

ST. JAMES' FINCHAMPSTEAD

Volume 3 Issue 17

MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR Christmas 2008

Discerning the Future

It is a hallmark of the wonderful energy of St James' Church that, even as we approach the most significant conservation work that has taken place in the building for hundreds of years, the PCC has been engaged in some dynamic prayerful discussion and planning about the future direction and mission of the church. This has been a twofold process - an 'awayday' in May followed by a recent 'bring and share supper' and follow-up evening in our church centre.

Amongst other material, we focused on the Bishop of Oxford's stimulating document and questions for churches within our diocese. The result of our reflections is that we have identified three main areas for development:

- 1) that we should become a church even more fully committed to the spiritual growth and maturity of all its members;
- 2) that we should increase our outreach and links within the community we seek to serve;
- 3) and that we should invest more in building up our youth work with teenagers.

Many ideas have been generated and captured in this process, and we shall seek to implement these as we take our vision forward. We have also been thinking about revisiting our Mission Statement and if you have any thoughts you would like to add to the melting pot of ideas as to what this might be, then it would be good to hear from you.

Two People to Thank

As we look around St James', scores of people are involved in ensuring its vibrancy and efficiency for which I am deeply grateful. Our church thrives because of such commitment from so many, much of it goes unseen.

and often

STOP PRESS: Permission granted—see page 17 for details!

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Although very many have been involved in the process, on your behalf I should like to pay *particular* tribute to two people without whom the forthcoming conservation work would simply not have been forthcoming! Maurice Driver has been chairing the Conservation Working Party and Ed Samson has chaired the Conservation Fundraising Team. Both have been indefatigable and we are deeply indebted to them (and Chris and Sue) for the countless hours that they have put in to ensure that this great work goes ahead. The count down to the January start of the work is underway; but before that we have a wonderful Advent and Christmas season to enjoy together.

Blessings, Rev Richard

Fledgelings Baby and Toddler Group

Every term-time Tuesday 1.45 – 4 pm in St James' Church Centre.

We are a relaxed and informal playgroup for Parents/Carers and their charges. Each week we have exciting toys, a special baby area, story time with music and songs, and great crafts for the older children. If you haven't been before then just turn up, you'll receive a warm welcome and lots of tea and sympathy!

Harvest Festival This year we decided to make special hats for the children to wear during our Harvest Festival service. The children could choose to make a top hat or a bonnet, and then decorate their hat with lots of pictures of harvest produce and sumptuous autumn dishes which we'd cut out of food magazines. They all looked wonderful as they walked up the aisle taking their food donations to the altar for distribution to the local elderly and the Reading Drop-in Centre. Rev. Richard also joined in and had his own highly decorated top hat to wear, much to the amusement of all!

Coming soon..... Fledgelings Nativity where anything can happen! 16th December starting at 12.00 noon (see page 16 for more details)

Bring your families to join us in the church for the Nativity and then afterwards at our Christmas lunch kindly provided by the Mothers' Union. During the course of the afternoon a very special guest will arrive to wish the children a merry Christmas!

For more information, call Karen Remington on 0118 9734070.

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal:

A big THANK YOU to everyone who has taken care and trouble to cover a simple shoebox (or several) with Christmas paper and then fill it with an assortment of goodies (some quite mundane by our standards but amazing to a child with nothing, like toothbrushes and soap). Those brought to the Church or Church School by 30th November numbered 208. Most from the UK go to Eastern Europe and bring smiles to the faces of children in often very sad conditions so thank you. Carolyn Fox

CHURCH CONSERVATION APPEAL:

The current level of the fund on the at the end of September 2008.

Cash @ Bank:	£373,148	
Conservation Spend to date:	£96,715	
Fund Cash Status:		<u>£469,863</u>
Pledges to Dec'09 (Incl. GA reclamation)	£12,562	
Expected Fund position Dec'09		<u>£482,425</u>
Parish Council Grant (Jan'09):	£15,000	
Interest on Account to June'09:	£6,442	
<u>Conservation Appeal Status:</u>		<u>£503,867</u>

Report:

- The Fund stands at £504k beating the original target. Unfortunately with the current extra costs of the project and inflationary impacts, the target now sits at £550k. We therefore have a shortfall of around £47k.
- We are expecting firmer budget cost figures within the next few weeks which will be tabled as soon available.
- The Fund Raising team has a program of events planned into 2009 to meet the increased project cost which include:-
 - Social events, concerts, etc
 - Talks, Bring & Buy events, etc
 - Christmas Sales items; 2009 Calendar, Christmas Cards and Notelets, etc
 - Re-launch of the final Sponsorship opportunities has just been undertaken with a significant list of new opportunities.
 - Sale of the outgoing "old" Pews. {{14 sold and 12 remaining}}
- We still expect to be able to obtain a 'grant' against the VAT costs of the project from the HMRC who allow this for 'Places of Worship'. Unfortunately we are only able to do this after we have incurred the costs as HMRC will only grant against contractor receipts.

