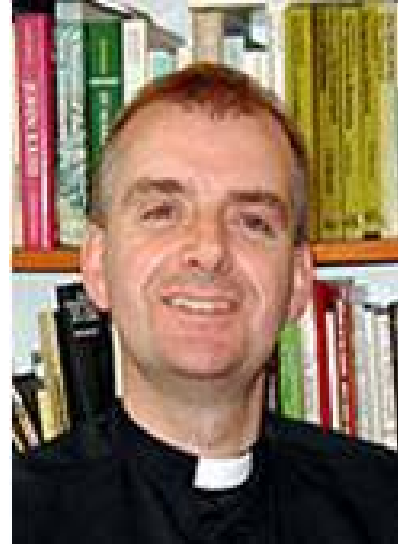


LEADER FOR SEPTEMBER 2006

Perhaps the last 17 years prove the truth of the expression that “time flies when you are enjoying yourself”.

But fear not, I have no intention of writing memoirs or biographical jottings of my time as your vicar in Hampton Hill. I did, however, take the opportunity the other day while starting to rationalise the books in the study, to flick through some of the diaries covering the years of my incumbency here. We moved in to the vicarage on the night of August 25th 1989 and Ramani and I slept in our sleeping bags in the dining room with absolutely nothing in the house only to be woken by thuds and shouts in the churchyard followed by police sirens. For that very night vandals caused damage to gravestones along Park Road and Burtons Road hedges and fences, and we truly wondered just what sort of place we had arrived in. It turned out that they were revellers who had had rather too much to drink after receiving their GCSE results.



In 1989 the church was thriving, not least under the care of its able churchwardens and lay readers. I arrived, someone who was entirely different to the personal specification the parish had written for its next vicar. And maybe that explains a lot, or maybe it says something about the Church of England's ability to work through clay vessels and not necessarily to expect an incumbent to be an archangel. Since then it feels as if we have taken the biblical mandate that: “for everything there is a season” to its logical extent. We have torn down and built up, buildings, groups, practices and attitudes within the parish and, I hope you believe, for most of the time, we have done this as priest and people in harmony and united purpose. Obviously I cannot begin to express my gratitude to an enormous number of people for making all this possible. The most important thing is that you know who you are and the part that you have played in strengthening the life of this parish in our community and far beyond it. For that I thank you most fulsomely. Your generous giving of time, energy, self and resources has been truly inspirational.

And so back to that text: “for everything there is a season”. And I do believe this is a profound insight into the nature of human existence within God's world. For our Christian faith teaches us that we are made by and for God. And our prime purpose and innate capacity is to reflect God's life in the world in which we live out our lives. Like the first disciples, we too, are called to witness to the truths of the kingdom of God as much in our places of work or leisure as in our worship. For me, it has undoubtedly been the daily round of worship, rooted in saying morning prayer in church, most usually with a few member of our parish community, that has been the bedrock of my ministry in Hampton Hill and out of which has sprung activity, ideas, relationships, insights and pastoral relationships. That, of course, is not the prerogative of the priest alone but is part of every Christian's daily commitment to live an engaged life with holding together both word and sacrament in the one hand with the realities of daily living in the other. Karl Barth, the early 20th century Swiss theologian, argued that we can only truly worship God when we read both the bible and the newspaper. His point, of course, is clear that our faith and our daily living are both mutually informed and mutually transformed. So that we bring the realities of our commitment to “every season” and that in every season “our faith makes a contribution”.

That, of course, applies to endings and beginnings just as much as it applies to periods of relative stability. I thank you most sincerely for your generous, joyful and engaging companionship on the journey we have undertaken together at St James' over the last 17 years and be assured that I will pray for you as I trust you will pray for us, in season and out of season.

Brian Leathard

BEWARE

While training for ordained ministry I received some very wise advice from a retired Bishop who had many years experience as a parish priest and bishop in a large diocese. “Two things you’ll never get right”, he said, “so don’t even bother – hymns and flowers”. Well maybe I took half his advice and I’ve stayed away from church flowers (on the whole). But, I have most certainly not followed his advice about hymns, even though I accept his warning that I’ll never get it right – or maybe it is the case that I think the hymns I choose for worship are right and others don’t. I have always taken great care over the choice of hymnody because the five hymns sung in Parish Communion are one of the most obviously inclusive elements of worship, or rather, they should be.

