

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Bradford on Avon



PARISH NEWS

DECEMBER 2007

web edition

DIRECTORY

Vicar

Canon Bill Matthews The Vicarage, 18A Woolley Street 864444
e-mail: vicar@brad-avon-ht.org.uk

Parish Deacon

Revd Angela Onions 27 Berryfield Road 309001

Retired Clergy

Ven John Burgess, Revd Alun Glyn-Jones,
Canon Peter Hardman, Ven Ian Stanes

Licensed Lay Ministers

Graham Dove

Dr Malcolm Walsh (retired)

Churchwardens

Joan Finch 40 Palairet Close 863878

Tony Haffenden 6 Folly Field 864412

Director of Music

Gareth Bennett 01380 728772

Pastoral Team

Alison Cook; Mike Fuller; Pat Kitchen; Sue Lavis; Revd Angela Onions;

Ministry of Healing

The Vicar; Mary Burge.

Times of Services

(Check Bulletins and notices)

Sundays 8 am Holy Communion
 9.30 am Sung Eucharist (coffee after)
 6 pm Evensong
 Service of Prayer for Hope & Health
 and Compline monthly)

Holy Communion 10 am Wednesdays

(weekdays) 8 am Fridays

Times of Meetings

Choir Practice 6.45 pm Church, Tuesdays

Sunday School 9.30 am Church Hall

Mothers' Union 7.30 pm Church Hall, (usually) 3rd Thursday

Bell Practice 7.30–9 pm 2nd and 4th Mondays

Parish Web-site www.brad-avon-ht.org.uk

Diocese Web-site www.salisbury.anglican.org

Weekly Bulletin Notices to the Vicar not later than Wednesday for
the next Sunday.

Please let the Vicar know if someone needs visiting at home or in hospital

FROM THE VICAR

However much Christmas may cost us in work and money, unless we are utterly confirmed Scrooges there is a note of hopeful anticipation about the run-up to it. It may be to do with family gatherings, or our own expectation of sharing in the pleasure of the young. It may simply be a yearning to hear once more the message of Christmas, of light in a dark world, of a vision of peace and harmony.

But the time of *preparation* for Christmas on which we are about to start also has strong elements of challenge, even of threat. We are reminded of our own mortality, and faced with deciding what we believe about what is to come after.

Advent places before us the Christian teaching that we shall face judgement, and that our experience beyond this life will be shaped by the way we have lived our lives on earth, and the sort of people that we have become in the process. It all becomes particularly challenging if we have had recent experience of bereavement, or are facing the prospect of serious illness for someone we love or for ourselves.

But the point is, surely, that although Advent comes before Christmas, Christmas is the starting point from which we reach Advent. And, in an odd sort of way, the adult Jesus, living, dying, risen and ascended comes before Christmas. St John was able to proclaim the truth of the Incarnation because of the way in which Jesus was experienced by his followers and others in his adult life, and because of his disciples' experience of his risen presence after his sacrificial death.

Those first Christians genuinely believed that God had revealed himself supremely in Jesus, and that he was a God of self-giving, infinitely generous love. Over the first centuries of the Church's life, there was a growing understanding that Jesus is the love of God expressed perfectly in human terms, and in a human life.

So we move from a teacher and healer to a man dying on a cross, to a group of people with transformed lives and hopes, to a belief that this man is God made flesh. And that belief gives a new perspective to our Advent thoughts. Jesus born, living and dying, reminds us that there is no limit to God's love. And so we are taught to set no limit to God's love for our future beyond this life, to believe that he will not abandon those he has loved on the scrap-heap of time, but continue and develop that relationship through all eternity. And we may cherish the hope that infinite love will eventually triumph over our failure to love.

A very happy and blessed Christmas to you all.

Bill Matta

DIARY FOR DECEMBER



2 SUNDAY

9.30 am
6 pm

ADVENT SUNDAY

Sung Eucharist
ADVENT CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

5 Monday

7.30 pm

Deanery Synod

Keevil

7 Wednesday

7 pm

Parochial Church Council

Church

9 SUNDAY

6 pm

ADVENT 2

Evensong

Christ Church

14 Friday

7.30 pm

Bradford Choral: Christmas Oratorio

Church

16 SUNDAY

11.15 am
6 pm

ADVENT 3

Holy Baptism
Service of Prayer for Hope and Health

17 Monday

7 pm

St Laurence School Carols

Church

18 Tuesday

10.30 am

Fitzmaurice School Carols

20 Thursday

7.30 pm

Mothers' Union - Readings and Music for
Christmas with sherry and mince pies

Hall

21 Friday

7.30 pm

Bath Philharmonic Concert: Handel's
Messiah

Church

23 SUNDAY

9.30 am
6 pm

ADVENT 4

Family Communion & Christmas Tableau
Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

24 Monday

3 pm
11.15 pm

CHRISTMAS EVE

Crib & Christingle Service
Midnight Mass

25 Tuesday

8 am
10 am

CHRISTMAS DAY

Holy Communion
Family Communion

From the Registers
is on page 32
this month

30 SUNDAY

10 am

CHRISTMAS I

Holy Communion with Readings & Carols
No other services today

*Unless otherwise stated, Holy Communion at 8 am and Sung Eucharist at 9.30 am each Sunday
Copy Date for January is 9th December*

HOLY TRINITY MOTHERS' UNION

On a really cold and frosty night, 18 members and several husbands turned up in Church Hall to listen to a talk from our Vicar. After the prayers from Isabel, there were quite a few notices. I had been informed that the new logo does not apply to jewellery, so we can all continue to wear our badges with pride. I wish everyone would wear them every time they go out, just to show that we are at work in the world!

We have to change our June meeting next year, as the Mary Sumner House Roadshow is coming to Cardiff on 19th June. It will be an ideal opportunity for a trip for shopping in the morning and the Roadshow in the afternoon. As it is to be held in St. David's Hall, that in itself should be interesting, not only for our members, but also for anyone else who would like to come. Please contact me on 863543.

We'd had a newsletter from Rosemary Rees, just returned from a visit to Zimbabwe, where inflation is now running at 8000%. She managed to get food to two of the orphanages she supports, but the situation out there is becoming dire.

The Mary Sumner Day service in August next year is to be at Holy Trinity, 10 years from when we started it here.

The Vicar spoke on the theme "With Great Pleasure", telling us about his love of reading, which was started by his mother, an author she read to him - PG Wodehouse. It was an excerpt entitled *Jeeves and the Old School Chum*, and it was hilarious. Dorothy L Sayers had led him to Ernest Bramah and his wonderful Chinese tales. His wife had directed him to the detective fiction of Catherine Aird, beautifully descriptive; and then on to Elizabeth Cadell with a tale of 'Mixed Marriage' – another extremely funny one. From then to the Pardoner from Chaucer, John Donne with his seduction poetry, then AE Housman, Henry Vaughan, and Thomas Traherne, finishing with a piece from his beloved Ecclesiastes. It was an extremely entertaining evening, and Ian gave Bill a very appropriate Vote of Thanks. Thank you for giving up time to come, Bill, we so enjoyed it.

On the 20th of next month, we shall have our usual evening of Readings, Carols and Music for Christmas, followed by sherry and mince pies. Do come and prepare for Christmas with us.

Chris Hodge

Saxon Club Programme

December 2007

We meet in the Church Hall at 2 pm on Tuesdays.

You are very welcome to join us.

December 4th: Age Concern, Wiltshire

Other meetings will be announced in the weekly Bulletins

GROWING



Holy Trinity

Sunday School

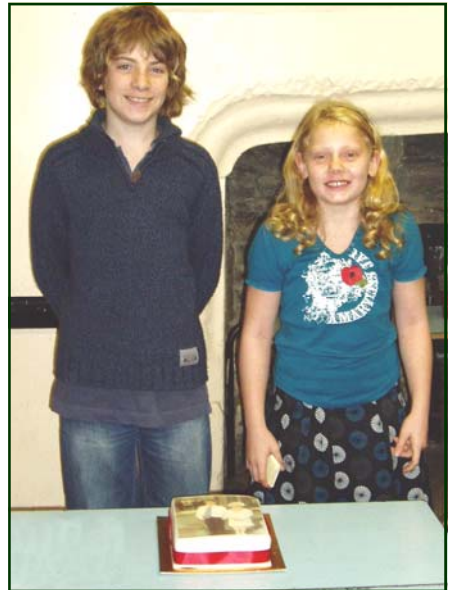
LEARNING

Sunday School News for the Month

The news from November is that we have said "farewell" to two of our Sunday School members: Annabel Bowen-Nielsen, and Thomas Stevenson. They were both confirmed last year, and have now decided that it is time to take their place in church among the adults. We had a small celebration for them in Sunday school, with cake and squash. Muriel came and played the piano for us and we sang our favourite songs.

