Evensong (JRC)
	Mothering Sunday		
4 th	Monday	10.00am 2.00pm	Mums and Toddlers in the Vestry Prayer Group in the Vestry
5 th	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm 3.45-5.15pm 6.30-8pm	Sing and Sign in the Vestry After School Club at St Michael's Church Youth Club – Outdoor Games
6 th	Wednesday	11.30am 1.15pm 4pm 7.30-9pm	Coffee and Soup in the Vestry Meeting re: Youth work - at Vicarage (JRC, PL and DW) Scripture Union @ Elstow Abbey Lent Course at London Road (Seder Meal)
7 th	Thursday	09.30am 11.00am 12 Noon 6.15-7.15pm 7-8.30pm	Prayers at St Michael's (JRC + SS) Holy Communion (JRC) Monthly Lunch in The Red Lion Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686 Youth Club at London Road
8 th	Friday	7pm 8pm	No Choir Practice Bell Ringing
9 th	Saturday		Jeremy to Exeter Cathedral, then away for the week
10 th	Sunday	10.00am <i>10.15am</i> <i>11.20am</i> <i>12.15pm</i> 6.30pm	Holy Communion + Sunday School (PL) <i>St Michaels Holy Communion (RC)</i> Mattins (Group) Cardington AGM, following the service Evensong (Robert Heley)
	Passiontide		
11 th	Monday	10.00am 2pm	NO Mums & Toddlers Prayer Group in the Vestry
12 th	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm 6.30-8pm	NO Sing and Sign in the Vestry NO Youth Club
13 th	Wednesday	11.30am 7.30-9pm	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Vestry Lent Course at London Road
14 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (SS)

		6.15-7.15pm	Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686
		7-8.30pm	Youth Club at London Road
15 th	Friday	7.00pm	Choir Practice
		8.00pm	Bellringing
17 th	Sunday Palm Sunday	10.00am	Holy Communion, Procession + full Gospel, with Sunday School (JRC)
		10.15am	<i>St Michaels Holy Communion (SS)</i>
		11.20am	Mattins (JRC)
		2.15pm	Baptism of Riley Cupit (JRC)
		3.00pm	Baptism of Oliver Andrew Ford (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evensong – Sung with Elstow Choir (JRC)

Holy Week

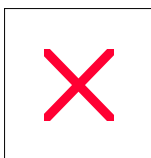
18 th	Monday	10.00am	NO Mums & Toddlers
		2pm	Prayer Group in the Vestry
		7.30pm	Meditation at St Michael's (PL)
19 th	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm	NO Sing and Sign in the Vestry
		6pm	Wedding Rehearsal for Emma Clarke and Phillip Claridge
		6.30-8pm	NO Youth Club
		7.30pm	Holy Communion and address at Elstow (JRC)
20 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Vestry
		7.30pm	Compline and Meditation at St Mary's, Cardington
21 st	Maundy Thursday	11.00am	NO Holy Communion. Clergy team at St Albans Abbey
		3pm	Wedding of Emma Clarke and Phillip Claridge (JRC)
		6.15-7.15pm	NO Yoga
		7-8.30pm	NO London Road Youth Club
		7pm	Passover meal at Cardington (SS)
		7pm	Holy Communion at St Michael's (PL and NM)
		7-9pm	Last Supper and Vigil at Elstow Abbey (JRC)
		7.30pm	APC Meeting in the Playing Fields Hall
22 nd	Good Friday	10.00am	Family Service at Elstow Abbey (JRC)
		10.15am	Stations of the Cross at St Michael's (NM)
		11.00am	Last Hour at Elstow Abbey (JRC)
		12Noon	Soup in the Vestry at Elstow abbey. Please see list.
		12Noon	Town Centre Act of Witness
		7.00pm	NO Choir Practice
		8.00pm	Half muffled bell ringing
23 rd	Holy Saturday – St George's Day	7.30pm	First Light of Easter at Elstow Abbey (JRC)
24 th	Easter Day	10.15am	<i>St Michael's Holy Communion (PL)</i>
		10.30am	Holy Communion (JRC + RC) (Not Family Service) With Children's Talk and Sunday School
		11.00am	<i>Cardington Holy Communion (SS)</i>

