

† STOMP

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AGAZINE

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THE PARISH OF ST MARY & ST PAUL
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

CONTENTS

From the Editor	3
From the Rector	4
UK Langa Township Pre-School Trust	8
Seasons that Change	10
The Mission of the Ethiopian Eunuch	12
Art in the Nave	14
Parochial Church Council 17 May 2021	19
The Exodus and the Sinai Peninsula	20
St James the Least of All	22
Unreliable Memories of Hemel H'sted	24
In the Church Warden's Garden	25
A Pentecostal Weekend	26
Hanging Basket	28
Readers' Comments	31
The Parish of St Mary & St Paul	32

COVER PICTURE

At the time of the publication of the 2020 Spring edition of StoMP the rules and regulations regarding the first Covid-19 lockdown were beginning to bite. I chose the picture for the front cover of that edition (see page 30) to illustrate some thoughts about how we were all missing the hugs and handshakes and other face-to-face contacts that were 'banned'.

Thankfully, some of the restrictions have been eased and we have begun to enjoy closer contacts with our friends and loved-ones.

I suspect in our church services we shall be sharing a socially distanced Peace or waving at a web-cam for some little time yet.

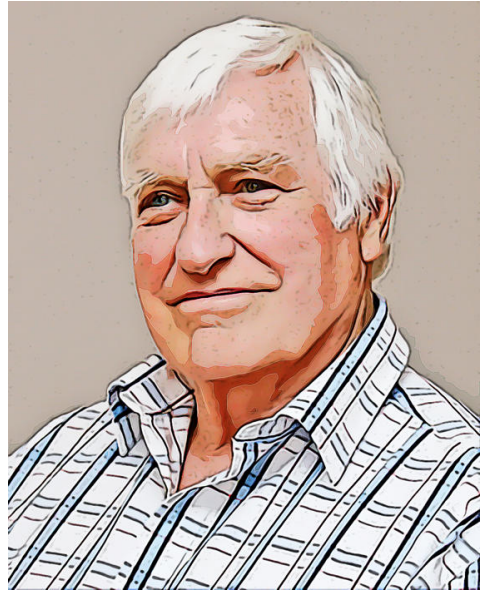
I've chosen for this edition's cover an illustration on the same theme as for last Spring's - the restored contacts between grandparents and their children must be bringing great joy to many young and elderly hearts alike.

Jeff Wallis

FROM THE EDITOR

The interview with Andrew Williams this month reminds me of how these interviews started some five years ago. Looking to my first editorial in June 2016 there was a reference to ‘a personality profile’, and in that issue featured under the title ‘Editor’s Interview’ was a piece on Norma Howie. Having been at funerals of people I thought to have known quite well I have realised with regret I have known hardly anything about them. Quoting from the editorial in the September 2016 issue, ‘In my mind was that going to funerals one suddenly learns so much about people who had passed away. This seemed to be a shame. My thought was that being together within a community, it is good to know something about each other’s stories whilst we are still around’

Since 2016 there have been twenty one interviews, the first with Norma our Office Administrator and the last with Andrew the Leader of the Borough Council. We try to alternate between St Mary and St Paul’s. It is a privilege to sit over a cup of coffee for an hour or more, questioning and answering. The focus is usually the same, to gain a sense of a person’s roots, of early and later life happenings and of key memories and

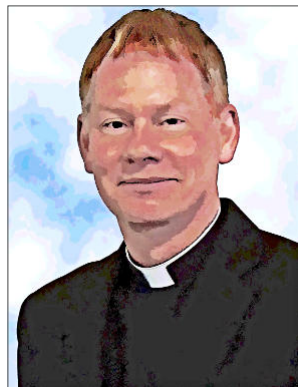


attitudes. Each interview takes its own course becoming more of a chat about reminiscences as the time goes by. I scribble notes as the description takes shape. Usually the interview is written up the same day and sent as a draft for comment, correction and additions or deletions. What is finally published is what has been agreed.

The privilege and the responsibility for me is to receive the facts and thoughts of individuals who are going through life and who are happy to share these with me and the readers of STOMP.

Gordon Gaddes

FROM THE RECTOR



Over recent weeks I've been looking at some of the icons that were given to me by Ynis Richardson last year when she was having a sort out. I used some of these for a WhatsApp Group series on icons of the Most Holy Trinity in the lead up to Trinity Sunday this year. Explaining the doctrine of the Trinity in words is nigh on impossible so it was a good opportunity for us to try and visualise this great mystery of our faith.

There are such a variety of Orthodox icons that a study of them could be long, in depth and - I feel - very fruitful,

but I am aware that for many people the icon as used in worship in the Orthodox tradition is quite impenetrable and can seem alien to English church culture. Sadly, a bit like meditation and silence, the Jesus Prayer and the Rosary, these practices need time and application to become meaningful and we often lack the discipline or motivation to pursue this in our tradition.

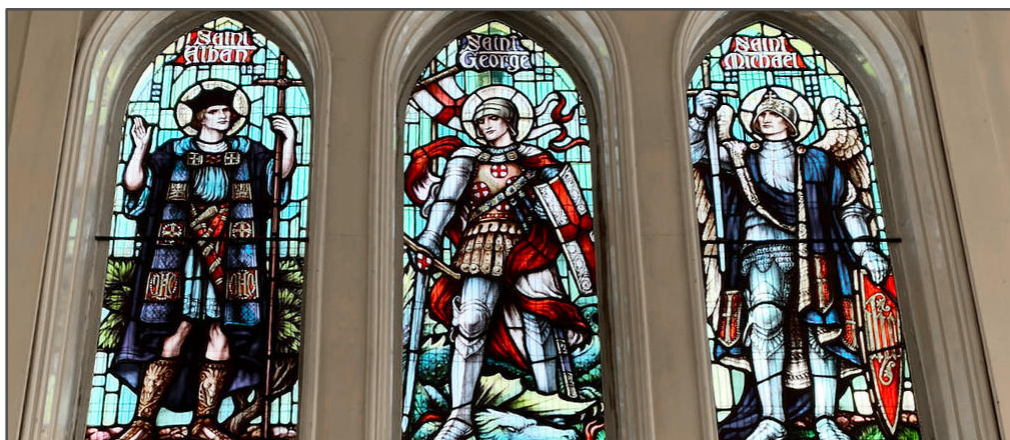
So in this edition of StoMP I want us to start to take a look at an artistic representation which is much more familiar to us and also very popular, although often ignored or taken for granted; that of the Stained Glass Window!



