

New Prospect



The Parish Magazine of St Mary Stoke Newington

May 2006

50p please



Just imagine ... looking down from the New Church's spire, and seeing a building full of people. People coming to worship, people coming for a concert or a play, people coming for a (fairly traded) coffee and cake, people coming to enjoy the experience of a living, breathing building, once again really serving the community within which it is set.

The Old Church was built for Stoke Newington's population to use in the ways they found important. It was the public place where the community gathered. Even in Tudor times it wasn't just a church: the odd space to the left of the entrance door was built to be the first school in the area.

Communities change, times change. For a long time it was thought somehow wrong to do anything in church except services of worship. It's not always been like that: in medieval London, the city's bookshops were in the nave of St Paul's Cathedral. For many people church, and worship, have become strange. They feel uneasy walking into churches at all, even when they're empty. It may seem odd to those of us who come, but for many of our neighbours, churches, and the stuff that happens inside them, are just plain weird.

So we need to make our churches easier to get into. Not just for people with disabilities (though that's important too), but for everyone. That means making them places where people feel at home, places that are once again not the preserve of a religious few but for everybody.

That's the vision we've been developing for the Old Church. Over the last few weeks, the Fabric Committee of the Church council have met with several architects, to see who we want to help us realise that vision. We have now agreed to appoint Matthew Lloyd Architects, a firm who have done some really exciting work with other local churches, to work with us as we start down what will undoubtedly be a long journey.

To set us going, Matthew will be coming to meet us all after church on May 16th, when we will have coffee after church in the Old Church, and start to get a feel for the future ahead of us.

Jonathan Clark



Springtime in front of the old church (photo by courtesy of Betty Gough)

Under Penalty of Death



When I went to Guatemala City last February, seeking my fortune in human rights law, I had assumed it would be a month or so before I found something I felt I could do. In week one, however, I had my feet under a desk and was enthused – three of us were the Death Penalty department of a small and precariously-funded legal research and lobbying organisation, the Institute (of Comparative Studies in Criminal Science).

There are currently thirty-one men on death row in Guatemala. The President has recently declared himself in favour of abolition – on the occasion of the death of the Pope - and there has been a moratorium on executions since 2000. However, draft legislation to abolish capital punishment has languished in parliament since 2002, and public hostility to abolition is palpable at all levels of society.

One of the main ways the Institute is trying to change attitudes and alleviate immediate suffering is by suing Guatemala in the regional human rights court, based in Costa Rica. Under the Inter-American human rights convention, the death penalty is permitted but countries are urged to phase it out. One of my colleagues' central arguments is the fact that

Guatemala has extended the crimes which can attract a capital sentence. The majority of our clients were condemned for kidnappings, but where the victim survived, dating from a period of social panic at the activity of kidnap gangs.

We were also trying to show that in many cases the convictions underlying the sentences were unsafe. The Guatemalan criminal justice system has undergone radical reform since the mid-1990s but is still under-resourced and susceptible to reliance on confessions rather than evidence gathering. In 2003 for example, only 6 out of 80 requests for DNA tests were granted. Our work involved liaising with the State public defenders department, where even the senior lawyers working on international appeals have to obtain written permission from the director to make an international call. Consequently people are often convicted in deeply flawed trials. At least two of those currently awaiting execution speak very little Spanish and are believed not to have understood even what sentence they have been given. One of our clients was convicted after the prosecution changed the charge immediately before the verdict, with no opportunity for his lawyers to prepare a defence from rape, which does not carry the death penalty, to murder, which does.

The court system itself is unwieldy and unhelpful. There is no system for reporting judgments, and I was often despatched to get copies of decisions. This involved entire Kafkaesque days going from one court office to another, getting my documents stamped and double stamped, smiling sweetly at disinterested clerks (and less sweetly at the interested ones), waiting hours on end in dusty basements and deserted marble corridors. I spent one surreal afternoon going through enormous leather-bound ledgers listing all sentences of over 30 years, while the office around me was celebrating a birthday with cake and coffee.

Another legal argument being used before the Inter-American court is that being on death row amounts to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and so my tasks included prison visits to take statements, or accompanying a volunteer doctor who prepared reports on the physical and mental condition of the prisoners. I saw a world I could never have imagined. My first lesson was embarrassing. When

introduced to our client I politely held out my hand to be shaken, but unfortunately his were handcuffed behind his back.

The highest security prison - called "El Infiernito" or "Little Hell" - is only an hour's drive from Guatemala City, but on the coast where the climate is dramatically different, malarial and unpleasantly hot even if you are not kept inside. For several months in the hottest part of last year the inmates had access to water for only an hour a day until a pump was repaired. Both the prisons I visited had an unforgettable smell, not an appalling stench but a stale, sour heaviness from sticky floors and sewage-grey stagnant water. The men live in "sectors" occupied by about thirty men, in two cramped dormitories where some had made poignant attempts at privacy hanging bits of cloth hung between the bunks. They have access to a covered courtyard but no access to the dry grass field outside. Any exercise they organise themselves in improvised gym sessions. Someone had had a TV once, but it had gone.

The guards leave the running of the prison to the inmates, with those who have access to money enforcing tariffs for privileges such as a mattress or the top bunk. The prevalence of this autonomy hit the press when on 15 August 35 inmates died in several jails, the result of what is thought to be a settling of scores between street gangs coordinated by mobile phone. On the other hand, in the absence of official provision some of the death penalty prisoners, middle class and educated, have organised literacy classes.

We spent one whole Saturday in the high security unit – it was "open visiting" day, and I had the chance to talk to a lot of the inmates. I have never before met a former rodeo champion – he was from the "Wild East" of the country where the cowboys live. Another man, an evangelical pastor, I assumed was a fellow visitor – but later learned he was in for kidnapping. As in any prison, I suppose, people are desperately grateful to anyone making efforts made on their behalf, and just for a chat, a bit of contact with the outside world.