			6.30pm Evensong + Holy Communion + laying on of hands (JRC)
25 th	Easter Monday	10.00am	NO Mums and Toddlers
		11.00am	Meet at Bedford Train Station to go to St Albans
		2pm	St Albans Abbey Pilgrimage
		2pm	NO Prayer Group
26 th	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm	Sing and Sign in the Vestry
		6.30-8pm	Youth Club – Games Night/Moot Hall Green
27 th	Wednesday	11am	Baptism interview at the Vicarage (JRC)
		11.30am	Coffee and Soup in the Vestry
		7pm	Wedding Rehearsal for Heather Warren and Craig Patrick Joseph Fullerton Kenny (JRC)
28 th	Thursday	09.30am	Morning Prayers at St Michael's (JRC + SS)
		11am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		6.15-7.15pm	Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686
		7-8.30pm	London Road Youth Club
		7.30pm	Elstow AP Vestry and Church Meeting in the Vestry (or church if large numbers). Nominations forms to stand for the PCC or Church Wardens or Deputy Church Warden, please speak to Glynis Annan.
29 th	Friday	10am	Gathering at the Vicarage garden to watch the Royal Wedding on a big screen. Open to all – please bring a picnic
		7pm	Choir Practice
		8pm	Bell Ringing
30 th	Saturday	3.30pm	Wedding of Heather Jane Warren and Craig Patrick Joseph Fullerton Kenny (JRC)

MAY 2011

1 st	Sunday	10am	Holy Communion + Sunday School (JRC)
	Low Sunday	10.15am	<i>St Michaels Holy Communion (NM)</i>
		11.15am	Mattins (JRC)
		3pm	Baptism of Ellie Bandy (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evensong (JRC)
2 nd	Monday	10.00am	NO Mums and Toddlers in the Vestry
	Bank Holiday	2.00pm	NO Prayer Group in the Vestry
3 rd	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm	Sing and Sign in the Vestry
		3.45-5.15pm	After school club at St Michael's
		6.30-8pm	Youth Club in the Vestry
4 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee and Soup in the Church
5 th	Thursday	09.0am	Morning Prayers at St Michael's (JRC + SS)
		11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		12 Noon	Monthly Lunch at The Red Lion
		6.15-7.15pm	Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686

		7-8.30pm	London Road Youth Club
		7.45pm	South Beds Council of Churches at London Road Methodist
6 th	Friday	7pm	Choir Practice
		8pm	Bell Ringing
8 th	Sunday	10.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		10.15am	<i>St Michaels Holy Communion (RC)</i>
		11.15am	Mattins (Group)
		6.30pm	Evensong (JRC)
9 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Vestry
		2.00pm	Prayer Group in the Vestry
		7.30-9.30pm	Scripture Union Meeting in Elstow Abbey Church
10 th	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm	Sing and Sign in the Vestry
		3.15-5.15pm	After School Club at St Michael's
		6.30-8pm	Youth Club in the Vestry
11 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Hitchin U3A group visit to Elstow Abbey
		11.30am	Coffee and Soup in the Vestry
		12.30pm	Team Rectors' Meeting (JRC)
12 th	Thursday	09.30am	Morning Prayers at St Michael's (JRC + SS)
		11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		6.15-7.15pm	Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686
		7-8.30pm	London Road Youth Club
		8pm	Finance and Standing at The Vicarage
13 th	Friday	7pm	Choir Practice
		8pm	Bell Ringing
14 th	Saturday	May Festival Open from Noon. The Arena and events from 1.30-3.30pm Including procession at 2pm. Help would be appreciated from 9am, starting with bacon sandwiches at the vicarage.	



Deadline for the June Parish Magazine to **Jacquie Waterfield @ 269 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK41 9PH or jakhat77@hotmail.com**

Christian Aid Week

15 th	Sunday	10.00am	Holy Communion (RC)
		10.15am	<i>St Michaels Holy Communion (JRC)</i>
		11.15am	Mattins (RC)
		2.15pm	Baptism of Jessica Evans (JRC)
		3.00pm	Baptism of Freddie Massey (JRC)
		4.00pm	Friends AGM in the Vestry, followed by Afternoon Tea
		6.00pm	Christian Aid Service at St Michael's
		6.30pm	NO Evensong at Elstow Abbey
16 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Vestry
		2.00pm	Prayer Group in the Vestry
		8.00pm	Team Council Meeting at St Michael's
17 th	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm	Sing and Sign in the Vestry
		3.45-5.15pm	Afterschool Club at St Michael's
		6.30-8pm	Youth Club in the Vestry

