

Our Harvest Festival on Sunday 2nd October gives us the opportunity to both rejoice in God's creation and to consider the way in which we use our resources. We have much to give thanks for. We are surrounded by a rich variety of fruit and vegetables. We are able to eat a balanced diet. We are not burdened by anxiety about where the next meal will come from. The Bible has much to say about our relationship to the created order, and about our responsibilities to one another.

In the book of Genesis we read the story of Adam and Eve, who are called to look after the garden of Eden: to nurture it, to see it flourish. They are to share in God's creativity and are called to act with responsibility, but they decided to take what they want. They chose the way of selfishness, exploitation and domination.

We, like Adam and Eve, are to take care of our world's resources. We can do this by supporting projects that seek to maintain the richness and diversity of God's creation. Elsewhere in 'The Spire' there is an article which tells the story of a farmer in Bangladesh. As a result of foreign seeds and the use of chemical fertilisers he and his family find themselves in a desperate situation. He faces debt, poor harvests and has little hope for the future. However, support from one of Christian Aid's partner organisations has enabled him to grow a range of vegetables and rice. Such a story reminds us of our global interdependence. We are called to use our influence to challenge exploitation in trade and agriculture.

In the New Testament we hear of how God's Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited. He did not seek power and domination. Instead he *emptied himself, taking the form of a slave*. He spent his time with those who were poor and marginalised. He ate with them and shared in conversation. He sought to meet their physical needs. In his service and responsiveness to them he revealed the love of God.

This harvest we will once again be supporting the work of the Upper Room in Hammersmith. This charity provides support for the homeless, vulnerable and disadvantaged in West London. During our harvest celebrations we will be collecting essential items - such as tinned food and toiletries. There is a full list of suggested items elsewhere in this magazine, as well as further details about the work of the charity.

It is vitally important that we support such projects within our city. In the 'Big Issue' John Bird reflects on the 'Big Release' photo exhibition in Norwich. Homeless people were invited to take a photograph capturing the strangeness of their position: the poverty, rubbish, emptiness, randomness. Remnant people. Left over like so many things about modern life. Unrecognised. Under-appreciated. Seen only as people who clog up city centres but do not exist. In our society people fall through the net of care as a result of abuse, mental illness, relationship

breakdown, or loss of employment. They are not remnants, but people. The following prayer challenges us to follow the Jesus' example of service: to call for justice not exploitation. To use our time, our wealth, our opportunities and our lifestyles to reveal God's love. God's Kingdom edges closer when we are prepared to show our support for those who are homeless or landless; when we are prepared to accept our responsibilities not just our privileges.

*O God, when in Jesus you walked this earth,
you had no place to call your own,
no place to lay your head.*

*As we stand by the landless and the homeless
and support those who struggle alongside them,
may we stand by you, seeing your face and image there.*

Julie Gittoes

We are delighted to announce that we shall
'Open our Doors'
on Sunday 30th October 2005 at 9.30am

The Bishop of Kensington will throw open
the new doors and lead the community into
church for Parish Communion

We look forward to seeing you and thank you for your support

Feedback on the Diocese of London's 2005 Lent Appeal

Donations from parishes across London have reached £73,000 (net total after deduction of expenses). The money is being divided among healthcare projects supported by Christian Aid, CMS, USPG, Mothers' Union and Crosslinks. Given that Lent came so soon after the Tsunami Appeal, this is a very good outcome that will help many people across southern Africa.

Parishioners and friends of St James contributed £3140 to the Appeal (£3863 with Gift Aid tax reclaim). This includes the splendid sum of £478 from the 3rd Hampton Hill Guides, who held a special fund raising day. Huge thanks to everyone who supported the Appeal.

Ann Peterken

SCRIPTURAL TRUTH

In a recent Guardian article Karen Armstrong wrote: "Human beings, in nearly all cultures, have taken a literary text, given it a special status and attempted to live according to its precepts. These texts are usually of considerable antiquity yet they are expected to throw light on situations that their authors could not have imagined We are seeing a great deal of scriptural activity at the moment. People talk confidently about scripture, but it is not clear that even the most ardent religious practitioners know what it is".

