

With September comes harvest, but it is a harvest with something of a difference this year. For too long, the urban and suburban have felt detached from what it means to celebrate harvest and in addition, there are those who take the view that, as our food supply comes from all over the world, harvest occurs throughout the year.

The recent G8 summit in Genoa has emphasized once more the inter-dependence of one country on another; not only do we need to cancel world debt and to re-consider the position of third world economies, we have to change our attitude towards world trade and recognize the necessity for us to pay what is a fair price for our overseas produce. We have a surfeit of newsreel showing how crops fail and we see floods on land which should have rice crops or maize. Life is hard enough for people in third world countries without us taking their goods at less than a reasonable price.

Nearer to home, we have seen areas of the countryside decimated by foot and mouth disease. Maybe it is difficult to imagine what it is like to live in a rural area so affected by the ravages of this disease or maybe we prefer to think simply that everything can revert to normal in a matter of time.

That is far from the case. For example, some breeds of sheep cannot be replaced because, through generations of breeding, they have adapted to the particular conditions of their local habitat. The animals needed that land just as the land needed them. So large chunks of our countryside stand to suffer enormously for many years. This disaster has occurred at a time when our attention has been drawn to the negative effects of pesticides on our produce and to the development of genetically modified foods. To add to those issues, we should now seriously consider the morality of exporting live animals - often in the most appalling conditions - and of transporting them miles across the country, and of keeping hens cooped up in unnatural caged areas so that we can continue to have the 'choice' of buying eggs at an abnormally low price. It does beg the question as to how civilized we really consider ourselves to be.

We have recognized the damage we have done to communities by patronizing the big retailers who will let us have the pleasure of shopping almost at any time of the day or night, at the cost of the small high street store. Perhaps the advent of farmers' markets with their home-grown, spray-free produce is helping to get the message through as to what is best for us.

These issues all point to our inter-dependence; we cannot continue to isolate ourselves in our own cocoons as though we have nothing to do with one another and treat the countryside as an interesting extraterrestrial place to visit occasionally. Each one of us should accept our responsibility to look beyond the cheapest price tag, to recognize what it means to purchase a bunch of "fair-trade" bananas and to press for the humane treatment of animals and birds.

From the time of Genesis we have been taught that we have a hand in caring for God's creation: we need to learn some lessons from the way each one of us has been responsible for letting our little bit of the world down. God is good and God is

generous in letting us have second chances. We need to grasp that opportunity in the many different guises it will appear and so perhaps have a better understanding of what it means to celebrate harvest and to sing "Come, ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home, all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin; God our maker, doth provide for our wants to be supplied, Come to God's own temple come; raise the song of harvest-home".

Freda Evans

**ST. JAMES'S CHURCH HALL
HARVEST WORKSHOP**

SATURDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER

10.30a.m. - 1.00p.m.

What does harvest mean to us?

food for some: starvation for others

Come and help us tell others what we think through

Crafts, Drama and sharing food!

Activities for two age groups

4 - 7 years and 7 - 11 years.

Please contact Freda on 020 8941 4424 to book a place.



FINDING A VOICE

A talk by music therapist Matthew Dixon at St. James's Hall on 12th July 2001

An animated audience of about fifty people attended the above meeting, organised and introduced by Sara Butterfield, Founder and Chair of the S.W. London Medical Foundation Supporters Group, to listen to Matthew Dixon, a music therapist, talk about some of the work he had done for the Medical Foundation. Matthew, a professional musician and oboist with a passion for the Baroque, had been drawn to the therapeutic possibilities of music by his interest in improvisation. During his student days he had seen a video about music therapy and remembered the look of energy and enjoyment on the face of a disabled young child being given a chance to play an instrument.

He spent two years on a course at the Nordoff-Robins music therapy centre, where, along with psychology and medicine, music was presented, not so much as an art form or cultural product, but as a fundamental, instinctive means of communication.

