

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Bradford on Avon



PARISH NEWS

OCTOBER 2009

web edition

DIRECTORY

Vicar

position vacant at present

Churchwardens

Joan Finch 40 Palairet Close 863878

Tony Haffenden 6 Folly Field 864412

Parish Administrator

Graham Dove Parish Office, 18A Woolley Street 864444

e-mail: secretary@brad-avon-ht.org.uk

Retired Clergy

Canon Richard Askew, The Ven John Burgess, The Revd Alun Glyn-Jones, Canon Peter Hardman, The Revd Jim Hill, The Revd Angela Onions, The Ven Ian Stanes, The Revd Karl Wiggins, Canon Humphrey York

Licensed Lay Ministers

Graham Dove

Dr Malcolm Walsh (retired)

Director of Music

Gareth Bennett 01380 728772

Times of Services

(Check Bulletins and notices or Church web site)

Sundays

8 am Holy Communion

9.30 am Sung Eucharist (coffee after)

6 pm Evensong, Compline etc

Holy Communion

10 am Wednesdays

(weekdays)

8 am Fridays

Times of Meetings

Choir Practice 6.30 pm Church, Tuesdays

Junior Church 9.30 am Church Hall (1st Sunday of the month)

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

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

Holy Trinity Web-site www.brad-avon-ht.org.uk

Diocese Web-site www.salisbury.anglican.org

Weekly Bulletin

Notices to the Parish Administrator not later than Sunday for the following Sunday.

Please let the Parish Administrator know if someone needs visiting at home or in hospital.

● DIARY FOR OCTOBER



4 SUNDAY

DEDICATION FESTIVAL

9.30 am Solemn Eucharist
6 pm Compline

11 SUNDAY

TRINITY 18

9.30 am Sung Eucharist
6 pm Evensong at Christ Church

15 Thursday

7.30 pm Mothers' Union
Amanda Foyster—Relate 'So much
more than marriage guidance'

Church Hall

18 SUNDAY

LUKE THE EVANGELIST

9.30 am All Age Worship
6 pm Taizé Service with Prayer for Hope
& Health

25 SUNDAY

LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY BIBLE SUNDAY

9.30 am Sung Eucharist
6 pm Sung Evensong

28 Wednesday 10 am

SIMON & JUDE, Apostles

*Holy Communion is usually at 8am each Sunday
PN copy date for November is 18th October*

● THOUGHTS ON THE INTERREGNUM

Autumn: fresh in our minds are the colours of autumn and the joyful activity of giving thanks to God for the harvest of our year's work in the garden, in the fields, at home, or in the workplace, along with the pleasure of our shared harvest festival meal. But soon the winter rains will rip off the coloured dresses the trees wore, the flowers will have died and the earth will stand bare, exposed to the cold and rain in a period of gloom before the first signs of spring appear to lift our hearts again.

This connection between death and rebirth is summarised in Genesis: "...for as long as the earth endures seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease".

Many of us, now in the autumn of our lives, may take comfort from the teaching of Paul in the analogy of sowing the seed of our mortal bodies before we can grow again transformed into heavenly bodies.

All this is based on our being the Easter People, confident in the resurrection of Christ Jesus from the dead, as we declare in the Eucharistic prayer before we share the bread and wine: *"By the power of the Holy Spirit He took flesh ... and put an end to death by dying for us and revealed the resurrection by rising to a new life; so He fulfilled Your will and won for You a holy people"*. This holy people is the Church, as Peter reminds us in his first letter.

But if, in our own lives and in the life of the world around us, we can see parallels with the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus 2000 years ago, so also ought we to see it in the life of the local church as well as the church in general, following Paul in his teaching that we are the body of Christ at this time in this place. But this time let us consider the caterpillar. Lively through the summer, it spins a cocoon and becomes like a dead thing in its pupa. But all the time it is lying dormant, fundamental changes are taking place in its structure so that when spring comes it can rise again as a beautiful butterfly.

So, likewise, as we are working through our interregnum, it is vital that change be taking place in our structures to fit us for our future tasks and environment so that we can rise again with a new living form when we emerge from the interregnum with the appointment of a new priest: for we are the Easter People, created in God's image, empowered by the Word made flesh in Jesus 2,000 years ago, and ever anew through the sacraments to fulfil His will. Hallelujah.

Or again, we are players in God's orchestra, each with our own instrument, technical skills and enthusiasm, with Jesus as our musical director. Our last conductor having left, we now need to revitalise our skills in this winter break until our new conductor is appointed, whose duty will be to co-ordinate us all to bring forth a joyful noise unto the Lord and give pleasure to all those who hear, as was pointed out by David Robertson on the recent last night of the proms.

Malcolm Walsh

INTERREGNUM NEWS

A Message From The Churchwardens...

We are delighted to report that the PCC's final draft of the Parish Profile — a copy of which will be given to each applicant for the post of our next Priest — has been approved by the Archdeacon and his team. Our thanks to you all for the ways in which you have helped us in the process. Every question you have asked, the comments you have made, and the letters you have sent have all been carefully noted and where possible have been woven into the final document. An advertisement has also been approved and will appear in appropriate publications on the 9th and 16th October. The closing date for applications is 13th November and interviews will be held on the 2nd December 2009. It is now our wish to set up a small prayer group to pray for the parish over the coming months and during the day of the interviews. We are seeking a leader and a group of six or seven who would be prepared to meet regularly over the coming weeks to seek God's guidance and help in our quest to find a new Priest. Please pass on your name to one of the churchwardens if you feel that you would like to help in this way.

Tony Haffenden and Joan Finch, Churchwardens

... and some thoughts from Archdeacon John Burgess

People come to live in Bradford on Avon for many different reasons. The historic nature of the town is very attractive, there are excellent train and bus services, good schools and wonderful walks along the river Avon and the Kennet and Avon canal.

