

ST. MARY'S CHURCH NORTH MYMMS



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40p

January 2007

Musings from your Vicar!

‘Cry out!’ The prophet Isaiah is given a command; and he responds: ‘What shall I cry?’

‘Write your article!’ our esteemed editor commands me, and I respond, ‘What shall I write?’ Dare I say this is a common conundrum for parish priests, for whom the magazine deadline comes round with ever-increasing rapidity!

As I write, we’re still in the season of Advent, preparing, soberly, for the joyful arrival of Christ’s birth. Yet for the next few moments, I must turn my thoughts to the future and think of the New Year; Epiphanytide for the Church – a continuation of the joy of Christmas as the significance of Christ’s light begins to illuminate the understanding of the human mind.

For us in the Northern hemisphere, we become more aware of light, or lack of it, at this time of year. There is an on-going campaign to cease the practice of moving the clocks back an hour in winter but to ensure instead that we have more light later in the day; more light means fewer accidents, particularly ones involving children.

Light has a huge impact on our moods and our general well-being, as those of us who feel very low in winter can testify. I remember vividly as a child seeing a photo of a group of Russian children wearing make-shift goggles standing around in their underwear in a circle at the centre of which was an ultra violet light. This sort of ‘sun-bed’ arrangement was intended to counteract the gloom of their winters and boost the children’s physical and mental development.

The Scriptures, too, pick up on the themes of light and dark that are so intrinsic to human experience. Things, people and events brought into the light reflect our positive attitudes to light whereas of course, darkness hides fearful things and actions that are sinister and evil. In his letter to the Corinthians¹, the Apostle Paul writes:

‘When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purposes of the heart.’

In our Advent services we are encouraged with such words, to bring our darkness into Christ’s light, and saying a prayer of confession together.

That corporate act of confession reminds us that light and dark are present

in God and God's presence is found in both. The light that Christ brings through his loving presence with us encourages us to face the darkness within and around; to bring it into the light so we may look at the truth of it together and, no longer fearful of it, can act to overcome it. As I write this I have in my thoughts – along with the rest of the nation – the recent murders of young women in Suffolk. In life, their bodies were not their own and their deaths, so painfully public. Through this tragedy, many things are coming to the surface; shameful habits, lives lived in half-light, hypocrisy, prejudice and judgement – such things as we would rather not be disturbed by. Yet disturbed we are, and forced to listen to voices rarely heard – those of the women themselves - and in the 'light' of them, to listen again to our own voices.

Perhaps this might be God's light disclosing the purposes of all our hearts?

When we cannot see so well, we have other senses to draw more heavily upon. When we cannot 'see' in the sense of understanding, we have ears with which to listen more keenly. Opening ears to the experiences of others helps us re-evaluate all sorts of things. I hope and trust that the process of re-evaluation will roll on, carrying us to new places of justice, compassion and collective responsibility.

So, darker days and the beginning of a New Year present opportunities for new light and perhaps a change that can draw us more together.

And may the winters of life
be filled with the warm light of the Spirit,
the promise of God be around you
like the emerging of spring,
and the Christ be discovered waiting for you
at every bend in the road. ²

With love and prayers
Sally

¹ *1 Corinthians 4:5*

² *Liturgies for Daily Life, Dorothy McRae-McMahon*

Should baptised children be permitted to receive Communion before they are Confirmed?

This question was considered by your PCC at their meeting in November and it prompted a lively debate and caused us to think of our own experience and understanding of baptism and confirmation.

The PCC had last discussed this subject some years ago but felt then that it was not the right time to change the procedure. However, on this most recent occasion, the PCC concluded that it was now right to re-open the debate and extend it to the congregation of St Mary's. The purpose of this article is therefore to help us all begin to think through this issue carefully and to do so with some relevant historical, theological background. Then in the coming months there will be opportunities to meet and discuss the practicalities and our possible concerns.

History

Has the pattern of Baptism and later Confirmation and Communion always been followed in the Church?

