

ST. JAMES' FINCHAMPSTEAD

Volume 3 Issue 19

MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

Summer 2009

Dear Parishioners,

I write with a sense of déjà vu! We have been on the brink of starting the conservation work before, but unfortunately we had to postpone the January start date. However I feel it is important to keep you up-to-date with developments and to let you know that there is now a very good chance that we shall be starting the work this summer. As yet the date is to be determined, but it would seem that nearly everything is in place for us to proceed.

A revised specification has been drawn up over the last few months, which will include much-needed retiling of the nave and north chapel roofs. The heating scheme has been simplified, and thus significant savings have been made so that we have more funds to tackle the necessary work on the roof. Crucially English Heritage and the Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee have agreed in principle to all the changes that we have requested, including replacing the carpet in the chancel - although the diocese wants to be involved in the details of the final colour choice of the carpet, which should be an interesting discussion!

We are now in a position to apply for the formal faculty from the diocese (the equivalent of planning permission) and we anticipate that this will be forthcoming. At the same time we are re-tendering for the work with five different contractors, recommended either by the diocese or by our own architect, and we anticipate some competitive prices.

Although we have been continuing with various fund-raising events for which we are enormously grateful, it would appear that there will still be the need for some more fundraising, but until we have the final tender price we do not know what the shortfall will be.

However the PCC believes this will be manageable and we hope that when the work begins and people realise how exciting the project is, that this will generate renewed commitment.

So in "traffic light" terminology, the red and amber lights are on, and we are waiting for the green light so we can begin! When we actually *do* have the green light and before the church closes, I will

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(Rector's message continued from page 1)

happily give some "guided tours" during Sunday morning coffee time, to fire up your enthusiasm for this great task that we have embarked on together. Thank you so much for your continued support, patience and generosity.

Truly, Rev Richard



for children up to 11yrs

Sunday Club is an opportunity for children to learn more about the Christian faith and what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

Our groups - Gems (0-2yrs), Pebbles (3yrs-Reception), Rocks (yrs 1,2 & 3) and Boulders (yrs 4, 5 & 6) meet in **St James' Church Centre on Sunday mornings** from 10.45 – 12.10 (2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays of the month during term-time). New members are always welcome to join us.

Each week we focus on a story or theme from the Bible using material appropriate to each age group. Stories, craft, games, drama and discussion provide an opportunity for children to find out more about the Christian faith and its relevance to them. This term we have been hearing about some people whose stories are found in the Old Testament part of the Bible (Abraham and Isaac). Then, after celebrating Pentecost, we will hear some of the stories that Jesus told (about seeds and weeds) from the New Testament.

Dates: 14th June, 28th June, 12th July.

We take a break for the summer holiday and will resume on Sunday 13th Sept.

Janet Clements on 0118-9328679 (Sunday Club Coordinator)

A chuckle is good for the soul! Some bloopers.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

The Church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hospitality.

This evening at 7pm there will be hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "Hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.

mothers
unionChristian care for
families worldwide

We begin June with an **evening** branch meeting on June 11th. Nicola Matthews, Chaplaincy Volunteer to the Oxford Children's Hospital will be speaking about "MU support for Families". This special **evening** meeting is open to **everyone** to come and hear about this facility based at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. All Mothers' Union members from around the Deanery have been invited, so we hope for a good audience!

On June 14th we will observe our wave of prayer, remembering especially our prayer partners in the Congo and Nigeria. Our allotted time is 12noon - 12.30 (please meet at 11.50am in the church) then afterwards we can enjoy lunch together in the Church Centre. Our Mothers' Union will be running the cake stall as usual at the Church Fête on July 4th, all contributions for that day will be most welcome.

The July meeting will be our service in Church followed by a cream tea provided by the Committee. The last date for this report will be our very enjoyable 'Bring and Share' Mary Sumner lunch on August 13th in the Church Centre. We look forward to a good gathering of members, partners and friends for this annual celebration.

