

✝ STOMP

WINTER 2022 MAGAZINE

ISSUE 53



THE PARISH OF ST MARY & ST PAUL
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

STOMP MAGAZINE
ISSUE 53 WINTER 2022

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*Cover picture:
St Michael's Cathedral, Kyiv*

St Michael's Cathedral, part of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is located in the centre of Kyiv, opposite St Sophia's Cathedral, (which is now a museum of 11th-century architecture, painting, and mosaic work).

The original St Michael's, built in 1108, was destroyed by the Soviet regime in the 1930s for having 'no historical value.' The reconstructed cathedral was completed in May 2000, its sky blue exterior and glittering golden domes a stunning addition to the townscape.

A sobering reminder of Stalin's inhumane policies stands in the cathedral grounds. This is a monument to the victims of Holodomor (starvation): a famine orchestrated in part by the Soviet leadership in an attempt to subjugate the population: as many as 10 million Ukrainians perished from 1932-33.

Keeping watch over the square are the reconstructed statues of Princess Olga, Apostle Andrew, St Cyril and St Mepholdius.

J Wallis

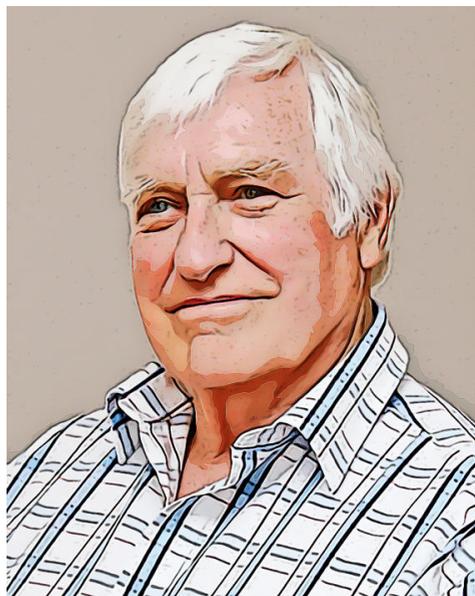
FROM THE EDITOR

THE UNIVERSALITY OF GOODNESS

Day in day out the media bring us stories illustrating wickedness at work. Violence, corruption, exploitation, greed and lies all feature. The conflict between goodness and evil plays itself out in the struggles to hold power and to gain power reported from across the world. To focus just on this side of humanity's existence today breeds cynicism and indifference, but it ignores the workings of goodness in action and the everyday saintliness of both the humble and the great.

I tried to capture this in the editorial in SToMP Winter 2021, headed 'Saints and Saintliness', concluding 'saintliness to me is the complete giving selflessly to others without regard to cost and dangers'. In that issue I illustrated contemporary saintliness by writing about Hawa Adbi, a Muslim in Somalia. In an earlier Autumn 2020 issue I had written about Swami Agnivesh an Hindu from India.

Today the SToMP story is about Afaw Yemiru, 'a teacher of Ethiopia's poor, who died on 8th May, aged 78 or 79', (reference *The Economist*, May 22nd 2021). It is about an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian of a very humble background and his incredible, long life of giving to others. These three amazing lives of contribution, respectively from the



Muslim, the Hindu and the Christian again express the golden rule of Professor John Hick that, 'it is good to benefit others and wrong to harm them'. Hick, the world-famous philosopher and theologian, saw this as a universal feature of humankind and confirmed this through his reference to the ethical convergence of several faiths (*SToMP Editorial Summer 2020*).

PS Recent Past issues of SToMP feature in the Parish Website News Section

www.stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

WALSINGHAM IN NORFOLK, PART 2

Following a few days of retreat last November at ‘England’s Nazareth’ of Walsingham, Canon John wrote something of its history in the previous edition of STOMP magazine. Here he continues Walsingham’s story in Tudor times.



The grounds of the shrine at Walsingham

The Tudor period started – in terms of Catholic devotion and pilgrimage – much the same way that the Plantagenet era ended. Henry VII was not as devoted as many previous monarchs but he encouraged devotion to Mary, Ladye of Walsingham and his mother, Margaret Beaufort, was exceedingly devout. So there would have been little surprise when the young King Henry VIII visited the shrine in 1511 to give thanks for the birth of a son. He arrived at the Slipper Chapel, a mile outside the village and shrine, walking the ‘holy

mile’ barefoot to make his devotions. So taken was he with Walsingham that ‘once there, he lit a candle, made an offering of expensive jewels and commanded the royal glazier, one Bernard Flower, to make a stained glass window for the Lady Chapel. Sadly, Henry’s young son did not survive, nor did the shrine. Yet in 1511, although the heyday of pilgrimage had passed, no one could have anticipated its days were actually numbered.’ ▷



The Anglican Holy House at Walsingham

Here is not the place to get in to the 'King's great matter', his divorce from Catherine of Aragon and his panicked desire to provide a son as heir to his kingdom. Needless to say that although Henry remained a Catholic to his dying day and very much wedded to the practices of the old faith, he nevertheless broke with Rome and made himself the sole arbiter of faith within the kingdom.

He plundered the monastic riches and lands; with no exception made even for Walsingham. On 30 May 1537, Sub-Prior Nicholas Mileham and George

Gysburgh perished on the scaffold at Walsingham (in what to this day is still known as the martyr's field) and the statue – object of so much medieval devotion - was burned shortly after at Smithfield along with a whole lot of other Catholic devotionals.

As an interesting aside the Langham Madonna in the V&A may well be the 'rescued' original statue, if some sources are to be believed, as although there were witnesses to the removal of the original statue from Walsingham nobody actually reported seeing it burnt. ▷



The old guardian's room in the Anglican Shrine

Before we enter the dark days when pilgrimage to Our Lady's Shrine was suppressed, it is worth seeking a flavour of those last days of pilgrimage. Who better to guide us through that than the Dutch reformer and Renaissance scholar Erasmus, who visited in 1511. By then the shrine was a shadow of its former self but his thoughts about it are amongst the few from the time that survive.

