

St. John's Church Record

May - June 2013

Full reports of the Church anniversary will be included in a special edition to follow later.

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The Bridge and being Bridge-builders

From the Minister

Once upon a time, two brothers who lived on adjoining farms fell into conflict. It was the first serious rift in 40 years of farming side-by-side, sharing machinery and trading labor and goods as needed without a hitch. Then the long collaboration fell apart. It began with a small misunderstanding and it grew into a major difference and finally, it exploded into an exchange of bitter words followed by weeks of silence.

One morning there was a knock on John's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's toolbox. "I 'm looking for a few days' work," he said. "Perhaps you would have a few small jobs here and there I could help with? Could I help you?" "Yes," said the older brother. "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbor. In fact, it's my younger brother! Last week there was a meadow between us. He recently took his bulldozer to the river levee and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll do him one better. See that pile of lumber by the barn? I want you to build me a fence an 8-foot fence — so I won't need to see his place or his face anymore." The carpenter

said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me the nails and the post-hole digger and I'll be able to do a job that pleases you."

The older brother had to go to town, so he helped the carpenter get the materials ready and then he was off for the day. The carpenter worked hard all that day — measuring, sawing and nailing. About sunset when the farmer returned, the carpenter had just finished his job. The farmer's eyes opened wide, his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all. It was a bridge. A bridge that stretched from one side of the creek to the other! A fine piece of work, handrails and all! And the neighbor, his younger brother, was coming toward them, his hand outstretched. "You are quite a fellow to build this bridge after all I've said and done." The two brothers stood at each end of the bridge, and then they met in middle, taking each other's hand. They turned to see the carpenter hoist his toolbox onto his shoulder. "No, wait! Stay a few days. I've a lot of other projects for you," said the older brother. "I'd love to stay on," the carpenter said, "but I have many more bridges to build."

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Continued from p1

As I write this, I am still on a high after our wonderful Anniversary Weekend of celebrations! It was wonderful to meet people who had been associated with St John's Church in the past and who had made the effort to come back—some from as far as the Czech Republic and Scotland—to help us celebrate. Thank you to all the locals who helped to make the weekend such a great success. One of the highlights of the weekend for me was the premiere of the cantata *The Bridge*. I've included the modern-day parable above (emailed to me by Sheila Gallagher from St Peter's Church) because it narrates how a barrier can be overcome by someone willing to take the risk of being a bridge-builder.

The Bridge is a celebration of Jesus Christ as the bridge between despair and hope, between humanity and God, between earth and heaven, and between one person and another. Jesus is himself the way to reconciliation, and Jesus's way is the way of the cross. Sometimes we need something extraordinary and risky to jolt us out of our complacent separation. The Church understands Jesus's voluntary sacrifice of himself on the cross as that

which God uses to atone for human sin. Sin represents the various barriers we construct between self and God, and between self and others. When the Church says that Jesus has made atonement, we mean that he has brought at-one-ment. In other words, Jesus is a bridge who has the power to unite what was divided.

One of the single greatest challenges the Church faces today—along with political parties, trade unions, and voluntary organisations—is that *individual choice* is regarded as the unquestionable highest good. What is most valued is the freedom the individual has to make her or his own choices in life; the apotheosis of which is the supermarket and the internet, where a vast array of options await our perusal and choice and purchase. On the one hand, it is undoubtedly of great benefit to have access to such a wide range of choice; on the other hand, does the exercise of such choice bring us fulfillment? Spirituality is regarded as one more option on the menu of choices; and increasingly younger generations go elsewhere than the Church in search of it.

I think that the atomization and individualism that consumerism has spawned is already evoking a counter-reaction. People, especially the young, are concerned about the degrading effects of unrestrained consumer choice on community and the natural environment. What is needed are those willing to take risks to build bridges that unite and heal. Christians are well placed to be bridge-builders, not only because we follow one who is the Bridge, but also because churches are situated in every local community. The Winter Shelter and the foodbank are examples of initiatives that succeed in bridging the gap between the homeless and accommodated; between the hungry and the fed. St John's provides space so that those with learning difficulties can interact with others in a creative way. There are already other ideas bubbling up about other ways that we can be bridge-builders in our communities, perhaps through music or a community newsletter. Let us be willing to use our imagination and time and energy to be bridge-builders.

Julian Templeton

Men's group

St Johns Men's Group meet at 8.30pm once a month, in The Railway Bell, East Barnet Road, New Barnet. It provides an opportunity for all men with a St John's connection, to meet informally and in relaxing surroundings, to discuss anything topical, whether concerning St John's, or

not. We meet on different weekdays each month, to give everyone the chance to come along, just in case one particular weekday is inconvenient due to other engagements. When the week day falls on a Thursday, those who wish to can

join us for a Curry Meal. On Curry Evenings, we meet at 8pm. Those not wishing to eat are welcome to join us at the normal time of 8.30pm. If you know of anyone who might wish to come along, please let Malcolm Bond, or any member of the Men's Group know.



