

New Prospect



The Parish Magazine of St Mary Stoke Newington April 2011 50p

Two for One Deal



These days priests come in all shapes and sizes and our newest member of the clergy team, Tony Sheeran joins St. Marys along with his guide dog Yeoman. Yeoman is a Black Lab who will be six in August. Tony, whose birthday is in May is considerably older than that!

Tony who was ordained in 2005 and had stints at St Judes & St. Pauls and St Marks Dalston is visually impaired having been registered blind in 1996 as a consequence of RP, an incurable degenerative condition of the retina. Tony joined forces with Yeoman in 2007 after Tony had walked into one lamp post too many and says Tony 'I have to say I wouldn't be without him now'.

As a Self Supporting Minister (SSM) Tony's main duties at St Mary's will largely be at the week end and occasional weekday. Tony works in the city full time as a project manager for a global insurance brokerage and on a clear day both Tony & Yeoman can be seen in and around the streets (and occasionally bars) around Bishopsgate.

Tony was born and raised in a small market town in Lincolnshire and as a teenager, when not playing cricket, spent the summers working on local farms picking potatoes and helping with the harvest. He admits to not being attracted to rural life and after studying for a degree in Birmingham moved to London eventually ending up as an insurance broker after a couple of years working behind bars in the West End.

In the 1990's the families love affair with Japan begun when Tony and his wife Anne were posted to Japan to work in the company's office in Tokyo. They lived there for over four years with their daughter being born there. Tony is currently doing a MA in Japanese Religion and will shortly be commencing his dissertation on 'Belief and conversion in the context of Japanese Christianity'

Tony is very excited about being a part of the community at St Marys – and says 'I have felt called by God to be a priest for over 20 years and I am also convinced that God has also called me as a blind priest. From my short time at St Mary's I feel sure that I will be supported in this role and look forward to serving God and the community in this church – and to understand, with respectful humility, why God has called me in the first place!'



All the King's Children



The 400th anniversary of the King James Bible might not sound likely to get children's pulses racing. Last month, however, two classes from St Mary's Primary School took part in an event that they, their teachers, and the parents lucky enough to be present will remember for a long time to come. The children are, of course, regular visitors to our church, but even those inured to the glories of George Gilbert Scott's achievements were visibly stopped in their tracks by their first sight of Christopher Wren's handiwork. The occasion was a trip to St Paul's Cathedral, where Years Three and Six spent the day rehearsing and then performing a "play in a day", *The King's Quest*, on the theme of the King James Version.

Before they began, the children were ushered from the crypt into the cathedral itself, and found themselves sitting directly beneath the great dome. This was where the performance was to be put on at the end of a hard day's rehearsal. The prospect of such a grand stage certainly concentrated minds, and the play, under the direction of a theatre company called Scene Change, was a riot of action and enthusiasm. St Mary's pupils moved seamlessly from representing a group of MPs to the Israelites crossing the Red Sea, with the

translators themselves, from Lancelot Andrewes to Miles Smith, winningly impersonated by actors as old as seven.

I'm not sure what innocent tourists made of it all, and one of our teaching assistants pointed out that it probably wasn't the best day to test out the acoustic marvels of the Whispering Gallery while seventeenth-century England was being loudly re-created directly beneath it. But the children were afforded a unique chance to live out the remarkable story of what a biblical scholar recently called "the most important book in English religion and culture" – and to do so in unforgettable surroundings. To find out more about Scene Change and The King's Quest project, go to scenechangetheatre.com.

David Horspool

A Very English Composer



Ralph Vaughan Williams was born in 1872 in the Cotswold village of Down Ampney. He was educated at Charterhouse School, then Trinity College, Cambridge. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London before travelling to Berlin and

Paris to study with Max Bruch and Maurice Ravel.