We were documenting not only the physical conditions of custody, but the psychological effects of being on death row. Simply knowing the method of execution that awaits is of course part of this. Executions are carried out by lethal injection. It used to be by firing squad,

until 1996 when a televised execution caused a public outcry. (It is chilling footage. A little scene in the corner of a damp field, with matter-of-fact army officers and the families waiting with empty coffins). There has also been the profound effect of seeing two of their fellows being taken from the sector and then executed, in 2000. They had become buddies, one prisoner said. For those remaining today, there are no outstanding appeals, nothing but Government will between them and execution at any time. The prison authority rarely tells a prisoner why he is being taken out of the sector - it could be a lawyer's visit or it could be the end.

Another aspect of the psychological trauma of death row is the effect on the families. As one convict said, in tears, he feels he is a dead man, it is better that his children treat him as a dead man and have nothing to do with him. Those children, naturally, are suffering not only from eight or nine years waiting for their father to die, but also from unwanted attention and playground taunts. Their fathers are notorious nationally; everyone remembers the details of the crimes.

In the two cases which were judged last year the international court ordered Guatemala to revoke the death penalty. Both men are likely to receive fifty-year jail terms and no one is anticipating imminent abolition. None the less, the international judgments have had a certain impact, on the higher echelons of the prison system and at government level, and I feel I was part of something that is having a gradual effect to change attitudes. It has least removed something very cruel from two men and their families.

Ellen Kenny

To be continued next month.

Saint of the Month
St Bernadine of Siena
Feast day: 20 May



Bernadine, or Bernardino, was born in the town of Massa Maritima (or di Carrera) in the province of Siena, Tuscany, in 1380. He was of noble birth, and his father was the governor of the town. Bernardino was orphaned at the age of about six, and thereafter brought up by his aunt. His education was the typical one for someone of his class and character, involving primarily the study of civil and canon law. He also showed an early interest in the care of the sick. In 1397, he joined the Confraternity of Our Lady attached to hospital of Santa Maria della Scala in his native city. When plague broke out in 1400, he and a group of friends devoted themselves to the care of the sick in the hospital. The plague was so virulent that many of those who were supposed to be looking after the sick themselves became ill, so there was a great need for help from outside. Bernardino effectively took over the running of the hospital for the four months until the plague burnt itself out.

Two years later, after the death of his aunt, Bernardino decided to join the Franciscan Order. This Order of Friars, that is religious who lived out in the world, begging for their food, had been founded by St Francis of Assisi in the early 13th century. Like most religious

orders, it periodically drifted away from its original high ideals, and several branches of a more or less stringent rule of life developed. Bernardino joined the 'Observant' Franciscans, or the more rigorous in their practices. Following the example of the founder, he gave all his possessions to the poor. For the next dozen or so years, little is known of Bernardino's life. He seems to have lived in seclusion in a place called Capriola, which may have been a gift from the Hospital where he had performed such heroic work a few years before.

It was in 1417 that Bernardino suddenly came to prominence when he developed a career as a preacher. His first notable sermons were preached in Milan, but before long, large crowds everywhere were clamouring to hear him. He preached often in the open air, with crowds numbering up to 30,000. At first, it was said, his voice was scarcely equal to the task, but he gradually built up its strength until everyone was impressed by his resonance. He would preach several times in the same day, for up to 3-4 hours at a time and travelled everywhere on foot.

The subject-matter of his preaching was perhaps not very surprising. He preached about the need for penance and voluntary poverty, and denounced gambling, usury, witchcraft and superstition, as well as the politics of Italy's faction-ridden city states. He does, however, seem to have been unusually successful. Penitents are said to have flocked to confession 'like ants' after listening to one of his sermons. In several of the cities, laws were reformed and the new ones named after him. He was not even afraid to take on the most powerful rulers, like the Visconti Dukes of Milan. The sermons were often preached in the vernacular, and at least one series – preached for Lent in 1427 – was written down by one of those who heard them. They show considerable use of anecdotes, illustrations, digressions and asides, with jokes and mimicry, but all the time with a serious underlying message.

He also scored some notable successes in peacemaking between rival factions, such as the Guelphs and Ghibellines in Florence (think Montague and Capulet). In each case, he persuaded them to take down their own favours and install instead representations of a

sunburst with the initials 'I.H.S'. This was a symbol of his own devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus. It is said that he was so successful in attracting people to this devotion that a card-painter, whose trade had been ruined by Bernadino's sermons against gambling, made a fortune instead from producing small copies of the device. Not surprisingly, Bernadino is now the patron-saint of gamblers.

Inevitably, Bernadino attracted opposition from those whose comfortable lives he was disrupting and opposition in those days usually took the form of accusations of heresy. He was accused of encouraging people to indulge in idolatry, and summoned to appear before the Pope to defend himself. This he did, with the help of a friend, so successfully that the Pope, Martin V, urged him to preach his sermons in Rome itself. He also tried to make Bernadino Bishop of Siena. Subsequent offers of Ferrara and Urbino were likewise turned down.

Bernadino was not so successful at evading high office within his own Order, and in 1438 he was elected Vicar-General of the Observant Franciscans throughout Italy. The reformed order had been founded in the mid-fourteenth century, but it was during his leadership that it really established itself. From 130 friars at the time Bernadino joined it, it had grown to over 4,000 by the time of his death. He also set up schools of theology in Perugia and Monteripido. He thought that the prime task of the friars should be preaching, not hermit-like contemplation. If they were to preach, they had to learn sound doctrine.

Bernadino stuck it out as the Vicar-General for 5 years, but in 1442 he resigned his office and returned to his first love of preaching. By this time, he was too weak to travel on foot and used a donkey instead. In 1444, he preached a series of 50 sermons in his native city of Massa Marittima. Then he decided he wished to preach in the Kingdom of Naples. He got as far as Aquila, where he died on the eve of Ascension Day, 20 May 1444. He was canonised only 5 years later, in 1450 and became one of the most popular saints in Italy, especially in his native Siena, where many references to him can be found.

Judith Simpson

Been Round (And Round) In Circles



On the 1st April I started out on my sponsored journey, laden down with food, drink and my Elmore Leonard books for the day – which was bright, so I felt cheerful.