Having settled, people find that there are also a great many clubs and societies for a huge range of interests. I suspect many people put the church in those sorts of categories.

The population of the Parish of Holy Trinity numbers just over 6,000 which is part of an overall population of at least 10,000 people. We have to establish our presence against that background and the many other attractions and activities.

The Churchwardens and PCC have been wrestling with this problem in their work to develop the Parish Profile for Holy Trinity. But it is not their job alone and we can all help. There is a sense that we want to recall people to the basics of life itself. All human beings have to face large issues in their lives: issues such as life and death, joy, and the pain of suffering and other deep experiences.

The family of the church is a place where these issues can be met and discussed and we can begin to find a way through the many complexities of life. There is also an important need to make this known and appreciated by a much wider section of our population.

continued...

Thoughtfulness and understanding begin to come out of life experience which is one reason why many older people do turn to the church although younger members of society also have a need to tread these paths to help them to shape their future attitudes and personalities in this way.

In our support for the Churchwardens and PCC at this time we can be playing a small rôle in this general background. It is sometimes given the technical name of mission but it is really genuine friendship.

John Burgess, Archdeacon

A QUIET DAY AT IVY HOUSE, WARMINSTER, 12th September, 2009

Illuminating, inspirational, helpful, relaxing, spiritually enlightening, faith enhancing, down to earth — these were just some of the words used by our group of seventeen to describe this Quiet Day led by Bishop Bill Ind. His inspiration for the theme of the day came from the questions that Jesus asked. Further stimulation had come from a much treasured possession, presented to him by a nun, containing over 200 questions which Jesus asks in the synoptic gospels.

There were three sessions during the day with each session producing a question on which we pondered and asked ourselves what that question meant for each of us personally. The first session was based on Jesus's question, "Who do men say that I am?" and Peter's inspired answer, "You are the Christ". What we were challenged to ask of ourselves was to think of who Christ was to each of us.



The second session was based on the story of The Good Samaritan where Jesus shows the relevance of the Law to actual living. "Who is my neighbour?" was the question on which we reflected. Thinking along these lines, a lovely suggestion was made that if we could not physically bring one of our neighbours, relatives or friends to church, bring them on

our shoulder and in our thoughts. This session was completed by celebrating the Eucharist together.

The third session was based on The walk on the road to Emmaus when Jesus joined two of the disciples after his resurrection and he asked them, "What are you talking about?". They explained to Jesus all about the happenings of the prophet from Nazareth who had been crucified. It was not until Jesus sat at table with them, took bread, gave thanks, broke it and passed it to them, that they recognised him and knew that he was alive. The question from this session on which we reflected was, "What are we talking about?" Maybe, it is less talk about the interregnum and, instead, bringing all the good things, with smiles on our faces, that are happening all around us everyday.

What a lovely group of characters we met from Bishop Bill's life: Margie, Hilda & George, the Director of English China Clays, Peter the Southampton Football Club supporter, and the bad fairy at the manger, who were introduced to us as signs that this is God's world and he is always at work around us. Each session was amplified with beautiful poetry and infectious enthusiasm. It was a day to treasure and remember. And of course, speaking metaphorically, the icing on the cake was the beautiful weather which we enjoyed in the most colourful and healthy flower and vegetable gardens imaginable. Do come next year for a most enjoyable and enlightening day!

Marlene Haffenden

FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

Although Churches which hold occasional events such as our Street Market are exempt from the full requirement to have a documented system of food safety management and full training for all food handlers, it is good practice to have some members who have the necessary training and are available to advise others.

To this end six of our occasional catering team attended a one-day course to achieve the Level 2 Food Safety award which is valid for the next three years. We are delighted that all six passed the requisite exam. Congratulations go to Anne Carter, Mary Ford, Margaret Harkcom, Eve Humphrey, Daphne Squire and Joan Finch.

Joan Finch

Holy Trinity Mothers' Union

Mid-September and a new 'term' for our branch. We met in church, where Ian celebrated Holy Communion for us. Then on to Church Hall, where Liz Purling and Chris Auty from SURESTART Children's Centre were waiting to tell us about their work. Notices had to be given out first, and there were quite a few after our long break. Chris thanked Ian for taking the service, Joy Stenning and Mary Dawson for the readings, and Sylvia Stanes, especially, for the Intercessions, during which she had coped beautifully with all the names of the workers in Africa in our Wave of Prayer. She reminded members that our Families First subscriptions are due for the MU magazine we receive 6 times a year — not bad for £9, is it? She read a letter from Eleanor Nhema in Harare, thanking us and Holy Trinity for the \$256 we sent out to the MU there. We discussed whether we wanted a party after Christmas or a meal, and got 100% voting for a meal!

Then our speakers told us about SURESTART, which is funded by the Government, to provide support for families with children from 0-5. A new building was built for them at the Fitzmaurice School site, and it's already too small within a year of opening! We learnt that Health Visitors, who provided such support to us as young Mums, only visit new Mums once after the baby is born these days, so SURESTART is the only way they can get help and support. Being very child friendly, these centres are much more attractive to go to than Health Centres, and there are trained staff with whom to talk over problems, get babies weighed, *etc, etc*. They have recently opened another centre at The Sports and Social Club at Poulton, for people in that area. Having started a Toy Library, they are now hoping to be able to get a mini-bus to take the toys and other equipment out to the surrounding villages. It seemed to us that they are doing a fantastic job for people who have no families to fall back on, at a time when a lot of help and advice are needed. Mary Dawson thanked them most warmly for giving up even more of their time to come and tell us about their work. Marlene and Evelyn had produced some lovely refreshments to have with the tea and coffee which followed.

At our next meeting, on October 15th, we shall welcome Amanda Foyster of RELATE, who will talk on the subject "So much more than Marriage Guidance". Please come and join us.

Chris Hodge

Junior Church News

What a blessing and wonderful start to the new Autumn Term!