I have picked a window from St Mary's which is in the South Transept and the group or 'trptych' of windows in St Paul's, at the east end, behind the altar. There will be a Zoom study and discussion on each of these windows following the now regular Tuesday evening social catch-up (probably on July 6th and 13th but further details will appear in the Sunday Bulletin shortly).

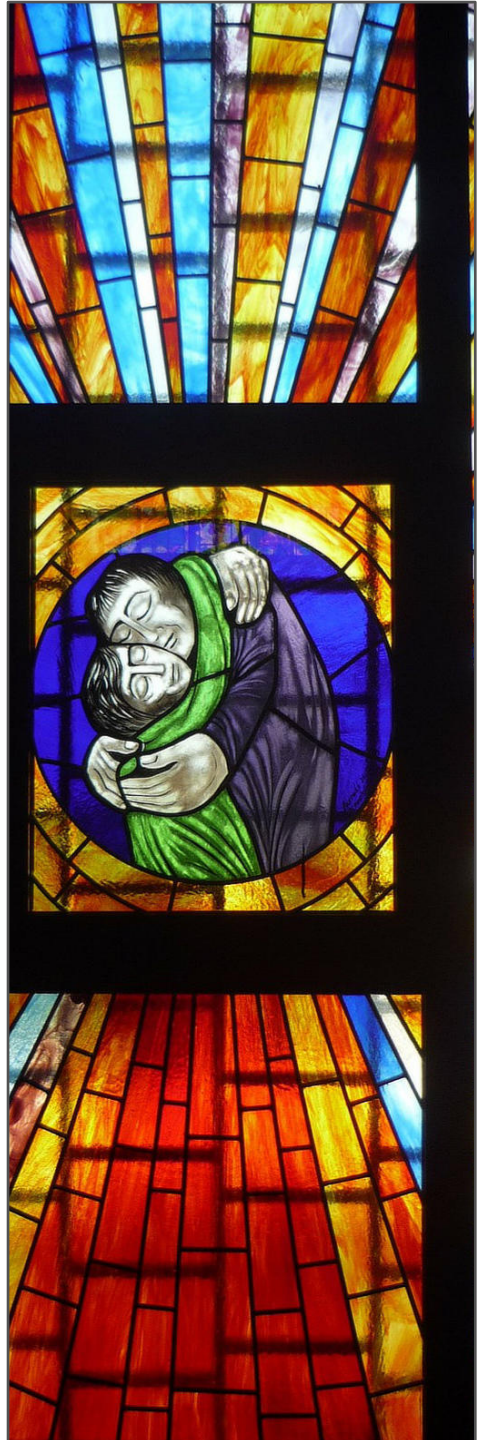
In preparation for us studying these windows I want to give a little bit of background.

Stained glass has been made for thousands of years with the Egyptians, Phoenicians and early Romans producing coloured glass objects. It was in monasteries that these practices came together in the form that we understand and see today, reaching its height in the cathedrals and churches of the Middle Ages when the stories portrayed in windows came to be known as part of the 'Poor Man's Bible'.



So the role of stained glass in our churches is very important historically as well as artistically. When we show children around our churches, like recently when Yew Tree School year 2 visited St Paul's, we remind them that in times past people could not access the internet for information or watch educational television and films, also they were illiterate and the books were not available to them, so to find out about the great stories of faith they could look at the pictures in windows whilst the story was told to them. This allowed individual interpretation and understanding in the journey of faith similar to the use of the Orthodox icon as a window into heaven and an educational tool.

It is worth us reflecting on how important imagery in architecture, carving, statues and sculpture, wall paintings and icons – as well as stained glass – was to our predecessors. Prior to the Reformation, which largely stripped images from our places of worship, our churches would have been a riot of colour and an assault on all the senses as bells rang, incense burned and the glorious chanting of monks and religious filled the space. The reformers not only removed these items of 'superstition' but by installing pews and refocussing worship on the 'Word' (as found in Holy Scripture) they installed more prominent pulpits, lecterns and forever corrupted the layout of our buildings in the process.





As this is the way many of us have been brought up in this country we have become indoctrinated in the use of white-wash and harsh light, dark heavy wood and the endless use of words in worship that keeps us from the power of silence and meditation.

If you have never sat in front of a stained glass window for a time and contemplated the changing colours as the weather and light inform it, as former worshippers would have done, then it is something I can highly recommend for your spiritual edification. Also, as with all art, the depiction of the particular saint or biblical scene reflects highly on the time it was produced so we can learn something not only about what our predecessors felt about this story or image but we can also find how it reflects our own understanding of the image and art.

As we approach this year's Art-in-the-Nave with anticipation, might it be time for us to consider the art OF the nave that we have available to us every day?

Have you looked in detail and teased out the story depicted in the stained glass window we are featuring from the south transept at Saint Mary's or perhaps that particular window has completely passed you by? Have you considered how the saints in the St Paul's triptych are shown, what they wear and what they symbolise?

Have a think and join us on Zoom to explore more fully these great windows.

Finally, like the children and visitors who gaze at these windows in wonder, please don't take them for granted but embrace them as an aid to education and an insight in to glory.

With every blessing to you all.

Canon John



UK LANGA TOWNSHIP PRE-SCHOOL TRUST

To mark this year's 10th Anniversary of LTPT a project was undertaken three years ago for the radical improvement of the pre-school at Nomonde. The final stage of the project was to clear out old playground equipment; to introduce a fenced off artificially grassed area and a carport style sun shade for toddlers; to re-introduce and replant the garden; and to install suitable educational and play equipment.

