

St John's Church Record

May-June 2012



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Messy Church

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Messy Church morning on April 2nd. Sixteen children came with their parents or carers and enjoyed the craft activities, the food and the fun. It was good that they were able to go into the Church and hear the story of Easter told by Julian. We have had a lot of very positive comments from those who were there and we hope to have another Messy Church morning at the beginning of the Summer holiday on Monday 23rd July. Please keep this date free!

Valerie Mills



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Who is fortunate?

Recently, I was forwarded an email by an author who claimed that I had misrepresented his thought in a review I did of his book about the Gospels. I was very concerned about this claim, so I re-read my review, and re-read the passages of his book on which I had based my comments, and concluded that I had not misrepresented him, but that he and I interpret the Gospels very differently.



One example of this difference in interpretation is the way in which we understand the passage in the Gospel According to Matthew known as the beatitudes. This passage begins:

“The poor in spirit are fortunate, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs. The sorrowful are fortunate, because they will be comforted. (Matthew 5:3-4, my translation)

The author whose book I reviewed interprets these same verses as:

“Those who enter the kingdom of heaven do not seek to possess the things of this world. They are non-attached and do not grieve the loss of what must pass away and cease to be. Those who enter the kingdom of heaven are kind and compassionate, seeking to comfort those who mourn and to rejoice with those who have good fortune.”

The latter is a non-literal interpretation that regards Jesus’ teaching as setting out ideal virtues or attitudes to which we are supposed to aspire. My difficulty with it is that I doubt that it gives much comfort to those who are actually experiencing poverty of spirit or sorrow. The poor in spirit may be a reference to those who are humble and non-assertive. They are often ignored and sometimes oppressed by the arrogant and the powerful I doubt whether they draw much comfort from being told that they are the ideal type. What may help is the good news that it is to them—and not the arrogant and the powerful—that God’s kingdom belongs. The sorrowful, who are often sorrowful because of their suffering, may have their sorrow compounded if told that theirs is the ideal state.

But if they believe that God will comfort them, this can be a source of hope.

Our world is full of unfairness and injustice. Jesus’ teaching about the kingdom of heaven often emphasises that ‘the last shall be first; and the first shall be last’, suggesting that the coming reign of God will bring about a great reversal. The poor in spirit and sorrowful can be called fortunate only if God will reverse their fortunes. Arguably, reversal of fortune is what the beatitudes are all about. Those whom the world ignores, oppresses, and pities will be given the places of honour in the new heaven and new earth that God is bringing into being.

The parable of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus contains a dramatic reversal of fortune: Lazarus finds himself reclining on the bosom of Abraham; the rich man finds himself in agony (Luke 16:19-31). Will God turn all our earthly assessments of fortunate and unfortunate upside down? If we believe that God is both loving and just, we must hope so. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is the source of our hope that God will transform the sorrow of suffering and death into the joy of new life. We are invited to enter into this new life even now by dying to self and becoming alive in Christ to God and to all that is good. This new life finds its fulfilment as the new order in which “God himself will be with them. There shall be an end to death, and to mourning and crying and pain, for the old order has passed away!” (Rev 21:3-4) Then we will be with God and will be fully known. All our comparisons and pretence and shame will fall away. We will then be more than fortunate; we will be blessed.

Charities we Support

Following the service on 22 April on the theme of Witness, the phrase 'Our church without walls' jumped out at me and I wondered whether we could have a poster at the back of the church indicating that members of St Johns Church support various charities by giving their time as volunteers, as well as by fundraising.

I plan to put a clipboard at the back of the church in May so that the names of charities supported in this way can be shown eg North London Hospice, charity shops (which ones, Coroners Court Support Service, etc. Just the names of the charities volunteered for are needed not the name of the person who volunteers (unless you want to be named for others to discuss it with you) Perhaps this might lead to some articles in the newsletter in the future.

Meg Hardie

Summer Cream Tea

This year's cream tea will be held on Saturday 16th June from 3:00pm to 5:00pm in the large hall.