At the turn of the century he was among the very first to travel into the countryside to listen to and notate English folk-song and carols performed by often amateur and untrained musicians. He recorded them and later wrote the tunes out in order that they might be preserved for future generations. The importance of this field work was that a vast corpus of English folk song now survives in notated form. It was therefore a natural progression for him to become the musical editor of *The English Hymnal*, and it is here that he composed several hymns that are now world-wide favourites (*For all the Saints*, *Come down O love Divine*). Later he also helped to edit *The Oxford Book of Carols*, with similar success.

Nigel Williams

Who, What, Why, When?



1. Thomas Cranmer

We (your editor and I) thought that we would spend some time this year looking at some of the important figures in the history of the church in England. So let's start with someone who was in on the very beginnings of the Church of England as we now know it – Thomas Cranmer. I mentioned him last month in connection with the Book of Common Prayer – he wrote many of the best loved prayers in that service book.

Cranmer was an unlikely hero and not everything about his life was heroic. His background was not grand, although he continued to be very proud of the fact that he was an 'esquire' – a member of the lesser gentry. Although we encourage the idea of social mobility today, and perhaps think that it simply didn't exist in earlier ages, this wasn't true. A clever boy could, through the Church, get himself an education and then a very important career. Cranmer's fellow Thomases of the reign of Henry VIII, Wolsey and Cromwell, came from even more humble backgrounds.

Cranmer was originally destined for a life as a Cambridge academic. From 1503, when he was about 14, to 1529, he lived and worked in Cambridge, studying and then teaching theology. There were few signs at that time that he was going to become a radical Protestant.

But in 1529, his life, like that of most of his fellow Englishmen, was turned upside down by the desire of the King, Henry VIII, to father a

male heir. Henry had convinced himself that the reason he had only one child, a daughter, was his wife's fault. In those days, there was no divorce and annulment of a marriage could take place only on very specific grounds. 'The King's Great Matter', as it was called, was to have far-reaching implications for Christianity in England, and Cranmer was to be at the heart of those developments.

Trying to find a solution absorbed huge amounts of academic and theological energy throughout Europe. It was inevitably caught up in politics – one of Henry's chief political rivals, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, was uncle to the wife Henry wanted to get rid of, Catherine of Aragon. And Charles controlled the Pope. It was the time of reformation in Europe, but that was of comparatively little interest to Henry.

Quite how Cranmer got so involved is not entirely clear. He seems to have come across the King's then chief adviser, Cardinal Wolsey, in the late 1520s, and as one of the leading theologians at Cambridge, was certainly consulted on the question of how to secure an annulment.* But by 1529, after Wolsey's fall, he had left Cambridge and moved to London, where he lodged with the Boleyn family – making it quite clear which side he was going to be on.

Three years later, Cranmer was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. Henry had despaired of ever getting the answer he needed from the Pope, and was beginning to look for home grown solutions. Cranmer was his chosen instrument.

In the year following Cranmer's appointment, he annulled the marriage and saw Parliament pass the Act of Supremacy which removed the Pope's authority over the English Church. The next year saw the beginning of the dissolution of the monasteries. Henry himself, however, remained theologically conservative. Having got rid of his wife, the Pope and the monasteries he had little further appetite for the new fangled ideas spreading on the continent. He wore proudly the title of 'Defender of the Faith' which had been

* The answer finally reached was that Henry had broken the laws of the Church by marrying his dead brother's widow after that marriage had been consummated and therefore his own marriage had never been valid.

bestowed on him by a grateful Pope for his attack on Luther's ideas. And he supported the continuation of the Mass in Latin and of images of saints.

Cranmer was different. His studies and his connections with continental scholars had increasingly convinced him that the theological ideas of the Reformation were correct. He had started early down this road by marrying in 1532, at a time when priests were still supposed to be celibate. He supported the provision of the Bible in English so that the people could read it for themselves. And when Henry authorised the Six Articles of Religion in 1539, which reasserted priestly celibacy, Cranmer had to separate from his wife – perhaps the first of his less than heroic acts.