The advent of the pandemic caused the cancellation of all of our fund raising events - a serious threat to the completion of this project.

Happily, a late surge in donations since Christmas has enabled the project to go ahead in two stages.

Nomonde Playground Stage 1

Construction work has now been completed, following work in stages as money became available from mid - February to early April. The photos show the progress and include the very prominent jungle gym donated by the VUSA Rugby and Learning Academy and another purchased by LTPT.

This has been the responsibility of Clarence Petersen Building Projects supported by Clarence's wife, Nadia.

Clarence's leadership and commitment to the job have been greatly appreciated.



Levelling the uneven play area surface in preparation for artificial grass.



The construction team, who would otherwise have been unemployed, recruited by Clarence Petersen Building Projects, responsible for the work.



Children line up to enjoy the newly-installed 'Jungle Gym.'

Clarence writes,

'COVID 19 has had a devastating effect on construction businesses and general employment. For months without work if you are a breadwinner the stress and daily struggle are devastating on you as a person.

'Lockdown has not made it easier so when I get work I employ those in need with the skill to get the work done.

'Township employees sit next to the road waiting to be taken on 'piece jobs' such as gardening or general labour on sites. The dedication and commitment of work they produce shows you that they want to be employed again. When I create opportunities such as this it makes me sleep better to know another household has something to eat during this pandemic!'

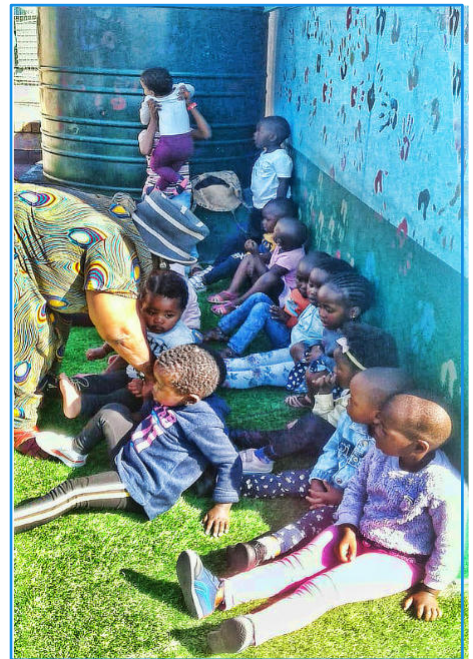
Nomonde Playground Stage 2

To complete the playground's final stage involves: removing redundant play equipment and re-surfacing the area; and erecting a sun-shielding carport. The cost will be £9,000 and our hope is to commission the work to be completed in October. Commitments for this to date have been received for £4,000 and we have pencilled in a profit of £2,000 from pending fund raising events. This leaves us with £3,000 to find.

We are very grateful to the congregations of St Mary's and St Paul's who have consistently supported the work of UK Langa Township Pre-School Trust and have helped us to continue the work in these difficult times.



Work pending: Redundant climbing frame to be removed and ground area to be levelled and artificial grass laid.



The plan includes building a carport style shelter to provide toddlers a respite from the blazing sun.

SEASONS THAT CHANGE

Well, what a difference this spring has been to last year. Last year we had warm days from beginning of March onwards to May compared with this year when March was cold and very dry and April into May was wet and cold. Warmth didn't arrive until the beginning of June. Our plants have had to adapt and tolerate all these conditions and as a consequence our growing season becomes later. I forgot to mention that in February we had perma frost – frost that remains in the ground for several days, this caused the loss of several plants including my perennial salvias.

Well, we move from spring into summer when it is now safe to plant out tender plants from the beginning of June. I always find that Begonias give a good show whatever the weather. Begonia semperflorans, dwarf and compact in mixed colours with green and bronze foliage are ideal for edging a border. For tubs I grow Tuber hybrids, strong growing in mixed colours that again are tolerant to varied weather conditions. Other summer bedding I find reliable is Impatiens New Guinea, they produce strong plants in a range of colours and are resistant to Impatiens wilt.

If you have a shady area Fuschias may be an option. My three choices would be, Lyles Unique with white sepals and red corolla, this is an upright grower and free flowering; Celia Smedley, large free flowering, strong upright growth with dark pink sepals and red corolla. Lastly, Carmel Blue, most unusual with single long white sepals and a corolla of deep blue.

Looking for interest going into summer, Buddleja globosa is a favourite of mine with its clusters of round, bright orange flowers produced on slender stems. This Buddleja is different to the more common Davidii in that it flowers in late June and pruning must be done immediately after flowering. Davidii is pruned in March.





Amelanchier in May



early berries



red tinted in June/July

Two small trees that are of interest during late spring into summer are, Amelanchier, a large shrub/small tree producing delicate creamy white flowers in May followed by clusters of red tinted small berries in June/July. In Autumn it produces colours of yellow and orange. Eucryphia x nymansensis is an evergreen tree with dark green serrated leaves and clusters of medium sized creamy white flowers. This small tree flowers in August at a time when not many other trees do.

I hope you find this interesting, these are my choices for giving varied interest over a season.

Roger Sygrave

The Mission of the Ethiopian Eunuch



The Baptism of the Chamberlain of Queen Candace of Ethiopia - Attributed to Breughel the Younger 1601 - 1678

In philosophy the popular usage of the term deconstructionism is ‘the critical dismantling of tradition and traditional modes of thought’ (Encyclopaedia Britannica). What would a deconstructionist make of bible stories, of the Exodus, of the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts, of Cornelius of Caesari in Acts, and say the martyrdoms of St Maurice and St Alban? Are these stories, myths or truths?

As an example let us take the story of the Eunuch, a subject of Canon John’s sermon recently. Acts 8:26-40, referred to the eunuch as an emissary, ‘an Ethiopian man, a high official of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians’. He sits in his chariot reading the bible scroll; Philip the Evangelist approaches and is asked to explain the text. The eunuch is converted and baptised. This is seen as evidence of the conversion of gentiles to Christianity.