Matthew started the evening by giving pairs of members of the audience, a tambourine and a wood block. He "sang" a few notes and the "pair" responded spontaneously with their "replay". The tambourine and the block were then passed to another "pair"

and the experiment repeated. Hearing their responses it was clear that people had listened to his "phrase" and their "replay" was either a repetition or "answer" to it. He then proceeded to play us a series of tape recordings of sessions that he had made with a young girl, who, after torture at the hands of the secret police in her own country, had become an elective mute. The first recordings of her responses to his musical "offerings" were an incessant pounding on the drum, in fact she damaged both drumsticks -(an unconscious musical metaphor for getting her own back on her captors). After several weeks of this repetitive behaviour there was a change and on entering the session she said "Hello", her first word to him.

Once she started speaking, she no longer wanted to play on the drum but moved on to the piano. In Matthew's own words "Her playing was extraordinarily expressive but the music was still very discontinuous, very disorganised. If I tried to make music with her, there was nothing to hang on to". Then he played us one of their last taped sessions - it was magical - whilst he still played the piano, she had started to play on a series of bells, there had clearly been a transformation. Instead of two isolated human beings each doing their own thing there was now a rapport, a feeling-interaction between them. Matthew again "As she played I could hear her calling for more music from me The musical dialogue that followed as I started to accompany her on the piano became an emblem of healthy and positive human communication". Today, the girl says simply: "The music meant a lot to me. I started to give myself another chance. I started to believe I could do something. I became like the old me". (She is now doing a University Degree).

The talk was followed by a lively question and answer session which the audience was reluctant to conclude.

(The Medical Foundation is a unique charity, founded by Helen Bamber O.B.E. Their Mission Statement: "The Medical Foundation exists to enable survivors of torture and organised violence to engage in a healing process to assert their own human dignity and worth. We advocate respect for human rights and are concerned for the health and well-being of survivors of torture and their families. We provide medical and social care, practical assistance, and psychological and physical therapy". Helen Bamber was just twenty when she went to Belsen in 1945 to work with survivors of the camp, the remarkable story of her life is told by Neil Belton in "The Good Listener - Helen Bamber: A life Against Cruelty", which I can personally recommend as a superb read. The Medical Foundation Web Site can be found at www.torturecare.org.uk and further information can be obtained from the S.W. Group's Secretary - Dr. Halcyon Leonard, Tel. No. 020 8546 8884.)

Mike Butterfield



Congratulations to Janet and David Nunn who celebrated their Silver Wedding on 2nd July.

SUPER-FIT BROWNIES NEED HELP!

During the Summer term the Brownies worked on the theme of Health and Fitness. We went Line Dancing which was a lot more difficult than you'd imagine, but great fun. We went on an outing to swim and wall climb and worked towards our agility badge. In the midst of all this the Brownies attended a badge testing session and raised £154 at the Brownie fundraiser. Brian kindly allowed the Brownies to give the odd £54 towards the use of the church hall, for which the Brownies continue to be very grateful and the other £100 was donated to the Guide Company so that they could buy another much needed tent. We finished the term with the annual bike ride and picnic which was a really great evening and enjoyed by everyone - especially the five Brownies who made their promise.

The Brownies are ever growing and we are in desperate need of help. You don't have to come along every week but if you have a skill that you think the Brownies would enjoy please come along and share it. Brown Owl would just love to hear from you. The Autumn term will be spent making the most of the nice light evenings until half term and then we plan to hold a Brownies Christmas Concert! Now talking of volunteers - anyone out there play the piano and want to take on the enviable task of teaching 26+ Brownies and one very tone deaf Brown Owl to sing?

Lesley Brough



Council of Christians and Jews (Staines and district Branch)
invite members and friends to an enlightening evening!

CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH MARRIAGE TRADITIONS

Thursday 6th September 2001

Synagogue Hall, Westbrook Road, South Street, Staines at 8 p.m.

CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

Rev. Christopher Swift
(Rector, St. Nicholas Church, Shepperton)

JEWISH TRADITIONS

Mr. Jeffery Blumenfeld BA
(Director, Jewish Marriage Council)

(Donation £1.00 including refreshments)

Was Genoa all Gloom and Doom?



Far from it.

I am very grateful to the many people who were concerned for my safety in Genoa. I went there in the knowledge that Drop the Debt staff had the welfare of

supporters as a top priority and would look after everyone. And so they did.

On the Saturday I attended a beautiful debt vigil service at the Benedictine church of San Antonnio in the eastern suburbs of Genoa. The prayers, the Ghanaian drummers, the readings and the personal witness were very uplifting. The service was a small interlude in a 36-hour vigil of silence in the church. Afterwards we enjoyed the company of campaigners from the north of England who had travelled to Genoa the really hard way - some by bicycle and some aboard a 40 year old red double-decker bus. The bus was parked right opposite the church and it was wonderful to see the driver up on its roof, happily waving a "Cancella il debito" placard as the long column of marchers went by. Such a contrast to the violence covered so extensively by the media, at the expense of issues and peaceful protest.

Despite huge campaigning efforts, no additional debt relief was announced at Genoa. But a spotlight was again shone on the HIPC Initiative agreed at Cologne two years ago, which is only now delivering, at best, a reduction of 27% in debt repayments for 23 countries - leaving them still spending more on debt than on health care. The voices of a billion people in the poorest countries were raised! Tony Blair and other G8 leaders did meet with a Drop the Debt delegation. Much more importantly, the G8 leaders met with elected leaders from Africa and welcomed the African leaders' plan for recovery, which includes a new initiative on debt as part of a broader package. Only time will tell if fine words translate into action.

It is difficult to adequately convey the feelings I experienced whilst in Genoa. Yes the violence was extremely frustrating, but the determination of the debt campaigners who had travelled there - many of them Christians and much older than me - was uplifting. And it was very good to have the chance to talk with others in Genoa who had a different agenda to debt relief. It felt right that our paths had crossed and that we had the opportunity to listen to one another. We cannot only listen to what we want to hear.

Some bible readings really spoke to me, during and after my visit. Arriving in Genoa

on 20th July, my bible reading for the day included the wonderful words of Paul to the Corinthians, "*grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness*". How relevant as the peaceful debt campaigners struggled to be heard. Back at St. James on 29th July, the reading from Genesis in which the Lord tells Abraham he will not destroy Sodom if only ten righteous people are found there, had an overwhelming significance for me. So did the gospel reading from Luke which teaches about the power of persistence through the wonderful words "*Ask, and it will be given to you, search, and you will find: knock, and the door will be opened for you*".

The debt crisis is not resolved. Much more needs to be done and the indomitable spirit of campaigners throughout the world will strive to complete the unfinished business.

Ann Peterken

BOOKS of

the BIBLE
GALATIANS

I must admit I find much of Paul's writing difficult and uncomfortable. There is a certainty, fervour and impatience in it; sometimes he seems intolerant and angry. Christ has spoken to him directly and he will have no deviation from what he knows to be true. There is nothing tentative about his greeting to the Galatians: "if anyone preaches a gospel at variance . . . let him be outcast!" (ch 1 v 9 NEB). Paul sometimes professed humility, but before and after his conversion he was always absolutely convinced he was right. Like a cleansing fire he burnt a great deal of rubbish. Like a cleansing fire some green shoots might get scorched as the rotten timber burns.

However, he builds as well as burns, and his theological building, comfortable or not, has a solidity and coherence which puts him among the greatest theologians. The foundations he put in place have endured.

The letter to the Galatians is short and very vehement but it contains some of his most important teaching. The first point he makes is his own absolute authority received by personal revelation (ch 1 vv 11-12). He then makes statements which are some of the foundations of Church's theology. Some we accept easily now, some are still difficult to understand, some seem news good almost beyond belief.

