

LEADER JULY 2006

I recently rediscovered a collection of poems by Michael O'Siadhail called "Our Double Time". He writes about what it means to live life to the full - in music and friendship, in love and suffering, in vulnerability and hope, in birth and death. He takes moments of trust and fragility, allowing them to be a lens for our hopes and fears. He reveals how the past and future shape the day-to-day intricacies of our lives: perhaps changing us, sustaining us, challenging us.

The final verse of "Trace", composed in memory of a friend's father, captures something of this dynamic.

*Do hopes and memories keep weaving into one?
Those twists around a single warping thread.
It seems the past both passes and lies ahead.
This man I never met shapes me in his son.*

Unbelievably, it is three years since I wrote my first words for this magazine: words of introduction from your "soon-to-be" curate! Then, I spoke of my sense of anticipation and excitement at the prospect of sharing in the life, worship and ministry with you and Brian at St. James', and of my feelings of trepidation and uncertainty at a time of significant transition. For an all too brief time, we have shared together our memories and hopes. As I stand at yet another moment of transition and give thanks for all that, I have been shaped by you, and with you. As I leave, that process of being changed, sustained and challenged will continue for all of us. We will continue to discern God's will for our life and mission.

Being caught up in moments of transition is part of human life. Whether it's looking forward to changing school, facing very different demands within our work, or learning to live in relation to love, grief and vulnerability. To be human is to change and to grow, to discover more about ourselves, each other and God. Some of the changes will be outward and practical; others will present exciting opportunities. Of course, within all that, change is an emotional risky and demanding process.

Over the coming months, we will all face a time of transition within this community of St James. I hope that whatever the future holds we will know something of God's assurance in our lives. As we move forward, our hopes and memories will continue to be woven together. Within a Christian community, the past and future come together in the present through the endlessly repeated sacrament of the Eucharist.



As we offer gifts of bread and wine, we receive them back as Christ's body and blood. We encounter Christ and we are shaped by him to form his body, the Church. As we do this in remembrance of him, our hopes and memories are woven together around the single thread of his love. We are bound together as one with all God's people, not just in this deanery and diocese, but across time and space.

As we consider our ongoing discipleship, it is right that we should set before us the example of James, our patron. He left all that he had to follow Christ. He allowed his understanding to be shaped by sharing in Christ's fellowship and by being attentive to his teaching. He was confident and ambitious, preaching the Gospel with passion, yet also learnt the necessity of humble service. Like James, we are called to show God's love in the midst of the people with whom we share our lives. We are called to hold our hopes and memories before God.

Do hopes and memories keep weaving into one? It seems the past both passes and lies ahead.

Julie Gittoes

SAINT FOR JULY

John Venn was ordained in the Church of England in 1783 after graduating from Cambridge. Serving first as curate to his father at Yelling, he was a rector in Norfolk from 1783-1792, then rector of Clapham until his death. As a leader in the circle of influential Evangelicals nicknamed the Clapham Sect, he played an active part in the anti-slavery campaign, and was one of the founders of the Church Missionary Society. He was married twice and had five children.

The 18th century revival of personal religion which gave birth to Methodism manifested in the Church of England as Evangelicalism. One small but highly influential group of Evangelical laymen lived in Clapham and were part of the congregation where John's father Henry - and later John himself - was rector. This circle of friends who encouraged each other in practical Christian living included William Wilberforce, and many of them became active in opposition to the slave trade.

John Venn was also a member of the Eclectic Society, a fortnightly discussion group established by John Newton (writer of *Amazing Grace*). In 1799 the Society considered how they personally could forward the cause of missions. They recognised it as a "duty highly incumbent upon every Christian to endeavour to propagate the knowledge of the Gospel among the Heathen." The SPCK and SPG were working in America and the West Indies but the whole of Africa and Asia were potential mission fields. The question for the group was not so much "What ought the Church to do?" but "What can *we* do?" Their answer was to form themselves into The Society for Missions to Africa and the East which, as The Church Missionary Society, became the largest missionary organisation in the world.