The sacramental rite of Baptism originates in New Testament times in which baptism was understood to effect:

such a unity with Jesus Christ in which the believer participates mysteriously in Christ's death and

resurrection and so has the assurance that sins are not a barrier between us and God. A sign of this is that we belong to the body of Christ through his Church and receive the power to live in this new and different way through the Holy Spirit.

In the book of Acts baptism was linked to the laying on of hands by the Apostles. In the early Church the baptism rite was quickly developed and was carried out by the Bishop who **confirmed** their baptism by anointing them with special oil and the laying on of hands. The baptised were then immediately admitted to **Holy Communion**. Children were treated the same way as adults with regard to baptism, although godparents spoke on their behalf.

By the 4th century so many people wanted to be baptised that the Bishops could not keep up, so this rite was delegated to the parish priest! The newly baptised would then be anointed with oil and prayed over when the Bishop was next able to visit - this was later to become known as Confirmation.

The time that lapsed between baptism and confirmation by the Bishop increasingly lengthened but this was entirely accidental. Baptism and confirmation together continued to be regarded as the ideal. In the East, the Bishop even delegated Confirmation to the priest, and was involved only in the blessing of the

oil. That practice continues today and all candidates are admitted to Holy Communion immediately following baptism.

In the West, however, the Confirmation rite was retained by the Bishop and by the late Middle Ages, Confirmation became recognised as a separate rite.

Background

What has prompted this discussion?

There was a move in the 1950's in the Church of England towards holding Communion services more frequently, and ultimately this


became the established service each week. As people began to receive Communion more frequently it caused people to re-think the meaning of baptism.

It led many to recognise that baptism was the complete rite of initiation into the Church and this prompted to think what this meant for baptised children who were part of the church; were they too through their baptism wholly, and not unconditionally, part of the Body of Christ? If so, should they not be welcomed to receive the sacrament at the communion rail, alongside the adults?

Over the course of the next 60 years, there have been motions to General Synod, debates, experiments and recommendations about whether or not young baptised children should, with appropriate nurture and support, be permitted to receive Communion before they are confirmed. Three Dioceses were given permission to undertake pilot schemes.

Meanwhile, this was also being re-evaluated internationally in the Anglican Communion and the practice has now become widespread. In 1996 General Synod approved the Admission of Baptised Persons to Holy Communion before Confirmation and the following year, the House of Bishops issued guidelines for this practice.

In June 2000 The Rt. Rev'd Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St



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Albans, wrote to all the parishes informing them that he was willing to give permission for baptised children, from age 7 years and above, to receive Holy Communion before they are confirmed, providing a number of essential requirements are fulfilled. This is in line with practice throughout the Church of England; more than two-thirds of Dioceses now have such a scheme.

One such criteria is that each parish is given ample opportunity to explore and discuss this process, covering an understanding of the theology of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion and the Church, as

well as its implications for patterns of worship, proposals for future and on-going training. Once the church has had ample time to consider its position, the PCC as the representative body, takes a vote, which must amount to a two-thirds majority.

What has been the overall experience of parishes who have adopted this procedure?

It has become apparent that anxieties anticipated did not materialise. Indeed, the latest General Synod Review observes ‘.... That where children have been given the opportunity to receive, the whole worshipping life of the congregation has changed and blossomed.’ *

So, it is helpful to look back at past practices in the Church and realise that these often arose out of necessity and derived from practical considerations, as much as theological understanding.

That can be liberating when we come to examine how we might conduct worship in our own church in such a way as includes people who wish to draw near to God.

More in next month’s magazine.

Sally Davenport

[*Children and Holy Communion: A review: p11]

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Smoking beret in the Abbey!

‘Shhhh!’ announced the notice as we entered the nave of the Abbey for the annual Advent Procession on Advent Sunday, and I thought ‘What a wonderful idea! We must get one of those for St. Mary’s.’ Whilst ruminating on this, we managed to locate the St. Mary’s contingent, who managed to fill at least three rows of seats on the South side of the nave.