18 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee and Soup in the Vestry
		7.30pm	Parish Council AGM meeting at the Playing Fields
19 th	Thursday	09.30am	Morning Prayers at St Michael's (JRC + SS)
		11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		6.15-7.15pm	Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686
		7-8.30pm	London Road Youth Club
		7.30-9.30pm	Deanery Synod at Christ Church
20 th	Friday	7pm	Choir Practice
		8pm	Bell Ringing
22 nd	Sunday	10.00am	Family Service (JEH)
		10.15am	<i>St Michaels Holy Communion (PL)</i>
		11.15am	BCP Holy Communion (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evensong (JRC)
23 rd	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers in the Vestry
		10am-6pm	Scripture Union at Elstow Abbey
		2.00pm	NO Prayer Group
24 th	Tuesday	08.15am-4pm	Scripture Union
		1.45-2.30pm	NO Sing and Sign in the Vestry
		6.30-8pm	Youth Club in the Vestry
25 th	Wednesday	08.15-4pm	Scripture Union
		11.30am	NO Coffee and Soup
26 th	Thursday	09.30am	Morning Prayers at St Michael's (JRC + SS)
		08.15-4pm	Scripture Union
		11.00am	NO Holy Communion
		5.15pm	Wedding Rehearsal – Luisa Siolitro and Luigi Magliaro (JRC)
		6.15-7.15pm	Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686
		7-8.30pm	London Road Youth Club
		7.30pm	PCC in the Vestry
27 th	Friday	7pm	Choir Practice
		8pm	Bell Ringing
28 th	Saturday	12Noon	Wedding of Luisa Solitro and Luigi Luca Magliaro (JRC)
29 th	Sunday	10.30am	Benefice Holy Communion (JRC, with guest preacher Rev Phil Campion) With Sunday School at Elstow Abbey
		11.15am	No Mattins
		6.30pm	Evensong + Holy Communion + Laying on of hands (JRC)
30 th	Monday	10.00am	NO Mums and Toddlers in the Vestry
	Bank Holiday	2.00pm	NO Prayer Group in the Vestry
31 st	Tuesday	1.45-2.30pm	NO Sing and Sign in the Vestry
		3.45-5.15pm	NO After school club at St Michael's
		6.30-8pm	NO Youth Club in the Vestry

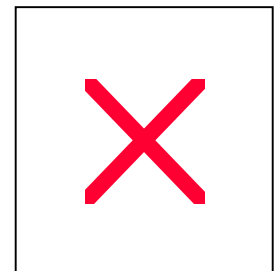
JUNE

1 st	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee and Soup in the Vestry
2 nd	Thursday	09.30am	Morning Prayers at St Michael's (JRC + SS)
	Ascension Day	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		12 Noon	Monthly Lunch at The Red Lion
		6.15-7.15pm	Yoga (for mixed abilities) Elstow Abbey Church for more details call June Hannigan 07817601686
		7-8.30pm	NO London Road Youth Club
3 rd	Friday	7pm	NO Choir Practice
		8pm	Bell Ringing



LIFEPATH BUNYAN

Lifepath Bunyan returns to Elstow on May 24-26 with over 600 Primary School pupils taking part in a day of activities that helps them explore the Christian faith and the world of John Bunyan. Based on Elstow Green and in both Moot Hall and the Abbey, Lifepath is organised by Scripture Union with its Associate Trusts in Bedford (Impact) and Milton Keynes (Bridegebuilder). It was a huge success when it ran in 2009 and the mix of drama, music and educational activity that culminates with everyone undertaking their own Pilgrim's Progress journey (including Vanity Fair, the lions and the Valley of the Shadow of Death!) promises to be a great day out for local schools.

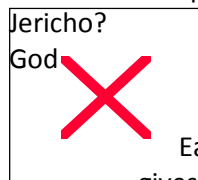


Local residents are, of course, welcome to come and see what is taking place but will be asked to keep a respectful distance away from the children and activities.

ST MARY'S CARDINGTON PARISH NEWS

From the Revd. Stephen Smith

"Vuvuzala" is a word new to the Oxford English dictionary, derived from the Zulu language, its various meanings include 'welcome' 'celebrate' and 'to shower with music'! It made an indelible impression on all who saw anything of the Football World Cup from South Africa last year because a vuvuzala is one of those long trumpets which were sounded throughout the matches to both the delight and frustration of many. Some describing the noise as 'inspirational' for their team, others saying that it sounded like a 'swarm of bees', being just as irritating. Because of this debate, the newspapers delved into the origins of the nameless trumpet, tracing it back to the Old Testament in military campaigns. Remember the walls of



Also its use in Jewish worship's psalm 150 the great Song of Praise says we should praise "With the sound of the trumpet....let everything that hath breath praise the Lord, Praise ye the Lord."