Everything changed with the death of Henry in 1547 and the succession his son Edward, born of that marriage to Anne Boleyn which Cranmer had facilitated. Edward was still a boy and therefore under the control of his advisers. But his own theological position was much more radical than his father's and the more advanced Protestant ideas were increasingly welcomed by both the King and his Archbishop. Cranmer arranged for several distinguished continental Protestant reformers to come to England.

It was during this period that Cranmer had his greatest influence on the direction the Church of England was to take. He produced the first service books in English, the foundation of the Book of Common Prayer. He oversaw the removal of images and other relics from the churches and the sweeping away of much of the old church ceremonial. He himself still considered the Holy Communion to be the central act of the church's worship, even though – as we saw last month – it was his creation of Morning and Evening Prayer which was to become the distinguishing feature of Anglican worship. But the theology underpinning the communion became quite different. It became a memorial service, not a sacrifice. Cranmer also drew up the Forty-two Articles of Religion which spelled out, for the first time, a truly Protestant church settlement in England.

Cranmer's position at the head of the Church of England came to an end in 1553, with Edward's death and the accession of Mary – Henry's daughter whom he had worked so

hard to exclude from the succession. Mary was devout Catholic and swiftly set out undoing all Cranmer's reforms. She also had Cranmer accused of high treason. He was tried, found guilty and sentenced, but she did not immediately have him executed. She had other things in store for him – he was to be tried for heresy.

This was to lead to the least creditable period of Cranmer's life. By this time Cranmer was, by the standards of the age, an old man – well over 60. He held his ground for a long time during a series of theological disputations, but it was inevitable that he would be found guilty. Moreover, on one crucial issue – the authority of the Pope – Cranmer himself began to have doubts, which fatally undermined his self-confidence. He began to give in, although each time he did so but it did not produce a result, his resolve was strengthened. Until, that is, the warrant was issued for his execution – by burning at the stake. He had already seen two fellow Protestant bishops, Ridley and Latimer, suffer in the same way and it broke his resolve. Cranmer recanted completely and appeared to find solace in the traditional practices of the Church, including sacramental confession.

But it was not enough to save him after all, even though a recantation and reception back into the Church was, under canon law, normally enough to secure clemency. On 21st March 1556, Cranmer went to the stake in Oxford. But before that, at the ceremonies that preceded his burning and at which he was invited to make a final confession, he dramatically recanted of his recantation. And, in an even more dramatic gesture, when he got to the pyre, he stretched out his right out into the flames, saying "foreasmuch as my hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished there-for".

Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer are commemorated at the Martyrs' Memorial in Oxford (although that is not over the spot where they were burned, which is about a hundred yards away). But Cranmer's real memorial goes much wider. When Mary herself died only two years later, Elizabeth immediately restored the Church settlement which Cranmer would have known, together with the service books he had largely written.

2. Date of Easter

Easter this year is not until 24 April – almost the last date it could possibly be. Only three years ago, it was on 23 March – almost the first date it could possibly be. How do we get this huge variation? The answer lies in the complicated combination of lunar and solar calendars and days of the week. The early church wanted to replicate the timing of Easter, so they attached it to the celebration of Passover. Passover, like all Jewish festivals, is determined by a lunar calendar. But it always falls in the spring. Passover falls on the 14th day of the month *Nissan*. Jewish months start with the new moon, so the 14th day is the day of the full moon.

Easter, however, could not follow Passover so precisely that it did not fall on a Sunday. So the Sunday had to be fixed, even if the full moon and therefore Passover, for example, fell on a Tuesday. Then, the church did not want to be dependent on the Jews for the calculation of the date of their most important festival. So they decided to standardise the calculation – to determine which new moon in the spring time would be the trigger for the date. They decided that it would be the moon that first fell after the spring equinox, thus importing a solar calendar into the calculation. The spring equinox, in turn, they fixed for 21 March. The rule is therefore that Easter Day is the first Sunday after the full moon which falls after the spring equinox. In 2008, there was a full moon on Saturday 22 March. This year, the March full moon falls on Saturday 19 March, and the April one on Monday 18 April.

