



ST JOHN  
at HACKNEY

# Reflections

monthly magazine  
July 2009

## FROM THE CLERGY

Fr David Evans



Given the choice, I will always sit on the top storey of a double decker bus. I like the height, and the way it allows me to survey the roads and houses I pass. It also means I spend a fair bit of time

looking down onto the shelters at bus stops. There's a local artist who displays his art there. He decorates potatoes by painting them and then piercing them with knitting needles and brightly coloured cotton buds, and then he chucks them onto bus shelters, where they look like meteors from the planet Zog. The art is odd, and it's displayed in an odd place; the combination of the two cheer me up. There's something pleasing about the sly humour of it.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we say to God the Father *Your kingdom come*: we pray for the coming of God's kingdom on earth. And each of us is called to help discern the elements of God's kingdom that already exist on earth - those parts of our world that have been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and speak to us of the love and joy and peace of God.

Sometimes these elements of the kingdom reveal themselves in unexpected places, at unusual times, through unlikely people. That applied as much in Jesus' day as in our own. In John 1.45-46 we read *Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathaniel said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"*

Perhaps our guerrilla artist and his fluorescent potatoes might remind us of that next time we're on the bus.

## CRÈCHE UPDATE

Helen Wickham



Our plans to run a crèche during the Sunday morning service have received a welcome boost thanks to a generous donation of preschool toys from a local toddler group. Funding bids for baby changing facilities and

special flooring are also underway and the *children and young people working party* have been discussing the health and safety issues relevant to running this exciting new venture.

We are working to a start date in the middle of September, and now need to turn our attention to the recruitment of reliable and enthusiastic volunteers! In accordance with the St John's Child Protection Policy all adult helpers will need to be CRB checked although it would also be great if any young people (aged 14+) would like to become involved with the nurturing of the youngest members of the congregation. If you would like to help please give your contact details to me or Toyin and a meeting will be held to discuss how the crèche will run.

## ANOTHER GARDEN PARTY!

Mercy Moss (MU Branch Leader)

The St John's fete will probably be over by the time you are reading this. But the fun hasn't stopped yet! Our Mothers' Union Branch is hosting a garden party to be attended by members of the Mothers'



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Union from all over the London Diocese. We'll be providing stalls for our sister organisations which will be bringing food and running the stalls with all kinds of goodies for sale. This will be held on the green in front of the Church on Saturday 18th July, starting at 11am and carrying on until around 5pm.

This will be great fun. We'll be raising money for the work of the Mothers' Union and showing the friendship and fun we have together. I do hope lots of people from St John's will come along to support us - and maybe get involved too! It's another chance to show just what a great place St John's is.

## SCOUTING MATTERS !!

Phyllis Manning



We managed to earn a really good amount at our Fete on 6 June - in spite of rain all night and a tremendous downfall as we were getting set up. We put up tarpaulins and rearranged ourselves, but at opening time, the rain

ceased, the sun came out and we were OK. Yes, God certainly moves in a mysterious way! So it was our best result ever: the White Elephant /Car Boot stall just pipping the Plant stall as the highest earner. Thanks to all who supported us.

Scouting has been going on all the time. The Troop has so far this year camped out 32 nights in total. 18 Cub Scouts (+ 4 leaders), once again joined the Giant Sleepover by putting down their sleeping bags in the Den (what a hard floor!) for The Guinness World Record, which this year included a *2 minute tooth brushing challenge*. And now we've got the Certificates to prove it. They started with a Good Turn; which this year was *Litter Picking in the St John's Churchyard*.

We are now preparing for our Group Camp - even the Beavers will visit for the day. And the Troop is planning their Summer Camp. So more of that next time.

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## CHRISTIAN AID

**The Gaza Relief Appeal** continues until the end of July. Please use the Christian Aid envelopes, marking them **Gaza Relief**; adding your details if appropriate. Put the envelopes in the Sunday collection bag, or hand them to a churchwarden.

## NOTES FROM KNARESBOROUGH

Christian D'Cunha



Isobel (a Scottish version of Isabel) Verity was born at 6.45am, weighing 6lb 11oz, on 25 June - a beautiful sunny day in Harrogate. For her at least it was a stress free birth. No crying at first, but immediately alert and inquisitive, eyes darting all over the place. She often pushes forward her lower lip to make a sultry pout - we wonder if she'll keep this charming quirk. Her Indian genes are nicely pronounced - a near-Eastern tincture to her skin and a shock of black hair on the crown.

Isobel is the anglicised spelling of the Scottish version of Isabel (I hope you're following me), reflecting the fond memories her mother Louise has of her years living in Edinburgh. She considered adopting the Gaelic spelling *Iseabail*, but I argued against it on the basis that we in Hackney don't do pretentious. Unless that is, you're from London Fields!

