

New Prospect



The Parish Magazine of St Mary Stoke Newington

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50p please

This Matters to You

About the time you read this, the Church Council will be discussing a major innovation in the life of St Mary's. We'll be thinking about introducing house groups, not just for Lent but as part of our parish's life in the long term. That's why it will matter to you – because everyone will be invited to join a house group.

Why now?

Our mission statement says that: ***Our calling is to share the loving hospitality of God, seeing Christ in the face of the stranger.*** The development of house groups is a great opportunity for us to discover the joy of our diversity, and to learn from one another. It is a chance for us to become more fully what the church should be – a body of Christians in which everyone shares in the responsibility for the life of the church. There is also a danger with a larger congregation – and it does already happen – that people who don't instantly fit into one of the existing friendship groups are left on the outside. And the other danger is that we all tend to end up in groups of people who are like us – in age, or social background, or ethnicity: and that doesn't represent the body of Christ.

Another need that people have expressed is to have more opportunities to explore their faith – to learn more about the Bible, about God, about Christian living in the world. There's only so much that can be communicated in sermons, and Lent groups are only for a small part of the year.

And finally – we are a growing congregation, which is good, but it makes it increasingly difficult to continue to run as we have up to now. When I arrived, it seemed that the pattern I inherited was that the rector and the curate would visit, visit, visit, and keep on visiting. It's a noble ambition, but as church life has changed it becomes impossible for us to visit everyone, and all the more so as there are

more people to visit. To keep on working in that way would mean that the clergy would be exhausted, people would still be unsatisfied that they hadn't been visited, other things wouldn't get done and the church's growth would stall.

So... we need to find another way of doing things, which will provide scope for learning about the faith, which will mean that we can develop the gifts of pastoral care for each other, and which will enable newcomers and those on the edge to be welcomed in. What I'll be suggesting to the Church Council is that house groups are what we need to develop.

How it might work

In the autumn, everyone is invited to join a house group. They meet fortnightly, in various people's houses around the parish and beyond, during school term times. Each group has a leader, but the idea is that the group itself shares responsibility for its life. In a house group, even more than in the church, everyone has an important role to play.

Each meeting includes some study (materials will be provided), and the chance to pray together (but no-one is asked to do anything they feel uncomfortable with). There is a group within walking distance for everyone. meetings begin or end with a drink and the chance to catch up with one another. They reflect the whole diversity of the congregation.

Why me?

House groups are good for you. In joining a house group, you're not helping the church, or your fellow Christians, any more than you're helping yourself. Living the Christian life is challenging – we need to learn from one another and support one another. One of the marks of a healthy church (research has found) is that the church members don't just meet on Sunday mornings, but share and learn together in just these sorts of groups. There are always reasons why not, but I'd like to ask you to think about the reasons why to get involved in this.

Jonathan Clark

Store'.

Roads in Lilongwe are also lined with posters from pastors proclaiming abstinence as the only way forward to try and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

There is also a strong Muslim presence, particularly in the centre of the country near Lake Malawi, a historical centre of trading, including slave trading. Sadly unusually for Africa, Muslims and Christians live peacefully together. Malawians are some of the loveliest people on the planet and naturally peaceful, they have never had a war, either civil or with neighbours, and refugees from neighbouring Mozambique have been long sheltered there. But its economic situation is dire and neither agricultural development nor tourism seems to offer much hope and fears remain of another 'hunger' if crops fail (or surpluses are sold off, which has happened before now). This lovely but beleaguered little country deserves our prayers.

Emma Dent

The Millennium Development Goals: why and how should Christians be involved?



Fact: One parking meter earns more in an hour than 70% of the world's population

Fact: 1 billion people go hungry every day

Fact: 3 million people die every year from HIV/AIDS

Fact: In 2006, the world spent over \$900 billion in arms

Statistics like these are designed to grab the attention, but it's getting harder and harder to interest people in poverty and oppression these days. I guess we've just seen so many pictures of starving kids on TV and there's always another cause and another problem, more people dying, more dictators being born. Nothing ever seems to change.

As some of you will remember, I went to conference in Johannesburg in March, looking at what Anglican churches across the world are doing to address global poverty, development and HIV/AIDS – and I have to say that I didn't go with high hopes. All that we seem to be able to do when we get together as the Anglican Communion is talk about gay sex. So my only hope was that the whole thing wouldn't disintegrate into another liberal v conservative, America v Nigeria slanging match with the English delegation just trying to keep a low profile. I was pleasantly surprised.

