

Church Council Members (as at May 09)

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We are always looking for good articles to put into this newsletter, so if you have come across anything which you think might be of interest to others, personal reflections, poems, etc, please let me have them before the next deadline, which is:

Monday 3 August 09, for distribution end August.

Articles may be edited due to space restrictions.

Marian Summers 1 Pintail Crescent ph 01 376 324 186
Maggie Ouwehand 20 The Ley ph 01 376 348 682

The Church in Great Notley

All ages welcome
Come and join us as we praise God together



June - August 09

We are five denominations working together:
Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic
and United Reformed Church

Minister

Rev. Mike Shrubsole ph. 01376 564880
e-mail m.shrubsole@virgin.net
www.greatnotleychurch.org.uk

Mission statement

The aim of this church is:-
*To show the love of Jesus in word and action
so that others may come to know him as Lord and Saviour.*

Sunday Services for June-Aug 09

(In the Community Centre)

All are welcome to our Sunday morning services at **10.30am**.
Holy Communion (HC) is on the 2nd Sunday of each month,
and we have **All Age Worship** (AAW) on the 4th Sunday.

June	7	10.30 am Jennifer Bailey
June	7	6pm Rev Mike Shrubsole
June	14	Rev Mike Shrubsole HC
June	21	Rev Stephanus du Toit
June	28	Rev Mike Shrubsole AAW
July	5	10.30am Nick Stuchfield
July	5	6pm Val Spouge
July	12	Rev David Dickens HC
July	19	Jim Lowe
July	26	Val Spouge AAW
Aug	2	Rev Stephen Bailey (no evening service)
Aug	9	Rev David Dickens HC
Aug	16	Mike Shelbourne
Aug	23	Combined service at SS Peter & Paul, Black Notley
Aug	30	Marian Rollins

God, the Port of Peace

*Here is a peaceful prayer for anyone leading a too-busy,
stressed-out life:*

Now come all, you who have been brought
In bondage full of busy bitterness,
Earthly desire abiding in your thought!
Here is the rest from all your busyness,
Here is the port of peace and restfulness
To those who stand in storms and in dis-ease,
Open refuge to wretches in distress,
And all comfort from trouble and mis-ease.

Adopted from John Walton, about 1410

Dates for your diary.....

- 8 June - Church council meeting
- 29 June - General church meeting- we will be considering
some material samples for the finishing of the new
church building
- 29 June - Feast day of SS Peter & Paul
- 4 July - Great Notley village fete
- 23 Aug - Combined service at SS Peter & Paul, B Notley
- 20 Sept - Induction service for Rev Beth Bendrey at
3pm at SS Peter & Paul, B Notley
- 27 Sept - Back to Church Sunday 2009
- 27 Sept - Harvest All Age Festival

and finally.....

Cadbury Dairy goes Fairtrade!

The Fairtrade Foundation has announced that Cadbury Dairy Milk, the UK's top-selling chocolate bar, is to achieve Fairtrade certification. The move is expected to result in the tripling of sales of Fairtrade cocoa for farmers in Ghana. Great news for us all !!

Black Notley Parish News

The exciting news is that we have appointed our new Church of England Parish Priest - Rev Elizabeth (Beth) Bendrey. She will be working in Black Notley, and in Great Notley alongside our existing Minister, Rev Mike Shrubsole. Beth will move into a rented Rectory during the summer and will be inducted into her new ministry, probably on 20th September. Please keep her and her husband Ian in your prayers as they prepare for this move and new phase in their life.

Mike

Elbow room?

A grandmother was giving directions to her grown grandson, who was coming to visit with his wife:

"You come to the front door of the block of flats. I am in flat 342. There is a big panel at the door. With your elbow, push button 342. I will buzz you in. Come inside, the lift is on the right. Get in, and with your elbow, hit 3. When you get out, I am on the left. With your elbow, hit my doorbell."

"Sure Grandma, that sounds easy, but why am I hitting all these buttons with my elbow?"

"You mean you're coming empty handed?"

Letter from our Minister, Rev Mike Shrubsole

Dear Friends

Have you made your plans for the summer yet? And will those plans include something of spiritual or theological value to nurture your spirituality and your thinking? Of course, a holiday to relax in and enjoy doing something different is a good thing, but wouldn't it also be a good thing to explore some new and different worship experiences, or perhaps be challenged with some new thinking about God and God's world?

Every summer the Christian press fills up with many different holiday opportunities. There truly is something for everyone. Whether you prefer a quiet and relaxing holiday with a simple and prayerful 'thought for the day'; or perhaps a full programme of lectures and events at a weekend like Greenbelt; perhaps you want it young and lively at an event like Soul Survivor or New Wine; how about a Cathedral Camp helping spring clean a beloved ancient monument; or how about a family camping holiday at the Spring Harvest site on the French Atlantic coast with teaching for all the family provided by the Spring Harvest Team? There is so much choice. Have a look, and go for it!