Judith Simpson

Ask the Rector

Do you ever find yourself wondering why we do some of the things we do at church – but then not quite liking to ask for fear of sounding silly? Well you're certainly not the only one. We've collected some questions that we'll be putting to the rector over the next few months.

We were very pleased to receive this first one because we've often wondered about this ourselves.

Postures and Prayers

Q. *During the liturgy, why do we sometimes stand for prayers, sometimes kneel and*

sometimes sit? Is it purely a matter of personal preference?

A. Tertullian (c160-225) wrote of the early church's practice 'We however, just as we have received, only on the day of the Lord's resurrection ought to guard not only against kneeling, but every posture and office of anxiety'. Early Christians stood as often as they knelt for prayer. They never sat!

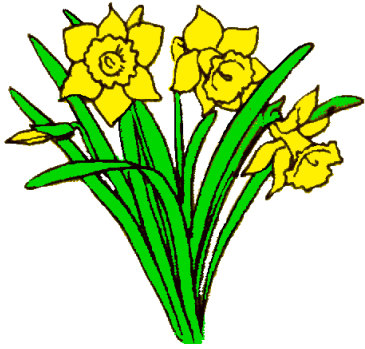
The posture we adopt, for prayer and for everything else, makes a real difference to how we feel. Remember the protests when all-seater stadia were introduced into football grounds? The fans knew that making them all sit down would mean they felt less involved, less active – more like just spectators. Sitting is a posture of attending to what someone else is doing: listening to a sermon, watching a play. It's not an active, involved posture. Kneeling is about submission, reverence, fear. People used to kneel in front of emperors because otherwise they might cut your head off. Standing is a posture of equal involvement. If you're standing, you're ready to act, to respond.

So it's understandable why people tended to kneel to pray. God did tend to get conflated with a sort of 'super-emperor', in which case there was all the more reason to kneel in fear. And that is exactly why the Council of Nicea, more famous for producing the Creed we sing in church at the 11am service, also produced a regulation *forbidding* kneeling during the Sunday liturgy, and at any time during the Easter season. Sundays are feast days of the resurrection, as is the whole Easter season: as God's forgiven children, there is no need for us to cower, kneeling before him. Human sense of sin being what it is, we can't refrain from the need to kneel sometimes: but we are called beyond a sense of guilt into the joy of forgiveness and active discipleship as God's children.

So on Sundays, our default position for prayer should be to stand; maybe if we feel the need, to kneel: but unless disability demands it, not to sit. None of us are spectators in worship; it is the celebration of the whole people's worship that we conduct together.

Jonathan Clark

Mothering Sunday – 4th Sunday in Lent



There is an old Jewish saying:

*God could not be everywhere,
and therefore He made mothers.*

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families - which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed and in many ways now resembles the American Mothers' Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.

From Parish Pump

PCC Notes

At the last PCC meeting we reviewed the new service pattern. Jonathan had written a short report outlining the results of the survey which had been sent out. Overall the recommendation was that we keep the service pattern. After a general discussion the PCC voted in favour of keeping the service pattern, and asked the Church Growth WP and Children and Youth WP to monitor its progress. It was agreed it was still a challenge – particularly with the possible transition of the younger children moving on to the Sunday School. It was agreed we would have a few more joint services throughout the year with a lunch to follow.

We then carried an audit about what skills we thought were needed for the PCC to function effectively, and once the lists of skills were completed, members of the PCC were given 3 stickers to put where they thought their own skills lay. Hopefully when analysed this will help us to elect a good representation of our congregation onto the PCC. The Annual Parish Church Meeting will be an integral part of a joint service on Sunday 10th April, at 10.30am.

Other items agreed were for two extra people to have their names put forward to the Bishop to help with communion at the 9.30am service; these were Lucy Skilbeck and Katie Smith. We agreed to purchase a Book of Remembrance with a bequest we had had from Lucy Fenton. We voted on the two faculties we had received from the Deanery Advisory Council – one for the first phase of the Old Church Project to go ahead and one for the commissioning of Stations of the Cross in stone sculptures. The memorial garden is nearly finished with some new paving stones to relay and turf to replace.