About 450 of us from countries as diverse as Fiji, Burundi, Mexico, Pakistan and Australia really got down to discussing what we were doing to progress the *Millennium Development Goals*. We were already doing quite a lot, it turned out, and we talked about what else we could do and even made concrete action points. Oh, just in case you haven't heard of the *MDGs* [a survey has shown that most of the world's population hasn't] – they were produced by the UN for the Millennium, and are supposed to be achieved by 2015.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership

The Archbishop of Cape Town, Njongonkulu Ndungane, hosted the conference and we had a whole range of speakers – including Archbishop Rowan Williams, people from the UN and the UK's *Department for International Development* – and the usual round of seminars. We also had the chance to visit local townships: I went to Sharpeville, where a few of the congregation offered painful,

extraordinary first hand recollections of the massacres there in 1960.

So, what came out of the conference? Well to start with, we were reminded of the strong theological imperative to get involved in these issues. Mission is about comprehensive salvation,' Archbishop Ndungane said. So we need to work to fulfil all of people's needs – physical, emotional *and* spiritual. Rowan Williams reminded us that central to the Christian tradition is the understanding that no-one can be forgotten and no-one can be invisible. In the Old Testament,

'The law is addressed to a whole community of people, all of whom are taken to be responsible to God and to each other and for each other, and that idea that no-one is forgotten, no-one is invisible runs right through the books of the law, the Torah, like a golden thread.'

In the New Testament, Jesus spends much of his ministry reaching out to the forgotten and St Paul recognises that 'If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it' [1 Corinthians 12.26]. In the celebration of the Eucharist, the Lord's Table is to be a table at which all are welcomed [1 Corinthians 11.20-22]. As human beings, we depend on one another for our humanity, and it's a 'fantasy that one bit of the human family can flourish at the expense of another.' So he said that those of us living in the Global North need to understand that we

'are deprived and dehumanised by a global situation of injustice... that we are victims of injustice as well, because to be a perpetrator of injustice is also to be a victim of it. We are making ourselves less human if we don't respond to God's call to meet the needs of those who suffer... There are no gated communities in the Kingdom. There are no communities that are protected from involvement in the loss or the trauma of others.'

The Church must therefore work towards abundant life for all, including for those who are not baptismal members. He suggested we always need to ask these questions:

'Who is being forgotten here? Who is not being heard? Who are the ones who are not reached

by the Law and the Gospel? Whose deprivation or diminution is actually wounding us all here in this situation or that situation?'

Secondly, it was clear that churches are already doing a lot of great work towards the MDGs. Churches are running malaria nets distribution projects, HIV/AIDS clinics, agricultural and handicrafts co-operatives, school feeding programmes, projects for abandoned and abused children. We can sometimes run the danger of meaning well but not really knowing what we're doing – a bit of a non-expert 'sticking plaster' approach. But on the whole, when we're working in partnership with NGOs and others and thinking about what we're doing though, churches can be hugely effective. We're an international network and an institution outside government which is trusted and respected in almost every corner of the world. Church communities have grassroots contact with millions of people every week and loads of committed volunteers, passionate about justice – people who roll up their sleeves in places where lots of organisations don't or can't. As Rowan Williams put it,

'the Church is probably the only organisation of civil society that can deliver goals concretely at grass-roots level, in modest but real ways; whether it's the work of the Mothers' Union... whether it's micro credit initiatives in a village somewhere; whether it's a small school in the back of beyond... All of those are examples of the real difference that no-one else can make.'

Thirdly, we were challenged to think about what 'development' should actually look like today. Global warming is a massive problem – and so development can't mean simply industrialisation any more. Industrialisation causes pollution, increases waste and exacerbates the poverty of the poor. The planet simply can't sustain the increased prosperity of another billion people: if it's going to survive, development can't be about Africa, India, China and South America turning into 'mini-me' US economies. One speaker, Steve de Gruchy, pointed out that 'ecology' and 'economy' come from the same Greek word – *oikos* – meaning household. And our ecology and economy need to be in harmony if we're all

going to flourish in our world 'household'. He explained that,

'Economy is *oikos-nomos*, the rules of the house, or the way we set up the house in order that all its inhabitants can flourish. Ecology, is *oikos-logos*, the wisdom of the house, or the way that the house is set up to function. These two things should be in harmony. Economy should resonate in harmony with ecology, and that is certainly the way we understand God's economy.'

He went on to suggest that we should understand development today as the building up of four basic capabilities – health, education and food, assets – something affirmed by Jesus in the Gospels as important, and also by contemporary development theorists.

So, I came back with a lot to think about – and the Church of England delegation [5 of us] is going to be presenting a report at General Synod on 7 July. We're trying to encourage Synod to recognise the importance of global development issues and to appoint someone to formulate a strategy for how we're going to take the *MDGs* forward as the Church of England – there's nobody directly responsible for development or global poverty issues at the moment! We tend to leave it up to Christian Aid and the mission agencies. So please hold us in your prayers. Also, we're going to be thinking more about our response to the *MDGs* in the autumn, especially in One World Week. Watch this space.