At the beginning there was a small hitch because the Circle Line was closed between Marylebone and Liverpool Street, so I had to take diversionary action and hotfoot it (well, not quite – I was on the North London Line) to Stratford and take the Central Line to begin my journey from Liverpool Street at 8.00am.

Every hour I asked someone to take my photograph showing a station in the background, and sign my log. Besides people from the U.K., signatories hailed from Italy, France, Japan, Finland, Sweden and Ireland. My final stop was VICTORIA (hurrah) and I was signed off by Rebecca McKay from Alabama, USA. To each person I gave a St Mary's Easter card and welcome pack, so they could visit our website.

People seemed amused and interested in the trip to Tete. It was good to share the Mozambique story with at least eleven people. The man from Japan was totally bemused by the whole thing.

I read two and a half books: *The Hunted*, *Gold Coast* and *The Switch* – great dialogue and thoroughly enjoyable reads. I made twelve trips from Edgware to Liverpool Street, and another half a journey to Victoria. I met some nice people and had great fun – but boy, was I glad when I walked out of Highbury and Islington Station at 8.45pm.

Beryl Warren

Another Tete Traveller Writes

When Father Jonathan Clark came up with an idea of making a trip to Africa and presented it to the Overseas Committee of which I am a member, it never occurred to me that I would be one of those people going to Tete, for there were many worthy contenders who deserved this rare opportunity. I cannot recall the last time I was this lucky, I can only thank God for this chance. There are a number of ideas that cross the Overseas' Committee floor, this one to my mind carries the most weight and the way the committee embraced it suggests to me that they too are in agreement with me on this. The four candidates on this trip without giving away many of their secrets are a European who has visited and worked in Africa, a European of African parentage who has visited but never worked in Africa, a European who has never visited or worked in Africa and an African born and bred who has visited and worked in Europe. Equally varied are their careers and life experiences, not to mention their heights and sizes. But their variation has no bearing on their unity to making this trip a success, and their determination is exemplified by some of the actions taken by some of the group members vis-à-vis the Auction, Clergy Walk, Lent Lunches and the ride on the tube, to mention but a few. So it goes without saying the group is more than capable of handling this trip if you were in any doubt.

Earlier on in the preparation of the group's arrangement of the activities leading to the eventual setting, it was agreed that the members of the group each write an article for "New Prospect" one each for January, February, March, and April. I want to focus on all the things we have done - "well some of us" - and to thank you for your participation in each and every one of them, for it shows that we are all in this together and that we are all anxious for what there is to find, to see and to learn. Well, we hope to find in Mozambique those people we picture in our minds and those we know nothing about, some with nothing to spare and some with a little something to offer, come to think of it, much like our community.

So we are planning to visit their community, you know! See the schools, markets, hospitals etc. We hope that transport will not be very bad

but in case we find it a bit tricky some of us are learning a phrase or two in Portuguese. As for the children, we hope to take with us a few souvenirs just so they get to know we've got children too like them and what we give them they too can have. We would like to go with a tune we can sing to them to show our joy, and some photos of some of St. Mary's prominent members and of the church's interior and exterior so they get to see where we come from and above all we will be taking with us our combined prayers to them.

In the past few weeks the group have been able to meet to go through the requirements of their trip, in order to make it as smooth as possible. Fortunately two of these selected four have experienced some of the complex systems of travel in Africa, to my mind this is an added bonus for the group as it will not be such a shock should there be problems. From the earlier articles you will know what the aims of the trip are and also have been reminded of the country's dimensions, and the history and demography of the actual area where we are going. To raise awareness of the relationship we created between our church and the church in the diocese of Lebombo, we displayed pictures and -maps of Mozambique at the back of the church, and a thermometer showing how much we have raised for the trip month by month. You must have seen how well you have done, for this we are very grateful. You can rest assured that this and many other things will be taken into consideration when we consider how to share our life here with the people of Mozambique. Our logistics manager has had contacts with the bishop and has been assured that we are expected. So, much has been achieved and we hope to hit our targets with the few activities left which include a concert on Sunday 21st May at 4pm.

We shall be keeping a detailed record of our trip for you all. We will act as messengers on your behalf. We think we are prepared, but any new ideas are still welcome and your prayers will push us, I am sure, to that winning line. Once again, thank you very much and please wish us well. God bless.

Simon Simwogerere.

Songs of Praise



Frederick William Faber 1814 - 1863

Frederick William Faber was born on June 28th 1814, at Calverley, Yorkshire. He attended the grammar school of Bishop Auckland for a short time, but a large portion of his boyhood was spent in Westmorland. After five years at Harrow School he moved on to Balliol in 1832, became a scholar at University College in 1834. In 1835 he obtained a scholarship at University College. In 1836 he gained the Newdigate prize for a poem on *The Knights of St John*, which elicited special praise from Keble. In January 1837 he was elected fellow of University College.

Faber was of Huguenot descent and found himself divided in his university days between a tendency towards Calvinism and the Church theory then being advocated by John Henry Newman. Eventually the latter triumphed, and he threw himself unreservedly into the Tractarian movement. He received Anglican ordination in 1839, and took work as a tutor. In 1841 a travelling tutorship took him to the continent. On his return he wrote a book called *Sights and Thoughts in Foreign Churches and among Foreign Peoples*, with a dedication to his friend the poet Wordsworth.

In 1843, he was appointed Rector of Elton, Northamptonshire, but soon after went again to the continent, in order to study the methods of

the Roman Catholic Church. On his return to Elton in 1844, he established the practice of confessions, preached Catholic doctrine, and wrote the life of St. Wilfrid, openly advocating the claims and supremacy of Rome. After a prolonged mental struggle he joined the Roman Catholic communion in November 1845.

In 1846, he established a religious community, the "Brothers of the Will of God" or "Wilfridians," as they were called from St. Wilfrid, their patron, at Cotton Hall, near Cheadle, Staffordshire.