Although we were sad that Annabel and Thomas will no longer be in Sunday School, we found happiness in welcoming a new member - Olivia. She is 9 years old, and already knows some of the other children, so she felt at ease straight away. Another new starter in November is Georgia who will be joining on her third birthday. Welcome to both of our new girls!!

Most of our Sunday school sessions in December will be spent preparing the Christmas tableau. We made an effort last year to encourage the children to take charge of this event for themselves. They decided which characters



Annabel and Thomas farewell to the Sunday School.

Photo: Karen Bowen-Nielsen

would be involved, and what they would say. As the children get older and more self-conscious, it becomes increasingly difficult to persuade them to dress up and perform in front of others. We do not wish to harangue them into performing, as the result is uncomfortable for both performer and spectator. This year the older children will get more opportunity to do the 'behind the scenes' works that the Sunday School leaders would normally do. The result may not be as slick as some might like, but we hope that the congregation will appreciate the children's efforts and be ready to congratulate them as enthusiastically as they did last year. We would also appreciate any offers to join in with the children, and be part of their contribution to our celebration of Christmas. Any willing volunteers please see me!

Karen, on behalf of the Sunday School team

Two simple recipes for Christmas. No cooking involved.

Salmon Pâté Starter

This is so easy and so tasty.

It can be made a day in advance.

For 8 people.

Large tin salmon

Packet smoked salmon trimmings-
whatever quantity you have.

Crème fraiche 2 - 3 tablespoons.

Horseradish sauce to taste

Salt and pepper if liked.

Put all ingredients into a food processor
and process until well combined.

Put in suitable container lined with
cling film.

Cover with melted butter and
refrigerate.

Turn out onto serving dish and decorate
with cucumber slices if liked.

A Quick Chocolate Mousse.

6 oz good quality plain chocolate

3 large eggs

2oz butter

2oz caster sugar

2 tablespoons Brandy or
Cointreau

Whisk egg yolks with 1 oz of
sugar until fluffy.

Melt chocolate. Add butter to
chocolate.

Fold Chocolate mixture into egg
yolk mix.

Add Brandy or Cointreau.

Whisk egg whites with remaining
sugar.

Fold into chocolate mixture.

Leave to chill in serving dish for a
couple of hours.

Decorate with chocolate flakes.

Joan Finch

PARISH PROFILE

Dennis Holloway



photo David Milne

Dennis was born in Maidenhead, Berkshire, in 1921, to a family which attended St Luke's Church. His hobbies were mostly practical and in 1931 he went to the County Grammar School. But, having failed to win a State Scholarship, he started his first job in February 1939 in the research department at EMI in Hayes, at a salary of 22s. 6d a week. By September, when war was declared, the laboratory was fully engaged on military contracts, so he remained there for the duration.

His work involved much experimental flying with the RAF and included working with Barnes Wallis in the early stages of developing the bouncing bomb, and flying in the Wellington bomber which dropped the first experimental bomb at Chesil Bank.

He had known Anne as a child and later they met as members of the Communicants Guild, a youth club run by the church. The friendship developed and in September 1945 they were married. The war had ended and in 1946 Dennis was seeking a new job. A new laboratory was being built at Taplow Court, a grand house in a fine position beside the Thames and Dennis was fortunate enough to have an office there for much of his working life.

In 1948, their first child, Anthony, was born, but died in infancy: Catherine arrived in 1949, followed by Peter in 1952. They built a house in Furze Platt and joined a small church, St Peter's. Here Anne became leader of the Young Wives group and Dennis joined the PCC, soon to be involved in a controversial scheme employing the American consultants, the Wells Organization, the first of such used by a church in the Oxford Diocese. Although this caused some disquiet it created interest and introduced new people to the church, particularly men who had previously been scarce and it also raised very adequate new funding.

Anne now recalled her original intention to have three or four children and in 1960 the twins, Sarah and Jane, were born, completing the family. By 1970

the laboratory at Taplow had been taken over in a merger of communication companies and Dennis felt he should accept an offer of a two-year duty at the head office in Ilford, so the family moved to Shenfield, Essex, for the period. Shenfield had an attractive and friendly old church but there was little time to get actively involved although they did make some good friends there.

In 1972, Dennis could move back to Taplow, so the family moved to Henley on Thames where they worshipped at St Margaret's in Harpsden, Henley. Anne resumed her Mothers' Union activities, becoming a Diocesan Vice-President for a time and then continuing as Deanery leader until her health forced a stop. Dennis joined the PCC, did spells as Treasurer and Churchwarden, and was a founder member of the new choir. During his wardenship, the Archbishop announced the Decade of Evangelism, so Harpsden Church responded by organizing a series of musical plays called 'One Solitary Life', covering the life of Jesus in five plays at two-year intervals. This drew support and interest from a wide area around Henley.

While in Henley, Anne and Dennis, with a team of helpers, did the packing, posting and distribution of several thousand *Home and Family* magazines to all Mothers' Union branches in the diocese until the present direct despatch was set up. They also organized the welcoming rota at Christchurch Cathedral for many years. Dennis, having retired in 1983, continued some consultancy until poor sight made him give up driving in 1991. He also worked as an Advisor for the Citizens' Advice Bureau for five years. Their four children married and each had a boy and a girl, then Jane had another girl, making 9 grand-children ranging in age from 30 to 11.

The move here in September 2005, just after celebrating 60 years of marriage, was to be nearer the family, who all combined to ease the transition. Unfortunately, Anne was unable to get to know our town and Holy Trinity but she was very grateful for the sympathetic support of Angela and visits from the Mothers' Union. She died in March 2006. Dennis gets good support from his family, manages church on his electric scooter, and now makes tape recordings of Parish News for the partially sighted. He misses all his friends in Henley but sees them from time to time and is doing his best to settle down here.

Pat Kitchen

WILTSHIRE BUTTERFLIES – 7

I expect some of you saw **Red Admirals** in November. During the first ten days, at least eleven were reported from Wiltshire (there would have been many more around, un-reported) and on 10th, a lovely mild, sunny, calm day, while walking with the dog in the Widbrook area, I came across four along a field edge. Two were large, probably females, active over some nettle regrowth in the sheltered field corner, and maybe attempting to lay eggs. If this weather continues, we shall see them into December.

Mike Fuller

Wiltshire Butterfly Recorder

Frances Barbara Blakiston

Barbara was born in Newcastle on Tyne on 7th October, 1918. Her father was a civil servant and the family moved home fifteen times, so Barbara was sent to Clifton High School for Girls in Bristol, as a boarder. On the outbreak of World War II, she enlisted *via* the Women's Royal Army Corps, became a Captain, and served on anti-aircraft battery sites.

On demobilisation she took a secretarial course in London and worked as secretary to the Principals of Hockerill College, Bishop's Stortford, The Grey Coat School, Westminster, and Portsmouth Grammar School for Boys. Further studies qualified her to serve in the capacity of domestic bursar in Pentland Hall of Residence, Goldsmith's College, London and then from 1966-1975 as Senior Housekeeper at Stockwell College, Bromley, Kent

On the death of her mother in 1967, Barbara purchased No 9, Barton Orchard, as her new home and then generously made it a holiday home for many family and friends.

In 1977 she sold Barton Orchard and shared the purchase and restoration of Priory House in Market Street, Bradford on Avon, with her longstanding friend Rosemary. They both retired there in 1980 and spent eight happy years entertaining family and friends and in voluntary service to the community, particularly for Holy Trinity Church and the Abbeyfield Society. Barbara helped to produce our Parish News, was a regular church steward, a member of the Ladies' Choir, and a generous giver. She served as secretary to the House Committee of the Abbeyfield Society, using her considerable professional skills and experience in the opening and management of Abbeyfield House here. The strong and complementary team of 'Rosemary and Barbara' proved excellent at getting things done.

By 1988, Priory House had become too large and Barbara moved to 16, The Ropewalk and Rosemary to 17 – a very major down-sizing! This enabled them to continue travelling extensively, to serve as local volunteers and to enjoy the company of friends and family.

She was a generous giver of herself, following in the footsteps of distinguished members of the Barnett family. Her father worked at Toyntee Hall. Her uncle and aunt, Canon Samuel Barnett and his wife Henrietta, were founders of Hampstead Garden Suburb.

With increasing frailty Barbara moved into Firlawn Nursing Home in Holt in July 2006. There she was lovingly cared for. She died at the RUH on the morning of Monday, 15th October.