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK
"Bite Back at Hunger"
12 - 18 May 2013



Following the article in the last issue, this is to remind you that it is not too late to get involved in helping with the house-to-house collection around the local roads. Christian Aid's vision is to bring an end to poverty around the world, by tackling its root causes as well as its effects – it helps people of all faiths and none. Christian Aid works through 578 partner organisations in 48 countries, providing urgent, practical and effective assistance, giving communities the support and skills to find their own solutions to poverty.

So come and join us and help make a difference! There are many ways you can be involved: delivering and collecting envelopes, helping count the money, praying for all those taking part and for Christian Aid's partner organisations.



The annual united service will again be at St John the Baptist Parish Church at the top of Barnet Hill – all are warmly invited to attend evensong at 6.30pm on Sunday 12 May 2013.

Alison Bond
020 8440 1941

Winter Shelter Report

The Barnet Night Shelter has now come to an end for the winter season of 2012/2013. Since we finished hosting the Shelter at the beginning of March a church in Kingsbury, New Life Assembly has been hosting the Saturday evenings. Over the seven months that the Shelter has been open a total of 19 churches and 5 synagogues from all across the borough have been involved in providing shelter for 15 homeless people each evening.

Homeless Action in Barnet has worked very hard with the shelter guests to help them find more permanent accommodation in council flats, privately rented flats and hostels. Of the 28 people we, at St. Johns, cared for we know that at least 11 have been housed and 2 guests have returned to their families. Others have moved away from the area.

When a former guest is moved into accommodation Together In Barnet Night Shelter provides a starter pack of equipment and some furniture to help them get established. At the March Church Meeting we agreed to send a donation to TIBNS to help fund these starter packs. Phyllis and I thought you would all like to read the lovely letter we received in thanks, so I have copied it below.

Lesley Calder

Dear Miss Brown

TOGETHER IN BARNET NIGHT SHELTER

St John's splendid cheque for £200 came in the post today and I have great pleasure in writing to say Thank You on behalf of our guests.

As you suggested I have placed these funds in the Starter Pack account. We hope to draw on this account quite heavily during the rest of April. The Shelter closes at the end of April and Homeless Action in Barnet is doing its very best to find accommodation for our remaining guests before that date.

(continued on p4)

“On Being a Games Maker”

Report on a talk to the fellowship group by Jean & Colin Jeffries

When Jean and Colin arrived it felt as if we had been transported back to last summer, when we all rubbed shoulders with “Games Makers” on the underground, on buses and in the streets. Jean and Colin were dressed from top to toe in their Olympic uniforms, complete with multiple passes, badges and bags, along with great big smiles! Personally, I think they have lived in their uniforms ever since the Olympics!

Jean started with a question, “how many went to the Olympics”? Almost half the Fellowship had attended, one person had even attended the London Games when they were first held here in 1948!

Colin explained how they had applied in 2010, which involved a twenty page questionnaire, following a wait of many months; Jean was called for an interview. Some time afterwards Colin was also interviewed and although he thought his interview had gone badly, they were both delighted to be accepted as Games Makers. Jean and Colin were nominated as “drivers” for the Olympic family, which they described as being taxi drivers for the hundreds of staff from Olympic Federations’ and Sports Authorities from around the world.

If you had wondered why the car park at the Stratford East Westfield Centre had been closed all last summer, it was to house the 4000 BMW cars used to transport officials, VIPs and some athletes’ between the multiple Olympic locations. Colin even confessed to getting lost within the main Olympic Park, it took him (and his VIP passenger) an hour to find their way out.

Both Colin and Jean were clearly impressed by the sheer size, scale and attention to detail that lay behind the whole volunteer organisation. The location to just pick up their uniforms looked the size of a several football pitches! In spite of the huge scale, they remembered to give Jean a personalised birthday card! Most impressive.

Perhaps just as impressive is that seventy thousand volunteers had to cover their own travel costs and other expenses during the pre-Olympic training and testing sessions. Some even came from overseas, just to experience the London Olympics. During the two months of the Olympics Jean and Colin worked ten hour shifts, some of which started at 6.00 am and others which ended at 03.00 am, it was at times an exhausting schedule. Luckily they were able stay with a relative a few tube stops away.

Jean’s big moment came when she had to drive Mo Farah home late at night, after he had won a gold medal! She happened to mention this a few (hundred) times and confesses to be Mo’s biggest fan. Both Jean and Colin managed to avoid any “incidents” with the cars, although some drivers had a number of speeding fines and others managed to write off six BMWs.

When asked why he had made such a commitment, Colin said “It will be the only opportunity I will ever have to represent my country in an international sporting event”, which I felt summed up their huge contribution in a typically, self deprecating and understated, British way.