So again huge thanks to the Fund Raising Team & the Social Committee for all their hard work and also to all our supporting donors/sponsors who have contributed so generously to get us to the amazing Fund level we are at today.

Ed Sampson & the Fund Raising Team.

News from the Social and Fund Raising Committee

On 14th September we supported St. James' involvement with the Wokingham Heritage Day by serving refreshments during the afternoon; the ladies in the kitchen were extremely busy and made a splendid profit of £388 towards the Conservation Fund. Total revenue from the afternoon was £634 which included the tower visits and other sales.



Harvest Supper was held on 11th October in the Church Centre. This was a joint occasion with Mission Committee who provided the raffle and arranged the guest speaker. As usual this was a well supported event with a profit of around £680 going to our Kimberley fund. Thanks to everyone who helped and supported the evening. On 24th October, we organised a supper with entertainment being provided by our very own Andrew Powell, who in his spare time is a tour guide at Stratfield

Saye. He gave us an extremely interesting and enlightening talk and slide show about The Duke of Wellington, his horse and his house at Stratfield Saye. The evening was very well attended. Many thanks to everyone who came and especially to Andrew for a very enjoyable and informative evening. We are delighted to say a profit of £707 was raised for the Conservation Fund.

Dates for your diaries:

Christmas will be upon us before we know it and we will be busy supporting the various services and Church events. The Christmas concert is on Wednesday 17th December in the Memorial Hall and generous helpings of mince pies and sausage rolls, and not to mention the mulled wine, will be in vast supply.

Raffle tickets for the "Christmas Hamper" will be on sale after most Church services and events and will be £1 each. The draw for the hamper will take place at the Christmas concert in the Memorial Hall on Wednesday 17th December. Don't forget – you have to be in it to win it !!

After our Nine Lessons and Carols Service on Sunday 21st December mulled wine and mince pies will again be served.

Tea and coffee will be offered after the four Christingle Services on Christmas Eve and no doubt if you have any room left for the odd mince-pie I'm sure we will have a few on hand to tempt you.

Church Fete – 4th July 2009

Our Church Fete will be held in the village Memorial Park on Saturday 4th July. Closer to



(Continued on page 5)

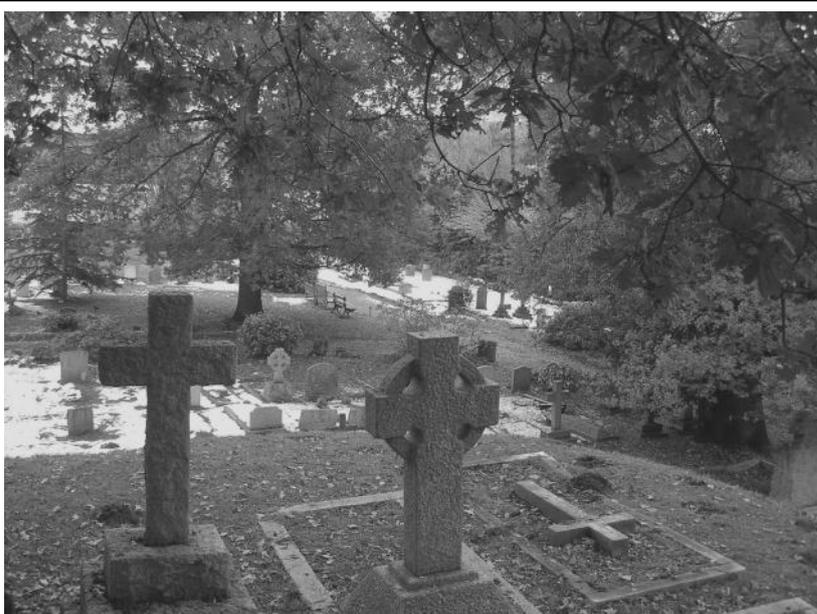
(Social news continued from page 4)

the date we will be asking for your help and support with running or helping on a stall or assisting with a game etc. but for now we can all just dream of warm summer days !!! The Social and Fundraising Committee (Chris D, Chris W, Sue R, Sue S, Mary, Nicky, Olive and Sarah) would like to wish you all a very happy and festive Christmas and thank you all for your support throughout the year; it really is very much appreciated.

Sue Sampson

CHURCHYARD TRUST

Thank you, to those who did, for supporting the Tea in the sports club. The local publicity was reduced combined with a wet afternoon, and there were less people than last time. We were able to meet some new people from the village; as well as many of the long-standing supporters of the churchyard and still raised £222 towards the Churchyard maintenance.



