

St Swithun's Church Newsletter

For information and inspiration

August 2011

Hope

There is a lovely cove just near where we were staying on holiday this summer. It is called Hope Cove. But the cove, small as it is, is divided into two parts - Inner Hope and Outer Hope - and there is a wonderful signpost on one of the twisty-turny Devon lanes indicating that Inner Hope is one way, Outer Hope is another. How true.

I equate outer hope with a sense of bravado, that facade we put on when we are not quite sure of ourselves, when we are aware of our own sense of insecurity, but when we

are acting to ensure that no one else recognises our limitations. Inner hope, however, is that sense of quiet assurance. It is a sense of trust, often accompanied by a feeling of peace, when we are convinced by the truth of what we know, of what we can expect.

We speak, don't we, of the hope of God, a hope of heaven, and yet, a few years ago, having preached on the topic of hope, I was stopped by a gentleman,

who said quite adamantly, 'I don't hope, I know!'. And this belies a change in the use, or meaning of the word. We hope for sunshine, we hope for good exam results, we hope someone feels better soon - to the end that 'hope' and 'wish' are almost synonymous. And yet, in our Christian

context, the inner hope that comes from God is something that we are convinced of, and so is something that sustains, that encourages, and that calms.

Outer hope is perhaps an intrinsic part of human nature

- there is after all the need to 'fake it til you make it' in some areas of life. And yet it is inner hope that satisfies and equips. It is a gift from God; his assurance of his presence, his sovereignty, and his peace. And so, in Paul's words, I pray:

'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.' Romans 15:13

Em Coley



A day in the life of Sally Barber



Where do I start? Well with three boys aged 7, 3, and 1..... What do you think?

My typical day starts anytime between 6.00am and 7.00am depending on when James decides it's time to welcome the day himself. The morning routine consists of a rush downstairs to start the mammoth task of breakfasting all six of us including the ever-patient Jasper (our dog!). After a conveyor belt of toast and cereal we move on to getting dressed. Thank goodness two out of three can now do it themselves!!

Hopefully by 8.30am, packed lunch made and school shoes found, we can leave the house on our short walk/cycle to Dominic's school. Some days I have to admit it's rather a power march/drag as we are running late and trying to beat the school whistle. Typically we are seen to be going against the pedestrian traffic as parents are leaving the playground.

My day then can be most varied, from the weekly shop to Sainsburys, dropping off Oliver at Magpies to a visit to Costa where the room at the back has become a place for young mums to gather to offload and listen to each other and eat cake.

Some days it's a time to catch up with Mum, one of my most favourite things to do, others Chris is off and we have some family time together with James and Oliver. Brunch with Em and Jack has been a recent addition, with Chris joining us last week as well. To have time to meet and catch up with friends and family is great, but it does seem that my week revolves around 'Cake and Juice' as Oliver calls it!!!

Trying to do any jobs around the house is interesting with James hanging off my leg, so sitting down for lunch is a welcome rest especially when Chris comes home. It's another chance to offload and maybe hand over responsibility for James for a while before Chris goes back to work or runs out on a shout. Very unpredictable, much like my day really.

Another journey down to School at 3.00pm to collect Dominic. This is one of my favourite times of day when all my boys are back together and on the short journey home peace reigns, with one or two sleeping children as I catch up with my good friend Jenny and hear about Dominic's antics at school.

If it's not swimming lessons or Martial Arts for Dominic, or choir practice/sing-along for me, then it's time to relax!! The close where we live is full of firefighter families and at the moment there are loads of kids aged between six months and eight years old. It's truly a blessing living in this community as they are only too happy to take it in turns to host the play time or make the cups of tea as we roam from garden to garden!

After 20 minutes of 'gentle' persuasion the kids finally say goodbye and fly into their own houses where the final feeding frenzy of the day begins. As Jasper waits patiently under the table to catch James' crumbs, Chris come home to rescue me once more before the challenge of bath and bed begins. Much hilarity later and by 7.30pm the

three Barber boys are all sparkly clean and sparked out in bed!! It's now that Chris and I cook together and share news and stories about our adventures in the day. By 8.30pm, after a manic tidying away of toys, we can finally relax with a glass of red or two!

There is no particular time when I pray during the day. It's the times of quiet when James is asleep, or we're walking to school, or I'm washing up or just watching my boys play together when I think about my blessings.

My wonderful children who exhaust me daily, but I could not be without them. I thank God for the love and support I am shown each day by my husband, my amazing Mum and Dad who need to know just how much Chris and I love them for all they do, and all my friends surrounding me.

Without the daily chats on the doorstep and the sneaky Costa visits I would probably go slightly mad! It's the combination of all this and knowing that God is in my life that keeps me sane and smiling.

God of all grace

Who in Jesus cried, 'I thirst',
Hold the people of east Africa in your
infinite love.

Be with those for whom the earth's
resources have run dry;

Be with those who must walk for miles to
find their daily bread;

Be with those for whom survival is a
fragile hope.

