

Welcome to the “on-line” version of our current Church Newsletter

We publish a monthly newsletter which is distributed to all our members and adherents through the pigeon holes in our church vestibule. We also send copies by post to friends of the church who now live away from Nottingham and large print versions are available to those who need them

Please note that, for this “on-line” version of the newsletter, some information from our printed magazine has been omitted. This normally includes:

- personalia
- personal "thank you" letters
- home addresses of members
- some details of events for children and young people

which we have chosen to remove for child protection, security and other privacy reasons.

We also remove material (such as that supplied by Christian Aid for inclusion in church magazines) to avoid possible difficulty with copyright issues.

Full details of the venues, times and names of individuals to contact are in the printed version of the newsletter or are available from the church secretary.

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends

As the Advent Season arrives we are again a world in waiting. North, South, East and West are all waiting, are all searching for signs of a recovery from the global recession. The so-called credit crunch of the naïve snowballed its way into an avalanche of economic disaster. A disaster made worse for many by their believing their rescue to be dependent on the skills not of a St Bernard, but one Bernard Madoff, former Chairman of the NASDAQ Stock Exchange and perpetrator of the biggest investment fraud in Wall Street history.

People as equally well qualified as Mr Madoff told us that the imprudent and irresponsible debts run up by the industrialised world would have little effect on the emerging economies of developing countries. Alas, no blessed assurances there, for it has been the case that the poorest in low-income countries have been hit very hard indeed. Statisticians suggest that by the end of 2010 some 89 million of those will have been pushed into extreme poverty by the present crisis.

The triumph of hope over experience is now heralding a 'return to normal', but for whom? The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is suggesting that despite recession's end the number of people unemployed in OECD countries could rise 10% to 57 million. The words of Angel Gurfia, Secretary General of OECD are pertinent *'It's not just a case of saying the world will recover its growth in 2010 and then live happily ever after – there are wounds and there is scar tissue.'*

All of that emphasises three things that have become blatantly obvious even to the most casual observer. The first is that the whole world is in this together. There is an interdependence that runs far deeper than many of us have previously realised. The second is this, while it is understandable and perhaps even deeply satisfying taking sideways swipes at banker's bonuses, surely we

cannot let such people continue to determine our fate, economic or otherwise. The third point you would expect me to make. It is that the economic life of the world is in great need of moral renewal.

Though a Scot, I am no Adam Smith, neither am I a John Maynard Keynes, so I cannot offer any solutions to the current economic crisis. What I can suggest in this season of waiting, this Advent is that the church cannot shy away from the economic, political and cultural realities of our times. The prophetic role in the stimulation of hope at times like this is paramount. We must needs help the world identify, indeed rediscover better values on which to build its future.

While those values seem at times to be fleeting shadows or mere suggestions in the season of Advent, with the Incarnation their full glorious technicolour explosion into the world becomes brilliantly clear. When the fast buck gives way to faith, hope and love that may well be the root of a very appropriate economic miracle.

May I take the opportunity the season affords and thank you again for the continuing privilege of being your Minister?

Suely and Leticia join me in wishing you all a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Revd Ian Wiseman

ROLL OF MEMBERS

The Pastoral Committee has been discussing the organization of our Roll of Members and following an Elders meeting the new designations are as follows.

MEMBERS are those who have publicly professed their faith, take communion and are very involved in the life of the church (or would like to be but age and infirmity preclude this).

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS are those who have publicly professed their faith and wish to be associated with our church and also wish to maintain their membership of their existing denomination.

ADHERENTS are those people (over the age of 16) who are regularly involved in the life of our church but who have not publicly professed their faith and do not yet feel they can take the step of membership.

FRIENDS are those people who have been very involved in the life of our church in the past and who have now moved away or are now part of another congregation but who wish to retain their links with us.

There will also be a Supplementary Roll which will contain the names of members who are not attending worship, or contributing to the congregation, or showing interest in the life of the church. Elders will discuss with the members concerned whether or not they wish to continue being associated with the church. If they do, their names will be placed on the Supplementary Roll and contacts continued over a period of three years. If at the end of three years they continue to show no interest, then after notification their names would be removed from the members roll.