The theme for the service was ‘Exile and Restoration’, and the readings and music reflected the ‘ups and downs’ of the Jewish people in Old Testament times, from the Creation, through the Fall, the Covenant, the Law, the Kingdom of Israel, Exile, Hope of Restoration, to the Promise of a Saviour. There was indeed a distinct ‘Jewish’ feel to the service, not least in the choice of the opening congregational hymn, ‘The God of Abraham praise’. This is a paraphrase of the ‘Yigdal’ hymn of praise, often sung at the conclusion of Sabbath Eve and Morning services in the Synagogue, and sung to a tune very familiar to those of us acquainted with Jewish worship. Other hymns most of us enjoyed singing, were both translations from the Latin: ‘Jerusalem the Golden’ and ‘O come, O come Emmanuel!’

As at last year’s service, the ‘O’ Antiphons provided the musical framework for the service, and the Abbey choir under Andrew Lucas ably performed items including ‘The truth from above’ (Vaughan Williams),

‘Adam lay ybounden’ (Boris Ord), the beautiful ‘Civitas sancti sui’ (William Byrd) lamenting the loss of Jerusalem during the Exile, and an effective modern setting of the Advent Prose ‘Drop down ye heavens from above’ by Richard Lloyd. The organist performed a brooding improvisation very much in the French style, ‘depicting the fall of Jerusalem and the Exile of the people of Israel in Babylon’. The composer that came to my mind during this piece was Durufle, (of Requiem fame), and a unifying feature that became clear was the use of a repeated ‘Ground-bass’ over which the organist improvised a set of variations.

The theatricals remained very much the same as ever, with the choir entering a completely darkened Abbey church singing the ancient ‘Christus vincit’, lit only by the candles they and the servers carried.

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Smoking beret in the Abbey! *contd.*

There was much 'Copeny' in evidence, i.e. the wearing of golden 'copes' or cloaks much favoured by the clergy on these occasions!

The organist performed works by JS Bach before the service, but I'm afraid that despite the 'Shhhh!' stricture, I was unable to hear these very well! For some reason Bach's Prelude and Fugue in E minor, scheduled to be played as the concluding voluntary, became the Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor by the same composer.

It was during the singing of the final hymn that I detected the faint whiff of burning cloth in the near vicinity,

but it was not until later at Hertford House that one of our number revealed that she had accidentally set her hat on fire with her candle! At this point I would like to thank Sally and Chris very much for hosting a very enjoyable reception to conclude a wonderful evening.

Philip Deane

Answers to Christmas Quiz

1: Angels

2a: Hark

2b: Away

2c: Père

2d: Pipers

2e: Yule

3a: Christingle

3b: Heralds

3c: Reindeer

3d: Ivy

3e: St. Stephen

3f: Three

3g: Melchior

3h: Augustus

3i: Shepherds

4a: Tiny Tim

4b: Obedient

5a: St. Agnes

5b: Longfellow

5c: *Laeti Triumphantes*

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Parish Profile: Bryan Smith

Bryan Smith (aka Arkwright), owner of 'Homecentre' and 'Bryan's Bikes' is a familiar figure to many local residents. He has worked in Brookmans Park for almost twenty five years and many a DIY project has been successfully completed with his help and advice.

Bryan was born in New Cross, South London in 1953, the younger son of Frank, a signal and telecommunications engineer, and Beryl, a housewife. He attended Monson Road Primary and then went on to West Greenwich Secondary Modern School. At the age of 13, Bryan started working on Saturdays in a local hardware shop. School held little interest for him and he left without any qualifications at the age of sixteen and began working fulltime at J and W Hardware Ltd (where he had worked on Saturdays).

At the age of 18, Bryan began studying via day release at the National Institute of Hardware, which was situated in Leicester Square. He studied there for four years and in his final year gained the highest marks in the country. Following graduation, Bryan himself became a tutor at the college and continued with this one day per week, until 1982 when he moved to Brookmans Park and lived in the flat above the shop.

Bryan and his wife Michele have been together for over twenty years. In the early days, they also lived above the shop and following three moves in

Hatfield, are now living in Peplins Way. They have three children; Jay is 15 who attends Chancellors, Nicole is 12 and also at Chancellors, and nine year old Kieren who goes to Brookmans Park Primary School.

