

## FROM THE CLERGY

Fr Rob Wickham



I have no grips on my shoes. I ought to get a new pair, but I do love my DM boots, they are so comfortable, so I feel slightly unimpressed at the thought of buying, and subsequently braking in, a new pair. But in

these icy conditions, I am slipping and sliding all over the place. Recently, as I was leaving the churchyard, I seriously slipped right over, and was caught by a young blonde lady, much to her amusement. Perhaps these old boots should remain after all!

So what sort of shoes do you like? How do you choose which shoes you are going to wear? When do you get rid of pairs of shoes? How often do you clean them?

I also wonder in whose footsteps you tread? When you walk, who do you feel walking with you, or watching each of your steps?

For me, I feel members of my family, and also that long list of Rectors of Hackney who have trod the paths of the church and churchyard before me. I also feel that long list of church people who have influenced our schools as they celebrate their 490th anniversary.

Who is it for you?

Next time you put on your shoes, have a think, and a pray as to who walks with you, remembering always that nothing separates us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus - even your shoes are filled with his love.



WE ARE A  
FAIRTRADE  
CHURCH

## SPECIAL SERVICES in JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2010

### Sunday 24 January Baptism Sunday

9.30am Choral Communion service

11am Billy Tomlinson will be baptised during this service.

6.30pm Choral Evensong to celebrate the beginning of the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. We will be praying for changes that we face. As a Church we think about the staff team; our mission and ministry. All of us though in our personal lives will be facing changes this New Year. We place these in God's hands tonight. We also say farewell to Janet and Greg Colson who emigrate to New Zealand at the end of the month.

### Sunday 31 January Education Sunday.

9.30am Choral Communion service

11am Informal Eucharist We shall be welcoming representatives from our two church schools.

4pm Reception for all who have applied to send their children to our Primary School using the church attendance criteria. This is an opportunity to pray for them, and to get to know each other better.

### Tuesday 2 February Feast of Candlemass, marking the end of the Christmas and Epiphany celebrations.

7.30pm Candle lit service, remembering Jesus's presentation at the Temple.

### Sunday 14 February Feast of St Valentine

5pm An opportunity for couples to renew their marriage vows.

Please come along - whether you have been married for 1 year or 50 years.

## HACKNEY WINTER NIGHT SHELTER 2010

Fr David Evans



For the second year, St John's is joining 18 other churches across the Borough of Hackney to care for homeless people during January, February and March. On Wednesday nights for those three

months we run a dormitory for ten men in the church hall. Our guests have dinner at St Mary's, Stoke Newington, and then join us about 9pm. Some want to chat and play chess, others head straight to bed. Breakfast is served at 7.15am, and our guests leave at 8am. None of this would be possible without a committed team of volunteers drawn from every

aspect of the church's life and from the wider community. For more information, please contact me on:

E: [davidjjevans@me.com](mailto:davidjjevans@me.com)

T: 020 8986-4456

Deadline for contributions  
for next issue is  
Sunday 28th February to  
[seabrook@mac.com](mailto:seabrook@mac.com)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To comment on anything in *Reflections*, please email as shown above

## PARISH RETREAT

If you'd like to take some time to be with God away from the distractions of daily life, come on the parish retreat. Perhaps you have a big decision to make about things at home or things at work, or you're considering changing direction in some aspect of your life. Or perhaps 48 hours away from the telephone, the children or the kitchen just sounds like bliss. Whatever you're looking for, this is a great way to step back and focus on what God's saying to you, to get to know each other a bit better, and to enjoy the beautiful cathedral and town of Ely. We'll be staying at Bishop Woodford House in Ely, from the evening of Friday 19 February until after lunch on Sunday 21 February. The cost is £123.84 per person, plus travel. Some subsidies are available from church funds. For more information, please speak to Fr David whose details are on pages 1 & 4 of this issue. We need to know final numbers by mid-January.