Easter, the highlight of the Christian year, is nearly here and after the preparation of Lent it gives us the finest reason to celebrate. Yet even Easter is difficult to pin down because, as a mobile feast, its date is determined by the lunar rather than the solar calendar. It is always the first Sunday following the Pascal full moon, which means it can fall on any date between 22nd March and April 25th. To calculate this, my Book of Common Prayer includes bewildering formulas involving a 'golden number' to show when Easter occurs. Fortunately alongside this there is also a chart which gives its date up to 2105. This year it reassuringly shows Easter Day as April 24th. Such wonderful complications explain

why those in education and the holiday industry want the date to be fixed like Christmas so that the Easter break would always be at the same time.

Yet, whatever the date, the story of Easter remains the same, the knowledge that the crucified Christ is risen. This tomb was found empty by the women brave enough to go to its location; they were charged to take this good news to the frightened disciples. Because of these events our faith began. All the Easter symbols – eggs, flowers and lambs - show that here is a new beginning for everyone. In the words of John ‘Golden Mouth’ Chrysostom, a bishop preaching over 1600 years ago, “Rejoice in this beautiful feast.....the Saviour has set us free.”

What an opportunity to celebrate with every means at our disposal, with trumpets and vuvuzalas; but however ancient their origins, the oldest musical instrument is, of course, the human voice, so on Easter Day you may wish to reply to the words ‘Alleluia Christ is risen’ with a shout ‘He is risen indeed, Alleluia’, showering all in church with these words of welcome and celebration. A very Happy Easter to you all.

Stephen

The account of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well: has it anything to say to us today?

Could it be that this story is about the most broken woman in the New Testament? This woman is someone who came to collect water in the heat of the day, while most people would have come to the well in the cool of the early morning. Could it be that she wanted to avoid people because she wanted to avoid the comments of others who knew about her relationships with men. A broken woman who could not bear the scorn and derision of others.

Arriving at the well she was surprised to see a Jewish man who spoke to her and this was at a time when unrelated men and women were not seen in public, let alone a Jew with a Samaritan. And then Jesus spoke to the woman, which startled her even more.

Jesus, as the account tells us, was tired and, as he asked this woman to give him a drink, he was also asking her to take a risk, to cross a cultural, social, and religious boundary. Jesus had a need for a drink and so he was asking her to meet his need. This woman, who was not respected by others in her community, who probably had little self-respect left, was being asked to give Jesus a drink and so was being given dignity and respect by him because there was something which she could do for him. Jesus was suddenly giving her identity and purpose, and as a result she gained in confidence, she had a new spirit and a new zest for life. Through talking with Jesus she found that he made her aware of what she could do with her life and became totally committed to Jesus’ teachings. This woman, who had no real life with no real purpose, only those of pain, shame and rejection, was suddenly given the gift of eternal life with Jesus who was revealed to her as God’s own anointed one.

When the disciples returned, they were horrified to find that Jesus had been talking to a Samaritan woman in broad daylight. If he had had to this, then why couldn’t the woman come to see him in dark, like Nicodemus who had come to Jesus in the dark of the night? While Jesus tried to explain things to his disciples, the woman ran off to tell the townspeople about Jesus and the change he had brought to her. They came to find out for themselves about Jesus and in the end invited him to stay with them. And all this happened because a broken Samaritan woman was willing to take the risk of talking to a stranger at the well. Her witness brought more people to see and hear Jesus, and it was all because of her willingness to reveal her brokenness to him. We ought to consider her to the first evangelist - talk about being transformed by grace!

You know, really, we are like that Samaritan woman: we all come to the well over and over again to draw water and meet our needs. But do we see the man sitting at the well? Are we able to hear what he is saying to us? Are we even aware that he is speaking to us? Can we feel what it is like to be asked by Jesus to do something for him? Can we see that Jesus did not look down on the poor and the broken? He didn’t come with something to give them: he gave that woman new life by showing that she had something to do for him. I wonder, could we approach the poor and the broken-hearted as Jesus did?

As we move through Lent towards Easter, we remember that the Story neared its conclusion on the cross, where Jesus was thirsty. Jesus is still thirsty today, and we are like that Samaritan woman. We come to the well week after week, and week after week Jesus asks us for a drink. We all know the kinds of things for which he thirsts.

Are we ready to bring him a drink? Are we ready to talk with him? Are we ready to show him our own brokenness? Can we make a full commitment to him?

