

across

ROYSTON

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The magazine of the Church of St. John the Baptist, Royston Parish Church,
part of the world wide Anglican Communion

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Altar frontals;
Ray Smith; Africa Mercy;
A life in the day...Lindsay Davidson



Tim Penn



Oscar Sassoli



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As I write this, summer has definitely arrived and in typical British fashion we have gone from the sublime to the ridiculous – no sun and chilly to full Mediterranean sunshine and soaring temperatures. Mind you, in another a week it may well be pouring with rain!

Across Royston this Spring and Summer there has been a wealth of activity and community spirit. From the Pink Ribbon Run/Walk on the Heath where 1000 people took part to the Fun Day (Wateraid) and our own church fund raising events. It's wonderful to see so much happening in our small town and how the community of Royston gets involved.

In this issue we hear from Emma Burgess, the town market manager. Our regular market is growing and offering a much wider variety of produce and at the same time we have gained a butcher and a new clothes store in the town centre. Suddenly the town is looking and feeling more positive. Perhaps this will encourage other entrepreneurs to take the plunge and open further businesses.

Also in this issue we deal with the sadness of the passing of Ray Smith, he will be missed. We hear about Lindsay Davidson and from a previous curate at St. John's, Averil Lauckner and how she is finding life at an inner-city church.

Veronica Weatherhead returns with an article and photos from her time on the Africa Mercy and the realisation of a youthful dream to serve as a nurse in Africa.

And lastly, but by no means least, we have an article from Bert Richardson. To all of us it is a powerful message and one that will speak to many Christians. Some of us are just as this article describes and understand it completely. Thank you Bert for taking the time to write in and be so open about your take on this sometimes difficult and very personal part of our faith.

The Across Royston editorial team

Contents

Our new altar frontals	4
Parish letter	6
Heart of the Matter	7
Ray Smith, RIP	10
Through all the changing scenes of life	12
Historic Royston:	
Where weary vicars have rested	14
A life in the day...	15
News, Views, Events	16
Web Watch	17
Mothers' Union	18
On the market	19
My Africa Mercy experience	20
Church fete	22
cHALLenge update	23
Where are they now?	24
Contact information	25
Dates for your diary	26
Services information	27
Book fair	28

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Across Royston is the journal of the Parish Church. Articles printed in this publication may not represent the views of the church or of all the members.

Final date for receiving articles: 10th of the previous month. Published six times a year. Articles, letters, sketches, poems, etc are welcome for possible inclusion in the magazine.

The Editor's decision is final. If you submit a piece from another publication please make sure you get written permission to use it. The editorial team reserve the right to edit submissions as they see fit.

Entries included on a first-come, first-served basis - we have limited space each issue, so get your entries in quickly!

OUR NEW ALTAR FRONTALS

Joanne Wallis

Back in 2008, approaching Christmas, and again the problem of how to display the Nativity scene under the Altar and cover the Altar at the same time. Les and I had a thought that what if the Frontal had a panel in the middle, which we could remove to show the scene?

Jill Myers had some years before produced new Chasubles for the Church, so Jill was called in to give us advice. Jill was overwhelmed with joy at being asked to produce a new frontal, and of course once one had been discussed, we moved onto discussing frontals for the other seasons of the church.

White is the colour for the festal periods from Christmas Day to the Presentation and from Easter Day to the Eve of Pentecost, for Trinity Sunday, for Festivals of Our Lord and the

Blessed Virgin Mary, for All Saints' Day, and for the Festivals of those saints not venerated as martyrs. It is used for marriages, and is suitable for baptism, confirmation and ordination. After much discussion, Jill suggested we pick up the rose that is carved into the base of the pulpit (which was made from the wood from the 15th Century wooden screen), the three rings at either end representing the Trinity, and Alpha and Omega, "I am the beginning and the end" (Revelation 1:8). Jill managed to get the frontal ready for Remembrance Sunday 2008 and with its beautiful red roses looking very like poppies it drew many admiring comments.

The next project was the red frontal. Red is used during Holy Week, on the Feast of Pentecost, may be used between All Saints' Day and the First Sunday of Advent and is used for the





the year; from dark greens, light greens, autumn colours and back to dark green. At its heart, the bread (harvested corn) and the wine (grape vines). It is an overwhelmingly beautiful frontal, giving new pleasure every time it's seen.

The final frontal is purple. Purple is the colour for Advent and from Ash Wednesday

Feasts of those saints venerated as martyrs. It is appropriate for any services which focus on the gift of the Holy Spirit, and is therefore suitable for baptism, confirmation and ordination. The thought of the Holy Spirit, as tongues of fire, moving like the wind gave Jill the inspiration for the design. The cross, although small, draws us to its centre, thoughtful and meditative. It's the source of the Holy Spirit's explosive power. Jill successfully produced the red frontal for us to celebrate Pentecost 2009.

The green frontal was more of a challenge. Green is used from the day after the Presentation until Shrove Tuesday, and from the day after Pentecost until the eve of All Saints' Day. It may also be used, rather than red, between All Saints' Day and the First Sunday of Advent. We wanted the frontal to be relevant to all the seasons for Royston and the Church. The suggestion of quilting was an exciting difference to the other frontals. Looking at the cloth from left to right, we have winter (holly, ivy, etc.), spring (daffodils, pasque flowers etc.), Summer (fields of harvested corn), autumn (blackberries, seed heads of grasses) and back to winter. Many of the flowers and the blue chalk butterflies are native to our Heath, The strips of quilting depict the colours changing through

until the day before Palm Sunday. We had to cover both Advent and Lent and seemed to be the hardest one to decide on. Jill suggested a reversible frontal. One side depicts a cross bearing the crown of thorns, for Lent, and for Advent there are the three mauve candles (prophets), one pink candle (Mary) and one white candle (Jesus) as in the Advent ring, with rays leading us to the Christmas Star and baby Jesus. Jill managed this frontal whilst caring for her sick husband Peter; who died before he was able to see the completed work.

The frontals were blessed by The Rt Rev Bishop Richard Inwood, Bishop of Bedford on Sunday 20th June 2010, our Patronal Festival. Jill was able to be there, and we were all very appreciative of her work. Jill had enjoyed doing the frontals, and found the whole project a moving experience and a distraction from Peter's illness.