In 1847 he was ordained priest and with his zealous community, now forty in number, converted the whole parish, except "the parson, the pew-opener, and two drunken men." Also in 1847 he began the publication of *Lives of the Modern Saints*, not as biographies, but as showing the growth of sanctity under the operation of grace and the supernatural perfection attained.

In 1848, Newman arrived from Rome with his new congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, and established himself at Old Oscott, Birmingham, then renamed Maryvale. Faber placed himself under Newman as a simple novice, taking with him all his community who were willing to follow his example. In 1849 he was sent by Newman to found the Oratory at King William Street, London, and was appointed its superior, where he remained until his death nine years later. In the poor chapel there, which had once been a Public House, Faber laid the foundation of his future works: poor schools, nightly services, and sermons with hymns and processions of the Blessed Sacrament formed their chief characteristics. In spite of his weak health, an almost incredible amount of work was crowded into those final years.

His hymns, composed especially for his services, display a combination of accurate theological doctrine, almost fanatical devotion, musical rhythm, and poetic talent. Some of his best-known hymns are *The Greatness of God*, *The Will of God*, *The Eternal Father*, *The God of my Childhood*, *The Pilgrims of the Night*, *The Land beyond the Sea*, *I was wandering and weary*, and *The Shadow of the Rock*.

His knowledge of the spiritual life and the extent of his theological reading were to result in a further eight books, *All for Jesus*, *Growth*

in *Holiness*, *The Blessed Sacrament*, *The Creator and the Creature*, *The Foot of the Cross*, *Spiritual Conferences*, *The Precious Blood*, and *Bethlehem*. The many foreign translations of these works and the constant quotation by spiritual writers have raised Faber to the rank of a master in mystical theology. He also wrote two volumes of *Notes on Doctrinal Subjects*, giving the skeleton of various sermons and of two projected works, *Calvary* and *The Holy Ghost*.

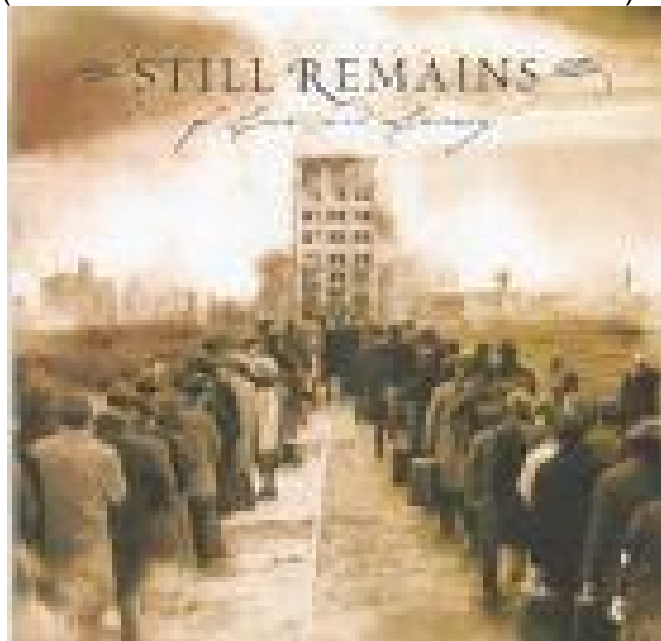
It is said that as a preacher he was remarkable for his delivery, expressiveness, absence of gesticulation, and surprising force. He died on September 26th 1863.

Andrew Yoshiro

More Songs of Praise Music Review

Still Remains. Of Love and Lunacy

(Note: This album is not for the faint hearted)



Still Remains is a Christian metalcore band from Grand Rapids, Michigan, evolving from hardcore band 'Shades Of Amber'. In early 2006, Still Remains joined Welsh metal band Bullet For My Valentine, along with Hawthorne Heights and Aiden on the Kerrang XXV Tour,

performing a storming set at the Brixton Academy.

The band comprises T.J. Miller on vocals, Mike Church and Jordan Whelan on guitars and gruff roared vocals. Evan Willey plays a thunderous bass,

Adrian "Bone" Green is on drums and Zach Roth provides the magic with his keyboards. Still Remains have a distinctive sound, which uses the keyboards to add a melancholy texture behind everything else. Vocals are loud and forceful in general but with some variation of tone here and there.

The band claim influences include 'In Flames', 'HIM', 'Soilwork', 'Decapitated' and 'Children Of Bodom'. However, if you like 'Bullet for my Valentine' but find 'Lamb of God' a bit on the heavy side, this could be just the band for you.

Unusually for this genre, there is no bad language in the songs or on stage. After all they are Christians. The lads are black clad with long hair and adopt a goth / emo appearance while the guitar playing is powerful and appropriate without any twiddly solos.

After seeing them live and listening to the album, I found that Still Remains grow on you. Especially the songs *The worst is yet to come*, *White Walls*, *To live and die by fire*, *Recovery*, *Blossom–The Witch* and perhaps best of all, *Bliss* and *I can revive him with my own hands*.

Of Love and Lunacy has 12 tracks and comes with the lyrics printed within the CD packaging, which is just as well if you want to know what they are singing about. There is plenty of Lunacy and rather less Love in the content. The songs tend towards the apocalyptic, as one might guess from the artwork, covering such topics as burning cities, escape, facing up to death, heaven's gates and resurrection. There are also songs requesting God's presence and warnings about evil.

At the end of the booklet each band member has a list of thanks to those who inspired and supported the making of this album. By now you will not be surprised that they all thank God the Father or Jesus Christ above all.

Andrew Jackson



Poem of the Month

My Garden

A Garden is a lovesome thing. God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Fern'd grot –
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not –
Not God! In gardens! When the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

Thomas Edward Brown. 1830-1897

Betty Gough Writes:

I first learnt this poem from a friend when I was in my teens. I liked it. It seemed to strike a chord somehow. But it was not until many years later that I knew why, when I recollected the following incident.