Destructionism would dismantle this story and would be likely to see it as a self-serving fable fed to the credulous. A constructionist, or maybe a positivist, would then put it together again but in the context of reasonable proof and credible deduction. Ethiopia did exist and included South Sudan. Christianity had early beginnings there and was made the official Ethiopian religion in the third century CE. Today, of a population of 111 million, 63% are Christian and 34% Muslim. Nearly half of the Christians are in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church the roots of which are in the highlands and trace back to the first century; most of the rest are Protestants. Candace was the name for empress, and Ethiopia had a series of fighting warrior empresses, between 260BCE and 320CE. Alexander the Great, entering Egypt in 332BCE is said to have avoided fighting the Ethiopian Candace at that time, for fear of being beaten by a woman. Eunuchs did exist in the royal courts, presumably to safeguard both the royal women and the harems. Our modern constructionist would go further. The distance in air miles between Addis Ababa and Jerusalem would be identified and also the most direct modern road route, respectively 1,559 and 2,146 miles.

Image: Wikimedia Commons - public domain

A map would be looked at and the road would trace north eastwards to Port Sudan, a short ferry journey would be followed by road along the western side of the Red Sea, then the Sinai Peninsula would be crossed to reach Jerusalem. 2000 years ago it is possible that the journey by chariot would be much longer; would it have traced northwards, winding along the Nile valley before turning eastwards to cross northern Sinai?

Putting some logic to the issue it could be concluded that Candace sent her emissary to Jerusalem to find out more about Judaism and about the early Christian embrace of gentiles. The journey there and back would have taken many months. It could not have included just the eunuch and a chariot, there would have been a retinue and a baggage train. It would have been well-financed and it would have brought back the good news. It is likely that this story in Acts is true and that the mission was a factor in the Christianisation of Ethiopia nearly 2000 years ago.

The question of the hazardous journey across the Sinai Peninsula in those times is discussed in a separate article on page 20

Gordon Gaddes

ART IN THE NAVE 28th- 30th AUGUST 2021

Vibrant Festival of Visual Arts Returns to Hemel Hempstead Old Town



Art in the Nave 2021 will focus a bright spotlight on the visual arts when it opens at the beautiful, historic Church of St Mary's Hemel Hempstead Old Town, on Saturday 28th August.

The three-day festival, from 28th to 30th August (Bank Holiday), represents a major event in the arts calendar with an Exhibition and Sale of works by over 35 artists.

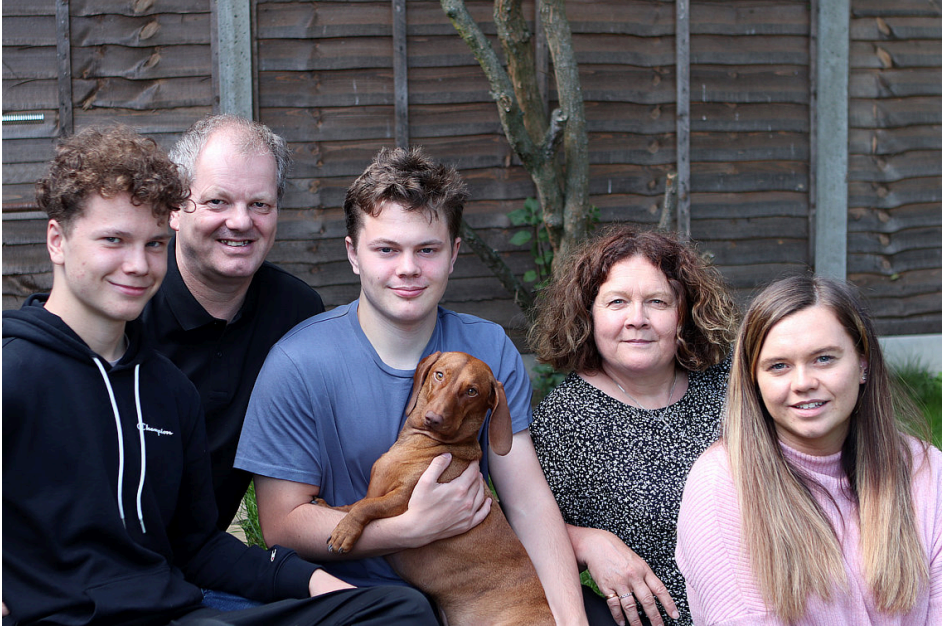
Art lovers attending the exhibition will be able to view and purchase a wide selection of excellent paintings, sculpture, textiles, glass, ceramics, silverware and hand-made jewellery. Art in the Nave offers something for everyone and is a great opportunity for a family day out.

Facilities will include light refreshments teas, coffees and a licensed bar. Entrance will be £1 for adults but free for anyone under sixteen. Donations from the proceeds raised at the event will support The Hospice of St Francis, The Dacorum Emergency Night Shelter and the UK Langa Township Preschool Trust.

For further information on any aspect of Art in the Nave 2021 including artist bookings contact: Brian Doran on 07926 027855

Email: artinthenave@gmail.com or visit our website www.artinthenave.uk

EDITOR'S INTERVIEW: ANDREW WILLIAMS



(l to r) Haydn, Andrew, Ralph, Belinda and Courtenay + Loki

Early Years

Now aged 57, Andrew comes from a long established Hemel Hempstead family tracing back to the 1920s when his grandfather left London, buying a bungalow to be converted into a small general store. The story of the family over three generations is a fascinating tale of changing circumstances and human adaptability. Within an area

with a radius of 500 square yards stretching across from the Midland Road through to what is now Queensway, Grandfather variously had a general store, a home delivery service based on a horsebox, a coach for hire, the Handpost Farm, and several properties within that area. Income in some years would be supplemented by going apple picking!