The cost of admission and cream tea will be £3.00. There will be a wide variety of charity stalls to buy goods from, including the Save the Children Fund, R.N.L.I., Friends in Need, Fair Trade and Barnet National Trust Association. There will also be a book stall, a Bring and Buy stall and home made cakes to buy. Funds raised will be divided between the North London Hospice, Church funds and other charities. Please come and support this event.

David Paul

Trinity Sunday, 3 June

If you arrive at 11:00 am on Sunday 3rd of June, you arrive in time for coffee! This is because we are going to meet for worship **at the earlier time of 10:00 am**. This is to allow those who wish to travel into central London to find a vantage point on the River Thames to see the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Flotilla, which starts at 1:00 pm.

Tony Alderman

We can report that Tony is already up and about following the surgery to remove his toe, and the wound seems to be healing well. Please pray for Tony's continued recovery.

Hugo Bartrum

Hugo is currently having radio therapy treatment on a brain tumour. Please pray for Hugo.

Christian Aid Week, 13 – 19 May

Whatever you do and however you do it, by being part of Christian Aid Week you can help people in poverty out of poverty. You will join 200,000 others to raise more than £13 million for poor communities around the world to help them find ways to improve their lives and have a brighter future. No matter how much you raise, your contribution will help make a big difference.

Last year, the volunteers from St. John's helped raise £1,409 from the house-to-house collection along local roads. This wonderful result, was only made possible through the willingness of a large number of people to give some of their time to support Christian Aid. We have several loyal supporters who help every year, but inevitably, we are always welcome new people to ensure that we can still cover all our allocated roads.

So, if you can spare just a little time to help with any (or even all!) of the following, do please speak to me as soon as possible:

- Delivering envelopes between Friday, 11 May & Sunday, 13 May;
- Collecting envelopes between Monday 14 May & Saturday 19 May;
- Being part of the 'Counting Team' on Sunday evening, 20 May.

(continued on next page)



Christian Aid continued:

Those are the practical ways you can become involved with Christian Aid Week, but don't forget that it is also an opportunity give and to pray.

Christian Aid currently works with 507 partner organisations in 47 countries around the world. From Sierra Leone to Tajikistan, from Kenya to Bolivia, we are helping communities to make their voices heard and look towards a brighter future. St John's will be just one of the thousands of churches that will stand together this Christian Aid Week to speak out for change. It is a real opportunity to go out and put our faith into action, raising funds to help some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. This includes Britain's largest house-to-house collection – an extraordinary act of witness, demonstrating to our communities that we care about poverty and justice. For more information, take a look at: www.caweek.org



Manufacturing the News

Or, How Reporters Make It Up

The Fellowship had a thought provoking talk by Nicholas Jones in April, on the whole subject of the press and the influence proprietors and editors have over our lives. Nick was Industry and Political reporter at the BBC for over thirty years. By showing us a number of front pages from the Sun, Mail, News of the World etc, Nick highlighted how the newspaper Barons influence voting patterns and government policies, particularly if they may benefit their own business.

One example was Rupert Murdoch's support for Margaret Thatcher's successful campaign to reduce the power of the Unions in the 80's. He used the success of the campaign to overcome the print unions and move, virtually overnight, all his printing from Fleet Street to Wapping, saving him millions!

Nick pointed out just how topical this subject has become, particularly with the current Levison Enquiry into media standards. He took us through a series of front pages from the point where News International (and others) lost faith in Labour and particularly PM Gordon Brown, frequently depicting him as a loser and out of control. At the same time juxtaposing positive images of David Cameron and Conservative policies. The message the press were giving to their readers was very direct, frequently becoming an instruction on how to vote.

In contrast, Nick pointed out how media campaigns have achieved some significant changes in UK law. One, known as Sara's Law, resulted on the creation of the sex offenders register. (though, as Nick pointed out, some Sun readers picketed "paediatricians", confusing them with paedophiles"!)

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Men's Group

The Men's Group will meet at 8:30pm at the Railway Bell, New Barnet on Monday 28th May and Wednesday 27th June. If anyone knows someone who might be interested in joining us please invite them along.

