

Deane Parish News

May



2004



May Diary

May 2 Easter 4

9am Communion CW

10.30am Family Worship

6pm Communion

May 9 Easter 5

9am Communion 1662

10.30am Service of the Word

6pm Service of the Word

May 16 Easter 6

9am Communion 1662

10.30am Family Worship and Baptism

6pm Communion

May 20 Ascension Day

7.30pm Communion

May 23 Easter 7

9am Communion 1662

10.30am Family Communion

6pm Service of the Word

May 30 Pentecost

9am Communion 1662

10.30am Praise Service

6pm Service of Healing

Communion Readings for May

May 2 Easter 4

Acts 9v36-43

Revelation 7v9-17 John 10v22-30

May 9 Easter 5

Acts 11v1-18

Revelation 21v1-6 John 13v31-35

May 16 Easter 6

Acts 16v9-15

Rev. 21v10,22-22v5 John 5v1-9

May 20 Ascension Day

Acts 1v1-11

Ephesians 1v15-23 Luke 24v44-53

May 23 Easter 7

Acts 16v16-34

Rev. 22v12-14,16-17,20-21 John 17v20-26

May 30 Pentecost

Acts 2v1-21

Romans 8 v14-17 John 14v8-17

The Rector Writes

That Cinderella Subject

I want to write to you this month about a very important subject indeed one of the most important subjects in the Bible - mission. Mission was so important to Jesus that in his final words to his disciples he told them to make it their number one priority, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). And yet although mission was to be their number one priority it is often well down in *our* list of priorities.

Church members speak to me about a whole range of things - the services; the graveyard; re-ordering the church; the quality of the communion wine (!) etc - but I can't recall anybody ever raising with me the subject of the church's commitment to mission. And yet if we fail to grasp this issue the church will decline. And when I say "we" I don't just mean our church in Deane, but the Anglican Church throughout our nation. Do you know that if current trends continue then attendance in Anglican churches will be down to two-thirds of the current level by 2030? Not that I believe that this will, in reality, happen.

And yet although I do not personally believe in the gloomy forecasts we are presented with I do believe that it is vital that our church engages in mission. The gulf between society and the church, and more importantly society and Christ, is enormous. And so it is vital that we commit ourselves to the task that the Lord Jesus gave his disciples to do - mission. And if we are to engage in this task effectively we will need to be both courageous and radical in our thinking.

And yet I am aware that as I write about mission that the very word itself is somewhat slippery. It's rather like motherhood and apple pie - at one level everyone believes in it. It appears in every diocesan mission statement and every strategy document that is produced, but

what does it mean? The word has become so broad nowadays that it would seem to encompass everything. But for me the heart of mission is telling others the gospel, the Good News regarding Jesus Christ.

Of course I'm not saying that being involved in more than this is wrong. Of course it's right that as Christian people we should be concerned for the whole person, the whole of society, and the whole of the created order. God is, and so should we. But the greatest problem that faces human beings is spiritual and it is our privilege and responsibility to present the solution to that problem in Christ. As Christian people we believe that sin separates us from a holy God and leads us to face eternity without him. But we also believe in salvation: achieved uniquely by the Lord Jesus Christ, by his death for us upon the cross. We believe that all who trust in him are justified, made right with God, and are thus fully reconciled to God. And we believe in the Spirit: sent by God to enable sinful human beings to turn to Christ so that they may be born again and have the certain hope of heaven. These truths lie at the very heart of the gospel.

It is with these truths that we are called upon to be Christ's missionaries. But if we are to do that job effectively we will have to think radically. Our society has changed and, if we are to reach it with the gospel, we must change too. We are all too often stuck in the old patterns in our thinking (yes, me too!). We expect people to come to us. But society has changed and if people won't come to us, we need to go to them; in the schools, offices, hospitals, residential care homes, pubs and fitness clubs.

As a church we need to unite and work together in the task of mission. We need to meet together to discuss and pray together about how we are to fulfil Christ's commission to us. We are to be a church which looks beyond itself to the spiritual needs of others. May this be a task which, as a church, we will all wholeheartedly give ourselves to.