"When you look in you would say it is the abode of saints, so brilliantly does it shine with gems, gold and silver ... Our Lady stands in the dark at the right side of the altar ... a little image, remarkable neither for its size, material or workmanship."

Although after the dissolution of the monasteries and the destruction of shrine and statue Walsingham became

a religious back-water for 400 years, the Elizabethan Walsingham Lament suggests that pilgrimage was not entirely forgotten:

Weep, weep, O Walsingham,
Whose days are nights,
Blessings turned to blasphemies,
Holy deeds to despites.
Sin is where our Ladye sat,
Heaven turned is to hell;
Satan sits where Our Lord did sway,
Walsingham, O farewell!

Next time: Young Anglican priest Alfred Hope Patten is at the vanguard of the restoration of pilgrimage to Walsingham.

*Canon John
Priest Associate of the Holy House, OLW.*



CHRISTMAS CARD REPORT

Since Christmas 2017 I've analysed aspects of Christmas cards coming through the door at 91 Highfield Lane, this year there were 107. This is the fourth report to STOMP readers.

Interest has centred on four main themes. First, the proportion of cards with a Christian message as opposed to a purely secular, festive one. Second, the extent to which support for charities feature on these cards. Third, any propensity for 'Christian cards', compared with 'secular cards', to give more support to charities. Fourth, the extent of the inclusion of eco-friendly messages on the back page.

This time I am comparing the statistics for 2017 with those for 2021 and trying to identify trends over this four-year period. In 2017 54% of the cards were Christian themed; by 2021 this had dropped to 48%. The overall support for charities over the four years has increased from 64% to 74%. Narrowing down, in 2017 69% of Christian cards supported charities but by 2021 this had risen to 78%.

The numbers for secular cards showed an increase from 57% to 70%.

I am unable to make a comparison on the eco - friendly aspect, this not having been calculated for 2017. However, this Christmas 75% of the cards had messages such as, 'please recycle me' with many varieties on such a theme. In fact, given the unacceptability into our blue bins of non-recyclable cards, significantly I found this year that only five cards could not be disposed of in this way.

To conclude, the sale of Christian cards is just about holding its own, the dip in 2017 being followed for the next two years by percentages similar to the 48% this year. Encouragingly, there has been an overall increase of 23% in support for charity cards over the four years. For Christian cards the increase has been 13%, but for secular cards the increase has been 23%. Nevertheless, there continues to be a greater propensity by purchasers of Christian themed cards to favour cards raising money for charities. This seems to have been spotted by large stores, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrisom. Waitrose, M & S, John Lewis and Smiths cards received all featuring multiple charities. Overall these changes and the range of charities supported seems phenomenal to me as a recognition of the pro-social dynamics working within our society.

GG

MONEY, MONEY MONEY 6

What a strange year 2021 turned out to be in so many ways. Lots of scares, but also so many positive signs of hope; especially once we began to realise that Omicron could be the mutation that turned Covid 19 into effectively another ongoing variant of flu. This brought the hope that it could be dealt with going forward under the annual flu vaccine system, and not as a special case any longer.

The Parish financial situation had similar twists to surprise us. When I last wrote in the Autumn SToMP, the situation still looked uncertain, but when we did the final end of year numbers an almost miraculous change became evident. There was a surplus of about £6k on our running costs and this was increased further by a capital gain on our investments of just over £3k.

The increase in the capital value of our investments was always possible, but uncertain. As you will know, investments can go down as well as up and the war in Ukraine has currently almost wiped out that £3k capital gain.

The improvement in our running cost account was more unexpected, and in large part due to:-

1. The late payment of Hire fees for our halls – including from film hires.
2. The success of the Credit Card payment set up in St Mary's Church.
3. Keeping control on our expenditure and
4. The fund raising and Stewardship generosity of many of you. So thank you!





Another plus was being awarded Covid Business Support grants of £3k by the Local Council, who have also stopped charging St Mary's Hall for waste collection.

Taken all together the result has been magical.

In the context of this very encouraging end of year picture, the PCC have looked again at their Budget for 2022 and felt able to take a more optimistic view of many of the income items. They also decided to spread the funding of the Quinquennial costs, due in part this year, by making provision for one fifth of the cost every year, and using the 2021 surplus to set up the Quinquennial fund with a two year contribution. These two moves reduce our 2022 cost spike and move us to a budget break even projection. A very welcome situation, but still dependent on the moves towards 'normality' continuing in the right direction.

The PCC also decided to use part of the surplus to return our Reserves Policy to that operated before the stresses of the last few years i.e. holding three months' of annual expenditure in case of the unforeseen happening. This still leaves just over £3k of surplus, and the PCC agreed to share our good fortune by giving this away to one or more charities – in part to make up for the lower charitable giving seen in 2021 as a result of very limited Christmas collections. Their plan is to hold off doing this for a while, in case the year has unhappy surprises in store.

All in all a good news story, and what a joy it is to be able to share good news.

EDITOR'S INTERVIEW

JEFF WALLIS

SToMP Editor interviews SToMP Designer!

Jeff and I have been working together on various projects for around 20 years, but there has never been the chance for the sort of long personal chat that we had this 7th February over a cup of coffee. From the age of fourteen there have always been individuals who have helped me on my way, trusted me and given me a chance. Each of these is on a list that I treasure, but this list also includes a few key people who have helped as working partners. All these people I thank and bless because what has been achieved would not have been possible without them. Jeff is on this list because of his unstinting and creative support for our work in DENS, the Parish of St Mary and St Paul, and the UK Langa Township Pre-School Trust over two decades

Born in 1938 in Hampstead's St Mary's Maternity Hospital the roots of Jeff's family are in North West London. He is the oldest of three brothers, his two younger brothers, David and Stephen having passed away respectively aged 56 and 67. His was a very happy childhood, a closely knit family within a stable and mutually supportive marriage. Mum, from Hendon, passed away aged 92, and Dad from Henley on Thames died much earlier, aged 73. Mum was the major moral force in the family, but Dad was always the backstop for her in dealing with the boys. Jeff might argue with his mother when bedtime was called but 'Dad from his armchair would lower his paper and stare and that was enough'! Mum had a very strict view about truthfulness, meeting



commitments and general behaviour. However, strange for today's times, Jeff, like me, benefited from the parental attitude that you were let loose to go off and play but with responsibility; our Mums' injunction, 'make sure you come back by teatime and behave yourself' captures this well!