Altogether, including Janet Brown's little brood, we had nine children attending this first session.

As it is Autumn our theme is Harvest. To remind us of God and to thank Him for all the food produced for us, we drew, coloured and cut out all kinds of fruit and vegetables to put into a basket drawn on a card. We finished it the following week so that we could put it onto our children's notice board for all to see specially for the Family Harvest Service.

Again it was lovely to have Muriel come and play the piano for us, and we practiced our Harvest song and others.

Junior Church Team



Crossword solutions

Across
1 Dare 3 Cherubim 9 Son Tohu 10 Yield 11 Ranch 12 Enlist 14 Baalah of Judah 17 Edward 19 Sheol 22 Media 23 Open air 24 Apostasy 25 Eton
Down
1 Describe 2 Run in 4 Household gods 5 Royal 6 Blessed 7 MIDI 8 Joshua 13 Children 15 Added to 16 Jasper 18 Await 20 Exalt 21 YMCA

GUIDE CAMP 2009

In the autumn of 2008 an advert appeared in the Guiding magazine: **Wings 2009 Windsor Great Park. International Camp organized by the Berkshire Scouts and Guides.** "How about this?" I said to my long-suffering co-leader who holds the camp licence. I must retire from full-time Guiding at 65 and it only happens every 5 years so I fancied doing one before I go!



Before we know it there we are, in the first week of August, with our mess tent, gas bottles, 4 large tents, 12 Guides, 7 of whom had not yet started secondary school (this piece of information is critical because they are not yet competent at managing all their STUFF), half of whom were first time at camp, squeezed onto a narrow marked pitch between the 2nd Bridgend Scouts and local Scouts from Ascot. As we gathered for the opening ceremony in front of a huge festival stage with the customary bank of massed speakers, surrounded by 6000 other Scouts and Guides, we knew we were in for a different sort of camp experience. Glastonbury for Scouts and Guides without the alcohol or drugs!

The huge site was divided into 5 sub-camps from where we collected our supplies and went with all our questions. Around the perimeter of the site were activity zones for the morning and afternoon workshops. From 9.30-12.30 and 2-5 every Scout and Guide departed for an activity. Included in these extremely well run and excellently staffed sessions were crafts, caving/rock-climbing, performance skills, science field, circus skills, hot air (a huge variety of inflatable slides), boating and kayaking, global development activities, Windsor tour, and shooting (archery and rifle range).

The forty nationalities present contributed to a variety of languages in the mobile, hot-shower cubicles and the late-night teeth cleaning at the sinks. 44 American girl Scouts from Washington State had each brought one light-weight bright pink tent. The male and female Sea Scouts from Alexandria in Egypt had brought a Bedouin tent. The Canadians all gave our Guides maple-leaf cheek tattoo emblems. Truth to tell the vast majority were UK Scouts and Guides from all over. One of the first groups to depart early on the Saturday morning were the Scouts from Fife in their own vehicle with trailer attached and Bryony and I were glad that a long road journey did not lie ahead of us after a week of full time 7am-11pm days. One of the highlights was the closing ceremony. Just the best fireworks I have ever seen concluded a fantastic show which also launched the Guide centenary year. Our Guides have memories of something special which I hope will inspire them to stay with this extraordinary youth movement.

Judith Holland

A LOGO FOR HOLY TRINITY

What is a logo? The Concise Oxford English Dictionary reads: 'an emblematic design adopted by an organization to identify its products'

This logo, or emblem, was adopted by Holy Trinity in the 1980s: it was taken from the monumental brass in memory of Thomas Horton and Mary, his wife. This is a large black slab of stone, inlaid with brass, now placed vertically on the east wall behind the organ, near the squint. In the centre are two figures, about 30cm in height, one male and one female; the husband is dressed in the merchant's costume of the beginning of the 16th century and the wife has the 'kennel' or triangular forehead dress of the same period. There is a scroll above each of them inscribed:

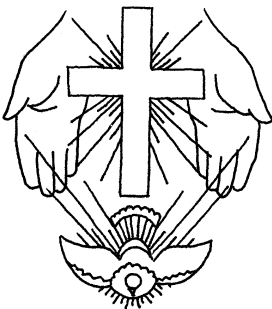
Sancta Trinitas unus Deus Miserere Nobis

There is also the 'Merchant's Mark', which looks like the outline of a cross-bow, which formed part of the armorial bearings of the Horton family. One piece of brass, measuring about 10cm by 15cm, contains a figure of Christ on the Cross, with a bird (dove?, the emblem of the third person of the Trinity), and, behind a sitting figure of an old man with a long beard, the usual representation of the Father, on a larger scale than that of the suffering Christ.



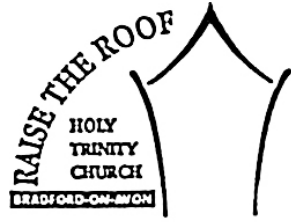
At each of the four corners of the slab there would seem to have been small inlaid pieces of brass; two of them are in position — 'Lady Helpe' and 'Jesu, Mercy'.

Thomas Horton was a 'merchant of the staple', or a clothier. Doubtless he was a rich clothier since, as well as founding a Chantry, he was responsible for building not only his own house in 1496 next to the present Abbey House, but also Church House (now known as Church Hall) the original 'Chantry' for his Chantry Priest, and nearly all of the North Aisle of Holy Trinity Church itself. Thomas died at Westwood on 14th August, 1530.



In the 1990s, another logo was adopted and is the one now in use, on the front page of the weekly bulletin, for example. It was designed by Bob Butler.

In 1993, the roof of the nave was in urgent need of repair. A Roof Appeal was launched, led by Margaret Purves. A great sum had to be raised — look at the size of the roof! By 1994 the money was collected — some £33,000 if I remember rightly — and the roof was raised. A special logo was invented for the appeal.



