

St Swithun's Church Newsletter

For information and inspiration

October 2010

Travelling a little slower...



Harvest, I believe, is all about God's goodness. It is a time to thank God for his generosity in giving us good things. It is a time to take stock and acknowledge the goodness of the

Earth as seen so richly at this time of year in the beautiful colours on the trees, the array of fruit and vegetables cultivated and wild. It is a time to recognise the bounty we enjoy; the choices that fill our supermarket shelves, the luxury of well furnished homes, cars, possessions.

It is a time of year which reminds me of Psalm 23, a psalm so often used as comfort for the dying, but a psalm that also speaks poignantly into the busyness of our lives:

*The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters, he
refreshes my soul. He guides me along
the right paths for his name's sake.
(Ps 23:1-3)*

The pace of life can be frenetic as we juggle family, jobs, friends, homes, chores, responsibilities. And yet I think that God longs for us to slow down and to take time to recognise his presence with us, the

goodness of his gifts, the life of joy that he longs for us. And today particularly, my heart is full of joy. We have just returned from seeing Jack's consultant, a gentle, patient, understanding man who has walked with us on our journey with Jack since day two of his life. Today he has told us he doesn't need to see us again, he is delighted with Jack's progress who, he said, has taught him (again!) that the medical journals are not always right! And as we left, his parting words were:

"Jack may be travelling a little slower on the motorway, but that just means he will see more."

And that is exactly our experience. Every small insignificant development that Jack makes – learning to wave, playing peek-a-boo, a clever crawl/shuffle method of getting across a room – is something to rejoice over. His development may be slower; our experience of it is richer, and full of delight. We are grateful beyond words to God for his goodness and generosity in giving us Jack, who I think, teaches us that by slowing down the pace of life, we can enter more fully into the goodness and the joy of the life God so richly gives.

Em Coley



Why not take a look at the church website for more information and updates: www.stswithunskennington.org/

A Day in the Life of Phillippa Franklin

My days all normally start the same, I get up at about 7am (make that 11am in the holidays), have breakfast, do all the normal morning routines, spend about half an hour picking out an outfit, as all teenage girls do, and then off to whatever the day holds for me. I get up in the morning because I know there will be some sort of adventure to take part in (even if it's just a trip to Sainsbury's.) Every day is different, and I want to see what each day holds for me, to move me along my life journey.

We all know I like food so my best part of the day is meal times. But not just because I get to cook for myself now and have amazing food, but because very often it is the one time of the day when I can actually sit back and relax, watch TV (normally 'Friends'), and/or spend time with Mum and Ben. This is the best part of my day, discussing everything that has happened and normally laughing a tremendous amount, but of course still eating lots.

Normally my days consist of reading, mostly one of my Jane Austen books as she is my favourite author, I also watch "far too much American TV", as Mum will point out. Most of my days are normally pretty relaxed during the holidays but when I am at school ...coming up to being university...I do loads of work in the evening, when I am not in class. I also become a taxi service for Ben, and occasionally Mum.

Most days of the week I will spend far too long on the phone to my best friend Jazz, it perplexes Mum how even when I have spent two hours on the phone to Jazz on a Monday afternoon I can then spend three hours on the phone to her on a Tuesday morning, but what can I say, we are teenage girls, we have a lot to talk about. I spend quite a lot of my day talking to Mum, either repeating the plan I have made for the next day about ten times or explaining to her why the man in



the TV programme I am watching is 'Buff', she still never gets it.

After a long day of talking – because talking is what I do best – I do my second best thing, eat! I normally eat between 6 and 7, having cooked for myself something delicious like 'Mac. & cheese', nothing beats it. As I said earlier I normally eat with Mum and Ben or on my own watching TV. The more I write, the more I realise how much of my time I spend watching TV, I do spend quite a lot of my time seeing my friends and doing other things!