Thanks to you for your kind prayers and sentiments over the past few weeks. Isobel hopes to meet you all soon.

Hackney Stories  
Celebrating Hackney's Heritage  
Guided history walk exploring  
Hackney's Medieval, Tudor, Georgian  
and Victorian buildings.  
Suitable for all ages. Children must be  
accompanied by a responsible adult.

**11am Saturday 11 July**  
Meet on the steps of the Town Hall  
Duration: Approx 2 hours  
FREE, but booking essential

To book a place or find out more  
please email the Heritage Officer  
[emily.jost@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:emily.jost@hackney.gov.uk)  
Tel: 020 3256 2590

## St John-at-Hackney Project WORKING PARTY REPORTS

### Development

Over the last few weeks the group has been working to appoint a freelance consultant to help us with a fundraising strategy for the redevelopment of the church. We were given two names originally and interviewed both but neither came up to our exacting standards! So we started again and found three more candidates to interview. This time we had really excellent proposals and choosing between the final two candidates was difficult. But the group made a unanimous decision which it will propose to the PCC to ratify before this goes to press. Look for more details of the person we will be working with in the next issue of Reflections.

Our other objectives have been to strengthen some of the relationships we might enter into with partner organisations in the Hackney area. These include the City and Hackney Primary Health Care Trust, Positive East and local charities.

Fr Rob has also been working very hard to secure some funding to appoint a community renewal worker who would oversee some of these relationships between the parish and wider Hackney organisations as well as coordinating some of St John's work with young people and the elderly.

### Operations & Finance

This group has been discussing numerous matters of interest. The most important issues are security and new finance processes. In particular:

- \* new locks are required for office gate and door to corridor
- \* people hiring building must not leave side doors unattended - unless they are bolted
- \* Emily, our Parish Administrator, has met with the local Crime Prevention Officer who has given us a range of advice

Finance processes: A new approach has been agreed to improve our financial management. Emily will take on much of the day to day work; the Treasurer will have more of an oversight role. The new processes will be introduced over the coming weeks. One of the main impacts will be that - in order to assist the Treasurer and management of accounts - all requests for expenses/re-imbursments will need to be submitted via Emily using a new expenses form so she can prepare the cheques for the Treasurer's signature.

### People & Prayer

This group has been asking two questions, and coming up with some answers:

#### How can we best nurture the faith of all at St John's?

- \* Short courses
- \* Wednesday morning Bible Studies
- \* Emmaus Nurture Course, one evening a week for 12 weeks from mid-Sept. What Christians Believe, How Christians Grow and Living the Christian Life.
- \* From 9 Sept to 24 March: the New Step course, run by the Diocese 'to help local Christians explore what it means to be God's people.'
- \* From January: Growing Christian Leaders course, monthly for 12 months.

#### How can we help people get to know each other better?

- \* Encourage people to stay for coffee and tea after the service
- \* Use roving microphone during the service
- \* Meal for newcomers every 3 months  
*Scheduled for Sunday 19 July and Sunday 4 October.*
- \* Bring and Share meal for whole congregation - *Parish Picnic scheduled for 30 August*
- \* Create Welcome Pack
- \* Coffee morning or afternoon tea for retired people and/or younger mums  
- to piggyback on H.E.L.P project
- \* Men's breakfasts monthly Oct to March.
- \* Social gatherings
- \* House Groups - *something to work towards*

## A CHURCHWARDEN in HACKNEY

Peter Ottino



What do churchwardens do? Elected by parishioners at large, not just the congregation, we are properly answerable to the Bishop for both care of the church and good

order at its services. So our lines of communication reach far outside St John's walls. But the prime subject of our concern is close to us. It is the building itself and the people, all the people, who come here.

Hugo and I share this responsibility. He attends more to the building and I to its people, but we both see our role as support for the whole community of St John-at-Hackney.

There are two clear points of focus for our support. One is the Parish's central figure, our Rector Father Rob, with his two curates Fathers David and Lincoln. The Parish is growing fast under their dynamic leadership. We churchwardens believe they deserve our steady, though not uncritical, encouragement. One or other of us is present at most of the many services and events of this busy Parish. And we both take pleasure, as we should, in occasionally spending time with Father Rob over lunch or dinner well away from the immediate pressures of the church curtilage.

Our other point of focus, of course, is upon you, the congregation, the readers of *Reflections*. I find it a great joy and privilege to speak with so many of you on Sunday mornings, working with you in those parts of our worship which fall to the laity - the readings, the offertory, the receipt of alms; and later attending as much as I can the very busy working parties to which our PCC has devolved much of its business and in which all are invited to participate. It is generally to these working parties that I aim to bring any concerns you may raise with me.