These designations were agreed at a recent Elders meeting and will form the main headings in our List of Members, Adherents and Friends for 2010.

HARVEST PRAYER

The young people of our church spent a great deal of time thinking about and writing the following prayer which they read at the Harvest Service. It is felt that their effort should be shared with those of our church family who were not at that service, so, with the agreement of the young people it is printed here.

Prayer of Intercession

Space

Father God

The wonder of creation was Your gift to all life.

The vastness of space highlights our insignificance,
and yet, despite this,

it was our humble planet,

our tiny corner of Your enormous creation,

that you chose to send Your only Son.

You have gifted us beyond belief!

But what are we doing?

We are ruining your planet,

your present to us, with our carelessness.

We pray for all of Your creation,

We pray for mankind's seeming insignificance,

We pray that our actions may not cause devastating effects on Your creation but help to continue to reconstruct it.

Trees

Father God

The rainforest canopy acts as an umbrella protecting delicate plants and providing food and shelter for many animals.

We pray that Your love is like an umbrella - to protect the world and give all its people food and shelter

Trees are some of the oldest living things on the planet. They grow into huge plants from the tiniest of seeds

They have been valued since the time of the Psalms

They are truly the “Kings of the Earth”
and yet, what are we doing?

There are those in the world who are chopping down trees without caring about the implications of not managing forests sustainably. The deforestation is continuing at such a pace that since midnight last night, an area of woodland the size of Nottinghamshire has been razed to the ground.

The implications of this on the climate may cause drought in parts of Africa, America and India and floods in the Pacific basin and China. These could destroy even more of the world’s trees.

Lord, please help the world leaders understand that our actions have consequences and that assumptions about our rights over the world come with responsibilities.

People

Father God

We pray for the people of the earth.

For the people of Indonesia, who have lost so much

For those who have no peace or peace without justice

For children without a family, those with no-one to love them except
for You

and us

We pray for the people closer to home,

For those in need who have lost loved ones

For those without jobs, struggling to support their families

For those who have lost their way;

The homeless,

The lonely, and

The poor.

We hope our gifts today bring a little relief to those using the Friary Drop-In Centre.

Finally, we hope that they will, once again, feel Your love and see the beauty of Your world around us all.

Amen

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REPORT FROM ELDERS MEETING

At the Elders' Meeting, we discussed:

- Supporting Students project - our next practical steps.
- a meeting with Revd. Terry Oakley about this project.
- possible provision of a fixed data projector and screen for the church.
- outcomes from a Junior Church review and planning day.
- House Groups and recent services.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Yet another year has passed and again I wish to thank the team who support me in my efforts to keep the Newsletter appearing each month. Unfortunately Frank Mansell has been forced by ill health to leave the team, but Jean (who also proof-reads the copy), Bob (who does the printing when I am away) and Sarah have been there to collate, fold and staple the pages.

Ian produces the Minister's Letter, Ron collects and writes material for Personalia and there are all the thank you letters and other articles from 'our readers' which fill the pages, so I thank you all for your contributions.

May I take this opportunity to remind you that the Newsletter is also produced as a 'Large Print' version, and more than twenty copies are now sent by email. If you wish to try either of these methods, please see me to arrange this.

On behalf of the Print Room Team I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and healthy and happy New Year.

Patrick.

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N.B. Please note that Sunday 13th December is the last day for contributions for the January Newsletter.

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WARNING - Postal Scam

I was asked to pass the following warning on to you all as it is likely this will become more prevalent with Christmas approaching.

A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (a Premium rate number). DO NOT call this number, as this is a mail scam originating from Belize. If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been billed £15 for the phone call. If you do receive a card with these details, then please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 02072396655 or ICSTIS (the Premium rate service regulator) at www.icstis.org.uk

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RSPCA CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

The RSPCA are again appealing for dog and cat food for the many pets brought into their shelter over the Christmas period. If anyone would like to make a contribution there will be a box in the main church vestibule from Sunday December 6th until Sunday 20th.