We are allowing dedications to be sown onto the reverse of the frontals as a memorial to loved ones. If you would like to have your loved ones remembered, please see me. There is a small charge to go towards the Church Funds. ■

**Please send copy/photos/information, for the next issue of the magazine,
NO LATER THAN 10th September**

(Space is limited, articles included on first-come, first-served basis. Date sensitive articles are given priority. If we can't fit your article in that issue we will include it in the following issue)

Parish Letter

Tim Weeks

Be Still, and Know That I Am God

I don't know if you have noticed recently, but a number of our sermons have been asking us to look outwards into the world rather than be inward looking, or as some might say, navel-gazing. There are a number of problems facing the church today and the temptation is to either throw up our hands in horror; abandon any thought that there might be a solution and then run away and hide or; spend so much time wondering how to solve the problems and become so focused in that direction that we lose any focus on the things we can get on with [the expression 'being so heavenly minded as to be of no earthly use' springs to mind – at least with regard to the second part].

At the time of writing this, the looming gospel reading for Sunday is the story of the Good Samaritan. This is a many-layered story and no doubt those charged with preaching will pull out some interesting and, I hope useful, strands.

However; just take the simple message for a moment and realise that in our everyday lives we are confronted with need. We are not often faced with mugging victims lying partly clothed in ditches, it may not be the simple need for food, water and shelter that we see in so many parts of this world; no, it may well be the need to combat loneliness, a helping hand through some of the complexities of modern life and bureaucracy or just a hand to hold in times of stress. Either way we may feel that, because we are confronted with so much need, there is nothing we can do and all our efforts would amount to what an American friend of mine would refer to, rather coarsely, as no more than a 'spit in the wind'.

I am reminded of a story that I heard Nicky Gumbel [of Alpha fame] tell. A man saw a boy on the seashore throwing star fish, which had been washed up by the tide and lay stranded on the sand, back into the sea. There were thousands of starfish on the beach and the man said, condescendingly; 'Don't bother to do that, there are so many, it won't make

any difference.' The boy threw another starfish back into the sea. 'It made a difference to that one,' he said. When we think of the tens of thousands of people in Judea and the surrounding territory that Jesus didn't physically help and His promise that 'S/ He who believes in me, these things s/he shall do and yet greater; [John 14 vs 12] perhaps we won't feel so useless for we believe in a God who longs to do great things through us.

I have seen a lot of 'Good Samaritans' in Royston, especially attached to this church; some, you will all know about, but there are many who quietly work for God and only He, and the recipient, sees. There are others who work in the community [many doing God's work, whether they know it or not].

I want to end by telling you a true story concerning a friend of mine and a trick he once played on a respectable congregation – like ours?

Picture the scene; the congregation arrived at the church for the main morning service. They came up the path chattering to each other in small groups, perhaps talking about the series of sessions on community involvement, given by one of their leaders; but, more likely, the weather or somesuch. They all noticed the rough character slumped against one of the tomb stones, head bowed, surrounded by an impressive collection of lager cans. Not giving him a second glance they went into church. A late congregant hurried up the path, paused at the sight of the man at the tomb stone, went over to him and knelt beside him. The man mumbled something to her and she left him and passed inside.

Within the church, the time for the sermon drew near. After the Gospel had been read, the doors at the back of the church opened and, to the consternation of those assembled, in walked the rough character from the tombstone. He shambled down the aisle and to the surprise of those present – especially the Vicar's husband – gave the Vicar a big hug; whereupon she escorted him to the front of the church where he proceeded to strip off his

filthy outer clothes and put on the robes of a Lay Reader [which had been secreted behind the altar]. He placed bread and wine on the altar; turned to the congregation and delivered his sermon – four words – before leaving the church by the vestry door:

What followed was a shocked silence, followed by several people leaving the church, too embarrassed to stay; one man shouting 'disgraceful' and several people telling him to 'be quiet'. After some minutes the Vicar continued to 'celebrate' for an unusually subdued congregation. After the service, no one

really seemed to want coffee and folk dispersed very quickly and quietly. The people talked about the service for months afterwards and the sessions on community involvement took on a new dimension.

And the four words of the sermon?

'Only one of you'*

**The combination of Matthew 25 vs 31-end and John 14 vs 12 is a powerful one and puts us on the spot – no excuses!*

Heart of the matter

A regular column by Cathy Brownjohn

The poor are always with us, so it says in the Bible, but no distinction is made between them. These days, a certain kind of rhetoric likes to suggest that there are two categories of people; the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor. This is a Victorian concept which is making a comeback, along with some Victorian economic conditions. No, I'm not talking about a return to dark satanic mills, but the fact recently illuminated by Danny Dorling, a professor of human geography, that the last time the gap between the earnings of the poorest and the richest in our society was this great was in roughly 1854.

All the evidence shows that the greater the gulf between rich and poor; the greater the rates of unhappiness and depression amongst those at the bottom of the heap and, oddly enough, the lower the levels of life satisfaction reported amongst those at the top. It seems that you can have too much of a good thing; if that 'good thing' is money, it can shut you away from others in society, diminish your understanding of those in less fortunate situations and give you a whole new set of problems to worry about behind your gated enclosure.

Before the recent crash, the acronym 'HENWI' was coined by financiers, standing for High Net Worth Individual. The use of 'worth' in the term infers some sort of moral value and indeed 'HENWIS' were lauded for their wealth creation and their importance to the economy, from which

we were all said to benefit. Somehow, people who were not doing well during the boom, the ever-present poor; were deemed to be stupid, lazy or scroungers. During the recession, this disapproval has intensified as the government seeks to make up the shortfall the bankers left us with welfare and other cuts. These cuts when they are made will bite deep into the most vulnerable flesh, that of the young, the poor and the old. To be heard in our society, you must have a loud voice and the ear of those in power. Too few people in this position use it to help those weaker than themselves, instead they use it to enhance their privileges and assure their advantages. What we need to remember is that camels are very poor at getting through the eyes of needles, and rich men are seldom greeted in heaven, unless of course, they have earned their money fairly and spent it well. ■

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Please note that during Lent and Advent we have no flowers in church.

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Ray Smith R.I.P.

This is a shortened version of Les's eulogy at Ray's funeral. A fitting tribute to a much loved member of the congregation

Lt Col Ray Smith R.I.P.

Ray was born in Wendover Hospital on April 21st 1932. His father was serving in the RAF in Malaya. Ray was the eldest of three children: brother to Rosemary and John. The family grew up in Tring and Ray won a scholarship to Berkhamsted School for Boys. Pat was going to Berkhamsted School for Girls and they first met on the school bus.

Ray was called up for National Service at 18 and joined the Beds and Herts Regiment, later transferring to the Royal Military Police, and had his first posting in Nigeria. On his return he and Pat started going out. On his return to Nigeria they began corresponding and they were engaged on his next home visit and were married at Tring Parish Church on 20th July 1957. Transport for the honeymoon came in the form of a very old Flying Standard, in which to change gear you had to double de-clutch, which was severely tested, particularly when trying to get up Porlock Hill when the bolt broke securing Pat's seat and she found herself suddenly as a rear seat passenger!