The Williams family shop and home now sold and awaiting redevelopment

A particularly noticeable hub of family activity for nearly 90 years was the Williams shop and house on the corner of the St Paul's and Lower Adeyfield Roads, (pictured above).

The business was taken over by Andrew's father in the 1960s who added the sale and restoration of furniture and Andrew leaving Mountbatten School at the age of 16, and having helped Dad earlier in his spare time, continued to work there full time until the age of 23.

The story reminded me of the thought of a friend of mine, 'if you can't make money within 12 miles of where you live, you won't make money anywhere!' Here we have the story of a multi - generational family living a life and getting by over nearly 90 years in an area measuring about 1000 yards from one side to the other. A

particularly important aspect was the coming of the New Town, when the ownership of land and property needed for development was a definite bonus to the family.

Local Politics in Dacorum . .

A major turning point in Andrew's life was the general election in 1979. Having enjoyed current affairs at Mountbatten School he was realising an interest in politics. He joined the young conservatives at the age of 18 and five years later in 1987 aged 23 he was elected as a Dacorum Borough Councillor for the Central Ward, a seat he held for 20 years until boundary changes saw him move to Boxmoor, which he vacated in 2017 to fight for and fill a seat in Adeyfield East. Since 1997 he has been Leader of the Conservative Group, and Leader of the Council since 1999.

This makes him the second longest-serving Conservative leader of a district council in the UK. Leaders generally don't last longer than six or seven years! Such longevity is a tribute to staying power and the ability to establish a consensus by taking the group together in agreed policy directions.

. . . and at County Hall

From 1987 to 2009 Andrew worked mainly for Securicor, finally for G4S. Having married Belinda in 2001, committed to politics and concerned about the work/life balance he and his wife decided that if he were to be elected also as a County Councillor, although losing income, he would leave security.

This he did when elected in 2009 and this May he was elected again for a 4-year term. To avoid conflict of interest, as his preference is to take the lead in Dacorum rather than the County, he has not headed up major political policy committees at County Hall although his general policy interest at the County is the environment. His main responsibility has been to chair the Audit Committee from 2013-2017, and he has recently been appointed to chair the County Pension Committee, which covers 146 affiliated schemes.

At St Mary's and St Paul's

We turned to church and faith. Andrew did not come from a 'Christian family'. His Sunday School days ended when aged 6, heading from the old St Mary's Church Hall for the monthly service in St Mary's, he ran ahead and hid behind a tree. He was reported to his Dad as lost and lost he was to the church for the next 32 years. Then, with the birth of twin sons Haydn and Ralph he had a sort of revelation. It was the overwhelming sense of responsibility and the sense that there must be something bigger to make sense of life. He had been baptised in St Paul's in 1964, now he took confirmation guided by Peter Cotton and Chandy Perera. Worshipping for a time at St Mary's, around ten years ago he came up the hill to St Paul's and has been active with us ever since.

Andrew's Special Interest - Local Council Housing

We then turned back to Dacorum Borough affairs. Andrew's particular interest, almost a mission one might say, has been council housing and affordable housing. Absorbing the New Town stock at one time the Borough had around 21,000 units. Through sales the stock has dropped to 10,000 but the Borough is the second largest District Council owner of Council houses.

In the difficult situation of local authority financing, the interplay between central government and local authorities on housing stock rent income, the spend on renovation and the need to find new affordable housing Dacorum Borough has walked a tight rope. The aim has been to protect the stock from being taken over by a trust or another body. For example the Borough was offered £60 million for its housing stock, a derisory average of £6,000 per unit. This would have been a significant loss of value to the community and would have placed tenants in a completely new relationship with an unrepresentative body.

In 2012 councils were given the opportunity to regain control of housing; Dacorum did so borrowing £354 million which it is repaying over 40 years to buy itself out of the national housing system. As a Leader of the Borough Council who spoke on these matters at a Labour Party annual conference in the early 70s and as a Councillor in the late 80's deeply worried about the sale of Council houses without the stock being replaced by new social housing under Borough control, I found myself much in sympathy with Andrew in his aims and the dilemmas faced.

The end result seems to be that the housing stock remains under the control of the Borough and, however minimal in terms of real need, there are at least 100 new units being built each year. The key constraint however, to give some numbers, is if a unit is sold for £100k, to replace it may cost £200k, but the Borough can only use £60k from the sale as only 30% of the cost of the new property can be funded from the sale proceeds, the rest has to come from other sources usually borrowing.

Family Life

Andrew and Belinda now live in Woodhall Farm, their 27 year old daughter lives locally and works in marketing. Their 18-year old twin sons Haydn and Ralph have just started university but in the pandemic are at home much of the time. Belinda runs her own online business.

Andrew, a strong family-oriented man, a non-smoker and an alcohol minimalist, is in the heart of local politics. Aged 23 he joined the Council when single, then later marrying, now with a wife and three children, the wonder is that he has stayed the course, a very rare thing in local political life.

Gordon Gaddes 05/21

REPORT ON THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17 MAY 2021

One meeting has been held since the APCM, attended by 13 members. This article is a summary of the main items reviewed and decisions taken.

Appointments following the APCM

- Lay Co Chair: Rosina Gaddes
- PCC Secretary: Jenny Bowes
- Deputy Wardens for St Mary's: Norma Podmore, Andrew Darby
- Deputy Warden for St Paul's: Malcolm Taylor
- Sidespeople for St Mary's: Sheila Barton, Michael Boardman, Jenny Bowes, Yvonne Doran, David Gambling, Catherine Irving, Catherine Lindsay, Norman Spink, Roger Sygrave
- Sidespeople for St Paul's: Geoff Cottrell, Julie Harkness, Seonaid King, Fergus Maclean, Pauline Picton, Ann Richardson, Jo Whittington

Committees

Two new committees had recently been established to decide on the projects for the remainder of the Salisbury bequest. The Committees now reporting to the PCC are:-

- Finance Committee
- St Mary's Fabric Committee
- St Paul's Fabric Committee
- Legacy Committee

Salisbury Bequest

The Legacy Committee had selected four projects from the suggestions submitted by parishioners. Improving audio-visual facilities in both churches was a priority. Any remaining funds would be spent on replacement of the roofs at St Paul's and removal of the pews in the north aisle of St Mary's to allow a social area. The fourth item, installing heating at St Paul's, was under review pending more urgent action on the roof. The PCC gave formal approval.