The working party managed to dry up the lower path that had become so wet in a wet year. It remains to be seen if this continues to work during the winter months.

Trees overhanging from High Barn next-door cause a gloomy atmosphere to the cremation wall plaques. We now have permission to attend to these from the Capes, who now live there, and will be seeking quotes for the work. Some of the dying oaks may need a little more attention as well.

John McCardle, stonemason, has been round identifying the graves with unsafe and fallen stones ~ mostly crosses. His estimate for repair of some 13 graves, as well as maintenance on the 3 St John graves West of the tower, is £1,745.

Extra drainage is now required on the path near the main iron gates. When the main gate-posts were repaired, the drain put in then does not work now, as the old soak-away no longer functions. The result is bad in wet weather. A new soak-away about 5' in diameter, down the hill from the path, is required; with drains leading to it.

The treasurer suggested combining the three small trusts; to save administration at the diocese. Also he will transfer £3k to savings. Lastly it was agreed to consult Rev. John Edwards about our investments. **Richard Owen**

MUSIC AT ST JAMES' - a note (♪) from the Organist

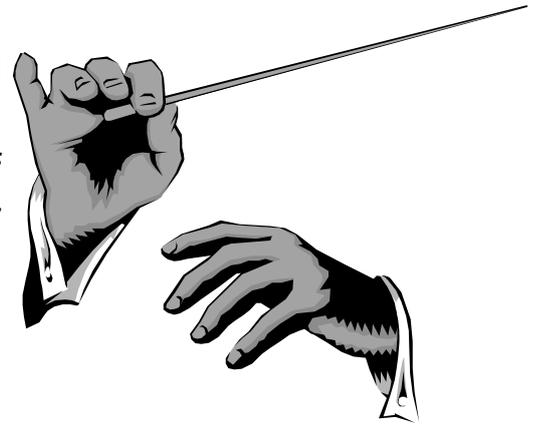
This term has been its usual busy self with the normal autumnal flurry of activity within the choir which promises to continue until Christmas. Twelve of our Junior Choir members began the term early by taking part in a Singing day for Children at Shiplake College on 30th August. Organised by the Royal School of Church Music (to which the choir is affiliated) this attracted in the region of forty young people from the RSCM's Oxford Area who enjoyed a tiring but rewarding day's musical activities under the direction of Louise Rapple, a member of the music staff at Shiplake and at Queen Anne's School, Caversham. Louise is well known for her ability in getting the best out of young singers and this occasion was no exception. The kids had a great day and I have since had excellent reports from the organisers about the tremendous effort put in by our own choir members and their good behaviour. Well done !!

Saturday 6th September saw the annual invasion of Roger and Ann Jeater's garden for the Junior Choir Swimming party. Happily, most of the youngsters were able to come to enjoy the pool and barbeque without getting too cold. Many thanks to Roger and Ann for once again welcoming us to their beautiful home and also to Pete Myall, David Booth and all those who helped on the day.

Next up was the RSCM Diocesan Choirs Festival at Radley College near Oxford on Saturday 11th October. Following an enjoyable and lively rehearsal with Philip Aspden at St Mary's, Henley on the Tuesday before, sixteen members of St James' Choir journeyed to Radley College for the Festival. The service took the form of Choral Evensong with the combined choirs under the inspirational direction of Kerry Beaumont, Director of Music at Coventry Cathedral. Following a brilliant rehearsal the choirs were able to gather outside in the lovely gardens at Radley College for a picnic. Yes, in October !! The day concluded with the Festival Evensong service in the magnificent College Chapel and the beautiful church music sung by a combined choir of 300+ singers, expertly accompanied by Jonathan White (Associate Organist at Magdalen College, Oxford) on the colossal west gallery organ at Radley all combined to create an unforgettable occasion. Part of the last hymn summed it up beautifully – *"Craftsman's art and music's measure for thy pleasure all combine"*. And it did. (Also, it was great to sing the "proper" words to this hymn with not one insipid "politically correct" editorial alteration in sight !!)

With the Choir's Festival, Harvest, All Saints, All Souls and Remembrance Sunday all behind us we can now start looking forward to the "silly season". Rehearsals for Advent and Christmas have been on the go for some time and I think we can promise a musical menu

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((Music continued from page 6))

containing something for all tastes. The first of the seasonal events takes place on Advent Sunday (30th November) with the popular "Darkness to Light" service. After a break last year, the Choir have been invited to take part in the Finchampstead Society's Christmas party on Sunday 14th December in the Village Hall. Louise and Robert's Wedding is on Saturday 20th. Louise is a regular member of the Choir and what a musical occasion this promises to be! The Nine Lessons and Carols at St James' is on Sunday 21st December at 6-00 pm followed closely by the Christingle making party, Carol Singing in the village, four Christingles, one Midnight Mass and a Christmas Morning Communion – and the Choir will still be on time for lunch on Christmas Day !!