Armstrong wrote in the aftermath of the London suicide bombings. How can a religious text be distorted to encourage indiscriminate murder? Armstrong is not one of the sceptical people who dismiss religion in general as a dangerous anachronism. Nor does she caricature religious belief and mock the distortion. Religious texts are necessarily incomplete, imperfect, human-made signposts to a truth which will always be infinitely greater than any human can fully comprehend. The signposts can be misinterpreted in many ways, by treating allegory as literal truth, by putting phrases out of context, or even the way we hear or see the words, Armstrong believes that the actual writing of orally transmitted scripture has obscured our understanding. In particular the Koran is vulnerable to this. She writes, ". . . . 'qur'an' means 'recitation'. Much of the meaning is derived from sound patterns that link one passage with another one teaching is always qualified and supplemented by other texts, and cannot be seen in isolation. The words that (Muslims) hear again and again are not 'holy war' but 'kindness', 'courtesy', 'peace', 'justice' and 'compassion'."

But as well as misunderstanding there is another distortion of scripture which is deliberate. Leaders, political and religious, not infrequently invoke scripture to further their own ends. Sometimes this is well-meaning but still disastrous. "Crusader armies marched to Jerusalem, ransacking several cities on their way. In 1099 they took Jerusalem and massacred the population" (from Wikipedia). President Bush has called the Iraq operation a crusade. His methods are traditional. As another example, on 23 August this year, American evangelist Pat Robertson, speaking on the Christian Broadcasting Network, advocated the assassination of President Hugo Chavez. He saw Venezuela as: "a launching pad for communist infiltration and Islamic extremism all over the country We have the ability to take him out, and I think the time has come that we exercise that ability".

Scripture is very powerful material. It can move mountains. Misused, it can blow up cities.

Dick Wilde

BOOKS FOR A PRISON

Reading has always been a passionate hobby for me, every since I was very young, and I have probably spent years of my life immersed in some book or other! So I can understand and empathise with the deprivation of those who want to read and have nothing to read. A friend who has contact with Pentonville Prison told us of the great need for reading material, of virtually any kind, in the prison library.

Accordingly, we delivered there all the books left over from the last Christmas Bazaar, and the librarian wrote thanking the church for our gift. She said in her letter, "Many of them were sought-after titles which will prove popular with the men, some we have added to the main library stock, whilst others we passed on to Healthcare and to the First Night Centre. The level of attrition on books is high and the constant movement of men within and to and from the prison means the level of loss is high also. We are therefore always grateful for donations to supplement our stock. Thank you for taking the time and effort to deliver them to us."

Now, after the holidays, it seems a good time to make a collection of books which you have read and would like to dispose of somewhere. So please dispose of them to our collection for Pentonville Prison library where all books will be welcome - general fiction (including novels in foreign languages), history, sports, war and science; in fact, virtually anything! Please bring them to church and put them in the baptistry or ring me for collection from your home. Thank you very much.

Margaret Taylor 8979 3961

P.S. Did you read recently in the national press about the prisoners' book group which won first prize in the competition for the Best Book Group?



Two of our bell ringers are leaving us for Australia this month. If we are to maintain our current practice of ringing every week before the 9.30 service and for weddings as required, we **must** have some more ringers.

Although we have managed to cover everything so far this year, there have been several occasions during the holiday season and at festivals when only one ringer was available. We do not want to have to tell a wedding party that nobody can ring for them.

It takes a few half-hour sessions to learn to ring, which can be arranged at a time convenient to you. Our bells are rung by only one person at a time, although it is preferable to have two and pass from one to the other. So, once trained, you only have to ring from 9.15 to 9.30 about every 4-5 weeks and occasionally for weddings. Please consider whether you could learn, and help us to keep up our tradition. Speak to me in church or on 8979 9380 if you would like to see what is involved.

Susan Horner

Commuter Communion

On the first Wednesday of every month there will be an early morning communion service at 7am. This service will last approximately 20 minutes and has been designed to offer an opportunity for prayer and worship to those who commute to work during the week.