Now in my second year as churchwarden, I look forward to continuing our work together, for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ Our Lord in Hackney, over the months ahead.

## POETRY CORNER

**This month's contributions come from:**

### **Daphne Hutchinson at St James:**

My choice, for originality of metre, conciseness of narrative, unabashed moral stance, and fun, is, by Hilaire Belloc,  
Lord Finchley

Lord Finchley tried to mend the electric light  
Himself. It struck him dead: and serve him right!  
It is the business of the wealthy man  
To give employment to the artisan.

But, says Daphne, those of you who know my prince of DIY (*that's her husband Jeremy*) will know that this in no way expresses my own opinion. For that I choose this from U.A.Fanthorpe's *Collected Poems 1978-2003*:

#### Atlas

There is a kind of love called maintenance,  
Which stores the WD40 and knows when to use it;  
Which checks the insurance, and doesn't forget  
The milkman; which remembers to plant bulbs;  
Which answers letters; which knows the way  
The money goes; which deals with dentists  
And Road Fund Tax and meeting trains,  
And postcards to the lonely; which upholds  
The permanently rickety elaborate  
Structures of living; which is Atlas.

And maintenance is the sensible side of love,  
Which knows what time and weather are doing  
To my brickwork; insulates my faulty wiring;  
Laughs at my dryrotten jokes; remembers  
My need for gloss and grouting; which keeps  
My suspect edifice upright in air,  
As Atlas did the sky.

### **and this from David Körst in USA**

Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll in *Through the Looking Glass*.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son  
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand;  
Long time the manxome foe he sought—  
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,  
And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,  
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,  
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,  
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through  
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!  
He left it dead, and with its head  
He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?  
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!  
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"  
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

## OPS & FINANCE XTRA!

After waiting nearly 9 months, we've been given the fantastic news that the *National Churches Trust* has awarded St John-at-Hackney a grant of £45,000 for repairs to the tower. If you haven't been up to the galleries recently, you may not be aware that the tower has been leaking for years, finally causing a large part of the stairwell ceiling to fall in. The main problem lies at the top of the straight bit of the tower (i.e. where the 'scrolls' are) where the masonry has been cracking, seedlings growing from it, and rain coming through it. To reach this area safely we need to erect scaffolding at great expense, hence the £45,000 grant. While the scaffolding is up we thought it prudent to also address the clock faces which need repainting and regilding, and also the weathervane which we might also regild once we have taken it down for inspection and repair. For this work we have been given a grant of £6,500 from the *Mercer's Company*.

The *National Churches Trust* is dedicated to supporting and promoting places of worship used by Christian denominations throughout the UK. The Trust promotes the use of these buildings by congregations and the wider community – underlying their importance to society. As part of the grant conditions, they ask that five members of our congregation become *Friends of the Trust* which is only £20 for a year. If you would like to do this please visit [www.nationalchurchestrust.org/friends.php](http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/friends.php) or speak to Laura Tomlinson.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To comment on anything in *Reflections*, please do write to the address or email shown on page 1.

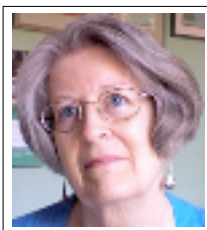
Deadline for contributions for August issue is Sunday 26 July to [seabrook@mac.com](mailto:seabrook@mac.com)

### 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.

## FROM THE EDITOR

Audrey Seabrook



Well, I regret that there was no room for me in the Poetry Corner. I have been searching unsuccessfully for a short poem to fit this remaining space; found myself losing track of time and overwhelmed by some very moving poems in my many books. So I aim to get in first next time!

However, don't let that stop you from sending in your own choice.

Meanwhile my ***Sturdy toolbox with a collection of DIY tools, including an electric drill. Also a handy metal cabinet containing a multitude of assorted nails, screws and other useful bits and bobs*** as advertised in June *Reflections*, is still available. For goodness sake - someone must have a use for it. Check it out and make me an offer . . . . . **PLEASE!**

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

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Director of Music	Mr Jack Bicker	
Community Development Worker	Mr David Hazeldine	
Cleaner	Ms Hazel Panton	
First Aider	Mr John Tribe T: 020 8533 1745	E: <a href="mailto:johnjanetribe@yahoo.co.uk">johnjanetribe@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Tower Captain	Mr Stephen Jakeman	
Artist in Residence	Mr Andrew Coombes	
Mothers' Union Leader	Mrs Mercy Moss	
Placement Student	Miss Karen Campbell	

### 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](mailto:phillips_james1@sky.com)