When I was five years old I went to Oldfield Road Infants School. We sometimes were told stories from the Bible. One was the story of Adam and Eve. I liked the beautiful garden with the one fruit tree in the middle which must not be touched. I was not surprised that Eve picked the fruit from the forbidden tree and gave it to Adam. The bit about the serpent did not register with me at the time. Perhaps I did not know what a serpent was. I was puzzled about them being naked, as well, but I could

understand them hiding from God, because they had been naughty. I thought it was sad that they were driven from the garden, and never allowed to go back. I always liked stories to have happy endings.

Now the only garden I knew at this time was our small back garden at home. My mother was the green-fingered parent, and she used to fill it with plants bought cheaply from the market. She did not like flowers regimented, so it was a profusion of colours and scents, and had been my playground all my life. So it was not surprising that the garden in the story began to look like the one that I knew.

One summer evening I was loitering there as the tobacco plants started to open and give out their scent, when into my mind came words from the story told to us at school – “The Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day”. I gazed down our garden. I knew you did not see God, but felt sure he must be there. So I faced the house, then turned very quickly, looking over my shoulder thinking I might catch a glimpse of him. I did not, of course, but I still felt sure he was there.

I can think of two morals to this tale. One is, if you want Bible stories to sink in, tell them to the very young whose minds are uncluttered. Secondly, if you have a plot of earth, however small, fill it with bright, scented flowers, for a young child may look on it – and see the Garden of Eden.



THE NEW CHURCH ITS ORGANS, MUSIC AND SERVICES (7)

After both churches had been bombed in 1940, services were held at first in the choir vestry of the New Church. However, it was soon discovered that the damaged Old Church could be made serviceable with temporary repairs. The ruined north aisle was sealed off with tarpaulins and scaffolding, and normal services were held as soon as possible after a surprisingly brief interval. As to the New Church, attention was primarily focussed on stacking up the pews, boarding up damaged windows and generally tidying up the interior, since it was realized that repairs would not be carried out until after the war.

The organ, as we've have said, had already been moved out of its chamber and stored elsewhere. Only some large wooden pipes had been left in situ, fixed to the walls around the sides of the chamber. The place was then made secure by the contractors (the firm of Dove Bros.), and was then left, locked and empty, for seventeen years.

Meanwhile, the blitz continued nightly, unabated. Towards the end of December 1940, it reached a new and frightening level of intensity. Sunday, December 29, was the 114th day of the blitz, and the following day the Evening Standard had a headline which ran "Seven London churches hit in London's fiercest raid". In that month, in the city of London, more than 1500 fires were burning. Elsewhere, whole streets were devastated. And this, in turn, brought in another menace – looting. This was widespread during the bombing, and in a single year, London alone had thousands of reported cases. Often thieves would enter a wrecked building, removing valuables and even furniture before rescue workers arrived. Warehouses and store rooms offered rich pickings: a nearby bomb would wreck the doors or windows, leaving the contents intact, and the place could be ransacked by thieves, working singly or part of a team, often while an intense bombing raid was still taking place overhead: this lasted throughout the war.

All of which brings us to Defoe Road and the church rooms (then divided into two halls)

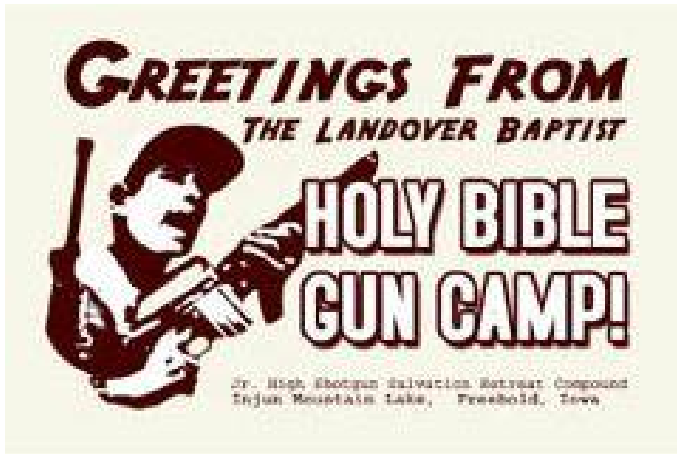
in which the organ from the New Church had been stored. The organ was, of course, a large instrument, and its nearly two tons of pipes and actions would have taken up every inch of available floor space. Before WW2, Defoe Road consisted of two rows of Victorian houses, flanked on one side by the halls themselves. Although it is possible that the organ had already been affected by blast from bombs during the early war years, extremely serious damage was caused by a flying bomb (V1) which exploded with enormous force at the site on Sunday, June 25, 1944, totally destroying many of the houses on both sides of the road. The church rooms' broken doors and windows would have given access to would-be vandals and thieves (many of the organ pipes contained a large quantity of lead), and there are still eye-witnesses who can remember seeing children running around the streets, blowing organ pipes which had been removed from the complex. The modern block of flats now standing next to the small hall marks a war damage site. This indicates a common feature of post-war rebuilding: when serious bomb damage occurred, the ruins were eventually pulled down, invariably being replaced after the war by blocks of flats (multiple dwellings of this type, suddenly interrupting an unbroken row of houses, can be seen all over central London, making bombed sites easily identifiable).

The New church miraculously escaped further bomb damage until the end of the war, which came in 1945. Sometime later, the massive wooden organ pipes left intact in the organ chamber were removed. These had been incorporated into the 1935 instrument from the original organ built in 1858, and were a vital part of its bass section. Like the rest of the instrument, these pipes were never seen again.

TO BE CONTINUED

David Bell

Emma Forrest's Website Review



There is a town called Freehold, Iowa. In this town the 157,000 members strong Landover Baptist Church reigns supreme over an extensive empire including vast swathes of real estate such as a theme park, a village, a retirement community, fitness centres, golf courses and four, count 'em, Olympic sized swimming pools.

It is a land where the King James Bible is taken as the literal word of God and the template for every part of life.

Unfortunately it is also a land where the unsaved (of which there is a very long list, including the mentally ill and abortion doctors) are NOT welcome (their capitals). Nor are homosexuals or African-Americans – Landover Baptists believe in segregation and slavery and they also believe that George W Bush was appointed by God to do battle with heathens.