Of course, Jeff remembers the war years, going up twice to stay in Wollaton near Nottingham, with his Mum and baby David. On the first occasion, taken to a house by a welfare worker where hospitality for evacuees had been offered the hosts were not at home and the three evacuees were left sitting on the front doorstep, much to the surprise of the returning hosts, two doctors, especially as they had specified, 'no small children'. Going backwards and forwards from London's danger to Wollaton's safety, still there is the memory of the doodlebug, cutting out directly above London's Colindale Primary School and the rush to the air raid shelter, and even the terrifying scream of a V2 rocket hurtling by overhead to strike some miles away.

Settling down after the War, from Colindale Primary School Jeff got a place at Orange Hill Grammar School for Boys in Edgware. 'Was there a grammar school for girls', I asked. 'Yes' was the answer, 'in the same building', but entry from the street through two side-by-side doors, the boys went to the right and the girls to the left, never to meet again during the day. Even the shared dining room involved separate shifts to keep the boys and girls apart. What a revelation that is about those times in London. Even more of a revelation is that on the other side of the road was an RC boys only secondary modern school – 'there was always a certain amount of low-level friction between the pupils of the two schools so they had to keep to the pavement on their side of the road and we had to keep to the pavement on ours'.

Jeff ended up in the Latin stream, but having had enough of school after obtaining seven 'O' Levels he decided to leave and get a job.

On leaving school he spent three years with GEC in Kingsway as a business trainee, taking a business certificate course on day release at the City of London College, covering accountancy, economics and commercial law. This was followed by five years with two other central London companies. Finally, in 1965, having had enough of commuting into London, Jeff joined DRG Sellotape Products Ltd in Borehamwood, a company in the same group as John Dickinson, as the Assistant to the Accountant and to the Company Secretary. This was the start of a 27 year period of service with Sellotape. With all of his past experience to help him Jeff was now on a new path, a problem solver for the Accountant; in one major initiative

recovering a very large amount of money from H.M. Customs and Excise. Then, seconded to an overspending publicity department to set up a system of budgeting, a fortuitous event sent his career in a new direction. It was lunchtime, the office was empty, the manager going out of the door for an urgent appointment, a journalist phoning, wanting an article by mid-afternoon. 'Can you write, could you do it?' Jeff was asked; what a success this was, Jeff's article was published practically word for word. Shortly afterwards he was invited to join the department, one of a team of eight people.



At a Sellotape press event with children's TV presenter Michaela Strachan - hard work no doubt, but someone had to do it!

Whilst over the years economies reduced that team to three, that is where Jeff stayed until his retirement. He became a multi-tasker, involved in all aspects of publicity: press and tv advertising, public relations, organising sales conferences, arranging exhibitions in the UK and most other West European countries. He linked with major London advertising agencies, design houses and printers, watching and learning, absorbing and doing. He was also an early user of 'all that new IT stuff'.

'I loved the work', he said, 'I never had that Monday morning feeling'.

The end came with a take-over by American asset strippers. He did not like their 'profit, profit, profit' ethos and was happy to be made redundant. However, Jeff now aged only 55, well-known in the business and very much in demand, carried on working on his own as a freelance marketing services manager for the next eight years loving the freedom and flexibility he now had.

I asked Jeff about his Christian upbringing. His mother was the big influence, at the age of five insisting on Sunday School at the nearby Anglican church, which he hated, but his Mother agreed when he asked to go instead with the boy next door to the Sunday school at the Congregational church.

The service morning and evening and the Sunday School in between were his spiritual and learning experience. He spoke admiringly of the hours and commitment of the Sunday School teachers and the other adults involved in youth work. At the age of 9 he joined the church's company of The Boys' Brigade and was part of this for 30 years, passing through the ranks to become an Officer, and taking bible and Sunday School classes.

Happy especially is the boyhood memory of being the solo drummer in the bugle band, as at the war time infant school in Nottingham, to his chagrin he had always been denied the drums and was put on the castanets.



During his teenage years Jeff's social life was centred on the church; alongside the BB (three evenings a week) there was also a youth club on Saturdays and a company of The Girls' Brigade provided a supply of girlfriends, all to be fitted in with homework demands from school.

At the age of 18, arising from his work in The Boys' Brigade, Jeff joined a detachment of The British Red Cross as a first-aider. The detachment was one which supplied first-aiders to the Wembley Stadium complex and he became very involved in covering the events that took place there. Jeff also trained as a first aid instructor running training sessions for first aiders from a variety of groups. Jeff was awarded the Voluntary Medical Services Medal in 1971.

In 1979 Jeff moved to Hemel Hempstead and life was taken up with his work and Church and voluntary work took a back seat.

In 1988 Jeff read an article in The HH Gazette which reported that the Cub Pack in Woodhall Farm was closing down because of lack of leaders and appealing for volunteers. Jeff contacted the Group and offered to help out as a non-uniformed helper until a leader could be found. Two years later he bought a Scout uniform, made the Scout Promise and took charge of the Cub Pack eventually retiring in 2003 with the Chief Scout's Medal of Merit for 'outstanding service to Scouting'

In 2003, very much involved with governorship in local schools, I asked Jeff if I might put his name forward to be a governor. Six years as a governor of Holtsmere End Junior School in Woodhall Farm followed, being elected chairman after his first year there, a tremendous responsibility.