Pat

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News from our Commitment for Life Partners in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, Christian Aid support is empowering people to cope better with the current and future impacts of climate change. One such example is a three year climate change adaptation project, being implemented by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) with local partners GKT, Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) and Rupantor. The overall goal of the project is to build a climate resilient society better able to adapt their lives and livelihoods to the dangers and risks associated with climate change in Bangladesh. The project focuses on the poorest in society who are increasingly the hardest hit by climate change precisely because they are poor and lack the voice, assets, services and information necessary to adapt.

Through the project, BCAS and its local partners are working with vulnerable groups in the following three districts:

1. Manikganj (central floodplain): an area affected by floods, river bank erosion, water logging, hot spells and drought.
2. Gopalgani (south central Bangladesh): increasingly experiences prolonged flooding, water logging, heavy rainfall, the salination of water sources, rising temperatures and cyclones.
3. Bagerhat (coastal villages): water salination, river bank erosion, tidal surges, cyclones, rising sea levels, water logging and unpredictable rainfall.

In these three districts, BCAS and its partners have carried out participatory research, working with the most marginalized in the community such as women, the elderly and the disabled, along with farmers, fishermen, landless labourers, shrimp cultivators and rickshaw pullers. By sharing their own perspectives, people are better able to map the hazards and resources in their communities, as well as identify what they could do differently, immediately or in the long term, to improve the situation.

Having mapped out all the issues and risks facing them, the communities, with the support of our partners, are developing local strategies and action plans. Examples of adaptation methods supported by the BCAS Climate Change Adaptation project in 08/09:

Floating allotments: floating beds are prepared using water hyacinth, weeds, algae and bamboo in areas affected by water logging. Vegetables and spices such as pumpkin, ochra, garlic and ginger are cultivated on floating allotments. Growth and crop yields are higher than normal farming practices and the floating allotments can withstand prolonged flooding. BCAS and its partners have trained poor farmers and provided financial support to some of the farmers to prepare floating allotments.

Tree planting: planting trees improves the environment by preventing erosion, as well as providing income generating opportunities. People have received training and support to plant and care for saplings of a variety of local tree and plant species that are able to thrive in wetland and coastal ecosystems.

Duck rearing: in the flood plain and other areas, duck rearing is an effective alternative livelihood, especially for women. 16 individuals from each of the three districts have received training and support to get them started in rearing ducks.

Crab fattening: farming crabs is an excellent income generating activity for people living in areas affected by water salination, tidal surges and the rising sea levels. BCAS and its partners have trained 15 groups of people in how to care for or fatten up crabs and sell them for money.

Over the next 12-18 months, BCAS and its partners will continue to support and train the communities in adaptation methods, and build partnerships through which the communities can share their experiences and encourage the adoption of these techniques in other climate affected areas in Bangladesh and elsewhere

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Outreach activities, with help from volunteers – see below, present
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CAROLS IN THE CAR PARK on SUNDAY 6th DECEMBER

Carol singing with refreshments ,
this year at the slightly earlier time of 6pm

We have invited all the students who live next door to join us
so please come along if you can
Everyone welcome

The Outreach Committee seek volunteers to
assist them on the evening of 6th December

**Please add your names to the list on the
notice board if you are able to assist with**

Setting up the gazebo from 5pm
Bringing cakes,
Serving on the night
Clearing up

Please come along and support this Outreach event

THE GOLDSMITH PLAYERS

The Goldsmith Players presented three one act plays for their autumn season, Two into one Won't Go, Alice Where Art Thou, and Friends of Valerie Lane.

The first play, Two into one Won't Go, set in an antique shop was a cleverly written comedy surrounding the purchase and sale of antique vases. The Comedy genre continued in Alice Where Art Thou situated in a north country village shop not unlike 'Open all Hours'. The storyline was the mysterious disappearance of one of the village girls with the script exploiting all the comedic opportunities of the village characters gathering in the shop. Friends of Valerie Lane was set in a London flat where friends of the deceased owner met together by invitation on the anniversary of her death assumed to be a suicide. As they reminisced it emerged that they all had a motive for her murder.

These autumn performances have become a well established feature and it was pleasing to see full houses on both nights. The detailed scenery and sets and superb costumes embellished the high standard of performances by the Company. Congratulations to everyone on the stage and behind the scenes.