

# What's in a name?

Juliet:

“What's in a name? That which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet.”

Romeo and Juliet (II, ii, 1-2)

Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet meet and fall in love in Shakespeare's lyrical tale of "star-cross'd" lovers. As members of two warring families they are doomed from the start. Here Juliet tells Romeo that a name is an artificial and meaningless convention, and that she loves the person who is called “Montague,” not the Montague name.

A name conveys meaning, emotion, or even character. Often the name we give to our child is chosen because it has a special meaning.

Names others give us can be hurtful. From when you were a child, do you remember being called a name that you didn't like? I do. I remember the sting of being called a name that I don't want to repeat here.

Do you ever call yourself names? You might be surprised at how many people do. It might be something they made up themselves. After they make a mistake, they might say, “I never do that right.” Or, “I always make that mistake.” Quite often in times of stress we can be heard repeating a phrase that someone (a parent, a sibling or a teacher) gave us when we were children. “I'm such an idiot.” Or, “I am so stupid.” When we call ourselves names, it can limit

us and keep us from becoming the people we would like to be.

St Paul is known as Saul when we first encounter him in the Acts of the Apostles. He was known by the Christians in the early church as a person who spoke “threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord” and was willing to travel around the country to get rid of those horrible Christians. But after Saul met Christ on the road to Damascus, his life changed and so did his name. He became known as Paul and as time went on, that name became synonymous with Christian faith.

At the Baptism of a young child, we proclaim his or her name; pour water over them three times, baptising them “In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit;” and claim them for Christ.

When we become Christians, the names we call ourselves need to change because our identity changes. When we are Christians we become part of the family of God, so we need no longer feel lonely or afraid, because we belong to God and to each other. As Christians, our new names, or at least the way we think of ourselves, need to become “joyful, friend of God, one who overcomes, faithful, one who believes in the power of God at work in my own life.” I admit that some of these new names are a bit long to put on a birth certificate, but they can and should form a part of a positive identity in Christ.

**Howard**

Chronicles

February 2009

# Editors' Letter

Dear Readers,  
First of all we'd like to say how delighted we are with the favourable comments we have received about the Christmas edition of the Chronicle. Even Beth and Michael Spence enjoyed it in far-off Sydney, and Diana Pope's daughter in New Delhi is a regular reader, so we feel truly international!

Now, though, we have to come down to earth and present to you, our readers, a dilemma over which we have been worrying for several months – money. We're sure you will realise that the extra pages we now print cost the parish a considerable amount more than the smaller Chronicle we used to publish. We don't want to pare down the magazine if we can help it, so how best to cover the cost?

To us there seem to be several possibilities. One might be to offer space to local adver-

tisers, especially now that our circulation is growing. Or perhaps three or four sponsors could make an annual donation to help. Another option would be to ask our readers to pay a small annual subscription. Of course if we did ask for an annual sub, readers' names would be kept on file and we'd need someone to ensure that each person received his/her copy. I must say we ourselves don't favour the latter option but felt we'd offer you the chance to voice your opinion.

So over to you, let us know how you feel. We are rather sad that we have to address this problem, but we hope you want to keep our magazine a full and lively journal without dipping too deeply into parish funds.

Anyway, enjoy this issue with its update of news and faith and fun.

God bless.

**Rosanne and Carol**

## From the Parish Registers

### Funerals at St James:

Colin William Drew – 13 January 2009

Peter Arthur Timms – 14 January 2009

## 5<sup>th</sup> Cowley Guides

This term we have had a celebration evening for Emma Reed who gained her Baden-Powell Challenge Award. This is the highest award in the Guide section.

The guides also completed a badge, Love in Action. For this challenge they had to learn about education in Africa (mainly Uganda) and African music, make an African mask, taste fruit, cook using Fairtrade ingredients, and hold a cake sale to send money direct to Ugandan schools.

During November we had a fireworks theme evening, with apple bobbing, find the sweet in the flour, eat a doughnut hanging from a string, and sparklers.

After that it was time to start on Christmas crafts, and we ended with a Christmas dinner on our last meeting of the year.



## MEETINGS

### Thursdays at St James Church Centre:

Rainbows: 5:00-6:00 pm

Brownies: 6:00-7:30 pm

Guides: 7:30-9:00 pm

### Wednesdays at St Francis Church:

Rainbows: 4:45-5:45 pm

Brownies: 6:00-7:30 pm

## Our New Team Vicar Welcomed

The longed-for day has come and the waiting is over. The church has been lovingly made ready. The invited guests start to arrive: Susannah's family and friends, the team rector, and friends from Marlborough. The church is soon full with parishioners, local friends, and clergy.

Bishop John arrives. Final preparations are made. The clergy robe and prayers are said. The candles are lit. As the first hymn is played, the clergy process into church preceded by the choir.

The service of licensing and installation of the Revd Susannah Reide as Team Vicar of the Parish of Cowley took place Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> January at 7 pm, in St Francis of Assisi Church, Hollow Way. The service was a delight, formal but also informal. The Area Dean welcomed us, and there were loving words from Bishop John, godly readings, and wonderful music and singing.