John's approach to mission is as appropriate now as then, as relevant locally as internationally. He stressed that it is vital to pray for guidance, and to follow God's leading because success depends on God: only the Spirit can raise up candidates who "have heaven in their hearts and tread the world under their feet". The right spirit is more important than formal qualifications - for the Missionary Society that meant a willingness to use laymen as well as clergy. He proposed that rather than making a general appeal for funds, they begin by promoting the idea and encouraging support among their friends and acquaintances: what was needed was long-term commitment, not haphazard charity. At the same time, they should be practical, studying circumstances and not being overly ambitious in their plans - starting small was the way of nature and of the early church. As John had taken over from his father in leading the Clapham Sect, so his own son, another Henry, took over leadership of the Missionary Society, moving it towards support of truly autonomous, indigenous churches.

The life of John Venn reminds us how much can be achieved by friends acting together, encouraging and supporting each other, and how much the church owes to those families who maintain the faith generation after generation. But John himself would also have stressed that friendship and family tradition are not enough - effective mission and a successful church depend on the work of the Spirit: *unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that build it. (Ps 127.1)*



Picture from CMS

ALMA SUNDAY– 9TH JULY

Sunday 9 July marks ALMA Sunday - a day to celebrate the Angola, London and Mozambique Association, a diocesan partnership between our own city and these two African countries. ALMA Sunday 2006 is the eight anniversary of a partnership that has borne much fruit. Many parishes across London have embarked on the journey of having a direct link with a sister parish in the south, whilst many more raise funds for various projects.

The Bishop of Kensington has recently visited Angola with his wife and Peter Southwood, the ALMA Link Officer. Their presence will have been a great joy to the rapidly growing Anglican congregations in that country.

Here in Hampton, St Mary's Church has established a link with the parish of Mandimba in Mozambique and will tell us all about it at our PCC meeting on 18 October, which is open to all.

Charities and Links Committee

WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?

Is it distracting when people talk in church? Since our church services ought to reflect both fellowship and worship, how do we get the balance right?

As a child I went to a Baptist church which, like St James', had a separate hall. There was no official rule about it but accepted practice was to talk to each other in the hall so that the church was kept quiet for prayer. This did mean there was something of a last minute rush into church - but that happens anyway! Quite a few people came well before the service and lingered in church afterwards for prayer and meditation. And once everyone else had rushed into the hall to do their talking, they tended to feel they might as well stay for coffee... So worship and fellowship were both well served!

Val Traylen

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION

Is it ever justifiable to assist someone with a painful terminal illness to end their life?

Please send replies to this question or questions for future issues to the office email (listed on page 7) or send to Margaret Taylor or Susan Horner or to the Church Office marked 'For the Spire'.

Have you subscribed to the Diocese of London's E-newsletter?

Keep in touch with the life of our diocese by entering your email address at the bottom of the home page for www.anglican.org.uk It's as simple as that and you can unsubscribe just as easily.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Once again, many sincere thanks to all of you who collected and donated to our charity in this year's Christian Aid Week. You have helped to build homes and schools, to fight the spread of HIV/Aids; and to bring clean water to some of the poorest people in the world. They thank you, as does Christian Aid and as I personally do, for all your efforts and for your generosity which gave us a total of £3202 from St James'.

Margaret Taylor

St Michael's Community Renewal Project in Camden Town

Towards the end of last year, parishes across London were asked if they could make a donation to keep this excellent project running whilst it applied for future funding. St James was able to send £350 from its charitable giving budget and received a lovely letter of thanks.

The Project Co-ordinator has recently sent us the Annual Report for 2005 and there is a very good paragraph to share.

2005 has shown that, more than ever, our work is vital to the community. Following negative press about immigration, a welcoming voice and a friendly place for refugees and asylum seekers to come is desperately needed. Also, in a city where the differences between Muslims and Christians are increasingly highlighted, events that bring together local people of different faiths are a refreshing change.

The Project also works to reduce the risk of social exclusion of older people in the community and runs drama workshops with homeless people. It is a wonderful example of faith in action in one of the most deprived areas of our diocese. Thankfully, the project has now received funding for 2006.