Having normally spent the day being a taxi service to Ben, a support and chatterbox to Jazz, a friend to Mum, and reading lots of Austen, I will finally head up to my room, chill out on Facebook and chat to my friends on MSN. Then I will get into bed and just sit, this is when I pray, I don't do it out loud and quite often I don't close my eyes, but I just sit, when no-one knows I'm doing it, in silence and my room, and just sit and think and speak to God thanking him for the day, thanking him for whatever he has in store for me tomorrow. I pray that he is looking after my Dad, but most of all I thank him for all that I have and all that I am, because the more the days go on and the more I speak to my friends, the more I realise I am special and God made me just the way I am, to be who I am and to stay that way.

Phillippa Franklin

Family Baptism

Although they never talked much about it, my parents were not believers or churchgoers, which naturally made me quite interested. I wanted my children to grow up in a Christian environment, but we never really found a church that welcomed us so warmly as this church, and there always seemed to be a reason not to go.

The children love going to children's church as the people running it make it exciting and fresh and really make time to get to know the children's individual personalities. I can see that Joshua, who was always painfully shy, has flourished in confidence since going to the church. They are both very comfortable in the surroundings and love the company of the other children too.

Pete and I have moved houses and jobs many times around Kent and London and for the first time are very settled and happy in our environment and church, so it seems natural to me to want to get Joshua and Samuel baptised in St Swithun's. It would, however, mean that I was the only one not baptised in the family as Pete was brought up in a Christian household and was baptised at an early age. So, I thought, why not get baptised at the same time to affirm my faith? So we are getting baptised on the 24 October and we're looking forward to it.

Rebecca Pogose

Pete, Rebecca and the boys would be delighted if you would join them on Sunday 24 October at 11.00am for the baptism and afterwards for a bring and share lunch in church. Let's make this a special celebration!



Pause for Prayer



As we support Church Action on Poverty through our Harvest collection, let's also commit to praying for those experiencing the devastating impact of poverty in our country, and across the world.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
Matthew 5:3

On those bowed down by poverty

Lord have mercy

On those who struggle to survive

Lord have mercy

On parents who have lost children to disease

Lord have mercy

On children who miss school because of unpayable debt

Lord have mercy

On young people growing up with no hope for the future

Lord have mercy

On adults who work and cannot make a living

Lord have mercy

On farmers who cannot sell what they produce

Lord have mercy

On people working to rebuild their lives after disaster

Lord have mercy

For campaigners fighting for justice

Lord have mercy

For citizens standing up for their rights

Lord have mercy

For postcard-signers, email-senders and letter-writers

Lord have mercy

For politicians and decision-makers

Lord have mercy

For the leaders of our country

Lord have mercy

For ourselves, as we struggle with these issues

Lord have mercy

For your world

Lord have mercy

Cleanliness is next to...

Its time for the annual BIG CLEAN in the church. The faithful, hardworking band of ladies (and the odd gent) do a wonderful job week in and week out, but once a year we really need you to lend a hand to get rid of the cobwebs and the dust in remote places.

The date is **Saturday 13 November** at 10am. Isabel Baggott has very kindly agreed to mastermind the operation but we now need bodies to do the work. If you can help, do let Isabel know. More hands mean less work, so come along in droves.

Gerry Bowen Thomas

Christmas Market

Well here we are, it's that time of year again. Put 20 November firmly in your diary for the Christmas Market at the Village Centre, 10-12 noon.

We would be really grateful for people to help with the stalls. If you are willing to do this, please tell Mary or Isabel or write your name on the list that will be at the back of the Church.

We would also be grateful for donations of the following items: cakes, good quality books, items for the craft stall, toiletries, jewellery, Christmas decorations, good tombola prizes (large & small), and raffle prizes.

Have you any unwanted new things at home you could donate? Or maybe you could take advantage of one of the 'buy one get one free offers'. You can bring things on Sundays or give to Mary or Isabel or any member of the fundraising committee. Many thanks in advance.

Mary Dennett and Isabel Baggott

Worship at the School

This summer I worked closely with Em to refresh the way we do class worship as a school.

