

FROM THE CLERGY

Fr David Evans



At Easter we emerge from the self-discipline and self-examination of Lent into the glory of the resurrection. The theologian Jurgen Moltmann describes the mystery of the

crucifixion and its aftermath in this way: 'God weeps with us so that we may someday laugh with him.' We laugh in celebration of the victory won on the cross, when Jesus did something for us that we could not do for ourselves. He was fully human, yet without sin. Sin is saying 'no' to God. Jesus lived his life and died his death saying 'yes' to God, and the resurrection is God's 'yes' to Jesus. When we are in Christ, we share in God's 'yes'. St John of Damascus (c.676 to 749) captures the joy of that reality:

The day of resurrection? Earth, tell it out abroad;

The Passover of gladness, the Passover of God.

From death to life eternal, from this world to the sky,

Our Christ hath brought us over with hymns of victory.

Now let the heavens be joyful, let earth her song begin;

Let the round world keep triumph, and all that is therein;

Let all things seen and unseen their notes in gladness blend,

For Christ the Lord hath risen, our Joy that hath no end.



The editor came across this picture entitled **Reflections** by Joan Dannatt, on the internet, and couldn't resist using it here. You can see other work by the same artist by visiting http://www.camdenprintmakers.co.uk/Camden_Printmakers/Home.html and clicking on the name Dannatt at the top of the page.

RETREAT TO ELY

Coral Brady



I was lucky enough to be included with nine other members of St. John's congregation to attend the Retreat in Ely at Bishop Woodford's House for a February weekend

with Fr. David Evans.

The theme was hunger (not necessarily for food) and fasting through God's plan for our own individual wants and needs. We disciplined ourselves through two sessions of silence

– a whole new experience for me, I am a particularly noisy person. I found great depths of warmth and calm through these silent sessions and intend practising silence a little more often in the future.

The first enjoyment of the Retreat was actually being inside the House building and meeting the good people looking after us. It was a very pleasant place to be. Our accommodation turned out to be invitingly bright, clean, separate rooms - most conducive to our private thoughts. The high standard and quality of the meals had to be seen to be believed.

I am left refreshed and hoping David will take us all again.

APOLOGY

Last month, the title **We've missed FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT but read on anyway . . .** apparently gave the impression that the church had failed to observe this Fairtrade event. This was incorrect. It simply meant that **Reflections** was late reporting it. Jane Hutchinson gave an excellent presentation on the subject in church on the Sunday prior to our publication, There was a large section also on our website, and our Traidcraft stall was open all day on that Sunday. We are very definitely a Fairtrade church as the symbol here always proclaims.



WE ARE A
FAIRTRADE
CHURCH

CHRISTIAN AID

Mahandra Roopchan

St John's is still accepting donations towards the **Haiti/DEC relief effort**, we will be accepting donations until the end of July 2010

Christian Aid Week this year runs from **9-16 May**.

The street collection is on **Saturday 15 May**. If you can help, please meet any time after 9.15am outside the old rectory in The Narroway.

The sponsored walk in the City, is on **Sunday 16 May**, more information will be available in due course.

If you would like to take part in any of the above activities please see me in church. I will be doing both activities and would welcome sponsorship for the walk.

mahandraroopchan@hotmail.co.uk

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting follows the I am service on Sunday 18 April. Everyone is expected to attend.



Victoria Burgher is a member of our St John's congregation.
Do visit her show.

FLYING HIGH

Phyllis Manning



First Aid comes high on the agenda for all sections in the Den - a good way to keep our aim of *Being Prepared*. The Cub Scouts have been practising slings, bandages and CPR* etc. in the last few

weeks, partly to enter the District Competition. They have also been aiming for the Scientist badge - so plenty of hard work and cress growing etc. In the same way the Brownie Guides learned about Fire Safety and topped this off with a visit to the Homerton Fire Station. Also they are still intensely celebrating their 100th Anniversary. Last month, another day out with all the Brownies of the County was a marvellously, joyous occasion. Every kind of outdoor activity was on offer so all the Brownies came home happy and exhausted.



The Scout Troop have been training to pass the *Axe and Saw* section, in anticipation of the oncoming camping season. They are also looking forward to a visit to Duxford Airfield - which will be arranged when they have completed the *Aviator (Groundstaff)* badge. It's quite

tricky sorting out how to 'plan' an airfield, and to learn the parts of a plane. Leaders learned a lot, I think!