One needs to integrate the choice of hymns with the readings, the season, the particular place in the liturgy (for example, an opening hymn choice would be very different from the choice of hymn between the creed and the intercessions). One also has to balance known hymns over against new hymns, liked tunes and disliked tunes, ancient or modern, four part harmony or unison chorus type song. And, of course, this omits both my own and other people’s prejudices!

Having recently been challenged by a member of the congregation about singing the same hymns too often, and other hymns not often enough (or indeed not at all!) I sought refuge in statistics. In the last two years we have sung:

- 169 different hymns from Ancient and Modern New standard
- 29 different hymns and songs from Songs of Fellowship
- 12 other hymns or songs from diverse sources.

No hymns have we sung more than five times in two years, and only 22 hymns have we sung four times in the same period, while 48 hymns have we sung three times or more.

Can you guess the 10 hymns we have sung most frequently? Answers on page 4. I hope this demonstrates a commitment to using diverse hymnody which has broad appeal, liturgical sensitivity and, most importantly, enhances our worship.

Brian Leathard

YOU ADDED. WE MULTIPLIED!

Christian Aid Week 2006 will make an impact around the world



We believe in life before death

What the money raised by your church or group could achieve:

In Bolivia, **£60.50** pays for a ewe and a ram for an indigenous family such as that of Sara and Malaquia Rosel, through Christian Aid’s partner, CIPCA. As the sheep grow and breed, they provide milk to drink, food to eat, and lambs to sell or pass on to other families. The extra income can help pay for school fees and medical treatment, leading to a healthier and better educated community. *You added. We multiplied!*

In Ethiopia, **£120** pays for two children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, such as Meheret and Matewos Mekonnen, to attend school for a year, through Christian Aid’s partner, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. This financial support enables guardians, often grandparents, to provide a home and hope to the children, and for them to learn new skills. *You added. We multiplied!*

In Ethiopia, **£440** will cover the costs of supporting a young person orphaned by HIV/AIDS to receive carpentry training at college, through Christian Aid’s partner, OSSA. Once trained, young people are able to support themselves and their families completely with their own carpentry businesses. *You added. We multiplied!*

In Nicaragua, **£1350** provides a community with 50 pigs, through Christian Aid’s partner, MCM. Families are trained to look after the animals, and feed them food scraps. As the pigs breed, some piglets are given back to MCM to distribute to other families, and the remainder can be sold. This provides families with the security of a regular income, and prevents men from having to travel to Costa Rica in search of work. *You added. We multiplied!*

In Bolivia, **£1810** buys tools, seeds and saplings for ten families, such as Malaquia Rosel’s, through Christian Aid’s partner, CIPCA. By planting cocoa trees and other diverse crops, families can develop their hectare of land, gain a more reliable food supply, and have a secure income to pay for school fees and other household expenses. *You added. We multiplied!*

WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION?

Festering memory or true forgiveness: how do we lay aside wrongs of the past, particularly if they have never been acknowledged? How do we find inner peace for the present?

One of the teachings of Jesus that we find hardest to accept is "Without me you can do nothing." I have been helped by the story of Corrie ten Boom. This Dutch woman and her sister were betrayed to the Gestapo for hiding Jews and sent to Ravensbruck camp where her sister died. After the war she encountered a former guard who asked her forgiveness. Her initial reaction was a surge of bitterness. But she recognised that *not* forgiving made nonsense of her life as an evangelist so, despite her feelings, she reached out to take his hand. It was only *as* she reached out that God's love for the man flowed into and through her, enabling her to forgive and to *feel* that she had forgiven. I don't think this necessarily means we have to go shake someone's hand, but we do have to recognise that forgiveness is God's gift to us, whether it is his forgiving us, or his enabling us to forgive someone else.