Bryan's big interest is in model railways and he enjoys visiting as many as possible with his sons. He also used to enjoy model making and building radio controlled cars but now has little time for this, as his present home requires lots of work.

Over the years, Bryan has served many local celebrities including the Beverly sisters who were house hunting in the area. He was also asked for and declined an interview with the BBC about the dangerous ducks in Gobions last summer?!

Bryan particularly enjoys the 'bike' aspect of his job. Mostly though if he can help someone in the course of his day it makes him happy. He certainly made me happy when he finally got my towel ring but I said I wouldn't mention that.....!!!

Sara Boothby

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PCC meeting of 13 November 2006

The Vicar reported that the dossal is still receiving attention following the development of mould, and she is seeking advice on assistance with renovation, grants, position in the church and its long term home.

Sally thanked those members of the PCC who attended an on-site meeting in the New Churchyard to review the difficulties of maintaining the graves in their present condition. (See also Churchyard update p16)

A date of 29 September 2007 has been agreed for St Mary's to hold a Harvest Supper to join in the Golden Jubilee celebrations at the North Mymms Memorial Hall. A sub-committee was formed to begin making plans for this event which will involve others from the wider community.

The Revd Davenport advised the meeting that the brochure for those intending to marry at St. Mary's was nearing completion.

Geoffrey Boothby gave a brief resume of the financial situation. He reported that finances are in good health, this is partly due to interest rates having gone up, although both the Quota and secretarial costs for 2007 are higher.

The projected deficit for 2007 stands at £1163, against £5472 for 2006. Geoffrey Boothby advised the meeting that the figures as given do not include:

- a) OSSIF receipts
- b) Cost of dossal repair
- c) any expenses incurred with regard to the Bevington organ

The Vicar expressed the thanks of the PCC to Geoffrey Boothby and Sue Crawley for their work.

The subject of Children and Communion was discussed in depth by the members of the PCC, with several members speaking of their own confirmation. Many views and concerns were aired on the subject of children receiving communion. It was proposed that steps should be taken to begin the process of considering this proposal more widely with the congregations of St Mary's in accordance with the requirements and guidelines laid down by the Bishop of St Albans.

[see 'Thoughts on Children and Communion' on p3.]

Jean Hockings - PCC Secretary

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Bishop's Harvest Appeal

Freely we receive, freely we give....

Towards the end of each financial year, the PCC makes a decision on how to distribute 10% of the pledged giving received from you, which we pass on to charities. We currently try to spread this equally among organisations at home and abroad and to support charities that are openly Christian in outlook and practice. This task is a joy but can be taxing as there are so many worthy causes from which to choose. Over the course of the next few months, PCC member Josie Thomas has agreed to write about the choices made this year. Overall, we have given away £4,700.

This month's charity is the Bishop's 'Harvest For the Hungry' Appeal, sponsored by The Rt Rev'd Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St Albans. Each year the Bishop chooses a particular charity to support and encourages the parishes to adopt it for their harvest service contributions.

The Appeal is supporting farmers in Uganda through an organisation called TEDDO, a Christian Aid partner working with people displaced as a consequence of civil war, to enable them to live self sufficient lives.

Caroline Wood, Communications and Information Officer, East and Horn of Africa, Christian Aid has recently visited the region and an excerpt of her report, on the St Albans website, is printed below:

'There is as yet no peace agreement, but there is a ceasefire. The Lords Resistance Army (LRA) and the government agreed to a ceasefire to allow the LRA to assemble at designated points where they would be protected. Once assembled it was agreed that peace talks would resume.'

This was an important step. If the ceasefire could have been maintained

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this would have helped to build trust between the LRA and the government, which would have boded well for the peace talks.

Unfortunately these positive developments have looked a little shaky recently as the Ugandan government has begun to talk of renewing its military efforts. We watch and pray that they will not undo the good work so far done.

However these developments, as fragile as they are, do increase the likelihood of people returning home from the camps and children being returned to their families from the rebel army.