## STEWARDSHIP

Audrey Seabrook



A few people have not yet collected, from the table near the church door, their envelopes for 2010. On the same table there is also a box of small brown envelopes to be

collected. If you are not yet a member of our Stewardship scheme, but would like to join, you can talk to me during the half hour between our two Sunday morning services. Would Mrs Andrea Willie please make herself know to me? May I remind members that the envelopes issued to you are for you ONLY and not other members of your family. Do not write anything on the envelope and use only those for the current year. Now is the time to throw away any envelopes from previous years.

## WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH YOUR CHRISTMAS CARDS?

In previous years our local Post Office and Tesco supermarket have each had a large box for recycling Christmas cards. This year Marks & Spencer also has a box. So why not take advantage of this excellent scheme, next time you go shopping?

## A TRIBUTE to IRENE CAMMEGH

Written by Phyllis Manning

The people in the photograph, taken possibly 15 years ago, are, from L to R: Doris Errington, Alan Errington, Jean Biddle, IRENE CAMMEGH, Audrey Brown, Joyce Bailey, Phyllis Manning, Harry Manning, Heather Inkersole, Denis Inkersole. If anyone recognises the others please let us know!



We were all members of St John's in Rev. H A S Pink's time as Rector. He did a magnificent job in getting things going after World War 2 as well as after The Great Fire of St John's in 1955. We were the members of a Social Club set up to give the congregation a chance to meet, which we did at the Vernon Hall (in Florfield Road near the Town Hall) and were in effect the committee. We invited speakers; had films, musical evenings etc. (of course it kept US together too.) We also organised a Drama group to put on plays in the Vernon Hall; in the newly opened Secondary School; and sometimes in the Church Service (held in the Secondary School during the rebuilding/renovation of St John's after the fire). As the names indicate, people sometimes 'paired off'.

Irene Cammegh lived in Clapton Passage and attended Clapton Girls' School. Her mother was a widow. After school she joined the Civil Service and soon rose up the ladder. At that time the Service would help with mortgages, but only if you chose to live in certain areas, so Irene moved to Princes Risborough. In the Parish, after the fire, much work was needed and Irene became Assistant Treasurer.

She soon made her name out in 'the sticks' running many charities and raising money for all sorts of local events. Most importantly she looked after her schooldays friend Joyce Bailey, who had moved to live nearby, when she became unwell.

Irene and Joyce both joined the Friends of St John's when it was re-activated in 1992 (having been initially formed after the fire mentioned above) but sadly Irene died on 17 March 2009. Together, she and Joyce were well known in the local area, as the many divers people at Irene's funeral were keen to tell us.

Irene never forget her 'growing-up' time at St John's and, as we now know, left a substantial legacy to St John's in her will.

So, Thank You Irene. Rest in Peace.

## REMINDER ABOUT STAMPS

All the used stamps which we collect in church, go to Oxfam which markets them with great success. **The Box**, a lovely wooden one, by the door, is clearly labelled. Encourage your children to pop the stamps from their birthday cards into the box! Most of all bring in all the stamps from your Christmas cards.

## WORKING PARTY MEETINGS

**Operation and Finance**  
7.30pm – 19 January

**Children and Young People**  
12.15pm – 7 February

**People and Prayer**  
11am – 14 February

## THE SOUND OF BELLS

Neil Stewart

I have been a bell ringer at St John's for just over three years and would recommend it to anyone who enjoys being in the company of friendly people.

I have always liked hearing church bells on a Sunday morning whether in the middle of London, or drifting across open countryside. So when I saw a notice saying that practice night for bell-ringers was Monday at 7:30pm I decided to see what it was all about.

I was welcomed very warmly by Steve Jakeman (the Tower Captain) who showed me a model of a 'ringing' bell. Two minutes later he threw me in at the deep end by giving me the tail-end of a rope. I imagined a bit of gentle pulling on a rope followed by a 'ting' of a bell. What happened was that the rope shot up through a hole in the roof and was pulled back down by Steve. It was my turn again, and I either pulled too hard or not hard enough. Following much coaching I gradually learnt how to 'handle' a bell.