The Archdeacon preached wisely and with great understanding about Christianity today, and the need to move forward, but also to look back to the joy and simplicity of the birth of Jesus. He spoke of the role of the Church and of the Parish of Cowley.

After Susannah's formal presentation and dedication, the declaration and oaths, the Bishop read the Deed of License and gave it to Susannah, and she was installed as "Team Vicar of the Parish of Cowley" and

welcomed by the people. This was followed by The Peace, as robust as ever. The Area Dean welcomed Susannah into the Deanery of Cowley, and introduced her to representatives of the local church and community.

We all enjoyed the Bring and Share Supper that followed, from the humble ham sandwiches to the chicken, rice, and pasta dishes, served with wine or fruit juice. There was a full table of lovely cakes and special breads.

Susannah cut the beautifully iced Celebration Cake which had been baked on Stir-Up Sunday, when the children made their birthday cakes for Jesus.

It was a joy to see and thank all the clergy (including Beth Spence on a short visit from Australia) who helped Howard look after us throughout the interregnum. Also, it was a real pleasure to welcome so many of our friends from St James. We were 107 in all, plus one well-behaved baby.

Thanks are due to everybody who attended and prepared for this lovely service and supper. A special thank-you to Norah, our church warden at St Francis.

We look forward to a future of joy and simplicity. With Howard our Rector and Susannah our Team Vicar we are blessed indeed!

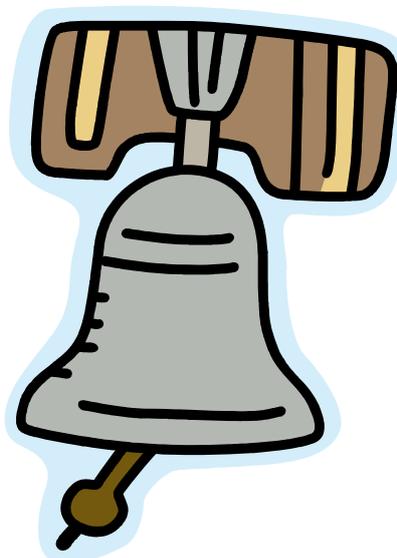
– Pat Chung

## Let the Bells Ring!

Several people have expressed an interest in learning the ring the church bells at St James. They have not been rung for services for some years now, except for weddings, when we import a team of ringers, mainly from Iffley. It would be lovely to hear the bells calling us to Sunday services once again.

In order to persuade an experienced campanologist to come and teach our own team, we need at least five people who would take seriously the training. It is quite a lengthy process to learn, so they would need to be fully committed.

If you are one of those people who really want to "give it a go," please let the editors know and we'll make the necessary arrangements. Remember – at least five people. More would be wonderful!



# ROSANNE INTERVIEWS

## Fergus Campbell

It's my guess that you've looked at the top of this page and said, "Fergus who?" You may then have gone on to think, "Hold on, isn't our new vicar's husband called Fergus...?" Well, if you did, then you and I are on the same wave-length. The Fergus I interviewed is, in fact, Susannah's husband, and when they married they decided each to keep their own surnames – all very modern and democratic. After all, supposing Catherine Zeta-Jones had changed her name when she married Michael Douglas – it wouldn't be the same at all, would it? And while we're on the subject, I must tell you that Susannah and Fergus's eldest son is proud of the fact that he, Benjamin Campbell-Reide, has the longest name of anyone in his class!

There was no need for my usual question of what brought Fergus to Cowley – that's obvious – so we went right on to talk about his early life, including the fact that although he has Scottish roots, he has never lived north of the border. Both his parents are doctors. His father was born in north Oxford and, incidentally, is delighted that Fergus and Susannah are living within easy reach of the city. However, Sydenham in south-east

London is where Fergus was born and spent the first six years of his life. He has fond memories of the wonderful views across the City of London which could be seen from his bedroom window – even Tower Bridge if the wind blew the branches of the trees in the right direction. The fact that at the age of six he moved from his first primary school to a new one in Manchester provided him with a real empathy for Benjamin, who has had a similar move from Marlborough. His son's first experiences at Larkrise School, however, have been anything but anxious. There have been invitations to come and play after school and even to birthday parties. The Campbell-Reides are discovering what we residents already know, that Cowley is a welcoming and friendly place.

For young Fergus, the change of school was quite tricky because of the very different ethos in Manchester, much more formal in its approach, with children who spoke with a strong, north-country accent. He determinedly clung on to his southern accent. Though there was some teasing, after a while things improved and he declared that he enjoyed his time there. Along with his

elder sister and younger brother, he remained at the school until he was eleven. He then went on to Manchester Grammar School. His time there was very happy. Besides being an able pupil, he became a keen cross-country runner, competing for his school. He is still an enthusiastic runner, as is his father, who has encouraged him throughout. He has not yet run a marathon, but talked about perhaps entering the Abingdon Marathon in a year or two. He met some very interesting people through the Astronomy Society, which encompassed a wide cross-section of age groups.