She had a keen mind and a retentive memory, and was very much a thinking Christian, a great reader with an extensive library, and a

Companion of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield. Above all she was a Christian of deeply sacramental faith, for whom her regular participation in the eucharist was of enormous importance. While increasing infirmity prevented her from worshipping at Holy Trinity at the end of her life, she was much in our thoughts, and will continue to be so, as will Rosemary, who has lost a very dear friend.

Bill Matthews

John Watt Purves

John Purves was born on the 24th October 1934 in Secunderabad, India, the second son of James and Hazel Purves. His early years were spent in India and when war broke out in 1939 he was sent back to England with his mother and brother, whilst his father fought with great distinction with the Indian Sikh Regiments. This service eventually resulted in John being made an honorary Sikh.

Early school life saw John as the only boy at an all-girls prep school where his mother was the school doctor. One evening his pyjamas were removed: he always said he was there 20 years too early! He went on to Edinburgh Academy and then to Bedford School and finally to Cambridge University.

In 1950 John joined the army. He went to Sandhurst and joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. His tours included Singapore, Canada, Belgium and Germany. He was a formidable rugby player. He ended up playing for his Cambridge college, and he captained Gosport and Fareham RFC in the 1959-60 season. It was in 1960 that a rugby accident in Hanover (a broken cheek-bone) moved him onto his next stage of life. He found himself in hospital and QARANC Nurse Captain Margaret Vaughan was there to give him nursing care.

John and Margaret were married in Llandaff Cathedral in May 1961. Within 5 years Alison, Rebecca and James were born. With all of the moving about with his work, John and Margaret rarely spent time apart. He loved to commute and when a job posting was far from home he would make sure he returned home at weekends.

In 1979 John and Margaret found a stable base and family home in Bradford on Avon. He showed himself to be a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He was a keen Mason, a President of Bradford on Avon Rugby Club, a member of the Bath & County Club and also an ex-treasurer of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust. He is reported to have got into trouble for driving a boat like Jehu along the canal! He was also, with Margaret, a regular member of this congregation, serving as sidesman and lesson-reader.

He supported Margaret selflessly in her political ambitions, both as County Councillor and as a parliament candidate for the Referendum Party in the 1997 election and since with her anti-EU activities with pressure groups

John left the Army in 1983 and started a second full-time career as a Technical College lecturer, first in Salisbury and then in Taunton. He finally retired in 1995.

John died suddenly on 21st October. He will be greatly missed in many areas of this community and in our church, and we extend our sincere sympathy to Margaret and her family at this time of loss.

Bill Matthews

John Purves

Margaret Purves and family wish to thank Bill and Angela, the churchwardens, the organist and choir, and every member of the congregation who have supported them with cards, letters and prayers following the sudden death of John.

It has been a great comfort at this sad time to know how well John was respected in the community and to know that he now rests in God's loving care but will live happily forever in our memories.

Parish 2007 Christmas Card Distribution

A reminder that Christmas is fast approaching and we shall once again distribute 3000 Christmas cards throughout the parish. This involves the services of 50 helpers and Jenny and I will be assembling the 'packs' for distribution in mid-December. A card is delivered to every home in the parish, and there are packs to local hotels, the library and the tourist information office.

It is not the most popular of tasks at a particularly busy time of the year but it is an important aspect of our outreach in the town. I hope you share my view that it is very worthwhile and probably responsible for many of the 'new faces' apparent at our services over the Christmas period.

Grateful thanks to everyone, for a job well done in previous years, especially those of you who have taken on a 'little extra'. Your assistance and continued support are much appreciated.

Mike Fuller

Bradford Area Churches Together
2008 Lent Course: The Lord's Prayer —
Praying it, Meaning it, Living it



Just a quick note to remind you that our Bradford Area Churches Together Lent Course will start during the week beginning 10th February 2008.

This year's convener, Denise Leigh from Christ Church, has a few vacancies for course presenters for this very 'user friendly' material from York Courses. Tapes and booklets on the subject matter will be made available well in advance, and the tapes all start off with the voices of four or five Christian celebrities giving their opinions of the material and how easy it is to understand. In fact, simply by playing the tape at the commencement of a Lent Course will stimulate a lengthy discussion amongst all participants. This always results in a successful event which is satisfying for presenters and participants alike.

A verbal list of the celebrities was given to me, and these included Canon Margaret Sentamu (wife of Archbishop John), David Hope, the ex-Archbishop of York, and Bishop Ken Stevenson. If you are interested in presenting, or joining in these spiritually enlightening courses, please contact me, or speak directly to Denise Leigh on 863916.

David Rawstron

Children and the Church

Mrs Terry asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favourite Bible stories. She was puzzled by William's picture, which showed four people on an aeroplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The Flight to Egypt," was his reply.

Pointing at each figure, Mrs Terry said, "That must be Mary, there's Joseph, and that's the Baby Jesus of course.

But who's the fourth person?"

"Oh, that's Pontius — the pilot!"

CHRISTMAS ABROAD

When working in hotter climes, expatriates often chose to visit the UK in the summer and therefore experienced many Christmas seasons abroad, some with rose-tinted memories of snow and family celebrations in their childhood. Others appreciated the few days of quiet reflection in other countries and the complete lack of commercialization that is prevalent in the motherland. Our presents were mostly hand-made or bought from the local markets.

Our memories of Jamaica in the late fifties, were of sitting in church with glassless windows, Jamaican ladies dressed in their best hats, gloves and shoes to match, all fanning themselves frantically in the humid heat. The final *Amen* of the Lords Prayer was punctuated by a black face popping up outside the window and with an impressive voice shouting "Alleluia!"

In Malta on Christmas Eve, I tried to suppress that queasy feeling that always came over me when in Catholic Cathedrals surrounded by eerily realistic statues of the Madonna with a faint blue tinge to her skin. After the service, when carols were sung beautifully by a boys' choir from somewhere high above us, we were escorted by the Priests along ancient, dark passageways to a room. Here we were treated to a very seasonal party when they doffed their vestments and made good use of a corkscrew! The following day was Christmas Day and as Prime Minister Mintoff had closed our usual church we took to small boats and crossed the harbour to worship at the Naval Base.

Christmas in Kuwait meant British Council Pantomimes and on one occasion, when playing Aladdin, I lost my voice and had to mime my songs to a backstage singer! On New Year's Eve, when Brian had to work, I lay in bed listening to the oil tankers booming Season's Greetings to each other on their air horns.

In West Africa, Christmas falls in the dry season and so we were able to sit with neighbours in our exotic garden overlooking the sea and watching the antics of our dog and Bambi, a rescued pet deer.

Most of our postings were in the Middle East where Moslem rulers allowed churches to be built and we were free to keep our religious festivals.

Several of these Christmas Days were spent in the desert with friends, enjoying the tranquillity of mountain scenery or gazing at the wonderful canopy of stars from our roof tops. It was easy to imagine biblical times on such occasions or when walking through the dusty souk surrounded by bearded men in long robes and lightly veiled women with barefoot children.

Ann Holland

Christmas Afloat — 1962

In 1962, having been appointed nursing sister aboard the SS Kenya, a ship of the British India Company, carrying 400 passengers, mostly families, taking up new postings or visiting relatives, and some VSO students, to East Africa, I was a little apprehensive at the prospect of my first Christmas at sea, away from my family traditions at home in Ireland. The officers were British and the crew

mostly Catholic Goanese. At sea on Christmas Eve, en route to Mombasa and Dar Es Salaam, preparations were made for a Midnight Eucharist, celebrated by a Catholic Priest who was travelling with us, and the Captain, who led the prayers. Some 400 gathered in the lounge for an inspiring service, with heartily sung carols, and an invitation for



SS Kenya of the British India Steam Navigation Co

all communicants of any church to receive the Sacramental bread, a loaf specially baked, and decorated with a star, by the Indian Moslem baker. As an Irish protestant I bravely took communion, and my family at home were most impressed by this ecumenical gesture.

The next day a large Christmas Tree was hoisted at the masthead, and a wonderful Carol service for all was held on deck, with some carols prepared by the children, accompanied by the ship's band, and ending, as is the custom at sea, with a lusty singing of *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*. So a memorable Christmas was enjoyed by all, as we gently steamed on for New Year in Durban.

Frances Hardman

Christmas in Cyprus

It was always a relief to spend Christmas in North Cyprus, because there was very little commercialism starting three months before, so that one was not sick of Christmas before it arrived.

There were the few odd Santas in the shop windows, but the festival was mainly a religious one celebrated by the Christian Community. In Kyrenia (Girne) where I lived, Christmas decorations did go up, mainly brought over from street decorations used in London the year before, giving a feeling of nostalgia. Christmas cards were available in some shops, and the number of shops selling cards and decorative paraphernalia gradually increased during my stay there. Many cards, however, were recirculated ones, with the pictures from the year before which had been updated on to plain St. Andrew's Church Cards.