Hopefully by now you will have discerned that www.landoverbaptist.org is actually a satire of all that fundamentalist Christians can turn their attention to. The Who We Are and What We (And God) Believe (sub heading: Our Bible Based Policy Against The Unsaved; as Jesus commanded) page tells you all you need to know, some of which is mentioned above.

As you might have guessed life as a church member can be pretty restrictive. There is a *huge* and hilarious list of rules. The following violations result in a 200 dollar fine: arriving late at church (note to Rector; St Mary's is sitting on a potential goldmine there!), failure to attend a service without written permission from a Pastor, inappropriate dress on men or women (for women that means skirts above the knee and trousers or a fine of \$300), witchcraft, dancing and/or skipping, association with Catholics, Presbyterians, Mormons,

Methodists, Unitarians, Episkypols, or any other occult activity (unless under supervision by Dr. J. Edwards), failure to conform to rules and regulations, failure to submit to authority, failure to bring at least one new guest to church a week.

There are gems scattered throughout the site. Such as: 'Landover Baptist Pastors are God's authority on Earth. This is obvious even to the half-witted homosexual man who would rather play Jack-Be-Nimble in the flower beds of this great nation than come to terms with God Almighty.' I also enjoyed the kids corner, which includes tips on how to spot a gay man by his handshake, where to buy a 'Love Jesus or Burn' badge and organize a Harry Potter books burning.

And if that doesn't tempt you, readers with children take note. If you want to stop them eating too many Easter eggs, the home page, while warning that all children found celebrating Pagan traditions such as Easter egg hunts and the Easter bunny will face punishment from Jesus, insists on the checking of hands for tell tale pastel dyes and unanalysis for chocolate traces.

To sum up, the beliefs page ends – 'Please note - If you do not have the same beliefs as we do, you are going to burn in Hell forever.' Well, you cannot say that they did not warn you.

The terrifying thing is that somewhere either within Britain's own religious history or deep within America's bible belt I would be willing to bet the price of a Rose and Crown G and T (another Landover violation if not part of Communion!) that at least some of these things are or have been actively pursued.

The whole thing is at times in very poor taste indeed (there is a picture of a burning cross to celebrate Christian love, with hooded robes worn for heat protection 'and nothing more'). Wisely, the site warns against under 18s reading it. But it is a finely crafted satire of what nonsense the far right and fundamentalist Christians can spout and should be required web surfing for good liberals everywhere; just to remind us what we can be up against.

Book Review

Saki: Complete Short Stories, £1.99, ISBN 1-85326-071-1 published by Wordsworth editions, but there are lots of editions of smaller collections

Ironic adaptations of classic novels seem to be in vogue with film producers recently. I would like to suggest that they consider the short stories of Saki next.

Hector Hugh Munro, better known as Saki, wrote a staggering number of short stories and was a master of the genre. Before being killed tragically young like so many of his time in the trenches of World War One he positively churned out hundreds of tales of Edwardian life tinged with myth, irony, and laced with a biting wit.

To return to my film theme; if someone does not give Rupert Everett the part of Reginald (star of many of the stories, such as *Reginald in Russia*, *Reginald on the Academy*, *Reginald on Christmas Presents*) sooner rather than later it will be a severe blow to satire. He was born to play it; see the 2002 adaptation of *The Importance of Being Earnest* for proof.

Along with Clovis, another frequent character, Reginald just loves causing mischief and mayhem, through, it seems, sheer boredom and arrogance. They make rather unsatisfactory houseguests and dinner party guests and encourage others to do the same. There are other characters who you feel must have learned at their knee. See *The Unrest-Cure* and *The Schartz-Metterklume Method*.

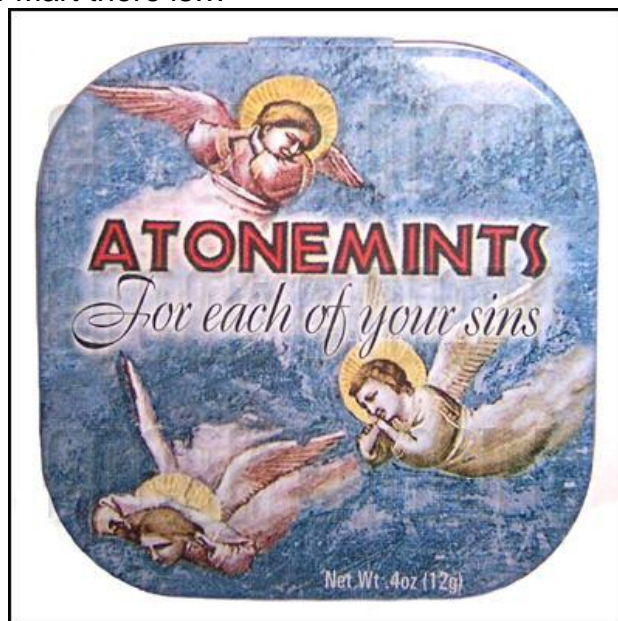
I think it likely that Roald Dahl read Saki and some are rather like an Edwardian Tales of the Unexpected; I particularly enjoyed *The Open Window* and *The Interlopers* and *Sredni Vashtar*, and *Gabriel-Ernest* will appeal to the blood thirsty. Many contain sinister aunts and bored and devious children. As Saki was sent to live with maiden aunts at the age of two and failed at the time to see what he would later acknowledge to be the comic potential of such a set up, he later got his revenge in print. The conventions of a society where one may feel uncomfortable for wearing the wrong type of glove often do battle with raw, untamed nature and it is not always a neat, easy or clean solution.

Emma Forrest

Advertisement

Easter is one of those difficult times for many people, what with giving things up just when all that extra chocolate appears, finding that perfect card or egg, giving in to the rector about extra duties etc but it is also traditionally a time for confession and atonement. Wouldn't it be great if there was some way to make this most awkward of acts a little easier, more palatable if you will, well Hurrah!

Thanks to those wonderful people at Freak-E-Mart there is...