May 30 Pentecost/ Whit Sunday

On Ascension Day the sequence of events that began at Easter was completed. Christ ascended to his Father in heaven, and now it was the turn of the Holy Spirit to come down to earth (the story is found in Acts 2: 1 - 8). Pentecost is the feast on which the Church celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit. With his enabling power, the Church was soon off to a flying start, an incredibly dramatic expansion in its earliest, formative period.

So no wonder Pentecost Sunday is a major feast in the Christian year. In fact, in many Christian traditions, Pentecost comes second in importance only to Easter itself. Pentecost is sometimes called 'Whitsun' (literally, 'white Sunday') on account of the tradition of the clergy wearing white robes on this day.

The Holy Spirit is of major importance to Christian thought and life. When we read through the book of Acts, we find evidence of his presence everywhere - guiding, encouraging, and empowering the apostles. In more recent times, the rise of the charismatic movement within the worldwide church has led to an increased awareness of the powerful role of the Spirit in each of our lives.

Christian Pentecost falls on the fiftieth day after Easter, when, according to Luke's account, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples in Jerusalem, who were gathered there on Jesus' instructions. ("Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised.")

Even so, the Holy Spirit's arrival astounded everyone. The disciples certainly did not expect a sound like a mighty rushing wind from heaven, tongues of fire coming to rest on their heads, and the gift of being able to praise God in languages unknown to them.

Luke's description of Pentecost focuses on the impact of the event on people: the disciples were empowered to preach the gospel, and to break down the barriers of language separating them and their audiences. Theologically, the coming of the Spirit thus occupies a significant role in the scheme of salvation, in that it can be seen as a reversal of the 'tower of Babel' (Genesis 11: 1 -32).

How to Grow Deane Church

Led by the Spirit

'Let the church return to Pentecost and Pentecost will return to her'. If we want to see our churches grow, we need to go back to the disciples' experience at Pentecost (Acts 2), when 3000 were added to the church in a single day! The crowd testified 'each of us hears them speaking in his own language/dialect'. Recognising that everybody understood Greek at the time, this powerfully reminds us how the Holy Spirit will enable us to speak the language of our friends, neighbours and colleagues. His power can break down the barriers that prevent others from hearing and responding to the Gospel.

What can we learn from the first disciples?

They were all expectant:

They waited prayerfully in Jerusalem for the gift promised by God (Acts 1:14). Are we expectant for the Spirit to move in our worship? Do we give him space to speak and gift us?

They were all involved:

Throughout Acts we see the Spirit usually coming on groups rather than simply individuals. He belongs to the whole church, not just a few! Do we share our stories of what he is doing in our lives? Are we looking at what he's doing on the fringes (this can show us where he is moving)?

They were all filled:

They were filled with the presence of Jesus, along with new gifts, energy and boldness to share the gospel. In what ways are we being filled with his Spirit, not just for ourselves, but in order to be emptied out for the needs of others?

The challenge remains 'we all want to be full of the Spirit, but few want to be filled'

SERMON NOTEBOOK: 'Founding Fathers of Our Faith'

Jacob: Genesis 32: 22-32

This passage, in which Jacob wrestled with God, describes a key moment in his growth as a person of faith. It was a critical time in Jacob's life, as he returned home after 20 years in exile to face his brother Esau, who he had cheated.

Jacob's Problem

God wanted to show Jacob where his main problem lay; it was not just with Esau, but with God himself. Jacob had always dealt with life's problems through his own schemes and cunning, rather than seeking God's help and direction. His struggle with God taught Jacob that he always had to put God first.

* In what ways has God taught you a similar lesson?

God's Action

God broke into Jacob's life in the form of the assailant who wrestled with him. Although this person remains mysterious (a man or angel?), he certainly acts as God and represents God. The struggle broke Jacob's self-reliance, for God could not fill him with new life, unless he first made him empty.

* How has this also worked out in your experience?