My son James (13) soon decided to start learning. He quickly overtook me in bell control and rang as often as possible, becoming adept in the more complicated Methods (tunes) very quickly.

We joined in a couple of group outings in summers to the Peak District and Norfolk. This involved map reading skills, picnics in beautiful countryside, and staying in B&Bs or hotels with some lovely people, in places we would never have seen otherwise.

Not wanting to be left out, my wife (no age given!) decided to give bell-ringing a try, and has since become a fully-fledged ringer. So there are now three members of our family ringing on Sunday mornings as often as possible, other demands permitting, in our busy lives.

## LENT 2010

Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, is on 17 February. There will be communion services at 10am and 7.30pm. This is a day of obligation, so please make every effort to come along.

In addition, each Sunday during Lent, Stations of the Cross will take place at 6.30pm and there will be extra bible studies and discussion groups. Please look out for the Lent leaflet currently being produced.

## PEMBURY THEOLOGY GROUP

Fr Lincoln Harvey



Theology is the joyful task of thinking and sharing our thoughts with each other. It is to enter into a great conversation, one in which our minds are shaped and our lives are changed. It is a conversation about who God is and what he is up to in Jesus Christ, a living conversation that helps us discover who we are and what is happening in our world. It is fun, it is lively, and all of us can do it!

The Pembury Theology group meets every two weeks in the Pembury Tavern, on the corner of Dalston Lane and Amhurst Road. Some of us do worship at St John's, some of us do not. We usually take it in turns to choose a topic - maybe an article, a picture, or a chapter from a book, generally short, rarely too hard, never at all boring - and we use this as the basis for an informal and relaxed discussion. Over time, we learn from the things we've read and we learn from each other. We've also become friends!

Does all this sound like your type of thing? If so, why not join us? Why not speak to me after the service and I'll let you have details about our next meeting? Or email me if that's easier! Fr Lincoln at [lincoln.harvey@gmail.com](mailto:lincoln.harvey@gmail.com)

## REMEMBERING SOME CHRISTMAS FETES

Hugo Deadman



St John's had a novelty this year. Our marvellous parish administrator, Emily, organised a splendid Christmas market. This wasn't like our summer fete, where lots of church people help to raise money and show Hackney what a vibrant, welcoming community we are. All the stalls at the market were manned by local people, who had each paid a rent and could then keep the money they raised.

What a variety we had too! I bought lots of excellent bits and pieces, some of which made marvellous presents for friends. Father David got the bargain of the day - a very louche, velvet frock coat

in which he can sweep around the parish. Hundreds of people came through the door, did their shopping and saw what an impressive building we are privileged to own. So hats off to Emily for organising such a successful event and raising over £1000 for the church.

This was one of many Christmas events around Hackney. St Joseph's Hospice had their annual mega-event, which seemed to attract everyone within a radius of 10 miles and saw some pretty sharp elbow work at the bric a brac stall. St Mary of Eton, St Matthias and St Michael and All Angels also held events - the latter a very fine one with an excellent grotto for Father Christmas. Of course I enjoyed our event most. It's a joy to welcome people, especially when we raise money for our work into the bargain!

## AN UNUSUAL HACKNEY PERSON

Hugo Deadman

Do you remember the Moleman of Hackney? A couple of years ago the papers were full of the strange story of the man living in a huge rundown house in Dalston, who had spent years digging a network of tunnels underneath it - and underneath the street outside. In the end, the authorities stepped in since his digging had started to undermine the roads.

But did you know that amongst the thousands of our Hackney predecessors buried in the churchyard is someone who was even more famous for his unusual lifestyle?