Charities and Links Committee

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF ANUSHA'S TRAVELS



When I last e-mailed we were in Bolivia about to leave on an overnight bus for the salt flats. Well the bus journey was absolutely freezing, the condensation on the inside of the windows froze as did we. There was a bus strike and so the only buses that were running were the cheap local tins on wheels that couldn't afford to hold out any longer in the strike. Anyway, most people were clued up and took sleeping bags on the bus with them but not us! Never mind, we arrived in Uyuni really early and had to find somewhere to defrost over breakfast. We then booked ourselves straight onto a 4 day tour leaving that day. The salt flats were amazing, just flat white as far as you could see and some crazy mirages too; Also went to a random cactus island that was literally plonked right in the middle of the flats, used to be corral apparently. The other days we visited various lakes, saw flamingoes, volcanoes and stunning scenery but the first day was definitely the highlight. On the third day we woke up at about 5am to visit hot springs and afterwards Pete

braved the "thermal" baths, I wasn't convinced, would have preferred it to be hotter so compromised by sitting with my feet defrosting in the water, it was -10.

We returned to La Paz after the trip and equipped ourselves with sleeping bags for the journey back. We spent a couple more days in La Paz and then went on a 3 day trek which was really cool but we both got a little ill on the first night, we think from the water and had to get up in the freezing cold to run up a hill to the loo! The next day was hard work, went up to 5100m (may even have done that twice actually) and that night it got down to -6 in the tent, there was ice on the top of the tent inside and out and in the morning it was -13. Mega cold but views of Huayna Potosi were incredible. Pete's love of mountains is certainly rubbing off!

After the trek we went back to La Paz for one last time and then headed overland, by bus, to Peru. First port of call was Puno where we visited the floating reed islands which was a really interesting experience, they build new islands every few years as they get soggy. We then moved on to Cuzco and from there we went on a city tour and tour of the sacred valley and finally to Machu Picchu. City tour and sacred valley were ok but would have been much better if it wasn't for the TERRIBLE guide who knew lots of nouns but could not link them together to save his life! So we didn't learn very much.

In Machu Picchu we had a much better guide, although he didn't turn up at our hostel at 5.30 as arranged, so after waiting around for half an hour we decided to make our own way up so that we wouldn't miss sunrise. Got up for sunrise which was amazing and then our guide bumped into us and made various untrue excuses. Despite this we enjoyed his tour and afterwards we climbed up Huaynapicchu for fantastic views. All in all we spent over 8 hours soaking it all up (and enjoying the sunshine). We walked down (and were quite glad we hadn't walked up, lame I know) and went to the thermal baths down at the bottom.

Headed back to Cuzco the following morning but left the same day as we will go back there for a week at the very end of our Peru adventure for a big Inca festival of the sun called Inti Raymi and other smaller fiestas that go on for the week before 24th June. So, we got a bus to Lima, 22 hours overnight, and while we were still within sight of the bus station, the driver crashed into a minibus and broke its windscreen along with creating a massive spider's web crack on the bus windscreen. Now I was gutted because it was the first really nice, really comfortable bus we'd been on and it was going to be a long journey. We thought we would have to change buses but after faffing with the police for a while we left the scene. Now everyone assumed we were going somewhere to change buses or get the windscreen fixed, but no, we were on our way to Lima. They told us not to worry, its was perfectly safe, and the driver has many years' experience, which begs the question, why did he crash in the first place!!!

We left in the evening on another overnight bus, this time to Huaraz, and arrived this morning. We've spent the day sorting out permits and buying food for a 4-5day trek that we are starting tomorrow.



THANK YOU JULIE.....



As most of you will have heard our curate, Julie Gittoes, is leaving St James' to take up the post of Vicar at All Saints Church, Hampton. Her last Sunday here is 16th July. Do please come to parish communion at 9.30 a.m. and celebrate with us.