Among the items sold for the appeal was a cookbook edited by Jean Pike and Joan Godwin, with illustrations by Bob Butler. This was a collection of some 90 recipes contributed by members of the congregation. Included was a recipe for Biblical Cake, by Vicki Codrington:

Ingredients:

- 12oz Kings ch 4 v 2,
- 6oz Judges ch 5, v 25
- 6oz Jeremiah ch 6, v 20
- 8oz I Samuel ch 30, v 12
- 6oz Nahum ch 3 v 12
- 2oz Numbers, ch 17, v 8
- 2tsbsp I Samuel ch 14, v 25
- ½teasp II Chronicles ch 9, v9
- 1 cup Judges ch 4, v 19
- 3 St Luke ch 11, v 12
- 1 pinch Genesis ch 19, v 26

Beat together Judges 5 and Jeremiah 6 until white. Add sifted Kings and beaten Luke alternately. Chop I Samuel ch 30, Nahum and Numbers; add all ingredients. Place in a greased cake tin and bake in a slow to moderate oven for about 2 hours.

You work it out!



Peter Bosanquet designed the end papers for the book.

Rosemary Carr

Time to end global poverty, urges Christian Aid



Almost three quarters (72%) of British men and women want to see poverty ended in their life time, says a poll commissioned by international development agency Christian Aid. Almost half (45%) feel that the UK government should be doing more to help, while about the same number (46%) say a political party's policies on ending poverty would influence their vote.

The YouGov poll marks the launch of a new Christian Aid report, *Poverty Over*, which says that the financial and other crises offer an unprecedented opportunity for the final eradication of global poverty. The report, which explores some of the measures that must be taken to achieve such a goal, is intended to inject new life and urgency into efforts to help the poor.

“The world is in crisis” says Christian Aid director Dr Daleep Mukarji. “It isn’t just financial. Climate change, the food security crisis and worsening levels of inequality are also undermining quality of life for many millions of people.

“Despite the large percentage of those polled wanting an end to poverty, only 3% believed that this goal would be achieved in their life time. If a determined effort is not made now to tackle poverty, they will be right.”

The fight, the report warns, cannot be won unless the structural causes of poverty are first uprooted. These, it says, can be traced directly back to human and institutional indifference to people without power, and even, in some cases, policies intended to impoverish.

“Poverty is political.” the report says. “Rather than being merely an unhappy fact of life, it is the result of structures and systems created by humans, and of people being effectively excluded from decision-making. As such, the solutions must be political too.”

Christian Aid's *Action on Poverty* week takes place at the end of January.

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren,

The concern you show for the welfare of your parishioners during the swine flu epidemic does you credit — although I am unsure of the continued effectiveness of your ‘ministry of welcome’, when those beaming smiles of your ‘welcomers’ will be hidden behind surgical masks. And surely, disinfecting the hymn books after each service is a little too enthusiastic? Won’t the pages simply dissolve in the end?

Also, must you condemn those with even slight sniffles to sit encased in large plastic bags behind glass screens? That is unlikely to make newcomers feel that they are being warmly greeted. And I have never before heard of passing the peace with gardening gloves on. Won’t people think it odd?

Finally, I must observe that obliging your entire congregation to paddle through a disinfectant pool as they leave the church is unusual practise. It will make people feel they are in the public baths — although I concede that the architecture of the two buildings has much in common. We take a rather more robust attitude to viral attack here at St James the Least. The use of the chalice was only reluctantly suspended during the Black Death and — apart from the one Sunday when Mrs Clapton lost her teeth in it — has been used at every service since. Colonel Addleshaw is safe from the virus, since it could never survive the alcohol levels in his blood stream and a glare from Lady Millicham would freeze any unwelcome visitor at a hundred yards.

Dear, romantic Miss Mompesson suggested we hold future services in the open air, but the thought of Mr Charnley losing his wig yet again in anything greater than a light breeze and the choir looking like galleons in full sail, made the idea unworkable — especially as it would oblige Lord Melchett to sit with everyone else and not in the family pew, where he can read the Sunday papers unobserved by the rest of the congregation.

There have, however, been some unintended benefits to the health scare. It has enabled me to cancel the coming visit of the bishop, explaining that we are far too concerned for his health. Also, as a way of containing the spread of the contagion, I have stopped visiting parishioners and do not allow anyone to call at the rectory. All evening meetings are suspended, I refuse to visit the village school and risk contaminating the children and I have made it clear that not stopping to talk to villagers in the street saves them from being ravaged by the disease. Should the ‘flu epidemic continue for some time, it would be a sadness I could learn to bear.

Your loving uncle, Eustace
Source: Parish Pump

Next time you feel as if GOD can't use you, just remember...

Noah was a drunk
Abraham was too old
Isaac was a daydreamer
Jacob was a liar
Leah was ugly
Joseph was abused
Moses had a stuttering problem
Gideon was afraid
Samson had long hair and was a womanizer
Rahab was a prostitute
Jeremiah and Timothy were too young
David had an affair and was a murderer
Elijah was suicidal
Isaiah preached naked
Jonah ran from God
Naomi was a widow
Job went bankrupt
Peter denied Christ (3 times!)
The Disciples fell asleep while praying
Martha worried about everything
Mary Magdalene was the Samaritan woman who was divorced,
more than once...
Zaccheus was too small
Paul was too religious
Timothy had an ulcer... AND
Lazarus was dead!

Now! No more excuses!
God can use you to your full
potential.
Besides, you aren't the message,
you are just the messenger...



*...if you have been affected by any
of the issues raised in this sermon...*

How to carve the perfect pumpkin

Here are some tips to make the most of your pumpkin this month.

