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**The Vicar's Letter**

Dear Friends,

In last month's magazine I wrote about the proposal to re-order the west end of the church. This month I want to introduce another proposed change, not to the church building this time but to our worship. As you know, we have an All Age Eucharist nearly every month, usually on the fourth Sunday. The purpose of this is to have a service which, as its name implies, is accessible to all. I have come to feel that we can and should take this accessibility a step further. It seems to me essential that we include in our pattern of worship a service that is as easy as possible for all to attend, especially those who are not used to worshipping at all. Following conversations in the Worship Group and among the Ministry Team, and after consultation with the PCC, what I would like to propose is the following:

- The current monthly All Age Eucharist to be replaced by a non-Eucharistic service every other month, always on the fourth Sunday, the months in question being January, March, May, July, September and November.
- This service (name to be decided) to have a later starting time (11.00 am), last around 40 – 45 minutes, and be followed always by a bring-and-share meal in the Church Hall. The service and the meal to be seen as one 'package'.
- Invitations to be issued to individuals and families, a different section of the local community each time.
- Great attention to be given to planning, to publicity and to welcoming newcomers in a way that is warm without being overwhelming.

I am aware that this would be a fairly radical departure from the current pattern, and that it will not appeal to everyone. I feel two points are worth making:

1. The 8.00 am Holy Communion will not be affected (although with the consent of the regular congregation we could move to a later time on these six Sundays). There will always be a Eucharist every Sunday morning at St Mary's.
2. This new pattern would *increase* the number of traditional Sung Eucharists at 9.45am.

The whole purpose of the change would be to help more people begin to make the journey towards faith. I would welcome your comments, suggestions and criticisms (yes, really!). Obviously, I would not be making this proposal if I did not strongly feel that something like this is necessary for the mission of our church, but if it is to work it will need support from more than a clique. My hope is that we can all see our pattern of worship not as something that meets the needs of the faithful alone, but which also speaks to those who find crossing the threshold of the church very daunting, and those who have never even thought of doing so.

With love,  
David

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### **This month's cover**

Congratulations to Lawrence for squeezing so much holiday information into this month's cover design – almost as many items as our wives and daughters pack into a holiday suitcases! If you are travelling in August, have a safe journey and return refreshed. And if there's room in your suitcase for a parish magazine from a church you visit, the magazine committee here would love to see it.

### **Charity of the month**

AIDS is one of the most serious problems confronting Africa today and one of the major diseases highlighted in the United Nations' "Millennium Development Goals" – an ambitious set of targets intended to halve world poverty by 2015. Mashambanzou Care Trust in Zimbabwe - supported by St Mary's for a number of years - is an inter-denominational, non-profit organisation that offers comfort and reassurance to people living with AIDS and their family members. Zimbabwe has the highest level of infection in the whole world. Millions of adults are infected and hundreds of thousands of children have been orphaned as a result. AIDS could potentially wipe out an entire generation

Mashambanzou works in a number of areas including youth education and health care and also looks after

children orphaned as a result of AIDS. It serves the poorest and the weakest in Harare, capital of Zimbabwe, who are otherwise not in a position to secure medical treatment. Please give generously – a little of our money can make a vast amount of difference.

*Dilys Ward*

### **Help for insomniacs**

David Busk is fond of telling us how he came to Godmanchester via our church website. Padding around in the middle of the night recently, I found it helpful too. Anxious that volunteers might feel unprepared for keeping the church open on Sunday afternoons I was delighted to discover that the website has guides to both the organ and the church printed in full. But there is so much more. The site contains details of all church activities, regular meetings, forthcoming events, copies of sermons and *Newsletters* we may have missed, email addresses of key contacts, and the amazing Church Forums, or noticeboards, which allow us to post comments on topics of interest, and receive feedback from other users. (To register for the Forums we need to know our Electoral Roll numbers. These are displayed on the noticeboard at the back of the church.)

Well worth a visit, then. Even in the daytime. [www.stmarysgodmanchester.org](http://www.stmarysgodmanchester.org)

*Peter Irving*

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### **My visit to Lambeth Palace**

On Saturday 19 May, I was one of ninety young people from across the country who went to Lambeth Palace to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury. Young people from the Ely Diocese were invited to apply for the visit and I was one of the ten lucky ones. The day was based around the way we read the Bible, as well as being an opportunity for us to meet the Archbishop. We had been asked to bring a copy of the Bible with us. As very few of us had met before, it was a rather apprehensive party that made its way through the Morton Gate and into the Palace proper.