It was agreed that with the two services we could do with deputy churchwardens and this will be sorted out at the APCM. The Middlesex Guild of Bell ringers had offered to repair the bells in the Old Church – they would get all the funding and once completed would be happy to teach anyone of us to ring them.

*Jean Guest
Secretary PCC*

Gardener's Question Time



Last year, in New Prospect, we read about how St Joseph's and St Anne's, two churches at opposite ends of the spectrum, had a dance evening and a Nativity Play, to try to build closer relations. With the green shoots of spring starting to emerge, they've decided on a Gardener's Question Time evening. Here's another reminder of the characters.

St Joseph's, an Anglo-Catholic church:

Mrs Laetitia Featherstone, previously Mrs Fortescue-Smythe, who married Father Lawrence in a Whitsun Wedding. He finally proposed after they danced the twist together at the dance evening
Gerald Horsfall, a solicitor
Frank Clark, a retired teacher
David Clark, his son, going out with Kylie Jameson (see below)
Mark Carroll, his friend

St Anne's, a neighbouring Evangelical church: *"The rev" Wayne Smith, a young and low-church vicar*

Sparky, an environmental activist
Vicky Davies, a young teacher
Kylie Jameson, "a striking young woman, with shoulder length hair and a permanent smile straight out of a Colgate advertisement"

David and Mark were in the pub.

"Dad's been fingered to do something else to try to get folks from St Joseph's and St Anne's together. They're having a Gardener's Question Time evening together," David said, after they'd swapped the usual reflections about working life, and the football.

"He's a glutton for punishment!"

"Yeah. He normally takes this sort of thing in his stride – 35 years teaching at our school means that not much fazes him. But I heard him say to Mum the other day that the point about banging your head against a brick wall is that it's nice when you stop."

"She goes to the other lot, doesn't she, your mum?"

"Yes, though they're both pretty middle of the road."

"You didn't do so badly out of the arrangement, anyway, did you – meeting the delicious Kylie," said Mark, fishing for information.

David replied rather seriously. "It's six months now. I've never felt so happy in a relationship."

Mark had the sense not to tease, and changed the subject. "So what is this Gardener's Question Time thing?"

"It's on Radio 4, and it's been going since about 1066 or something. Sunday afternoon. You ought to try it some time!"

"So it's either that or Premier League football in the pub. You've presented a real dilemma there. But your Dad's show might be more fun."

Two weeks later, some 50 people from St Joseph's and St Anne's assembled in St Joseph's hall. With Frank on the platform were four panellists: Mrs Laetitia Featherstone, the Rector's wife, and Gerald Horsfall, a solicitor in his fifties, from St Joseph's; and Sparky, an environmental activist, and Vicky Davies, a young teacher, from St Anne's.

Frank had planted the first question, to avoid an embarrassing silence [OK, sorry, pun intended this time]. Mrs Jones asked: "I have always had a problem with ground elder in my garden. What does the panel advise to get rid of it?"

"Thank you. Now, who would like to go first?"

Gerald needed no second invitation. "Glyphosphate, and plenty of it. Don't mess about. That'll do the trick."

Sparky, who'd been looking a bit bored and staring at the table in front of him, sprang to life. "That's criminal. Don't you know that stuff's poisonous, and should be banned? I don't know what's wrong with ground elder anyway – it has a right to be there, doesn't it?"

Mrs Jones came back in: "It'll take the whole garden from you if you don't do something, and just digging it out is a Forth Bridge job."

Sparky had another go. "Well, if you are determined to kill off what the Lord is putting there, at least do it naturally. I sometimes make a mix of cold tea and nettle leaves. Ground elder doesn't like that."

Mrs Jones looked sceptical, and Gerald looked positively annoyed. "Is there any

evidence at all that that will do the slightest good?"