100 Club

Authority to continue to run the 100 Club Emergency Repair Fund was given to the Club Administrator.

Jenny Bowes
PCC Secretary

THE EXODUS AND THE SINAI PENINSULA

This story arises with my brain entwining around the event of the Eunuch in Acts 8 described in my other article in this issue of SToMP , but it is a separate story and it is about the Exodus, the second book of the Old Testament. It appears that modern research, involving the archaeologist, the climatologist and the geographer casts doubt that the Sinai Peninsula could have been crossed by the tribe of Israel led by Moses. The suggestion seems to be that this story captures the return of Jewish people from captivity in Babylon, not from captivity in Egypt. The contribution I have to such a debate is stimulated by an article in the Guardian Weekend dated 20 March 2021. This is about the Sinai Peninsula, how it is and an incredible proposal to re-green it. ▷



Photos: Sinai peninsula today - The town of Dahab and Coloured Canyon, two popular tourist attractions.



*Sinai peninsula -
Google Earth*



The first photo is a satellite shot of the peninsula and you will note the network of dry valleys heading northwards towards a dead end. The hypothesis is that Sinai sometime was green and that deforestation and grazing by goats and sheep led to the degradation of the environment. Particularly in the north the loss of the wetlands and soil desiccation led to massive silting of Lake Bardawil and a major change in climatic conditions involving desertification to the South. The second photo shows the re-greened peninsula as envisaged by the Weather Makers.

This story and the forward looking plans of the Egyptian Government to re-green Sinai raises the question: was there a greener, more watery route for Moses and his people to cross over from Egypt to Judea, even if it took the prescribed 40 years?

The driving force to re-green is Ties van der Hoeven a Dutch 'holistic engineer' and his firm the Weather

Makers. Quoting from the Guardian article, 'Within a couple of decades the Sinai could be transformed from a hot, dry barren desert into a green haven teeming with life'. There would be a change in the local weather pattern and wind directions, more rain and beneficial effects wider than just the Sinai Peninsula.

To counter any pessimism about this vision, we can turn to the highly successful greening over twenty years of the Loess plateau of North China, an area the size of France. A dry, barren and heavily eroded region has been greened in a remarkable way.

So back to the Hebrew Exodus out of Egypt. Some students think that Sinai's Lake Bardawil is near the Fourth Station of the Exodus called Piherirot. Food for thought!

GG 17 May 2021

ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL

The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from Uncle Eustace, an elderly Anglo-Catholic vicar to Darren his nephew, a low-church curate, recently ordained.



On the best way to run a church council meeting

The Rectory

St. James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

Thank you for inviting me to speak at your church council yesterday. I began to suspect that my theme of why Eusebius's dislike of Sabellianism led to his condemnation at the Council of Antioch in 324 was a little misjudged, when the only question I was asked after my lecture was if Eusebius was on Facebook.

I never realised how much technology is needed these days just to discuss church matters. It seemed that everyone had brought their laptop, so they could refer to all the diocesan briefing documents and reports that you mentioned. I've been in the diocese 40 years and have never heard of most of those papers. But then I find it too easy to delete the diocesan mailings, unread, with a click of my mouse.

Our church meetings are far more traditional. Since the church floor seems to have been carved out of permafrost, our meetings circulate round members' houses. This introduces a nice element of competition, as each host tries to outdo the previous one in the baking of cakes.

Meetings at Colonel Drinkwater's – a more inappropriate name one cannot imagine – are the shortest, since we are always promised wine once the meeting is over. It is remarkable how unanimity is achieved on every subject within minutes, and nothing appears under “any other business”.

Mrs Eddington never troubles us with minutes, largely because she can rarely read the notes she takes. She just shares with us whatever she *can* decipher at our next meeting. Last month, she accidentally brought her shopping list instead, and so read that out. There followed a lively discussion on whether carrots from our local shop were better than those at the supermarket. When it was found out she intended to use them in a venison casserole, endless recipes were keenly debated.

We always leave our church meetings well fed, up to date with village gossip, and totally untroubled by any church council business. And the lack of any minutes ensures that I can then make all the decisions myself, between meetings. I think you will find our system has much to be commended.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

MORE UNRELIABLE MEMORIES OF HEMEL HEMPSTEAD



Image: Wikimedia Commons

In my previous article I mentioned walking to church. Perhaps I could have added some of the shops etc that we passed on the way, all gone now. Senior members may remember some of them.

Coming down Adeyfield Road you cross the railway bridge. The station was still there and the steam train ran, but goods only, no passengers. On the corner lived the Wells family, daughter Gillian. Down to Alexandra Road, and on the corner where Barton Lodge is now the vet was Mrs Berlany, daughter Peggy.

The wool shop was on the left opposite Christchurch Road. Run by

Mrs Pullen who had a lovely daughter Lesley whom I admired greatly.

Over the road there was a hairdresser which had jars of Keg men's hair cream "with a bay rum base" in the window. I bought a jar once. It totally failed to help me to have more success with girls.

Then there was the fire station. The fire chief lived "over the shop" and his daughter was called Carol.

Next down was the clock and watch shop, run by Mr Edwards. His daughter was called Wendy.

I seem to remember a greengrocers next door. ▷

Over the road was the cobblers shop run by a man and his son, I can't remember their names. The shop had a wonderful leathery smell.

In those days you could get shoes soled and heeled. He also sold heelball, a waxy stick with which you could use to take brass rubbings. No daughters.

Crossing Queensway, or rather Queen Street as it was then, into the High Street, there's Lloyds Bank in the grand corner building.