Ray's first posting after their marriage was to Woking in Surrey followed by a spell at Middle Wallop learning to fly Austers. Their next move was to Putney where Carole was born, followed by three months in Lagos before moving up to Kaduna. They took the opportunity for a leisurely journey back via Cairo, Jerusalem, Beirut, Baalbek, Athens, Dusseldorf and London.

In 1963 Ray was posted to Berlin where Nicky was born in the British Military Hospital in Spandau. It was the Cold War period after the construction of the Berlin Wall and a

very interesting time to be there. Before being posted to Hong Kong a house in Tring was purchased giving the family a home base. Hong Kong proved a marvellous place to be for the next three years, but then it was back to Tring and a further posting to Lisburn in Northern Ireland and from Ireland they went to Bulford, living under the 'Kiwi' with the local hunt's beagle hounds.

A posting to Singapore followed, where they lived in a magnificent house designed by Lutyens and have wonderful memories of holidays with the girls in Malaysia. They received a royal visit from Prince Charles. Playing polo he fell off his horse, but Pat was on hand to provide her expert physiotherapy. Meanwhile Ray had to oversee his safe passage through some of the seedier haunts of Singapore, a task made more difficult when HRH insisted, against Ray's better judgment that he travel in the Rolls Royce. Ray's worst fears were confirmed when a group of American sailors immediately recognised him in Boogis Street more famously known for being the street for transvestites.

Bielefeld in West Germany was the next posting where Ray ran a ski hut when it was decided that the Army should have trained skiers. Ray led expeditions to Nepal to pay Ghurkha pensions when he was posted to Dusseldorf. A posting to SHAPE in Mons, Belgium, followed. Whilst there, Ray was required to attend the NATO school in Oberammergau, fortunately wives were encouraged to accompany their husbands. A beautiful spot and with all its associations with the Passion Play. Amongst many other duties at SHAPE, Ray was in charge of the Honour Guard made up of police from each NATO nationality, which visited Chichester in July 1982 to meet Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. His last posting was in York, with Edinburgh Castle coming under his jurisdiction, before retiring from the army in 1986 after a rich and varied career.

Ray, Pat and Nicky came to Royston in 1986, Carole having got married in 1985. Ray was employed as Security Officer, European, at Johnson Matthey. It was to be a year that ended in tragedy with the death of their beloved daughter Nicky along with two other girls in a car accident. It was an event that clouded and marked the rest of their life, inflicting an indelible scar of pain and sadness. There are many reminders of Nicky in this church, including the candleholders on the altar, the wooden cross, the memorial book and the paschal candle stand. In spite of their devastating loss, Ray and Pat have found the courage to carry on. Ray has drawn strength from the prayer and worship in this church and from the house group held for many years in his house. The Saturday morning Eucharists have not been the same without his solid, reassuring presence. This short and simple service without any frills was very much to his liking. He didn't have much patience with

padres that waffled on (which I am in danger of doing – sorry Ray!).

In retirement, Ray pursued his varied interests in history, wildlife, and the National Trust. He was Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society and chairman for several years of the Town Twinning Association. And, of course, at the centre of his life there has always been his much loved family, wife Pat, daughter Carole, son-in-law Steve and cherished grand daughters, Nicola, Catherine and Maria.

We will miss Ray's bluff, no nonsense common-sense, his endless fund of amusing stories and above all his friendship for all and sundry.

May he rest in the peace of the risen Christ, reunited with loved ones gone before, especially thinking of Nicky.

AMEN

I would like to thank everyone at St John's who has helped me through the initial loss of my husband, Ray Smith, for all the cards and flowers, phone calls and visits I have received. To Joanne for taking infinite care over producing the wonderful Order of Service, with so many photos of Ray. To Les, and all the Clergy, for making Ray's Memorial Service truly memorable. I will never forget Les speaking about Ray's life, and remembering Nicky. Col Norman Allen also added to the Memories and it was wonderful listening to Tim.

Thank you to the bell ringers, choirs and organist and in particular Lance for singing one of my favourites, Pera Jesus.

I am very lucky to have shared my life with such a wonderful man, but perhaps that will make the rest of my life seem even harder. How fortunate I am to have my daughter, Carole and her family and the Church of St John the Baptist.

Pat Smith



Ray in S.H.A.P.E. June 1982

Through all the Changing Scenes of Life

Bert Richardson

I was impressed by the two articles in recent editions of the parish magazine on the subject of guided by prayer. But in case there are some poor souls in the Christian Church who have never felt that God answered their prayers and feel lost and inadequate, here is another view that might give them a little hope. I must hold up my hand and say in all my seventy five years of life I have never seemed to feel His guidance once.

Looking back on my life it may seem that my plans have come to nought so many times that you wonder why I am still standing happy and contented. This is not a history of my life but snaps to illustrate the point in question.

After an idyllic childhood in the wilds of Yorkshire, I returned to the city as a teenager to live on a large council housing estate on the edge of a Hull. Here I soon faced the early death of my beloved father (41 years) leaving my mother, elder sister and myself. As I grew into early manhood, I drifted except for my church life. I ran a church youth group for the children of the local Dockers, we lived close to miles of deep sea docks, and a Sunday school held in a local council school. I became interested in the ministry and applied to Archbishop Ramsey with the blessing of my parish clergy. He invited me to Bishopthorpe and rejected me as unsuitable. Angry and dissatisfied, I gave up work and decided to do more studies.

I had very little money in my pocket and a widowed mother to help and support, but I had a generous grant from the city council and as much part time work as I wanted from my old firm. I began my studies with no aim in sight except to go to London for further studies. Two years later Goldsmiths College rejected me. I was angry and disappointed again. I was left with no job and no prospects. Out of the blue an unknown college in Lancashire offered me a place among my arch enemies, the Lancastrians, to start four days later! Here I met my Liverpoolian wife. The College had a great Principal, who was a Christian, although it was state institution, and with her support a group of us opened up a small chapel in the grounds. When our three years were up, Sheila (soon to be my wife) and I planned to stay in the north but

I had a strong disagreement with a county council over changes they had introduced to my contract without my knowledge and I told them I would refuse to honour it! I was jobless again but at the last minute we received a plea to go south to teach in Dunstable and I finished up teaching London Overspill children, the toughest of the tough. My three great sons were born southerners!

I could go on with the way my life has twisted and turned. Not once has God seemed to answer my prayers, given me guidance or granted any of my wishes. He even gave me a faulty heart and an argumentative mind and very little understanding of spelling! "Born to change the world" as one colleague put it and another said "He marches to a different drum".