Diary Dates

Thursday June 11 th	Evening Meeting 7pm for 7.30, speaker Nicola Matthews (Church Centre).
Monday June 15 th	12noon - 12.30 Wave of prayer in Church.
Wednesday June 17 th	10am Corporate Communion.
Saturday July 4 th	2pm Church Fête ~ MU Cake Stall.
Wednesday July 8 th	Diocesan Summer Meeting in Oxford.
Thursday July 9 th	2pm Branch Service in Church and Cream Tea.
Wednesday July 15 th	10am Corporate Communion.
Tuesday July 21 st	7 for 7.30pm Deanery Meeting at the Cornerstone, All Saints.
Thursday August 13 th	12.30 for 1pm Mary Sumner Bring and Share Lunch (Church Centre)

Everyone is most welcome to attend our meetings held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 2pm in the Church Centre. Sarah Owen.

MISSION

We are again working on a joint venture with St. Mary & St. John in the delivery/collection of Christian Aid envelopes. Christian Aid Week runs from Sunday 10th May. St. James' were fortunate enough to have a speaker from the organisation at the 11.00 service on the 10th to promote their very valuable works. We also ran cake sales after both the 9.30 and the 11.00 services which raised approx. £100.00 in addition to what the envelopes will bring in. Even though it is called 'Christian Aid Week' it doesn't mean that is the only time donations can be made. If you able to make a donation, however large or small at any time during the year, please do so. Gill Myall - Mission Committee

SOCIAL AND FUND RAISING COMMITTEE NEWS:

Many thanks to everyone who attended the St. George's Day Supper on 25th April. The hall was decorated with red & white flags and bunting, also in keeping with the St. George's Day theme, "Dragon Pie and English trifle" were on the menu. Chris Driver devised an English quiz and we were entertained with some readings and by some rather humorous tales from the archives of past Finchampstead Parish Council Minutes. The evening was great fun and we were delighted to have raised £720 for the Conservation Fund.

My fear of not having enough things to sell at the jumble sale on 2nd May was thankfully unfounded to say the least. As everyone will confirm we were inundated with lots of good quality items. Very many thanks to everyone who donated and also those splendid folks who came along to help on the day. In spite of the low numbers coming to buy, we still made a profit of £535 for the Conservation Fund.

On Saturday 16th May we were indeed treated to a wonderful evening's entertainment from "Trio Treats". The ensemble consisted of Jean playing the piano, John the clarinet, Sarah the flute and Colin the violin. The evening was somewhat of a family affair as Jean and John Blackwell who live in Finchampstead are husband and wife with Colin Waker being Jean's cousin and Sarah Tomlins, Colin's daughter. The programme featured eight composers from Shostakovich to Milhaud. Earlier on in the year Trio Treats performed this concert in Chester where Colin is a member of the Chester Music Society. We are extremely grateful to them for giving us their time to come and perform for us and are delighted to say the evening raised over £500 for our conservation fund

Dates for your diaries:**Choir Concert on 20th June 7.30pm**

Andrew and the choir will be entertaining us with some musical delights. The concert will be held in Church starting at 7.30 and will be followed by a finger buffet in the Manor House. The tickets, which are £7 adults and £4 under 16's, will be on sale after most Sunday Services or from the Church Office.

Sunday July 12th After the 11am service we will be holding our annual St. James' Church barbecue. Tickets will be on sale after most services nearer the time.

We are always pleased to hear from anyone who is willing to join the coffee rota for after Sunday morning services. Please speak to Sarah Owen if you are able to help or would just like to know what is involved.

We are always pleased to hear from anyone who is willing to join the coffee rota for after Sunday morning services. Please speak to Sarah Owen if you are able to help or would just like to know what is involved.

Sue, Mary, Chris, Sue, Sarah, Nicky, Chris, Olive
(Social and Fundraising Committee)



CHURCH CONSERVATION - Funding Appeal:

We have either received or have forward pledges, to the end of 2009, including donations, sponsorships & grants of an amazing **£543,776** towards the Church Conservation Project. This includes estimates of potential Gift Aid reclamations up to the end of 2009, projected interest on the account and also the very generous Grant of **£15,000** from the Parish Council promised for this year.

As with all projects of this kind there are always so many financial unknowns and we have had our fair share together with the rising costs of materials and the Euro currency, etc, going in the wrong direction for us all!!

We await the final bids from potential contractors which we should receive this month and still expect to start the project in the summer.

Without having a final figure for the conservation project, we are continuing with our fund raising and there are a number of events throughout 2009 which will be supporting the project.