Malcolm Bond

Do come and join us at the **Annual United Service** to mark the start of Christian Aid Week – this will take place at **St John the Baptist Church at 6.30pm on Sunday 13 May**. The speaker will be Hannah Griffiths from Christian Aid. I hope many of you will be able to attend and support this service.

"LET'S GIVE THE TOOLS TO HELP PEOPLE IN POVERTY OUT OF POVERTY."

Alison Bond (020 8440 1941)



But, Nick was also at pains to point out that there is inevitably a price to pay for the support of the media. In Thatcher's time, Murdoch's SKY TV channel got its licence, with few restrictions, to the detriment of the BBC. The Sun boasted "It's the Sun wot won it" for Tony Blair, but Labour paid the price when the paper stopped supporting the war in Iraq and turned against Gordon Brown.

The consequences of the Conservative Parties relationship with the press, particularly the role of Andy Coulson (ex NoW editor – until 2011, Tory Dir of Communications), are yet to materialise, but in Nick's view, there will be a price to pay. We were left with the impression that perhaps the UK has the press it deserves! We now live in a country where papers will pay hundreds of thousands of pounds for "a juicy story", where phones are routinely tapped and where the Police at all levels are paid (allegedly!) by the press for passing on details of yet to be proven crimes – but yet we keep on buying the papers!

Nick gave us plenty to think about.

Children's Worker

St John's Church (United Reformed)

St John's Church seeks Christian applicants with suitable skills, experience, and commitment to lead a team of volunteers to run the following activities as part of its ministry and outreach to children and their parents:

- Little John's Baby and Toddler Group (Monday afternoons, weekly)
- Junior Church (Sunday morning Christian education, twice per month)
- Messy Church (once per month craft-based event)

The successful applicant will be paid £11 per hour, 32 hours per month, including holiday provision.

Applications close on 15th June 2012. For an application form and further information, contact:

The Minister, Julian Templeton, 42 Onslow Gardens, London, N10 3JX

Email: julian@templeton.me.uk Tel. 020 8444 5076



May 2012

Sunday 6th 11:00am Worship with Elder Ordination and Inductions and Communion led by Rev. Julian Templeton

Tuesday 8th 8:00pm Elders' Meeting

Wednesday 9th 8:00 pm Fellowship Committee Meeting, 86 Lyonsdown Road

Thursday 10th 8:00pm Foodbank Meeting at the Salvation Army Barnet Corps, Albert Road

Friday 11th 8:00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 13th to Saturday 19th Christian Aid Week

Sunday 13th 11:00am Worship led by Alison Cousins and Andrew Mills

6:30pm Christian Aid Service at St John the Baptist Church, High Barnet. Speaker: Hannah Griffiths

Monday 14th 1:30pm Little John's Toddler Group

Friday 18th 8:00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 20th 11:00am Worship led by Rev. Derek Lindfield

8:00 pm Soul Food led by Sal Bateman and Rev. Kate Hackett

Monday 21st 1:30pm Little John's Toddler Group

Friday 25th 8:00pm Choir Practice

Saturday 26th 2:00pm St John's Fellowship Outing to Wrest Park

Sunday 27th 11:00am **Pentecost** Worship led by Helen Snider and Andrew Summers

3:00pm Causeway

Monday 28th 1:30pm Little John's Toddler Group

8:30pm Men's Group at the Railway Bell

Tuesday 29th 8:00pm Prayer and Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park

June 2012

Friday 1st 8:00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 3rd **10:00 am Trinity Sunday** Worship with Communion led by Rev. Julian Templeton

Wednesday 6th 7:00pm Nosh and Natter at 10 Leicester Road

Friday 8th 8:00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 10th 11:00am Family Worship led by Alison Bond and Lesley Calder

8:00 pm Soul Food led by Rev. Julian Templeton

Monday 11th 1.30pm Little John's Toddler Group

Tuesday 12th 8:00pm Elders' Meeting

Friday 15th 8:00pm Choir Practice

Saturday 16th 3:00pm Summer Cream Tea

Sunday 17th 11:00am Worship led by Rev. Julian Templeton followed by **12:30pm Church Meeting**