We began the day by meeting everyone in the famed Guard Room in the Palace, and spent a little time getting to know one another. To our surprise, we eventually realised that the charming clerical gentleman who was wandering about and chatting was in fact the Archbishop in plain clothes – many of us had assumed that he would be kept apart from the ‘youths’ and only wheeled out for sermons and the like. In fact, much of the day was very different from our expectations. We began with a short service, followed by an interesting talk by the Archbishop in which he compared the Bible to a huge pile of books including story books, minutes of meetings, and a CD of popular music, and told us that if we read the Bible just for the stories, that would be an excellent start. After an introduction to

Absalom, we were turned out into the garden for a half hour of ‘silent prayer’ – in which we could do what we wanted. It is perhaps a reflection of the atmosphere of the day that most of us turned to Kings and began to discuss what we had just heard.

On our return, we split into small discussion groups. Although topics for discussion were suggested – which books of the Bible did we like best? (Job and Esther featured on our list) - How can we involve more young people in the Church? - we were encouraged to debate whatever topics we liked. My group considered how hard it was to read Revelations, and why we read the Bible.

The day also included group photos, lunch, and a question and answer session, in which we asked the Archbishop to explain how one should interpret Revelations (‘Remember it’s a dream’); whether women should be allowed to be bishops (‘Yes’), and whether Satan exits (‘Maybe’). ..

I enjoyed the day very much and think of the Bible in a different way now. To many Christians our holy book is a chore to read – something we have to do, but take no particular pleasure in doing it. The day at Lambeth has taught me that reading the Bible because we genuinely enjoy it is much better, and something I think I’ll continue doing for a long time.

*Felicity White*

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**Wives' Group**

We are most grateful to Jean Lenton who provided her lovely garden for our July Charity coffee evening. We were fortunate to have a dry sunny evening and the ladies (and 2 gentlemen!) enjoyed relaxing in the beautiful surroundings. Over a £100 was taken which will boost the money being raised this year for Age Concern, our chosen charity. Thank you to everyone who supported us.

There is no meeting in August and our next event will be the Annual Dinner which will be held at The Exhibition on 11<sup>th</sup> September. Anyone wishing to attend please contact Olwyn Hurd (458700) or Barbara Thirlwall (457018)

*Barbara Thirlwall*

**Men's Social Group**

The July cycle ride was cancelled - all the budding cyclists were completing their preparations for the Tour de France. There will be an evening walk on 7 August (meet at the Chinese Bridge at 7 pm). Hopefully we might be able to muster enough for a 'crocodile' or one of those walking buses and we could pretend that we were on our way to school. For the September meeting we at last return inside for a talk on brass rubbing to be given by Peter Heseltine of Earning Street. Church Hall, 7.30 pm.

*Peter Dawe*

**Mothers' Union**

At the July meeting we visited St Anne's School, where we were entertained by the children after, that is, we managed to enter the building. Some of us managed to beat the weather, but several were trapped in the car park by a violent hailstorm accompanied by thunder and lightening. Once the elements had taken their revenge the entertainment began.

This year Miss Lowe was in charge and put together a varied concert. Proceedings started with a selection of country dances performed by a well-rehearsed Year 3.

This was followed by music from the string band and then some solo performances. The 'Sing for Fun' group treated us to some unaccompanied solos taken from the Victorian Music Hall; and we also enjoyed some excellent recorder music.

As always Olwyn Hurd and team served us with splendid refreshments. The children all performed with great confidence and enjoyment and we returned home after a really exceptional afternoon's entertainment.

On Tuesday 7 August the Mothers' Union will hold a garden party at the home of Trish Pope (43a West Street).

*Jean Morgan*

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### News from Children's Church

Children's Church follows the schools' holiday pattern, so we have now broken up for our long summer holiday. We can look back on another busy and varied year with a lot of pleasure. Our Sunday morning activities were typically attended by more than 20 children, and, of course, we joined in many other parish events. Highlights for me were bread-making during the Harvest Festival weekend, the Nativity service, observing Good Friday together under Pat Saunders' excellent guidance and a particularly happy May Revels (with our Editor's inspiring direction of the Tug of War).

We now have a good collection of resources in the back room of the Church Hall (new chairs, cushions, toys and stationery). Our beautiful set of story sacks now covers the Nativity, Adam and Eve, Jonah and the Whale and Ruth and Boaz. The collection of Godly Play materials is also very special, and we always enjoy Pat's Godly Play sessions with us. Our CD player unfortunately disappeared during the break-in, but we hope to replace it.

Ally Barrett was very aware that, for those occasions when children are in the church itself, there need to be attractive resources to guide them through services. She set up the successful North Aisle area, with miniature altar tables, clergy dolls with vestments, a special clock, to follow

stages in the Eucharist, and much more. We are hoping to make more materials available for older children who stay in the pews with their families.