Very many thanks to everyone for contributing & supporting the fund and also to all those involved in the fund raising activities themselves.

[Ed Sampson & the Fund Raising Team.](#)

ST. JAMES' PASTORAL TEAM

Working in close
conjunction with
Reverend Richard:

- ◆ Within the Parish and outside to help members of the community in all aspects of life
- ◆ Primarily visiting the sick, the lonely, and the bereaved
- ◆ Will visit at home or in hospital, or can arrange to meet at St James' Church Centre
- ◆ Will assist in getting people to hospital appointments
- ◆ Team members have time to listen, or to comfort
- ◆ There for you, when you need to offload

Are you, or do you know someone who is, troubled or anxious?
Do you feel a talk with someone would help?

A member of the Clergy or the Lay Eucharistic Minister from St James' Church, Finchampstead, is able to bring Holy Communion to those unable to get to our Church.

Please call the Church Office on 0118 973 0133 to arrange a visit.

FLEDGELINGS

Baby and Toddler Playgroup
Every term-time Tuesday from
1.45 till 4pm, St James' Church
Centre, Finchampstead.

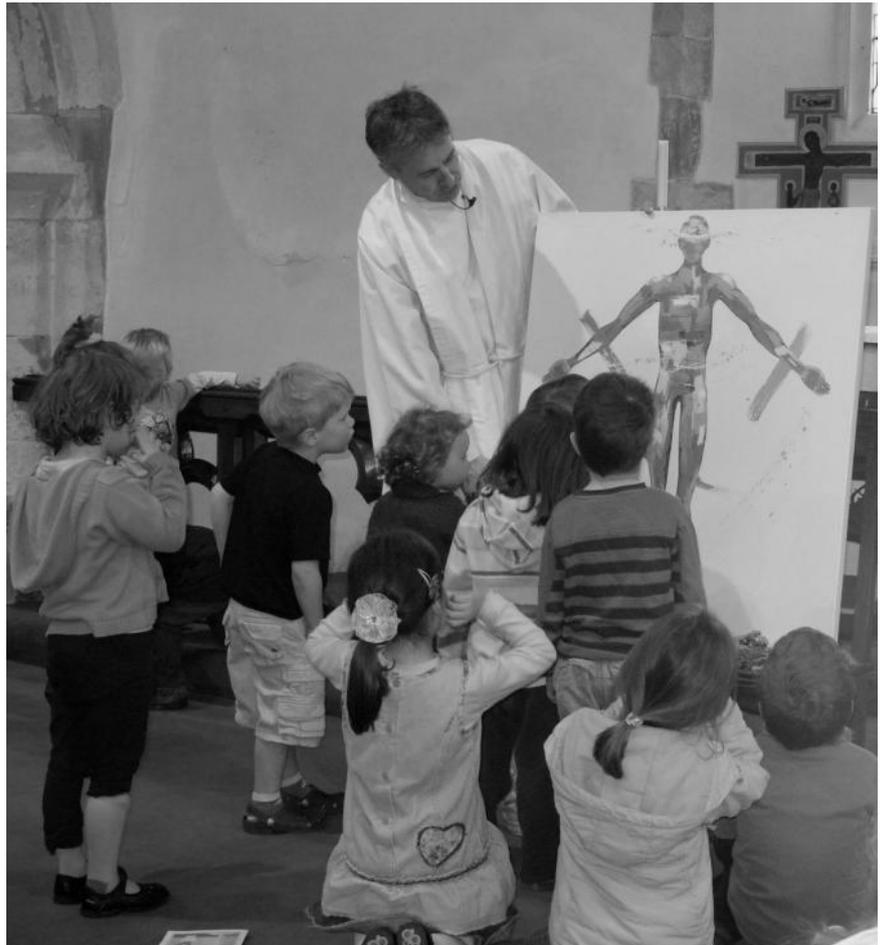
Fledgelings is run by a dedicated team of volunteers who provide fun, safe and nurturing surroundings for pre-school children to play together and for their parents and carers to meet up socially, make friends and gain support in a very welcoming environment. All the Fledgelings volunteers have pre-school aged children of their own, and are familiar with the trials and tribulations of child-rearing; some of us probably have far too many children for our own good! But it does mean we are able to provide helpful advice, or a shoulder to cry on, and we pride ourselves on aiming to offer something a little bit special.