This has already started to happen, especially in the region in which TEDDO works and TEDDO is to switch to assist people as they plan to return home.

On a technical note, the people living in the camps are not refugees. Refugees are people who are seeking refuge outside on their country of origin. The people in the camps sometime live no more than a few hours from their home, they are not outside of their country of origin but have fled to the nearest towns where they might find some safety in number - legally they are referred to as internally displaced persons or IDPs. I know this might sound like a trivial issue, but is an important legal distinction that can have a huge bearing on the people we are talking about in terms of the protection they can expect to receive and whose

responsibility it is to provide that protection.

Further to the support we are providing TEDDO, we are also providing support to our partners further north to help with the increased need the partners anticipate when the children return from the LRA.'

We contributed £433 to this appeal which will go to help many people suffering from malnutrition in the area.

In the meantime we can all help by supporting the Fair trade movement when we go shopping; every little helps!

Josie Thomas

Total for Harvest Appeal to date is £56,664, which will almost certainly increase as treasurers finalize their accounts

I.C.E.S.

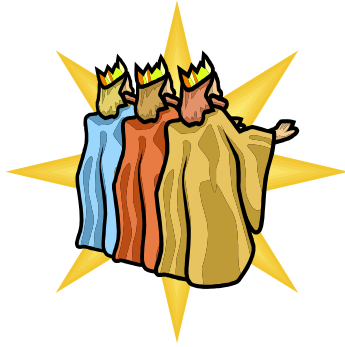
A reminder that starting in February 2007 Amanda Furlong will be running 'The Introduction to Christian Ethics'

Tutorials will be on alternate Wednesday afternoons from 1.30pm until 3.00pm at her home in Colney Heath.

See the article in the December issue for more information, or phone Amanda on 01727 825601 or e-mail her on: thefurlongs@mac.com

A Little Christmas Miracle - from chaos to beauty...

Entering the Church on a bleak cold wet afternoon we saw a throng of children aged from 3 to 10 years with a number of parents scattered around.



Sally welcomed everyone before introducing Robin who sorted out the children into groups of 8 identified by colours and specified activities to be carried out in St Michael's Room.

I settled happily listening to Sally talking of the Kingdom of Love to her group and my reverie was interrupted when I was invited to help with the activities taking place in St Michael's Room. From peace and serenity into a maelstrom of barely controlled activity.

Carpets were covered with protective sheets, tables laid out with gold and shiny paper, silver shining paper, black matt paper and paper of many colours and a great variety of sticky backed circles, squares and strips and glue sticks and scissors all assembled by Robin, Chris and the other willing volunteers.

I was sent to the 'Crown department' where in 15 minutes each child was to produce an individual, fitted and decorated crown. Crowns were castellated or pointed, patterns were created, scissors flashing (metaphorically) as children concentrated on their glorious creations.

As crowns were donned, along came the next group, and then the next one, before a refreshment interval was announced.

After cakes and drinks, straight on to 'Kings' of a variety of sizes and shapes.

The children, armed with a whole spectrum of spirit pens attacked the provided outlines with wild enthusiasm producing work akin to the style of Picasso.

The finished Kings will form a border for the ultimate Christmas collage.

I have yet to see the completed work, but have no doubt it will be as exotic and inspiring as last year's frieze. We finished the afternoon by singing a song to a well known tune, original words by Sam Elgar, and all were sent home with a bag of goodies.

David Thomas

On the next two pages are 3 newspaper reports from Year 6 children at St. Mary's School about events which happened whilst on a residential trip to the Kingswood Activity Centre, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, in November 2006.

The children took part in many different activities which included caving, fencing, zip wire, ICT work which was to create an advertisement for a product which the children invented themselves, archery, problem solving, climbing, abseiling and motor sports.

Ripped Trousers In The Hole

Charlotte Walford, aged 11, suffered the greatest embarrassment of her life when her trousers ripped and fell down in a cave.