Christmas really started with a Christmas Fayre held originally in a restaurant garden near the church, but, after the church had been extended, in the church grounds. The mulled wine and mince pies was always a popular stall! We had our midnight mass on Christmas Eve and the Eucharist for Christmas Day at the normal morning celebration time. Then people usually disappeared in large groups to have a Christmas lunch at one of the local restaurants or in smaller groups to share Christmas lunch with friends and neighbours in their houses.

continued...

Altogether it was a much more satisfying experience of the Christmas festival than that which normally takes place in the UK.

Malcolm Walsh

Christmas in the Snow

In 2001 we led a Saga Christmas Holiday in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia on the Baltic coast. One of the attractions was to experience a truly white Christmas, and we were not disappointed, The snow fell on Christmas Eve, the temperature having been well below freezing, with the sea frozen to some quarter of a mile out.

Estonia is traditionally a Lutheran country, with a 13th Century cathedral, and another church which once boasted the highest spire in the whole of mediaeval Europe. After many years of Russian occupation, there is also a splendid 100 year-old Orthodox church, but they celebrate their Christmas on 6th January.

For Estonians, the important day is Christmas Eve, when, after a packed carol service, which we attended in the Cathedral, families gather for an evening feast, not of turkey, however, but pork hocks, followed by a special traditional cranberry-based dessert. After the meal, presents are exchanged. A delightful custom, earlier in the day, is for families to visit the graves of their relatives, and to leave a candle burning in a jar. It was wonderful to see these little glowing lights as we drove past in the evening darkness. Only the Catholic Church held a midnight service, to which some of us trudged through the snow, returning some three hours later.

Christmas Day is a quiet family day, and we amused our hotel by requesting a traditional British Turkey Lunch, for which we had carried 20 Sainsbury's puddings, supplied by Saga, in our suitcase. In the afternoon we attended a splendid choral Nativity Concert in a local church, performed by school-children. We found it all a very refreshing change from the rather hectic round of celebrations we are used to at home.

Peter & Frances Hardman

Christmas afloat – 2004

I suppose being on a cruise in the Indian Ocean at Christmas time should have been a highlight or, to use overworked terminology, 'the holiday of a lifetime', but it wasn't really. I was homesick at Christmas!



Tallinn, Estonia..

The spire is that of the Lutheran Cathedral

There was a Midnight Mass and during the day all sorts of activities and entertainments that normally come at the top of my list of things I like to do. In the morning there was a great lecture on 'The Nativity in Art'; I was able to talk to a botanical artist about her work and buy one of her paintings; I watched the sea for dolphins; went to an excellent concert called 'Christmas à la Carte', and then to a gala dinner with friends. All special and fun, but something was missing.

I suppose it was that almost intangible thing 'tradition'. We all have our personal rituals which mean something special just to us. I hadn't decorated our house, something I love doing, or sneaked downstairs to place Brian's presents by his chair. I hadn't got the smell of stuffing on my hands, or heard the church bells ring. All these are little, unimportant things and I have no wish to appear ungrateful or grouchy, but I missed them and, of course, my sons. So, though I love to explore this wonderful world of ours, given the choice, I'd rather stay at home for Christmas!

Liz Netley

The Crabbe Family

I read with interest the article on George Crabbe in the November 2007 issue of Parish News. Although I have not verified it, I think that Caroline Crabbe must have been a relative of George. Caroline gave the stained glass window which is set in the Norman aperture above the Holy Trinity South Porch in memory of her niece, Kate Spackman, aged 7, in 1866. The design is from the studios of Hardman and Co, Birmingham.

The record of the window is in my book *Stained Glass Windows of Holy Trinity, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire*, published in January 2004, and on sale in the church.

Rosemary Carr

Cecilia Hynes-Higman writes in reply:

Having done a little further research, I can add that George Crabbe, SON of the poet, married Caroline Matilda Timbrell on 10th April 1817 in Trowbridge. He and Caroline had seven children and George was his father's curate at St James's Church for several years, before moving to other parishes elsewhere in England. Timbrell is, of course, a local Trowbridge name and there are monuments to Timbrells in Holy Trinity and a Timbrell Street in Trowbridge.

Cecilia Hynes-Higman

MUSICAL MEMORIES

Music of one sort or another seems to have underpinned my life. Some of my earliest memories came over the air waves from the BBC into our kitchen as we ate our war-time fare and listened to and sang along with Vera Lynn and Gracie Fields and, best of all, Paul Robeson. I also very much enjoyed 'Music and Movement', leaping around my Mom as she tried to get on with the housework, and I longed to go to school where I could learn to do it properly. Aged 7, I would do my piano practice with the sitting room windows wide open hoping that someone might hear me and recognise me as a budding Myra Hess, for Myra Hess's recitals were source of wonder and inspiration to me. On Sundays, we would go to the family chapel where the singing was unaccompanied. My Dad's rôle was to hum the first line of the tune to set the pitch, but my Aunt Annie, with her high soprano would do her best to sabotage this and push it up a tone or two. My sister and I, supporting our father, thus learned to sing lustily from a very early age.

The first stage performance I was taken to was an amateur production of *The Pearl Fishers* and I loved it. The emotion I experienced then was only matched a few years later by a professional production of *La Bohème* at the Theatre Royal in Birmingham and I wept all the way home on the top deck of a Midland Red double-decker for poor Mimi's sad fate.

Despite the restrictions of war time and classes of 45 or more children, music was taken seriously in our primary schools. The Director of Music for Worcestershire Education Committee, Mr Benoy, used to visit all

of the schools and attend concerts, and he knew by name the children with musical ability. It is thanks to him that, as a teenager, I had a moment of glory playing two movements from a Handel concerto with the Worcestershire Youth Orchestra in Kidderminster Borough Hall. This was quite a family occasion, with my sister playing first violin and my cousin the viola.

In the sixth form at our Grammar School we had an enthusiastic music master who encouraged us to go to concerts in Birmingham Town Hall. At that time, Rudolf Schwartz was the conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Looking through some old programmes I see that in 1955 alone, Segovia, Edith Fischer, Rawicz and Landauer, Moiseiwitsch, and Artur Rubenstein were all guests of the CBSO, not to mention the quite unforgettable visit of the Israel Philharmonic which came to Birmingham in that year as part of their historic tour. I shall never forget the passionate intensity of those strings in Brahms's 4th Symphony. They took us deep into the suffering and struggles of their nation and offered faint flickers of hope for a better world. In 1970 it was again the sound of strings, but this time an unaccompanied cello played by Mstislav Rostropovich who evoked similar feelings. To mark his honorary doctorate from Sussex University he played two Suites, one by Bach and the other by Benjamin Britten. Unforgettable!

These days Bryan and I have more time to indulge our love of music. Highlights have included a number of performances of Handel operas by the English National Opera, visits to the

Edington Festival, some magical evenings at Iford and memorable performances at the Wiltshire Music Centre, not least a recent, amazing production of Dido and Aeneas with Sarah Connolly and the Orchestra of the Enlightenment. In a different league, but very special to me, have been our Singing in Round Christmas celebrations, when a hundred or so voices sing for the joy of singing, by candle light, filling the darkness of ancient churches with our sound.

I have always loved the clarity, beauty and directness of early music, and it has been a great privilege for me, in the last few years, to have been introduced to the repertoire of harpsichord music by a brilliant

teacher and performer, Sophie Yates. But it is a song which best encapsulates for me the transforming power of music. That most poignant of Purcell's songs, *Music for a While*, especially when sung by Emma Kirkby, says it all:

Music, for a while,
Shall all your cares beguile:
Wond'ring how your pains were eas'd
And disdaining to be pleas'd
Till Alecto free the dead
From their eternal bands,
Till the snakes drop from her head
And the whip from out her hands;
Music, for a while,
Shall all your cares beguile.

Margaret Harris

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent Wreath has four red or blue candles around a white or gold candle. Alternatively, there may be three purple candles, reflecting the liturgical colour for Advent with a pink candle for the third Sunday, when rose-pink vestments are traditionally worn. The first candle is lit on Advent Sunday; additional ones are lit, one on each Sunday, and the white or gold one on Christmas Day.

The new candle each week may appropriately be lit during the Prayers of Penitence. Alternatively the candles may be lit after the Gospel Reading, before the Peace, or after Communion, where the prayer used at the lighting becomes a natural Post-Communion prayer. All five candles may appropriately be alight during services through the Christmas season.