On a Tuesday the children will be looking at different stages in Jesus' life, which will change each term. This term we are focusing on Jesus the miracle worker; looking in detail at 'Jesus feeds the 5,000', 'Jesus heals a man' and 'Jesus calms the storm'. During our worship time the children will discuss the stories and think about what they mean to Jesus, God, themselves and the world.

On a Thursday the children will focus on prayer; each term taking a different focus. This term, to tie in with Harvest, we are being thankful for nature and if you look around the school many classes have made mobiles to act as a reminder during their reflection.

Term	Focus	Activity
Term 1	Nature	Mobiles
Term 2	Giving	3D parcels with what God has given them on each side
Term 3	Fears and sadness	A picture on a clear plastic sheet of their fears, so that it is not so scary when a light is shone on it.
Term 4	Family and friends	A friendship bracelet with a bead for each family member
Term 5	Promises	God's promises
Term 6	Journeys	A map of the journeys they have made and will be making

The teachers have all given positive feedback and across the school children are more engaged in their reflection. Creating a physical reminder for their Thursday worship has proven particularly popular! I would like to say a huge thank you to Em for her time and guidance!

Charlotte Blackwell, RE co-ordinator and Sycamore class teacher



Some do the three peaks...we did 33 churches!



Saturday 11 September was the 2010 Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust Ride & Stride. At 10.25, following a horrendous downpour and under the watchful eye of the two Barbaras, Em and Roger set off to visit 33 churches from Oxford through to Abingdon – by 18.00. Having registered at the three Kennington churches, our next stop was St Luke's in Canning Crescent – one of the highlights of our day, but more on this later.

After St Aldate's – and in the true spirit of Ride & Stride – we locked our cycles and helmets in the racks outside St Ebbe's Church and set off to walk our Oxford quota of churches. While I visited the churches of Santander, Barclays, and Lloyds TSB, Em went in search of the church of Prêt a Manger, to order coffee and cheese and ham toasted croissants – highly recommended.

En route to Botley was St Margaret's church at Binsey, known as the Lewis Carroll (Alice in Wonderland) church – the second highlight of our day. It was 14.10 when we left St Lawrence, New Hinksey, with the task of getting to Abingdon and back to St Swithun's by 18.00. But we just had to

eat – and where better than The Fishes? A quiet word with the staff – we were on a sponsored cycle ride – and they responded magnificently: ham, eggs, and fries washed down with a pint of iced orange juice and lemonade that has never tasted better. Then we started what proved to be the hardest leg of what was rapidly becoming an epic journey, along the A34 cycle track to St Lawrence at South Hinksey, and the welcoming smile from Pearl Livet and colleague where we were fed and watered again.

So, the final leg to Radley, Abingdon and Sunningwell and back to St Swithun's – it was now 15.08 and we were finding the challenge – enormous. Having planned the entire route to be as flat as possible, even going through Kennington every incline became a hill (at least to me). The sight of Em charging off into the distance – or was it me fading? – acted as the incentive I needed even if she had to stop every few hundred yards to allow me to catch up.

At Christ Church in Abingdon we came across their Radio Church and managed to link up to Bampton St Mary's for an online chat and another notch on our list. At 17.12 we left St Michael's in Park Crescent en route to St Leonard's, Sunningwell. It is a pleasant ride once you have navigated Wooton Road and turned off at the welcoming road sign for Sunningwell, entering the village to the crack of leather on willow – yes Sunningwell Cricket Club were at home.

For me, the journey home from Sunningwell was the hardest. I have to confess I had to walk up Flowing Well Hill – mainly because I could not ride and phone at the same time. As I reached what seemed to be a level section of road, Em came flying past and off into the distance; when I got to the junction with the old A34, she was waiting

– probably to make sure medical assistance was not required. Once into Bagley Wood Road it was downhill all the way to the Avenue, finally sweeping triumphantly into St Swithun's to a warm welcome from Linda Frankum, journey over – for another year at least – the time was 17.58. After the planned 33 churches and some 35 miles cycling – as my Oliver would say, 'we did it Grandpa'. It was then that I found the 18.00 target was so that Em did not miss Strictly Come Dancing on the TV!