Each week we provide a craft which includes sticking, painting, colouring and glitter – all those things you may find horribly messy at home! At 2.20pm we always have story time where the children listen to well-known Bible stories including the birth of Jesus, the feeding of the five thousand, the Good Samaritan, Moses in the bulrushes, and Noah's ark. We then have singing, and all the children join in with delightfully tuneful instruments singing traditional nursery rhymes and lots of other songs. After story time, with your ears still ringing with the noise of budding musicians, the children are given drinks and biscuits and the grown-ups are made a cup of tea or coffee. You may want to come just for the novelty of being made a cup of tea! In addition to our normal playtime, we also run special events including: the Easter Egg Hunt, Harvest Bonnet and Top Hat Parade, Sports Day, Teddy Bears' Picnic and our extremely popular Christmas Nativity and Party – where anything can happen!

If you haven't been to Fledgelings before, or not for a long time, please come along and join the fun. There's no need to book, just turn up and you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome, and your little ones will have plenty of toys and friends to play with.

For more information call Karen Remmington on 0118 9734070 or email

karen@remmington.net



Fledgelings Easter Service

**June**

- 1st** 6pm Handbell Group [CC]
- 2nd** 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings
5pm Young People's Confirmation Group [CC]
7.45 for 8pm 'What's it all about?' Course [CC]
- 3rd** 9am School service
10am Midweek Communion
- 4th** 8pm Evening Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride
- 7th** **Trinity Sunday**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am Church Family Communion & welcome to all our recently confirmed members
6pm Evensong
7pm Youth Group(Contrast) [CC]
- 9th** 10am Tuesday Working Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings [CC]
5pm Young People's Confirmation Group [CC]
7.45 for 8pm 'What's it all about?' Course [CC]
- 10th** 10am Midweek Communion
- 11th** 9.45am Morning Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride
7 for 7.30pm Evening Mothers' Union Meeting with speaker from the Chaplaincy unit at the Oxford Children's Hospital – all welcome
- 14th** **First Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion [CW]
9.30am Matins
10.45am Sunday Club [CC]
- 11am Parish Communion
7pm Youth Group [CC]
- 15th** 12 – 12.30pm Mothers' Union Wave of Prayer in church, followed by picnic lunch [CC]
- 16th** 10am Tuesday Working Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings [CC]
- 17th** 10am Midweek Communion
- 18th** 8pm Evening Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride
- 20th** 7.30pm Choir Concert with buffet (Tickets available after services & from Church Office)
- 21st** **2nd Sunday after Trinity & Fathers' Day**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service,
11am Parish Communion,
7pm Youth Group (Contrast) [CC]
- 22nd** 6pm Handbells [CC]
- 23rd** 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings [CC]
- 24th** 10am Midweek Communion
- 25th** 9.45am Morning Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride
- 28th** **Third Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion CW
9.30am Matins
10.45am Sunday Club [CC]
11am Parish Communion
7pm Youth Group [CC]
- 29th** 6pm Handbell Group [CC]
- 30th** 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings [CC]

[BCP=Book of Common Prayer CW=Common Worship, Contemporary Language CC=Church Centre
CTC=Churches Together in Crowthorne *=ticket needed-ring office for details 0118 9730133]