Jesus is sitting with us now. He is tired and thirsty. He is asking us to give him a drink. What shall we do?

Rev Peter Littleford

Global warming – I don't care!

OK. The title may be a little controversial but there are many people today who take that line. "If global warming is happening" (and they stress the "if") "then its effects will be felt long after I'm gone so why should I care?" How do you feel when you come across that sort of attitude? As a Christian do you have any duty or responsibility to do anything? – and if so – What? For my 12th assignment in my training I have been looking at sustainability and green issues and what we as Christians can or should do.

It is incredible what you can find out. Did you know that you can now buy a Green Bible – it is printed on recycled paper and any references to the earth are marked in green. There are 863 references to the earth (165 times in the New Testament) with a relatively small 494 references to Heaven and 537 to Love. The opening story is the creation of the earth and the Garden of Eden in Genesis 1 and ends with a new heaven and a new earth in St John's Revelation. The bible starts and finishes with the earth – it is the Alpha and the Omega – the beginning and the end.

So let's just have a look at the two stories of creation and in particular to Gen1:29 where God spoke to Adam and Eve. He said to *"Be fruitful, fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves upon the earth."* Now compare that to Gen 2:15. *"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."* That has got a completely different emphasis. I think that one trouble with our society today is that we are too busy subduing and having dominion over the planet that we forget to work it and take care of it.

Whatever you may think about the accuracy of the Genesis narratives the one thing that we can be united in is our belief in a wonderful creator God. This planet, everything we have, has been made by God. We ourselves have been made in the image of God. We have been placed here as the pinnacle of his creation. God's care of the planet and his concern for it is articulated many times in the Old Testament, in the story of Noah - *"I have set my rainbow in the clouds and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth"* - and over and again in the psalms.

The only conclusion that I can draw goes something along these lines.

If I believe that

- 1) God created everything,
- 2) Man is created in the image of God,
- 3) Man has been placed on the earth, and given everything in it along with God-given power to subdue it and have dominion over it or, alternatively, to work it and care for it and
- 4) I will, at the end, be accountable for my actions.

If I believe those four things then I must at the very least try to do something towards caring for the planet and it's inhabitants, in a way that will please the creator God.

But we come back to the mind-numbing attitude of "I don't care – Global warming isn't happening." I would like to quote from my own essay, which in turn quotes from another book. "Whilst the public obtain most of their information through the media, the scientific community communicate through their journals and publications. Al Gore noted that over 14 years 928 scientific articles were examined and they all linked global warming to carbon emissions while 53% of 636 news articles over the same period cast doubt on the same link. "The media gave the impression that the scientific community was divided, whereas in actual fact it was not and is not."

(Christianity and Science. John Weaver SCM Press 2010 Page188)” Global warming is happening, we are affecting it by our actions and we have to do something.

What? Do you recycle? The Council now makes it easier for us to recycle paper, plastic, glass, vegetable matter, and some charities have clothing banks to deposit old clothes. There is a web-based community – freecycle – if you have something you no longer need you can advertise it and give it to someone who wants it - saving it from going into landfill. By recycling you save resources and often energy saving greenhouse gas emissions.

Do you recall Dick Strawbridge? He pops up on television from time to time - an ex-Army engineer with a broad west-country accent and an equally broad moustache who went to live as sustainably as he could. One chap he interviewed recycled so much that his annual waste that had to go to landfill could fit inside two carrier bags! I fully accept that that is not realistic for us but we can all do our bit – turn the thermostat down by one degree, use energy saving light bulbs, lag our lofts, fit cavity wall insulation and possibly double glazing. I have to say that I like the fact that it uses less energy to switch on the dishwasher once a day than wash up by hand three times a day and it is “greener” to get Tesco’s to deliver the shopping to my door than go to the supermarket myself. “Being Green” isn’t necessarily all doom and gloom!

So, as individuals we may be able to help reduce carbon emissions and, as a church, you will be pleased to hear that our new Church hall is going to be as efficient as is currently possible when it comes to the heating technology –a ground source heat pump and solar electricity generation on the roof!

But we have another problem Jesus told us to pray for the time when God’s kingdom in Heaven, and his will there, is replicated on earth. We have to strive to make the earth as heaven-like as we can. And that, I think means, not only caring for the planet and being green but also sharing out the resources that we have been given and seeking justice for the poor in other parts of the world. Currently one third of the world’s population enjoys two thirds of the world’s resources whilst the majority of the world is in poverty. As I write this Comic Relief is trying in a non-religious way to redress that balance in a small part of the world. (And no – I am not knocking their work – it is just that the task is great).