For his A-level exams, he took History, Politics and English literature, and his results secured him a place at Oxford University. He entered Mansfield College and read History. He described his time at Oxford as very good. He thoroughly enjoyed the social life, continuing with his running, joining the student Christian Union. After graduation he did voluntary work with the Scripture Union in the north of England, mainly visiting secondary schools. He found this crystallised and gave focus to his Christian faith, as he took RE lessons, led as-

semblies and discussions, and generally engaged with a number of young people. At the same time Fergus was decided what to do next, namely starting a career. He found himself led in the direction of local government.

He took a post as a management trainee with Surrey County Council which, among other things, involved learning computer skills. During his ten years there he moved on to become area manager for special educational needs, a job he described as incredibly demanding but never dull! One big bonus from the years spent there were the good friends he made, many with whom he and Susannah are still close. He moved to Sutton local council and it was about this time that he met his future wife.

They both attended a big church in Twickenham but did not get to know each other for quite a while. Eventually they met briefly through a mutual friend. However, one Saturday whilst out shopping they bumped into each other. Fergus was a bit confused at first because Susannah had changed her hair (quite often a problem for a young man!) but they chatted at length and Fergus suggested lunch. They spent the rest of the day together and before they knew it they'd fallen in love. During the years before their marriage Susannah spent

three months working on Iona, and Fergus missed her so much.

Once married, their first home was situated in the middle of Twickenham. Susannah worked for Tearfund, then for Voluntary Services Overseas, selecting and organising personnel. She next went off to work in Cambodia, again leaving Fergus a lonely young man. He told me he flew out to spend Christmas with her, describing it as "brilliant." Having experienced something of the life she was leading out there, he understood more fully the work she was doing. She returned home, and after two years of married life they found a little home in Teddington. Next came Susannah's vocation to the ministry.

She studied at Bristol Theological College and Fergus found work with Wiltshire County Council in Trowbridge. During those three years at college baby Benjamin was born. Next for Susannah came a curacy in Marlborough, and Fergus changed his working hours to part-time in order to support her and their burgeoning family. When Benjamin was two and a half, Max was born, and then along came their baby daughter, Otilie. And so we are almost up to date. Just a month ago the family was welcomed into our parish. Fergus has been lucky enough to transfer to

Oxfordshire County Council on a part-time basis as he continues to support his busy wife and their three young children. Asked if he'd like to add anything more that we hadn't touched on, he wanted me to emphasise how thrilled they all are with the warmth which we have welcomed them to Cowley.

### **Was there one particular person who had a strong influence on your early life?**

One person who comes to mind is a history teacher I had when I was eleven. Fun- nily enough it turned out that his brother was organist at Susannah's church in Marlborough. He inspired my interest in the history of architecture.

### **Can you remember any incident in your early childhood that held special significance for you?**

The odd thing – when we were in London and I was only four or five I have golden memories of my friends and I being in and out of each other's houses in our neighbourhood. It was a free-flowing community that I most treasure in my memory.

### **What kind of child were you?**

Slightly too well-behaved.

### **Has your faith been with you since childhood?**

Yes, I can't pick a time when I didn't believe.

**Which period of your adult life has given you the most satisfaction?**

Being a parent. There are trials and tribulations involved but it is a real privilege – it's very fulfilling.

**Are there any aspects of modern life which you dislike?**

Yes, mobile phones – I don't do mobile phones.

**And what is best about life today?**

I like the opportunity and possibility to be connected to a wide variety of people throughout the world.

**When you find time for leisure, how do you like to spend it?**

Running. I do that regularly.

**If you were not doing what you do now, what**

**would you choose to do?**

I like the idea of performing on the stage. It would be nice to be part of a group of talented and creative people.

**What do you hope to be doing in ten years' time?**

We'd like to go on adventures. When the children are teenagers we could go on cycling/camping holidays and maybe further afield.

## The Garden Wall

You may have noticed during several weeks before and after Christmas that work was being done on the stone walls between the churchyard and the rectory, and in front of the rectory. Howard suggested that the Quinquennial Inspection consider the forest of ivy growing out from the wall. They discovered that indeed, ivy had established residence within the walls, particularly the churchyard/rectory wall. Over many years it had grown very large roots, causing the wall to become unstable, and there was some concern that the weight of the ivy might bring the wall down.

In order to remove the roots it was

necessary to take down some of the stonework, remove the ivy, and replace the stonework. The diocese decided that the stones should be cemented in. When I spoke with the man doing the work, he said that they had originally been put together with mud and sand. The walls at the front of the rectory, and between the front garden and the car park, were also renewed although they were not so badly affected, and a new gate has been installed.



### Lent - What about a Home Group then?

There are currently 4 home groups in operation in the parish. Home groups are one of the best ways to grow in your faith, discover ways to hear God, learn to pray, think about your purpose in life, learn to worship, help others, and to be at peace with God. They also provide a great opportunity to get to know other people from the parish, develop friendships, and have fun. (You should have been at the last Home Groups party!)

