

On Easter Sunday we celebrated the resurrection of Christ with the joyful singing of *Alleluia* and *Glory to God in the highest*. However, the resurrection is not an abstract event that we rejoice in only to move on with our lives. The Gospel narratives of resurrection which we ponder throughout Eastertide remind us of the very personal emotions and encounters involved. We hear of Mary Magdalene's fears and sense of loss, we read of the disciples' fear and incomprehension, we recall the doubts articulated by Thomas.

In these stories we see that the risen Christ meets his friends and followers where they are. He isn't to be found waiting for them in the empty tomb. He is to be found in the empty spaces of their lives. He draws near to them in the midst of grief, terror, loneliness, disbelief and distress. Christ addresses their anguish and confusion by calling them by name. He speaks to them of love and peace, he comforts, challenges and transforms them. The resurrection is not a neat reversal of the pain and darkness of all that went before, but an invitation to continue the story of the power of God's love. The risen Christ extends that invitation to us today.

In Luke 24 we hear of how that invitation is brought to two disciples who had decided to leave Jerusalem. They felt disillusioned and shattered. On their way to Emmaus they discuss the trial and death of Jesus. Perhaps, like us, they replayed the events of their lives searching for a different outcome, trying to spot where it went wrong; analysing what they could have done.

Jesus had seemed to them to have been fulfilling the words of the prophets; in his teaching and ministry he proclaimed good news to the poor, release for the captive, recovery of sight to the blind, and freedom for the oppressed. They learnt from him, ate with him and witnessed his powerful proclamation of God's love. Then he was betrayed, arrested, condemned, killed and buried.

Yet the whole city is buzzing with perplexing rumours of resurrection. The two disciples are unable to make sense of it. It is then that Christ draws near to them. He appears as a stranger, unrecognisable. He does not force his presence upon them. He simply asks them what they are talking about. He meets them in confusion and allows them to tell the story as they see it, it is only then that he begins to explain the Scriptures to them.

The disciples invite their companion to stay with them, to share in rest and refreshment with them. They invite him to eat with them. They sit together. Food and wine is brought to their dimly lit table; then the guest becomes the host. He takes the bread; he breaks it; he shares it with them. They recognize their risen Lord. He is present with them.

Immediately Christ departs. The disciples do not sit back in relief and complacency; they do not rejoice in a personal experience of resurrection encounter. They have received an invitation to something richer, more challenging, more urgent. They are

called to return to Jerusalem to become Church; to become the Body of Christ in and for the world. The Acts of the Apostles recounts how the disciples share in prayer, breaking of the bread and fellowship. We hear how they receive Christ's spirit of peace and how they embark upon a mission of proclamation of love, justice and mercy.

In this season of Eastertide, those two disciples should be for us an encouragement and example. We too encounter our risen Lord in bread and wine at the Eucharist. He meets us where we are. He calls us by name. He invites us to share that presence with others. We are called to stand with the oppressed, the suffering, the marginalised in solidarity. We are called to join in Christ's mission of love and justice. That is why it is appropriate that the *Global Week of Action on Trade* (10-16 April) falls within Eastertide.

The resurrection offers us an encounter and assurance, but Christ also invites us to share in an urgent challenge. We are still called to act on the words of St. Ambrose, writing in the 4th century:

It is not from your own possessions that you are bestowing alms on the poor, you are but restoring to them what is theirs by right. For what was given to everyone for the use of all, you have taken for your exclusive use. The earth belongs not to the rich, but to everyone. Thus, far from giving lavishly, you are but paying part of your debt.

Julie Gittoes

The South Aisle Windows

The stained glass windows in the south aisle of the church are among the many beautiful things in our church. Experts tell us that the north aisle windows are better crafted, but in the south aisle the pictures of the parables in rich and vivid colours give us a warm reminder of the central teaching of the gospels.

The southern aspect lights the windows brightly; but over the year the sun has caused the leads to deteriorate badly. Last year we realised if we delayed the repairs any longer the panes would begin to crack as the windows, already bowed and leaking, sagged further. The surrounding masonry is also suffering from rainwater leakage. We took advice, and after consultation decided to ask Chapel Studios, recommended specialists, to quote for a programme of repair. The quotation and their programme were accepted; the diocese agreed, and the repair programme started.