- all except Louise and Robert who, I believe, are flying off on honeymoon on Christmas Morning.

The New Year sees the move to the Church Centre whilst the Conservation work in church is carried out. The Choir will be starting rehearsals straightaway for Lent, Passiontide and Easter, which will not be far off. The Easter music will include that to be used at St Alban's Cathedral during Easter Week when St James' Choir is deputizing for the Cathedral Choir at Evensong on Friday 17th April. More about this later, but a number of people have expressed a wish to go to the Cathedral with the choir and several have enquired whether there is to be a coach or not. When this is decided, the arrangements will be announced. Thank you for your interest and support - please watch this space !!

Andrew Bosley

Mission Report

Harvest Supper saw the launch of our sponsorship promotion for the Pre-school at St. Matthew's Kimberley. We have committed to fund the education of 15 children who are too poor to be able to have any education before school age. Paul Cowan from Newbury came to speak to us about this project. He spent a year out there living and working with the community and knows how much of a difference this will make to the families of those we are able to support.

The Supper tickets and the Raffle raised approx. £670.00. On this occasion the aim of the evening was not to collect as much money as we could, but to put forward what we would like to achieve. There are now different coloured envelopes available in Church for this project. There might also be an opportunity for individual sponsorship in the near future.

The majority of the Christmas collections will also go towards our St. Matthew's link.

Gill Myall

St James' Finchampstead Bellringers

We are really pleased to welcome 2 new ringers, Elizabeth Tracey and Ray Clarke and are now working hard to help them learn to ring. In bellringing there is always more to learn and Chris Markham attended a day's course at Steeple Aston, run by the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers, to learn to ring Grandsire Doubles.



The Crowthorne Ringing Course used our Tower for one of their training sessions again in August, and in September and October we welcomed visiting ringers from Hertfordshire and Derbyshire. The Tower was open for Heritage Week and people came once again to enjoy the views and hear about the bells. Mary Ede and Judith Witting also gave girls from 2nd Finchampstead Guides a short demonstration of bellringing whilst they were on a church cleaning evening. We have enjoyed ringing for 6 weddings in this period. It's lovely to see all the beautiful brides and, despite the poor summer, the sun shone on all of them.

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 have had to cancel some practices).

Patricia Amos 0118 973 3747

Christingles & Health & Safety

Once again there will be four Christingle services but for everyone's safety this will, as usual now, be by ticket. These will be available from the Church Centre from 7th December. Please sign the list as you take your tickets so that we know how many Christingles to make. Also please take a Children's Society Gift Aid envelope at the same time so that you can bring it to the service already filled up and in. Thank you.

All collections at these services will be for the Children's Society but by completing the envelope you enable the Society to claim an extra 28p for every £1 that you give as a UK taxpayer

Our Christmas Collections at Midnight and Christmas Day

will all go towards our link with St Matthew's Kimberley, primarily to fund the Pre-School project but also to support our link in other ways. Please use the new yellow Gift Aid envelopes if you are a taxpayer and wish the government to add to your giving towards St Matthew's. Don't forget to fill in your details in the spaces provided. Thank you.

**Happy Christmas to all our readers
and a special thank you to our deliverers too**



December

7th Second Sunday of Advent

8am Holy Communion [BCP]

9.30am Family Service

11am Church Family

Communion & 'Gift' Service

6pm Evensong

7pm Youth Group [CC]

8th 6pm Handbell Practice [CC]

9th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party

1.45pm Fledgelings [CC]

10th 10am Midweek Communion [CC]

6.30pm School Carol Service

followed by drinks & mince pies in Church Centre

11th 9.45am Morning Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride

2pm Mothers' Union Carol

Service and tea – bring a friend and a plate of food.

13th Youth Group Performance* [CC] see page 20 for tickets

14th Third Sunday of Advent

8am Holy Communion CW

9.30am Matins

10.45am Last Sunday Club

before Christmas holidays [CC]

11am Parish Communion

15th 6pm Handbell Practice [CC]

16th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party

12 for 12.15pm Fledgelings

Nativity Service in Church

followed by party in Church Centre

17th 10am Midweek Communion 7.15pm Church Concert in the Memorial Hall *

21st Fourth Sunday of Advent

8am Holy Communion [BCP]

9.30am Family Service

11am Parish Communion

3pm Family Carol Service [CC]

6pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols followed by refreshments in Church Centre

22nd 3pm Christingle making party for junior choir & servers. Then Carol singing round the village

23rd 10am Tuesday Working Party

10am Decorating the church with candles, greenery and flowers (contact Carolyn Fox if you can help, please – 0118 9732262)