The Home Groups will be following the York Course Bible Study for Lent – “These three, Faith, Hope and Love.” If you want to learn more about the Christian faith, tackle the biggest questions facing humanity, and examine your own beliefs in fellowship with others, then one of our Home Groups may be just the thing for you.

Good news: two new Home Groups are set to begin at the start of Lent. One is being led by Patrick Gilday and Lydia Potts, and the other by Howard Thornton. Please contact the Parish Office as soon as possible if you would like to join any of the Home Groups. Telephone 01865 747 680 or email

# National Marriage Week 7-14 February

National Marriage Week was launched on Monday 12 January in the Palace of Westminster with an inspiring array of speakers including the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Archbishop made headlines as he spoke about the value of marriage. "One of the phrases that a younger generation than mine likes to use is, 'Get a life.' 'Get a life' is said to people who are clearly meshed into narrow, boring, obsessive, forms of life. And it occurred to me thinking about this morning, that all of that presupposes that people have quite a vivid idea of what real life is like; it's a life of discovery, it's a life of surprises, it's a life where you don't quite know what's going to come to you, but you go forward with some degree of expectation that you are going to be enlarged and challenged and enriched.

"As I thought about that, I thought well actually, that's not a bad slogan for a National Marriage Week: 'Get A Life.' Because when we're talking about the marriage relationship, we're talking about a relationship which constantly unfolds over time, which allows you to build on difficult experience, to work through it, to move, to mature. Marriage is for life; and that doesn't just mean life-long, important as that is. It means for life; that is for an enhanced kind of human experience."

Here are thoughts from a few celebrities about why their marriages work:

## **Paul and Stacey Young (rock star and model respectively):**

We don't have one rule for one and one rule for another  
Jealousy is a big no no, but don't take each other for granted  
Still make time for each other despite children and heavy workloads  
Keep a bit of madness, mischief and unpredictability in the relationship

## **Graham Cole (The Bill):**

Friendship (wife is my best friend)  
Love and loyalty  
Truthful always (no exceptions)  
Freedom/independence i.e. each have friends - understand one another's needs  
Fun and laughter in everything

## **Antony Worrall-Thompson (chef/television personality):**

Don't stand still and take marriage for granted  
Always be prepared to listen and take advice  
Never let the romance disappear  
A few pleasant surprises will always go down a treat  
Marriage is always shared responsibilities  
Always allow enough time in your schedule to sit down and talk

The Parish of Cowley is hosting a Deanery-wide Marriage Preparation Course on Saturday 28 February for couples being married this year. During the day couples will be encouraged to speak honestly to their partners about their hopes, dreams and expectations for their lives together.

If you know someone who is getting married this year and would like to attend, please contact the Parish Office.



# St Scholastica's Day Riots

Although the story of St Scholastica herself is a simple story of a holy woman who lived nearly 1500 years ago, the date of her special day holds important significance in the history of the City of Oxford. It is a tale worth telling mainly, I suppose, because it explains the term *Town and Gown* more than any other. Thank goodness that nowadays the animosity between University and City is much diminished. You do sometimes get a glimpse of it when students rush across The High spraying celebratory champagne when finals are over, disrupting the flow of traffic. During the Middle Ages feelings were much more venomous than the flicker of annoyance you might see on someone's face today.

By 1100 Oxford was already positioned to become an important town because of the wool trade and cloth industry, and its two monasteries and large Jewish community. But in terms of controlling its own affairs as other towns did, its civic development was affected at the end of the century by the emergence of a university. Students and teachers became a significant minority in the town, and town and university competed for dominance. The main areas of contention were jurisdiction over legal matters, and control over trade and commerce.

Although the town was the larger entity, the university had the support of the king, who often ruled in favour of the university, taking powers away from the town. The Chancellor was given his own court with the right to banish those he considered undesirable, and to excommunicate people who challenged his authority. There were class and social differences between students and townspeople, and students with little social or economic investment in the towns where they studied felt no obligation to conform to the rules and practices there. Cambridge, Vienna, Bologna, Paris, and other major university locations faced a similar situation. So the stage was set for conflict, and historians note that the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries saw frequent disputes.

The date was February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1355. The place was the Swindlestock Tavern on Carfax. The site of the tavern can still be seen, marked as it is on the corner of St Aldates and Queen Street by a wall plaque set at about knee height. To put the situation into perspective, the atmos-

phere between Town and Gown had been one of escalating animosity for many years beforehand. Townspeople resented these rich young men parading around, living a life and (to their minds) ease and indolence, and expecting respect from the working classes. The majority of students were teenagers, some as young as fourteen, away from strict parental control. Although they were housed in halls or hostels and supervised by town landlords and friars, their new-found freedom often went to their heads and they treated the townsfolk with contempt.