But It's April . . . so on 23 April we are celebrating St George's Day (our patron Saint) with a grand Get Together at our Epping Forest campsite. Before the camp fire and renewing our Promise, the programme includes lunch from a pig roast, gum boot dancing! and space hopper racing. The Camp Fire is centred on the *last Night of the Proms* !!!!!

April 23rd is our National Day in England. Why not celebrate? It is also reputed to be Shakespeare's Birthday! Have a Happy Day!

*Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation

DONKEYS

Audrey Seabrook

On Palm Sunday 28 March, during the I am service, we held our usual procession, singing and carrying our palm crosses, round the churchyard, following a donkey. Our donkey is brought to us courtesy of the Trinitas Donkey Stud in Essex, owned by breeder Carole Travell (Which calls to mind *Travels with a Donkey*, one of Robert Louis Stevenson's earliest published works.) as part of the Donkey Breed Society. For more information have a look at::

<http://www.donkeybreedsociety.co.uk>

STEWARDSHIP

Audrey Seabrook



You don't get rid of me that easily. I will continue to pester you until you respond to my simple requests!

∞ If you were a member of the

Stewardship Scheme in 2009, you will have found in your new 2010 box of envelopes, a slip of paper with a question about your tax. It is important to return this to me, after ticking the yes or no box and signing your name. Simple as that. *So far, only 18 out of 50 people have done so.*

Easter Flowers

Thankyou to all who donated Easter flowers, in memory of your loved ones. The names, which you included in the envelopes, of the people you wished to remember will be read out in the prayers on Easter Day.

FAREWELL TO TOYIN

15 April will be Toyin Adjidele's last day, as our youth & children's co-



ordinator, at St John-at-Hackney. On Sunday 11 April we will be celebrating her pioneering work at St John's. Please take full part in the preparations for that occasion.

Anyone and everyone is invited to write something for Reflections.

Deadline for contributions for the next issue is Sunday 25th April to seabrook@mac.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

PHOTOGRAPHS for REFLECTIONS

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

POETRY CORNER

As most people will know, Janet Colson who was a member of our choir, has emigrated to New Zealand. Unfortunately *Reflections* does not have a photograph of her to remind you. Before she left, she wrote this poem:

Hackney Bus Depot

I sit in view of the pavilion
Yard upon yard of frosted glass
Scored by winter trees tipping
a bone-white sky;
A feeble sun-light filters pinkish
On the tomb-like park,
The swings are hangmen,
The slide's steel stilled.

My son, swaddled in polar fleece
and a duffle coat
pushes with the strength of Hercules
A boulder of ice-impacted snow;
We are alone,
Cocooned as we have been perennially
In this walled garden,
Our North, our South, our East and
West
Our ritual place
Our one-time home.

JCC January 2010

TAKING THINGS FOR GRANTED

Audrey Seabrook

This is your editor speaking. I have been constructing this issue of *Reflections* over the last couple of days, but today is 1st of **April** and I do feel rather a **fool**.

I do take it for granted that other members and friends of St John's will contribute some words of wisdom, or even of nonsense, to interest or amuse our readers. However, apart from those two boxes on the back page, I find myself having to dream up something to fill the remaining 30 column-inches, in spite of having already written the **Apology, Donkeys** and **Stewardship** bits. So hang on while I dust off my thinking cap.

Central heating is something else most of us now take for granted, but over the last 2 days during a severe spell of extremely cold weather, I found myself without any, adding layer upon layer of extra garments, while waiting for British Gas to send an engineer. They had installed a new *super-efficient, energy saving boiler*, less than a week ago. Whose energy was it saving? This episode brought to mind my childhood in Liverpool, before the days of CH. My mother would rise early in the morning

to rake out the ashes of the previous day's coal fire, in the *Living Room* before building a new fire (in the days when that room was called the *Kitchen* - and the cooking done in the *Back Kitchen*). Mum would spread the clothes for my brother and me on the hearth to get warm before we came downstairs to dress for school. The parlour and bedrooms had small gas fires, only lit occasionally. We didn't know anything different.

Another thing we took for granted was that hot-crossed buns only appeared for Good Friday. A horse-drawn baker's van came round the streets on Maundy Thursday, selling the fresh hot buns. There were no supermarkets in those days clearing the shelves of Christmas puddings and mince pies, to replace them with hot (not hot) crossed buns by 1st January.