**July**

- 1st** 10am Midweek Eucharist
- 2nd** 8pm Evening Housegroup
at 216B Nine Mile Ride
- 4th** 2pm Church Fete at the
Memorial Park
- 5th** **Fourth Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am Parish Communion
6pm Evensong
7pm Youth Group [CC]
- 6th** 6pm Handbells [CC]
8pm Standing Committee
- 7th** 10am Tuesday DIY Working
Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings Sports Day [CC]
- 8th** 10am Midweek Communion
- 9th** 9.45am Morning Housegroup at
216B Nine Mile Ride
2pm Mothers' Union Service &
cream tea
- 11th** 8.45am Ladies Breakfast [CC]
- 12th** **Fifth Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion CW
9.30am Matins
10.45am Sunday Club
11am Parish Communion
followed by **Church BBQ***
**6pm* Evening Parish
Communion (if Conservation
work has started)**
7pm Youth Group [CC]
- 13th** 6pm Handbell Group [CC]
- 14th** 10am Tuesday DIY Working
Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings [CC]
- 15th** 10am Midweek Communion
- 16th** 8pm Evening Housegroup
at 216B Nine Mile Ride
- 19th** **Sixth Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am Parish Communion
**6pm* Evening Parish
Communion (if Conservation
work has started)**
7pm Youth Group BBQ [CC]
- 20th** 9am School Leavers' Service
6pm Handbell Group [CC]
7.45 for 8pm PCC Meeting
- 21st** 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]
1.45pm Fledgelings (TBC)[CC]
- 22nd** 10am Midweek Communion
- 23rd** 9.45am Morning Housegroup at
216B Nine Mile Ride
- 26th** **Celebration of St James' Day
(Patronal Festival)**
8am Holy Communion CW
9.30am Matins
Sorry, No Sunday Club until
September, children very
welcome in Church
**11am Patronal Festival
Communion**
**2pm Celebrating St James'
Day - Tower Open if church
not yet closed/ Teas etc
followed by Evening Festival
Service (Time TBC)**
Sorry, no Youth Group until
after summer holidays

28th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]
Sorry, no Fledgelings until after summer holidays (except Teddy Bears' Picnic on Aug 18th)

29th 10am Midweek Communion

August

2nd **8th Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am All-Age Parish Communion
6pm Evensong

4th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]

5th 10am Midweek Communion

9th **9th Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion CW
9.30am Matins
11am All-age Parish Communion
6pm* Evening Parish Communion (if Conservation work has started)

11th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]

12th 10am Midweek Communion

13th 12 for 12.30pm Mothers' Union
Bring & Share 'Mary Sumner' Lunch.
Raffle in aid of the 'Away From It All' holidays organised by Mothers' Union for needy families. [CC]

16th **10th Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am All-age Parish Communion



6pm* Evening Parish Communion (if Conservation work has started)

18th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]

Fledgelings Teddy Bears' Picnic Noon – 4pm[CC]

19th 10am Midweek Communion

23rd **11th Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion CW
9.30am Matins
11am All-age Parish Communion
6pm* Evening Parish Communion (if Conservation work has started)

24th 6pm Handbell Group [CC]

25th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]

26th 10am Midweek Communion

30th **12th Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion BCP
11am All-age Parish Communion
6pm Taizé Service (TBC)

September

1st 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party [CC]

2nd 10am Midweek Communion

6th **13th Sunday after Trinity**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am Church Family Communion & 'Moving On' Service
6pm Evensong
7pm Youth Group



Some Forthcoming Dates :

6 th Sept	'Moving On' service Youth Group resumes	7 th Oct(Wed)	Monthly Youth Service
8 th Sept	Fledgelings resumes	10 th Oct	Harvest Supper
13 th Sept	Sunday Club resumes	1 st Nov	All Saints' Day All Souls' Day service at 6pm
25 th Sept	Macmillan Coffee Morning	8 th Nov	Remembrance Sunday
4 th Oct	Harvest Festival & Bring & Share Harvest Lunch	29 th Nov	Advent Sunday

*[BCP=Book of Common Prayer CW=Common Worship, Contemporary Language CC=Church Centre
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ST JAMES' FINCHAMPSTEAD BELLRINGERS

Well, the ladybirds are still there, flying around and being crunched underfoot. Now the weather is warmer we have opened the windows in the hope that they will fly out.

We have rung for 2 weddings this year and it was especially nice that one was for the daughter of one of our new bellringers, Ray. Ray and Elizabeth have been making great progress and Ray has been able to begin ringing for Sunday service. We are currently planning a bellringing outing at the end of June to the Isle of Wight where we hope to ring at 4 towers and finish with tea at the Markham's house there.

We practise on Wednesdays from 7.45pm – 9pm and would love to welcome more ringers – both novice and experienced. Do come along and join us. (feel free to give me a ring first if you prefer as we occasionally have to cancel a practice)

Patricia Amos - Tower Contact 0118 973 3747

MUSIC AT ST JAMES' – Random ramblings from Andrew Bosely

EASTER BEGAN A LITTLE EARLY with the Baptism of Baby Lucy Peat on Holy Saturday. As expected, this was very much a “Musical Baptism”, her parents Richard and Beth having a long association with St James' Choir. It was wonderful that such a large number of choristers were able to come and sing. Lucy comes to church regularly and is already showing signs of aspirations to future choir membership – she pays attention when the choir is singing and burps in time with the music and in the correct key !