We are very fortunate in our wonderful team of volunteers, with their constant enthusiasm, fresh ideas and creativity, and would be pleased to hear from anyone wishing to join us. Recently we have been looking at passages from St Paul's epistles, and colleagues have helped the children to do weaving, write epistles with authentic writing materials and produce 3D prisons, from which Paul and Silas could emerge, after the earthquake!

This year, Mandy Abbotts, Catheryn Turrell and Kate Steed 'retired', and we are very grateful for all that they did. Special thanks must go, however, to Ruth Ekblom, who left the Children's Church team at the end of the summer term. A joint leader for six years and helper before that, Ruth made an enormous contribution to the quality of our provision for the young, and I particularly remember her leading a Churches Together craft activity for 200 people and only half an hour to produce huge banners: it was very impressive! I am hoping we will all still benefit from her many skills and energy as Ruth will remain very much involved in church life.

*Victoria Richardson  
(Joint Children's Church leader, with  
Jules Shelley and Angela Wright)*

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### **Ten years and a hundred and one towers later**

It was ten years ago when I first climbed the tower steps to offer my services as a bell-ringer. I was looking for a practical way of being involved with my local church and I had noticed that, quite often, not all of St Mary's eight bells were ringing on a Sunday morning. Anyway, how difficult could pulling on a bell-rope be?

The answer turned out to be: “difficult enough for to me feel I'd achieved something once I'd mastered it”, but that wasn't the end of it. Instead of simply making a commitment to ring bells twice a week, I had entered into a wholly new and fascinating world, rich in tradition, history and ingenuity. This world is known to those within it as the “Exercise”, a word which covers the whole practice and organisation of bell-ringing.

First of all, there's learning to actually ring a bell; a bit like learning to ride a bicycle. At first, it seems impossible; the rope seems to have a mind of its own. Once you have learnt how to do it, you never forget. Good bellringers ring with very little effort; it's knowing just how hard to pull: something which comes with practice and, compared with learning a musical instrument, very little of it. If we practised every night, we'd drive Godmanchester mad. However, for complete beginners we silence their bell by tying up its clapper.

Once you can handle a bell and can control exactly when it sounds, you will be able to ring with other people and make some music: first of all scales, or “rounds” as we call them, but always starting with the highest note and going down to the lowest; then swapping places with other bells on commands from the “conductor”, known as “call changes”; and later on “method ringing”, too complicated to explain here, but a more interesting way to exercise your brain than Sudoku and with a very satisfying musical result.

Bellringing is a very social kind of music-making which also gives that sense of teamwork you get from achieving something you could never have achieved on your own.

As a bellringer, you've joined a huge social network. When I'm on holiday, or staying with relatives in England, or Wales, I will usually make an effort to either join a practice night in the local church, or help ring for their Sunday service, and instantly I'm no longer a tourist, but a kind of honorary local. There is a ringing etiquette. For example, bellringers are always welcome in any tower, but visitors must always try to say something nice about the bells as they leave - sometimes all you can say is that they're “interesting”.

Apart from practices and services, other occasions are quarter peals and full peals, district meetings and outings. The first two of these need

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more explanation than I can give here, but I quite enjoy the other two. District meetings are held regularly – there are three districts in the diocese – and the proceedings start with ringing in the church that is hosting the meeting. This is followed by a service and then, the best bit, a proper afternoon tea with plenty of sandwiches and cakes. There is a, hopefully, short business meeting followed by more ringing, either in the same church, or in another one nearby.

Outings don't usually involve coaches, but we spend the day going around selected churches in a particular area, have ringing sessions of about half an hour at each one. I like these for the opportunity to see the churches, many of them in beautiful rural settings, with maybe a pub lunch to break up the day. From Godmanchester, we have had enjoyable trips to Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, North London and other parts of Cambridgeshire. With all of these events and individual visits to churches when I'm away, I have now rung in exactly 101 different towers.

If you'd like to be part of all this, contact me (tel: 453270, email: [charles.looker@virgin.net](mailto:charles.looker@virgin.net)).

Charles Looker

### BYOW

It may not feel like summer, but the calendar assures that us it is. In which case it's time for the parish Summer Lunch. This will take place in the Church Hall on Sunday 5 August, 12.15 pm for 12.30pm, and all are welcome. Tickets (£5 adults, £2.50 children) are available from Val Pithey, and having just returned from holiday she is anxious to offload. Please bring your own wine as usual, and enjoy a Sunday lunch in good company knowing that proceeds from the event are going towards church funds.