TRIBUTE TO JULIE

As we wish Julie god-speed for her move to All Saints, we thank her for her gift of the last three years; during this time her ministry has deepened and widened and we have had the benefit of her spirituality, faith and dedication. We have enjoyed her company and friendship, and also have learned how to make really appetising vegetarian food! Thank you for everything, Julie, and go with our love and best wishes for your work at All Saints. As Brian said: "lucky them".

Margaret and David Taylor



APPRECIATION OF JULIE

Julie's knowledge, hard work, quiet authority and warm friendliness will be greatly missed at St James'. It is good to know that she will not be far away in her new post.

Dick Wilde

Julie has made a believer out of me! Since her arrival at St James' the notion of women priests has begun to make sense. This is not because of some particular female characteristic but rather that she doesn't allow gender to define her vocation and priesthood. Accepting a woman as a priest is a huge leap for me and I'm very grateful to her.

Putting that to one side, Julie is approachable, understanding and supportive, fun to relax with over a generous gin and a greatly valued friend.

Isobel Hammond

I have really appreciated having a curate who has been a confidante, a spiritual leader, a pastoral carer, a fellow musician and most of all a friend. She never imposes her ideas on us or preaches at us other than when she should do – in the pulpit! I have had some lovely times with Julie - one Friday evening when neither of us had anything to do after choir practice (2 Billy No Mates) and no dinner cooked at home , we went for a curry in Hampton Hill. It was a lovely evening. We always giggle together. Once, we almost destroyed a Properties Committee meeting by giggling when there was a serious discussion about who would be the ladder monitor at church! We almost lost control we were stifling laughs so much. I was with Julie (and Sarah and Jackie) quite a lot in Sri Lanka and she was a really good 'mate'. Again, we had some great laughs.

Julie always takes the trouble to answer your questions and gets back to you when she says she will. She really cares about her job and the people. She does a lot in a quiet and conscientious way.

Liz Butler

Arriving in our house at tea-time is not always the easiest of experiences. Far from a civilised cuppa with a slice of cake or a crumbly flapjack the atmosphere is more like feeding time at the zoo with a frenzy of small (often unwashed) hands grabbing what takes their fancy, tossing aside what doesn't and giving no quarter to the presence of a guest in their midst - let alone a lady of the cloth! Brian and Ramani had got used to their wild and primitive neighbours (and, I suppose, had been through at least little of it when Anusha was younger) but I did wonder what Julie's reaction would be when she first made the brave move of knocking on the door in the late afternoon. Ducking the bits of sausage, side-stepping the piles of mash and ignoring the undignified chomping Julie was, of course, superb, unfazed, unflappable and probably mildly amused! It is this friendly approachability, combined with her calm and thoughtful ministry in church that has been such a blessing for us, as I'm sure it has been for many. She has been there during difficult times - visiting Susannah when she was in hospital three years ago was of great comfort to her - and has been fantastic company at many a party! During Brian's sabbatical we could not have asked for a better priest to be in charge. She will do a wonderful job at All Saints and we are so pleased that she will be nearby, enabling our friendship to continue. I hope she'll even turn up for tea now and again...

Charles and Susannah Nettleton

When Julie joined our 'Tuesday Group' at Kath Brooks', she demonstrated her gift of being utterly unobtrusive, yet always noticeable. We immediately felt comfortable with her and although she spoke with a wisdom that far outweighed her years, she never assumed the role of 'teacher'. She was a wonderful listener, always giving credence to what was said, however 'off the wall'. She identified with our dilemmas and would somehow sort them out without appearing to do so. We will so much miss her warmth and humour, but will cherish all that she has given us. Thank you Julie for adding so much to the interest and enjoyment of our meetings.

Marion Dewey

We have watched Julie blossom over the last couple of years into a mature priest with distinctive views. Her development is grounded in a powerful intellect allied to a natural sensitivity to the particular audience she's addressing.

In assisting our Lent Group - with an average age in excess of 60! - she combined her extensive knowledge of the bible and Jesus's life with subtle prompting. By modestly steering the debate, she stimulated us to contribute in areas which may otherwise have remained untouched.

At a baptism in May, her gentle message - delivered informally in front of the congregation and virtually without notes - on the importance of the family's love both for the new child entering the Kingdom of God and for one another touched everyone, young or old.