FREEDOM AT LAST – On Easter Morning the Choir moved from the North Aisle to sing the Easter Day Eucharist from the Chancel and what a difference it made to the sound (as well as freeing up the 50-odd places in the North Aisle Stalls for congregation.) It was lovely to have John Purver with us to play the organ, thus enabling your Director of Music to conduct the Choir who, understandably (and on their own admission) always seem to sing better when conducted. For many the crowning moment of the service was Handel's “Hallelujah Chorus” sung by the choir before the blessing. On a personal note it was great to let the choir “escape” from the north aisle to sing the whole service from the Chancel. You can hear the organ properly from there and, once again, I've lost count of the number of people who commented favourably on the much clearer sound produced by the choir from this location. It's a great pity that the geography of the church building doesn't allow this to happen on a permanent basis.

CHORAL EVENSONG AT ST ALBANS CATHEDRAL was a great success and I'd like to make special mention of Andy and Judith Witting who sewed the first seeds to make this trip possible. This is not the first time that St James' Choir has sung in a Cathedral, although for some of our current members it was “a first” and I'm proud to say that your Choir rose to the occasion. All their hard work really paid off and they sounded superb in that vast building. You might be interested to know that the Choir have been invited to re-visit St Albans on some future occasion. Once again, John Purver accompanied and his colourful handling of the Cathedral Organ was truly awesome! Also with us was Matt Sampson who expertly sang the Priest's parts in the responses and collects as the Cathedral's Priest in charge of liturgy is a “non-singer”. With him was his fiancé Catherine and it was good to see them both ahead of their forthcoming wedding. The level of support from our congregation for this venture was quite astonishing. The 73 seater double-decker coach (expertly driven by “Phil”) was nearly filled to capacity by the Choir and the largest number of “groupies” I have ever seen in my time at Finchampstead. Many thanks to Sue Sampson for organising the transport and to Gill Myall for ensuring that no-one got left behind at Finchampstead or St Albans on the day. Not everyone came by coach - some made their own way, including Revd John who journeyed up from London on his way home from work. As Director of Music it would be very wrong of me to dwell any more on the level of musicianship and professionalism displayed by our Choir on this occasion. Rather, I'm going to leave “the last word” to them and their supporters who put together a “blog” which was passed from person to person on the coach during the journeys there and back. This was organised by Joan Gutteridge and was called the “in-flight” entertainment. (Great idea Joan – thank you). I

(Continued on page 12)

(Music from page 11)

will close this report with some of the entries plus an overheard comment from a stranger. Sorry there isn't room for all of them.

"Should anyone have come without their glasses, the Gutteridge Spec shop will be open throughout the flight where a wide range of styles are on offer! Tissues and cough cures are also available"

"Blow the in-flight entertainment ... what happened to the in-flight catering ... some snacks and a G & T would be nice" *(Anon but obviously the work of a Choirmen)*

"Make that a double !!" *(Anon but obviously the work of another Choirmen)*

"Still grey and wet now but the sun did come out in the Cathedral – well done Choir!!" *(Anon)*

"A very enjoyable day - enjoyed the service – well done choir" *(Olive)*

"Thanks for all the hard work – it was a memorable performance" *(Mary)*

"Many thanks for a good day out – the choir was magnificent" *(Hazel)*

"The choir were magnificent - well done and God bless them all" *(Anon)*

"Sopranos can do it so much higher !!" *(Cathy and Claire)*

"We've never heard you sing so beautifully – it was a great joy and honour to be part of the service" *(Anon)*

"I've been a Choir groupie for 10 years and that performance had to be one of the best – well done" *(Anon)*

"We should be proud of St James' choir – all that practice was well worth it – well done" *(Anon)*

"So glad we came – next year St Paul's or Westminster Abbey ???" *(Two more Groupies)*

"Even though the choir stalls made people look shorter you all rose to the occasion! Sadly the service was far too short and we all wanted to hear you for much longer! So, what else can I possibly say but ZUGABE, ZUGABE !!!" *(Magdalene)*

"Anyone wandering into the Cathedral for the first time would have been impressed at the *Cathedral Choir*. You were wonderful and it was marvellous for you to have the space and accoustic to show you off at your very best. I was a proud Vicar ! Thank you *(Revd Richard)*

And finally – *not from the blog but overheard in the Cathedral Café during the Rehearsal* – "Thought the Cathedral Choir were on holiday"

And there's more. ... bloopers

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in Church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days

The sermon this morning; "Jesus Walks on the Water". The sermon tonight; "Searching for Jesus".