In ch 2 vv 3-14, he tackles the first big dispute in the early Church. Must converts become Jews before becoming Christians? This seems a remote discussion to us now; it caused a bitter argument in the early Church. Paul saw that Christ was indeed the Messiah of the Jewish tradition. However, although He was forecast by the Jews and was a Jew Himself, He was the Messiah for all nations, Jews and Gentiles.

Paul then deals with a related problem concerning Jewish law. Once again Paul berates his readers: "You stupid Galatians! You must have been bewitched . . . did

you receive the Spirit by keeping the law or by believing in the gospel message?" (ch 3 vv 103 NEB). He continues with his explanation of the relationship of the law and faith. He tells us that the law up to the coming of Christ was "a temporary measure" (ch 3 v 19). However, the law is not invalidated by Christ's coming, it is transformed by it. "Thus the law was a kind of tutor in charge of us until Christ should come . . ." (ch 3 v 24). This demolishes the dreary view of religion as simply a set of rules or a moral code. Paul preaches a wonderful freedom, though this does not mean licence, as he makes clear later in his letter.

There is a further declaration: "There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female: for you are all one person in Christ Jesus." (ch 3 v 28). This is revolutionary teaching. Two thousand years on this statement has yet to be agreed by all Christians.

Paul softens in the last two chapters of his letter. Acknowledging the generosity of the Galatians, he pleads with them to follow the way he has shown them. He shows them that their freedom leads them to live of peace and service to one another. ". . . the harvest of the Spirit is love, joy peace, patience, kindness, fidelity, gentleness and self control. There is no law dealing with such things as these" (ch 6 vv 22-23). Real liberation theology.

Dick Wilde

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Last month's article on Romans was written by Bob Hampton.

VERMEER AND PAINTING IN DELFT AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY UNTIL THE 16TH SEPTEMBER

Special exhibitions at the National Gallery have much to commend them, not least because they display enough paintings for you to absorb without utterly exhausting you.

Just under half of Vermeer's entire known works are shown here with 70 works by other local artists from the Delft area, including the well known de Hooch.

The first Vermeer for the visitor to see is one of his earliest known pictures, that of Jesus with Martha and Mary. It is quite unlike his other works with its life-size, heavy-set figures but it captures the electric atmosphere of the moment.

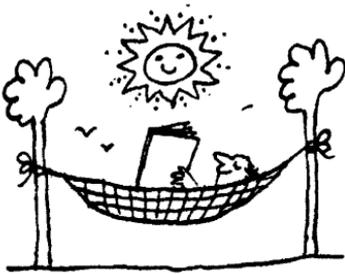
There are still life paintings of flowers which became a distinctive tradition of Delft, illustrating arrangements of flowers that in reality bloom at different times of the year. Landscapes display realistic scenes of life in the country with Paulus Potter's depictions of farmyard animals and there are several architectural paintings of church

interiors, including the well known interior of the Grote Kerk at Haarlem. De Hooch provides us with charming scenes of maids and mistresses going about their homely chores – even including one where the mother, with her child's head in her lap, is examining it for lice, a common necessity at the time!

The jewels of this exhibition are stored up for a climatic ending in the last room. The Milkmaid is one of the most famous of Vermeer's works. Such an ordinary scene and yet such an extraordinary painting. Even the grains of the bread are such that the loaf becomes edible. The other – Woman with a Balance – shows a young woman holding up a small balance for weighing gold; She has her coins and jewellery before her. As we know, the luxurious items which surround her will count for nothing at the end of her life: all that will be weighed then will be her soul, not her worldly possessions and this point is reinforced by the painting behind her of The last Judgement. Yet despite the message, the woman has a beauty and tenderness which make it a fascinating painting. Try and view Vermeer if you possibly can: it contains several God-given moments.