So we come to Jeff's 30 years at St Mary's and his special involvement as crucifer, server, reader, and as designer, writer, IT adviser and doer. What a Christian journey this has been and still is.



Photo: News Chronicle

With the British Red Cross at the F.A. Cup final 1960 stretchering off Dave Whelan of Blackburn Rovers



ALL FOOLS' DAY

In years gone by, the rules surrounding April Fool were this: between midnight and noon on 1st April, everyone is 'fair game' to be made a fool of. It is the morning of the practical joke. But the aim is not just to discomfort the victim: he must be tricked into taking action himself, sent on a 'fool's errand'.

And so children would be sent to the dairy for a pint of dove's milk, or to the bookseller for The Life of Eve's Mother.

Practical jokes on a bigger scale were played: in 1860 a vast number of people received an official looking invitation to the Tower of London that read: 'Admit the Bearer and Friends to view the Annual Ceremony of Washing the White Lions.' Precisely the same trick had been played in 1698.

Then, on the stroke of noon, tradition decrees, April Fools is finished. If anyone attempts devilry thereafter, even while the clock is still striking, it recoils on his own head. A child would then race through the sing-song formula: 'April-Fool-Day's-past-and-gone-you're-the-fool-and-I-am-none!'



THE LONG WALK

Asfaw Yemiru born in Bulga 75 miles from Addis Adaba, one of eleven children, decided to leave home at the age of nine. Barefoot he walked to the capital, there making his home with other young children in the churchyard of St George's Cathedral. He wanted education, something more than just the religious books he would get at the village school. Life became tough for him, begging and working as a bearer, sometimes not eating for a couple of days.

Things changed when a rich Turkish lady dropped a cheese from her basket, which he raced to pick up for her; 'She took him on as a general skivvy and, between fetching water and chopping wood, he could go to proper primary school'. Flying through this school he ended up with a scholarship at the top Ethiopian school, the General Wingate boarding school.

Whilst there, concerned about the hungry children outside and the wasted meal left overs inside, and encouraged by the Headmaster, he set up a scheme to feed the children with scraps. Aged 14 he started to teach children under a nearby oak tree. The numbers swelling for this free education for poor children, and time going by, aged 20 he threw himself in front of the car of the visiting Emperor Haile Selassie, in the time honoured way shouting, 'give us land'.

Successful in that plea his land was next to the Wingate School, and his original flimsy makeshift school ended up with 64 classrooms, a library wing and dormitories, the Asra Hawariat School, translated 'footsteps of the Apostles'. It was known for its relatively high academic standards.

He needed money for all of his work but there were bits of good fortune – an unclaimed national lottery prize was given to him, donations came from the Emperor, the Mayor, Winchester College and the Wingate School. The major fund-raising, making him known internationally, was the 1000 kilometre round walk with some students across the desert from Addis Adba to Harar and back. The walk would gain sponsorship he said, and he contacted 5000 of the richest families and companies in Ethiopia, but got just one reply. However, money flowed in from abroad from the Ethiopian diaspora and charitable foundations. His new school was visited by the Emperor, a great occasion where symbolically the poor met the powerful and wealthy. Asfaw was there, in jacket but bare foot, beside the besuited Haile Selassie with his entourage.

By 2020 more that 120,000 children had passed through his two schools, learning the 3 Rs, history and geography, and skills such as how to grow vegetables, raise chickens and weave, all to make a living. A statistic for one year indicated the contribution being made: in Addis Adaba, 2500 children enrolled and the school was ‘the father to 380 orphans’.

Occasionally at odds with the authorities during his mission Asfaw spent several periods in prison. However, his great contribution was recognised in 2001 when as The Laureate he was awarded the World Children’s Prize of the newly established Swedish ‘Children’s Nobel Prize’ organisation and also the Global Friends Award.

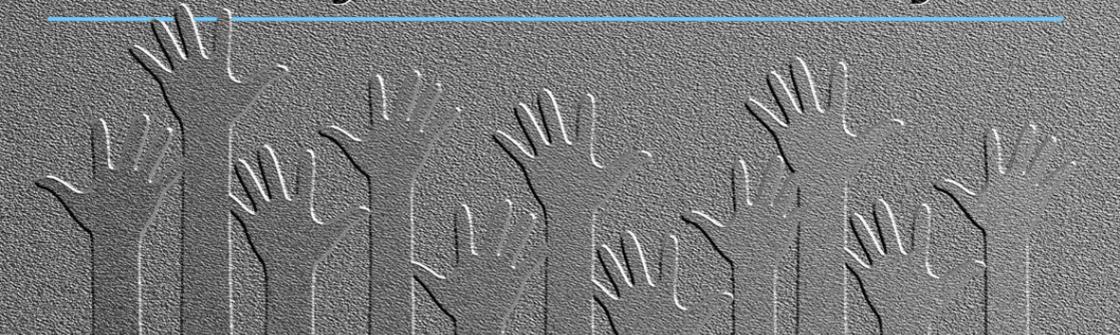
The presentation by Queen Sylvia was in Sweden, a video clip showing a tearful Asfaw meeting the Queen. So how was such a distinction achieved? It was for, ‘Distinguished work in the fight for the Rights of the Child’. It arose from the voting of 27 million students in 57,000 schools in 107 countries. This led to three successful nominees being considered by a jury, which consisted of 15 children representing street children, debt slaves, refugees and child soldiers. Additionally, but organised separately, a smaller and older group of children selected the winner of the Global Friends Award. Asfaw Yemiru gained both the awards in the same year.