Mansfield the bakers, Woolworths

Burtens the gents' outfitter with the dance school above it.

Home & Colonial grocer. The sign's still there.

Harringtons the men's barber, up some steps.

The grocer's, down some steps, run by Mr Raton, always in a brown overall, a big bacon slicer on the counter. You don't get lovely grocers shop smells like that any more. He delivered.

Past the church was the market Square, which had a real market and public toilets. The public library was on the corner, children's library upstairs. Dinky Dell next. Keen's the butcher on the opposite side, with Edwards's hardware store next door (?). I think that the recently-departed angling shop was there then.

Wednesday was early-closing day, you did your shopping in the morning, when did that stop?

Perhaps people could fill in some missing bits?

David Gambling

SPRING WATCH IN THE CHURCH WARDEN'S GARDEN

From the corner of her eye, Emmeline L, St Mary's Church Warden, detected a movement outside her window - a quick turn of her head but nothing there. Eventually after a couple of repeats a field mouse was briefly detected as it dashed across the patio.

Emmeline put down some bird seed and took up watch. Soon the mouse was repeatedly returning and carrying off the seeds to his nest while Emmeline prepared to photograph him.



A PENTECOSTAL WEEKEND

Rosina and I had decided to visit Canterbury for two reasons. To see for the first time in nearly two years how Granddaughter Faye Gaddes has settled down. She is at Christ Church University studying Psychology and Sociology. Second, we wanted to experience the Cathedral and its precincts and to attend the Sunday morning Pentacostal Sung Eucharist.

We stayed within the Cathedral precinct in the Canterbury Cathedral Lodge a very special, beautifully designed hotel and conference centre funded by the dioceses of the Episcopal Church of the USA. Access to the precinct was either for guests through the ancient Christ Church gates manned by the urbane and helpful Cathedral Constabulary or, oddly perhaps, for the general public through the Cathedral Bookshop – good both for security and business! On such a financial note it costs £20,000 daily to run the Cathedral and to date the pandemic has cost the Cathedral Accounts £3 million.

Leaving the Lodge to go to the service we were confronted with a picturesque gathering at the head of which, gorgeously clad in a red robe and wearing a medieval enormously plumed hat, was a person we named 'The Herald'. He was attending a group of Kentish dignitaries, including the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, the High Sheriff of Kent, the Mayor of Canterbury and leaders of councils. Pentacost is one of the four Sundays each year when such an official group gathers to attend services.

Attendance had to be booked in advance, we were carefully checked in and ushered to our seats in the magnificent nave. The sermon was by the Dean, the Very Revd Dr Robert Willis,

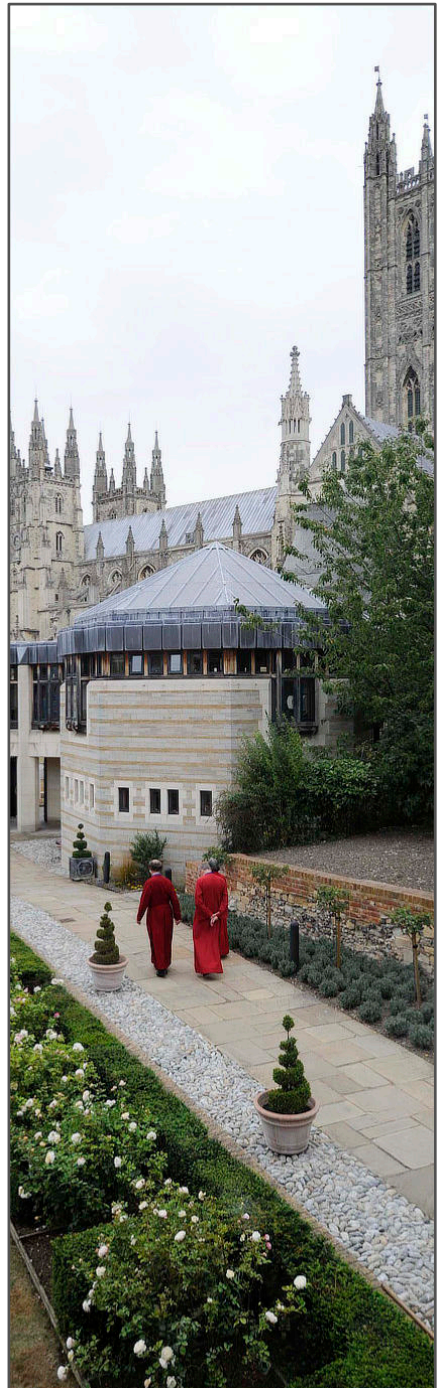


Dean for the past 22 years and much loved in the area. In outlining below the message within his sermon, I have also referred to his reflections during Morning Prayer taken that Sunday in his garden.

I saw the main theme of the sermon to be the first birthday of what was to become a universal church. A day of exhilaration when the breath of the holy spirit poured down on the gathered family of Jesus, his disciples together with the women and his mother and brothers. This wider family, raised by the Holy Spirit from their earlier fear, was to go out and spread the message to Gentiles and Jews alike. That day in Jerusalem were gathered people from all over the world as it was known at that time, listed in Acts 2,1-21. The Galileans spoke in many tongues to the complete bewilderment of the listeners, how could this be, were they drunk? This is seen by Dean Robert to herald through faith the breaking down of barriers between peoples and nations. He referred in a contemporary analogy to the previous day's festival of music, the European Song Contest, European - wide, watched world - wide. People from different cultures and with different languages and customs coming together in song. In the context of the UK contestant, James Newman, getting 'nil points' he referred to James' beautifully stated congratulations to the winner and to his humble and very gracious acceptance of his defeat, which was received with a rousing ovation by the audience.