"I think so" said Sparky. "That mixture plus prayer, of course. You didn't mention that, you lot from St Joseph's."

Frank decided it was time for another question. Tom Smith stood up.

"I want to plant an oak tree in my garden. I've always loved them. They really speak of England – hearts of oak, and all that. How far from the house should I plant it?"

"Perhaps Vicky would like to have first go at this," suggested Frank, hoping that there would be less controversy this time.

"Oh, nice and close, I should think. The oak tree is one of the loveliest of the Lord's blessings. Let's get the full benefit for everyone in the house."

Mrs Featherstone bridled. "I disagree. I once heard this question asked on the radio's 'Gardener's Question Time', and when asked how far away to plant the tree, the expert said 'Twenty miles!' It's all very well to talk about the loveliest of the Lord's blessings, but we're getting tree root damage to the garden wall at the Rectory, and thank goodness it's not the wall to the house."

"Well, you'll have to weigh up the choice of that advice, Tom," said Frank, moving swiftly on. Fortunately the next question was a bit more neutral. A teenager asked, "If the panel had to name a new rose, what would they call it?"

Vicky began, again: "As a Christian, and a great admirer, I'd call it 'St Anne'".

Gerald countered: "I feel I ought to suggest St Joseph, but I won't. It would depend on the colour, of course, but in honour of my profession, how about Legal Eagle?"

Sparky came next: "God's Green Gift would do it for me."

Mrs Featherstone decided to be statesmanlike: "Given what we are trying to do here, let's call it The Unity Rose."

Frank seized his moment. "I like that last one. Thank you all very much. Good night and good gardening."

Andrew Hudson

Some Things to Do in April



23rd April is St George's Day – our dragon slaying patron saint. A celebration will take place in Trafalgar Square, where festivities include will free entertainment with live bands on the main stage, food stalls and street actors all putting on a Very English display.

William Shakespeare's birthday falls on the same date, and Shakespeare's Globe hosts its own set of celebratory activities at the theatre to tie in with St George's Day. Workshops and interactive fun and games bring the Bard to life for all ages. *12.30pm-6pm*

Hand Made Tales is a timely exhibition focusing on the role domestic crafts play in many women's experiences. It draws on the connections between the current revival of domestic crafts such as sewing, gardening, and cooking and the historical roots of the domestic arts within the home. The exhibition will allow visitors to explore and learn the stories of crafts and the women involved in them through personal tales and fun interactive projects.

*Until Wednesday the 20th Apr The Women's Library, London Metropolitan University, Old Castle Street, London, E1 7NT
Monday - Friday: 09.30 - 17.30 (Thursday until 20.00) Saturday: 10.00 - 16.00 Closed Sunday*

Street food is going through a revolution as the greasy sausage merchants of yesterday are replaced by vendors of cheap, fresh, well sourced and truly exciting food.

The Real Food Festival team has brought together the very best of this new generation of authentic vendors to Southbank Centre for the first Real Street Food Festival.

*Friday the 29th April to Monday the 2nd May
Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX*

Win This Super Prize



The Yo-God! God Detector

How many times have we heard it said "Oh, Lord, give me a sign!" Alas, too often the reply is vague and ambiguous. We all want to know if God exists; maybe He just needs a reliable method to let us know He's here.

The Yo-God! God Detector gives God a way to send a simple unambiguous message of His presence. Just set out your God Detector anywhere in your home, church, or office and offer a simple request or prayer that God reveal Himself through the detector.

This remarkable piece of equipment could be yours. All you have to do is to enter our caption competition. Or, you could get out your credit card and visit www.EvolveFISH.com.

Invasions Do Permit Us, vis-à-vis Us

Here's a fun game we came up with after church one week:

"In order art God of our father some heaven, there to be a name which is sanctified do the afterlife. For there to be a terrestrial heaven which is done, it invades us this day. Our everyday pans do give, and our invasions do permit in us, vis-a-vis us. But because the person is permitted, gives birth to us from badness, because of thine the kingdom a certain power and glory permanently. Amen."