Report by Sarah Lock

Last week at the Kingswood activity centre group B of St Mary's school entered the air raid shelter cave to emerge with one of their pupils, Charlotte Walford, 11, having her trousers fully ripped and dangling around her ankles.

In the cave the children had to crawl through endless obstacles that could have triggered the rip. However the object that we have concluded had caused it was the tyre.

There was one witness who was sure the tyre ripped the trousers. Sarah Lock, 10, reported. 'I saw it happen, we were climbing through the cave and I was looking at her nice new trousers and then I fell on my face. When I got up I saw her climbing through the tyre. Then right in the middle of the tyre her trousers ripped quick as a flash.'

Charlotte also believes the tyre ripped her trousers. 'Yes the tyre did rip my trousers but it wasn't my fault I was crawling through the tyre when I heard a rip it was my trousers, I emerged from the cave with my trousers around my ankles I was so embarrassed.'

Charlotte has now learnt to be more careful in the future with her trousers.

St. Mary's Little Spielbergs

The British film industry appears safe after a group of ten year olds dazzled the public with brand new adverts.

Report by Mark Watts 6 December 2006

Year 6 of St. Mary's School travelled to the Kingswood Activity Centre to shoot their adverts for a brand new product. They commenced shooting on the 25 November at 12:45 pm. They were to select props and the shooting location. 24 hours later they were called into the special effects room to add effects and cut footage.

This was their first ever advert and they have learnt a few things by doing the project. We managed to get a word with Charley Crowhurst, 10, to get his summary of the project. 'I've learnt a lot about advertising and computers by doing this'.

The projects will be revealed at a presentation. It will begin at 2:45 on the 7 December at St. Mary's School, Welham Green, Hatfield. The advert being screened is by Mark Watts, aged 10. He worked alongside Chelsea Howell, 10, Joe Stockwell, 10 and Jodie Ronaldson. Their product was self-playing football boots.

All the groups were proud of their work and can't wait for it to be seen by the general public.

Visit to Kingswood *contd.*

HE BELIEVES HE CAN FLY!!!

A St. Mary's schoolboy believed he could fly on a zip wire harness.

Report by Cameron Hill

Year 6 children from St. Mary's School, North Mymms went to the Kingswood Activity Centre and took part in many new activities.

One of their favourites was the Zip Wire; a long wire that you slide down, attached by a harness.

Cameron Hill, aged 10, rather enjoyed this experience. He went up the steep tower to have his turn on the zip wire. Whilst on the way up he tried to think of something funny to do on the way down. He thought of nothing so he asked the instructor Gemma, age unknown, for an idea. She gave him the idea of singing 'I believe I can fly' and to flap his arms like a bird.

Some people thought it was quite funny. Here's what one of his best friends Lewis Dear, 10, had to say about it.

'It was funny but also very stupid, I tried to be funnier by pulling a funny face. Mine was also quite funny but not as good as his song.'

Those flying lessons have really paid off for him.

Dates for your diary

Christingle Service

Candlemas with Christingles will be celebrated at the 9.30am Eucharist on Sunday 28th January 2007

Snowdrop Sunday

18th February 2007

Vision for Action

Well known TV presenter Diane Louise Jordan will host a major celebration at St Albans Cathedral on 24th February 2007.

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Women's Fellowship

Our speaker for November, Mr Bruce Bennett, is an expert photographer and whilst accommodated on a river steamer on the Danube delta where it flows into the Black Sea, he found much to engage his interest.

His slides with commentary were principally of wild life and in particular of birds of which there were a multitude, some native and others migratory. A number of these were spectacularly beautiful, as also were the butterflies and moths.

Amid all this colour the Romanians struck a sombre note. Far from the cities they were living at little above subsistence level with simple, not to say, primitive housing, horse drawn transport, and reliant for their existence on agriculture and fishing. This is still a desperately poor country as we have heard already from previous speakers.

Our guest in January will be Mr John Britten and we meet on Tuesday January 23rd in St Michael's Room at 2.15pm.

Muriel Norman

STOP PRESS!

OASIS at Wednesday lunch time will reopen on February 14th 2007. If you would like to go on the rota to help please contact me. Further details next month.