These delicious treats come in a very lovely and practical tin box containing 65-70 breath fresheners, just the thing for before you spill all those grubby secrets and embarrassing transgressions to the clergy.

They may not help with the rest of Easter or make what you confess any sweeter but they are a very tasty substitute for chocolate, alcohol, TV, cigarettes or whatever else you give up during the Lenten season or at any other time for that matter.

Available via the Internet for the bargain price of just £2.99 from Freak-E-Mart.*

Andrew Yoshiro

*Or to the winner of our Caption Competition.

Ed

Last Month's Caption Competition



Here's the picture just to remind you. Our adjudicator chose no. 1 as the winner. The "racing nuns" are yours!. The other entries (all excellent) are in no particular order.

Since her adoption of radical feminism, Prudence always made the most of the "does anyone know of any cause or impediment..." part of the wedding service.

St Audrey's PCC arranged an intercessors training day.

During his sermon on Trinity Sunday, Hilda felt moved to disagree with some of the Rector's carefully thought out points.

When Dulcie auditioned for the part of *Maria*, the Social Committee rather wondered if it was too late to cancel the production of "The Sound Of Music".

When St Audrey's Wanderers played their arch-rivals (St Sepulchre's Wednesday) in the diocese football league, Mrs Patterson's advice from the touchline could be shockingly specific.

Encouraging Ann to attempt to trump Rev Susie by singing the Exsultet was not the ideal thing to do, as Fred and George found out!

A whole new interpretation of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity

It was Mario and Luigi's first death metal gig.

"She's always practising her Mongolian open throat singing - I wished she'd stuck with Rock and Roll lessons; especially now we've bought all this 50's gear."

Coming to find you... wherever you are " yelled Phyllis, who seemed to have not really understood the true nature of the game!

Stan and Bert had mixed feelings (and oncoming earache) about Ena's audition for the Ethel Merman version of "There's no Business like Show Business"

Having grown up with an earthly Father who was hard of hearing, Nora had an idiosyncratic approach to the Intercessions.

There was often a lively exchange of theological views at St Maureen's, especially during the sermon on Trinity Sunday.

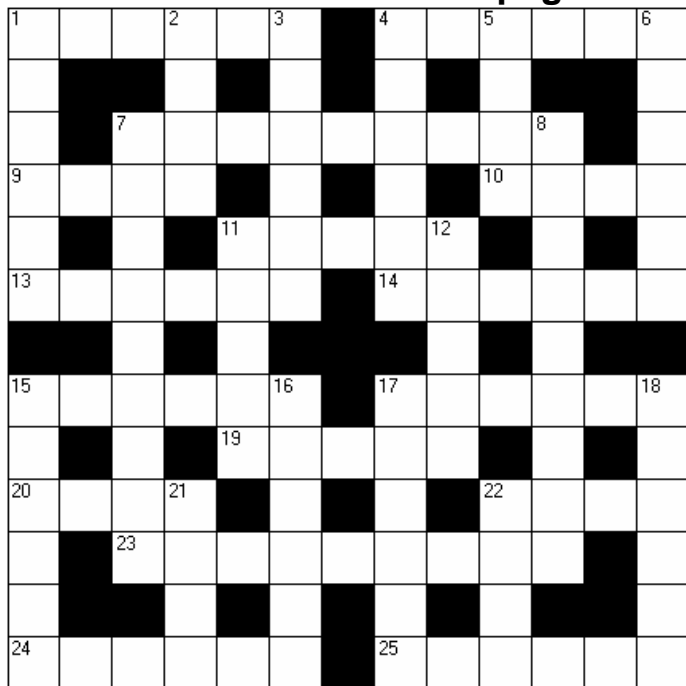
As a lifelong Bingo player, Veronica sometimes got confused when the hymn numbers were announced.

Prize Caption Competition



Your caption goes here. Win our super new Star Prize as featured on page 12. Entries can be given to any one of the magazine team. Closing date 20th April.

Crossword – solution on page 15



Across

- 1 To be half asleep (6)
 4 Simon Peter's brother, in John ch. 1 (6)
 7 Wife of David in 2 Samuel ch. 12 (4-5)
 9 Jeremiah wrote in one in Jeremiah ch. 51 (4)
 10 Saul abode under one in Ramah, in 1 Samuel ch. 22 (4)
 11 In which God will carry the lambs, according to Isaiah ch. 40 (5)
 13 A son of Ithamar in Ezra ch. 8 (6)
 14 Location of Elisha in 2 Kings ch. 6 (6)
 15 Prayer (6)
 17 A building devoted to worship (6)
 19 Brother of Alexander in Mark ch. 15 (5)
 20 A description of the cymbals in Psalm 150 (4)
 22 I ____ on the work of thy hands (Ps 143.5) (4)
 23 The lion strangled for his, in Nahum ch. 2 (9)
 24 Card game (6)
 25 OT book (6)

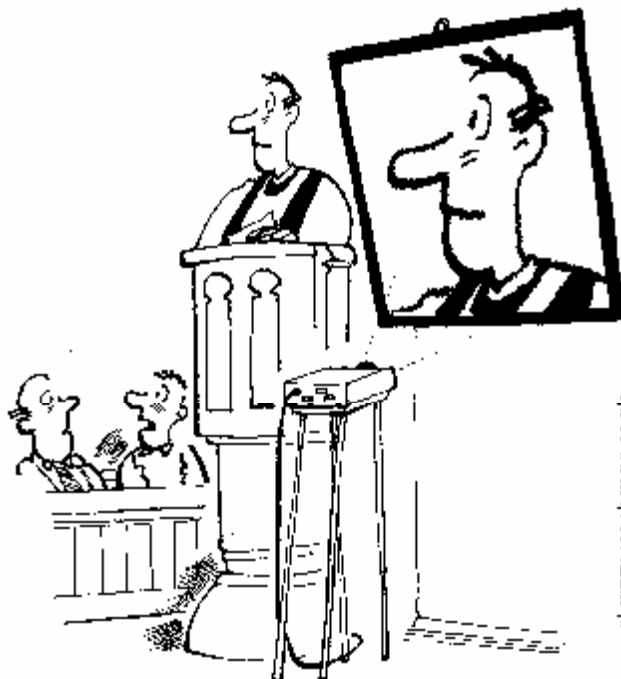
Down

- 1 ..and _____ it with slime (Ex 2.3) (6)
 2 Like the flesh, according to Matthew ch. 26 (4)
 3 Name of the brook in Numbers ch. 13 (6)
 4 The ark of God was brought here in 1 Samuel ch. 5 (6)
 5 ..not reckoned of grace, but of ____ (Rom 4.4) (4)
 6 Make a vigorous attack (4,2)
 7 He that hath a _____ eye (Pr 22.9) (9)