When I lived in Jamaica during the late60s/early70s I enjoyed the delicious Easter Bun - a similar mix to our hot-crossed buns, but more fruity and in a loaf shape - which we also ate on Good Friday with cheese. Happy days! I certainly appreciate things which are kept in their traditional seasons, rather than available more or less all year round. I suppose when Easter is over we'll see halloween being advertised.

When I'm not sitting in front of this computer talking to you, I have a privileged vantage point overlooking the churchyard from a seat beside my bedroom window. I observe the comings and goings of complete strangers as well as the regular tos and fros of familiar friends. At one time, not many years ago, before such things were regulated, the churchyard was packed daily with cars parked haphazardly. Now that motorists must pay and display a parking ticket, it is mainly the free spaces for disabled drivers which are occupied, making this green place a joy for walkers or the many cyclists from the four corners of the parish. I watched a man on roller blades recently practising his art like a ballet round and round the memorial garden.

I reflect on how the church came to be built in this field in the small village of Hackney. In 1788 a vestry committee found that the population had increased so much that the church should seek to seat 3,000. Architect William Blackburn rejected the idea of building on the old site, (where St Augustine's Tower still remains) advising that a budget of £15,000 be created to buy land on which to construct a new church. In April 1789 the committee put the matter to a parochial vote, winning their case by 313 votes to 70. A Bill went to the House of Commons and became an Act of

Parliament empowering the Trustees to acquire, for £875, Church Field which lay to the northeast of the existing church. The existing tenants, a butcher and cornchandler, were given three months to leave.

William Blackburn died suddenly in November 1790; a month later James Spiller, influenced by and a friend of John Soane, was chosen from six architect candidates. Hackney church was his largest project to date and remained his magnum opus. Believing that a building seating 3,000 would have poor acoustics, he persuaded the Trustees to allow him to reduce the capacity to 2,000, but remained convinced that the acoustics would not be good unless the church was full. Work started in spring 1792, the main structure taking more than two years to complete and was consecrated on 15 July 1797. It was not until 1814 that the tower and main entrance to the church were added. The porches and doors at the four corners of the church were named Clapton, Homerton, Hackney and Dalston, those being the districts of the parish from which people approached the church on foot or on horseback or in their carriages. The paths through the churchyard still lead in that direction to the doors to this day, although all the porches are not now in use. At the steps to each porch there are still large blocks of stone which were mounting blocks to enable riders to mount the saddles of their horses or to climb into their carriages.

Harry Sedgwick, a trustee, oversaw a subscription for planting the churchyard. 129 subscriptions enabled nearly 200 elms and horse chestnuts to be planted in avenues. Sedgwick was buried in the churchyard; his planting achievement is commemorated on his tomb. The layout of the churchyard has hardly changed to this day, except for the clearance of many old tombs and relocation of their headstones. The cyclists, people on roller blades and parents with baby buggies still follow the same routes enjoying this wonderful space which has been awarded a Green Flag in the Heart of Hackney.

Local historians also conduct guided walks around the churchyard, stopping to look inside the church at the many ancient monuments therein.

We even hear the lovely sound of horses, with their mounted police, clopping along Churchwell Path, below my bedroom window.

Hackney Singers Spring Concert!

A performance of

Edward Elgar's The Dream of Gerontius

7.30pm Saturday 17 April at St. John-at-Hackney.

This will be a grand performance in every sense featuring the full Forest Philharmonic Orchestra and virtuoso soloists, as ever under the inspired direction of Mark Shanahan.

Tickets: Churchwarden Hugo Deadman or on the door

STAFF and VOLUNTEERS at ST JOHN-at-HACKNEY

Rector	Fr Rob Wickham T: 020 8985 5374 Ext. 221	E: rectorofhackney@aol.com:
Curate	Fr David Evans T: 020 8985 5374 Ext. 223 T: 020 8986 4456	E: davidjjevans@mac.com
Curate	Fr Lincoln Harvey T: 020 7254 2343 T: (m) 07855 866823	E: lincoln.harvey@gmail.com
Curate	Fr Sebastian Ejiaku T: 020 8519 2555	
Reader Emeritus	Mrs Barbara Scott Wollaston	E: babscotwoll@ntlworld.com
Parish Admin.	Miss Emily Ovenden T: 020 8985 5374 Ext. 222	E: admin@stjohnathackney.org.uk
Director of Music		Mr Jack Bicker
Cleaner		Ms Hazel Panton
First Aider & Caretaker	T: 020 8533 1745	Mr John Tribe E: johnjanettribe@yahoo.co.uk
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