This year my summer is going to be rather different to the usual. I will be on a three-month sabbatical programme from 1st July to 17th October. I would like to thank all those, locally and nationally, who are helping to make my sabbatical possible. Ministers in most denominations are offered an opportunity like this once every ten years. It is intended to be a time of refreshment and exploration of new ideas and experiences. Every minister plans their own programme. Hopefully it will be of value to them as an individual, and will help them in their future ministry with the local church, and will perhaps mean that they are better equipped to serve the wider church through the deeper knowledge and experiences they gain. But the emphasis is on refreshment and not output!

Letter from our Minister ... *continued*

I have planned my sabbatical to begin with a one-month stay at Tantur, between Jerusalem and Bethlehem in Israel. Tantur is an ecumenical theological institute for individuals who want to immerse themselves in studies of the Holy Land past and present. So, the programme includes the traditional pilgrim archaeological visits to the places mentioned in the Bible, and it also includes political and social appreciation of the present-day tensions between peoples in this divided land.

My general theme for the whole of the sabbatical is to develop a deeper appreciation of the problem of climate change and carbon dioxide emissions and to explore what Christians are saying about it and doing about it. Whilst at Tantur, I want to look more deeply at the agricultural and nature parables of Jesus and think about what they tell us about Jesus' concern for the environment. During August, I will be visiting a variety of different Christian holiday events such as Soul Survivor and Greenbelt. September will mainly be taken up with private reading and reflection and some visits to interview people who are working in the climate change field of scientific research or who are campaigning for change.

So my summer will be different this year, I will be having a longer rest and a deeper experience of new things than usual. I've never had an opportunity like this before. But a sabbatical programme is just like a longer and bigger summer holiday with more time and space for extra experiences and reflection. So I'm looking forward to an enjoyable time. I hope you are looking forward to something new this summer too. When I return in October, I hope we all find each other refreshed and renewed.

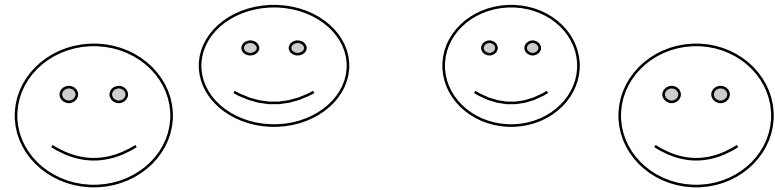
Yours in Christ, *Mike*

The Church in Great Notley

Junior Church

providing a caring and nurturing environment for you and your children at worship each Sunday.

The provision follows a monthly pattern.



Second Sunday – (14th June, 12th July)

a **Junior Church session** led by our leaders in an adjacent room. This allows parents time and space to enjoy worship, which concludes with Communion.

The fourth Sunday is **All Age Worship** (28th June, 19th July, 23rd August) when the children will be encouraged to be more involved throughout the service and a craft activity will be provided linked to the theme.

First, third and fifth Sunday and during the summer school holidays – toys for toddlers are provided at the back of the hall and in addition we will have a pack of simple colouring and activity sheets accessible to children and supervised by the parents.

Date for your diary – 27 Sept

Harvest all age festival

From the Junior Church team

Prayer: a beginner's guide

The good thing about prayer is that there's only one way to go wrong, and that's *not* to do it. The best way to do it is to just get on and do it. If prayer at its simplest level is listening to God and talking to him, you don't need long books to tell you how to do it, you just need a conviction that prayer is a good thing to do, that you're someone God wants to hear from and that he's worth talking to.

Is prayer a good thing to do? Never mind for the moment about whether prayer 'works' or not: Jesus prayed and he encouraged his disciples to pray too, so if we're following him, we need to be praying. Full stop.

Are you someone God wants to hear from? The message of the Bible is that however unworthy, sinful and useless we may feel as human beings, God can't wait to hear from us and is sitting on the edge of his seat, hand poised ready to pick up the phone the second it rings.

Is he worth talking to? He's the one person who knows us inside out, the one person with infinite power at his fingertips, the one who has the true perspective on an entire world's story. Not a slot machine to pay into in the hope of one day getting 'an answer to prayer', but a person...who likes us.

How might you begin to pray? What sort of a person are you? Do you like a good gossip? Then gossip to God. Are you the strong silent type? Then be silent in his presence. Say hello... say the Lord's Prayer ... say 'Oh God' and mean it... deliberately be silent and still for one minute ... read a story from a Gospel and imagine what you would say to Jesus if you were there... tell him about what is worrying you or thrilling you ... copy the great pray-ers of the Bible and of the Church... write a letter to him ... listen and look for a few moments in a place you consider holy...