1. **The shape.** Pumpkins come both short and round as well as tall and thin. Decide on the pattern of face you will want to carve, and choose your shape of pumpkin accordingly. If you like big toothy grins, better get a wide pumpkin!
2. **The ripeness.** Choose one with hard skin, which your fingernail will dent but not puncture. Avoid bruised or dented pumpkins, unless the marks can be incorporated into the character of the pumpkin you have in mind.
3. **The hollowing.** At home, begin by laying out sheets of newspaper, because you have a messy job ahead. Choose a medium length knife with a thin serrated blade, and cut out a hole near the top around the stem. As you cut, it will help if you angle your knife slightly upwards. This makes the lid and hole slightly cone-shaped, which stops the lid from falling into the pumpkin later on.
4. **The scraping.** Dig out your pumpkin with a large spoon. Make sure the pumpkin is perfectly flat on the bottom.
5. **The face.** Use a crayon to draw on the face. It can easily be wiped off if you go wrong, but in the meantime, will give you some guidance. Now, cut out the design, pushing out the pieces of pumpkin wall as you go along.
6. **The preserving of your masterpiece!** Vaseline does this well – it seals in the moisture, and slows down the growth of mould inside. Popping your pumpkin into the fridge each night also will help.
7. **The illumination.** A small plain white votive candle in a glass holder works best.



Pumpkin by Sylvia Stanes

Source: Parish Pump

George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill:

“I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend... if you have one.”

Winston Churchill, in response:

“Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one.” -

Food for thought...

God has provided mankind with analytical abilities which inevitably lead us to ask questions about His creation and His intentions for us. One obvious current issue that troubles Christians is the question of whether to accept the two not entirely consistent Genesis accounts of the creation of the world or the Darwinian model supported by cosmological, geological and biological evidence. This, and a host of other more subtle questions, are necessarily agonised over by generations of theological students during their training. But it is often difficult for lay people to find answers or guidance when doubts arise. One of our congregation, Alan Knight, has expressed some of his concerns in the following article. Some readers may empathise with Alan's thoughts; others may feel outraged. Do you share or do you repudiate these concerns? Some of our College of Retired Clergy may like to offer guidance. Parish News is not an appropriate forum for the exploration of such crucial issues, but if there is sufficient interest it may be possible to arrange a discussion meeting to tackle some of the issues raised by Alan.

The Editors

THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

Before I set out my thoughts upon my stall, perhaps it is only fair that I describe the stallholder to some degree, so that you have a clearer idea of why these thoughts have taken shape in my mind. Firstly, I must make it clear that I am not a learned historian, and I have not studied comparative religion in any depth. I am most certainly not a biblical scholar, and I do not know a word of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic. I am just a general reader who has learnt over the years that one must search for the 'level of truth' in all matters; it is rarely obvious. It is far more like an onion; one has to keep peeling off the layers until one finally reaches the hard core of truth. Like so many of us, I have learnt over the years that the truth of a matter is very rarely black or white; it is nearly always a varying shade of grey. I accept that many legends contain a grain or two of truth. I fully accept that God can perform miracles on Earth whenever it please Him, and that we are foolish to judge the extent of his powers by those of us humans, even in this age of science when we are so proud of our achievements. I feel a great debt of gratitude to Martin Luther whose thinking and acts have been the great mainspring of the Reformation and have made it clear that every man and woman has the right and ability to speak and pray to God, whenever and wherever they wish, and without the intercession of a priest or Saint. As a result, I actually feel even closer to God on top of a lonely mountain than when we celebrate Holy Communion inside Holy Trinity Church. I understand that the four Gospels in the Bible were written in Greek between 65AD and 100AD (on average 50 years after the events they relate) and that an historian treats them as oral history, with all the warnings on objectivity and accuracy that follow from this.

My first subject is the early years of the Christian Church. I understand that there were three Great Councils to

thrash out what texts would appear in the Bible, and what texts would be discarded. Christian theology was argued and codified in those Councils as Catholic Doctrine, the powers of Bishops and Priests set out, and the essential Liturgy of Christian Church Services was decided. The three Councils were the 1st and 2nd Councils of Ephesus (431AD & 441AD) and the Council of Chalcedon in 451AD. The full written Records of those Councils, if they now exist, are I suspect hidden deep within the Papal Library vaults. Having an understanding of how history is largely written by the victors, and how politics, vanity and the search for power, can affect the historical outcome, I ask myself whether Caesar Constantine and the Early Bishops hid any unpalatable facts and inconsistencies from us in order to solidify The Faith. In the same vein, why were the Roman Catholic scholars in Israel so secretive for 25 years about the contents of the Dead Sea Scrolls? During the first 1500 years of the Christian Church, what layers of human-divined Doctrine did the Church superimpose over the simple Message of Christ? I worry about all this; it will not lie down in my mind. I believe that Luther was on the right track. What do you think?

I have to face the fact that if I had been born in Damascus of a Syrian family, I would almost certainly have been brought up as a follower of the Muslim Faith, and probably proud of it. Whether I would have resented Christians because I perceived them to have superior airs, and hated them for the atrocities they committed during the three Crusades, I honestly do not know. But I would undoubtedly have denied that Jesus was the Son of God. To what extent therefore is my Christian Faith an accident of birth? An historian (Charles Freeman) has

written: "It is certainly quite likely that without Roman Imperial support in the 4th Century AD, Christianity would never have been more than the religion of a minority in Europe." Is he right? Did the Holy Spirit influence the politics of Caesar Constantine or was it simply good luck?