Reserved English delegation?

Important Women (6) *Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122 – 1204)*



You can immediately see how unusual Eleanor was from her dates. To live to the age of 86 or 87 in the twelfth century was an extraordinary achievement. And it was, you might say, the final act of an extraordinary life.

As her name indicates, Eleanor was born in the southwestern French territory of Aquitaine. Aquitaine basically formed the south-west quarter of France; one of its chief cities was the great port of Bordeaux. In those days, France was very far from the united country we know today. The King of France ruled the area around Paris – the Ile de France – and not a lot else. The Kings of England ruled Normandy, Anjou, the district around the Loire which roughly bridged the gap between Normandy and Aquitaine was also a separate dukedom. So was Burgundy in the south-east, while no-one even pretended to think that Savoy, high up in the Alps, might form part of France. The largest, richest and most independent of them all, however, was Aquitaine.

The court of Aquitaine was civilised and literary. Eleanor's grandfather was known as the 'troubadour' (a combination of poet and musician) and both poets and musicians were encouraged there. Eleanor herself was well educated, taught to read and write, in both French and Latin. When she was about 15, her father, Duke William, died while on a pilgrimage to St James of Compostella. Eleanor, the elder daughter and with no brothers, became her father's heir. A woman with such a large inheritance was always vulnerable to those who wished to take it over; it was assumed that she would be unable to defend it herself and probably that she was

incapable even of ruling it to any good effect. She almost certainly had, or would have, a husband who would look to rule the land for the benefit of his dynasty and interest. Female heirs were therefore Bad News. If anyone had any doubts about that, they need only to look to contemporary England, where Henry I's daughter Matilda was just embarking on a bitter civil war with her own cousin to secure her own inheritance.

William, knowing all this, had left Eleanor to the guardianship of King Louis VI of France. This made sense, since the King of France was likely to be main predator into her lands but as her guardian, honour might make him more restrained. Louis decided to fulfil his duties by marrying Eleanor to his own son and heir, Louis VII. There was a proviso in William's will which meant that she remained Duchess of Aquitaine in her own right. Only their son, if they had one, would combine the two lands. (France adopted the Salic law, which meant that a woman could never inherit.)

The marriage never seems to have been particularly happy. Eleanor was clearly energetic, intelligent and full of ideas and interests. She enjoyed the secular culture which her father and grandfather had developed at their court. She came from the south, not the north. Louis was the second son, originally intended for the church until his elder brother was killed. He appears to have been somewhat weak and ineffectual. And, crucially, they had no sons. A first child, a daughter, was not born until 1145, 7 years after their marriage.

From the early years of her marriage, Eleanor was active in ways which many of her contemporaries would not approve of. Bernard of Clairvaux, for example, distinctly disapproved of her. A war with the Count of Champagne in which Eleanor's younger sister was one of the causes at issue resulted in a massacre at Vitry which left Louis wracked by guilt. In expiation, Louis decided that he would make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The Pope suggested he might care to turn it into a crusade instead. This was clearly exactly the sort of adventure to appeal to Eleanor, and she decided to go along too, on the grounds that she was the feudal leader of the soldiers from her duchy. In fact, she played a part in

launching the crusade from the basilica at Vezelay.

The crusade went badly almost from the start. However, Eleanor seems to have contrived to enjoy herself. Her uncle Raymond was the Prince of Antioch and she spent some time there with him. Indeed, there were rumours that she had actually had an affair with him. She wished to support him in his attempt to recapture the territory of Edessa, which had traditionally belonged to Antioch, rather than press on to the relief of Jerusalem, which was the ostensible point of the crusade. Louis insisted that she travel with him. Forced to retreat from Jerusalem, they embarked separately by sea back to western Europe. Both took so long that they had been assumed dead when Eleanor showed up in Sicily, followed a few weeks later by Louis in Calabria (the toe of Italy). From there, they journeyed north to Tuscany, where they petitioned the Pope for an annulment of their marriage. The driving force behind this was Eleanor. Pope Eugenius refused, and insisted instead on a reconciliation.

Nine months later, a second daughter was born. Louis, faced with the prospect of never having a male heir, finally agreed with her that their marriage should end. It was annulled on the grounds of consanguinity – that is, that they were too closely related. (They weren't in fact any more closely related than most of the other marriages among the major rulers of Europe, but it gave a convenient excuse.) Eleanor retreated to Poitiers, where she kept her court, and six weeks after her annulment, she married Henry, Duke of Anjou (who was even more closely related to her than Louis had been). Henry was the son of Matilda and her second husband and heir to Matilda's domains under the agreement which had finally been reached between her and Stephen.