I mentioned a couple of highlights – and we should say that every church visited was a wonderful experience. First, St Luke's in Canning Crescent is worthy of a visit. In an old tin hut – which they hope to replace with a new wooden structure – it is a wonderful example of how the church can provide for its community. It acts as church, home to toddlers, youth club, drop-in centre; it provides counselling facilities, art classes... they do not have chairs or pews but settees; how about that, Bill! What an enthusiastic welcome. The second highlight was St Margaret's Binsey, so quintessentially a rural church, surrounded by grazing sheep and cattle and with an amazing history – why not dine at the Perch and pay St Margaret's a visit; they are raising funds for necessary work to keep this unique church alive, so please remember them in your prayers.

And finally, my thanks to Em; she was great company and if my original plan to go it alone had gone ahead, I would have really struggled to complete the course. Finally, finally, can I make a public appeal for my Christmas present this year – Mary, can I have a Massey Ferguson tractor seat as racing cycle saddles are not suitable for this rider. Now for 2011.....

Roger Dennett

Refresh

A huge thank you to Margaret Smith for running the Refresh services over the summer. These were a wonderful opportunity for space and reflection, prayer and meditation. I was touched by the thought and prayer Margaret had put into each service, and her faithfulness in seeking God on our behalf. Refresh will take a break for the next few months, but will resume in the New Year. If you would like to be part of a small team responsible for these services please speak to Margaret or to me.

Em Coley

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

Deadline for copy: 20 Oct 2010

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Dates for Your Diary

Sunday 3 October

9.30am. Harvest Communion

6.00pm. Harvest Communion Celebration at St James the Great, Radley

Monday 4 October

KS1 in School

Tuesday 5 October

9.30am. KS2 Harvest Service

Thursday 7 October

7.45pm. Deanery Synod

Sunday 10 October

6.30pm. Kennington Churches Together Evening Prayer

Monday 18 October

3.30pm. Singalong in Church

Sunday 24 October

11.00am. Pogose Family Baptism followed by Bring and Share lunch

Sunday 31 October

4.00pm. Party of Light

Saturday 6 November

9.30am-4.00pm. PCC Away Day Appleton Church

Sunday 7 November

5.00pm. Tea and fireworks with Kennington Churches Together at St Swithun's

Saturday 13 November

10.00am. Fairtrade sale & coffee morning in the Hall.

10.00am. Big Clean

Saturday 20 November

10-12 noon, Christmas Market, Church Hall

Monday 22 November

3.30pm. Singalong in Church

8.00pm. PCC in Church

Sunday 5 December

6.00pm. Carols around the tree followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Church.

NB The Kennington St Swithun's Home Group will be meeting on 13 October, 27 October, 10 November, and 24 November.

Mission and Outreach: We are holding a meeting to explore mission and outreach opportunities for St Swithun's Church. If you are interested in this, please come along to the vicarage on Monday 18 October at 8pm. It would be good to see you there. **Em**

From the Editor



I would like to share a meditation from Simon Parke:

"We can't always manage a prayer ourselves. Perhaps we try, but it seems dry and manufactured; a cheap tin cymbal of a sound, when we were hoping for the full orchestra. Or maybe the whole business of prayer feels mad, ridiculous and pathetic. And so the day prays for us, on our behalf. Perhaps it's the blessing of the ticket collector's smile, unbidden and bright; or an aroma on the street – a bakery of flower shop? – taking you back across the years in sacred recollection. Or is it the life-scraped shoes of the beggar by the cash point, bidding you reassess? It's best when we haven't a prayer; we find ourselves caught up in something altogether larger and more compelling. A full orchestra in fact."

(www.simonparke.com)

Jackie Smith

Many thanks to Lee's firm, Lee, Bolton, Monier Williams, who have kindly printed this newsletter free of charge.