There are two versions of what happened on that February day and the couple of days that followed. One from each side of the conflict. The Town's version is simple and to the point and goes something like this. On the day of St Scholastica's feast in 1355 a number of scholars, led by Walter Sprynghouse and Roger de Chesterfield, entered the Swindlestock Tavern. They were served wine by the landlord, John Croiden, and they threw it back in his face. They proceeded to beat him over the head with a quart pot, apparently without reason. An argument ensued and the bailiffs were called to sort out the trouble. However, the scholars rushed out into the street, evidently bent on trouble as they just happened to be armed with bows and arrows and other weapons. A huge fracas developed between the students and townsfolk with the mayor, bailiffs and sergeants trying to settle the affair. They sought out the Chancellor of the university asking that the troublemakers be arrested (this could only be done by the university authorities.) Nothing was done and within hours the mob had increased to an estimated 200 students. The mayor and his men were set upon and many were wounded, a lad of fourteen was killed, and parts of the town were set on fire.

After nightfall things calmed down somewhat but as the king (Edward III) was residing at his hunting lodge in Woodstock, a deputation of townsfolk went out to complain to him. The students then took the mayor's warden, closed the four city gates, and continued to fight with the locals and set more of their homes on fire. This account is attributed to the citizens themselves.

The official University side of the story

was recorded by the historian, Anthony Wood, some time after the event. His version begins in similar vein up to the point where the riot began on Carfax though he says that the landlord had sold the students inferior wine. From there, Wood said, the citizens had already been alerted that trouble was in the wind and had armed themselves in advance. The town bell (in Carfax tower) was rung to call people to fight. The University bell (in the tower of St Mary's in The High) was also rung to call scholars to arm and defend themselves. It was said that "innumerable multitudes" were called in to Oxford from the outlying villages (Cowley included, no doubt) and the townsmen "were now prepared in battle array." The students withdrew to their lodgings but their halls of residence were attacked, their books and goods were spoiled and plundered and their "victuals" and wine trodden and poured into the street.

The following day the Chancellor and other principals from the University rode out to Woodstock having been summoned by the king. While they were away, according to Wood, the townsmen forced open student lodgings with iron bars, and he goes on to describe in horrible detail the slaughter and maimings which were purported to have occurred. Finally most students fled, leaving the university forsaken.

Sixty students died but there is no record of how many citizens were killed.

The retribution for the riot was very harsh. For the citizens of Oxford all functions of the Church Mass were suspended, not sacraments administered, and no Christian burials allowed. To the Medieval men and women these restrictions were a terrible punishment. The interdict by royal command was not

lifted until the middle of March the following year. The Bishop also imposed an annual penance upon the Town. Each year on St Scholastica's Day the mayor and sixty burgesses were required to solemnly process to St Mary's Church and attend a special Mass for the souls of the students who were killed, and render to the university a silver penny for each. Although in years to come the city fathers pleaded for the fine to be lifted it was not until 470 years later that the university finally acceded to the humble petition to forgo its rights.

It is really no wonder that for all that time there was little love lost between Town and Gown.

**Rosanne Butler**

[In 1955, on the 600th anniversary of the riot, Oxford gave an honorary degree to the Mayor, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University was made an honorary freeman of the City.]

### *Saint Scholastica*

**Saint Scholastica, was born into the Italian nobility in 480, and was the twin sister of Saint Benedict. Their mother died in childbirth. She was dedicated to God at a young age, and became a nun, and led a community for women at Plombariola, about five miles from Benedict's abbey at Monte Cassino.**

**One of the most well-known stories about her concerns herself and her brother. Benedict had come for his annual visit. They spent the day praising God and conversing. When it grew late, she asked him to stay, but he said he must return to his cell at the monastery. When he refused her request, she began to pray, and a huge thunderstorm blew up, with downpours of rain so heavy that neither Benedict nor his brothers could go out into it. She said that when she had asked him to stay, he would not listen, so she asked God, and he had listened. So her brother stayed, and they talked all night. Three days later, back in his cell, Benedict looked up to the sky to see his sister's soul leave her body in the form of a dove and fly up to heaven. She died in 543. He had her body brought to the monastery and laid in the tomb he had got ready for himself.**

**Saint Scholastica is the patron saint of nuns, convulsive children, and the city of Le Mans, France. She is also invoked against rain and storms. She is represented as a nun with a crucifix and crozier, or with a dove flying from her mouth. She is remembered and celebrated on 10<sup>th</sup> February.**

### Notes from the November PCC meeting

The PCC heard that the charities group had met and allocated our giving this year.

The Seashells have received offers of help to set up and organise rotas, but more volunteers are needed.

“Back to Church Sunday” was discussed.

The Treasurer outlined the reasons for an increase in our expenditure. She reported that funds had been raised through the Harvest Supper and Craft Fair. She thought a small group would be needed to prepare our budget. Church Centre finances will be included in it this time.

Norah reported on concerns about some users of St Francis Church. In particular, the problem of the state of the floor has not yet been resolved.

St James Church Centre committee is anxious to promote bookings. Events are flourishing and

proving both popular and profitable.

The PCC agreed to spend £1000 on a sound system; money had been given for this purpose.

The PCC decided to apply for a Faculty to carry out work at St Francis detailed in the 2007 Quinquennial Inspection report.

Howard introduced the idea of creating sub-committees or “action groups” for buildings and for finance, so that members of our congregations with appropriate gifts or skills could advise and take on these responsibilities. This will be discussed in greater detail at the next meeting.