Do join us on 5th Oct, 2nd Nov, 4th Dec.

Reap Change This Harvest

What does harvest mean to you? For farmers like Sharhabanu Begum in Bangladesh, where 86% of the population depend on the land to survive, a successful harvest means everything.

A few years ago Sharhabanu's family were persuaded to use foreign seeds that needed chemical fertilisers. These were marketed by private companies after the World Bank lifted restrictions on imports to Bangladesh. Many farmers accepted these seeds, and bought the fertiliser required to grow them, because the private companies gave them credit.

However, the seeds didn't grow well, and the chemicals in the fertiliser were bad for the environment. Sharhabanu was desperate: 'Our soil became hard and unhealthy. Our situation was bad. We couldn't even buy our children clothes.'

Thanks to Christian Aid's partner UBINIG and the introduction of organic farming methods, Sharhabanu and around 120,000 other farming families in Bangladesh are reaping the benefits of better harvests and sustaining local seed varieties for the future.

Sharhabanu explains: 'We switched from chemicals to composting and began trying to save more of our local seed. Now we get four crops a year and our children can go to school'. Sharhabanu now harvests a range of vegetables and sixty varieties of rice!

Christian Aid invites you to celebrate with Sharhabanu not by feasting but by fasting. Daniel 1 tells the story of a man who would not compromise his commitment to follow God. One of the things he did was to eat and drink only vegetables and water.

In the week leading up to your harvest celebration, why not cut back to a simple diet to help you appreciate the diversity and reliability of what you normally have? You might want to leave out meats, dairy products and treats or consider eating the same main meal every day, all week.

This is an ideal way to reflect on the true significance of harvest, and to celebrate the variety you enjoy by raising money to help families like Sharhabanu's. Why not

ask friends to sponsor you in your different kind of fast, or put aside the money saved in the week from your normal grocery bill? By entrusting the money to Christian Aid you will allow us on your behalf to help people around the world to enjoy a better harvest next year and hopefully for years to come.

Alternatively, you can make a donation to the Reap Change appeal. Whatever you give can make a lasting difference to someone's harvest, just £8/€12 can provide a five-day training course in seed-saving enabling Bangladesh farmers to gain new skills to improve their livelihoods, and preserve their land's natural resources.

Donate by calling 0845 450 2005 or visit www.christianaid.org.uk

Revealing Statistics from the Upper Room

Many of you will know that St James supports the Upper Room, a community project in the north Hammersmith area founded on the Christian imperative to love and support our neighbour. Bruce Marquart, the Project manager, is an impressive man who truly follows this call.

Some statistics reveal the impact of this Christian charity as it seeks to contribute concretely to the relief of the suffering that it sees everyday in the midst of an affluent London society.

Upper Room (*at St Saviour's Church, Cobbold Road, W12*)

Averaging 65 meals a day - 8 staff & volunteers daily, 6 days a week.

UR4Kids (*Breakfast Club in a church hall on the White City estate, W12*)

Averaging 40 meals a day - 7 Staff & volunteers, 5 days a week.

Fairshare Food Distribution - Delivering 3000 kilos of food a week to 8 homeless charities - 2 staff 4 days a week.

European Day Centre (*at Askew Road United Reform & Methodist Church, W12*)

Averaging 35 meals a day - 5 volunteers & staff.

Daily Total 140 meals a day and 20 volunteer shifts a day.

Weekly Total 765 meals a week and 105 volunteer shifts a week.

Monthly Total 3000 plus meals a month and 420 staff and volunteer shifts.

We at St James support this valuable work each year through donations of money and goods, with a special focus at Harvest Festival. There is always a need for volunteer help, so do please call 020 8740 5688 if you or someone you know can offer some time and energy.