Yet when I look back on my life of joys, disappointments, depression and calms and anger; as a Christian I see the hand of God there beside me however many bends and right hand turns my path has taken. Not once has my prayer seemed to have been answered. Not once has God seemed to speak to me. Instead He seems to have planted brick walls and barbed wire fences across my path. From adulthood my plans have been stopped in their tracks, yet I stand here a contented man with a marvellous wife and three smashing sons. Even the last plan of a dyed-in-the-wool Yorkshire man, which was to end his days between the Yorkshire Wolds and the Cleveland Hills, has failed. So here I am happily living out my days in Royston! Yet if my plans have failed it has been for the good. I would never have met Sheila or her family if London had accepted me and I am certain I would have been a thorn in the side of any bishop! Strange are the paths that God has led me on!

So to all these thousands of Christians who say that they have never had their prayers answered; who wonder why they don't get the clear answer that your last two correspondents got, "Be not afraid, be of good courage". Look at your life in all its strange contortions and sorrows and ask yourself was God there with me? You may be surprised at the answer—God bless those with an unclear vision. ■


Pound for Pound Sponsored Slim

A number of us have started sponsored slim, raising money for the Church general funds, we started on the 29th May with our first weigh in, the fact that this took place on a Saturday Morning with coffee and biscuits was not a very good start, some people weighed in on the Sunday and have each week since.

We decided that we would continue until the beginning of August, this gave us 9 weeks of being good. Most of us decided that about 7lbs of weight loss would be a manageable target.

I have managed to raise £50.00 in sponsor money if I reach my target and I have fingers crossed, one lady has already reached her 7lbs on her 3rd week, she said her success was following the diet sheet in the pack and lots of exercise.

Some ladies knew they had commitments which would mean eating lots and will not be starting until August so if you want to join us please do not hesitate, packs are at the back of the church and Joanne has the scales, just ask. Sponsors are always welcome the more pounds for pounds the better.
Wendy Chappell



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HISTORIC ROYSTON:

Where weary vicars have rested...

Walking along the Baldock Road footpath recently I passed no.31 and noticed a smart new oval white plaque by its front door, bearing the words THE OLD VICARAGE. This set me thinking about all the other properties that have been used to house our vicars.

First I consulted Alfred Kingston's "A History of Royston", where I read how the first vicarage was provided in the reign of King Henry VIII:

Ground was laid out around the Church for a churchyard, and a vicarage house was erected on the west side of it, bounded by Church Lane and Melbourn Street. Whether the vicarage house was the gift of the 'inhabitauntis', as the Act of Parliament suggests it might be, or how the money for its erection was obtained, there is no evidence to show. Probably the same public spirit which had purchased the Priory Church had likewise made provision for the erection of a vicarage, while the Lord of the Manor gave the land for this and also for the new churchyard.

In a terrier dated 1610, the Rev. Thomas Greene being then Vicar, the vicarage house, yard and garden are described as 'A model of ground containing in length thirty-six yards, on which stands the vicarage house, with a yard and garden thereto belonging which whole model is holden from the lord of the manor by service of his court, and payment yearly of a pair of hawk's bells'. In a later terrier, presented at the Archdeacon's Visitation at Ware in 1681, the vicarage house is described as "Consisting of three Bayes of Building, in length 54 feet, in breadth at the south end thereof 20 feet, at the north end 23 feet, stand siting eastward upon ye churchyard, westward upon the Market Lane, butting northward on Ickleton Street, and southward upon a small tenement now in the occupation of Jno. Beldam". The terrier also mentions that there was a small garden 64 feet in length.

In other words the first vicarage was on the west side of the present churchyard alongside Church Lane with its front on to Melbourn (formerly Ickleton) Street. The small tenement mentioned would be the cottage which stood just inside the west gate of the

churchyard, being occupied by the sexton until its demolition in late Victorian times.

This first vicarage was used until the Rev. Edward Banyer DD, who was presumably well off, built his new vicarage on the other side of Melbourn Street. It remains today as the Banyers Hotel but does not seem to have been passed to his successor vicars, who appear to have reverted to the first place of residence.

During the first half of the 19th century a new red-brick three storey vicarage was built fronting London Road and the original building was demolished to enlarge the churchyard. This new structure stood where houses at the southern end of Garden Lane have been built.

Older Royston residents will remember that Mrs Detmold and her daughter Pat (Mrs Rule) lived there until after the 1939-45 War. The longest incumbency of the parish was that of Rev. Joseph Harrison, Vicar from 1875 to 1923, and he lived there.

When the Rev. Francis Fairchild Greig became Vicar at the end of the 1920s, he moved to the house that is now the centre of Copperfields, the street constructed on its gardens. There was also a meadow which became the site of Tannery Close. This was the first vicarage of my recollection. It is where I went for confirmation classes in 1945 and the lawn and meadow were often used by the scouts and cubs of the 2nd Royston St John the Baptist Scout Group. My first scout camp was in the aforesaid meadow!

More recently the diocese disposed of this property and purchased 31 Baldock Road, from where Rev. Leslie Harman and his family migrated to 20 Palace Gardens, the present vicarage.

So Royston has had 6 vicarages over the 400+ years since the inception of the parish but as you can see, change has been more rapid in the last 150 years! And hawk's bells are no longer required with which to pay the rent! ■

F. John Smith

A Life in the Day:

Lindsay Davidson



I have been a member of St Johns Church since I moved to Royston in 2000 from the wilds of Shropshire. As someone who has lived and worked in many places both in the UK and abroad, and led quite an exciting and interesting life during that time, I have found Royston to be a really good place to finally settle down and bring my wandering years to an end, (I hope!).

Both my husband Bill and I have always tried to really integrate into the local community wherever we have lived and especially now we are both retired, we have found it an invaluable way of meeting people and becoming part of the local scene as well as stopping either of us getting bored or turning into your typical grumpy old man and woman – although we can do that quite well too when we are in the mood! But on a more serious note, as a committed Christian particularly, I feel that it is very important to give back to the people around you and to take God's love out into the Community in practical ways, which is something I have always tried to do, even if sometimes this has been rather imperfectly. I have always felt it is better to try and fail than not try at all and I am sure that God would prefer me to "wear out" rather than "rust out" as I get older!

Since my arrival here, I have been Chair of Royston and South Cambridgeshire Home-Start as well as being a Home-Start volunteer for four years, initiated and led the St Johns Parenting Team which ran for nearly 6 years and helped over 150 local parents during that time, organised the "Families First" Royston Parenting

event for three years running, served as a School Governor for three years, and am currently a Royston Town Councillor.