There are several traditions about the meaning of each candle. The scheme that accords with the Common Worship Principal Service lectionary is:

Advent 1: The Patriarchs Advent 2: The Prophets
Advent 3: John the Baptist Advent 4: The Virgin Mary
Christmas Day: The Christ

Each of the four Sundays then reminds us of those who prepared for the coming of the Christ. 'The Patriarchs' can naturally focus on Abraham, our father in faith, and David the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born. 'The Prophets' gives an opportunity to reflect on the way the birth of the Messiah was 'foretold'. John, who proclaimed the Saviour, and Mary, who bore him in her womb, complete the picture.

The Archbishop's Council.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2007

Shoe-box up-date

So many shoe boxes have been packed with your love and your gifts again this year, which means joy and excited smiles for so many children, as well as the knowledge that someone, somewhere cares about them and they are not forgotten.

Your support, kindness and generosity have enabled us to fill and collect 140 Shoeboxes, which has topped even last year's total! What a marvellous effort. Thank you so much on behalf of the children.

These exciting parcels will be given out to children of all ages, from toddlers to teenagers, and will make a world of difference to some of the worlds most disadvantaged children. With paper, pens and pencils, their very own stationery items, the older children will be able to go to school. These gifts alone are so thankfully and gratefully received, a lifeline of hope making a child feel special and valued, perhaps in the midst of extreme poverty, natural disasters or war.

It is the 15th Anniversary this year of this 'Samaritans Purse' project, which is always well supported by Churches, Schools and many other organisations throughout Wiltshire. The warehouse in Melksham is already filling up with these Christmas shoeboxes, it is an amazing sight to see. A little 'army' of volunteers are ready to help give these boxes a quick check to be sure there are no liquids, war related toys, or unsuitable items (we are told to check carefully, but not to disturb all the love that is filled in the boxes !). They are then packed carefully into big boxes and loaded onto enormous lorries which are on their return journey anyway to Eastern Europe. Their destinations are to most of the Eastern European countries, including Bosnia, Serbia, the Ukraine, Romania, and beyond.

So while we are opening our Christmas presents in a few weeks time, and tucking into our Turkey and festive fare, we can be sure a child somewhere will be putting on a warm hat, scarf and gloves, or admiring a colourful hand puppet, and wondering who the kind person is who knitted and sent such lovely gifts. This is surely what Christmas is all about.

So, on behalf of the children: THANKYOU VERY MUCH



Celia Milne

THE DONKEY'S TALE

I didn't want to go at first. I'm not that young any more. I knew I was going to have to journey somewhere. All the humans were in a stir about having to be 'registered', whatever that meant. If I was needed it was because I would have to carry something, or someone, a long way. I didn't want to go at all.

The man who came to get me didn't seem too bad. He had a kind voice and patted my neck. I like my neck being patted. He told my master that he had to travel from Nazareth, (that's where I'm stabled), to Bethlehem.

That's a long way. He seemed even more anxious than the other men around. I heard him saying that his wife was expecting a baby, and it was due very soon. 'Trouble', I thought. 'Why me?'

The wife's name was Mary. She patted my neck too and said she hoped she wouldn't be too much of a burden. Young she was and though it was obvious that her baby was due soon, when I carried her she seemed no weight at all!

The journey was hard. For six days we travelled, and although at first Mary walked alongside me and the man (Joseph was his name, by the way), I had to carry her for the last two days. I knew her baby was due any time soon and I tried to go more

quickly. Joseph was very good to me and praised my efforts.

I was so pleased when we reached Bethlehem but Oh! it was so crowded. There were people everywhere, all rushing and pushing. I was so tired and really looking forward to being in a warm stable for a night, but when we got to the inn, Joseph was told he was too late. All the rooms were taken. I wished, then, that I had tried to go even faster and Joseph kept telling the innkeeper that they couldn't have got to Bethlehem any earlier because his

wife was about to have a baby. The innkeeper just said he couldn't help that, there just wasn't any room in the inn. Then, do you know what Joseph did? He said could he at least stable me for the night. I was so surprised – to think about me at a time like this!

I think the innkeeper was a bit surprised too, because he was quiet for a minute and then said not only could I be stabled for the night but so could Mary and Joseph. I was so pleased, for a stable is a wonderfully warm and cosy place.

Well, what a night it was! We had only just got settled into the stable and I'd managed a greeting or two to the other animals (there were cows and horses and mules and even a dog I remember), when Mary had her baby. We could see the little mite as there was a really bright light shining



through the rafters. It was very strange but later we heard that a star above the stable had started to shine really brightly. I never actually saw the star but I certainly saw the light. So bright it was.

You'd have thought all that was excitement enough but we had all just started to settle down again, the baby having been cleaned and laid in the manger, made comfy with straw, and Mary resting and Joseph fussing, when there was the sound of rushing feet and the stable door burst open and standing there were shepherds, all breathing very hard and looking – well I don't know how to describe how they looked – excited and frightened and as if they were expecting something wonderful, and then they behaved as if they were seeing something wonderful!

They came in and bowed before Mary and Joseph and asked to see the boy child (who, by the way, had been called Jesus). They told how they had seen great lights and things they called

Angels who had told them not to be afraid as they were being given news of great joy and that a baby had been born in the stable of the inn in Bethlehem. He was to be the saviour of the world. Soon the stable was filled with all sorts of folk, and the shepherds told their story over and over again.

Finally the shepherds left calling out and praising God, and slowly all the other people left too, but only after they all had a peek at the baby. Nobody laughed at the shepherds or called them names but many said they, too, had seen strange sights on the hills and, after all, there was the star over the stable!

And I, what did I think? I decided then and there that no matter what happened to me in the future (that's another story which I may tell you some time), I had been present at the most special, wonderful moment in the world's history and what is more it had all happened in the very best place possible – a stable!

Liz Netley

A CHRISTMAS SCHOOL MUSICAL

It was 2 o'clock in the afternoon on a Friday, two weeks before the end of the Christmas Term. The teacher said, "Right class, stop your writing and listen to me. A new teacher has arrived today to take over this class until the end of the term because you have been so awkward, noisy and stroppy. She will be very, very strict." The class sat in silence staring at their teacher. "Oh no," thought Millie, one of the clever girls, "this can't be true. Is she joking?" Just then there was a knock on the door and in walked the most beautiful lady you could imagine.

"Oo-oo!" whistled the boys. Their teacher winked at her and walked out. "Hello class. I'm Miss Crew," said the new teacher, not looking at all strict. Everyone relaxed. "Don't look so glum. Did she tell a fib about me?" They nodded, not sure what to believe.

"Well we're going to have fun. You will have to behave – yes, even you Ben. We have the biggest challenge we've ever accepted. We are putting on a MUSICAL, "Cool!" they chorused. "In two weeks!" she said. "I have lots of experience. I've just done *Grease* with

a school in London and when I was small, I did lots of leads with an operatic society in Bath."

"So you can sing?" said Cydney. "Oh yes. "And dance?" asked Georgia.

"Course". "And act?" "Just so."
"What a teacher" shouted Josh and the class threw their papers in the air. "Steady on," said Miss Crew, "acting is the toughest stuff. We must be really fit and supple and coordinated." Then she produced a huge drum.

"This is a *Djembe*, an African drum. Listen to my rhythm and bang on your table." They copied well. "Now begin to move – anywhere – up on your tables." The whole class was moving round the room following Miss Crew and her *Djembe* – over tables, under the teacher's desk. The rhythm was powerful.

Then she produced small *Djembes* for them all. Wow! What a lesson it was. At last she said, "Enough for today. We'll start properly on Monday. Come with Big Ideas. But keep it a secret from your Mums and Dads: it's our surprise."

"Some teacher!" said Millie to Abbie on the way home. "Wish we had her all year," said Abbie. They couldn't wait for Monday, but it did come.

"Right," said Miss Crew, as the class settled, "no maths, no writing, ONLY OUR MUSICAL!" "Hurrah!" they shouted. "Not too loud, remember it's our secret. First of all – storyboard –

we'll make some sketches. Drawing paper and felt pens out, please. As it'll be Christmas, we'll do a Nativity."

GROANS! "That's for infants," said Charlie. "A Nativity with a difference," went on this new teacher, "now we're going to THINK. Is that hard for you?" They were smiling now.

"What parts will we need?" she asked. "Baby – Mary – Joseph – Kings – Shepherds – Innkeeper." They all knew that answer. "Why were people travelling?" she asked. "To pay taxes," Josh called. "Who likes paying taxes?"

"Dad, doesn't," from Charlie. "Who made them pay?"

"The Roman Emperor," Cydney said. "How did he force them?" "Soldiers", Ben.