New Blessing

Jacob would not release his assailant unless he blessed him. However, in response God asked for his name. In stating his name, Jacob had to face up to all that this name represented concerning his past life. It was only then that God blessed him with a new name, Israel (lit: he struggles with God). This constituted a fresh start for Jacob, as he would now instinctively seek God's presence and direction.

* In what areas have you experienced God's blessing?

Through this experience Jacob grew up in his faith, as he learned to cling to God and trust his promises, as the one who makes human strength perfect in weakness.

Bits and Pieces

Knitting Challenge! Can You Knit?

Do You Have any Double Knitting Wool? If you answered YES to either question, you could help. Julie Cooper has recently read the report from Operation Christmas Child about the appeal in 2003. She was inspired by a church in Tyne and Wear which had knitted 700 hats for the shoebox project. So Julie picked up her knitting needles and started knitting. As it would be humanly impossible for Julie to knit 700 hats herself, she is calling on others to join her. Several of the members and volunteers at the Wednesday Lunch Club have already taken up the challenge and are knitting away. Non-knitters are also helping by donating wool. Julie has a pattern and some wool (but more would be fantastic) and so, if you can help, please speak to Julie.

CHRISTIES against CANCER

Gillian Gregory and her friend are attempting a sponsored walk of 127 miles from Liverpool to Leeds in June to support the CHRISTIES against CANCER charity. Gillian was treated at Christies over an eight month period in 2000/1. Gillian was born in Liverpool, raised in Leeds and has lived ever since between the two places. She will start in Liverpool on June 14th, walk an average of 12 miles a day along the Leeds/Liverpool canal to arrive in Leeds about 10 days later. In this way she will be following the path of her life which she is so grateful to have. This will be the first long endurance walk which Gillian has attempted, although she goes walking with her friend every week. If you would like to support Gillian's walk, please sign the sponsorship list at the back of church or telephone her on 01204 64792.

Fundraising for Embu

Pathfinders/CYFA are spending the first weekend in May fundraising for the St Stephen children's home in Embu, Kenya. They invite you to lunch in the Memorial Hall after the 10.30am family service on Sunday 2nd May. They will be serving/selling soup and sandwiches.

Please go along to encourage the Youth Organisations which are an important part of the church family, while they give their time to fundraise for the children of St Stephen's. Deane has strong links with Embu. Sheila and Chris Dewhurst-Taylor (two of the youth leaders) have raised money over many years for this project which offers security, welfare, education and God's love to the homeless children of Embu.

Please also pray for the weekend, for a safe fun-time when money will be raised to bless the Embu children. Pray also that our young people will learn that their commitment will be like a drop in the ocean, sending ripples which will change lives.

Ladies Guild

May 4

Japan

Barbara Thompson

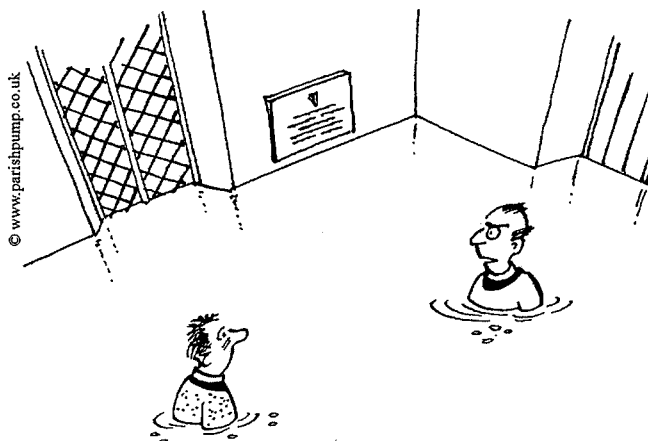
May 18

50th Anniversary

Brenda Dixon

Christian Aid

Christian Aid Week this year is May 9th to 15th. Please volunteer to help with the house to house collection if you can. Sign the list at the back of church, if you have not yet done so. Your help will be much appreciated.



*But I clearly said it was the Curate's
job to turn off the tap filling the baptistry!*

Focus on:

Deane Church Toddler Group

If you come to the parish hall lounge any Thursday during term time at 1.30, you will find a happy band of bumps, babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers; mums, dads, nanas, childminders and friends who together make up Deane Church Toddler Group.