On a donkey as young boy, going to St George’s Cathedral ‘to be made a deacon’, then returning home to be with the large family led by his Orthodox priest father, later fleeing on foot to Addis Adaba, Asfaw made Addis Adaba his home, and helping deprived children his mission. Quoting from *The Economist*, ‘he wanted to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. Those two worlds came together when Haile Selassie visited his school. Guards attended in smart pith helmets, and little girls in white dresses gave the emperor flowers. But he, the principal, went barefoot as he usually did; and as he had done aged nine on his long, long walk from Bulga to Addis Adaba’.

Based on the Obituary, The Economist May 22nd 2021 and on internet research.

Gordon Gaddes

UK Churches contribute £55 billion annually to the UK economy!!



The social capital school of thought in Economics stresses that quantitative money calculations do not capture adequately the real value of a society, partly because they do not include the contribution made by voluntary work, for example for voluntary bodies and through churches. This thinking has been a major influence on reviews by HMG Treasury following which on 27 July 2021 they published the Treasury Green Book, the gold standard of policy evaluation, with its supplementary guidance on well being. This is the context in which the National Churches Trust commissioned State of Life, social impact and value specialists, to assess the economic and social value of church buildings and communities in the UK. There are around 40,000 churches in our country and, applying the Treasury Green Book guidance and applying to its own statistical methodology, State of Life valued the contribution of the churches to be £55 billion annually.

How on earth can this be? Before answering that question let me give you a small personal example to help make the broader point and to prove it.

Becoming Chairman of the newly formed DENS charity in 1997, I was interested to establish how DENS had managed to go through the past four years as an emergency night shelter.

Of the £55,000 cash spent, 38% had come from churches, 36% from Dacorum Borough, 9% from businesses, 9% and charities and 2% each from individuals and schools and the rest from a miscellany. However, many dozens of volunteers had given their time without which DENS could not have progressed. Researching this, and costing the time of each volunteer at a nominal rate of £4 per hour, we found that the value of their contribution was 6 times the value of the cash cost of DENS during that emergency period.

So now let us turn to this seemingly amazing figure of £55 billion, which is roughly equivalent to the amount spent by local authorities on adult social services. In their assessment State of Life, based on the Green Book approach, used several parameters. There was a two fold division between 'market value factors' and 'non market value factors'. ▷

A SNIPPET

On the market value side we have several categories, a repeat of which will chime with your experience. First, there is the direct, calculable economic value of running, staffing and hiring buildings, a definite part of the national economic output. Second, we have the market value of services provided by churches, which otherwise would be provided at cost elsewhere, or not at all!

Third, there are all the voluntary hours spent, the replacement of which would involve a cost, or indeed things would not be done to improve the well being of society. Turning to 'non market factors' we are in a more esoteric area. How can statisticians make evaluations? BUT these things exist so they try to assess and quantify. These come in three categories. First, there is the well being to volunteers in and through the church buildings. Second, there is the well being to people who benefit from social and community services. Third, there is the well being value of attending church services.

Sceptical you may be about the numbers, £55 billion arrived at by statisticians and academics and Government officials, but instinctively and also through your own experience you will know that all of this has a major point to make, that churches and church communities have an important and irreplaceable economic and social contribution to give to our society and that is without recourse to the 'halo effect' referred to by some commentators and perhaps the subject of a future STOMP piece?

Perhaps in future issue of STOMP we can turn to the spiritual capital school of thought in economics!

Gordon Gaddes

St Mary's bellringers have among their number:

- One who has conquered Everest.
- One who has swum across to the Isle of Wight.
- One who runs marathons with his partner who is ladies' captain of the running club.
- Two who regularly walk up to 20 miles for pleasure (?)
- Two who regularly ring 3-hour sessions of continuous ringing.
- Two student doctors.
- And a couple of us who don't do anything worthy at all!



GOOD NEWS STORY 1



Revd Jenny Hill dedicates the renovated memorial to Canon Buckley and his wife in Heath Lane Cemetery in June 2016

Do you remember the story of Canon Buckley and his generosity to the Parish – I wrote an article on his life in SToMP some years ago when we renovated his headstone as requested in his Will!

In addition to paying for the installation of electric light in St Mary's amongst other acts of generosity, he left £500 to be invested to produce annual income to support the '...poorer members of the congregation.'

In the late 1920's, after the first world war and during the Great Depression there were very few 'social services' and little welfare provision and the congregation would have been much larger and undoubtedly included people with significant needs.

His £500 might have produced around £25 per year of income in 1930. At the time an average wage for a working man was £5 per week – a pint of milk cost 1.5p !

The £500 invested has grown to £15,000+ and currently produces a disposable income of around £380 per year,

which you will have noticed - if you study the detail in the Annual Accounts - has recently been accumulating largely unspent. This arose because the Diocese, as Custodian Trustees, emphasised that there was very limited leeway in who qualified as a legitimate beneficiary unless we got the Charity Commission to agree to changing the narrow definition.

Through 2021 negotiations were conducted with the Diocese and the Charity Commission which has resulted in the agreed beneficiaries now being described as '...the poorer members of Hemel Hempstead.' – A much wider pool than the '...poorer members of the congregation of St Mary's.'

This change has allowed the Trustees, with the agreement of the PCC, to give £2,500 of accumulated interest to the Dacorum Community Trust – an organisation that we have previously supported because of the good work that they do.

This is illustrated by the things that they describe in their letter to say thank you and I thought it would be good to share some extracts with you.

'This donation has been very welcome as we continue to support increasing numbers of local people in crisis when they have nowhere else to turn for help. We estimate that the Trust will have registered 810 clients by the end of this financial year 2021, an increase of 116% since the outbreak of the pandemic two years ago.

You may be interested to know that between 1st April and 30th September 2021, we registered 361 clients from the Hemel Hempstead area and over half were families with children.

Our top three areas for referrals came from Central Hemel Hempstead, Highfield and Bennetts End.