HOUSEGROUPS FACE DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

“**Good God, Bad God?**” is the title of a training day organised by Nicky Gumbel’s Church, Holy Trinity Brompton, which I was privileged to attend yesterday. This question arises from the fact that the New Atheist authors, like Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, seem to be focusing less on the contention that ‘there is no god’, and more on their argument that ‘the Christian God has a flawed character’. They pose questions like: ‘Science and religion are locked in irrevocable conflict?’; ‘How can you defend the concept of a loving God when there is so much suffering in the world?’; ‘How do you interpret the passages of the Bible that seem to show God meting out judgement on his people?’ The training day was designed to tackle vital questions such as these, and help Christians develop a confident faith that is able to speak wisdom into issues of the day, without ducking the hard questions. Not surprising, the lecturers were mainly those to which the Housegroups have been listening in our Apologetics course this year.

We are now approaching the final lectures of this course, when we will be tackling some of these very difficult questions. Last September, at the start of our study, it seemed to be a huge task to complete the twelve lectures before us. In all honesty, the path has not been smooth, a few of the lecturers have been difficult to understand, and we have not always followed the easiest study methods. Hopefully, we have now solved these problems, and look forward to completing, what must be acknowledged to be, the most ambitious project we have undertaken. I am reminded of the old adage: ‘If theology doesn’t

stretch our minds, it probably won’t stretch our lives.’

If you have a look at the following programme, you will see that the topics ahead of us are very relevant to our lives today, and the lecturers are among the most lucid of the team. Now that we have fixed our presentational problems, it is a good time to join us in this very valuable study. A friendly welcome awaits you if you would like to attend any of our meetings.

The Morning Group meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursday from 9.45 to 11.45a.m.

11 Jun	‘Faith, Reason and Integration’ by <i>John Lennox</i>
25 Jun	‘God, Evil and Suffering’ by <i>Ravi Zacharias</i>
09 Jul	‘Seeing and Exploring Cultural Connections’ by <i>Stuart McAllister</i>
23 Jul	‘Reasoning from The Scriptures’ by <i>Michael Ramsden</i>
August	Holiday

The Evening Group meets on the 1st & 3rd Thursday from 8 to 10 p.m.

04 Jun	‘Science at the beginning of life’ by <i>John Wyatt</i>
18 Jun	‘Science at the end of life’ by <i>John Wyatt</i>
02 Jul	‘The Trinity and Apologetics’ by <i>L. T. Jeyachandran</i>
16 Jul	‘Do all Religions lead to the Same Goal?’ by <i>John Lennox</i>
August	Holiday

Most of these meetings will be held in our home at 216B Nine Mile Ride. For more information telephone us (*Tel: 0118 973 2592*), or the Church Office (*Tel: 0118 973 0133*). *Audrey and Francis Moore*

ST JAMES' FINCHAMPSTEAD HANDBELL TEAM

In the months since our last bulletin, the team has been practising hard to perfect new and more challenging music.

The New Year Rally in Aldershot offered us the opportunity to learn more from the longer-established hand-bell teams in the South East Region; April's three-day National Rally and AGM took place in the wonderful Cotswolds setting of Cirencester's Royal Agricultural College. The workshops and training sessions we attended were challenging and very helpful, but the *grand finale* to our weekend was the superb performance from the SE Region Bell Orchestra of which Meg (St James' Team Leader, and newly-appointed Regional Secretary) is a dedicated member.

Under Meg's leadership, our ringing ability has progressed beyond all expectations. The concept of our work in the community was Meg's inspiration - the result of her care for the elderly. Our visits to Wokingham's Suffolk Lodge in January and Murdoch House in February were lively affairs with the residents singing along and trying their hand at the small bells. March venues included The Berkshire Nursing Home and Finch's Cockayne Court.