I was also a "SSAFA" representative in Royston for two years when I first arrived because of my military background (my father was in the Army and I was an Army officer myself) and I also worked with the Youth Justice Board as a Community Panel member for a while after receiving extensive training, so as you can see I have not wasted much time since poor old Royston has had the dubious honour of welcoming me into its arms!

However, through all, and perhaps in spite of, this busyness and involvement, I know that the most important thread running throughout all of it has been my faith and the support I have received from the Church in many of the things I have tried to do. Having been a Christian for nearly 29 years now and having also experienced many different types of churches during that time, I have learnt (sometimes painfully!) how important it is to be rooted in to a good church fellowship and to have that as a solid base and foundation from which to work out into the world. There is a very wise saying that one of the signs of real Christian maturity is to realize how little you really know as you get older and also how dependant we are on the Lord to make sense of anything and then to have the humility to acknowledge this, I can only hope and pray that I am getting there even if only slowly! ■

Future dates for our diaries:

- o 10th September – Pamper night
- o 26th September 2010 – Harvest Festival (moved forward a week to fall within the Royston Arts Festival weekend of 24-26th September)
- o 2nd October 2010 – Harvest Supper

Don't forget the Church Family Barbecue on 29th August 4-6pm in front of the church. There'll be activities for the children as well as some delicious BBQ food and desserts. Come along for a chat with old friends and meet some new ones!

Help Wanted St. John the Baptist Advent Recipes

I am hoping to produce a book for this Advent containing recipes for a good Advent from our congregation, this does not only mean cooking recipes for the Christmas cake and the Turkey (but they would be helpful) but things that you do as a tradition in your home with your family, or did when your children were small, or you did with your family when you were a child. Special books that you always like to revisit and why. I will include the travelling crib and Christingle and hope we will get lots of other traditions from other countries which you may know about.

All you need to do is write your recipe out, if you have pictures that would be great and post them to me either in the pigeon hole at church, via Joanne in the Church Office or to my home which is 14 Brooke Road, Royston, Herts.

I will be making this into a small book which we will sell at the beginning of Advent so some of the ideas can be used by us all. All proceeds will go to the general Church Fund.

Hope to have your ideas by September 24th.

God Bless, Wendy Chappell

Socks for Harvest

We had a tremendous response last year when you included warm socks with your Harvest gifts.

The socks were distributed to the homeless and elderly of East London by the Sisters of St. Saviour's Priory. The people who 'drop in' for a warm meal frequently have bare feet. The socks were a great help last winter in the freezing weather. Please will you include socks again this year with your Harvest gifts.

With grateful thanks, Margaret Coates

London City Mission

This year the London City Mission celebrates its 175th Anniversary. The city has changed dramatically since Victorian times but the purpose of the Mission remains the same: to share with the people of London the transforming love of God in Jesus Christ and to enable them to join His Church. L.C.M. has about 150 paid staff engaged in their ministries, supported by around 200 volunteers. L.C.M. workers are engaged in District Ministries reaching out to the whole population especially in London's neediest areas. The missionaries share God's word in the streets, homes and workplaces throughout the city.

A special thanksgiving service will be held on 30th September at All Souls Church, Langham Place.

WALKS FOR OLDIES AND OTHERS

All the walks meet at the Heath car park for a 9.30am start

They are between 3 and 4 miles long and are taken at a very steady pace. If you have no car there will be room for you in someone else's car. If you think the ground will be very muddy please wear strong shoes/boots and bring a plastic bag to put them in at the end of the walk (especially if you are travelling in someone else's car), plus a change of shoes! Please note: no dogs. These walks are for anyone who wishes to join us and not just members of the Parish Church.

Bert Richardson 244509

3rd August
Croydon

7th September
Western-Clothall

Web Watch

A regular column on websites of interest.

It's hard to think of an activity which, on the surface, is more divorced from the digital age than gardening. However, gardeners have embraced the internet and all it offers with spadesful of enthusiasm: there are many, many good websites out there of which Crocus is possibly the most notable. First and foremost Crocus is an online shop, but it also offers help and advice for all types of gardener; from green-fingered gurus to the occasional barbecuer. The kitchen garden section is particularly good, offering planting plans, seasonal calendars for veg, herbs and fruit, as well as month-by-month tips and reminders. Go on, grab those secateurs...

<http://www.crocus.co.uk>



chALLENGE Quiz # 02

Many thanks to everyone who entered the second chALLENGE quiz. We raised just over £50 this time.

And the winner is ... Bob Smith

The questions were perhaps a little tougher this time and this time 16 entries were sent in. Of those, only 4 were completely correct, plus one more that arrived just too late. Another 3 had just one small slip, different in each case. This time we numbered the winners 1 to 4 and Clare rolled a die which came up with "3" (she would have rolled again for a "5" or a "6").

The quiz was fun to compile, I hope it was fun to enter. As anyone could Google for the answers (in the local library if not at home) there were a few slightly tricky ones.

I was hoping to catch someone in the "bear trap" ... surprisingly, the only one who fell in was ... the winner! "Ursus arctos" is the official taxonomic name for the brown bear; made up of the latin word for bear (ursus) and the Greek word for bear (arctos). As Stephen Fry put it on QI, "the Arctic Circle is named after the bears, not the other way round". The winner put "polar bear" but crossed it out in time. Oddly enough, there were several other answers offers: "Great Bear" (Ursa major) and "North Star" (Polaris, in Ursa minor).

The one that caused most head-scratching, I suspect, was the topical "our patronal festival" as the date we celebrate is on the closest Sunday. The actual date is the Nativity of St. John the Baptist which is June 24th ... or Midsummer's Day. Various alternatives were suggested, including "Evangelist's Day" (sorry, that's the other St. John – the one who Jesus loved, beginning with the Word, and so on – rather than his second cousin who hung around in the Madonna and child pictures).

In addition to the many entries, I also had a contribution for the next quiz which will be something a little different – a crossword. Thank you all again for taking part and raising money for the chALLENGE appeal.

Peter Rice

*Don't forget ALL are
welcome at our meetings –
not just mothers.*

The Mothers' Union does many things to help other people in about eighty countries of the world, and our branch contributes to that work in a modest way by donating to their work overseas at our meetings. But there are many ways that MU members help others in our own country too, such as giving holidays to needy families through AFIA (away from it all), caring for children when mothers visit prisons and providing resources for children in women's refuges. Our own members also work for others

in various ways and at our last meeting some delightful and miniscule garments had been knitted for the premature unit in the hospital. and at next meeting we will be making cards to be sent to prisoners at Christmas. For those who have no family, just a card made with love means so much at the season of peace and goodwill.