Our aim is to provide swift, practical assistance for people in need to resolve a crisis and signpost them to the wider community if they need further support. Our assistance includes energy and supermarket vouchers, a combination of new and second-hand essential kitchen and bedding, beds, curtains, electric cookers, fridge/freezers and washing machines. We can also provide miscellaneous help. For instance, recently in response to an emergency request from a partner agency, we paid a taxi fare for a victim of domestic violence to a woman's refuge and a bus ticket for a client so that he could collect a food parcel from the foodbank.

Among the 84 clients supported by the Trust in January 2022, we helped a couple who had fled, with no possessions, to Hemel Hempstead from another Borough.

The couple were accommodated temporarily in a house of multiple occupancy. Both had multiple health issues, one had a broken leg and the other long term health issues. The Trust provided an emergency bedding and kitchen starter pack, a clothing voucher and food parcel, as well as a one-off weekly bus pass to enable them to sort out their housing and benefits applications.

Another case concerned an older client who asked for assistance with a cooker. He had a very low income and was unable to work because of serious mental and physical health problems. It transpired that his mother had died two years ago and since then he had been living mostly on sandwiches. The client was very isolated but had a good neighbour who helped him. We purchased a cooker and fridge for the client to store medication and gave him a donated Tesco mobile phone with three months free credit. We also referred him to Southhill Centre where he will be supported with bereavement issues.

I think these examples illustrate two things. The first is the very real need there is amongst our 'neighbours' which we do not always see: and the second is how effective a small well run organisation with the right attitude and local contacts can be in meeting that need practically and directly; and in a way which I feel sure Canon and Mrs Buckley would approve.

So as I said at the start, a good news story. But if you are saying, 'well I know of a case of need within the family of the congregations', do let John know because the income from the Trust continues to come in and there is still money to help where there is need.

Robin Woodd

GOOD NEWS STORY 2

Some of you will remember our Parish's early 2000's involvement with the Diocese of Umzimvubu in South Africa when Gill and I enjoyed helping with their cathedral and a number of communities with bridge

As well, we recently had the following exciting email from a young South African lad called Lucky who was a stalwart member of the bridge building team for the first bridge at Welakabini in the Transkei. He was a 19 year old school leaver at the time but is now a graduate (the first in his family and village) and married with 4 children!

'There has been a lot of rain on this side since December, we have experienced heavy rains and still are. Our foot bridge has been all over the news and national TV on all the news channels including CNA news and 403 and more in the past weeks. this is due to fact that amongst others the footbridge has been the only link between people from Welakabini and all the villages on Welakabini side of the river and the Clinics and Town as well as the schools on the opposite side of river as the car bridge down the Umzimvubu river was flooded and couldn't be used for days to two weeks due to floods. Now our footbridge was filmed and published nationally as we were using it to ship coffins and groceries to our area. Government deployed soldiers to come and assess and promised to build another bridge in the area but this is not the first time they promise, we will wait and see. They also promised to put in tap water. We are now in the spotlight because of our bridge.'

Robin Woodd





GOOD NEWS STORY 3

Langa Educare Forum

The LTPT Christmas Appeal raised £1,600 which was sent to Yolisa Gqirana for use to support the Langa Early Child Development Forum's work, which covers 28 crèches and pre-schools.

On 21 January the Langa ECD organised its 'Back To School Nourishment Campaign' providing dry goods, vegetables and fruit for 28 pre-schools to start the new school year.

Later on 27 January there was its 'World Health Day Campaign', a demonstration of usage and the distribution of personal protective equipment such as masks and sanitisers.

Expressing her appreciation, Jean Mpati Langa ECD Chair commented, 'you can't teach a child on an empty stomach'; looks forward to, 'a year of hope' that 'doesn't become a year of disparity and deprivation'.

Also Yolisa, the Administrator at Nomonde, commented, 'build a child, build a nation' and, 'Your contribution is playing a pivotal role at home for households without work, without food', for single parent and parentless families and for grandparents.

Gordon Gaddes



Vegetables for the children of Langa Pre-Schools

ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL

The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace.'

On how to survive a residential conference.



The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

I am glad you enjoyed your conference, but please do not be deluded into thinking that conferences are there to teach you anything. Conferences exist to provide another entry on your CV, to give you time off while flattering yourself that you are working, and to make the person leading it feel that their life is not wholly pointless.

As it happened, I was also invited to the same one, the one entitled 'Learning how to say no.' But I refused to attend, thereby proving that I didn't need it anyway.

There are certain useful points you need to learn for conferences. First, about half the attendees will have been together only the previous week attending another conference in another part of the country. They will be eager, enthusiastic, and overflowing with management platitudes. Avoid them at all costs. Should one of them say to you: 'expect the unexpected' you have my permission to strangle them. They won't have expected that!

Secondly, when you are all asked to go through that ghastly process of introducing yourselves to everyone else, make it up. I think the last time I was obliged to do this, I became a butcher specialising in exporting offal to Saudi Arabia. All your clerical colleagues will then panic that they have turned up for the wrong course and the leader will make sure that you are not asked another single question throughout the event. Both outcomes are satisfying.

Thirdly, do realise that when you are asked to divide into small discussion groups, it means that the conference leader has run out of ideas about what to do next. Do not, at all costs, volunteer to be chairman. It only means that when you have to report back – and if the leaders use the word ‘plenary’, then by all means contemplate strangling them also - you will be involved in sticking sheets of paper on to walls, which will then rip off the wallpaper when you try to remove them.

You will also have the embarrassment of finding that every felt tip pen you try to use will be empty, and what you thought were the conclusions your group had arrived at will be volubly contradicted by all the other members.

No, if you are ever obliged to attend another course, take a good book, enough claret to cover every evening away, and develop a debilitating illness that, while enabling you to attend every meal, obliges you to retreat to your room for the rest of the day. You will leave having learned as much on whatever the topic was as your colleagues, but you will return refreshed and eager to make the next booking.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



RECENT PCC MEETINGS

Extravaganza '22

The Team Rector told everyone of plans for a May 'open weekend' of trains, planes and automobiles (along with crafting demonstrations) that would be staged in 2022 (April 30th – May 2nd) as an additional way to draw new people into St Mary's and the Old Town.