And be with us as we read the stories of
those who bear such acute suffering;

Give us hearts of compassion to respond
in your service,

So that together we may see restoration
where there is pain,

And all may rejoice in your goodness.

Amen

Pause for Prayer

'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.'

Matthew 11: v 28-30



We give thanks...

That as the pace of life slows through August we have the time to rest and reflect.

That the quieter times will give us the opportunity to come closer to God and to allow the Holy Spirit to pray in us and to teach us how to pray.

Pray for...

People struggling to survive in the Horn of Africa

The people of Norway

Those who guide us

Those who inspire us

Those who work to reduce suffering

All the children and helpers involved in the 'Waste Watchers' holiday club

All those enjoying a holiday break - that they will return refreshed and renewed

Awareness of the needs of others and the ability to give effective help

Spider Man...

Here's a lovely indication that the message of some of our silly action songs is getting through, even to our youngest members (in this case Emily Baggott):

Emily (patting the wall): Want to climb up wall.

Mum: You can't climb up the wall. Who do you think you are, Spider Man?

Emily: No....I'm special to God.

The Prayer Corner



There will be a few changes to the prayer corner in the coming weeks – see if you spot them! The idea is to use the area as a prompt to pray, and you will continue to find prayer resource books there, the

book of remembrance, information on organisations and people supported by St Swithun's and prayer cards. There will also be a central visual display and a symbol connected with that.

Over the coming weeks there will be a series on Jesus' 'I am' sayings, encouraging us to think and pray afresh about what Jesus meant by each of them and what that means for us at the moment. If you have the opportunity to sit quietly in that corner but are unsure how to use your time there will be a card on the table with some suggestions.

If you get the chance to use the space and want to share how you found it Em or I would love to hear from you.

Catherine Schneider

Homegroups after the summer: The Conspiracy of Freedom

We are consumers. No doubt. But does it have to shape our lives, fragment our communities and damage our world? What if we could resist the pressures of consumerism? What if we could live more simply, sustainably, generously?

Over the past few months, we've used a range of materials in homegroup: a series based on Bishop John's book *Living Jesus*, and more recently a series of studies based on the challenges and encouragements of the Sermon on the Mount. Up next: a set of discussions based around the DVD 'Conspiracy of Freedom'.

Each episode on the DVD considers a different aspect of life: starting with the general overview 'The Life', the series moves on to consider 'Home', 'Play' and 'Enough'. The series will hopefully excite and inspire us to explore what 'life in all its fullness' looks like in a world obsessed with getting more. Perhaps the way to a rich life is to think less about 'riches'?

Anyone is welcome to come along to a homegroup at any time, but the start of a new series is a particularly good time to join. If you're interested, just come along when you see it advertised in the pew sheet or ring Sam & Emma (327575) for details of the Thursday group or Martin Morse (326641) for the Wednesday group. No matter where you're at in your faith, there's a place for you in homegroup - it's not about knowing lots of right answers, but about exploring our faith together and supporting each other in that and in the ups and downs of life more generally. Why not give it a try?

Sam Partington

Praise Party

There is a training seminar for church children's workers led by Doug Horley considering 'Worship for 21st Century Kids'. This will be a chance to look at the culture kids are growing up in, the influences they are exposed to, and how we can stay relevant to our children in praise and worship. We will also learn about 'Journeying with Children' to help them go deeper with God in prayer and worship.

This will be led by Doug Horley who is a national and international children's worker and songwriter. Doug and his team travel far and wide putting on family praise parties, seminars and adult celebrations to spread the word of God. His heart is simply to see children meet with Jesus in a real and profound way and to have a bunch of fun in the process!

It will be held at Grove C of E School, North Drive, Grove on Saturday 10 September 2.00–4.00pm.

On the same day there will be a praise party for families with children under the age of 11. It will be from 6.00–7.30pm and I'm hoping that we'll take a contingent from St Swithun's. Look out for the sign up sheet nearer the time.

Em Coley



Flower Festival

Superb Summer Sundown

What a feast for the senses! The flowers were a delight to sight and smell, the anticipation engendered by the opening ceremony being fully gratified by the very talented artists; the sound of the versatile pianists a fitting complement. Outside, the brilliant jazz musicians delighted our hearing and we were all in awe of their talent and versatility; the youngsters were so relaxed and nonchalant, belying their gift. The taste of the curry was, if possible, even better than the smell, fragrant and spicy in perfect proportions. Sitting replete, enjoying stimulating conversation, the warmth of the day gave way to the chill touch of a rain-bearing breeze, but little could spoil such a perfect evening!

Chris Wright

Hog Roast

The smell of roasting pork drifting into church is not the normal end to a Sunday

service, but in many different and joyful ways the Flower Festival weekend wasn't an ordinary weekend. Thanks to a tip-off from Bill Hunwick, we were able to get a very professional hog roast at a great price, and it certainly provided a suitably celebratory patronal lunch. Bill also deserves credit for the sheer number of people he invited - it can't be often that a church lunch requires a whole table of reserved seating! The various people who contributed towards the array of salads also deserve a mention, continuing as they did St Swithun's tradition of great catering.