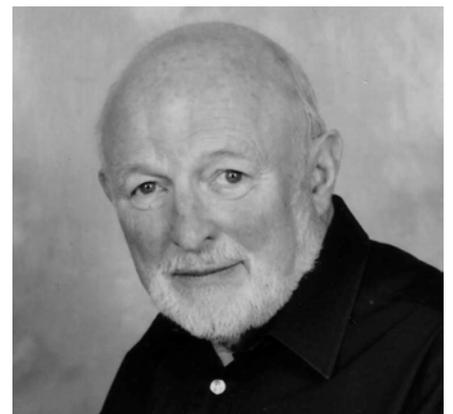
- Monday 18th 1:30pm Little John's Toddler Group
- Wednesday 20th 8:00pm St John's Fellowship, Rev. Michael Hopkins 'The Great Ejection'
- Sunday 24th 11:00am Worship led by Helen Snider and Andrew Summers
3:00pm Causeway
- Monday 25th 1:30pm Little John's Toddler Group
3:30pm Pastoral Meeting
- Tuesday 26th 8:00pm Prayer and Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park
- Wednesday 27th 8:30pm Men's Group at the Railway Bell
- Friday 29th 8:00pm Choir Practice

July 2012

- Sunday 1st 11:00am Worship with Communion led by Tony Alderman and David Paul
- Monday 2nd 1:30pm Little John's Toddler Group
- Wednesday 4th 7:00pm Nosh and Natter at 10 Leicester Road
- Friday 6th 8:00pm Choir Practice
- Sunday 8th 11:00am Worship led by Paul Elsdon and Meg Hardie

In Memoriam Derek Morley-Slinn

The funeral for Derek Morley-Slinn took place at St John's Church on Monday 2nd April, attended by a large congregation of family and friends. North London born and bred, he remained local moving from Wood Green, where he was born, to Muswell Hill, where he grew up and practiced as a solicitor, to New Barnet. His final days were spent at Sunrise Senior Living in Elstree. Although a solicitor by profession, Derek had an early interest in photography, which continued throughout his life and, in his later life, he became a semi-professional photographer— he took many photographs for St John's—turning his house in Clifford Road into a photography studio. I remember well my first visit to Derek's home, and could not help but notice among the enlarged photographs on the walls, a series of nudes! I decided there was no point in attempting to play the prudish clergyman, and try to ignore them, so I commented: "Derek, those are stunning photographs!" Derek had a keen brain and always wanted try new things and take on new challenges, into which he threw himself with typical gusto, and did indeed excel at many things: dressage; walking and climbing; dancing; microscopy; a love of nature and bird-watching in particular; an interest in and ability to retain a large volume of obscure facts. The latter was put to good use when devising quizzes, a number of which he organised for St John's in aid of charity. An example of his penchant for obscure knowledge, and his sense of humour, was one particular General Knowledge round, which turned out to be a round consisting solely of questions about Generals! Derek first came to worship at St John's during a ministerial vacancy and was struck by the friendly welcome he received. But it was when he returned to worship for the second time—and someone remembered his name—that he there and then decided: 'This is the church for me.' He became a Church Member, and was ordained and served as an Elder, taking his turn to lead worship with Helen Snider. The screen, projector and computer that St John's now regularly uses in worship is in large part due to Derek's thorough research and implementation. Derek was an intrepid traveller, and the St John's Fellowship always greatly enjoyed the photographs and entertaining commentaries about his trips. He had a great love of music, and when one telephoned him, one frequently heard music playing in the background, and Derek would say, "Hold on just a moment while I turn the music down." He was also adventurous in his trying of different foods, becoming a very good cook. A sparkling conversationalist, one invariably came away from an encounter with Derek with a smile on one's face. A reformed alcoholic, Derek was living proof of how surrender to the power of God, combined with self-discipline, can bring redemption. We give thanks to God for Derek and commend him to God's grace and mercy. Derek's daughter, Dominique, was very close to her father. Please remember her in your prayers.



Julian Templeton