Eleanor and Henry must have met before, because she was already pregnant when she married him in May 1152, and their first son, William, was born in August. She was 11 years older than Henry, but this did not prevent them having eight children in all – five sons and three daughters. She bore her last child at the age of 45. In 1154, Henry succeeded to the throne of England. For the first few years of his reign, while Eleanor was having her children, little is known about her involvement with the

politics of the time. For example, we have no idea where she stood on the most famous of Henry's quarrels, that with Thomas Beckett. However, by the mid 1160s, the marriage seemed to be in trouble. Henry had always had mistresses, and although Eleanor regarded some of them with equanimity, she most certainly did not feel that way about Rosamund Clifford, or 'fair Rosamund', who came on the scene sometime in the later 1160s and died in 1176. In 1168, Eleanor moved back to Poitiers and set up her own court there. At least two of her sons, Richard and Geoffrey, joined her there.

The court at Poitiers was a centre for knights and troubadours who followed the concept of courtly love, or the desire of a knight for an unattainable lady. The court was famous all over Europe – a poem written in German about that time reads "Were all the world mine, From the sea to the Rhine, I'd give it all, If so be the Queen of England, lay in my arms". But presiding over a literary salon was unlikely to be enough for Eleanor. And she got her opportunity to meddle in politics when the eldest surviving son, Young Henry, decided to mount a rebellion against his father. Eleanor encouraged him, and urged her vassals in Aquitaine to do the same. As she was riding north to join the rebellion herself, she was captured – dressed in men's clothing. Henry took his revenge by imprisoning her, mostly in Winchester Castle, but sometimes in other places. It was more like house arrest, and they would sometimes celebrate Christmas together. Even though in 1184 she was summoned to Normandy to ensure that Philip of France did not seize the lands which had belonged to Young Henry, who had died in 1183, she was by no means free to come and go.

Henry died in 1189 and was succeeded by Richard I, 'the Lionheart' who had already been in alliance with Philip of France to force his father to recognise his right to the throne (Henry preferred the younger John, the villain in the Robin Hood stories). This was Eleanor's opportunity. She was immediately released from house arrest and in fact ensured the succession while Richard was on his way back to England from Tours. But Richard, although he had fought so hard to secure England, did not actually really want to live there and rule it.

Before long, he was off again on his crusades, leaving Eleanor as Queen Regent to rule over England. The biggest single thing she had to achieve was to secure his release when he was imprisoned by the Emperor of Germany on his way back from the Third Crusade. Not only did she ensure that the country raised the enormous sum demanded, but she also delivered it in person and ensured that the Emperor stuck to the terms he had offered.

Richard died in 1199 leaving no children. There was once again a disputed succession. John was the man in possession, but there was a strong party who supported Arthur of Brittany, the son of the intervening brother Geoffrey. The nobles of Aquitaine reaffirmed their allegiance to her. The countries of England and Normandy officially recognised John, but the other lands of Anjou, Maine and Touraine recognised Arthur. Eleanor supported John. One of her last acts of political involvement was to travel to Castile to fetch back her granddaughter Blanche to marry the heir of King Philip. She was taken ill on the journey back to Paris, and halted at the Abbey of Fontevraud, of which she had long been a patroness. It was where both Henry II and Richard were buried.

Here finally she consented to give up any pretence of public life, after another skirmish in 1201 to prevent Arthur rebelling against John. It was at Fontevraud that she died, having outlived all of her children except two, and where she was buried. Her effigy shows her reading a book – an astonishing thing when most men, let alone women, could not read at all.

Judith Simpson

Judith wrote about Eleanor of Aquitaine at the special request of one of your editors. If you have a favourite "important woman" that you would like us all to know about, please speak to one of the editorial team – and we'll see what we can do.

Music for the Eucharist

Having the words of the hymns printed on a sheet has given me a lot of food for thought. I can understand why it has been done, and I realise that it opens up the possibility of using hymns which are not in the New English Hymnal – modern words, and sometimes, although less often, different music, to add to the old favourites. This led me on to think about the music we use at the main Sunday morning service in general, including the settings of the Gloria and Creed and various responses.

I write as a cradle Anglican, who has been through a lot of different phases in my lifetime. The old Hymns Ancient and Modern still held sway in my childhood. Schools tended to use Songs of Praise, and higher churches the New English Hymnal. Family churchgoing, boarding school, Oxford (with churches to suit all persuasions as well as my college chapel), and three years in Grenada provided a rich variety. (One year in Grenada we sang substantial parts of Bach's St John Passion, with all the parts learned by rote.) At first when I came to live in Islington, I went to St. Silas (where all my children were baptised) and when we moved to Highbury, I started coming to St. Mary's – in about 1981).