HARVEST FESTIVAL Sunday 2 October at 9.30am

Please bring gifts of tinned or dried food, toiletries or new socks or underwear for the Upper Room

ALL SOULS SERVICE

to remember those who have died and to give thanks for their lives

WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER at 8pm All welcome

*Please contact one of the clergy if you would like to add a name
to the list of those to be remembered*

This Made a Difference

contributed by Antony W. Ball

I used to feel deprived - of a 'conversion experience'. I was brought up to assume the 'truth' of the Christian faith, but in a generally-non-churchgoing family where there was no presumption of any link between 'being a Christian' and 'going to church'. When I decided, in my late teens, to start going to church it was a decision, like most decisions I have ever made, more rational than emotional - no 'heart strangely warmed' let alone blinding light or heavenly voice.

I chose to go to a Congregational Church (Protestant, 'free', independent, non-conformist) for historical family reasons rather than anything to do with denominationalism, Church polity or theology. As I became more involved in Church life and eventually in pastoral ministry, I discovered that many within the Church (particularly among those most committed and dedicated) frequently harked back to an identifiable moment in time when they were 'converted' or 'born again' - following which experience they no longer merely 'believed', they 'knew'. I felt deprived. I knew what I 'knew' and it didn't include what I 'believed'.

After retirement, I followed a two-year course in a Jesuit-foundation college. It upset some friends - one of those 'born again' Christians in particular - that I should have chosen a Roman Catholic college rather than a Protestant, evangelical one. I was, apparently, being disloyal - I might as well 'become a Catholic and have done with it'. That course is what made a difference. Most of the other students were Christians, but there was no talk of, let alone presumption of, their conversion experiences. The college ethos was Catholic, but the teaching not overtly or dogmatically so - and there was no confusion (let alone assumed equivalence) between what we 'believed' and what we 'knew'. Instead, we examined at great length what could be 'known' and what might be 'believed'.

This made a difference. I do not intend to 'become a Catholic and have done with it' - I can see flaws in Catholicism as I can in Congregationalism - but I now realise (which means 'believe' not 'know') that God has dealt with me in the way most appropriate for someone like me. If I had 'felt my heart strangely warmed' (John Wesley's phrase) I should have diagnosed heartburn rather than the Holy Spirit, so God found an alternative way of claiming me. I no longer feel deprived. I just feel that God knows me better than I know Him.



Congratulations to John and Betty Rainbow who celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary recently. Congratulations also to Sallie and Ciga Colak-Antic on becoming grandparents.

Margaret Bramall is now home again at Atfield House. Rose Frier is progressing and is also now home. At the time of going to press, Megan Parry was in the West Middlesex Hospital.

Alan Davey, who used to live in Park Road and subsequently Wolsey Road, has died. We send our sympathy to his wife Lee and the family.

There will be Voices for Hospices Concert in church on Saturday 8th October at 7.30pm. On Sunday 16 October there are two special events: our Young Musicians will be giving a concert in church at 3.30pm followed by a delicious tea, and St James's will be hosting the United Nations Association service for the borough at 6.30pm on behalf of Churches Together Around Hampton. Please do support all these events if you can.



We are delighted to report that baby Scarlett Lily Bunce, who was born prematurely, has made rapid progress and is now at home with her parents Charles and Corinne.

Two of our bellringers, Lisa and Ian, whose daughter Connie was baptised here in April, are returning to Lisa's native Australia in October. We thank them for their ringing over the past four years and wish them well in the next phase of their lives.

Best wishes to Sylvia Boarder who celebrates her 90th birthday on 7th October.

Last month, we asked whether anybody remembered when Edwards' grocery shop was on the the Ashton House site. Mrs. Wallace, of Uxbridge Road, says she not only remembers but also when it was Chaplin's prior to that! Can anyone go back any further?



**There will be a sale of
Charity Christmas cards in
the Hall at 10.45 am on
SUNDAY 6th NOVEMBER**

Memories of Hampton Hill

Mr Jarvis, who now lives in York, lived in Hampton Hill until 1997.

These are some extracts from his reminiscences.

My great-grandparents were married in Thursley Church in Surrey on Christmas Day, 1875 and came to Hampton Hill soon afterwards. My great-grandfather worked for the Southwark and Vauxhall Waterworks in Thames Street, Hampton. My great-gran was housekeeper for the Misses Hayes who lived in the house where Barclays Bank is now. They lived in their house in Edward Road for nearly sixty years. I still have a telegram sent to them by King George V and Queen Mary.