Meeting on Mon 17th January 2022.

Finance

The PCC discussed the 2021 accounts and their approach to the use of surplus funds.

St Mary's – Church Architect

The PCC agreed that the Fabric Subcommittee should appoint a suitable architect on their behalf at their next meeting planned for 1st February.

Mission Action Plan

The PCC Chairman went through a report on the PCC planning day prepared by Norma Podmore and Rosina Gaddes.

Training

The Team Rector detailed plans for increased lay involvement in the services which would necessitate a programme of training for more lay members of our churches

Canon John Williams - Chairman
Jenny Bowes - Secretary to the PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC), which is the governing body of the parish of St Mary and St Paul, comprising elected lay members together with the clergy, makes regular reports to the congregation about business conducted at meetings.

Reports are circulated to the members of the Electoral Roll for whom we have an email address, displayed on the notice board in both church buildings and printed in SToMP, our parish magazine.

Meeting on Mon 15th November 2021

Child Friendly Services

The PCC discussed the relaunch of children's work following the long covid shut down and reviewed the first new services which had taken place the previous week.

Christmas Services

The PCC agreed the service schedule for Christmas to reflect the situation with the pandemic and the volunteers who would be available.

Our Halls

The PCC reviewed hall hiring and agreed the new fees for 2022.

THE DAFFODIL(NARCISSUS) THE LENT LILY



The joy of seeing the golden colour of daffodils in spring, lighten up any garden after the dark days of winter. Our native Narcissi in England is *Narcissus pseudo narcissus*, it is fairly short with pale yellow flowers. Sometimes there is a slight variant with pale yellow petals and a deeper yellow trumpet.

The word Narcissus is said to have come from a youth in Greek mythology who changed into a flower after endlessly gazing at his reflection in a pool. There are various versions of this myth.

This lovely native daffodil used to grace the meadows and deciduous woodlands of many areas of England. Locally around the village of Leverstock Green they grew in

abundance and it is said that local schoolchildren were given the day off school to pick daffodils for their mothers. Unfortunately today it is rare to see any growing mainly due to modern farming techniques.

Another so called native is the Tenby daffodil, found growing around Wales, including on the cliffs near St.Davids. Classification of this Narcissus is varied and one likes to think it is native of that region but there are many theories. On the last classification it was given the status of 'species' meaning it is an individual within the family of Narcissii.

A miniature narcissus that has become a favourite of mine, after seeing them naturalised on grass ▷

banks at the Valley Gardens Windsor, is *Narcissus bulbocodium conspicuus*. When talking about daffodils, Wordsworth's famous poem referring to 'a host of golden daffodils' in the Lake District, would be *Narcissus pseudo narcissus lobularis*. Even today it is a spectacle with a golden glade as far as the eye can see.

It is interesting to know that, even today, there are more *Narcissus* grown in this country than in Holland which is well known for its bulb growing.

Today the choice of *Narcissus* you can buy is extensive. To start with they are grouped into Divisions and if you are showing blooms this must be clearly stated. Some years ago I had the privilege of helping stage a *Narcissus* show. The standard of quality of the blooms was exceptional and a real joy to see after all the staging had taken place.

Referring to 'Divisions', this is the classification of *Narcissii*.

The first is 'Trumpet daffodils', common varieties include King Alfred, Golden Harvest, Dutch Master and Fortune.

The second division is 'large cup daffodils',

they do not have the long trumpet but instead are short and fimbriated. Examples are Flower Record, Barrett Browning and Ice Follies.

Division three is 'Small cup daffodils' this is when the centre corolla is much smaller, examples of this are Pheasants eye and Actaea.

Fourth division is the 'Double daffodils' not everyone's favourite but very striking. Their only downside is that they are somewhat top heavy. Plant in a tub and support if necessary, they do make a good show. Varieties include Golden Ducat, Acropolis and Unique.

Division five are the 'Triandrus Hybrids'. These are the multi stemmed narcissi. These give great value for money, creating a good show. They are strong stemmed, examples include, Triandrus Thalia, delicate white blooms and Hawera, yellow with small heads.

Division six is 'Cylcamineus', a neat, shortish stemmed narcissus with a longish tapered trumpet in most cases. Examples are, February Gold, an excellent narcissus for early flowering. Jetfire, starts yellow and the trumpet turns orange and Jack Snipe, white petals, lemon yellow short, trumpet.

Seventh division is Jonquilla, multi headed, larger than division five, examples include Quail, Sundial and Pipit, delicate yellow and a cream trumpet.



Division eight is 'Tazetta', good, multi headed, strong stemmed narcissi. Examples are Geranium and one I always recommend Minnow, it has white petals with a deep orange centre.

Another miniature is Silver Chimes, strong growing, white petals with a lemon yellow centre.

Lastly, a division for the 'Split Corolla' daffodils. You either love or hate them! The trumpet has been split into as many as six segments with the back petals often of a different colour. Examples are Parisienne, white

petals, orange centre, Marie Jose, white with stripes of yellow in the centre and Orangery, as the name suggests, protruding white petals, bright orange fimbriated centre.

Hopefully I have covered narcissi from our simple but beautiful native varieties to our modern day hybrids.

You should be able to purchase all of the ones mentioned and a variety of them will make a really good show.

That splash of yellow in March each year is a joy to look forward to. 'The joys of Spring', thank God.

Roger Sygrave



Mission Action Plan

During 2020 and much of 2021, our churches were closed or restricted in what they could do because of the pandemic and no planning of our mission action was possible. This summary report therefore follows on from the MAP 2019/20.

Website and Signage: Targets – 1 Year

- Improve the warmth and welcome of our notice boards.
- Make the new website still more welcoming and interactive.
- Put up banners facing the park with news of events in the church and the High Street.