"Right – occupied country, barbed wire, guns and guards – set the scene. Draw!" Felt pens went skidding over the paper.

Pictures from the

television came into their minds – Iraq, Afghanistan, enemy occupation, tanks, uniforms, missiles; faces of fear; children peering out of buildings as tanks rumble by.

"Right, take a breather. We have to get the atmosphere." "Drums!" called out Josh. "Great. Imagine you are in dark clothes, you may be a soldier, and you may be a frightened child. Pick up your *Djembes* and move with my rhythm." They worked on the scene. "Tomorrow bring dark clothes."

Next day it was the tax paying, watched by guards, long queues of



people muttering "Occupation, occupation, we don't like the occupation!"

"Now we need Mary and Joseph coming to queue. Who'd like to be Mary?" Millie's hand shot up first. "And Joseph?" It was Ricky. "You bring clothes for a poor carpenter and his young wife. They pay their taxes but have no money left for a room to stay in."

"Innkeeper" It's Josh and he says, "You can use my stable out at the back in the yard." "Thanks a million," says Joseph, knowing how tired Mary was as her baby was due that night. "Mary and Joseph in the stable," said Miss Crew, "how shall we set this scene? What can you bring?"

"Hay – bucket of water – horse *pooh* – yuck!" The ideas come. "What a *yucky* place for a baby!" "Joseph was used to making things out of wood," said Ricky. "I could make a sort of manger." And he did. "Mary gave birth that night and wrapped her baby in her head-shawl," said Miss Crew. "Can you bring the baby, Millie?"

"Guards are always busy checking everywhere. They look round the yard that night and into the stable," the teacher goes on. "I didn't expect to see a baby," says Ben, who is a guard. "Let's do quiet drumming. Perhaps we can make a gentle sound by rubbing our fingers over the drum-skin, while Mary and the girls sing, "Go to sleep, little baby Jesus. Go to sleep, little baby King."

"Right children," says Miss Crew, "home-time. Pack away and remember what we've done so far." "Thanks Miss Crew, it's such fun," say the children as they leave.

Next day Miss Crew is in serious mood. "KING. Let's have a talk children. Mary called her baby a King. What does that make you think?" "Dangerous for him," said Josh. "What will the real king say?" "He'll have competition," said Charlie. "What about the All-Powerful Emperor, who is called Lord?" challenged their teacher. "He makes everyone obey him and the new king might not," said Ricky thoughtfully. "Very dodgy," Ben decided.

"What does Mary know?" Miss Crew goes on. "She must know he's special," suggests Millie. "And different," says Abbie. Teacher says, "What a responsibility for a poor peasant girl." "I think," says Georgia, "that an angel had come to Mary and told her that her baby would be God's son."

"Even more special," says Millie, "at least he'll have some powers." Just then the baby begins to cry – it was actually Millie doing it but it sounded so real. "I think you're frightening him with those stories," says Millie-Mary. "He can worry about that when he's bigger."

"But real worries came too soon" says Miss Crew. "King Herod hears about the new baby king and feels threatened. He decides to send his men out to kill all baby boys under 2 years old." "We must escape," says Ricky-Joseph. "Come, Mary we must take our baby and travel to Egypt, where no-one will find us. We'll go on the donkey tied up out the back." They pack up and wave goodbye. Miss Crew begins to sing, "Little Donkey, Little Donkey, travel safely on your way," and the children join in, those with drums making a clip-clop sound.

"Just as they are disappearing out the back door, you boys acting as

soldiers rush in at the front," says their teacher. "Where's the baby? Where's the baby?" Ben, Charlie and the other boys are shouting and throwing hay around and kicking the bucket over, while the drummers are getting loud and frantic. "There's trouble for him when we find him," they rush out shouting.

Dan, acting a child, comes forward. "I believe the baby will come back and he'll be more important than any King or Emperor. He will bring a new way of living for us all."

Everyone gathers round singing, "Jesus Christ, Superstar, who are you? What do they say you are?" softly at first, getting louder and louder. Mary holding the baby comes into the

middle. Still singing the boys get the drums and the girls begin to dance.

"Come on class," Miss Crew is getting excited, "stamp, clap, jump, twist and turn. Give it all you've got. Make it the biggest, maddest, most wonderful dance." Faster and faster they go. It is the fastest, thumpiest dance they've ever done. "Jesus Christ, Superstar. Who are you? What do they say you are?" thunders over the drums. Only Mary stood still smiling down at her baby and wondering.

Miss Crew is clapping wildly. "Wow!" she cheers. If you do as well as that for the parents it will be fantastic.

And of course they did.

Jill Allum

A letter from Christian Aid thanking Jonquil for the money raised by her tea drinking event.

Many thanks for your kind donation of £225.00 on 23rd October 2007 towards the work of Christian Aid. Your gift will help support our work in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries.

It was very kind of you to organise a Tea Time event. One project your money will support is in Sri Lanka where Chitrani Namanathan is the leader of a women's group at the Knobsnills (tea) Estate. Since Christian Aid's partner the Institute for Social Development has been working with the women there, many have become literate and more aware of their rights. "Most importantly, I now have the courage to confront management and negotiate better conditions."

Christian Aid believes in strengthening people to find their own solutions to the problems they face. We do whatever is needed to support the poor people and their communities, whether it is speaking out against the causes of poverty or funding vital work on the ground. The generosity of our supporters means we are currently able to support over 600 partner organisations around the world as they work towards ending the injustice of poverty.

Once again, thank you so much for your continued support of our work with and for the poorest communities on earth. With your continued help, we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely,
Marilyn Brown

A CRUISE FROM ATHENS AROUND THE BLACK SEA —1

I had been waiting for some years for an opportunity to do a cruise around the Black Sea. Friends had done it a few years back with Voyages of Discovery – too expensive for us! Then a Travelsphere brochure arrived with the cruise, stopping at 7 ports, all the ones to which I wanted to go, including a couple of nights in Athens to start. Couldn't have been better, because when we did our Greek tour about 10 years ago, there had been a strike, and we had only seen the Acropolis and Agora in Athens, not enough for me!

We flew with BA to Athens, amazed at the difference in the food since we travelled with them in April to Thessalonica. Then, I had put on the bottom of my questionnaire, "flight good, food appalling!" It must have had some effect, because this time we had a really good three-course lunch, which was very enjoyable.

We spent the next morning doing a bus sightseeing tour of Athens, costing 5 Euros, about £3.50, where you could get off the bus whenever you wanted and get back on another one when you were ready. It also paid your metro fares for the next 24 hours! I wished we hadn't booked to go to Cape Sounion that afternoon, as Athens was far more interesting. Having been to Sounion before, I found it no more interesting than the last time, but Gerald hadn't wanted to be dragged around Athens all day! Having climbed up to Sounion, he wished he'd stayed in Athens!



These tours are so tiring!

We were on the Louis Line ship Perla by 10.30am on Friday, finding our Superior cabin so small that we could hardly pass each other in it! However, you don't spend much time in the cabin, so we set off to validate the credit card, and book the excursions. Because this was going to be the only time we'd travel this way, we wanted to do all of them, an expensive business. We also decided to avail ourselves of a drinks package, where you paid so much up front, and all drinks were free for the voyage. Costing it at the end, we'd saved about £50! No cash changes hands on a ship, they use either debit or credit cards, which are then debited to your account at the end. We were still awaiting the final bill when I started writing this.

We had a Captain's Cocktail Party that night, not as formal as on some lines, just a little dressing up, and nice canapés and drinks before dinner. We found we were at the same table as a couple from Yorkshire, a couple from Colorado, and a Greek married to an American

– an interesting mix – and we had very entertaining meals with them each night. For breakfasts and lunches you sit where you like and help yourself, but dinners were formal, and the choice and cooking were superb.

We were late getting to Istanbul next day: the Dardanelles had been busy, and the ship had had to stop to take off a passenger who had died suddenly. It was pouring with rain, not a good start, but it was so interesting travelling across the bridge from Asia into Europe, to go and see the famous Blue Mosque, passing on the way, the Suleyman Mosque, which is the largest and grandest in the city. The Blue Mosque is named for the blue tiles lining the walls. Our guide had provided us with plastic bags, in which to put our shoes because you enter the mosque in bare feet. When we saw the magnificent carpet in there we weren't surprised, deep red with a pattern of tulips, Turkish style. We were told tulips were originally taken from Turkey to Holland. Our guide, Hande, pointed out the pulpit – more stairs than Bill would like to ascend – the gallery from which the service is sung, and the shrine which faces towards Mecca.