At present four of the five pairs of windows have been removed for repair; ribbed plastic windows have been put in as a temporary replacement. The easternmost window, "the Good Samaritan" is still in its place. Together with the windows over the altar, we expect it to be removed for repair when the other four windows are returned. We expect this to happen very shortly.

The Properties Committee

· MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

TRADE JUSTICE + DROP THE DEBT + MORE AND BETTER AID

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"Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. And overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life".

Nelson Mandela in Trafalgar Square, 3 February 2005

April will see a big focus on trade justice, with **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** joining in with campaigns around the world for **Global Week of Action for Trade Justice** from 10th - 16th April. Churches are asked to remember this important week in their worship and prayers, with materials available in many languages. Worship guides in Portuguese have been sent to London's link dioceses in Mozambique and Angola so that we can act and worship in solidarity.

If you are wondering what you can do for **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY**, here are some pointers:

- Look at the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** display in the entrance lobby of the hall - there are handouts to help you be better informed
- Join in the all night **Wake up to Trade Justice** event - 10pm Friday 15th April to 8am 16 April in Whitehall and Westminster
- Send a postcard to Tony Blair (cards in hall and church)
- Wear a white armband - available in Oxfam shops or make your own.
- Be in Edinburgh on Saturday 2nd July to help convey the British public's concern
- Pray for change - in the world at large and in ourselves.

Ann Peterken

Mass for Women's Voices by Graham Beebee

The first performance of Graham Beebee's Mass for Women's Voices will take place at **St James' Church, Hampton Hill** on **Sunday, 3rd April** at 6.30. The Mass will be performed liturgically as part of a service of Holy Communion by singers from two local choirs, **Concordia** and **Marble Hill Singers**.

Graham Beebee is well known locally as a recorder and keyboard player, employing his talents as an arranger and composer. He taught at the Lady Eleanor Holles School until recently. The Mass was composed early on in his career. The original scoring was for men's voices, but Graham revised it for 4-part women's choir.

The Mass will be directed by **Tony Kraus** who is currently chorus master at Opera North. He conducted the Marble Hill Singers for a number of years whilst working as a repetiteur at English National Opera.

Report by Chris and Sandy Swift of their recent work in Niassa, Mozambique

From October 13th to November 16th last year we travelled in the Diocese of Niassa, having gone there at the invitation of Bishop Mark Van Koevering to deliver a programme of education for the catechists leading the churches in his diocese. In addition to this Sandy, whose background is in relationship counselling, was to work with the Mothers' Union officers in the diocese to produce a programme on understanding Christian marriage and on the widespread problem of domestic violence.

The work took place in three centres; the town of Milange, just over the Malawian border in central Zambezia, Nampula, Mozambique's third city; and by Lake Niassa. This brought us into contact with three very different histories of Anglicanism. In Milange most of the people who have become Anglicans have done so in the last decade, following the end of the civil war. In Nampula the church dates from the 1980s, while Lake Niassa has an Anglican history stretching back to the 1880s.

The greatest part of our work took place in Milange, which is linked with our own parish of St Nicholas in Shepperton. This time included a five day workshop with the catechists and a further week of visits to outlying churches in the villages around Milange to deliver the Mothers' Union programme. In this time it became clear that the standard of work in terms of leadership and oversight delivered by the catechists varied enormously, with significant consequences for the lives of their churches.

In the workshops in all three centres the programme worked under the following headings: Leading Worship, Anglican Identity, Being a Pastor, Teaching and Preaching, and Personal Prayer. The groups contained people of apparently greatly differing commitment and ability (and suitability) for the ministerial roles they were fulfilling as catechists; a role which is crucial in this growing church with so few clergy - not all of whom are truly active. There are over 140 churches at this time but only just over 20 priests.

Several things emerged as we met and worked among the catechists, although we are very clear that we only scratched the surface of the many issues. There was a great lack of clarity about Anglican identity. There was a poor grasp of Biblical content and genres. One of the stronger catechists talked about the "Letter of St Matthew" one day, which led to an amazing morning of potted introduction to the New Testament that was lapped up by most of the group. There was a very shallow understanding of how worship could be led and applied to deepen Christian discipleship. The necessary formation that gives Christian teaching its integrity was not always apparent in the catechists. Yet, all that said, there was also a good deal of energy and enthusiasm, and some of the church communities felt vibrant despite the above.