*Contact: Val Pithey (454851)*

*Prayer from the liturgy for St Oswald's day (August 5th), written by the Northumbria Community:*

"I place into your hands, Lord,  
the choices that I face.  
Guard me from choosing  
the way perilous  
of which the end is heart-pain  
and the secret tear.

May I feel your presence  
at the heart of my desire,  
and so know it is for Your desire for  
me.

Thus shall I prosper,  
thus see that my purpose is from You,  
thus have power to do the good which  
endures."

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### School reports

*One again our two local headteachers have found time in their busy season to send us an end of year report. Godmanchester is fortunate to have two such outstanding schools serving the community.*

#### A Year of Change and Challenge at Godmanchester School

As we reach the end of the academic year we again celebrate another successful year that has been full of change and challenge. Last year I wrote of the ‘community heart’ evident in the town and the strong sense of community within the school, this continues to be a virtue of Godmanchester.

Caring for and thinking of others is a strength of school. An ex-pupil of Hinchingsbrooke School visited us in January to talk about her work at a special school in Uganda. The children decided to raise money to send a boy to school. The breaktime stalls started, the 20p rolled in – enough for Ivan to go to school.

The older pupils asked: “What happens to Ivan when the money stops?”

They found a solution – created the Annual Ivan Relay Race, Ivan will finish his education and now so will Shaliwa. This positive attitude of pupils is an important part of our school and forms the foundation for

our academic success. Again this year we have achieved and exceeded our academic targets, pleasing inspectors and governors. Individually all pupils have done very well, particularly the more able. But more importantly they leave us as learners, thinkers, leaders and doers.

Our community will continue to thrive as we work towards the “Community Cohesion Agenda” in 2008. With extended provision planned for young children, additional services and activities for pupils & families provided, our team work and partnerships expand.

Within our classrooms the objective teaching and personalised learning continues to produce young people with a conscience, a care of others and a desire to learn. They need to be included and involved in the wider community to help us all meet the challenges of change in the future.

*Philip Ellington.  
Headteacher.*

#### St Anne’s Church of England Primary School

Another year has passed by since I last wrote an article for the *Parish News*. It has been a very successful year.

Our SATs results this year in both Key Stage 1 (age 7) and Key Stage 2 (age 11) have been the best ever since the school opened eight years ago.

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Our musical achievements continue to be a strength of the School. In the Rotary Young Musician Competition four groups went forward to the semi-final at Northampton, and three entries from the semi final to the final at Melton Mowbray - the Recorder Duet, the Vocal Quartet and the Senior Choir. In the final we were awarded one first place and two runners-up positions. We were the only school with entries in more than one section of the Final Competition. At the Peterborough Music Festival the Junior Choir retained the Phillip's Trophy by winning the 7 years and under choral section. The Recorder Ensemble was placed second in its section. Many pupils passed exams at different levels playing a variety of instruments, the highest achievement being Grade 5 with distinction by Millie Harris on the treble recorder.

Our sports teams entered competitions with other schools at a local and county level in football, tag rugby, quick cricket, athletics and swimming, and some notable individual performances were recorded. Ben Chance was selected for the Under 11 County Cricket Squad; Zoe Griffiths won four medals/trophies in the Huntingdon Piranhas Swimming Club Championships; James Barkshire represented Cambridgeshire at the Tennis East Inter-County mini tennis tournament; and Nathan Jackson has won through to the grand final of the boys under 10 age group of HSBC Wee Wonders National Golf

Competition. This will be played over two days in August at the home of golf, St Andrews, and will be filmed by Sky Sports. The winner will go on to play in the World Junior Championships in the USA.

During the Year we became the proud recipients of another national award, the ArtsMark Gold Award. The scheme is managed by Arts Council England to recognise schools with a high level of provision in the arts. It is open to all schools in England, and a benchmark for arts provision in art, dance, drama and music.

As reported earlier in *Parish News* we had an Ofsted Inspection in October. In a message from Helen Whiter, Director of Learning at Cambridgeshire Office of Children and Young People's Service, she wrote: *I was particularly pleased to read that aspects of leadership and management were outstanding; and the recognition of the 'excellent caring ethos in which all children are valued as individuals'. A report of this standard is as a result of a team effort, something which I know you value highly.*

We are now starting to look forward to a new academic year starting in September. Please come and visit us often, everyone is welcome at St Anne's at any time. Thank you all for your prayers, continued support and enthusiasm.