Lent is a wonderful time for reflection and Christian Aid have generated a lent calendar this year which challenges us to look at how we live, how materially wealthy and how wasteful we are. Here are some thought provoking facts.

Each household in Britain throws away an average of 9lb of food and drink each week. Weigh your waste.

£2.50 will pay for a textbook for two students to share in Sudan. How many books have you read for pleasure since January?

In Mali only one in four people can read - How many unread books have you got in your house?

Fact – even earning the minimum wage places you in the richest 11% of the world.

Nearly one billion people do not have clean water. How many taps have you got? To bring water and sanitation to everyone would cost US\$11.3 billion. That is a lot of money but only 1/3 of what we spend on alcohol each year in Britain.

One recycled tin can saves enough energy to power a television for three hours!

It has been calculated that just 10 minutes of sunlight on the planet is the same amount of energy consumed globally in electricity in a year.

So, whilst the problem may be large, we can all do our bit – Turn off unwanted lights, recycle those cans, plan menus to reduce waste. Walk (or bike) if you can, share car journeys if you can’t. Buy locally produced and in season food. Each of these little steps will add up and, with others will make a difference.

As Christians we can together apply pressure to help influence governments. We must strive to bring equality to our world neighbours. Fair-trade products help to eradicate the exploitation of third world producers. Some people say that the Fair-trade products are not very palatable and I remember the coffee in the early days. But it has improved! I am sure that there are people reading this who have drunk Fair-trade coffee thinking it was another major supermarket stocked brand!

As Christians we have to try to make a stand and encourage one another and others to help us in our God-given role to care for the environment and our fellow humans. "In as much as you did not feed the hungry, give drink to the stranger, clothe the destitute you did not do it to me".

Global Warming – I don't care. We can stand up to that attitude – we have a responsibility to look after this planet and to bring about the time when "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

John Hinson

PS I have some fascinating books looking at Christianity / sustainability, which I would be delighted to lend.

SIDSMENS ROTA

APRIL 2011

	3 rd	10am	Mrs A Morris	Mrs G Freeman
		11.15am	Mrs D Fordham	
		6.30pm	Mrs G Annan	
	10 th	10am	Mrs S Batiuk	Mr P Batiuk
		11.15am	F.W. Crossen	
		6.30pm	P. Moss	
	17 th	10am	Mrs J Barnicott	A Freeman
		11.15am	Mrs A Knight	
		6.30pm	Miss M Eastwell	
Easter Day	24 th	10.30am	Mrs M Crossen	Mrs A Knight
		6.30pm	Mrs C Parrish	

MAY 2011

	1 st	10am	Mrs A Morris	Mrs G Freeman
		11.15am	Mrs D Fordham	
		6.30pm	Mrs G Annan	
	8 th	10am	Mrs S Batiuk	A Freeman
		11.15am	F.W. Crossen	
		6.30pm	P. Moss	
	15 th	10am	Mrs J Barnicott	Mrs S Brown
		11.15am	Mrs A Knight	
	22 nd	10am	Mrs A Morris	Mrs A Barfoot
		11.15am	Mrs D Fordham	
		6.30pm	Miss M Eastwell	
	29 th	Benefice Service at Elstow		
		10.30am	Mrs M Crossen	Mrs A Knight
		6.30pm	Mrs C Parrish	

JUNE 2011

	5 th	10am	Mrs A Morris	Mrs G Freeman
		11.15am	F.W. Crossen	
		6.30pm	Mrs G Annan	



THE BISHOP OF ST ALBANS

The Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith

Dear Friends

We have been shocked by the devastation which hit Japan, following hard on the heels of the earthquake in New Zealand. The stories of human loss and suffering are beyond our imagination. I ask you to pray for these two regions of the world over the coming days and consider sending financial help. I have just received a letter from the Archbishop of Japan which describes the situation for the Anglican Church in that land.

In his words, "We see homes devastated, whole towns that were swallowed by the tsunami, and houses that continue to burn because fire fighters are unable to reach both the properties and the people who were the victims of this catastrophe. With hearts filled with grief and helplessness we see people who are mourning their lost loved ones and others who search tirelessly for missing family members." You can read more of his longing to make the church shine as a light of hope in this tragedy, below.

Donations for Japan can be sent via Christian Aid

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/emergencies/current/tsunami/index.aspx>. and other agencies named on the Diocesan website homepage or at <http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/Mission/World-Development/International-Emergencies/Japan-Earthquake>

I hope we will be able to show solidarity with our fellow human beings on the far side of the globe by generosity and prayer.