Our meetings are in the Catholic Church Hall at 7.45pm on the third Thursday of the month, so on 16th September we have a Craft Meeting, and on the 21st

October we enjoy a talk from Neville Chuck, who has spent his life as a local photographer as well as his other interests.

Please come and join us if you are able.

**Contacts – Joanne Wallis 246911
Margaret Coates 242548
Rev. Janet 243508**

At our May meeting, Jean McIntosh spoke on the 2010 Mothers' Union theme 'Relationships not Rules'.

Jesus Christ lived out this theme. He healed on the sabbath. He befriended the outcasts and had an unusual choice of disciples.

We split into groups to discuss the effects of traditions, truths, rules and how they are affected by our relationships.

Jesus is calling us to form loving, caring relationships, even if it means bending the rules. Remember that God is our Ruler but we should be guided by LOVE.

I would like to share with you our Final Prayer:

Margaret Coates

Almighty God, we thank you for your great gift of love – the love which we are able to share with those around us, which gives us a sense of self-worth and belonging, which enriches our lives in so many ways.

You have opened your heart to us – help us to do the same to you.

We thank you for your love which defies all expression, constant, total, inexhaustible, flowing out to us like a never-ending stream.

You have opened your heart to us – help us to do the same to you.

Almighty God, we thank you for loving us before we ever loved you and for continuing to love us even when we fail to love you in return.

You have opened your heart to us – help us to do the same to you.

Deepen our love for you and for each other. Help us to be faithful and true in all our relationships, and most especially in our relationship with you.

You have opened your heart to us – help us to do the same to you.

Amen

On the market

Emma Burgess, Royston Market Manager

Since 2008 Royston Market has held its rise in foot traffic and new traders. The Town Council took over the running of the Monthly Farmers' Markets on the first Sunday of every month together with instigating a Mini Farmers' Market on the 3rd Saturday of every month. Farmers Market Products are available from 9am - 1pm due to restrictions on sales of fresh meat the Farmers' Market is not allowed to trade for more than 4 hours.

The returning Italian Market shows that the people of Royston still support traders coming into the town and I hope that more travelling markets offering their wares will follow suit and come to Royston during 2010/11.

Advertising in the village/local magazines offers the public access to the market news together with traders being able to advertise their business.

Traders on the current market have expressed their gratitude for having an "on-site" manager who gets involved and is willing to undertake any issues that may arise.

Current utilisation of pitches is stable and I am always willing to accommodate new traders. Also, you may not be aware that a Charity Stall is available on a weekly basis at a charge of £5.

Currently the market offers: fresh fruit and veg, pet products including outdoor wear, groceries, a butcher, wooden wildlife products (made to order), baker, jeweller, household and plastics, swimming pool supplies, antiques and bric-a-brac, bespoke picture frames and a framing service, childrens wear, hot and cold food and drinks, plants and cut flowers, fresh fish, dairy products, ladies clothes, kitchen utensils and cleaning products.

[Ed: Thank you Emma. It's great to see the market and town looking more vibrant and offering more to the community. Let's hope that with the continued support of the community it will grow further, bringing in more businesses to the town centre.] ■

REGISTERS

Funerals

Rosanna King
Robert Green
Joyce Reynolds
Joyce Allan
Gerald Wallace
George Francis
Jenny Axtell
Nora Bozier
Violet Monk
Ray Smith

*May God grant them
eternal rest*

Weddings

Phillip James Black to
Rebekah Louise Richards

Christopher Charles Hackett
to Hannah Frances Maclellan

Stuart Richard Reynolds to
Ann Patricia Cave

Baptisms

Thomas Agrawal
Alfie Fuller

*We welcome them into the
family of Christ's Church*

My Africa Mercy Experience

Veronica Weatherhead



My name is Veronica Weatherhead and I live in Royston with my husband Mark and son Ed. I work as a staff nurse in the Nuclear Medicine department of Addenbrooke's hospital in Cambridge. Nursing is the only career that I have ever wanted and cannot imagine doing anything else. As a young nurse I was attracted to the thought of working overseas in a place like Africa but never had the courage to pursue it. So how did I end up spending a spell on Africa Mercy? It was my way of realising my early dream, nursing overseas, having an adventure whilst having the confidence that I would be safe and secure in the environment provided by Mercy Ships. But why Mercy Ships? Purely because I knew of them through Mark's work with Rotary, as Julia's husband was also involved. I certainly didn't realise that it was a Christian organisation and whilst I have always felt that I have some sort of faith I wasn't a churchgoer and I didn't know who I was praying to. Having contacted Julia and got the low down on the application procedures I was very surprised to find that one of the requirements was to provide a letter from my Pastor! Fortunately I knew Les socially and he was able to provide me with the necessary glowing references.

The whole volunteer process is self-financed and I am extremely grateful to those who supplemented my meagre savings to enable me to embark upon this 7 week adventure. These include my father, my husband Mark and Addenbrooke's Abroad.

Africa Mercy was anchored in the port of Lome the capital city of Togo in West Africa between Ghana and Benin, do look at the map, I had to, we are all so ignorant. Each season the ship is



Top to bottom:
Our ship, the Africa Mercy; the children's ward with teddies at the ready!



moved to a different location where a range of operations are provided for free by an ever-changing team of volunteers from all over the world. The selection process for surgery is widely advertised and initial screening takes place in local football grounds and churches where literally thousands of hopefuls attend, very sad as only a small proportion of them can possibly be treated. My allocated duty was as an admissions nurse who dealt with the selected patients immediately before their operations recording their medical history, height, weight, blood tests etc. All simple stuff but with temperatures in the 40s and patients speaking a variety of languages and dialects requiring interpreters, it was sometimes quite a challenge. One of the standard questions was "When did you LAST have Malaria?!" The children are wonderful; they don't complain and always seem to be smiling despite their numerous problems, I just wanted to bring them all home with me. All the children are given a knitted teddy bear to take home and even the older kids of 16 or so are keen to be given one. I told my sister Becci about the bears on my return and she, being in PR, has mobilised through an appeal, the Bassingbourn Knitting Guild to knit bears and the scheme has snowballed with more and more volunteer knitters – so if you want to knit some bears.... we have the patterns. I am going to be speaking about my experiences at a Mercy ships promotion in Southampton in the near future as I am keen to spread the news of the great works that they do.