Val Traylan

.....
The people who hurt us show us where our ego is not yet crucified. We should thank God for them.

.....
Every time the memory comes back I pray for the person who hurt me. The devil soon stops reminding me about them!

The ten hymns sung most frequently at parish Communion at St James' over the last two years:

Love Divine, all loves excelling
Immortal invisible, God only wise
For the beauty of the earth
Rejoice! The Lord is king
Come down, O Love Divine
King of Glory, King of peace
Just as I am
Alleluia, sing to Jesus
Lord enthroned in heavenly splendour
Guide me, O thou great Redeemer

Harvest Gifts for SPEAR

St James is collecting essential items for **Single Persons Emergency Accommodation in Richmond**, a local charity that provides an essential service. Please read the list below and bring your gift to the Harvest Festival service on Sunday 1 October (or before mid-Oct).

Tinned Foods: soups of any kind, meat and fish products (please NO baked beans and NO tinned tomatoes)

Dry Goods: biscuits, chocolate, tea, coffee, pasta

Soft drinks: cordials

Toiletries: toothbrushes, toothpaste, disposable razors, stick deodorants, body lotions, soap and shampoo (travel size)

The charity prefers tinned food with at least 12 months consumption remaining. Please check the sell-by-date on your gift.

The plate collection on Sunday 1 October will be given to the **Upper Room**, a charity that provides a broad range of services for the vulnerable and socially disadvantaged people of West London. Please give generously.

Charities and Links Committee

A celebration of the Anglican Church in Mozambique and Angola Saturday 16 September 11.30am-4pm (Eucharist at 12 noon) at St John's Church, Waterloo

A centenary celebration with all three Bishops in attendance - Bishop Dinis Sengulane of Lebombo, Bishop Mark Van Koevering of Niassa and Bishop Andre Soares of the Missionary Diocese of Angola. A wonderful opportunity to see and hear from these dedicated church leaders. If you are interested in attending, please contact Elizabeth Wilmot on 020 8977 9434.

Kensington Area Conference - The Gospel in Tomorrow's World 10.00am - 4.00pm on 30th September 2006 at St Barnabas Church, Kensington Led by The Right Revd Tom Wright, Bishop of Durham

Please let St James' Parish Office know as soon as possible if you are planning to attend.
A poster is available on <http://gabriel.london.anglican.org/open/Area/Kensington/>



A Saint for September: Michael the Archangel

There are fashions in devotion as in every other area of life. St Michael and the Holy Angels enjoyed a new popularity during the 19th century Anglo-Catholic revival, which is why he appears, along with St James and the Blessed Virgin, in a decorative plaque at the front of our church.

Of the seven archangels, three are mentioned in scripture by name, the others being Gabriel and Raphael. Michael appears in both Old and New Testaments. In *Daniel* he is represented as Israel's champion during the Babylonian captivity. *Jude* alludes to a Jewish tradition that Michael disputed with Satan over ownership of the body of Moses. *Revelation* recounts how Michael, leading the faithful angels, defeats the hosts of Satan and drives them out of heaven.

Because of this victory, St. Michael is revered in western tradition as the protector of God's people. Usually represented as a winged warrior, he is invoked as 'captain of the Heavenly Host' and 'our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil', especially at the hour of death when Satan can be expected to make his last desperate attempt to trap the soul.

But Michael is also associated with healing. In 950 he was credited with bringing an end to the plague in Rome and in the eastern churches his role as healer predominates. In what is now Turkey, he is venerated at a number of healing springs dating back to the first century. Warrior and healer may seem quite opposite roles for a human, but the combination makes sense if you regard disease as one of Satan's weapons in his war against humanity.

So what *are* angels? The word 'angel' simply means 'messenger' and Gregory the Great asserted that being plain angel or arch-angel reflected the importance of the message. Since the name Michael means 'Who is like God?' Archangel Michael is sent "whenever some act of wondrous power must be performed so that his action and his name may make it clear that no one can do what God does." In the past there was a universal belief in the activities of non-corporeal beings, some friendly, some hostile. As scientific knowledge grew, the church increasingly played down the supernatural elements in scripture and tradition so that today, ironically, angels appear to be an embarrassment to the church while they are hugely popular with people outside it.