Julie is wise beyond her years, always willing to help and, above all, human.

Clive and Maria Beaumont

We moved to Teddington from Acton three years ago, with Rosamond one year into her ordination training. St James quickly became our new home parish, and we found Julie's immense kindness and goodwill a great source of support. Over the last three years, it has been our privilege to get to know Julie better. With her searing intellect and good humour, she has become a good colleague to Rosamond and a good friend to us both, sharing both good times (mostly gin-soaked) and trials. We are glad she is not moving too far away, and wish her every blessing for her ministry at All Saints.

Tim and Rosamond McDowell



ST JAMES' PCC MEMBERS

Churchwardens



Liz Butler

I was born in Uxbridge Road and have always lived in this area. I went to Carlisle and Hampton Hill schools. I married a local boy in 1970 and had 3 children and lived most of my married life in Hampton and the children went to local schools. My teaching career started at Hampton Junior School and I have taught at several other local schools including 10 years at Hampton Hill Junior School where my mother also taught for 22 years. My daughter is also a teacher locally. I am now happily teaching at Jack and Jill School in Hampton. Although I live technically in Teddington, I feel part of the Hampton Hill community. My main interests are singing and walking. I love fast cars but don't drive one because of the speeding tickets!



Rodney Taylor has been Churchwarden for four years and before that was a member of the PCC. He chairs the Properties Subcommittee and is a member of the Finance and Music Subcommittees. By day, he is a practising physician in the NHS, and also works for the General Medical

Council, the Healthcare Commission and other bodies concerned with standards of practice in healthcare. He is President of the Faculty of the History and Philosophy of Medicine. Though not a great gardener, he has tried to improve the appearance of the churchyard.



Jackie Allen

I'm Jackie Allen, a school teacher locally, with 3 grown-up children. I guess I joined the PCC to find out more about what goes on at St James' and because I was asked to!



Don Barrett

I was keen to be part of the work of St James' Church and I feel that being on the Planned Giving Committee fulfils an important role in the support which I can give to the community of St James' and Hampton Hill.



Michael Bunce

It is a privilege to support the vicar and to help serve the Christian community of St James'.



Anne Cowlin

I've lived in Hampton for nearly 27 years, but attending St James' for the last ten. My involvement began with the millennium 'kneeler project' and a couple of years later I was asked if I would consider serving on the PCC. For the last three years I have been a PCC member and am a member of the Finance and Planned Giving committees. On a personal level, I am a mother of two grown up children and have my own business, which I conduct from home.



Lou Coaker-Basdell

I have joined the PCC Committee of St James' this year but have been running the Sunday School for a number of years.



Janet Nunn

In July 1988, after 23 years teaching secretarial subjects I took early retirement to spend more time with David and to escape the rapidly changing secretarial world. Not wanting to let my skills go rusty, and with Brian's arrival, I volunteered to be his secretary. In April 2005, I decided to put my name forward as PCC Secretary. I have been secretary to many organisations and felt I would like to offer my services to the church to put my minute-taking skills to the test again!



Paul Peterken

I joined the St James' congregation in 1992 when I met Ann. I have always studied and worked on numerical subjects, so when the church needed a new treasurer in 1998, I was 'volunteered', joining the PCC at the same time. Since then, I have tried to help the church manage its financial and business affairs in a wise and effective way.



Peter Poole

I've been a member of St James' for some ten years, but due to my Army career was never available to seek election to the PCC. Now having started a second career in the charity sector, I am more often in the area and thus able to contribute more of my time to Parish life.



Chris Saul

This is my third year on the PCC which is proving less traumatic than the recent rebuild of my house. I am heavily involved with the social committee, perhaps not least because having two small children one is thrust into sociability. I run a niche IT company for my real job.



Valy Traylen



Dennis and Elizabeth Wilmot

St James' has been our Church for 15 years during which time it has become an increasingly important part of our lives. Beside the worship and fellowship we like taking an active role in Church life with various duties, most recently bell ringing by Elizabeth. Sitting on the PCC is a natural extension of our part in the Church and is seen as a serious responsibility where we help shape the future of St James'.