24th Christmas Eve

NO Midweek Communion

Noon First Christingle service*

2pm Second Christingle service*

4pm Third Christingle service*

6pm Fourth Christingle service*

7pm Carol Singing at the Sports Club

11.15pm Midnight Communion

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**



25th Christmas Day

8am Holy Communion BCP
 9.30am Parish Communion
 11am Church Family Communion

28th 1st Sunday after Christmas

8am Holy Communion CW
 9.30am Matins
 11am Parish Communion

31st NO Midweek Communion

January

4th Epiphany

8am Holy Communion BCP
 9,30am Family Service
 11am Church Family Communion
 6pm Evensong

5th 6pm Handbell Practice

6th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party

1.45pm Fledgelings

7th 10am Midweek Communion

8th 9.45am Morning Housegroup at

216B Nine Mile Ride

2pm Mothers' Union Meeting

11th 1st Sunday of Epiphany

8am Holy Communion CW
 9.30am Matins
 10.45am Sunday Club resumes
 11am Parish Communion
 6pm Evening Parish Communion
 7.15pm Youth Group resumes

12th 6pm Handbell Practice

8pm Standing Committee

13th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party

1.45pm Fledgelings

5-6pm Young People's Confirmation group

14th 10am Midweek Communion

15th 8pm Evening Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride

18th Start of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

8am Holy Communion BCP

9.30am Family service

11am Parish Communion

6pm Evening Parish Communion

6pm Finchampstead Churches Praying

Together at start of Week Of Prayer for Christian Unity – Joint Prayer Meeting for our community at St Mary & St

John's Parish Centre, prayers led by

Rev Graham Robinson, and

refreshments at 7pm to be provided by St. Mary & St. John's congregation

7.15pm Youth Group

19th 6pm Handbell Practice

20th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party

1.45pm Fledgelings

5-6pm Young People's

Confirmation group

21st 10am Midweek Communion

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22nd 9.45am Morning Housegroup at
216B Nine Mile Ride

25th 8am Holy Communion CW
9.30am Matins
10.45am Sunday Club
11am Parish Communion
6pm Evening Parish Communion
7.15pm Youth Group

26th 6pm Handbell Practice
7.45 for 8pm PCC Meeting

27th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party
1.45pm Fledgelings
5-6pm Young People's Confirmation
group

28th 10am Midweek Communion

29th 8pm Evening Housegroup at
216B Nine Mile Ride

February

1st **Candlemas**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am Church Family Communion
6pm Evensong
7.15pm Youth Group

2nd 6pm Handbell Practice
8pm Face to Face with Jesus

3rd 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party
1.45pm Fledgelings
5-6pm Young People's Confirmation
group

4th 10am Midweek Communion

5th 8pm Evening Housegroup at
216B Nine Mile Ride

7th 8.45am Ladies Breakfast

8th **Fifth Sunday of Epiphany**
8am Holy Communion CW
9.30am Matins
10.45am Sunday Club
11am Parish Communion
6pm Evening Parish Communion
7.15pm Youth Group

9th 6pm Handbell Practice
8pm Face to Face with Jesus

10th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party
1.45pm Fledgelings
5-6pm Young People's Confirmation
group

11th 10am Midweek Communion

12th 9.45am Morning Housegroup at
216B Nine Mile Ride
2pm Mothers' Union AGM

15th **Sixth Sunday of Epiphany**
8am Holy Communion BCP
9.30am Family Service
11am Parish Communion
6pm Evening Parish Communion
No Youth Group

16th 6pm Handbell Practice

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CC=Church Centre, CTC= Churches Together In Crowthorne,

***=ticket needed-ring office for details 0118 9730133**



& Buy, Cake Stall, Raffle. All welcome.

Some Forthcoming Dates

8pm Face to Face with Jesus

17th 10am Tuesday DIY Working party

NO Fledgelings

No Young People's Confirmation group

8pm Science & Religion Lecture

18th 10am Midweek Communion

19th 8pm Evening Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride

22nd **Sunday Next before Lent**

8am Holy Communion CW

9.30am Matins

10.45am Sunday Club

11am Parish Communion

6pm Evening Parish Communion

NO Youth Group

23rd 6pm Handbell Practice

8pm Face to Face with Jesus

24th 10am Tuesday DIY Working Party

1.45pm Fledgelings

5-6pm Young People's Confirmation group

25th **Ash Wednesday**

10am Midweek Communion

8pm Communion for Ash Wednesday

26th 9.45am Morning Housegroup at 216B Nine Mile Ride

27th 10am –noon Big Brew Coffee

Morning organised by Mothers' Union in aid of the MU Overseas Fund. Bring

Lent Lectures on Tuesdays 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st March in the Church Centre at 8pm)