- 8 Fellow soldier in Philemon ch. 1 (9)
 11 Name of the brook in 1 Samuel ch. 30 (5)
 12 Leader of the Israelites during the exodus (5)
 15 Person dedicated to a religious life (6)
 16 Shade of meaning (6)
 17 Struggle (6)
 18 Its bishop signs himself "Exon" (6)
 21 Butter container described as lordly in Judges ch. 5 (4)
 22 Savoury foodstuff in Genesis ch. 27 (4)

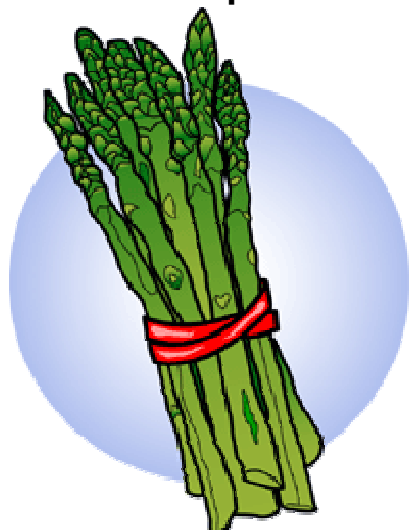
Sudoku Solution for April

2	6	8	9	5	4	7	1	3
3	5	9	2	1	7	8	6	4
1	7	4	6	8	3	5	2	9
8	1	6	4	3	2	9	5	7
7	9	5	8	6	1	4	3	2
4	3	2	5	7	9	6	8	1
5	4	7	1	2	6	3	9	8
6	2	3	7	9	8	1	4	5
9	8	1	3	4	5	2	7	6



...to be honest, I am not sure that all the money spent on a data projector was money well spent!

Recipe



In my alphabet, M stands for May = Asparagus. The English season is short, but is so worth waiting for. Personally I eschew imports with their air miles and all that that entails, and (as with strawberries in June) I like to “pig out” during the *proper* month.

I've *done* fried asparagus topped with poached egg and parmesan, asparagus with hollandaise sauce, asparagus quiche etc etc – but to my mind, nothing could be more delicious than simple plain asparagus, lightly steamed, and served with loads of butter, freshly ground black pepper, and some really good bread to mop the juices up with.

As my steamer can't quite accommodate the full length of a bunch of asparagus spears, I cut them to fit the steamer and use the trimmings to make soup. This recipe particularly appeals to me, as I hate to throw away the valuable and tasty cooking water.

Asparagus Soup (for 4)

Remains of 2 bunches of asparagus, chopped into 25mm pieces and with the woody ends discarded

Water from cooking the original asparagus

1 oz. Butter

1 oz. Flour

2 egg yolks (save the whites to make meringues)

Approx 1/8 of a pint of cream or top of the milk.

Melt the butter in a saucepan and stir in the flour to create a stiff paste. Gradually work in the cooled asparagus water and stir over a gentle heat until the mixture is smooth.

Add the asparagus trimmings and simmer until tender, stirring constantly.

When the asparagus is tender, pass through a sieve or liquidiser and return to a saucepan.

Beat the egg yolks with the cream (or top of the milk) and add to the soup. Reheat gently, being careful not to allow it to boil, as this will curdle the eggs.

Season, and serve – or freeze for later.

Crossword Solution

Across

1 Drowse 4 Andrew 7 Bathsheba 9 Book 10 Tree 11 Bosom 13 Daniel 14 Dothan
15 Orison 17 Temple 19 Rufus 20 Loud 22 Muse 23 Lionesses 24 Euchre 25 Esther

Down

1 Daubed 2 Weak 3 Eshcol 4 Ashdod 5 Debt 6 Wade in 7 Bountiful 8 Archippus
11 Besor 12 Moses 15 Oblate 16 Nuance 17 Tussle 18 Exeter 21 Dish 22 Meat

HACKNEY SINGERS

The Hackney Singers next concert will be on Saturday May 20th 2006 at St. John's Church Hackney at 7.30p.m.

They are singing VERDI'S REQUIEM with the Forest Philharmonic Orchestra and with Mark Shanahan conducting.

Tickets are £12 full and £7 concession and can be obtained from Jean Guest at Church or 0208 922 1691

Guaranteed to be a wonderful experience.

Jean Guest

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

John Keniston (020 8809 1479 jgkeniston@lineone.net), Richard Munnings (020 8800 7198 rmhmunnings@yahoo.co.uk), Jane Pryce (020 7359 1224 janepryce@btinternet.com), Emma Forrest (emmaforrest@yahoo.com), Andrew Yoshiro (nocturna@dircon.co.uk) Mark Perrett (markperrett@btinternet.com) David Hammonds (dhammonds@hotmail.co.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

Organist and Director of Music, David Bell

Parish Administrator, and Verger, David Hammonds (Mon-Fri. 9.30-1 pm) (020 7254 6072 stmarystokenewington@btinternet.com)

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

PCC Secretary, Jean Guest (020 8802 4921).

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

Recorder of Stewardship Magnus Flett (020 7359 3729 magnus.flett@blueyonder.co.uk)

Parish Information for St John's

Church Wardens, John Davis & Martha Christian

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, followed by	8:45 am	5 pm
Friday	8:30 am, followed by	8:45 am	5 pm

Brownies. Fridays 6.30 pm See Irene Powell after church

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