It seems to me that there are two opposing possibilities when choosing the musical practice to be followed by a church. The aim – a congregation that joins in, and the avoidance of dreary dragging, is I'm sure agreed. Do we stick to what everybody knows? On the whole that is the path St. Mary's has taken. Or do we go for the new? - a new setting of the Eucharist, perhaps one written for the modern language version of the liturgy? I feel very strongly that there needs to be open discussion of this. The decision can be taken by the Rector and the (new) organist, but I think the congregation needs to have its say too.

There is a fear that changing the setting of the Eucharist would upset longstanding members of the congregation. Well, it might – but our congregation has a pretty rapid turnover. There is a small nucleus of people who have been here for many years (like me) but they are a minority. There are probably more people who have joined in the last 5

years – and I have no idea what their previous experience has been. Does anybody? I feel that it would be worth asking, as well as asking what people would like. If they want something new, are they prepared to do a bit of initial practice? Of course you can't please everybody all the time, but if people know what is happening, and that the object is to uphold the excellent tradition of congregational singing which David Bell has done so much to establish, there is a lot less cause for grumbling.

However I have a problem, which I realise is a minority one. I like to sing the alto part in hymns, and this poses a variety of problems. Occasionally the NEH number printed on the sheet provides the full music, and then it is easy to find in advance. In many cases a different tune is used – and I have to (1) remember the other words normally sung to that tune (once the tune is being played over) (2) look them up in the alphabetical index of first lines (saying I can remember what they are) (3) find the tune and use the music. That is the simplest process, although sometimes it can take too long, so that you end up finding the music just as the last verse is reached – and normally the last verse is sung in unison, because the organist may well play different harmonies. This is the simplest case.

Why should the church cater for the needs of a small minority? Well, a minority that can read music is a great help if something new is introduced. And if we want to keep up the odd occasion when more is needed – at choral evensong or the annual carol service – we need to make it possible for people to practise reading music in a non-threatening situation. The teaching of music as a general subject is practically dead in state secondary schools, and has come to be seen as a specialist preserve. I largely learned to sing parts at boarding school, helped by a father who liked to sing parts in church. No specially good voice is required, just practice.

For this particular problem I think a couple of simple measures would help to keep the opportunity open.

1 - print the name of the tune after the number of the hymn.

It is usually only one or two words. One could then look it up in the index of tunes found in all

music edition hymnbooks – and if it isn't in the one one has, no further time need be wasted.

2 - provide a few hymnbooks with full music at the back of church for those who wish to use them. They weigh quite a lot, so people would be unlikely to carry them off by mistake.

I feel it is worth trying at least!

In many ways, however, the most important thing is to preserve the habit of good congregational singing at St. Mary's, which David Bell has done so much to establish and maintain. I think this needs a good open discussion with the Rector and the new organist – who of course will have the final decision (and have to put up with any grumbles!

Tamsin Heycock

Book Review



Small Island by Andre Levy, published by Review, priced £7.99

This moving novel may resonate with many members of the St Mary's congregation for sadly unpleasant reasons. Woven around the intertwining lives of four main characters, it is set before, during and after World War Two.

The four are two couples, English *Bernie* and *Queenie* and Jamaican *Gilbert* and

Hortense. Both have married for the wrong reasons; the war and its aftermath bring Emma Dent them together in a run down house rented out to lodgers in West London.

This book is about expectations and having them dashed. Hortense has been brought up to think that her education has fitted her for great things in the UK; Gilbert thinks he is better than other West Indians because he does not come from a small island. Bernard has been brought up to believe in the strength of the Empire, even after the horrors of the Great War that rendered his father literally speechless. The wife he leaves behind some up the experience of many in making the best of things.

Swinging from Jamaica to India, taking in London and Nottinghamshire, *Small Island* is also about prejudice and racism. Hortense in particular, long drilled in terms of how wonderful the Mother Country is supposed to be, is shocked to find post war Britain smaller (and smaller minded) and shabbier than her dreams. Taking life in such a multi cultural city as London now is for granted, I was shocked to read about the segregation allowed to be used by American troops, even when they were stationed in the UK. The treatment of black servicemen stationed in the UK and of first arrival immigrants treated at best like oddities and at worst as dangerous insurgents still has the power to repulse.

It would be difficult to tell too much of the plot without giving too much away but Levy is a great storyteller. Characters are strongly and warmly drawn, with a delicate touch that humanises the vast social canvas they are drawn against. The plot has interwoven strands that combine to be at once heartbreaking and warming and I think it will be of great interest to anyone interested in the lives of the first Windrush passengers and how life in Britain began to change.