22nd March Mothering Sunday

5th April Palm Sunday

6pm Annual Church Meeting

9th April Maundy Thursday

10th April Good Friday

10am Family Service

2-3pm Service of Meditation

12th April Easter Sunday

18th – 28th April

Rev Richard on trek to the Himalayas in aid of the Parkinson's Disease Society

21st May Confirmation Service at

All Saints' Church, Wokingham

4th July Church Fete

25th July St James' Day

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**



Housegroups Train to be Defenders of the Faith

As we approach the beginning of a New Year, both our Housegroups are planning to continue training to obey the Apostle Peter's exhortation: "*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect*" (1 Peter 3:13). So far we have looked at how to live in order that people will ask us questions about our faith; how to answer those who tell us there is no *absolute truth or reality*; how to give reasons why we believe *there is a God*, when atheists tell us *there is no God*; and how to understand that our view of the world (i.e. *worldview*) affects our judgement and behaviour? We now plan to study four more lectures by outstanding speakers on difficult questions.

We will start with Amy Orr-Ewing's lecture on the *Trustworthiness of the Christian Scriptures*. She looks at the question: "How would you talk about the authority of the Bible with someone who finds it ludicrous, or even simply no more than historical literature?" We hope to learn how to affirm the trustworthiness of the Bible and respond to the charge that we cannot really know what the Bible says, or that the Bible can say anything you want it to say.

Next, we have a lecture by Joe Boot entitled: *Uniqueness of Christ*. He considers the question: "How do you understand the historical person of Jesus Christ?" By looking at the Gospel texts, we can answer the question of who Jesus claimed to be as well as address the question of who early Christians believed Jesus to be. And there's more. We learn how examining the writings of those who did not accept the claims of Jesus ultimately gives evidence of his existence and crucifixion.

For our third lecture we have L.T. Jeyachandran talking about the *Trinity and Apologetics*. This study takes a unique look at Biblical examples of the doctrine of the Trinity. L.T. deftly demonstrates how this understanding of God and of human beings as created in the image of God explains reality.

Finally, we have a lecture by our old friend John Lennox entitled: *Pluralism*. He asks us to decide "Do all religions lead to the same goal?" In his talk John defines pluralism and defuses its claims. Keeping you on your toes, John brilliantly demonstrates the impossibility of mutually contradictory worldviews co-existing as satisfactory explanations of reality.

Because the members of the Morning Housegroup continue meeting during Lent, they will also study an inspired lecture on *Matters of Life and Death*, by John Wyatt who is Professor of Neonatal Paediatrics at University College London. He speaks on the rapid advances in medical science and technology that are affecting all of us today, and helps us see how we can relate biblical principles to matters of life and death in a way which is practical,

(Continued on page 19)



for children up to 11yrs

Christmas Our final session this term (Sunday 14th Dec) will focus on Christmas craft and drama as we prepare Sunday Club's contribution to the Church Christmas concert (on Wed 17th). We hope your children will come along and join in the fun as we look forward to Christmas. Please let the leaders know if they are able to take part in the concert the following week.

Sunday Club will continue to meet in the Church Centre **on Sunday mornings** from 10.45 – 12.10 (2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays of the month during term-time) - but with some changes, due to Church services being held in the hall during the Church Conservation work. We regret we will be unable to offer a crèche for babies and children aged 0-2yrs during this period but groups for children aged 3 -11yrs will continue as normal. Pebbles (3yrs-Reception) and Boulders (yrs 4, 5 & 6) will continue as before whilst Rocks (yrs 1, 2 & 3) move to the Meeting room. Due to restrictions on numbers in the hall, Sunday Club children and leaders will join the congregation for Communion or a blessing but will then return to their groups until the end of the service.

We hope these changes will not be too disruptive and that the children will continue to enjoy learning and discovering more about the Christian faith.

Janet Clements 0118-9328679 (Sunday Club Coordinator)



mothers
unionChristian care for
families worldwide

Our first date for December is the Carol Service 1.45 for 2pm on Thursday December 11th in Church. We look forward to having members from St Mary & St

John, Arborfield and St Laurence, Slough with us for our service and Christmas tea. The Fledgelings Nativity play and party is on Tuesday December 16th at twelve noon and we will be providing the lunch for the parents and carers as usual.

In January Reverend Richard has kindly agreed to give us an update on the Saturday school project at St Matthew's in Kimberley, South Africa and their Mothers' Union involvement. Our Epiphany Gifts this year will be for this project to enable the extension of the valuable pre-school education programme. Our AGM will take place at our February meeting.