The PCC decided that Christine Woodman should be authorised to deal with any emergencies at the Church Centre and expenditure that may be incurred in dealing with them.

Joan circulated copies of guidelines she had prepared based on the rules laid down regarding the handling of finance. These rules must be adhered to even when dealing with small amounts of money.



THE VICAR, OUTVOTED BY THE PCC  
APPEALS FOR A PENALTY

## **Gardening?? You must be joking!**

What does your estate look like at the moment? Not up to standard yet? Never mind, no garden is yet at its best. But, hold on, what about those snowdrops bravely challenging the cold weather, and the crocuses peeking above the soil? Even some daffodils may be showing in the cold mud. Yes, spring is sprung, and all we have to do for a while is to enjoy its little treasures.

If we have fine days, then there will be plenty of old growth to tidy away, not too much yet. Leave some to protect new shoots of perennial plants, and provide hidey holes for some insects. After all, we want some of the insects to help us in the garden, and the birds want them as food, especially when they have hungry mouths to feed. While we are talking about our feathered friends, don't forget to give them food and unfrozen water every day. A friend of mine says that in her garden the birds queue up for a bathe and a drink before they have a feed.

The seed and plant catalogues are still coming in the door. They make good reading if you have a wide imagination about how many plants you can fit into your space, and how much money you can put to it. I can usually spend well into 3 figures in each catalogue, but where would they all go? Just think, one packet of seeds can contain hundreds, if not thousands of seeds, and even an amateur at the game should manage to get *some* to germinate. Maybe you could buy the little seedlings as plug plants, more expensive, and possibly still more than you need. So share them round. Many people may be glad of a few plants. If you do have excess, then do remember the plant sale advertised here last year [see Joan Coleman]

This is the time of year when I think [note, think!] about digging a trench for the runner beans. Sometimes it is a longish one, other years it is a round one for a wigwam support. This should then be lined at the bottom with wet newspaper and then gradually filled in with potato peelings and other materials suitable for composting. By the time the runner beans need sowing, the soil can be returned, and the beans will have a water retentive compost to spread their roots into. I love runner beans!

This activity should keep me warm, and so I will be able to sow those broad beans [spring sow ones now] that I didn't sow in the autumn. You surely didn't think that I followed my own advice did you?

Have a fruitful and healthy new year.  
Diana Pope

## **Medieval Wall Paintings**

The Cowley Local History Society will host an illustrated talk, Medieval Wall Paintings, by Peter Chivers, at 8:00 pm on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> February. It will be held at the United Reformed Church on Temple Road, Cowley, and the charge for visitors is £3. A membership in the society can be had for £12 (£10 concessions.)

# WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

## Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2009

On **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March** over 3 million people worldwide will be praying and worshipping during an annual day of prayer, using a service prepared by Christian women in Papua New Guinea.

This is always an exciting day. The extent of unity in prayer is shown by the fact that the first service will begin at sunrise in Tonga and travel around the world until the sun sets in neighbouring Western Samoa. By then, the day will have been celebrated in over 170 countries, and throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland alone over 5,000 services will have been held.

Papua New Guinea is a land of many ethnic groups and over 800 distinct languages of which more than half are unrelated. As a result, there is great cultural diversity, yet the women of Papua New Guinea have emphasized the oneness there is in Christ.

In spite of gender inequality, women there are beginning to take their place in professions previously closed to them. There are now women who are pilots, engineers, doctors, lawyers, lecturers and also officers in the military forces. In this way, they contribute to their nation.

Further information and resources can be found at [www.wwdp-natcomm.org](http://www.wwdp-natcomm.org).

### **LOCAL SERVICES:**

10:30 am. All Saints, Lime Walk, Headington  
Speaker: Gill Poole

2:00 pm. Rose Hill Methodist Church  
Speaker: The Revd Jean King

#### Evening Service

7:30 pm. St. Francis Church, Hollow Way, Cowley  
Speaker: The Revd Susannah Reide

## **St John's Home Appeal**

In St Mary's Road, East Oxford, are the buildings and grounds of All Saints Convent and St John's Home. There is also a church embroidery department, a small guest house and conference room, and the Stepping Stone centre.

The grounds are shared with Helen and Douglas House. They come under the charity umbrella of the Society of All Saints Sisters of the Poor. St John's Home was established in 1874, when Father Benson saw a need for residential care

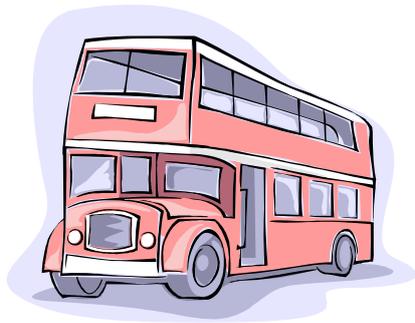
for the area's elderly, poor, and incurable, and set about fulfilling the vision. It continues to provide care for frail and elderly people.

There is an appeal for funds to replace the central heating system and all the domestic water pipes, some nearly 100 years old. If you can help in any way, by donating individually, by hosting a coffee morning or similar event, or in any other way, please email [admin@st-johns-home.org](mailto:admin@st-johns-home.org) or ring 01865 247 725.