Community Links: Targets – 1 Year

- Build on the 2021 Nativity Trail for children to increase engagement and footfall for local churches and businesses.
- Provide regular and sustained giving to Highfield Fridge.
- Run Art in the Nave and Extravaganza '22.
- Encourage the relaunch of the Friends of St Mary's.

Service Offerings: Targets – 1 Year

- Further develop Café/Messy Church offerings at both churches.
- Provide lay led Lent Course.
- Provide regular non-Eucharistic service for non-church people in the community.
- Survey church and community to find out what they would like our churches to provide for them.

Climate Crisis Projects: Targets – 1 Year

- Carry out an eco-audit of all buildings.
- Come up with a specific project to reduce the impact of climate change.
- Look at cost of installing solar panels on St Paul's roof.

Longer Term aims to be achieved by the end of 2024

- Encourage the Friends of St Mary's to become a lively local group developing projects for church and town.
- Manage change based on the survey of church and local people.
- The Climate and Health Action Group to complete and review first project.
- Follow up the eco-survey with action and funding.

In addition there are other longer term aims which the PCC discussed and which we should like to achieve:

- Clear plan to achieve financial viability as a parish and as part of the wider Team.
- Improved educational and discussion opportunities for new and existing people.
- More pilgrimage opportunities for members of the parish.
- Have at least four people trained in Lay Leadership.

THE VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

‘You step out of that door, Kaffir, you are a dead man.’ One of the first phone calls from a neighbour as Archbishop Desmond Tutu arrived at Bishops court, the official residence of the Archbishop of Capetown in 1982. The reason was that it was in a wholly white district and, under apartheid law, no black person could live outside a designated area.

Desmond Tutu was the first black person to head the Anglican Church of Southern Africa and it was a scandal to most white South Africans of all faiths, including many white Anglicans. I was privileged to meet him when he came for three days to our diocese in 1988 and, as Chaplain to our then Bishop, John Taylor, I had been involved in organising his visit. I had many conversations with his chaplain in Capetown and one I remember well.

‘The Archbishop rises at 5.30 and goes jogging, followed by 30 minutes prayer and the Eucharist before breakfast.’

I was somewhat bemused by the jogging, and said our Bishop would be delighted to pray and share the Eucharist with him, but jogging was not on our Bishop’s list of activities! Tutu nonetheless went jogging but with a policeman in attendance, as he got death threats almost every day and from white extremists. Indeed, we had to have panic buttons installed in Abbeygate House in all the public rooms and there was a policeman outside the front door for all three days of the visit.



Ian Ogilvie with Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Tutu was feared by the white, not least because of his strong teaching on non-violent resistance, which had led to his award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985, an amazing international honour, which angered the government greatly. Tutu refused to support violence and this made him unpopular with some of the black majority too, who wanted to take up arms against the white oppressors. But his faith and convictions never wavered in believing a peaceful transition was vital.

What was he like as a person? He had the most wonderful laugh and he was happy to laugh at himself. Despite his sufferings, and daily threats to his life, and one or two short periods in jail, he was never bitter; angry yes, as Jesus was, at injustice and ▷

wrong, but never pitying himself. Other people always came first – he had a tearful call from the wife of the Bishop of Mozambique whose helicopter had gone down in the country and was thought to be dead (he was found later). Linda Taylor had just brought coffee into the office and was stopped in her tracks as Desmond shouted, ‘Let us pray,’ down the phone 3000 miles away as he prayed with this lady.

The highlight of the visit was the midweek evening service in the Abbey. It was absolutely packed and we must have broken all the Health and Safety regulation, even though there were fewer of them thirty years ago! People were sitting on window ledges, all around the altar and on the floor. As he came out of the vestry, spontaneous applause broke out and went on for five minutes as he processed with Bishop John around the building. He began his sermon by saying he was tickled pink to be in St Albans ‘but with my skin you wouldn’t know anyway!’ It had been his birthday recently and his wife gave him a card, which read, ‘We have a unique, beautiful relationship – I am beautiful (as indeed Leah Tutu was) and you are certainly unique!’ He went on to preach about reconciliation and forgiveness with deep conviction.

I believe Desmond Tutu was a prophet. Prophets tell it exactly as it is with no regard for themselves. The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah was put down a sewer and New Testament prophet John the Baptist had his head chopped off. Much of Tutu’s ministry was under apartheid and he saw it as the greatest moral evil of his time, but when

the black ANC government began to show signs of corruption he said, ‘I didn’t fight to stop the white gravy train just so that you guys could jump on. This did not make him popular with some of the black community but prophets don’t compromise and they speak the truth whatever the consequences.

Nelson Mandela spent the first two weeks of his freedom at Tutu’s home in Capetown and later appointed him to head the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where white and black people who had committed violent acts under apartheid were made to face their crimes and seek forgiveness.

Now that wonderful man, diminutive in stature and immense in spiritual power, has left us at the age of 90 to be with the Lord he served so well.

I want to end with two quotes about him, the first from our own Archbishop John Sentamu: ‘Desmond Tutu loved, he laughed and he cried’. The last can only come from the great Nelson Mandela: ‘Sometimes strident, often tender, never afraid and seldom without humour. Desmond Tutu’s voice will always be the voice of the voiceless’.

Tutu may no longer be with us but his legacy and his smile will live on. Thanks be to God

Ian Ogilvie
Tring Team

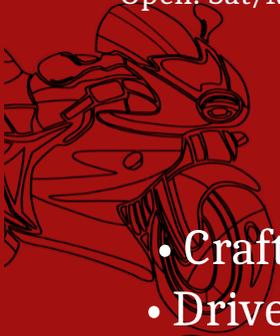
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The Revd Luke Geoghegan

The Revd Richard Leslie

The Revd. Diana Spink 01442 262133

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