Diary Dates

Thurs Dec. 11 th	MU Carol Service and Tea	1.45 for 2pm in Church
Mon. Dec. 15 th	MU Deanery Meeting at	10 for 10.30am St John's Crowthorne
Tues. Dec. 16 th	Fledgelings Nativity Play & Party	12 noon
Wed. Dec. 17 th	Corporate Communion	10am
Thurs. Jan. 8 th	Branch Meeting in Church Centre	2pm
Wed. Jan. 14 th	Corporate Communion	10am
Thurs. Feb. 12 th	Branch Meeting & AGM in the Church Centre	2pm
Wed. Feb. 18 th	Corporate Communion	10am
Fr1 Feb. 27 th	Big Brew Coffee Morning	10am

Everyone is most welcome at our meetings.

Sarah Owen

St James' and the Big Bang: A Science and Religion Fortnight - Please note your diaries now so that you don't miss our contribution to the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of his famous book 'On the Origin of the Species'. Become better informed by attending the lectures arranged by Rev Richard & Rev John on Tuesday 10th and 17th Feb, and sermons on 8th, 15th and 22nd Feb, all in the Church Centre.



(Contrast continued from page 20)

er their expenses, around £1-00 per young person please.

A great big thank you to all our young people and families for all their support, hard work and the sense of fun and excitement they bring to youth group. Thank you to all the leaders and helpers who have volunteered this term. A special thank you to those adults who attended the training evening led by Ian Macdonald on the 12th October. Thank you too to the PCC who allow youth group to be held every week in the church centre. As a way of thanking the wider church community for the use of the magnificent church centre please please would young people help clear away chairs at the end of the evening service in the church centre, before the session each week at 7pm, during the restoration and refurbishment of our church in 2009.

During the first week of the summer holidays, Ian Macdonald, the Oxford Diocese youth worker, will be leading a trip to Taizé in France with the Bishop of Reading, Bishop Stephen. More details available soon. This trip is only open to young teens over 16. Please contact Cathy Clayton for more information. Similarly in the summer Green Belt a youth festival will be taking place, more details from Reverend Richard in the new year. Yellow Braces a very popular event for those in years 7 to 11 will be taking place on the weekend of the 10th, 11th and 12th July 2009, see the diocesan website or contact Cathy on 0118 9730707 for more information.

Fledgelings continued from page 2)

Fledgelings Nativity	Tuesday 16th December
Firstly let us know if you can come!	Please put the names of all coming on the list on the Fledgelings notice board –both adults and children
12.00pm Drop off the children’s party food and the gift for your child in the Church Centre	Please bring a plate of children’s party food – see list on notice board for details, and add your name
12.15pm Nativity Service in the church	Please bring your child dressed for their part – sign up list for Nativity will be on the notice board
~ 1pm Lunch in Church Centre	The Mothers’ Union will provide lunch for all the adults
~ 2pm Special Guest! 	Please ensure you bring a WRAPPED, NAMED gift for your child – strict £5 budget!

By popular demand ...

FACE TO FACE WITH JESUS

is returning soon.

A chance to engage in depth with Jesus' life and teaching. Experience familiar stories in a new way. Hear new ones and find out what it might have been like to be there in first century Palestine.

Why did Jesus say that?

Why were the religious leaders so upset?

What was the crowd up to?

Why didn't the disciples do something?

We'll use the same method as last time but with four completely new stories. Listen, imagine, and discuss them in small groups.

Hear what other people have to say. Think about the differences – and the similarities – between Jesus' time and ours. Test out your ideas about the man who turned the world upside down.

We'll meet in the Church Centre every Monday evening in February (2, 9, 16 and 23) from 8 until 9.45.

More details from Rev John (01344 774586 or john@adoramus.wanadoo.co.uk)



Conservation Project

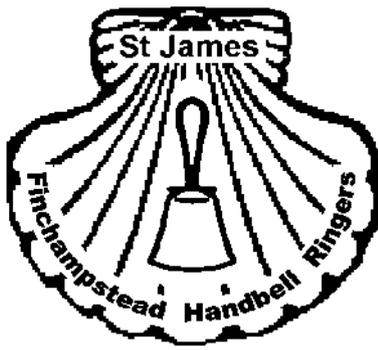
After a further year of re-design to meet the Diocesan Chancellor's reservations regarding the proposed works to the church interior, I am very pleased to be able to report that we now have the Chancellor's Faculty (permission) to commence work.

We are now in the process of organising the emptying of the church of all furniture, fittings and ornaments immediately after Christmas, in order that the chosen building contractor can start work early in January.

This is a major step along the way to restoring the church to its full aesthetic beauty, and a just recognition of all the hard work put in by the members of the Working Group and many others.

We expect the church to be out of bounds for at least six months. The public footpath round the north door and west end will be closed off; the alternative footpath route to the Village will be via the churchyard main entrance.