The Old Testament is another minefield. Historians now largely agree that it was first set down in writing about 600BC in Babylon during the Exile of the Israelites, so that their oral history of their tribe would not be lost. Of course it was built upon with records of later events. Historians never forget that it is largely a record of an oral history, with all the pitfalls and uncertainties that this poses for the historian. The 'preface' of Genesis, if I may call it that, is remarkable in my view for its description of the creation of the Earth. Without all the scientific knowledge that we have today about the Big Bang Theory, the authors postulated a process for this creation that is not dissimilar to that theory if you substitute 'thousands of millenniums' for 'days', and make allowances for their simple homespun language in trying to explain an enormous event that was so wrapped up in their Faith. How were they able to do this? Was it indeed the power of the Holy Spirit guiding their pens? On a different tack, the same historian (Charles Freeman) has written: "The Christian gentiles retained the Hebrew Scriptures, valuing them for what was seen as references to the coming of Jesus. Thus the Old Testament remained an integral part of the body of Christian Scripture, even though the God of the Old Testament, with his exclusive relationship with one people and a heavy emphasis on the destruction of their enemies, sits ill at ease with the more gentle and approachable God of all people

preached by Jesus.” Do you accept this analysis? Did the three Great Councils allow for all the pitfalls and uncertainties attached to such oral history? Or did those Councils set that same history in stone as a kind of Gospel in its own right? I suspect that they did. If so, why? What forces were at work to cause them to do this?

When we hear a reading from the Old Testament in our Church, at the end the reader recites the words “This is the Word of the Lord”. These words often make me feel uncomfortable, because in my view over half of the Old Testament is clearly not the Word of God; it is an oral history of the complex doings of a Hebrew tribe. When I hear those great words in Isaiah Chapter 40 foretelling the coming of Christ, my heart tells me that they are indeed the Word of the Lord put into Isaiah’s mouth, but when I hear the description in Numbers and Joshua of the Israelites’ military invasion and conquering of Canaan, I tell myself that I am simply listening to the history of the tribe, not the Word of God. What do you think? I have been told, by a Canon of the Church, no less, that the exact description in the Bible of the Hebrew column of people leaving Egypt in the Exodus beggars belief because the size of that column (according to the measurements stated) would be over four miles long and twenty people wide. A column of that size wandering for 40 years through the desolate, largely waterless, desert of the Sinai Peninsula simply does not seem remotely feasible, and I believe the Bible refers to no miracles of divine intervention providing food and water. That same Canon firmly believes that Moses did not receive the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone in Sinai, but that they were first codified in Babylon in 600BC by the Elders of

the Faith as a Code of Conduct for the Hebrews, and that the words were simply put into the mouth of Moses. However, the fording of a waterway linking the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, and the sudden inrush of waters drowning the pursuing Egyptian forces, could well be explained by the enormous eruption of the volcano Thera (Island of Santorini) which occurred about that time, and scientists have proved that it caused gigantic tidal waves over the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, swamping all low level lands along the coast (wiping out the Minoan Civilization of Crete in the process). Then again, the State Records of the Egyptian Pharaohs of that time do not contain a single reference to a captive slave tribe of Hebrew origin. So where is the ‘level of truth’ in the story of the Exodus?

I personally accept the working hypothesis that some scholars have advanced, that Jesus was born in the year 5BC. This then matches the Roman Government official records, the accuracy of which scholars trust, including a reference to a prophet called Jesus from Galilee. Those same records state that Pontius Pilate had left his post of Proconsul of Judea several years before 33AD. You may be aware that astronomers, using their now considerable knowledge of the movement of planets, stars and galaxies, can now not only accurately forecast future movements of those heavenly bodies, but can go back in time and recreate the position of these bodies in the sky at any given time in the past. It seems that in April of 5 BC a spectacular cosmic event took place, namely an extremely rare conjunction of the moon and two planets in our Solar System. Scholars state that such a conjunction would have riveted the attention of the Middle Eastern astrologers of that era, producing

many pronouncements of a momentous event occurring. I understand that in those days the science of astronomy was closely intertwined with the culture of astrology, and that the Zoroastrians of Babylon were noted far and wide for their skill in such matters. Those Zoroastrians had (and still have) a similar Faith to that of the Hebrews, *ie.* that there is only one true God and not a panoply of gods. It seems that, quite naturally, they had long religious discussions with the Hebrews during the latter's Exile in Babylon, and knew all about their prophesy of the coming of a Messiah to be an all conquering King to save his people. The argument goes that when in 5BC the Zoroastrians saw the conjunction of the two planets and the moon, they deduced that the Messiah was at last arriving on Earth. They knew which country to go to witness the birth of this great King, and three of their learned brethren accordingly set out for Judea. Hence the three Wise Men (not Kings) from the East. I am quite certain in my mind that the Wise Men did not follow a star, otherwise why would they need to ask Herod and his scholars for further directions from Jerusalem? No, they meant exactly what they said to Herod: "We have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him". In the year 5BC. Does this proposition seem soundly based to you, or do you think it has a structural weakness? If so, what is that weakness?

I have trouble with the Holy Trinity. Do you? I can easily accept and believe that God and Jesus are Two in One – "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father". However, somewhere in the Communion Service we are asked to "worship" the Holy Spirit. Why? Did Jesus ask us to do that? I regard the Holy Spirit as an enabler, a gift from God, not God himself. In my view, the

Holy Spirit is the activity of God on Earth. One does not worship an activity.

In all humility I also have trouble about one of the cardinal points of Christian Doctrine, namely that Communion may only be given by an ordained Priest or Bishop. Did Jesus say that? It all derives from a simple act in the Upper Room on that fateful Thursday, where Jesus gave each of the 12 Disciples a token of his body and his blood, and asked that we remember Him in the future by performing the same simple act. There was no elaborate ceremony. He laid down no minimum standards as to the persons performing that act. I could accept the argument that a public 'Service of Holy Communion' led by an ordained Priest, with prayers, music and ceremony, gives added weight to the act, and possibly deeper meaning for the faithful, but nonetheless I fail to see why Jesus would not approve of a Christian family holding a simple 'Act of Communion' around the kitchen table in exactly the way that Jesus asked of us in that Upper Room. What do you think?