*Anthea Kenna*

*Headteacher (375300)*

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### June PCC Meeting

*Minutes in full of all PCC meetings are displayed on the south door noticeboard. Here are some key points from the June meeting*

#### Matters arising

- Loudspeaker System – There is a need to ask the sound engineers to return, ideally on a Sunday morning, to experience the problems for themselves and, hopefully, to resolve them.

#### Finance Committee

- On the Summer Fete, Peter Ballantine reported that the net profit of £1,495, after expenses, was slightly up on last year. Thanks were recorded to Christine and Mike Parker and to all who helped.

#### Fabric Committee

- Renovation of the North Porch floor has been completed. Repairs are underway to rectify the windows damaged by people attempting to break into the church.
- Flower Guild are very happy with the cupboards in the NW corner (they provide a useful worktop) and have intimated that they would be content for the cupboards to stay there rather than to be returned to the North Porch.
- Action to provide a fire alarm for bell ringers in the Bell Tower was ongoing.

#### Deanery Synod

- 2009 is the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Diocese. As part of the planning towards this, each parish is asked to produce a Mission Action Plan. This will be presented at a special service in 2009.

- The Deanery has a vacancy for a lay representative on Diocesan Synod; this does not have to be a member of the Deanery Synod.

#### Worship Group

- The Easter Morning Vigil service had been sparsely attended. This service replaced an evening service on Holy Saturday. The question raised was whether we might attract more people to attend on the Saturday. This needs to be thought out well in advance of next Easter.

#### Church Hall Committee

- New windows are in place and other repairs ongoing.

#### Parish Policy on Child Protection

- PCC adopted the Parish Policy on Child Protection for another year and copies are available from the Parish Office. The Policy ensures that we maintain a safe environment for work with children and young people. For example, it states that all new workers with children in the Parish, paid or voluntary, will be recruited according to Home Office guidelines, which include Criminal Records Bureau checks. All workers will be properly supported in their work, be given training opportunities and will receive guidelines on recognising and reporting child abuse.

#### Any other business

- The Youth Group were leading an attempt to obtain an ECO congregation award for our Church. They are examining ways of improving the church environment. The results of a questionnaire will be submitted for assessment in the hope of an award.

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### Dates for your Diary

Thu	2	9.45 am	Holy Communion	
Sun	5	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
<i>Trinity 9</i>		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		12.15 for 12.30	Summer Lunch	
		6.30 pm	Sung Eucharist	
			Mothers' Union Garden	
Tue	7	2.00 pm	Party	43a West Street
		7.00 pm	Men's Social Group	Summer walk, starting at the Chinese Bridge
				Oak Tree Court
Wed	8	10.30 am	Holy Communion	
Thu	9	9.45 am	Holy Communion	
Sun	12	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
<i>Trinity 10</i>		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		6.30 pm	Sung Evensong	
Tue	14		<i>No Wives' Group</i>	
Wed	15	11.00 am	Holy Communion	Woodley Court
Thu	16	9.45 am	Holy Communion	
		7.30 pm	Prayer Group	36, Old Court Hall
Sun	19	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
<i>Trinity 11</i>		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		6.30 pm	Sung Evensong	
Wed	22	9.45 am	Holy Communion	McCartney House
Thu	23	9.45 am	Holy Communion	
Sun	26	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
<i>Trinity 12</i>		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		6.30 am	Sung Evensong	
Mon	27		Bank Holiday	

The Editorial Committee Meeting for the September magazine will be held on **Sunday 19 August**. Would you please ensure that material is with one of the following people by that date, and if possible not later than **Friday 17 August**.

Peter Irving (Editor) 26 Post Street ([pjibooks@aol.com](mailto:pjibooks@aol.com))

Lawrence Back (Lawrence@lionscorner.co.uk)

Joan Jackson (joan.jackson@ntlworld.com)

Victoria Richardson (DIRand VMR@aol.com)

Any enquiries concerning advertisements should be addressed to Victoria Richardson

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### The Registers

#### Baptism

8 July                    Jessica Ivy Taylor  
                              Hannah Louise Rose Lutman  
26 August                Eva Iris Ann Hurst  
                              George Edward Jordan

#### Holy Matrimony

11 August                Rhyse Plummer and Heather Coles

#### Funerals

3 July                    John Thompson Chicken  
4 July                    Doreen Rowan

### The Lectionary

5 July                    **Trinity 9**  
                              Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14, 2:18-23; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21  
12 July                    **Trinity 10**  
                              Genesis 15:1-6, Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40  
19 July                    **Trinity 11**  
                              Jeremiah 23:23-29; Hebrews 11:29-12:2; Luke 12:49-56  
26 July                    **Trinity 12**  
                              Isaiah 30:8-21; 2 Corinthians 9; Psalm 19:49-56