Bishop Mark and his wife Helen are truly remarkable people, with whom it was the most enormous privilege to work. They are in a situation in which collegial support is desperately lacking. Mark is especially aware of this in the area of training and

oversight for the clergy and catechists, and has attempted, so far unsuccessfully, to recruit a training officer to work with and for him in Diocese of Niassa to develop the Christian leadership there. A little, very basic input in this area could go a long way in the fertile soil of Niassa.

Revd Chris Swift, vicar of St Nicholas in Shepperton

CHURCH RECORDS

Several years ago we asked the London Metropolitan Archives to do an inventory of all our registers and important documents as there are specific regulations under which these have to be stored - temperature, safety, fire risk, etc. The outcome was that they took a lot of past paperwork, minute books, etc. and the following registers:

Baptisms 1864-1961 Marriages 1864-1968 Burials 1864-1948

These records are stored at LMA at Northampton Road, Clerkenwell and I took another Baptismal Register (1961-1976) a few weeks ago for storage. The LMA is literally round the corner from the Family Records Office in Myddleton Street and contains a tremendous amount of information about the London Area. The LMA is open every day including alternate Saturdays and they now have an e-mail address (ask.lma@corpoflondon.gov.uk) and a website (www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma) as well as a telephone number 020 7332 3820.

One of the advantages of having the Registers at LMA is that they are now on microfilm which makes access so much easier.

The LMA produce a number of Fact Sheets to aid searches and whilst browsing through these I came across some very interesting information. Not only do they hold official records like ours but also lists of convicts transported from Middlesex; lists of deeds of properties up to 1938 and the evacuation of children during the Second World War.

They also have over 80 different hospital records including West Middlesex Hospital when it included the Workhouse Infirmary and the records of Normansfield Hospital in Teddington. Normansfield was established in 1868 by Dr John Langdon-Down and his wife, Mary, as a private institution for the care and treatment of the mentally handicapped specialising in the education of children with learning difficulties. Normansfield was taken over by the NHS in 1951.

The LMA also holds records of Amateur Dramatic Societies one of which is the West Middlesex Hospital Players 1952-1960. For Normansfield Hospital they hold programmes and scores of the Genesta Amateur Dramatic Club founded by Dr John Langdon-Down and his family 1892-1952 as well as photos of the Normansfield Hospital.

In just a brief visit I found the information fascinating. It was also good to see St James's Church listed under London Churches with all the papers we have lodged there and our recently published Churchyard records. If anyone would like more details of how to get to the LMA we have some leaflets available.

Janet Nunn

This Made a Difference

Lifechange; the Open University

In February 1989 I walked into a classroom at Richmond Adult College to join prospective students who had applied for admission to the Open University Arts Foundation Course. Our ages ranged from mid-thirties to mid-sixties. Most of us hadn't studied or sat exams for several years. Listening to the tutor explain the structure of the course each of us wondered how we would meet the challenge of part-time student life that lay ahead.

For the next seven years my life revolved around the OU. Unlike traditional Universities the academic year runs from February to November. It begins when the postman delivers a hefty parcel containing course work for the year ahead. The package contains study units, cassettes, and a timetable. Lectures are held once a week for Foundation students, once a month for those studying second and third level courses. Some courses require attendance at Summer school. This means a week or weekend spent living on a university campus. Over the year students are asked to produce eight Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA's) and the year ends with an exam in October. Each student's grade is a combination of marks earned in the TMA's and the exam result. This means the student is being continuously assessed. The winter break is from November to the end of January. With luck results arrive before Christmas.