Top to bottom:

Me (far right) with some of my fellow Mercy workers on board ship; The dental team

On arrival on the ship, I was taken aback by the fact that Christianity pervades everything they do with praise, worship and prayers but over time I was so impressed by the joy and compassion demonstrated by a group of such lovely people that I just wanted to be a part of it. I have started to attend St. John's since my return so we shall have to see, it's early days. I have already made arrangements to return next year between 9th March and 12th April when the ship will be moored in Sierra Leone.

If you want to know more about Mercy Ships or want to volunteer or become a donor visit the website at <http://www.mercyships.org.uk/> or phone 01438 727800 ■

Church Fete

The St John's church fete took place on 19th June. As always there was a great mix of traditional and new stalls and activities. There was something for everyone – bottle and toiletry tombolas, jewellery stall, plants, books, art, china & white elephant. Where would any fete be without its cake stall, guess the name and guess the weight competitions? We were certainly lucky enough to have all of these. For the children there was a bouncy castle, hook-a-duck, fancy dress competition and toy stall, not to mention the ice creams and all manner of games to try your hand at.

The weather could have been better but it certainly could have been much worse, and attendance seemed to be reasonable, especially when we learned that the profit was £3,628.02 – a slight rise on last year. The money will go to church funds.

As this was Trevor Lloyd's last time in charge of the fete we extend our thanks for all the hard work he has put in over the years to bring it to the success it is. ■



cHALLenge update

cHALLenge has had a very busy start to the summer with lots of fundraising events happening across Royston [Ed: sorry for the pun!]. We've had Open Gardens, Strawberry Teas, Leigh Casling returned to the church to perform for us once again and we had 'Anything Goes' from Royston Town Band.

Royston Parish Church cHALLenge is most grateful to Royston Town Band for putting on this concert in the Parish Church which has contributed to our appeal, and which was a very enjoyable evening. The varied programme included rousing brass band pieces such as Slaidburn, arrangements of classical pieces and of modern pieces such as the theme to Pirates of the Caribbean. Soloists included Paul Skerry on euphonium, young tuba player Jonathan Surridge's rendition of Nellie the Elephant and his sister Katy playing The Acrobat on the trombone

This concert, together with the return of Leigh Casling on 11 June (From Swing to the King) added nearly £900 to the appeal total. Despite clashing with the start of the World Cup a good audience enjoyed Leigh's Sinatra, Dean Martin, Bobby Darin, Michael Buble and then classic Elvis. We were also treated to a surprise appearance of 'Neil Diamond'. Audience participation added to the fun.

Following a generous donation from Mr and Mrs Ron Smith and the Strawberry Tea on 4 July the total is now over £54,000!

Phil and Jenny Burchill very kindly hosted the tea at Bull's Farm and many thanks are due to them and their family and friends for making it such a super afternoon. The weather was perfect and the dozen or so who walked thoroughly deserved the delicious scones, meringues, strawberries and dainty sandwiches in the lovely garden there. ■

Coming soon: Ladies' Pamper Night returns on September 10th. More treatments available, extra therapists in the church and some great gift ideas for Christmas. Watch out for the posters, purchase your tickets early and book your treatments quickly! It should be a great night and we might even have a sponsored wax with some very brave fire-fighters!



Top to bottom:

Enjoying the sunshine at the Strawberry Tea; Leigh Casling performing with audience participation; Jonathan Surridge of the Royston Town Band.

Where are they now?

Averil Lauckner



Life after a Royston Curacy!

Nearly three years after leaving Royston (as long as I was there!) I have been prevailed upon to let you know what I am doing and what is happening for me.

As many of you will, no doubt, remember, I moved from Royston to Lichfield in Staffordshire to take up a post with two halves – as the minister for Christ Church a “small” parish on the western side of the city, and also within the United Benefice of St Michael, St Mary and St John. The latter half of the job being largely about developing a City Centre Chaplaincy.

Sadly, the second part of the post has not worked out, mainly due to a personality clash between myself and the Rector of the United Benefice, but also because of the stress of trying to develop and change two ministries at the same time.

The result of this is that I now find myself, with half a stipend, but what is really a very full time job developing the parish of Christ Church.

As I said Christ Church parish is considered to be “small” one, with some 3000 homes and 5000-6000 people. It is essentially a suburban or dormitory parish. Apart from the houses there are two supermarkets (Morrison’s and Waitrose) which serve the whole of the city, a few small specialist shops, one or two factory units and Beacon Park, which also is an amenity for the whole city.

Most of the congregation is drawn from the area immediately around the church, and like so many other churches is formed of mostly the early retired. The challenge for the church is to reach out and be relevant to the large (over half the parish) new housing areas, most of which is to be found on the ‘Darwin Park Estate’. Here the population is mostly of young couples and young families, maybe it is not surprising that they are under-represented in our congregation.

So for the last 18 months or so we have been trying to find ways for church to be relevant and meaningful for these young families, whilst remaining identifiable as the Christ Church of our established congregations. Which is probably an impossible dream.

Some of the initiatives we have tried you would recognise from my Royston days. Pray & Play is a direct lift, and the All Age Eucharist was based broadly on the same ideas as the Family Eucharist at Royston. But some of the things we are doing are rather different – such as a once a month praise service on a Sunday afternoon (Come & Praise) aimed mainly at children, because there is no real possibility of having a Sunday School (the Quakers use our church hall on a Sunday morning).

It does mean that our Rogation Sunday Walk (with Quiz and tea) attracted a number of families, such



West Wales on my recent holiday

continued on page 28...

Contact Information:

*PLEASE AVOID CONTACTING THE STAFF ON THEIR OFF DUTY DAYS.

CLERGY

Rev'd. Leslie Harman 243145, 20 Palace Gardens SG8 5AD
leslie.harman@btopenworld.com
(off duty on Thursday)*
Rev'd. John Fidler 241886, 8 Stamford Ave.
(off duty on Saturday)*
Rev'd. Tim Weeks 01279 831404 or 01763 252632
angela.mweeks@ntlworld.com
(AVAILABLE Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Sunday)

LICENSED READERS

Margaret Coates 242548, 24 Wheatfield Crescent.
(off duty on Friday, Saturday & all evenings)*
Penny Davies 248434, 22 Goodwood Road
(not available weekday mornings and early afternoons)
Tony Mills 246410, 1 Dunedin House, Briary Lane, SG8 9BT
Tony_Mills21@yahoo.co.uk
(off duty on Friday)*