Finally, may I assure you that in general I am an adherent of the Church of England, even though I consider that it should be disestablished for the good of clergy and congregations, and that clergy should ask themselves (when discussing the issues of women Bishops and homosexual clergy) "What does Jesus want?". The answer to that may be difficult to divine, but it is the only Question that needs to be asked in my view. Consequences for Church organizations are merely of quite secondary importance that will have to be managed as best as humans can contrive.

Alan Knight

WILTSHIRE BUTTERFLIES – SEPTEMBER 2009

The butterfly season begins to draw to a close during September and numbers of both species and individuals tails off quite rapidly. One exception is the **Speckled Wood** whose numbers usually peak in mid-September. It has been particularly common this autumn with large numbers seen along many woodland rides and hedgerows. The **Comma** also occurs in good numbers at this time, attracted to ivy blossom and over-ripe blackberries, before entering its long winter hibernation. A few **Large and Small Whites** linger into September and **Small Tortoiseshells** have been much commoner this autumn compared with previous years. **Red Admirals** have been relatively scarce but are now becoming more frequent and are to be seen nectaring with Commas and visiting late-flowering garden plants. They are also attracted to fallen, decaying fruit, especially pears and plums.



*Speckled wood, Bradford on Avon
Photo: Bryan Harris*

Fresh **Painted Ladies** are around, being the second generation of the immigrants that arrived in May. If the weather remains favourable, they should continue into October until they succumb to the first of the winter frosts. Large White caterpillars are abundant on brassicas and may either become a third generation of adults in October if the weather remains warm or over-winter as chrysalises and emerge next spring. As usual, any sightings will always be welcome and of interest.

© Mike Fuller
Wiltshire Butterfly Recorder

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, “Why is the bride dressed in white?”

“Because white is the colour of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life.” answered the mother.

The child thought about this for a moment, then asked, “So why is the groom wearing black?”

SAINTS CORNER

October 13th — Edward the Confessor (1003-1066)

This early King of England was the virtual founder of Westminster Abbey. And — never mind entrance charges — at one point in his life, Edward was giving a full tenth of his income to Westminster Abbey.

Edward was the son of King Ethelred the Unready* and his second, Norman wife, Emma. After various ups and downs which included a brief exile in Normandy, Edward was made King of England in 1042.

As king, Edward had a tricky time of it — trying to keep the peace for over 20 years while various Danish and Norman magnates struggled for power (which eventually led to the Norman Conquest). Scholars have argued over how much of a success he was as a king.

As a Christian, there is no doubt: Edward's holiness was evident to all. He made himself accessible to his people, he was generous to the poor, and he was chaste. He was also reputed to have seen visions and even achieved miraculous cures for people through prayer.

Edward did much to help the Church in many ways. His lasting contribution was the original Westminster Abbey — a huge Romanesque church, 300 feet long, with a nave of 12 bays. Westminster Abbey became the place of coronation and burial of kings and queens of England. It was finished and consecrated just before his death. Edward himself was buried there, and his relics remain undisturbed to this day.

During the Middle Ages, Edward was a very popular saint: along with Edmund of East Anglia he was widely considered to be England's patron for a time.

Source: Parish Pump

* Some modern interpreters suggest that his name actually translates as Ethelred the Ill-Advised!

More thoughts...

- ◆ Change is inevitable, except from vending machines.
- ◆ Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what happened.
- ◆ The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese in the trap.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

This year marks the bi-centenary of the first Lord of poetry; not only the 'People's Poet' but also the only man ever to have been raised to the peerage solely because of his poetry. He's not just the poet of military exploits and Arthurian legend, he's also a poet of nature and romance.

Eminently quotable – he comes third only to the Bible and Shakespeare in Dictionaries of Quotations – Tennyson is a very Victorian poet but he can still speak to us afresh in the twenty-first century. Did you know that he loved limericks?... and he wasn't above writing one or two rather improper ones himself!

Come and celebrate Alfred, Lord Tennyson, in words and music, with Sybil Mitchell, Megan Jones and Peter Hardman, with Jacquelyn Bevan at the piano, on Friday November 20th at 7.30pm in Holy Trinity Church Hall. More information next month.

Sybil Mitchell

STATE OF THE ART IN 1990!

Attempting to sort out (and throw out!) some old papers, I came across this article in Sarum Link:

On a Sunday morning in August, Canon Bill Matthews officially declared open the Holy Trinity Utility and Toilet Suite at Bradford-on-Avon.

After Parish Communion, coffee was served in church and the congregation invited to view the new facilities. Behind the organ, a new door leads into an elegant suite, complete with toilet, cleaners' sluice, sink and bench for flower-arranging or coffee making.

From Margaret Morris

Preparing for the digital switchover



Digital TV switchover in the West TV region will happen in two stages, on 24th March 2010 and 7th April 2010.

Age Concern, Wiltshire, has circulated a help sheet to explain how the digital switchover will take place and to set out details of what help is available to people in the region.

Free switchover briefing and grants are available.

For more information, materials, or to book a briefing session, please contact me on 01380 735522 or email nick.whelan@ageconcernwiltshire.org.uk.

Nick Whelan

CANTAMUS AND THE BRADFORD BAROQUE BAND

On Sunday 8th November, 7.30pm, at the Wiltshire Music Centre

Mozart: Coronation Mass in C, Horn concerto no. 4,
Selections from *Così fan Tutte*, *Vespers K339*
Conductor Mike Daniels, Horn Stephen Macallister

Soloists: Cheryl Enever, Jeanette Ager, Paul Badley, Colin Campbell

Tickets £16 and £10 available from the Wiltshire Music centre Box
Office 01225 860100

Toothsome

When I had a job delivering lunches to elderly house-bound people, I used to take my four-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, 'The tooth fairy will never believe this!'