Outwardly my life didn't change. Inwardly everything brightened and gained new colours. It was as if someone had switched a light on inside my head that changed the way I saw the world around me. Like most of my contemporaries I left school at sixteen and went into a full time job. Years later listening to my own daughters' tales of campus life I realised that University serves as a bridge between adolescence and maturity. It allows the student to gain self confidence and independence in the security of the college environment before moving on to the demands of a full time career. Studying with the OU filled in a part of my life that had been missing. I enjoyed being a student. I made new friends, visited new places and spent hours reading. At summer school I could forget the daily round, the common task, as I attended lectures, took part in discussions and exchanged ideas with other students in the college bar in the evenings. At York University there were waterways and bridges on campus. In the town I visited the Minster and the art gallery and took a boat trip along the Ouse. Bath University was a sixties grey concrete building. It was ugly but it had a great swimming pool. St Mary's Twickenham my study bedroom overlooked peaceful lawns planted with trees and I wanted time to stand still.

The light that brightened my world continues to shine. The Open University gave me confidence to develop views on the arts and politics, accept a managerial post at work and drive a car. Best of all it gave me a love of Shakespeare's language that takes me on annual pilgrimage to the new Globe Theatre on Bankside where an

audience has the magical experience of watching a Shakespeare play performed in its original setting.

Harold Wilson gave Jenny Lee the brief to start the University of the Air in 1969. Under her guidance it became the Open University. Originally it aimed to provide part time home based study for adults. To the surprise of its founders it uncovered an unsuspecting demand for continuing education. Today it accepts students of all ages, races, colours and creeds and offers an increasingly wide range of courses. The Open University changed my life. It could change yours.

Sheila Bligh

Australian Notes

The pilot's cry: "Enjoy your flight!" doesn't ease the discomfort of more than twenty hours cooped up in low-pressure re-cycled air for me, but the destination is worth it. Central Perth is a well-planned complex of handsome modern buildings. Its unmistakable and attractive skyline can be seen many miles away as the aircraft lands at an uncrowded airport.

In summer Perth has very little rain, brilliant blue skies, and temperatures usually in the range 26 to 35 C, occasionally over 40 C. It is a city of strong winds which make the hot sun very bearable, although giving no protection against sunburn. The city centre is on the north of the Swan river; on the south is the old town of Fremantle, still a thriving sea port, which has a history dating back to the days of the first settlements. The splendid Kings Park, with its magnificent shrubs and trees, overlooks the city centre and the river. Perth and its suburbs have been planned imaginatively. It has a lively shopping centre with spacious pedestrian precincts. All buses around the city centre are free. To serve the northern suburbs a modern railway runs from the centre about 30 km north, fairly close to the coast. The Mitchell freeway, a motorway, runs on either side of the rail track. There are rail and road connections over the Swan river to Fremantle.

We stayed in Hillarys, about 15 km north of the city centre and close to the Indian Ocean. A short cycle ride could take us to a sandy beach for a morning swim. We could catch a bus to the station and then a train to the city centre. The trains ran every 15 minutes and took about 25 minutes to get to the centre. A day ticket, giving complete freedom on all trains and buses in Perth and Fremantle for the whole day cost A\$3, about £1.25. However, the Australians are wedded to their cars, most families we met seemed to have two and used them freely.



Water is said to be in terribly short supply, and is a hot political topic. However, the use of water seemed to be profligate; gardens don't go short, and the lawns by the roadside are sprayed with water which often runs to waste down the gutters. There are many parks with thriving grass and tall, handsome eucalyptus trees swaying in the almost constant strong wind. It's lovely, and it's hard to believe in a real water shortage.

Australians are sports enthusiasts, swimming naturally being one of the favourite sports; it is part of most school curriculums. While we were in Perth the annual race to the offshore island Rottneest was held. This year 2,300 people took part as teams of four, or two, or solo swimmers. The swim is across 19.2 km of ocean. We were assured that there were not many sharks; indeed everyone completed the crossing safely. Seven hours is considered a fair time for the swim.

Like America, Australia has a federal constitution; each of the seven states is autonomous for internal affairs. Each state raises its own taxes, sets the pay of its public servants, and decides its own engineering works. The election for the state government of Western Australia was held at the end of February. The Labour party under premier Geoff Gallop was returned comfortably, in spite of the Liberals, (roughly equivalent to our Conservatives), promising to build a 3,700 km canal from Kimberly in the far north to Perth to alleviate the putative water shortage. Scepticism was understandable. All the states had Labour governments, curious to an outsider since the federal government under prime minister John Howard is Liberal.