From there we could walk to the Hagia Sophia Museum, which started life as the largest Church of the Christian world in 537 and then became a mosque, all the mosaics being covered by tiles. However, these had been removed, in some cases leaving damaged mosaics. Hande told us there were 2 courts before you got into the church, and the un-baptised were only allowed

in the courts. There was a lovely mosaic of Emperor Leo kneeling before Christ in penitence, asking to be allowed into the kingdom. It was very much of a mosque inside, with the same kind of pulpit, gallery and shrine as the Blue Mosque.

From there to a carpet factory, not on the excursion, but obligatory it seems, so that they can extract money from you. Not much luck with our group, although the carpets were beautiful, and we did enjoy the apple tea. The choice of excursions had some people having a Turkish lunch, but we'd chosen to go back to the ship which was a good thing because the others were ill all next day! In the afternoon, we visited the Topkapi Palace, the oldest and largest of the remaining palaces in the world. Located where the acropolis of Byzantium once stood on the peninsula overlooking the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmara. We had to walk through the grounds and various gates, past the harem, which we didn't visit, to get to the main part of the palace. It was raining again, and the bag with macs and umbrella was on the coach! Hande pointed out the various rooms we should visit: a magnificent Treasury, porcelain collection, costumes and rugs, *etc.* The Treasury had some fantastic pieces, including the Spoonmaker diamond, the 7th largest in the world. According to legend, it was found by a man who sold it for 3 spoons, not knowing its worth. It is surrounded by 49 smaller diamonds embedded in gold in 2 rows. We saw the Topkapi dagger, with 4 magnificent emeralds, each about 3cm in

diameter on the hilt, and embellished with diamonds, and the thrones – the magnificence took your breath away, and it was all beautifully displayed. We saw the portraits of all the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire, and a collection of lovely old rugs and prayer mats. And I forgot the porcelain and silver in our efforts to get back to the coach before the rain came down again!

Very rough weather during the night forced us to take sea-sickness pills in the early morning: problem solved. Our next stop at Constanta in Romania was an afternoon trip, giving us time to catch up on the news that England had beaten France in the Rugby, and also Estonia at Soccer. These things matter, even when you're away! We were taken to an Art Gallery for 30 minutes to appreciate their Art, then on to the Cathedral of Saints Peter & Paul. Here we had a concert given by 16 young men, all priests or theological students. What voices they had, with one basso profundo who was gorgeous. How Max would have enjoyed it. From there to a Mosaic pavement discovered when they were going to build flats. It covered the floor of a warehouse, and a huge site. We had a small walking tour to take photos of the Casino, modelled on Monte Carlo, and the Genoese Lighthouse, then a very slow walk along the shore. There was a bitterly cold wind, and we couldn't wait to get back to the ship, but lo! a new shopping mall awaited us for the next ½ hr. Quite ordinary to us, but great for Romania, and all the young people

were gravitating to the 4th floor to the coffee shops: nothing changes!

We were late arriving at Odessa the next day. We were always late arriving since the Captain didn't believe in wasting precious fuel speeding up to get there on time. We went straight up to the Cathedral of the Transfiguration, which took 40 years to build and was blown up in one night by the Russians, and to the tombs of the governor of the city, Count Vorontsov and his wife. Thrown out. they had to be buried elsewhere until the Cathedral was rebuilt to exactly the same specification, and the inside is still not finished as they keep running out of money. The Lower Church had a real wow factor, and it is the Upper Church they are still working on. From there to a new shopping mall (!) built by the Greeks, where we managed to change Euros for Ukranian money. Then to the Opera House, which was magnificent. It has taken 12 years to restore (money again), and they've used 6kg of gold to do the gilding. We then



St Vladimir Cathedral, Sevastopol.

went to the Archaeological museum, where the Greeks have restored a floor to show that Odessa had Greek origins. The rest of the museum was quite scruffy! We saw a bust of Pushkin, who was exiled to Odessa, but not his wife, as the ruler of the time fancied her! Then to the Potemkin Steps, with a statue of Richelieu, who'd wanted to make Odessa more beautiful than Paris. This was a photo-stop only, as we had to get back to lunch. I'd found Odessa fascinating and beautiful, and so went back on my own, climbing the 192 steps, and walking back to the cathedral, and other places where I had not had time to take the photos I wanted. Arriving, eventually, back at the steps, I took the cable car down to save my poor knees!

Our next port was Sevastopol. All I knew about it was that there was a Siege! And I was to learn more – our first stop was to a round building housing a 115m long and 14m wide panoramic painting of the battle on 18th June, 1855. In front of the painting were relief buildings, dug-outs, shrines and figures of the officers, soldiers, nurses and a priest, giving you a very clear picture of what was happening. We were only allowed to go round once, so lots of photos had to be taken.

We then went down to a lower level where we could see it all again through glass, but not giving you the whole picture that you could see on the top level. It was amazing. The building was bombed in 1942, and a lot of the original structure destroyed by fire. It was decided after the war that the remaining fragments could not be restored, and so it was re-

painted, the building restored and modernised, and opened again in 1954, marking the centennial of the first defence of the city.

From there we were taken through Sevastopol to St. Vladimir Cathedral, and the ancient Greek city of Chersonesus, founded by the Greeks in 422BC and very well preserved. To go into the Cathedral, I had to pay 10 grinyar for a head covering, (my scarf was not in the rucksack that day!). It was destroyed in the war, and the restoration only finished in 2001. It was very bright, with lots of gilding, probably why it took so long to restore, but no wow factor. A visit to the museum followed, a quick one, thank goodness, and then into town where our guide pointed out various monuments – one to the Russian Army and Navy was a pylon, with a bayonet and sail.

I wanted a closer shot, so leaving Gerald, I walked around the shore. Unfortunately, the guide's directions were a bit hazy, and getting back on to the streets, I lost my way, and only caught up with the party as they were going back to the coach. Even Gerald was getting a bit worried! I'd missed the Changing of the Guard at the War Memorial, so went ashore again that afternoon, to take some more photos. That evening, the pianist in one of the lounges didn't turn up for the second night, so I reported it. It took the staff member $\frac{3}{4}$ hr to find him, but he never missed again!

Chris and Gerald Hodge

Photographs provided by the authors

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S RESPONSE TO A COMMON WORD

The Archbishop of Canterbury received a copy of a key letter from Muslim scholars and religious leaders addressed to Christian religious leaders. Dr Anas S Al-Shaikh-Ali, Chairman of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists, and one of the signatories to the letter, presented it to the Archbishop at Lambeth Palace. The Archbishop welcomed the letter as a clear reaffirmation of the potential for further development of existing dialogue and common action between Christians and Muslims and other faith communities:

"The theological basis of the letter and its call to 'vie with each other only in righteousness and good works; to respect each other, be fair, just and kind to another and live in sincere peace, harmony and mutual goodwill', are indicative of the kind of relationship for which we yearn in all parts of the world, and especially where Christians and Muslims live together. It is particularly important in underlining the need for respect towards minorities in contexts where either Islam or Christianity is the majority presence."

Source: Parish Pump

INTERFAITH NEWS

Understanding The Diverse Communities In Wiltshire The West Wiltshire Interfaith Group

Farzana Saker, secretary of the Interfaith Group welcomed the two speakers and the large, diverse audience on Sunday October 21st at the Civic Hall, Trowbridge. Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones, known as the Black Farmer is also a prospective parliamentary Conservative candidate for the new Chippenham Constituency and Imam Rashad Azami is Director of the Bath Islamic Society.

Farzana went on to say that the title of this meeting was deliberately chosen to bring to the attention of rural Wiltshire the ethnic communities that exist in this area.

Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones briefly described his life, being brought to this country from Jamaica as a 4 year old, his turbulent childhood in the Birmingham area and his eventual emergence as a successful farmer and entrepreneur after years of struggle. The turning point in his life was being given a menial job as a "runner" with the BBC (Pebble Mill) and eventually rising to become a director of programmes. His plain speaking was refreshing and his positive views on being an immigrant in this country were well received.



The other speaker, Imam Rashad Azami, recalled how he first came to this country from India, after studying in Saudi Arabia, as an academic to advance his studies. He temporarily took charge of the mosque in Bath for six months, after which time he was asked to leave by the Home Office. A day before he was due to leave he was finally allowed to stay and has been officiating at the Bath mosque for many years now.

A lively discussion took place with members of the audience asking questions. As can be expected there were differing views as to how immigrants from diverse backgrounds saw themselves 'fitting in' here.

From a Moslem perspective, one gentleman saw himself and his family as 'guests' in this country although he had lived here for many years.

This view was energetically challenged by Mr Emmanuel-Jones, saying it would be impossible to become integrated by sitting back as a 'guest'. He believed in striving to advance himself as a member of this society with a strong self belief.