If you would like further information, please telephone 01189734123, or e-mail mandcm@tiscali.co.uk **Maurice Driver.**



ST JAMES' FINCHAMPSTEAD HANDBELL RINGERS (SJFHR)

After a month's summer break, our autumn season began with the Wokingham Heritage Sunday, where our ringers exceeded all their previous records by ringing non-stop for almost 1½ hours! This was to stand us in good stead to meet a request from the Wokingham & District Elderly Society to entertain at their Harvest Lunch two days after.

We are keen to play our part in the continuing revival of the art of handbell ringing. At gatherings during September and October, the Brownies, Beavers, Cubs and also a pre-school group were encouraged to "have a go" on the bells. Their interest and enthusiasm was inspiring and we hope to establish a youth team who in due time will be able to join in our work in the parish. Ringing during the November All Souls' Service was a great privilege and a particularly poignant occasion for us all, and we look forward to joining in the Family Carol Service in the afternoon of 21st December.



At the January '08 launch of our project to take our music to the wider community, we pledged to visit a minimum of one care home per month. The number of requests to ring has been much greater than we could possibly have envisaged and, by year end, we will have entertained at over 40 different venues – and also topped up training and techniques at six rallies/events organised by Handbell Ringers of Great Britain (SE).

We are currently recruiting (all-age) at the moment. Are you interested in making music with

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(Handbells continued from page 18)

us? Do you know a lapsed ringer who would like to return to handbells? Are you free between 6.00 and 7.30 pm on a Monday? Check out our website (presently under construction) @ www.sjfr.co.uk to get a flavour of what we do.

Still interested? Then why not come along to St James' Finchampstead Church Centre on a Monday evening – give us a try. That's just what Elizabeth Hayden did at the end of October. Or, if you prefer, please call on 0118 973 1569. **Meg Hostler**

Ability to read music is helpful but not essential. A warm welcome awaits ...

(Housegroups continued from page 13)

relevant and compassionate. The lecture is followed by two stimulating seminars. If you ever thought of attending any of our group meetings, this is the one not to miss.

The Morning Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday at 9.45 a.m.

08 Jan 'Trustworthiness of the Christian Scriptures' by *Amy Orr-Ewing*

22 Jan 'The Uniqueness of Christ' by *Joe Boot*

12 Feb 'Matters of life and death' by *John Wyatt*

26 Feb 'Science at the beginning of life' by *John Wyatt*

12 Mar 'Science at the end of life' by *John Wyatt*

19 Mar 'The Trinity and Apologetics' by *L. T. Jeyachandran*

26 Mar 'Do all Religions lead to the Same Goal?' by *John Lennox*

The Evening Group usually meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday at 8 p.m.

15 Jan 'Trustworthiness of the Christian Scriptures' by *Amy Orr-Ewing*

29 Jan 'The Uniqueness of Christ' by *Joe Boot*

05 Feb 'The Trinity and Apologetics' by *L. T. Jeyachandran*

19 Feb Schools' half-term holiday – No Housegroup meeting

05 March 'Do all Religions lead to the Same Goal?' by *John Lennox*

Lent begins on 25 Feb; the Evening Group does not normally meet in Lent to allow the members to attend the Lent Lectures at St James'.

Most of these meetings will be held in our home at 216B Nine Mile Ride, although we may need to change the venue occasionally. To check on the venue, or to ask for more details, please don't hesitate to telephone us, or the Church Office (Tel: 0118 973 133). A friendly welcome awaits you whenever you attend.

Audrey and Francis Moore (Tel: 0118 973 2592)

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: RICHARD PEAT, 14, GERRING RD, ARBORFIELD
0118 9760402
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 welcomes all young people in years 7 and above who enjoy having fun, making new friends, tuck and chatting about the big issues. Our group has a Christian ethos. We meet every Sunday in term time from 7pm until 8-30pm. In November we had been rehearsing for our Christmas production. Our Christmas performance will take place on Saturday 13th December in the church centre from 7pm until 9pm, to which all friends and family will be invited. There will be a light supper after the performances. Food donations are requested please from our youth group families. Please do support this event, which will be held in the church centre. Tickets will be available from Cathy Clayton. Please call Cathy on 0118 9730707 or email Cathy at catherine.clayton@btinternet.com. Young people are requested to arrive at the centre by 6pm for a final run through, on the 13th. A snippet from our production will be performed at the Village Concert in the Memorial hall. Our performance evening will be our final session, on the 13th December. Youth Group resumes on the 11th January 2009 at the new time of 7-15pm, when we will welcome Reverend Trevor Walt, who specialises in deliverance ministry and is a chaplain at Broadmoor Hospital. On the 18th January 2009, members of Amethyst will be leading the evening. Amethyst is a Christian drug and alcohol awareness charity, which offers information and support for young people. All subs from that evening will be donated to Amethyst to cov-



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