Now that was the Lord's Prayer translated into Japanese and back again via the wonder of internet translation tool babelfish. If the gospel is as universal as it is supposed to be and transcends all people, culture and languages, let's see how it copes with a bit of translation fun. The game is simple: choose a text, choose a language, send it one way and then the other and see what hidden theological truths are revealed.

Genesis 1:26 via Korean: *That time after us whom puts on being similar we who do to make the man make who is to our image.*
Psalms 23 via Russian: *My Shepherd Lord – I will not want him. I will lie downwards at the green pastures.*

John 3:16 via Greek: For the God that is loved thus, the world sent his son alone.

John 15:13 via Dutch: Larger love has no people who stipulate that life is for friends.

1 Corinthians 13:13 via Chinese: The faith hopes and loves with the greatest.

It is interesting to see how the Korean just ignores the word God, which is quite literally lost somewhere in the translation, and the very act of creation becomes something man does to himself. It is also interesting to see that the Greek views the incarnation in completely opposite terms to traditional theology, with the world sending his son up to God. Who knows, maybe Jesus did come as part of a cosmic French exchange program? Jesus came down and assumed humanity with all its weaknesses and failings, even unto death; while his exchange student practised sitting at God's right hand and being exalted.

Here are a few for you to try and work out for yourself:

"The docile one is Benedict, for he will inherit the earth."

"There was a word with a beginning, my God, there was a word."

"Lord let thousands, which thy officials in peace leave, my eyes have seen the rescue."

Stephen Bovey



Jackie demonstrated the position she had invented for more active prayer times.

March Caption Competition

Here's the picture to remind you. Our adjudicator had a difficult task, but eventually a winner was chosen. Thank you everyone for taking part.



Although he tried to disguise his appearance the people saw right through him. "Don't leave the Lib/Dem party" he pleaded as he raised his hands. "anyone can make a mistake".

We should have consulted the Diocesan rule book before we expanded our Quiet Garden by demolishing both the Church and Rectory!"

In 2050, crowds would gather to hear elderly speakers advocating the use of strange things called "books".

The lost episode of Last of the Summer Wine where the gang visit London and Compo is converted... but to what?

His impassioned speech in favour of men always wearing hats gathered only a few eccentric followers.

Stoke Newington's Hyde Park Corner

It's hard to take a politician seriously when he has a drip at the end of his nose

Oh it's just another one of those loony Christians banging on again about the rapture. Fancy a pint?

Sadly, Stanley's rousing sermon on the significance of foot-washing amongst the Black Forest coal-mining community failed to excite the public imagination.

Albert's controversial theories about rhubarb had him banned from the Allotment Society – so he took his message to a larger audience

Harry's attempts at book burning didn't quite have the same impact as Kristallnacht, all for the sake of a particularly turgid Alan Titchmarsh romp!

Come and get your cheap second hand edition of the Republic of Heaven here ... only 3 groats!

'Help! I'm not levitating! The Aliens are kidnapping me!'

Oh, it's that bloke who wrote that book about lentils. You have to give it to him, not many people would have tried a book-signing here. Fancy a pint?

April Competition



Your caption goes here. You have until April 20th to get your entries in.

Who said that?!

"The trouble with quotes on the Internet is that you can never know if they are genuine." –

Winston Churchill.

Poem of the Month

Thank you Morlean, for this month's choice.

Do you have a favourite poem you'd like to appear here? The Eds. would be very pleased to hear from you if you have. Just give one of them the title and author of your favourite and they will do the rest!

The Vicar of Bray (Anon)

In good King Charles's golden days,
When loyalty had no harm in't,
A zealous High Churchman I was,
And so I gained preferment.
To teach my flock I never missed:
Kings were by God appointed;
And they are damned who dare resist
Or touch the Lord's anointed.

And this is law I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever King shall reign,
I'll be Vicar of Bray, sir.