# Where's this bus going?

I got off the bus at Templars Square the other day, and as it continued past me on its way, I noticed this ad on the side of it: "There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." The slogan is accompanied by links to the British Humanist Association and Richard Dawkins' website. The atheist campaign raised money to put ads on 800 buses throughout England, and will also put tube cards on the London Underground and animated slogans on large LCD screens on Oxford Street.

Complaints have been made to the Advertising Standards Association, but it ruled that the campaign does not breach the advertising code or mislead consumers, and it will not launch an investigation.



"The ASA council con-

cluded that the ad was an expression of the advertiser's opinion and that the claims in it were not capable of objective substantiation...Although the ASA acknowledges that the content of the ad would be at odds with the beliefs of many, it concluded that it was unlikely to mislead or to cause serious or widespread offence."

A Christian bus driver in Southampton refused to drive a bus carrying the ad, and was given another route. Hanne Stinson of the British Humanist Association thought he shouldn't have been allowed to refuse. "There's no way that the advert on the side of a bus means the driver agrees with it. It's important that people have the right to express their belief." Unless they're bus drivers, apparently.

Whatever you think about the ads, they get a reaction. I'm glad we live in a country where it's still legal to express our beliefs. Maybe we'd better get out there and express them while we can.

Carol Thornton

## Children aren't the only ones going to school !

**Full Circle** is starting work soon at Church Cowley St James Primary School.

**Full Circle** is a charity that works in schools, bringing younger and older people together. It started in 2001 with just one school, running lunchtime clubs where older people could share activities such as games, gardening and crafts with young children.

For many different reasons, young people and older people have far less opportunity to spend time together these days. Full Circle brings the two generations together in a friendly environment where the two groups can enjoy each others' company and engage in different activities.

Full Circle groups are about having fun and building friendships. Getting involved with Full Circle groups really can change people's lives and we're currently looking for older volunteers for the Church Cowley St James project.

If you: are over 50 years old, would be happy to share your experience enjoy being with young people, are available for around an hour a week between 12 and 1pm (day to be decided), and would like to make a difference to young people's lives by volunteering with Full Circle, please contact Rowen or Denise at Full Circle on **(01865) 246456** for an informal chat.

## **Candlemas – A Light in the Darkness**

It is difficult for us to imagine a world where light was not to be had at the touch of a button, or the pushing of a switch. Yet that was the situation without gas or electricity. It was a rural world without heavy industry – a world where survival depended on growing your own food. A world without refrigeration or preservatives, no superstores to help you through lean times.

In the long winter days after Christmas and Epiphany, times could become bleak as resources got lower. I came across a book of country sayings and practices recently and one of them was, “Sow broad beans on Boxing Day.” People couldn’t wait to start the growing season again. Ploughing and sowing began early so that more food would be available as soon as possible. It was into such a world that the church introduced the feast of Candlemas to lighten people’s spirits, and remind us that Christ came as a light to the dark world, and is the source of all growth and regeneration.

We may not rely on candlelight as they did, but we can still benefit from that wonderful service to help us look away from dark and wintry days and even darker news.

**– John Shreeve**

### **The editor agrees:**

I didn’t find it difficult to imagine the world John describes, because from the age of four until almost eleven, I lived with my parents in a tiny cottage with no gas or electricity. Yes, we did have to grow our own food, catch rabbits in the fields, cool food by lowering it into the well, keep our own chickens, and (incidentally) visit the loo at the bottom of the garden. Summer and winter my mum cooked our food on a black kitchen range and washed our clothes in a stone copper with a fire underneath which had to be kindled very early on a Monday morning.

Candlemas at our church was celebrated, but without candles. They were so scarce in wartime that they were saved for the altar. Of course we needed them at home to light us to bed. The church was lit by hanging oil lamps that the churchwarden used to light. Incidentally our village school was lit in the same way. The Headmistress was responsible for trimming the wicks and lighting them in the afternoons at this gloomy time of year.

I so agree with John that Candlemastide is a lovely time in the Church’s year. Thank goodness we don’t have to think twice about “wasting” candles nowadays.

**– Rosanne**

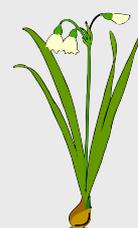
## **Snowdrop Festival at St James**

The dates and times of our church opening for the Snowdrop Festival are as follows:

Sunday 8 February 2:00 – 4:30 pm  
Monday 9 February 10:30 am – 4:30 pm (a new venture)  
Saturday 14 February 10:30 am – 4:30 pm  
Sunday 15 February 2:00 – 4:30 pm

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> Brian Tidy will play an organ recital at approximately 10:30 am. And on the same day pupils from St James Primary School will give a performance of handbell ringing.

The church will be open for drinks and home-made cakes throughout, so we hope everyone will bring friends to see the flowers and enjoy our lovely parish church.