Whilst the adults chat the children play and sometimes the ages mix around the play-do and creative tables.

We have a varied selection of toys for all ages, a slide, some ride-on vehicles and a kitchen corner. Last year we were grateful to receive a grant from the Community Chest which enabled us to buy child-sized tables and chairs. Now we can enjoy our activities in comfort and safety.

No meeting is complete without refreshments, (pink wafers are a particular favourite of ours) and then its time to tidy up, and the weekly puzzle of how to fit a roomful of toys into one cupboard. The session ends with us all gathering together in a circle for some songs and rhymes before we head for home at 3.pm.

At present there are about 12 adults and 12 children at each session with plenty room for more. The cost is £1 per family, which includes refreshments. If you, or anyone you know would be interested in joining us then drop in to see us any time. If you would like further information then have a word with Jean Mainey, or ring the Rectory.

The things children say

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?" One child answered, "Mary." The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?" A little kid said, "Verge." Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?" The kid said, "Well, you know they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

News

World's best-selling artist

Publisher HarperCollins has claimed that Annie Vallotton, the illustrator of the Good News Bible, is the world's best-selling artist. If her 500 line drawings in each copy of the Bible can be multiplied by sales of 140 million Good News Bibles worldwide, then Ms Vallotton has a world beating 70 billion picture sales.

Danger here for Christians

North Korea is the world's most dangerous country for Christians to live in, according to recent research by the Christian charity, Open Doors.

North Korea's record for religious persecution beats even that of Saudi Arabia and Laos. Its 400,000 believers risk imprisonment, torture and death if they practice Christianity publicly. Already tens of thousands of North Korean Christians are held in labour camps, where they face torture, starvation and death.

Despite this, refugees fleeing to China have reported that the Church in Korea has not only survived, but is growing.

Other countries that make the Open Doors' World Watch list include Vietnam, Iran, Myanmar (Burma) and China. Religious persecution is increasing in Eritrea, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

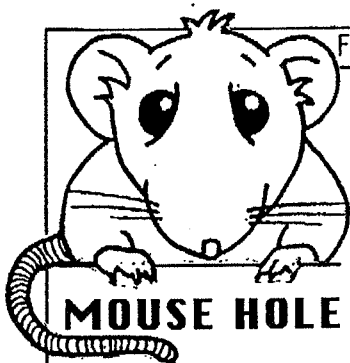
An estimated 200 million Christians worldwide are suffering persecution for their faith.

No Bibles in church, please

Wycliffe Bible Translators are asking for a ban on Bibles in church.

They want Sunday 16 May to be No Bible Sunday.

Why? "Because in giving up their Bibles for the day, churches will be identifying with the people of the 2700 language groups around the world who do not have a Bible in their mother tongue," the charity says.



From my home in the church I learn about all sorts of things...

It was the Festival of Pentecost, 50 days since Passover and Jews from many countries had come to Jerusalem to celebrate...

The Apostles and other believers were together, when they heard a sound like a strong wind and saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person...

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Start a stamp collection!
...but don't just stick them in an album and forget about them... find out about the countries they come from and the Christians living there.



A good website to visit for more information is www.operationworld.org

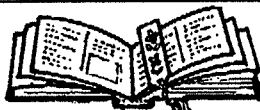
...All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages as the Spirit enabled them.
A crowd of people gathered outside, they were all excited because each of them heard the believers speaking in their own language about the great things God had done.

About 3,000 people heard, believed and were baptised that day!

☐ ☐ ☐ Read Acts 2:1-11 and find out which countries these people came from... Have you heard of any of them?

Collect old stamps from letters, glue them to a box or tin making sure they overlap. Cover with clear plastic, cut a

slot in the lid and use as a collection box for charities who work to bring God's word to people all over the world.



The whole Bible and parts of the Bible have been translated into 2,355 different languages... but this is only one third of all the languages in the world, so there are still many people yet to be able to hear the Bible read in their own language. For more facts and an interactive Bible game see www.biblesociety.org.uk and click on information bank

영생