With somewhat 'indecisive' weather, we were glad of the marquee and church hall, but it was lovely having more time to chat with people from church and with guests than post-service coffee normally allows (and we did get some sun!). For younger church members, the garden games continued to go down well, and the various inventive uses to which they put the Connect 4 counters and hoopla was a great



reminder of the creativity of children. All that remains now is to decide how we can top it for next year's lunch!

Sam Partington

Karaoke - Undiscovered Talent!

St Swithun's Flower Festival weekend was an undoubted success, not least the Picnic and Karaoke evening.

For me (Roger) this was the first time I had attended a Karaoke evening and I was amazed – we had wall to wall talent with some great performances from the Scott Russell family, the Coleys and the Barbers – who could forget the duets of Em and Sally, of Lee and Sally, the rich tones of Simon – and that Kerri Morse was something else!

Brian Baggott and I do not support the same football team but we do have a common passion in Bonnie Tyler. We also share the skill of not being able to sing, even with the black and white dots in front of us! When we saw that 'Total Eclipse of the Heart' – one of her all time classics – was available... well, we just knew we had to pay our tribute

to our Bonnie.

In his wisdom, Lee set the machine for the long version of this song and with the cheers of the audience ringing in our ears, Bri and Rog burst into song. It was really hard work trying to concentrate on keeping up with the music which seemed to be out of sync with us singers, if you pardon the expression. Though, to be honest, when you are up there 'performing' you get into a world of your own and it really did sound good – to us two anyway. With the encouragement of our audience, we battled on right to the end of what, when sung by our hero, is a great classic number.

When the scores came up on the screen, the joint total of our effort failed to match the next lowest score! We enjoyed ourselves – after all that is what the evening was about – and for those who missed the debut AND last performance of Bri and Rog, we understand Simon recorded it... and it is selling like burnt cakes!

Bri and Rog

Sermon Series

This summer we will spend a few weeks thinking about the theme of food! By looking at a varied selection of feasts in the Bible we will consider how Jesus used food as a symbol of welcome, how God used food as a symbol of his faithfulness, and as a symbol of inclusion. If nothing else, it should whet our appetites!

31 July	The Gigantic Feast	2 Cor 9:6-10 Luke 9:10 - 17
7 August	Elijah's Feast	1 Kings 19:1-9 Matthew 5:1-12
14 August	Matthew's Feast	Romans 5:6-11 Luke 5: 27 - 32
21 August	A Seaside Feast	1 Peter 1:3-9 John 21:1-14
28 August (9.30am)	Peter's Feast	Acts 10:1-6 Matthew 10:1-16

Holiday Club



Another summer is here and we are preparing for this year's summer club for children from 4-11 years old in the garden of 49 Bagley Wood Road. This year we have planned three fun-packed days (August 24-26) of stories, music, games and craft on the theme of not wasting God's world.

Please pray for good weather, good fun and fellowship...and the band of helpers.

If it is at all like last year, a great time will be had by all. Please join us at the All Age Service on 28 August to continue the theme and to hear all about our adventures.

Mary Dennett

Garden Working Party

On Saturday 20 August, Rosey will co-ordinate another garden working party. Come along to the church grounds with garden gloves and tools. Anytime between 10am and 1pm, even just an hour will help. Bring your lunch.

Clergy:

Rev Em Coley 01865 735135;
emcoley@me.com

Rev Pam McKellen 01235 554739;
p.mckellen@btinternet.com

Newsletter Editor:

Jackie Smith 01865 326175;
jacquelinesmith0@gmail.com

Church Wardens:

Isabel Baggott 730950

Gerry Bowen-Thomas 739356

Bill Hunwick 739311

Dates for Your Diary

Sunday 7 August

6.30pm Refresh

Wednesday 24 - Friday 26 August

Waste Watchers Holiday Club

Sunday 28 August

11.00am All Age Service celebrating
Waste Watchers

Sunday 4 September

6.30pm Refresh

Saturday 10 September

10.00am-12.00 noon Craft Morning in
Church (4-11-year-olds)

Sunday 2 October

9.30am Harvest All Age Service,
followed by a Bring and Share Lunch

Monday 3 October

9.30am Harvest Service for the School
in Church

Saturday 14 October

10.00am-12.00 noon Craft Morning in
Church (4-11-year-olds)

Monday 31 October

5.00pm-7.00pm Party of Light
(alternative to Halloween)

Something to Say?

Please send any contributions for the St Swithun's Church newsletter to the Editor, Jackie Smith. We welcome text and/or pictures (in particular it would be good to build up a bank of pictures reflecting church life, so if you have any please do send them in).

Don't worry if writing isn't your thing – Jackie can help you with the right form of words.

Deadline for copy: 20 August 2011