BELL RINGERS

Alan Curtis 222408

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Ann Smith 243082

CHOIRMASTER

Rupert Jordan 262885

rupert.jordan@schott-music.com

CHURCH FLOWERS

Mary Maze 245606

CHURCH SECRETARY

Joanne Wallis – Church Office 246371,

st.johnroyston@btopenworld.com

CHURCH TREASURER

Phil Burchell 848937

CHURCH WARDENS

Brenda Strangleman 245273

Peter Rice 242577

CRÉCHE

Mary Primett 243711

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Margaret Coates 242548

GIFT AID SECRETARY

Brenda Strangleman 245273

HOUSE GROUPS

Jane Askew 230712

KIDS IN CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Alice Barnes 221337

alicecatley2@yahoo.co.uk

MAGAZINE TEAM

Alice Barnes 221337

John Davies 243549

Wendy Gurr 246602

Cath Maybury 232909

stjohnsroyston@yahoo.co.uk

MOTHERS' UNION

Joanne Wallis 246911

MUSIC GROUP

Rupert Jordan 262885

ORGANIST

Adrian Jacobs 243224

adrianjgiacobs@yahoo.co.uk

PCC SECRETARY

Neil Guttridge 241818

STEWARDSHIP SECRETARY

Brenda Strangleman 245273

WEBMASTER

Alice Barnes, stjohnsroyston@yahoo.co.uk

Diary dates for August & September 2010

August

Sun 1st.		Royston Kite Festival. Church stall in aid of cHALLenge.
Mon 2nd.	8.00 p.m.	Parents' Baptism Preparation Meeting.
Sat 7th.	3.00 p.m.	The marriage of Aaron Asling to Linzi Noades.
Mon 16th.	8.00 p.m.	Prayer Group in the Lady Chapel.
Sat 21st.	1.00 p.m.	The marriage of Keke Cox to Lea-Ann Smith.
Sat 28th.	2.00 p.m.	The marriage of Karen Anderson to Danyel Bayliss.
Sun 29th.	4.00 p.m.	Church Family Barbecue in the church grounds.
Mon 30th.	2.00 p.m.	The marriage of Robert Joy to Lydia Leggett

September

Sat 4th.	1.00 p.m.	The marriage of Russell Kent to Rebecca Kitteringham
Mon 6th.	2.30 p.m.	Friendship Group.
	8.00 p.m.	Parents' Baptism Preparation Meeting.
Mon 13th.	7.45 p.m. Prayers.	8.00 p.m. PCC meeting.
Mon 20th	8.00 p.m.	Prayer Group in Lady Chapel.

Looking forward: HARVEST SUPPER – 2nd September, 6.30 p.m. in Greneway School. Quizzes, food and entertainment for all the family.

There is no 'Kids in Church' Sunday School during August, but there will be activities and quiet bags for any children attending (please ask one of the welcome staff for a 'Pew Bag').

If you visit our website:

www.roystonparishchurch.org.uk

you can find current prayer diaries, news, photos of events, updates on cHALLenge and information on our children's teaching

WEEKDAY SERVICES *(See weekly notice for special services)*

Eucharist:

11.00am Wednesdays (followed by refreshments)

9.30am Saturdays – There is an evening Eucharist on certain saint days and festivals.

Morning and evening prayers: said at 9.00 am and 4.45pm.

Pray & Play (for under 5's): alternate Wednesdays during term time at 2pm.

The staff are always glad to administer the Sacrament at home and to visit the sick and housebound when they receive a request—please contact the Vicar on 243145 to arrange a visit.

One of the clergy is usually available at the following times: Wednesday 9.30am to 10.30am and Saturday 10.00am to 12.00am. Arrangements can be made for baptisms and weddings at these times.

Sunday Services for August 2010

1st

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
11.45 a.m.
6.30 p.m.

9th after Trinity

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Parish Eucharist (with laying on of hands for healing)
BCP Eucharist
Service with a difference.

8th

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
12.00 p.m.
6.30 p.m.

10th after Trinity

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Family Eucharist
Baptisms
Evensong with hymns and sermon.

15th

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
6.30 p.m.

11th after Trinity.

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Parish Eucharist with baptisms.
Evensong with hymns and sermon.

22nd

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
6.30 p.m.

12th after Trinity.

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Family Eucharist
Eucharist with hymns and sermon.

29th

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
4.00 p.m.

13th after Trinity

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Parish Eucharist. Mission Sunday
Preachers: Ron and Cathy Smith of Mercy Ships.
Family Barbecue

An informal evening service will follow the Family Barbecue.

Sunday Services for September 2010

5th

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
11.45 a.m.
6.30 p.m.

14th after Trinity

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Parish Eucharist (with laying on of hands for healing)
BCP Eucharist
Service with a difference.

12th

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
12.00 p.m.
6.30 p.m.

15th after Trinity

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Family Eucharist (with Kids in Church)
Baptisms
Evensong with hymns and sermon.

19th

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.
6.30 p.m.

16th after Trinity

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Parish Eucharist with baptisms
Evensong with hymns and sermon.

26th

8.00 a.m.
10.00 a.m.

HARVEST FESTIVAL. BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY.

Eucharist (said with sermon)
Harvest Festival Eucharist (with Kids in Church)

No evening service. Arts Festival Grand Finale Concert.

...continued from page 24

that someone commented that we were lucky to have so many young families involved in church. The truth is they are not "fully" involved, rather more dipping their toes in the water. But it is a start.

Meanwhile, the routine life of a vicar goes on, with weddings and funerals (not in the numbers that we had in Royston) affording me one of the tremendous privileges of ministry, that of accompanying people at what are often vulnerable times of their lives. Not surprisingly there are also lots of baptisms, and with a much smaller church than St John's there is a maximum of two families per baptism service (or only one if the baptism is within the Parish Eucharist).

Maybe what surprises me most, is that we seem to have two major improvement projects happening simultaneously. There are plans to refurbish the 'service end' (loos, kitchen and storage) of the Hall, and hopefully to provide a

Parish Office as part of these improvements. In the church the heating system is rather elderly and probably incapable of adequately heating the building (at least not to modern standards), so we are just finalising the faculty approval to upgrade that, in the hope that we can all be a little warmer next winter.

Which, even with support of some very capable church members, keeps me very busy, and from time to time I wonder how this can really be only a half stipend post. But then I also reflect on how blessed we are, at the end of last year we licensed a Reader to the parish, and later on this summer the Non-Stipendiary Minister who has been working with us for the last 9 months will be formally licensed to the parish.

Busy – yes; blessed – that's certainly my feeling most of the time; but most importantly still energized, except when I am so tired that all I long for is the comfort of my bed.

No change there then! ■

Averil Lauckner



The 2010 Book Fair took place over the weekend of 15th and 16th May. It did particularly well raising £792.66 compared with £485.54 in 2009. A great deal of work was involved storing the many hundreds of books which had to be sorted and put into categories. The proceeds went to general Church funds.

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