My father loved his grandparents very much. He used to go round to their house every Tuesday. He cut their toenails and did jobs for them.

Both my father's mum and dad were born in Wolsey Road and never moved away from Hampton Hill. They had a lovely garden and my gran was still doing it at 85. It backed onto the garden of Harry Wright and his daughter Olive. She used to wear Victorian clothes. She was also the reader at St James's Church and very good at it. My grandfather was churchwarden at St James's and he used to pay for the choir outing and do a lot of jobs for the church.

My mum's mum and dad lived in Myrtle Road in a cottage lit by gaslight and with no bathroom, just a tin bath. My gran used to iron tea cloths for a lady in a grace and favour apartment in the Palace. She got a penny a dozen. They had 19 shillings and eleven pence a week. My grandfather kept 11 pence and my gran had 19 shillings. The rent was three shillings and one shilling for a sack of coal. My grandfather had an allotment and grew all his own vegetables. He also had a gun licence and shot rabbits and pheasants and sold them to help out. My gran used to make jam and chutney and always had a good table. She used to do a most wonderful Christmas. The Christmas tree had clip-on wax candles.

My mother was knocked down by a tram when she was about three. It happened outside the Sun pub. My mum was lucky as the driver put the cow-catcher out and it saved her. I still have the newspaper cutting.

Hampton Hill was a very pretty village. The post office was early Victorian with brass fittings on the counter and it was lit by gas lights. There was a wonderful butcher's run by Mr Humphrey, it was very good meat. I remember Templeton Lodge in the High Street. It was a dance school run by Irene Ashton. Miss Ashton used to walk up the street with nothing on her feet when it snowed.

When we had the great freeze in 1947 we all helped one another; it was a great spirit. My auntie lived in Sunbury and her house backed onto the river and when it thawed I can remember wardrobes and furniture floating on the Thames.

We all lived in a row in Cross Street. My auntie is the only one left and she is nearly 93. We always had dogs and to this day I still have two and would not be without them. I have kept Jack Russell terriers for 38 years. I moved to York in 1997 but I still miss Hampton Hill. I think it is a lovely place to live with the beautiful park.

ALL SAINTS HANWORTH
 Uxbridge Road TW13
 4 MUSICAL CONCERTS FOR AUTUMN 2005
 SUNDAYS at 3pm

2 October Thames Ladies Barbershop Chorus
 9 October Dominic Field, trumpet & Andrew Pledge piano/organ
 23 October Susie Winkworth, cello & Andrew Pledge. piano

FROM THE AUGUST REGISTERS

BAPTISM	21	Ryan Michael Golden, Twickenham Karen Genery, Hampshire	
WEDDINGS	6	Lee Platt and Lorna Clarke	
	13	Natalie Anne Tilley and Graham Edward Mewes	
FUNERALS	3	Eric Malcolm Hounson	53
	11	William Summers	76
	15	Hugh Blue Brown	74
	31	Alan Davey	76

DATES TO NOTE

2 **Harvest Festival** 09.30 All-age Eucharist
 4 Francis of Assisi, friar and deacon, 1226
 5 07.00 Commuter Communion (a short service of 20 minutes)
 9 **20th Sunday after Trinity**
 08.00 Holy Communion 09.30 Parish Communion
 13 Edward the Confessor, King of England, 1066
 16 **21st Sunday after Trinity**
 08.00 Holy Communion, 09.30 Parish Communion
 15.30 St James' Young Musicians performance in Church
 18.30 St James' hosts the Churches Together Around Hampton United Nations service on behalf of the LBRUT
 18 Luke the Evangelist
 23 **Last Sunday after Trinity**
 08.00 Holy Communion, 09.30 Parish Communion
 28 Simon and Jude, apostles
 30 **All Saints Sunday, 09.30 The Bishop of Kensington will preside and preach at Parish Communion after having "Opened our Doors".**
 Do join us to celebrate.