DEANERY SYNOD MEMBERS



Ann Peterken

I had already attended my goddaughter, Claire's, christening at St James' before it became my parish church on moving to Hampton Hill in 1982. I gradually learnt about the great variety of tasks that comprise parish life, with many people sharing their time and skills. Joining the PCC was one way to express my commitment and led eventually to a fulfilling term as churchwarden. Whilst valuing all that St James' gives me locally, I enjoy outreach beyond the parish - with other churches, denominations, dioceses and countries.



Lesley Mortimer

I am an ex-officio member of the PCC by virtue of having been elected to the Hampton Deanery Synod. I am an ex-head teacher of a Church of England secondary school and am currently Widening Participation Officer at Brunel University, Uxbridge.



Janet Taylor



Pip Rowett

SARA'S LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS CYCLE RIDE



From 25 June till 9 July, Sara Butterfield will be taking part in a 15-stage 1000 mile cycle challenge from Lands End to John O'Groats. Some of you may have seen an article about Sara in a recent issue of the Surrey Comet.

The ride is to raise funds for the victims of the Asian Earthquake which struck on October 8th 2005 and left tens of thousands of men, women and children homeless and without the means of a livelihood.

The cycle challenge, labelled e2e4e (End to End for earthquake), is being led by Kingston's Director of Community Services.

The cycle challenge, labelled e2e4e (End to End for earthquake), is being led by Kingston's Director of Community Services. entire distance. She has been training very intensively over the past few weeks, for example cycling same day to Brighton and back and also around the Isle of Wight. Over twenty people will be taking part in some of the stages but Sara will be the only female amongst the five people who are attempting to cover the entire distance. She has been training very intensively over the past few weeks, for example cycling same day to Brighton and back and also around the Isle of Wight.

Over the years Sara has been involved in numerous humanitarian relief programmes and firmly believes that individuals and groups working together really can make a difference. She has used her love of the outdoors to help raise money for those in need and is very much hoping that her recent fund-raising climb on Everest will stand her in good stead for the fitness and endurance demanded by this new challenge.

You can follow the trip and find out more information on the website www.kingstonepublish/e2e4e, which will be updated during the course of the trip. To donate on line, go to www.kingston.gov.uk/e2e4e. Barclays Bank Account is called e2e4e and the Earthquake Appeal Account No 03799875, sort code 20-46-73

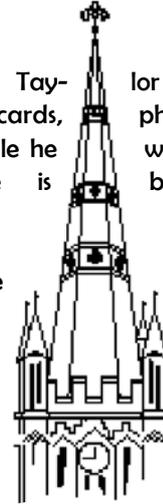
Around the Spire

Thank you to Peter Hale and Gordon Tucker for painting the railings around the church. They look splendid.

Julie's leaving date is 16th July 2006. Everyone is welcome to the Church Hall after Parish Communion.

David Taylor has appreciated all the cards, phone calls and messages while he was in hospital. Happily he is back at home now.

The Guides went to camp during the week of 17th June and a great time was had by all. See article below about the vicar's bad manners.



Works on the organ chamber are now complete and the snagging for the office area is also finished.

VICAR REPRIMANDED

Our vicar received a stern warning when he visited our Guide Company at their weekend camp at Bentley Copse near Dorking. Coincidentally (!) arriving at the campsite just as lunch was being served, he failed to notice the Company etiquette which required campers to respect the imaginary table in front of them, and so sit down on the ground to eat rather than stand up. Guides and Leaders alike were stunned by his bad manners and roundly castigated him.

Nevertheless he greatly enjoyed his hours with them on a sunny Saturday. He reports: "It was a fair cop. It's just been a long time since I was a Boy Scout and had forgotten the rules". Even more importantly he commented on "their obvious enjoyment, their independence from home, their learning to depend on each other and the fabulous role models being offered by the Leaders of the camp". Bravo – and next time he'll remember to sit before eating (although he had washed his hands and said grace!).