The profound Christian soliloquy of Dean Robert can be seen via Google reference: <https://youtu.be/YbTnAxj3z-s>

Gordon Gaddes



HANGING BASKET

A poem written shortly after returning from a visit to a beloved elderly aunt



A warm July day, 2005
Scarlet, crimson – a touch of yellow,
mass of leaves green, yet
a touch, mysterious, of red a mixture,
full-out, slight decay, a touch of death.

Analogy for life – a life, but whose?
Basket of life – beauty and hope.
Basket within, the fade of death,
but, overwhelming, the beauty and the strength,
the flowing, the movement, the colour.

Creation, in glory, illustrated in basket,
discourse of life and of being,
of commitment, of interest, of other.

Life of being, basket of life
perfect, beautiful, wind-swaying life.

StoMP MAGAZINE

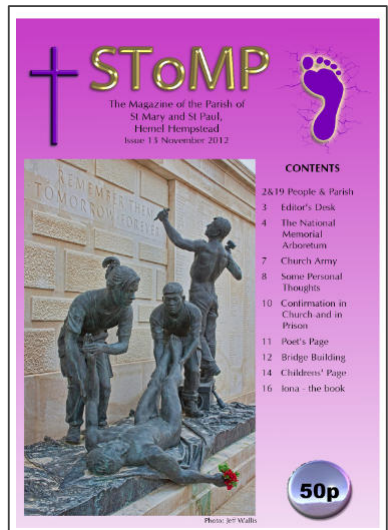
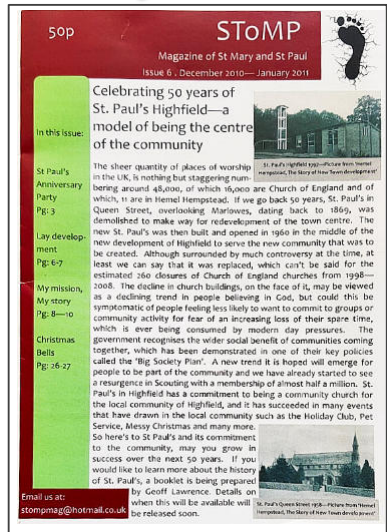
This edition of StoMP Magazine is the 50th since its original launch in April 2010 as a full colour bi-monthly publication under the editorship of Eleanor (Ele) Fox who also produced the layouts. Ele continued in the role for the first 12 issues.

When Ele moved away in the Autumn of 2013 the editorship was taken over by Julian Royals and Jeff stepped in to produce the page layouts and artwork; by this time, for economy reasons the use of colour was restricted to the cover pages, the inside contents in monochrome.

This arrangement continued until Issue 29 in December 2015 when because of his work, Julian moved away .

With the support of several contributors from both our churches Jeff managed to produce 24 pages for Issue 30 in March 2016 after which Gordon volunteered to be our Editor since when he and Jeff have produced 20 quarterly issues.

Back Numbers: Upper - Issue 6 December 2010 produced by Ele Fox; Lower - Issue 13 November 2012 produced by Julian Royals and Jeff Wallis



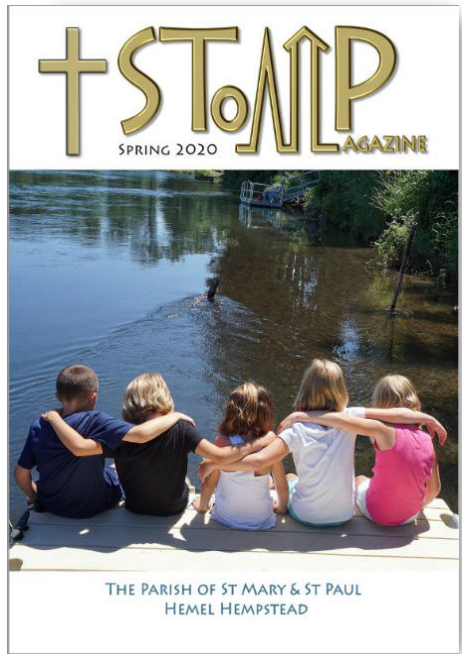
In 2020 the PCC reviewed the distribution and finances of the magazine and as a result most people now receive their copy free of charge by email. This means that our circulation is now around 150.

This has enabled us to use colour throughout as the digital copies carry no production costs and those that prefer to have a printed copy are able to continue having it this format but pay a more realistic price of £1. It is also available on the parish website.

At the same time a new printing machine was commissioned for the team office resulting in greatly improved print quality - and the machine even collates, folds and staples the pages as well.

Thank you to all our contributors - a number of whom have been regularly contributing to our pages from right back to Issue 1 - we do rely on you and sincerely hope more parishioners will make contributions to our pages.


Gordon Gaddes and Jeff Wallis



Issue 46 Spring 2020 produced by Gordon and Jeff - the first digital issue to be circulated free of charge to parishioners on the emailing list.


If you would like to be added to this list and receive a free copy please contact us: hello@stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

READERS' COMMENTS ON STOMP 49

 I have been meaning to thank you both so much for the latest edition of STOMP. I thought the content was wonderful with such interesting contributions, together with the poems and beautiful photos which really enhance it. Thank you both for all the hard work that goes into each edition. It is really appreciated.


A lady, who can't get to church any more and to whom I used to take Communion, so looks forward to receiving it and now is able to read it online. She loves being in touch with news of the churches.

Diana Spink

 Thank you very much for the Winter STOMP and for the sensitive presenting of 'The Wandering Mariner' which was my last in that style.


What an excellent magazine, such a lot of good work going on in the area.

Ruth Clinch

 Just received the Winter copy of STOMP. Thank you so much for sending it. I hope the parish appreciate that they have the most interesting and well presented parish magazine that I have come across in years. They are very lucky to have you.

Nigel Abbott

Former Team Rector

 I have been meaning for ages to write to you to thank you for that splendid edition of STOMP you sent us. It must be unique. I think we both read it from cover to cover.

Malcolm Lessiter (Former Team Vicar of St Paul's) and Caroline

CHEERS!



Gordon and Jeff celebrate the 50th edition of StoMP and their collaboration over the last 20 issues.

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