It is a rich country, with massive coal and iron reserves, besides many other minerals, including uranium. It can afford to be generous to its public service workers and to invest in many excellent public amenities. The wealth appears to be fairly shared on the whole, although there seem to be twinges of conscience about the conditions of the aborigines. In the nineteenth century the Tasmanian settlers simply eliminated the natives. Tasmania, which we visited is a beautiful and fascinating island, but with lurid history of terrible cruelty to animals and men. There is now a struggle to save its forest of magnificent trees, some literally thousands of years old. Very surprising was the keen interest the press and radio took in British politics and affairs in general. Not only was Prince Charles's planned wedding headline news in all the papers, but the West Australian, a popular paper, kept me up to date on things like Blunkett's resignation and the Blair-Brown controversies. American politics were also well reported. The ABC radio has a programme rather similar to our "Today" programme, with extensive interviews with experts and politicians. I heard an illuminating analysis of the Iraq problem from a British academic on this programme.

A wonderful holiday - but it's good to be back home.

Dick Wilde



Thank you to those hard working volunteers who cleaned the church so thoroughly on March 11/12. After their efforts St James looks sparkling-clean again!

The church choir will be visiting the Charterhouse church in London on 23 April to sing evensong. If you would like to be part of the congregation ring Martin Hinckley on 8979 0528 to find the details.

Ruth Mills has asked us to say that she will have organic meat for sale soon. If you would like to have some lamb at £40 per half lamb please ring Margaret Taylor on 8979 3961. Ruth will bring the meat from Ludlow.

You will see the letter from Brian and an envelope for your reply in this copy of magazine. Please reply with comments about the Spire together with any contribution you would care to make - words or money.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

On Sunday 24th April 2005 at 1100 (after Parish Communion) a meeting of Parishioners will take place to elect Churchwardens, to be followed immediately by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

The purpose of the APCM is firstly to review what has happened in the least year; to receive reports from the Vicar, the Secretary of the PCC, the Treasurer and the various groups that work in support of the PCC. This is your chance to know what is going on and to ask questions of those who have led on various aspects of our church's life in the last year.

The second part of the meeting is to elect members to the PCC, to the Deanery Synod, to be Sidespeople and to the posts of Secretary and Treasurer (and the Auditor) for the coming year. If you would like to be more involved in the work of our church and our parish, in whatever way, through its groups, subcommittees, or as one who takes on a role on a Sunday, please do not be shy about coming forward. Please let Brian, Julie, Rodney or Liz know, or talk to someone who is already involved and find out what it is all about, and what you might be able to do to help. You will be very welcome.

**THIS IS YOUR MEETING, YOUR CHURCH, YOUR OPPORTUNITY, YOUR VOTE
PLEASE BE THERE AND HAVE YOUR SAY**

FROM THE FEBRUARY REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

6 Holly Rebecca Drake, Hampton

DATES TO NOTE APRIL

- 3 **Second Sunday of Easter**
- 4 **Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary**
- 9 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, pastor, martyr, 1945
- 10 **Third Sunday of Easter**
- 11 George Augustus Selwyn, bishop, 1878
- 17 **Fourth Sunday of Easter**
- 21 Anselm, abbot, archbishop, teacher of the faith, 1109
- 23 George, martyr, patron of England, c.304
- 24 **Fifth Sunday of Easter**
- 25 Mark the Evangelist
- 27 Christian Rossetti, poet, 1894
- 29 Catherine of Siena, teacher of the faith, 1380

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid
We believe in life before death

This year the Week will be from 15-22 May when we will try to visit each house in the parish twice - once to leave a red envelope and the following week to collect it. The Week is a major contribution to Christian Aid's budget, providing £14.3 million pounds out of the total of £29.3 million pounds given to partner organisations in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the UK. Can you help St James to make our Christian Aid Week 2005 a really significant collection. If you could distribute envelopes, collect envelopes or count money please speak to Margaret Taylor on 8979 3961.

Dr Henri Mucumbi from Christian Aids' partner Amo-Congo will talk about his work with victims of Aids/HIV helping them to lead normal lives. Come and hear him at 10 am on Saturday 23rd April at the URC Church, Eden Street, Kingston.

COPY DATE FOR MAY MAGAZINE: 10TH APRIL