+ Alan St Albans

A Prayer for the people of Japan

O loving Creator, bring healing and hope to our struggling brothers and sisters on earth. We pray for all in Japan who grieve, suffer pain, or whose homes have been destroyed by the earthquake and tsunami. We remember those who have died and pray for those who mourn their deaths. May your compassion, O God, calm troubled hearts and shelter anxious souls. We dare to hope that through the generosity of the privileged, the destitute might find warmth and life again, and those who despair might glimpse hope. We make our prayer through our Saviour Christ who defeated death and reigns with you in glory. **Amen.**

A Prayer for the People of New Zealand

God of consolation, grant to the people of Christchurch the spirit of faith and courage to rebuild their lives. May they have the strength to meet the days to come with steadfastness and patience; not sorrowing without hope but clinging to your goodness and love, through Jesus Christ who is the resurrection and the life, **Amen.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL ROTA

DATE	Helper
Sunday 13 th March	Susie Masih
Sunday 20 th March	Sarah Duffy
Sunday 27 th March	No Sunday School – Family Service
Sunday 3 rd April	No Sunday School – Mothering Sunday
Sunday 10 th April	Joanna Jameson
Sunday 17 th April	Sara Canavan
Sunday 24 th April	Easter Day – Beth and Tracey
Sunday 1 st May	Michelle Flemmons
Sunday 8 th May	Rebecca Taylor
Sunday 15 th May	Sarah Duffy
Sunday 22 nd May	No Sunday School – Family Service
Sunday 29 th May	Susie Masih
10.30am 5 th Sunday	

EASTER LILIES

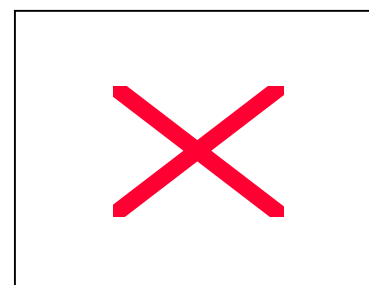
In memory of loved ones

£1.50 each

Please ring Barbara on 01234 854369 or use envelopes at the back of church to put your money in and the name of the person to be remembered.

The names of those remembered will be displayed on a board at the back of the church on Easter Day

Thank You



Moon walk 2011

For most of us Saturday 14th May means spending the day on the Moot Hall green at the **May Festival**.

Rebecca Taylor is not going to be there. She will be taking part in the annual **Moonwalk**, where ladies walk 26 miles around London at midnight in their underwear to raise money for Breast cancer Research.

There is a sponsor form at the back of the church so that we can all support Rebecca and Cancer research.

The Bedfordshire Association

Elstow, Bedfordshire

At The Abbey Church of Ss Mary and Helena

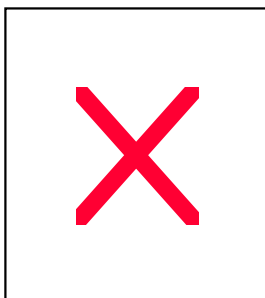
On Saturday, 12 March 2011 in 43 mins (Tenor 9cwt)

A Quarter Peal; (1320 changes)

of Primrose Surprise Minor

- 1 Jennifer S Thompson
- 2 Barbara Beard
- 3 Ann Desics
- 4 Patrick J S Albon
- 5 Stephen H Stanford
- 6 Robert P Wood (C)

First Primrose - 3
Rung for Bedford District QP Week



DON'T FORGET!

MOTHERS' DAY ON SUNDAY APRIL 3RD

XXX

DETAILS FROM THE REGISTERS

FEBRUARY 2011

Date	Communicants	Attendance	Collections
3 rd	10	10	4.00
6 th	40	90	312.21
10 th	9	9	5.00
13 th	50	107	251.09
17th	9	9	3.50
20th	27	63	263.29
24th	8	8	12.00
27th	30	73	297.00
	<u>183</u>	<u>369</u>	<u>1148.09</u>

BAPTISMS

February 20th 2011 Remi Bree Nadine Tomlin
 Clare Murphy

MARRIAGES

February 26th 2011 Michelle Anne Clifford & Emmaniel Okpah

BURIALS

March 9th 2011 Martin Harley (Ashes)

Lenten Quiz

Jeremy has put together a little quiz to test your knowledge of this time of year. Have fun exercising your brains; the answers will appear in the next edition of the magazine!

- (1) Match the colours to the seasons. Purple, Green, White or Red?