Freda Evans

**BOOKS FOR
A BRIGHTER
SUMMER**



***Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier (Harper Collins £5.99)**

This is truly a delightful book of historical fiction, set in the household of the painter Vermeer in Delft of the mid-17th century Netherlands. It is the story of Griet, a young maid employed by the Vermeer household. The artist asks Griet to help him in his studio and eventually paints her as the girl with the pearl earring. The ensuing emotions and family tensions become a story in themselves. There is much to learn, too, of an artist's work, tools of the trade and materials of the time. Above all, the feelings of Griet, the shy young maid, captivated me as reader. The subject is topical at the moment as the Vermeer exhibition is currently taking place at the National Gallery.

A book to treasure and to re-read and, as the Guardian reported, a truly magical experience.

Janet Jefferies



THE QUINQUENNIAL AND OTHER INSPECTIONS OF OUR PROPERTY

This year we are due for our architect's 5-yearly inspection of the church fabric. This is required, and paid for, by the diocese. The Properties Committee and the Treasurer are always apprehensive at this time, since the maintenance work required by the architect is our responsibility. Quite a lot of that work the Committee members can do themselves; some has to be done by paid contractors. Until the inspection and the subsequent estimates are completed we do not know how much it will cost us, in anticipation the Treasurer has been setting aside money each year as a "building reserve". Last year's accounts showed this reserve to be about £15,000. Although this seems a great deal of money, major roofing or masonry work may well take all this reserve and more. A repair to the brickwork of part of the churchyard wall last year cost £4,000.

Another inspection recommended at 5-year intervals is an examination of the safety of our fixed electrical wiring. This was carried out for us in July by Seeboard at a cost of about £630. We have not yet got estimates for the remedial work it recommends. Six other regular inspections and maintenance visits have to be arranged. They are: maintenance of our heating system boilers; checks and tests of all fire extinguishers; testing the Hall fire alarm system; tests of all portable electrical appliances; inspection and test of our lightning conductor; and maintenance of the church clock. Each of these is carried out annually.

Dull old stuff - but we can all feel comfortable and safe in the church and hall, and the buildings continue to show our care for them.



The Properties Committee

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Margaret Lawrence's mother, Bessie Smith, is in Walton Hospital making a good recovery after a hip operation. Peg Boarder is in Teddington Hospital.

We were sorry to learn that John Afford, of Teddington Choral Society, has died. He leaves a wife, Valerie, who is in a home in Sunbury, and two sons, James and Michael. We send our sympathy to them and to all his friends.

Congratulations to Elizabeth Hodges, who was selected to compete in the European under-18 rowing championships in France.

FROM THE JULY REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 15 Zachary Andrew Lewin, 21 Longford Close
Emily Rose Ridgley }
Lisa Ridgley } 122 Fulwell Road
- 22 James Javier Perrin, 44 Bridge Way, Whitton

Weddings

- 7 John Stairs and Lindsay Ennis
14 Christopher Collins and Sanaz Sazegar

Funerals

- 16 Burnette Lucas, 95 Munster Road, Teddington 40
18 Paul Edward Walpole, 28 Hampton Road East, Hanworth 63
20 Daniel Hillman, 42 Park Road 70

DATES TO NOTE IN SEPTEMBER

- 3 Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, Teacher, 604
8 Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary
13 John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, Teacher, 407
14 Holy Cross Day
15 Cyprian, Bishop Carthage, Martyr, 258
17 Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, Visionary, 1179
20 John Coleridge Patteson, 1st Bishop of Melanesia & his companions, Martyrs, 1871
21 Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
25 Lancelot Andrews, Bishop Winchester, Spiritual Writer, 1626
27 Vincent de Paul, Founder of the Lazarists, 1660
29 Michael and all Angels
Harvest Workshop, 10.30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

ADVANCE NOTICES:

- 7 OCTOBER **BAPTISMAL TEA PARTY** 3.30 p.m. in Church
Could you provide sandwiches or cakes and/or help on the day?
Contact Debbie Nunn 8979 3078
- 14 OCTOBER **SALE OF CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARDS**
In the Hall after Parish Communion (approx. 10.45 a.m.)

COPY DATE FOR OCTOBER MAGAZINE: 10TH SEPTEMBER