To the east of the church lies the tomb of one James Lucas, known in his lifetime as the Hermit of Hertfordshire or, less charitably Mad Lucas. For 30 years he had lived in seclusion in his huge mansion near Hitchin, rarely going outside and holing himself up in a little cell as the house disintegrated around him. His withdrawal started following the death of his mother, to whom he was very close, and his conviction that other family members planned to expel him from the house. His fame spread. From an area behind bars in his kitchen, he received visitors, plying them with gin and water. It became fashionable to visit him, and Charles Dickens wrote a less than flattering account of his audience. Every Good Friday hundreds of children would visit, to be rewarded with sweets, buns and pennies. On his death in 1874, a huge amount of space was given over in the newspapers for obituaries, and souvenirs of his life appeared for sale. Nothing now remains of the house, other than a pub nearby, called The Hermit. *Cont. >*

Was Lucas really mentally ill? Probably. But he was able to hold court for many years and was often very charming, other than when it was suggested he should move or change the way he spent his life. And why should he? I rather like him as someone who ploughed his own furrow. And Hackney has always been a home for such unusual people - as has St John's. So hurrah for our historic hermit!

## COMMUNITY RENEWAL CO-ORDINATOR

On 25 January we shall be interviewing for the above new post at St John's. The postholder will be able to develop and co-ordinate: our children and youth work; our work amongst older people; and our health related projects. He or she will be encouraging opportunities for volunteering at St John's both from within the Church community and outside - building on the excellent work done by Fr David and Toyin.

This is a crucial appointment. Please keep the process in your prayers.

## A POEM FOR JANUARY

*T'was the month after Christmas and all through the house  
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.  
The stuffing I'd nibble, the turkey I'd taste  
The yummys I'd eaten gone straight to my waist.  
The wine and the mince pies,  
The bread and the cheese  
I should have just said, 'No thank you, please.'  
So as I dressed myself in my boyfriend's old shirt,  
I couldn't believe my bottom and belly - the girth!  
I said to myself, as only I can,  
'You can't spend the year disguised as a man!  
So away with the last of the sour-cream dip,  
Get rid of the fruitcake, every cracker and chip.  
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished  
'Til all the additional ounces have vanished.  
I won't have a cookie, not even a lick.  
Instead I'll chew on a celery stick.  
I won't have Irish coffees, or chocolates, or pie,  
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly I'll cry:  
'I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore-  
But isn't that what January's for?'  
Unable to giggle, no longer a riot,  
Happy New Year and to all a good diet!  
Sent in by Pam in Vancouver*

## PHOTOGRAPHS for REFLECTIONS or WEBSITE

Please remember if taking photographs to send by email for use in *Reflections* or on our website, you should select a small file size.

## READERS' COMMENTS

Thanks for *Reflections* ..... it's a lot of work to put together a newsletter like that, and you do a terrific job!

*David in Los Angeles*

*Reflections* is always a good read - good to see all the diversity that happens within the orbit of St.John's. It's refreshing to

see a church that embraces, and is a part of, the community, rather than a distant, separate bastion.

*Nick in Béziers,  
South of France*

I think *Reflections* is excellent and gives such a good impression of all that is going on in the parish. *Judith Jeeves, S Wales*

## STAFF and VOLUNTEERS at ST JOHN-at-HACKNEY

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Tower Captain		Mr Stephen Jakeman
Artist in Residence		Mr Andrew Coombes
Mothers' Union Leader		Mrs Mercy Moss

## PARISH DIARY

For Services see the weekly Sunday notice sheet

Sundays 9am Choir practice  
Mondays 7.30pm Bellringers practice  
SCOUTS and GUIDES meet regularly at their headquarters  
The Den, in the Old Rectory Drive  
activities for boys and girls from age 6 years  
Contact Jim or Judy Phillips  
Tel: 020 8985 9397;  
Email: phillips\_james1@sky.com

The next issue of *Reflections* will be published on 7th March