Emma Dent

Website Review



I have often wondered what it is like to work at or belong to a parish church in the centre of a place as full of tourist attractions as London. With our own Andrew Yoshiro now working as a verger at the St James Piccadilly, bang slap in the centre of town, I decided it was time to check out its website.

This church's beautiful Wren building and the market held in its grounds are well known to Londoners and tourists alike but I knew very little about it, apart from the fact that they are not afraid of publicity – the Rector is currently starring in an EDF Energy advert about the church's solar panels. Could the website enlighten me?

The home page is keen to emphasise the church's values; a diverse community (preferred we are told to congregation), which strives to be 'widely representative' of those who are attached or single, gay or straight, comfortable with or struggling with their faith.

This reads a bit like a government policy document but the point is strongly made, with a clean, clear home page and selected text in bold bright colours.

There are lots of different links to choose from, including 'about us', 'faith and practice' and 'events', of which I did not realise there are so many and would like to check out some time.

Of these the most intriguingly named links are 'divers prayers' and 'God, sheep and fence sitting'. The first are apparently short daily prayers, although there was no explanation, which rather excludes those not well versed in theological terms. The second sounded

intriguing so I read on. Under the heading 'no fence sitting allowed' it urges viewers to consider, in the light of your faith, issues such as the environment, globalisation and health care. So far so expected. But it also urges that we place faith in thinking about topics such as citizen participation in democratic processes, the ethics and impact of advertising and food consumption. There are more links to stimulate thought and discussion.

Now all this is all very worthy and interesting and rather bold, although viewers may question how much such be addressed on the website of a parish church. I do bear in mind though that this site must be viewed by interested parties from around the world who have seen or visited the church on their travels and it must seem daft for this progressive place of worship to not make the most of such an opportunity.

All the pages are easy to read but I have a grumble about this site; on too many of the links the actual text is below the fold on the page, ie at first it seems to be a blank page and you have to scroll down to find it. I find this intensely irritating as SJP, as the jargon has it, is a professional operation with what looks like a pretty professional site.

<http://www.st-james-piccadilly.org/>

Emma Dent

Many thanks from the "Ted Smith and Magnus Flett" team who walked the *London Pride Walk For Cancer Research UK*, sponsored by Fuller's Beer on Sunday June 3rd 2007 which raised £572.

The team consisted of John Guest, and Jeff and Betty Manning. We walked 10k at the side of the River Thames to Chiswick Bridge along to Hammersmith Bridge and back to the Brewery Garden.

We started early before the day warmed up and finished about 12.30 - good timing for the pint of "Fuller's London Pride" just as the minute hand passed the yardarm!

Thanks to the congregation, friends and families for your sponsorship.

Betty Manning

A Feast of Music



Sunday June 24th, as well as being the feast of St John the Baptist, was also David Bell's last Sunday as Organist and Director of Music at St Mary's. Fittingly, David had chosen the hymns for the service, and a great selection they were: the appropriate, but not-so-well-known "By all your saints still surviving", the uplifting old favourite "O Praise Ye the Lord!", followed by William Turton's Communion hymn and prayer for unity "O Thou who at thy Eucharist didst pray that all thy church might be forever one". Our final hymn was the rousing "Thy hand, O God, has guided thy flock, from age to age". David ended the service with Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March Number 4 - dignified, but lively rather than solemn. I've saved mention of the first hymn till last: the tune was Vaughan Williams familiar "Sine Nomine", usually the accompaniment to "For All the Saints", but this morning the words we sang were those of Fred Pratt Green, and they amply sum up David's contribution to our worship at St Mary's:

*When in our music God is glorified,
And adoration leaves no room for pride,
It is as though the whole creation cried
Alleluia!*

*Let every instrument be tuned for praise!
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise!
And may God give us faith to sing always
Alleluia!*

BAPTISMS

On Sunday 17 June

George Martin Vaughan
Adam Philip Dinham
Amelie Mary Bird
Rhys Caleb Thomas



**We welcome you into the fellowship of
faith;
we are children of the same heavenly
Father;
we welcome you.**

Comparative Religion



The similarities between Christianity, Sikhism and Hinduism is that they all believe in God. The differences is that they come from different countries.

The differences between the Sikh temple I visited with my church, St John's, and the Hindu temple I visited with my school this month was, in the Hindu temple you had to wear long sleeves to cover your arms. In the Sikh temple you had to cover your head. The Hindu temple was also bigger and I liked that. But they were more the same than different to me.

Win this Super Prize! "He Lives" Bubbles



When you were small, you rushed around the garden blowing bubbles and generally making a nuisance of yourself by leaving a trail of damp gooey residue over all and sundry when they had burst. You were fascinated by the iridescent quality of the bubbles as they floated into the ether. Just why did they form one giant bubble when two merged?