**You can't go wrong. Prayer is good.
God longs to hear from you. He's worth it.**

Church Building News

Our Sharing Agreement was signed locally on 29th April. Now we need to collect a few more signatures from church headquarters around the country.



It will be fully completed very soon. We are progressing over the next few weeks to appoint the necessary supervisors (a CDM (Health and Safety) Coordinator and an Employers Agent) who will oversee the completion of the contract on our behalf. Once we have a completed and agreed contract, our contractor should be ready to start on site work within a couple of months.

It really does look as if 2009 will be the year in which building starts. Of course, we must remember the old saying: 'Don't count your chickens before they are hatched!' But, we do seem to be getting much closer to a start date. One concern of which we are very aware is that the financial budget is very tight. We are probably going to have to specify some omissions from the scheme in order to be able to afford it. But, at this stage, it does not look as if a tight budget is going to stop us from going ahead. Of course, any generous donations or enthusiastic fundraising could improve this picture for us. The Treasurer of the 'Friends' is always ready to receive any new gifts into our charity account!

**An edited extract from Pause for Thought
(Terry Wogan's Radio 2 show 13/5/09)**

From Lieutenant Colonel Charles King, Editor in Chief at the Salvation Army's International HQ:

With all the hoo-ha about MPs expenses, the visit of the Pope to the Holy Land didn't generate as much publicity as it might otherwise have done. When he went to the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount in Jerusalem, he was the first Pope ever to go to what is a site sacred to Christians, Jews and Muslims – the world's three great monotheistic religions.

At the Dome of the Rock – which marks the spot from where the Prophet Muhammad is said to have ascended to Heaven - he took off his shoes in deference to Islamic custom and met the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. Then he moved on to the nearby Western Wall – the Wailing Wall, one of Judaism's holiest places – where he met Israel's chief rabbis. Later he prayed where Christ is said to have eaten his last meal.

Three great faiths, with significant differences that can't be ignored, but with much in common, including a shared belief in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. With such a precious shared past, surely it should be possible to share an equally precious and peaceful future. Pope Benedict offered a prayer for peace yesterday that deserved to rise above the clamour of everything else that was jostling to get into the news bulletins. The implication of it was that the people of the world are one human family, some members of whom have fallen out with each other and are in need of reconciliation. I think most of us can identify with that.

The first step towards reconciliation, surely, is looking at what you have in common, not at what divides you. The truth is, reconciliation can take place, if men and women want it badly enough. I don't know if it ultimately lies in the hands of Popes and Muftis and Chief Rabbis, or ordinary men and women – Christians, Jews and Muslims, whose holy books have so much in common, urging them to honour their Creator by respecting their neighbour. I'm more than happy to say 'Amen' to the Pope's prayer for peace.

Summer Solstice

Sol + stice come from two Latin words meaning 'sun' and 'to stand still'. As the days lengthen, the sun rises higher and higher until it seems to stand still in the sky. The Summer Solstice results in the longest day and the shortest night of the year. The Northern Hemisphere celebrates in June, and the Southern Hemisphere celebrates in December.

While the Druids worship at Stonehenge & elsewhere, below you will find some Christian alternatives that honour the Creator rather than the created.

A Canticle for Brother Sun

Praised be You, My Lord, in all Your creatures,
Especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who makes the day and enlightens us through You.
He is lovely and radiant and grand;
And he heralds You, his Most High Lord.
(St Francis of Assisi)

God in All

He inspires all,
He gives life to all,
He dominates all,
He supports all.
He lights the light of the sun.
He furnishes the light of the night.
He has made springs in dry land.
He is the God of heaven and earth,
of sea and rivers, of sun, moon and stars,
of the lofty mountain and the lowly valley,
the God above heaven, & in heaven, & under heaven.
(St Patrick)

Give us today our daily bread

Have you ever thought that it would be a really good thing to do to start each day with a Bible reading and a prayer, but practically it's hopeless. You may be like me – work full time, early start, long trip to work, rushed breakfast..... Life is too busy, and there are too many pressures to make any more time in the morning.....but still....there is a longing to be closer to God.

I'm encouraged to share with you a little of my hectic morning routine which satisfies my desire to connect with God at the start of each new day, and to commit the day to him, whatever it may bring. Once the milk has been poured on the cereal, I make my way to my computer and log into www.dailyscripture.net, conveniently stored in my list of favourites. Here I find a reading from the Bible, a meditation and a prayer, all of which is devoured in exactly the same time it takes me to eat my Special K. I haven't got time to read it twice, or to stop and think about what I have read. The computer goes off and I'm away, but I do have time on my journey to work to try and recollect what God is trying to say to me, and by this small daily connection, I believe God changes me and draws me closer to him.