Quick Crossword

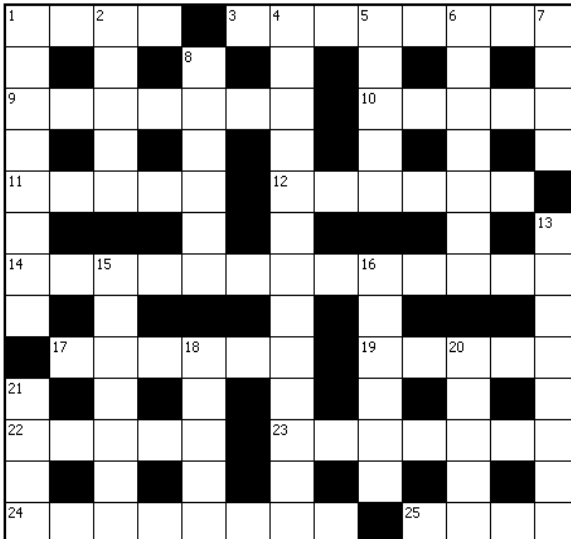
The Bible version is the NIV

Clues across

- 1 'Those who were standing near Paul said, "You — to insult God's high priest?"' (Acts 23:4) (4)
- 3 They were assigned to guard the tree of life (Genesis 3:24) (8)
- 9 'Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the — of —, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite' (1 Samuel 1:1) (3,4)
- 10 Surrender (Joshua 24:23) (5)
- 11 Where American livestock can be reared (5)
- 12 Listen (anag.) (6)
- 14 Alternative name for Kiriath Jearim (2 Samuel 6:2) (6,2,5)
- 17 He founded Westminster Abbey, — the Confessor (6)
- 19 Hebrew word for the place of the dead (5)
- 22 Allies of Persia in the fifth century BC (Esther 1:3) (5)
- 23 Where John Wesley was forced to preach a lot (4,3)
- 24 Rebellion against God; abandonment of religious belief (8)
- 25 Note (anag.) (4)

Clues down

- 1 Give an account of (Mark 4:30) (8)
- 2 'I — — the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free' (Psalm 119:32) (3,2)
- 4 'He took the ephod, the other — — and the carved image' (Judges 18:20) (9,4)
- 5 'You are a chosen people, a — priesthood' (1 Peter 2:9) (5)
- 6 The meek, the merciful and the mourners are all this (Matthew 5:4–5, 7) (7)
- 7 Musical Instrument Digital Interface (1,1,1,1)
- 8 He was the son of Nun (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
- 13 'Let the little — come to me' (Matthew 19:14) (8)
- 15 'About three thousand were — — their number that day' (Acts 2:41) (5,2)
- 16 In John's vision, the wall of the new Jerusalem was made of this (Revelation 21:18) (6)
- 18 'Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly — a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Philippians 3:20) (5)
- 20 'Glorify the Lord with me: let us — his name together' (Psalm 34:3) (5)
- 21 Young Men's Christian Association (1,1,1,1)



Solutions on page 9.

Source: Parish Pump

FOR PRAYER IN OCTOBER

We pray for:

- our church on our Dedication Festival
- our Licensed Lay Ministers (celebrating their annual service in Salisbury Cathedral on October 3rd)
- our new All Age Worship service (on October 18th)
- our continued reading and sharing of the Bible with others

Lord, we are rivers running to thy sea,
Our waves and ripples all derived from thee:
A nothing we should have, a nothing be,
Except for thee.

From a prayer by Christina Rossetti , 1830 – 1894

Saxon Club Programme October 2009

*We meet in the Church Hall at 2 pm on Tuesdays.
You are very welcome to join us.*

October 6th	Dr Alan Dodge — 18th century village life
13th	Open meeting
20th	Canon Peter Hardman
27th	Open meeting

Interfaith Group Meeting

Meeting on 24th October, details to be announced later.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL - OFFICERS

Tony Haffenden (Churchwarden and Acting Chairman)
Joan Finch (Churchwarden) Graham Dove (Hon. Secretary)
Jeremy Lavis (Hon. Treasurer)

Pat Astill David Rawstron

Anne Carter Edward Shaw

Marlene Haffenden* Kathryn Swift

Bryan Harris Anthony Swift

June Harrison* Malcolm Walsh

Cecilia Hynes-Higman Anne Willis**

Peggy Leach John Woods*

Dr Nick Nutt * Deanery Synod representative
† Diocesan Synod representative

STANDING/FINANCE COMMITTEE

Churchwardens; Secretary; Treasurer; Bryan Harris

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: John Cox

Treasurer: John Woods

Anne Carter; Bryan Harris; Jeremy Lavis;

Rev Angela Onions; Raymond Winrow

Joan Finch; Tony Haffenden

PARISH NEWS

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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 Licensed Lay Ministers.

The Group was established in 1975.

OTHER OFFICERS & ORGANISERS

PCC Secretary	Graham Dove	868654
PCC Treasurer	Jeremy Lavis	863600
Bellringers	Phil Gaisford	863538
Bookstall	Rev 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	Rev Angela Onions	309001
Electoral Roll Officer	Pat Irving	862903
Flowers	Jonquil Burgess	868905
Guides	Judith Holland	866215
Mothers' Union	Chris Hodge	863543
MU Prayer Circle	Chris Hodge	863543
Publicity Officer	Ann Holland	862731
Servers	Mary Ford	862240
Sidesman's Rota	Joan Finch	863878
Stewardship Secretary	Graham Dove	868654
Junior Church	Alison Cook	864116
	June Harrison	863745
Verger	Peter Wills	867593
Midsummer Market	John Cox (Community Stalls)	864270
	Colin Johnston (Church Stalls)	868132
	Stephanie Moorfoot (Communications)	863366

Parish Representatives on other organisations:

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

The cover picture on the printed version of Parish News is from a drawing by Frances Taylor. Printed at the Parish Office, 18A Woolley Street, Bradford on Avon.

Parish News also appears (in colour) on the Holy Trinity website. Visit it at

<http://www.brad-avon-ht.org.uk/>

Previous issues of the magazine can also be found in the magazine archive at this address.