# Mothers' Union News

The AGM this month was a lively meeting. We had plenty of reasons to congratulate ourselves, including the fact that we have welcomed two new members. Pat Chung, our facilitator, reported that our average attendance remains steady, and Margaret Randall, treasurer, reported that our finances are in even better order than they were a year ago. Our charitable giving has increased, thanks partly to some successful fundraising events.

Members of newly-elected committee are as follows: Pat Chung, leader; Margaret Randall, treasurer; May Morgan, secretary; Cynthia Dales, diocesan representative; Betty Mitchell, Marlene Shreeve and Rosanne Butler.

As the Darwin Day at St James and the Snowdrop Festival rather overtook the date of our wine, cheese, and poetry evening, we decided to postpone this until 16 May. Please make a note of this in your diaries as

many people were looking forward to it. Our theme for 2009 is, "The Cost of Relationships." We have been offered this prayer from our world-wide association, and we'd like to share it with all our readers.

God of love and life,  
when we count the cost  
of our relationships  
and struggle to pay the price,  
help us to remember  
how you gave us your only Son.  
When we give freely  
we mirror your greatest gift,  
and we become like you  
in loving without reward.

Amen.

## **The Lunch Club Project**

The intergenerational project had a glorious finale last Wednesday, when the group appeared in front of more than 200 children at their assembly at Church Cowley St James School. This was our opportunity to share with the whole school some of the delightful stories that had emerged from both age groups during the project. After a warm welcome and tea in the children's classrooms, we filed into the hall and performed.

A song, which poet Jenny Lewis had created out of group members' memories of bells formed the basis of our show. Each one of us read a piece of it, but there were frequent interruptions (or eruptions?) as the children and Rosanne acted out some lively scenes, one of which depicted Cyril's secret childhood adventures as a bird nester and general scallywag.

Various children came to tell me how much they had enjoyed our presentation. 'Our' children expressed delight with the whole project. Here are some of their comments.

I liked all the friendly people we were with.

The best was working with Rosanne. We had a lot of fun together.

I liked it because I met Cyril who lived near my nan.

It was really exciting to work on the project, and nice to meet the elderly people who all had lots of stories to tell us.

It got us in touch with old people and we found out that old people had a long history that we could learn a lot from.

I'd like to do it all again ... I'd like other people to try this experience as well.

Somehow, I have the feeling that St James Tuesday Lunch Club hasn't seen the last of these children or their friends.

With many thanks to the Lunch Club for putting up with us, and to the members of the group for being so generous, thoughtful and inspiring. A special thank you to Denise Hinton for her brilliant support.

# Sunday Services

## ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am Holy Communion  
10.00 am Sung Eucharist  
"Church at the Centre" every fourth Sunday  
Also Sunday Lunch : every second Sunday

## ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am Parish Eucharist

## Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Parish Mothers' Union – <i>St James (3<sup>rd</sup> Mon)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Seashells Toddler Group : <i>St James</i>
	12.00 pm	Eucharist – <i>St James</i>
	12.30 pm	Tuesday Lunch Club – <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Friends of St Francis – <i>St Francis (2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup>)</i>
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Thursday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Eucharist – <i>St Francis</i>
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>

## Snowdrops at St James

Aptly named, a drop of snow  
sweet flower that comes when  
cold winds blow  
and in the depth of winter brings  
a whispered tiding of the Spring.  
You'd think such little things  
would die  
beneath the bleak and bitter sky.  
You'd wonder how the buds  
uncurled  
in such a grim and hostile world  
just little frozen drops of snow.

How daintily the bells grow  
upon their slender stalks that  
thrust  
so bravely through the earth's  
hard crust!  
No sunshine warms their icy  
bed.  
No birds make music overhead  
when like small strangers they  
appear  
At the gateway of the year.  
**Gwen Fancutt**

The Parish of Cowley office in St James Church Centre is open :

**Tuesdays 1-3:30 pm,**  
**Fridays 9-3:30 pm,**  
and by appointment.

**Parish Secretary:** Elaine Ulett

**Ministry Team Telephone:**  
01865 747 680  
[parishofcowley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:parishofcowley@hotmail.co.uk)

### Team Rector

Revd Howard Thornton  
Cowley Rectory  
11 Beauchamp Lane  
Oxford OX4 3LF  
*Howard has Friday as his day off.*

### Team Vicar

Revd Susannah Reide  
27 Don Bosco Close  
Oxford OX4 2LD  
*Susannah has Monday as her day off.*

### Non-Stipendiary Ministers

Revd Canon Mark Oxbrow  
13 Annesley Road  
Oxford, OX4 4JH  
Tel: 01865 461953  
[markoxbrow@aol.com](mailto:markoxbrow@aol.com)

Revd Amanda Bloor  
Diocesan Church House  
North Hinksey  
Oxford OX2 0NB  
Tel: 01865 208 221  
[parishofcowley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:parishofcowley@hotmail.co.uk)

### Churchwardens:

Dan and Clare Edwards  
Tel: 01865 774002  
Norah Shallow  
Tel: 765199

### Deputy Wardens:

Margaret Martin Tel: 718532  
Pat Chung: Tel: 773792