(continued from p3) The guests’ starter packs have been most interesting this year. As I am sure you know, we try to ensure that the pack is tailored to the individual need. One ex guest who is a chef chose good knives and a wok! Others specify a microwave and others have more basic needs like a bed.

Please make sure that everyone is aware of our gratitude and that the funds will be put to very good use.

Warmest good wishes to you all.

Notes of Church Meeting Held 21 April 2013

“Fit for Purpose”

Q1 How can we make the gospel fit for purpose?

The gospel message brings liberation, primarily by bringing God's forgiveness. But to those who feel no need to be forgiven, might the gospel be better directed toward their lack of purpose and meaning, for example?

1.1 The question should be:

“How can we pass the message on to more people?” Should we use Facebook and other social media in the way Potters Bar Church does?

The “forgiveness” aspect of the Gospel may be a second step for many. Faith enables a more meaningful and better life.

Q2 How can we, as a congregation, be fit for purpose?

St John's is very good at welcoming and including people. Despite this, we are getting smaller and more aged. How

might we appeal to a wider range of people?

2.1 Words in hymns are no longer Fit for Purpose. Music is a vital part of church life. Maybe we should open a music school. The appearance of the church can be improved.

Lots of notices outdated
Many not to do with the church

Needs some “branding” about notices

2.2 Perhaps we should have a different time for our Sunday service. Maybe a “Messy Church at the same time. Set up an evening group. More of Julian and Georgie going in to local schools.

2.3 As many as possible to invite their neighbours to “The Bridge” on Friday.

Q3 Should we consider joining with others to be “Fit for Purpose”

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Congregationalists and Presbyterians in New Barnet who had the vi-

sion and determination to unite to become St John's Church, Is it time for us to be considering something similar with other local churches – URC or other?

3.1 Quoting an elder (Roz) “We don't have a front door” (Meaning that we don't front onto a busy road). Maybe we should use another church for certain events. Yes, have discussion with other congregations.

3.2 Definitely do more with others. We had a good experience of doing so with the winter shelter and the foodbank. Have a social event at the end of the winter shelter. There used to be a valuable Churches Together in addition to the Justice and Peace Group which may be one of the few existing ecumenically groups. Could Churches Together be revived?

3.3 Used to have clergy breakfasts. This could be a way of reviving Churches Together? Could people with additional views please email Julian or send letter to church record?

THE VICAR'S CAT

After his cat got stuck up a tree, the vicar mounted a rescue operation. He climbed a ladder, tied one end of the rope to a narrow trunk, and the other end to the tow bar of his car. He gently drove forward and the inevitable occurred: the rope snapped, catapulting (sorry!) the cat into the sky. No more was heard of the cat until a few weeks later. The vicar went to visit a member of his church, a young mum and her little boy. In her front room, lying on the rug was the vicar's cat. “How did you find such a lovely cat?” asked the vicar innocently. “You'll never believe it”, replied the mother. “My Johnny's been asking for a cat for months. In the end I got so tired of it I asked him come out into the garden (I was hanging out the washing) and pray. ‘Dear Jesus’ we prayed, ‘please send us a pussy cat’. And you'll never guess what happened next, Vicar...”

St John's Fellowship Outing – The Paper Trail Project, Hemel Hempstead Wednesday 19th June 2013 – Meeting at 1.30 pm.

For this year's Fellowship outing we are very pleased to confirm that we will be going to The Paper Trail Project, near Hemel Hempstead.

Frogmore Paper Mill is the very heart of The Paper Trail project and the 'jewel in its crown'. So why is this site so unique? - It was at Frogmore that the world's first machine for making a continuous roll of paper was built (the birth of paper's industrial revolution). The primary objective of The Paper Trail is to conserve and restore Frogmore as a working paper mill using a 'Fourdrinier' paper machine which dates back to 1895 and to make this unique industrial heritage accessible to the public. A tour round Frogmore Paper Mill is fascinating - it is almost like walking back in time to the Victorian era.

This paper-mill launched the industrial revolution for paper 200 years ago, and remains a unique centre for innovation and sustainability based around paper media, including exhibitions and presentations on the unique history of papermaking in the Gade Valley from the archives of John Dickson Stationery Co, The British Paper Company and Dacorum Heritage Trust.



Frogmore Paper Mill

We have arranged guided tours for the Fellowship, which will include:

- Tea and biscuits on arrival
- A talk, demonstration and the chance to make your own paper
- A talk, demonstration and chance to do type setting
- A guided tour of the site and the opportunity to see the 100+ year old paper making machines in use.
- Time to wander around the site and to see the other exhibitions
- As an optional treat we can take a 30-40 minute canal boat cruise on the Grand Union canal

The tour takes approx 2.15 hrs, or 3.00 hrs with the canal cruise. The cost will be £9.00 per head, with an additional £3.00 for the canal boat ride.