There are many sites for reading scripture in the internet, so have a look and see if one suits you. *Happy surfing!*

- Maggie Ouwehand

Quote for the day:

If the Saviour cannot manifest himself at your breakfast table, he will not shine through you at any other table.

- Vance Havner

What goes on 'in the cupboard'?

Actually it's been a couple of years since we last saw the preacher and preacher carer huddle away in the little store cupboard for a prayer before the service, much to the amusement of our visiting preachers!

Nowadays they go into the adjoining small hall, but still shut the door. What on earth are they doing in there?!

The time before the service is often very busy for the minister – there are props to get out, readers to organise, computer generated hymns to get into order and find someone competent to get the overheads up in the right order. In all the bustle of doing God's work, it is quite easy to forget God, and therefore it is essential to have a quiet time, both for the congregation and for the minister, to allow the Holy Spirit to prepare us for the approaching hour of worship.

The time 'in the cupboard' is spent in prayer, asking for God's blessing on the preacher and the congregation.

We would really like some more people to come forward to be preacher carer. You don't need to be a great prayer – we have a book written specifically for this occasion called 'New Vestry Prayers', or you can say your own prayer if you prefer.

Please consider this small but important job, and give me a ring if you would like to be included. Many thanks.

- Maggie Ouwehand (ph 348682)

Feast of SS Peter & Paul

This issue we remember the two most famous apostles, for they share a feast day on 29 June. It is thought that 283 pre-reformation English churches were dedicated to SS Peter & Paul together.

St Peter (d. c. 64AD), originally called Simon, was a married fisherman from Bethsaida, near the Sea of Galilee. He met Jesus through his brother, Andrew. Jesus gave him the name of Cephas (Peter) which means rock. Peter is always named first in the list of apostles & was one of the three apostles who were privileged to witness the Transfiguration, the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and the Agony in the Garden. Jesus told Peter that he would be the rock on which his Church would be built & Peter would be personally given 'the keys of the kingdom of heaven'. Jesus also forewarned Peter of his betrayal and subsequent strengthening of the other apostles. After his Resurrection, Jesus appeared to Peter before the other apostles, and later entrusted him with the mission to feed both the lambs and the sheep of Christ's flock.

In the Book of Acts, in the early chapters he organised the choice of Judas' successor, preached with stirring authority at Pentecost; and was the very first apostle to work a miracle. Later, he took a prominent part in the council at Jerusalem, and went on to clash with St Paul at Antioch for hesitating about eating with gentiles. Peter's presence in Rome is mentioned by early church fathers such as Clement of Rome and Irenaeus. Tradition also tells us that Peter suffered under Nero and was crucified head-downwards. There is no conclusive proof either way that St Peter's relics are at the Vatican, but it is significant that Rome is the only city that ever claimed to be Peter's place of death.

Images of Peter are innumerable, but his portraiture remains curiously the same: a man with a square face, a bald or tonsured head, and a short square, curly beard. Not surprisingly, his chief emblem is a set of keys, sometimes along with a ship or fish.

Feast of SS Peter & Paul

Like Peter, Paul also started life with another name: Saul. This great apostle to the Gentiles was a Jew born in Tarsus, and brought up by Gamaliel as a Pharisee. He became a persecutor of Christianity, & even took part in the stoning of Stephen. While on his way to persecute more Christians in Damascus he was suddenly given his vision of Christ. It was the decisive moment of Paul's life – he suddenly realised that Jesus was truly the Messiah, and the Son of God, and that He was calling Paul to bring the Christian faith to the Gentiles. Healed of his temporary blindness, baptised, he retired to Arabia for about three years of prayer and solitude, before returning to Damascus.

From then on Paul seems to have lived a life full of hazard and hardship. He made many Jewish enemies. Nevertheless, Paul made three great missionary journeys, to Cyprus, to Asia Minor and eastern Greece, and lastly to Ephesus, where he wrote 1 Corinthians, then to Macedonia and Achaia, where he wrote Romans, before returning to Jerusalem. After stonings, beatings and imprisonment in Jerusalem, he was sent to Rome for trial as a Roman citizen. En route, he was shipwrecked at Malta; when he finally reached Rome he was put under house-arrest for two years, during which time he wrote the four 'captivity' epistles. Paul may have revisited Ephesus and even have reached Spain. Tradition tells he was eventually martyred at Rome during the persecution of Nero, being beheaded (as a Roman citizen) at Tre Fontane and buried where the basilica of S Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. The belief that Peter and Paul died on the same day was caused by their sharing the same feast day.

It is difficult to overemphasise the influence of Paul on Christian thought and history: he had a major effect on Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Calvin and others. In art, Paul is depicted as small in stature, bald and bandy-legged, with a long face, long nose and eyebrows meeting over deep-set eyes. His usual emblems are a sword and a book.