Rhoda Brutey 01707 654633

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Churchyard Update

Why do we still have headstones that have been laid down?

For some time now the PCC has been aware of the pressing need to review the condition and upkeep of the churchyard and to attend to the re-erection of headstones which had been laid down for safety reasons. At some time in the future we may also need to consider formally closing the New Churchyard. Recently, the PCC gathered in the Churchyard to see at first hand the issues involved. At a subsequent meeting they voted to begin the necessary procedures in a cost effective way.

Will the New Churchyard be closed?

The Churchyard has been full to capacity for many years and there have been no new burials, other than in existing family plots. Closure would entail handing over responsibility for its upkeep to the Council whose own resources are stretched. So, we may not automatically pursue this action if we can find ways to make mowing more straightforward, less time-consuming and can maintain the churchyard appropriately. We currently spend nearly 100 person hours a year mowing the New Churchyard alone and we cannot keep this up indefinitely.

Who does this?

We have a willing band of mowers-22 in all. Some are on both Churchyard rotas. There is also a

working party of up to ten people who meet at 2pm on the last Saturday in each month either to help with the mowing or to lop, prune, edge or collect leaves. We recently welcomed Jay to the team.

Do you need more help?

There is always work for willing hands, so yes please!

May I say a big thank you to all who help to keep the Churchyards tidy and mowed?

You certainly can and I will join you in thanking all for all their hard work in 2006.

Martin Soley - Chairman Churchyard Committee



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Churches Together in North Mymms

Carol Service, Sunday 10th December at St Thomas More's Church

This year the Carol Service was a little different. St Mary's School were not able to join us, and we missed their enthusiastic contribution, often of modern carols.

The committee was a little worried about this, as families normally come to support the children. Would anyone come? But there was no need for concern, as the three churches filled in the gaps with a varied programme of music, both recorded and live, a splendid choir from the URC, with a talented young

soloist, and guitar playing (by Father Philip, the new priest) to accompany St Thomas More's contribution.

There were moving readings from the Bible and elsewhere. And over 60 people attended singing carols, and later enjoying a cup of tea and a mince pie. A great success!

Patricia Cook



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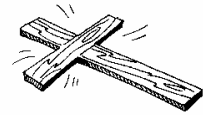
Brian Wood
01707 645022

Friendly Service
No job too small

Regret no GAS work undertaken

From the Parish Church Registers

Funerals:



Our sympathy to the relatives and friends of:

Gwendoline Eunice Talon

19th December 2006

Interment of ashes:

David Peter Clark

29th November 2006

Michael Robert Willis

3rd December 2006

Herbert John (Jack) Shadbolt

9th December 2006

Almighty God,
from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:
kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace
and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth
that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward,
till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Collect for the Peace of the World (Common Worship)

Only the current registers, (Baptisms from March 1980; Weddings from January 1999, Burials from March 1984 and Services from July 1996) are stored at the church. All previous church registers, and parish magazines, are stored at the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, County Hall, Hertford, SG13 8EJ. (01992) 555105, to ensure they are adequately preserved.

**Parish Office Hours
open 9am - 1.30pm
Tuesday/Thursday
tel: 01727 825578**

**On the first Monday of each month the Vicar holds an office
hour at the Vicarage from 6.30pm until 7.30pm**

**The Vicar can be contacted at any other time by telephone:
01727 822062 or through the Church website:
www.stmarysnorthmymms.org.uk**

Weekly

Wednesday	8.00 pm	Bell ringers' Practice
Thursday	10.00am	Carers' Support Group meet in St. Michael's Room
Friday		Vicar's Day off
	10.00 am	Pramsters meet in St. Michael's Room
	7.00 pm	Choir practice

FEBRUARY COPY DATE

Copy for the February 2007 issue please by Monday 15th January to:

**Jean Hockings
64 Mymms Drive,
Brookmans Park, AL9 7AD**

01707 650642

jean.hockings@btinternet.com

or:

**Patricia Cook
100 Brookmans Avenue,
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