If you want to know more: [http://](http://www.thepapertrail.org.uk/default.asp?v_DOC_ID=876)

www.thepapertrail.org.uk/default.asp?v_DOC_ID=876

Location & Parking

The Paper Trail is on the outskirts of Hemel Hempstead – approx 20 miles, 30 min by car, from East Barnet.

Frogmore Paper Mill
Fourdrinier Way
Apsley,
Hemel Hempstead
Herts HP3 9RY
T: 01442 234600

We recommend parking in the nearby public car park in Durants Hill Road (30p per hour) Limited free disabled parking available at the Mill – Please notify us if you have a disabled badge.

Calendar of Church Events

May 2013

Sunday 5th	11:00am	Worship with Communion led by Tony Alderman
Sunday 12th	11:00am	Worship led by Richard Harvey and Brenda Sandford
	3:00pm	Causeway
	8:00pm	Soul Food led by Rev Julian Templeton
Monday 13th	1:30pm	Little John's Toddler Group
Tuesday 14th	8:00pm	Elders' Meeting
Wednesday 15th	8:00pm	St. John's Fellowship, Simon Brown A Rocha (<i>A Christian Conservation Charity</i>)
Sunday 19th	11:00am	Worship led by Rev Julian Templeton followed by Church Meeting
Monday 20th	1:30pm	Little John's Toddler Group
Wednesday 22nd	3.45-5.15pm	4Weds4Kids
Thursday 23rd	8.00pm	Men's Group curry evening at the Railway Bell
Sunday 26th	11:00am	Worship led by Tony Alderman and David Paul
Tuesday 28th	8.00pm	Prayer and Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park
Wednesday 29th	8:00 pm	Junior Church Leaders at 37 Greenhill Park

June 2013

Sunday 2nd	11:00am	Worship with Communion led by Rev Julian Templeton
Monday 3rd	1:30pm	Little John's Toddler Group
Wednesday 5th	7:00pm	Nosh and Natter at 10 Leicester Road
Sunday 9th	11:00am	Worship led by Paul Elsdon
	8:00pm	Soul Food led by Rev Julian Templeton
Monday 10th	1:30pm	Little John's Toddler Group
Tuesday 11th	8:00pm	Elders' Meeting
Sunday 16th	11:00am	Worship led by Rev Julian Templeton
Monday 17th	1:30pm	Little John's Toddler Group
Wednesday 22nd	1:30pm	Fellowship Outing
Sunday 23rd	11:00am	Worship led by Helen Snider and Andrew Summers
Monday 24th	8:30pm	Men's Group at the Railway Bell.
Tuesday 25th	8:00pm	Prayer and Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park
Sunday 30th	11:00am	Worship led by Alison Bond and Alison Cousins
	3.00pm	Causeway

July 2013

Monday 1st	1:30pm	Little John's Toddler Group
Wednesday 3rd	7:00pm	Nosh and Natter at 10 Leicester Road
Sunday 7th	11:00am	Worship with Communion led by Rev Julian Templeton

CHARITIES UPDATE



Faith and Justice in Action

Part of our regular giving for the past few years has gone to Commitment for Life, which is the world development programme of the United Reformed Church. It celebrated 20 years of faith in action in 2012 and encourages participating churches to take action, pray and give for people across the world but especially in our four partner countries of Bangladesh, Jamaica, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory and Zimbabwe. It works in partnership with Christian Aid and The World Development Movement raising over half a million pounds a year from contributing churches.

St John's has had a particular focus on one of the partner organisations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories called the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC). A mother in the West Bank describes how support from PARC has helped her to turn her family's life around. Khitam Sbeih lives near Jenin – the change in her life started when she heard about the help that PARC was providing to local people by offering low-interest loans to start small businesses. "When I saw this it encouraged me to start my own business," she says. "I thought 'I can do that!'" Khitam used her loan to buy her first sheep and since then she has not looked back. "I used to sit at home and not do anything, and now I am a business-woman!" She now has a herd of sheep from which she produces cheese, milk and yoghurt; she also sells honey and wax from the bees she tends and maintains a grove of citrus fruit trees. As well as providing Khitam with a loan, PARC also provides advice on marketing her produce and helped her to build a well and irrigation system for her citrus trees. And the local network maintained by PARC provides Khitam with plenty of opportunities to exchange ideas and information with other businesswomen in the area.



The Occupied Palestinian Territories are often in the news for the wrong reasons, so it is good to hear positive stories such as this. It is only through our regular support to Commitment for Life that organisations such as PARC can continue to help and transform the lives of people like Khitam. PARC also helps the many olive growers of the region – you can support them by buying the Zaytoun olive oil sold on our Traidcraft stall.

Alison Bond

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