Lent

Lady Day
Ascension Day
Ash Wednesday
Christmas Day
Trinity Sunday
All Saints Day
Feats of Epiphany
Trinity XX
Palm Sunday
Remembrance Sunday

(2) Put in order from the beginning of the year...

Maundy Thursday	Passion Sunday
Low Sunday	Mothering Sunday
Sexagesima	Ash Wednesday
Easter Day	Septuagesima
Quinquagesima	Holy Saturday
Easter Saturday	Good Friday

- (3) On What Sunday do we have Simnel Cake?
- (4) How many days of Easter are there before Ascension Day?
- (5) Does Holy Week include Palm Sunday?
- (6) Where does the Ash Wednesday ash come from?
- (7) Which Sunday is called 'Refreshment Sunday'?
- (8) What do you put in a precina?
- (9) What does Jesus 'do' on Holy Saturday?
- (10) What are the 7 Penitential Psalms?

BOOK REVIEW

“The Rose and the Ring” by “Mr MA Tichmarsh” – a.k.a. William Thackeray

William Makepeace Thackeray is world famous for “Vanity Fair”, his satirical novel of early nineteenth century English life. Deriving, as its title suggests, from Bunyan’s wonderful “The Pilgrim’s Progress”, it is to my mind the most overrated novel in the English literary canon, a (¿deliberately?) unpleasant pastiche of the world so minutely and affectionately described by Dickens (who, incidentally was to refuse Thackeray’s insistent advances as an illustrator). And there, for me, Thackeray’s works would have remained, preferably buried and forgotten, but for his, or rather “Michael Angelo Tichmarsh’s” delightful “fireside pantomime for great and small children”, *The Rose and the Ring*.

Perhaps because of “Vanity Fair’s” inherent nastiness and clumpish prose, Thackeray’s other works have (mostly rightly) been consigned into oblivion. I sense that “Vanity Fair” (which, to be fair – sorry – is an acutely observed look at the evils and weaknesses of society) has to some extent retained its reputation because of the Bunyan reference. So it is with great pleasure that this month I offer you a book of Thackeray’s which redresses the balance. You will not find it easily (try Ebay or The Book Depository), especially with Thackeray’s own many illustrations, but if you have internet access, have a look for instance at: <http://www.archive.org/stream/roseringorhistor54thac#page/n9/mode/2up>. My own edition of 1911 has JR Monsell’s illustrations and, being copies or embellishments of Thackeray’s own drawings, they stand well, although slightly fewer in number. I think you would prefer them should you be looking to buy.

As one critic wrote, “*The Rose and the Ring* is one of those special literary treats which happen when a writer for adults turns his attention to the world of children.” It is an utterly delightful tale in which morality and invention hold hands in the most satisfactory way. We are transported to a make-believe world where black is black and white is white and grey is a colour simply unknown. It is totally refreshing to have villains who are outright villains and a hero who is unswervingly (¿unswervingly? – well almost), but not nauseatingly, good. And of course, in control of it all is a Good Fairy, the Fairy Blackstick.

It is full of allusions to contemporary Europe, but never strays over the line which separates entertainment from thesis. It disregards poverty, disease, unhappiness and other such social blemishes even though it pillories pride and covetousness. Although hundreds of people in the background are killed, murdered, tortured or maimed, such evils are dissociated, sterile and somehow harmless. All part of the fun. This is strictly a sort of Punch and Judy show, as the illustrations make clear. There will be a happy ending – and part of the fun is trying to work out how that happy ending will come about (not too taxing an exercise in the event) and how merit and beauty will be rewarded. It is a roller coaster of a ride but, because Thackeray sets the tone from the outset, we can relax by that fireside in the warmly safe knowledge that All Will Be Well. Which, knowing Thackeray, is an interesting “ask”. He himself was an inveterate gambler and not much liked by his contemporaries. His redeeming feature was his fond loyalty to his daughters after his wife ceased to be able to cope. Ultimately, he was a profound pessimist, so that the upbeat charm of *The Rose and the Ring* takes on a whole new resonance.

You will have noticed by now that I am not actually saying anything about the book itself. This is no mistake: you must be as taken by surprise as I suspect everyone else was and as the author quite obviously intended. I am only sad that laying one’s hands on a copy is less than straightforward, a copy, that is, which is adequately illustrated. The illustrations play a larger part than perhaps one would expect, but, then, as I hinted earlier, Thackeray was more than just an illustrator: he had wanted to follow a career as an artist.



Bookworm