At the February fund-raising supper for The Parkinson's Disease Society, we joined forces with



musicians and choristers from Finch Village School to provide entertainment to a packed Church Hall.

Amongst other activities, the team are looking forward to hosting and entertaining senior citizens from local care homes at the 2nd Annual Tea Party – to be held in July in St James' Hall. *Sally Hamblin, Team Member*

Laughter At Murdoch House

If you are:

- interested in learning to ring;
 - looking to revitalise rusty ringing skills;
 - seeking to gain further practice with a second team; or
 - wishing to arrange a visit by St James' team to a local sheltered housing complex, residential or nursing home
- please contact Team Leader Meg Hostler on 0118 973 1569

or e-mail meg@hostler.fsworld.co.uk

Saturday 4th July – St. James' Church Fete

2pm – Finchampstead Memorial Park



Our Church Fete this year is one week earlier than usual, on Saturday 4th July and we hope by now you will have this date written in your diaries. Included in this issue of the newsletter is a volunteer sign-up sheet which we would be delighted if you could complete and send back to us.

If you are not able to lend a hand on the day, please could you offer your support by contributing items for the many stalls such as: Tombola, Bottle Tombola, White Elephant, Books, Cakes, Plants and Produce, Raffle, etc. etc.

But most of all please come along and bring your friends and family. We would love to see you all.

During the afternoon there will be competitions for the children:

Fancy Dress Competition

Flower Display/Competition

Colouring Competition

Details of all these will appear in the Pew Sheet in the coming weeks and information and forms will be available from Sunday Club and school.

In addition to these competitions there will be several attractions, including St. Sebastian's Brass Band, a ball pond for the smaller children, lots of games and stalls with great prizes to be won, also a raffle, barbeque, refreshments, strawberries and cream, line dancing demonstration, American vintage cars and so much more.

Grand Draw – There are amazing prizes to be won in the Grand Draw this year, and we have taken the opportunity of enclosing some Grand Draw tickets with this newsletter. Please don't feel obligated, but if you can possibly sell them we would be very grateful.

We value all your support and help and hope that between us we will have a wonderful day and at the same time make heaps of money for our much loved Grade I listed building – St. James' Church.

Please give me a call if you can help or would like more information.

Many thanks. **Sue Sampson 0118 973 2069**

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE: REV. RICHARD WARDEN, THE RECTORY, THE VILLAGE,
FINCHAMPSTEAD 0118 973 2102

ASSOCIATE PRIEST: REV. JOHN EDWARDS, GREEN HEDGES, 25 ST JOHN'S ST.
CROWTHORNE 01344 774586

LICENSED LAY MINISTER: DR KEITH ATTON

CHURCH WARDENS: ED SAMPSON, PORTELET, KILN RIDE EXT.
FINCHAMPSTEAD 0118 9732069
NICKY ALDER, 65 READING ROAD, FINCHAMPSTEAD
0118 9734904

ALL ENQUIRIES FOR BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS, ETC SHOULD BE MADE TO:
THE CHURCH OFFICE, THE MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH LANE, FINCHAMPSTEAD. RG40 4LU.
Email; office@stjames.finchampstead.co.uk

OFFICE HOURS; OPEN FROM 10.00AM TO 12.00 MONDAY TO FRIDAY.
TEL / FAX NO: 0118 973 0133

CONTRAST

We have enjoyed a very busy and lively spring term at St James' Youth Group.

We are about 15-20 young people aged 11+ (from secondary school) meeting up at the Church Centre 7pm – 8.30pm every Sunday evening during term time.

We have a topic every session, play games, munch tuck and discuss the big issues. Sometimes we do "outings" such as swimming, bowling or lazer quest.

Thank you to all who came to our Easter Vigil, we were 15 of us holding the vigil and it was a great experience for both Young people and leaders.

This summer term we are celebrating the **10th year anniversary of Youth Group (Contrast)** with a family BBQ Sunday 19th July at the Church Centre! Any of you who has had any connection with Youth Group earlier years, please come along!!

We welcome new members any time. Our group has a Christian ethos,

If you would like more information call Cathy on 0118 9730707 or email at Catherine.clayton@btinternet.com