A young Muslim described how difficult it was to advance himself in a society that was centred around meetings and 'clinching deals' during a 'social' drink in a pub, given that drinking alcohol is forbidden to Muslims.

Imam Rashad Azami replied to this by saying that he sometimes had to attend such meetings but it was up to the individual to choose a soft drink or coffee. However, one could appreciate the dilemma of a young Muslim *being seen* to enter a pub for whatever reason.

The formal meeting closed and Farzana thanked the speakers and the ladies of the community for providing the excellent refreshments, also the Co-operative Membership Community Fund who financed the children's clown and Trowbridge Town Council for their grant. This is much appreciated as the group has not obtained long-term funding for these events and depends on the goodwill of its members and the public.

The 'Eid al-Fitr

This Moslem festival at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan fell on Friday 12th October and a party to celebrate this was hosted on the following Sunday afternoon by the Moroccan community in Trowbridge. The refreshments were delicious and the bouncy castle (*inside* the hall) was noisily enjoyed by the children! Farzana and the hosts were disappointed that there were not more people from outside this community to participate in this joyful occasion.

Ann Holland

THE CHILDREN'S CHARTER

An almost 'throw away' line at the end of the parable of the persistent widow (or the unjust judge if you prefer the other title) says: 'when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?' and it set me thinking again about how faith and the faith experience are passed on to succeeding generations. I was preparing a sermon on the subject where the epistle spoke, in Paul's charge to Timothy, about teaching and evangelism when I happened to visit Malmsbury Abbey and discovered a church that had given the place of children in the church a great deal of thought and had come up with a charter. It was not hidden away in a drawer but displayed on a large board just inside the entrance for all to see. It is certainly challenging but is also in line with my own thinking and is reproduced here for us all so we can think about its implications.

The Children's Charter for our church

1. As a family we should take every opportunity to share Christian life together.
2. There is a need for regular prayer for the whole family of the church.
3. The discovery and development of gifts in adults and children is a key function in the church.
4. Learning is for the whole church, adults and children.
5. Children need to be taught why to go to church
6. Principles of communion and confirmation need to be taught from the early years
7. The full diet of Christian worship is for children as well as adults.
8. Fellowship is for all, each belonging meaningfully to the rest.
9. Service is for children to give, as well as adults.
10. Children are equal partners with adults in the life of the church.

CHILDREN NEED TO EXPERIENCE CHURCH LIFE IF THEY ARE TO STAY IN OUR CHURCH

I went on in my sermon to think about all the children and young people with whom we are in touch and how we pass the faith on to them — children, grandchildren, godchildren, nieces, nephews, friends and so on. But we have a prime duty as a church to engage with and involve those children who are in our midst Sunday by Sunday. Many of the things in the charter are already part of our church life at Holy Trinity but how much more could or should be done if the charter were ours? If nothing else I hope it makes us think!

Ian Stanes

A TRUE OR FALSE CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Can you separate fact from fiction in the Christmas story?
Test your knowledge by answering "T" or "F" to each statement.
Answers will be given in the January issue of Parish News.

- There are no records of Joseph speaking in the Christmas story.
- The wise men were three kings from the orient.
- The little drummer boy came to the manger after the other shepherds.
- The star did not appear above the manger.
- Jesus's ancestors include a prostitute, an adulterer, a woman who committed incest, and a non-Israelite.
- The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary first and then he appeared to Joseph.
- Mary rode a donkey from Nazareth to Bethlehem.
- Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem because of a decree by Caesar Augustus.
- The wise men followed the star as it moved from their eastern land to Israel.
- The wise men did not arrive on the night of Jesus's birth.
- God sent a choir of chubby angels to announce Jesus's birth to the shepherds.
- Shepherding was considered a very noble occupation.
- Both Joseph and Mary were told that the baby was to be named "Jesus."
- When Herod heard about Jesus he was the only one concerned about this new king.
- The wise men found Jesus lying in a manger in the town of Bethlehem.
- After the angels announcement the shepherds went straight to Bethlehem to see Jesus.
- Joseph married Mary immediately after the angel appeared to him.
- Some of the shepherds doubted and refused to believe the message they heard from the angels.

Source: St Phillips and St James, Whittington, Parish News

Provided by David Rawstron

FOR PRAYER IN DECEMBER

We pray:

- for all involved in preparing for our Advent and Christmas Worship
- for the work of Shelter and Christian Aid
- for all who travel over the Christmas season
- for all who will be worshipping with us
- for our living a truly incarnational faith
- for Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq
- for all who will be serving with our peace-keeping forces over Christmas, and for their families

Unto Us a Son is Given

Given, not lent, and not withdrawn – once sent,
This Infant of mankind, this One is still the little welcome Son.
New every year, new born and newly dear,
He comes with tidings and a song, the ages long, the ages long;
Even as the cold keen winter grows not old,
As childhood is so fresh, foreseen,
And spring in the familiar green.
Sudden as sweet come the expected feet.
All joy is young, and new all art,
And he, too, whom we have by heart.

Alice Meynell (1847 – 1922)

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptism

- 28.10 Douglas Robert Foley
Glendinning
4.11 Colin Terry Henry Allen
18.11 Emily Jessica Douglas
18.11 Molly Anna Mary Blanchard

Marriage

- 27.10 Matthew James Finch
& Charisa Abragan

Funerals

- 24.10 Daniel John Pullen
26.10 Doris Elsie Kathleen Payne
29.10 Frances Barbara Blakiston
29.10 Beryl Jose Binding
5.11 John Watt Purves

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL - OFFICERS

Canon Bill Matthews (Chairman)	Tony Haffenden (Churchwarden & V/C)
Joan Finch (Churchwarden)	Graham Dove (Hon. Secretary)
Dr Malcolm Walsh (Hon. Treasurer)	Revd Angela Onions (ex officio)

Pat Astill	Cecilia Hynes-Higman
Karen Bowen-Nielsen	Peggy Leach
Janet Brown	Dr Nick Nutt
Mary Burge	David Rawstron
Bob Cherry	Edward Shaw
Trevor Ford	Anne Willis
Bryan Harris	John Woods
June Harrison	

STANDING/FINANCE COMMITTEE

Vicar; Churchwardens; Secretary; Treasurer.

CHURCHWARDENS EMERITI

Norman Hanney, Jeremy Lavis, Mike Fuller, Anne Carter

FRIENDS OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Patron: Dr Alex Moulton

Secretary: *vacancy*

Committee:

Ex officio:

Chairman: Bob Cherry

Treasurer: John Woods

Anne Carter; Bryan Harris; Jeremy Lavis;

Revd Angela Onions; Mike Smith

Canon Bill Matthews; Joan Finch; Tony Haffenden

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BRADFORD GROUP MINISTRY

This comprises the three benefices of Holy Trinity, Christ Church with Westwood and Wingfield, and Monkton Farleigh, South Wraxall and Winsley. The clergy meet regularly for prayer and shared planning, and there is an informal Group Council consisting of the licensed clergy and churchwardens, with Readers. The Group was established in 1975.

OTHER OFFICERS & ORGANISERS

PCC Secretary	Graham Dove	868654
PCC Treasurer	Dr Malcolm Walsh	862702
Bell ringers	Phil Gaisford	863538
Bookstall	Revd Angela Onions	309001
Brass Cleaning	Chris Hodge	863543
Brownies	Jennifer Hazell	863860
Choir	Gareth Bennett	01380 728772
Church Stewards	David Milne	864341
Church Hall Bookings	Anne Carter	862146
		or 07981 742361
Coffee on Sunday	George and Ivy Hurst	868795
Display Co-ordinator	Revd Angela Onions	309001
Electoral Roll Officer	Pat Irving	862903
Flowers	Jonquil Burgess	868905
Guides	Judith Holland	866215
Midsummer Market	David Rawstron	862224
Mothers' Union	Chris Hodge	863543
MU Prayer Circle	Chris Hodge	863543
Publicity Officer	Ann Holland	862731
Servers	Mary Ford	863984
Sidesman's Rota	Joan Finch	863878
Stewardship Secretary	Brian Netley	866121
Sunday School	Karen Bowen-Nielsen	07732 786440
Vergers	Peter Wills	867593

Parish Representatives on other organisations:

Bradford Group Council:	The Churchwardens
Children's Society:	Anne Carter
Christian Aid:	Jonquil Burgess
Deanery Synod:	Bob Cherry; June Harrison, Revd. Angela Onions; Dr Malcolm Walsh; John Woods; Anne Willis (Deanery Information Officer)
Churches Together:	David Rawstron

Cover picture from a drawing by Frances Taylor.

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