For the Christian the image of an angel can serve as a reminder that our God is creator and ruler of infinitely more than our physical universe; there are dimensions beyond the scope of human investigation. The conflict between Michael and Satan, both of them angels, also reminds us that being embodied may make us vulnerable to *expressing* sin in certain ways but it doesn't *cause* us to sin. The root of sin is in the will, in the devil's attitude 'I will not serve'. Above all Michael is an image of perfect obedience to God, his wings representing readiness to move swiftly and forcefully against every manifestation of evil. We acknowledge that ready obedience and aspire to imitate it every time we pray ***Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.***

What do you think?

Are angels mythical or real? Do you believe you have encountered an angelic helper? St Paul warns us against worshipping angels: does that mean we should not look to them for help? Medieval theologians reputedly debated how many angels could dance on the head of a pin: is focusing on the supernatural a distraction from practical Christianity?

Please send replies to the Parish Office or one of the editors listed on page 7.

Drum Trade Justice Home Thursday 14 September

This autumn, campaign events are taking place in more than 80 countries during the *Global Month of Action against Poverty* from 14 September to 17 October. Read all about this global initiative at www.bond.org.uk/campaign/toolkit.

Drum Trade Justice Home will take place in central London on 14 September between 12.00 noon and 2.30 p.m. This event needs large numbers for a dignified and determined show of solidarity. Be there if you possibly can and wear your white *Make Poverty History* wristband. Pick up a flyer in church for details.

For the latest news, visit Christian Aid's www.pressureworks.org/dosomething

Twickenham & Richmond United Nations Association (UNA)

The branch has just launched its own web site at www.truna.org.uk. This gives an overview of the activities of the Branch and includes a newsletter with upcoming events. St James's Church is affiliated to UNA and all are welcome at events. The new Executive Director, Sam Dawes, will address the Branch at the AGM on 26th September from 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Twickenham. Further details will be in the next newsletter and on the website from the end of August.

Dennis Wilmot

REGISTERS FOR JULY

BAPTISMS

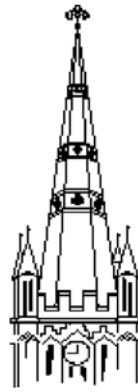
- 9 July Tean Claire Bourdeaux, Teddington
16 July Finlay Michael Kiely-Crane,
West Molesey
16 July Nicholas James Lewis, Teddington
16 July Lilian Suzanne Carole Small,
Hampton Hill
16 July Emily Jane Wheeler, Hampton

FUNERALS

- 13 July Mr Lyndhurst Rowles, Hampton

WEDDINGS

- 15 July Gary Thomas Smith and Victoria
Therese McCloskey
22 July Andrew James Hull and Kelly Caroline
McDermott
29 July Lee Anthony Walker and Alicia Anne
Vaughan Lane-Smith



Around the Spire

The first meeting of the adult confirmation classes will be on 7th September at 8.00 p.m. in the Upper Room.

Ben Newman has successfully completed his degree course and we wish him well with his future career.

Good luck to all those children who will be starting at new schools this autumn.

Julie's induction will be on Tuesday, 5th September at All saints, Hampton at 20.00.

PARACHUTE JUMP In aid of the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths

On Sunday, 24th September Lucy Moritzen (Greta Rosten's daughter) is going to do a sponsored parachute jump to raise money for F.S.I.D. This charity investigates and studies conditions which may be associated with sudden infant death of no known cause (cot death). As a result of these studies the incidence of this tragic occurrence has been considerably reduced. The Foundation also offers support and counselling for bereaved families and has a subsidiary branch which gives advice and support for the care of the next infant (C.O.N.I.).

Please will you pray for Lucy and if you would like to sponsor her telephone Greta on 01425 483662 or email: petermoritzen@bt.internet.com

Until her move to Hampshire a few months ago, Greta Rosten was a member of St James' and Lucy and Peter were married here in 1997.