Well, Jesus was a child once, but he did not have the modern accoutrements of playful recreation and, er,bubbles. He had to make do with saws, planes and adzes from his father's workshop (watch those bare toes, Jesus!); however, if he had been familiar with them, they would have become a metaphor for his bubbly character and his inquisitive mind! Yes, through the looking- glass of the bubble holder, you too might have a glimpse of how the world could be for you; you could be transported back to the past as a child or you might see how the world could be in the future. Or, you might just get covered in goo.....!

Anyway, forget this blarb of unnecessary spiel and just concentrate on the main prize. These bubbles are the magnificent reward for your intellectual qualities as a caption competition winner. Treasure it and don't use it up at one go...you never know when you will next need it! Normally retailing for a very reasonable \$5.00 each, they have now been removed from all shop shelves and this is the last one ever in the entire universe. A collector's item, which could just feature on the

Nostalgia The Joy of Flannelette

My Grandad was a steward on the RMS Queen Mary. When I was quite small he was still working, and on occasions we would go down to Southampton Docks to wave him off and (in the case of us children) look forward to his return with interesting American sweets for us.

In the meantime, we were sometimes sent to stay the night at Grandma's to keep her company. This was a treat in itself, as we were allowed to stay up late, sit on her scratchy dun-coloured sofa with its antimacassars, and watch grown-up television – "Take Your Pick" was Grandma's favourite, and with her we thrilled to Michael Miles challenging contestants to "Take the Money!" or "Open the Box!". Grandma's ability to knit without pause through all this excitement never ceased to amaze me. Then there was cocoa and toast before bedtime (at home it was Ovaltine and digestives). And finally, going to bed was a special pleasure. At home we had nylon sheets that snagged your toenails (as my mother was teaching full-time and coping with three small children, with hindsight I now see that nylon was an understandable choice) – but at Grandma's, the beds had freshly ironed flannelette sheets. Their cosiness and texture made a deep impression on my childish memory.

Fast-forward twenty-five years – and after ten years of sharing rented accommodation with other people, I finally got around to buying my own flat – as it happened, in Lordship Road, N16. On moving in, I felt the need to make some sensible household purchases to mark my new status as a property owner. At the time the all sheets I owned were odd ones my mother had given me, so buying some new bed linen myself seemed an appropriate thing to do. However, with a new mortgage, money was tight, so I had economy in mind as I set off for Oxford Street.

As I browsed the unfamiliar territory of John Lewis' bed linen department, all was

going well until I came across the fateful display of flannelette sheets. A single touch from my fingertips was enough to transport me back to my grandmother's guest bedroom, and the warmth and texture of her sheets. Hang the expense – it had to be flannelette! I queued at the checkout, feeling strangely conspicuous – surely all the respectable ladies around me would discern that I had abandoned thrift to indulge in the sensual delights of flannelette? However, I reached home without being denounced, and can report that my new sheets were indeed as comfortable as my childhood memories.

I have to confess that I have since discovered the huge effort involved in washing flannelette sheets, as no doubt my mother and grandmother did before me – how Grandma, who was not a tall lady, managed to get them on the line I'll never know – so I don't use them as often as I might. But when I do, I am often reminded as I slide between the sheets, of the heavy dark furniture and the gently reassuring tick of the bedside clock in Grandma's spare room.

Jonathan Gebbie

From The Editors

It's holiday time, and we take a bit of a break now. This will be an enormous relief to our regular contributors - who deserve boxes upon boxes of chocolates and huge bouquets of their favourite flowers.

In the meantime the editorial team will still be meeting to throw about ideas for September and onwards.

We would like to hear from those of you who manage to get away during this time and perhaps attend services at other churches – or temples, mosques, gudwaras, village fetes, music festivals etc etc. On the other hand, you might like us to review the stunning book you read on the beach. Cheeky photographs are welcomed from the bold.

Copy date for the September issue is 20th August. Thank you for reading and supporting New Prospect.

And now – a holiday poem

Seaside Golf

John Betjeman

How straight it flew, how long it flew.
It clear'd the ruddy track
And soaring, disappeared from view
Beyond the bunker's back-
A glorious, sailing, bounding drive
That made me glad I was alive.

And down the fairway, far along
It glowed a lonely white;
I played an iron sure and strong
And clipp'd it out of sight,
And spite of grassy banks between
I knew I'd find it on the green.

And so I did. It lay content
Two paces from the pin;
A steady putt and then it went
Oh, most securely in.
The very turf rejoiced to see
That quite unprecedented three.