When Royal James obtained the Throne,
And Popery grew in fashion,
The Penal Law I hooted down,
And read the Declaration;
The Church of Rome I found would fit
Full well my constitution;
And I had been a Jesuit
But for the Revolution.

And this is law I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever King shall reign,
I'll be Vicar of Bray, sir.

When William, our deliverer, came
To heal the nation's grievance,
Then I turned cat-in-pan again,
And swore to him allegiance
Old principles I did revoke,
Set conscience at a distance,
Passive obedience was a joke,
A jest was non-resistance.

And this is law I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever King shall reign,
I'll be Vicar of Bray, sir.

When glorious Anne became our Queen,
The Church of England's glory,
Another face of things was seen,
And I became a Tory.
Occasional Conformist Face!
I damned such moderation;
And thought the Church in danger was
By such prevarication.

And this is law I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever King shall reign,
I'll be Vicar of Bray, sir.

When George in pudding-time came o'er
And moderate men looked big, sir,
My principles I changed once more,
And so became a Whig, sir;
And thus preferment I procured
From our Faith's great Defender;
And almost every day abjured
The Pope and the Pretender.

And this is law I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever King shall reign,
I'll be Vicar of Bray, sir.

The illustrious House of Hanover,
And Protestant Succession,
By these I lustily will swear
While they can keep possession
For in my faith and loyalty
I never once will falter,
But George my King shall ever be,
Except the times do alter.

And this is law I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever King shall reign,
I'll be Vicar of Bray, sir.



Our calling is to share the loving hospitality of God, seeing Christ in the face of the stranger

Ministry Team for St Mary's & St John's

Rector: The Revd Jonathan Clark, The Rectory, Stoke Newington Church Street, London N16 9ES
(020 7254 6072 rector@stmaryn16.org)

Curate: The Revd Lucyann Ashdown (020 7254 6072 lucyann.ashdown@googlemail.com)

Assistant Priest: The Revd Tony Sheeran

Honorary Assistant Priest: The Revd Graeme Watson (020 7249 8701
gchwatson@blueyonder.co.uk)

Pastoral Assistant: Melissa Martin (020 7254 6072)

Readers: Alan Murray and Jonathan Gebbie

Parish Information for St Mary's

Parish Administrator: Mark Perrett (020 7254 6072 stmarystokenewington@btinternet.com)

Church Wardens: Andrew Jackson and Sandra Roth

Organist and Director of Music: Nigel Williams

PCC Secretary: Jean Guest (020 8802 4921).

PCC Treasurer: Michael Johnson

Recorder of Stewardship: Rosaline Nwagboso

Sunday School: Martyn Hawkes

Website: Graham Robson robsong21@yahoo.co.uk

Parish Information for St John's

Church Wardens: Joyce George & Irene Fergus

Parish Office: 020 8809 6111

Services

Sunday

Holy Communion 8.00 am Matins 9.00 am (Old Church) Family Eucharist (St Mary's) 9.30 am

Sung Eucharist (St Mary's) 11.00 am Parish Eucharist (St John's) 11 am

Evening worship 6.30 pm (Old Church)

Weekdays (All at St Mary's except Thursdays)

	Morning Prayer	Mass	Evening Prayer
Monday	8:30 am,		5 pm (silent prayer)
Tuesday	8:30 am	8:45 am	5 pm (silent prayer)
Wednesday	8:30 am	7.30 pm	5 pm (silent prayer)
Thursday	8:30 am		5 pm
Friday	8:30 am		5 pm

The Editorial Team (*"Nemo primus inter pares"*)

John Keniston (020 8809 1479, jgkeniston@lineone.net), Jane Pryce (020 7359 1224, janepryce729@btinternet.com), Mark Perrett (markperrett@btopenworld.com)

Brownies. Fridays 6.30 pm. Enquire at Church Office

Booking enquiries for the Community Centre: see Parish Administrator

Arrangements for baptisms, weddings etc: ring the Parish Administrator for an appointment.

St Mary's has a Church School: St Mary's School, Lordship Rd, London, N16. 020 8800 2645