Ah! seaweed smells from sandy caves
And thyme and mist in whiffs,
In-coming tide, Atlantic waves
Slapping the sunny cliffs,
Lark song and sea sounds in the air
And splendour, splendour everywhere.

Bert was the only
one who felt
comfortable with
the new Perspex
pews.



Last Month's Caption Competition



Here's the picture just to remind you. Our adjudicator chose no. 1 as the winner. The other (excellent) entries are in not in any particular order.

No-one knew how the Fog Dance worked, but within minutes they could hardly make out the church tower.

*"You put your whole self in, your whole self out. In out, in out, shake it all about
You do the Hokey Cokey and you turn around
And that's what it's all about....."*

The vicar of St Faith's tried to fill the pews by showing the local population what super fun church attendance can be – but they remained unconvinced.

One of the many ways in which the congregation of St Sepulchre's glorify the Lord.

In his anxiety about good weather for the forthcoming summer fayre, the vicar turned a "blind eye" towards some of the more frankly pagan practices of the Social Committee.

The Rector wasn't at all sure that the new "traditional English" vestments would catch on. It was at the climactic moment of "Stripping the Willow" that Kevin's mobile rang.

Brian worried that the white socks made him look silly.

The bride felt that she'd been more than a little upstaged by the choir.

Practice in Little Gidding for the London 2012 Opening Ceremony was coming on apace, but the "rustic" element felt a little under ambitious!

At the invitation of the Womens' Institute fete, Pan's People had reformed but were a mere shadow of their former selves!

The latest English attempt to find a sport at which they can conquer the world.

Cleaning the Church was felt to be best achieved by making it fun and lively.

That Sunday the congregation were reluctant to go into Church, worried that the new rector might be somewhat charismatic.

St Mary's is famed not only for its support of Early Music but also for sponsoring England's first boy band, leading to their world tour in 1959.

Summer Caption Competition



Your caption goes here.

Get competitive and win our fabulous new Star Prize as shown on page 12. Entries can be given to any one of the magazine team. The closing date is 20th August.

Stokefest 2007



Mary Martin, Claire Lissaman, and Traidcraft



Christine Hall at the fairy equipment stall



Sue Ferrar lent her famous tent



The Flea Circus. I had to hop around for ages to get this picture. But worth it, I thought.



Pirates in Clissold Park



It's amazing what you can build with a few cardboard boxes



The camera obscura – brilliant!

**And the sun shone all day.
Wonderful!**

The Editorial Team (“*Nemo primus inter pares*”)

John Keniston (020 8809 1479, jgkeniston@lineone.net), Jane Pryce (020 7359 1224, janepryce@btinternet.com), Emma Dent (emma_m_dent@yahoo.co.uk) Andrew Yoshino (nocturna@dircon.co.uk) Mark Perrett (markperrett@btopenworld.com) Pamela Wadsworth (pamewa2002@yahoo.co.uk) Fiona Weaver, (f.weaver@londonmet.ac.uk)

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 rectorofstokey@btinternet.com)

Vicar, The Revd Martyn Hawkes, St John’s Vicarage, 2a Gloucester Drive, London N4 2LW (020 8809 6111 mj_hawkes@yahoo.co.uk)

Curate, The Revd Susie Snyder, (020 7254 6072 susannasnyder@btinternet.com)

Honorary Assistant Priests, The Revd Graeme Watson (020 7249 8701 gchwatson@blueyonder.co.uk)
The Revd Fiona Weaver (020 7359 5808 f.weaver@londonmet.ac.uk)

Reader, Alan Murray

Parish Information for St Mary’s

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

Church Wardens, Michael Parker (0797 4378221) Judith Simpson (020 7690 6491)

Pastoral Assistant and Verger, Beryl Warren (020 7254 6072)

PCC Secretary, Jean Guest (020 8802 4921).

PCC Treasurer, Michael Johnson **Sunday School**, Margaret Glover

Recorder of Stewardship Rosaline Nwagboso

Web warden, Graham Robson robsong@yahoo.co.uk

Parish Information for St John’s

Church Warden, Martha Christian & Irene Fergus

Parish Office, 020 8809 6111

Services

Sunday

Holy Communion 8 am Matins 9.30 am (Old Church) Sung Eucharist (St Mary’s) 10.30 am
Parish Eucharist (St John’s) 11 am Evensong 6.30 pm (Old Church)

Weekdays (All at St Mary’s except Thursdays)

	Morning Prayer	Mass	Evening Prayer
Monday	8:30 am, followed by	8:45 am	5 pm
Tuesday	8:30 am, followed by	8:45 am	5 pm
Wednesday	8:30 am	7.30 pm	5 pm
Thursday	8:30 am		5 pm
Friday	8:30 am		5 pm

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