

The Parish of St George-in-the-East with St Paul

Newsletter for OCTOBER 2012

Harvest - Busy Bees

Harvest weekend is 5-7 October, with the school service on Friday, the social on Saturday and the festival service on the Sunday.

This year **Christian Aid** is asking us to think about its work with the forest people of the Rajasthan region of India, supporting their claims for land rights - 100,000 people will be marching in October. Collecting tree-honey is an important part of the local economy, so resources also focus on apiculture - that's bee-keeping! - and the part that bees play in God's economy (a very traditional Christian theme, not least when we bless the Easter candle, praising God for the work of bees). Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumble Bee* will provide theme music, and we'll be checking out on the beekeepers of our parish, of whom there are surprisingly many. The promised land flowed with milk and honey - can we make this a reality for our sisters and brothers in India?

HARVEST SOCIAL

Saturday 6 October 6pm in church

- a bring and share event
- please bring food to share with others, and your own choice of drinks
- Paul and Hannah are planning a fiendish quiz



All welcome - bring your friends and neighbours!

September news

Congratulations to **Charles & Nazrim Whatling**, married here on 15 September, and honeymooning in Mauritius.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of **Charlie Tyler**, ex-Navy and Covent Garden porter, whose family have happy memories of growing up round here before they moved out to Essex; he died at the age of 87, and his funeral was on 14 September.

St Paul's School term has got off to a good start - still no news of the OFSTED inspection which we were expecting to happen last term! Ian Graham, the chair of governors, has nobly offered to continue in post until this has taken place. He was planning to vacate the chair this term (continuing as a governor), since he has served in this role - with great skill and dedication - for several years, and his office has now moved further into the City. We have an equally capable successor in view when the time comes - who is not the Rector! We are more fortunate than many schools in having a pool of able and committed governors, so that the Rector, while he plays an active part in governance, can concentrate on his spiritual and pastoral roles with pupils and staff.

There was a recent foray into **Church House Wellclose Square**, for which the Diocese of London (which owns it) now has definite plans, which we hope can incorporate some of the various local ideas for community use of the ground floor and basement of what is an 'iconic' building. Although work is needed on the roof, the inside is in rather better shape than might be expected after its years of emptiness. On 30 September the Anglo-Danish Society is meeting at Wilton's and will be exploring some of the Danish history of the area, for their first church was on the site of St Paul's School, and we hope to find some permanent way of marking this.

Danes - as well as Finnish, and Polish Lutheran friends - were among those the Rector met at the

Anglo-Baltic-Nordic Theological Conference at Mirfield (home of the Community and College of the Resurrection) in September. This group has met since 1929 - long-predating the Porvoo agreement between our churches - and proved a most enjoyable event, with a fascinating range of short papers and discussion (including nightly 'interim plenaries', aka drinking sessions), bringing together the history of our parish (with its Danish, Swedish and German Lutheran churches) with more personal contacts. In the newly-reordered chapels at Mirfield we sang hymns translated (by a pastor who is something of a linguist) from German, Swedish, Danish, Icelandic, Greenlandic, Romanian and Hungarian sources, and enjoyed a trip to Bolton Abbey - which is not, as some supposed, in a Lancashire town, but in the Yorkshire dales.

On 20 September most of the clergy of London diocese assembled at Church House Westminster for a **Study Summit** (a suitably grand title, with a suitably grand theme, 'Being the Church in a World City'). The Archbishop of Canterbury - who was given a standing ovation when Bishop Richard introduced him - gave a typically powerful keynote address (which you can listen to on the diocesan website). Although some people write off Christian faith as the product of primitive village culture, he said, nothing can be further from the truth. The church then as now flourished in urban settings - as the letters of Paul and others make clear. It grew up in complex, socially stratified and divided settings, with rich and poor cheek-by-jowl, with high levels of mobility, with a mix of cultural backgrounds, and all the other challenges (for good and ill) of urban living. Look around your own congregation, he told us, and if all this is not reflected in your church's life - if you are not surprised at who turns up on a Sunday - then something is wrong, for that is what being the body of Christ is all about. And the most astonishing thing is this: where else in society today can you find people coming together in this way? People of different backgrounds may come together for sporting events - football, the Olympics, rock concerts, or whatever - but they do so as spectators. The church is the only place where people from all walks of life, of all ages, of all kinds of family situations, really engage with each other, and commit themselves to living and working together: where status doesn't matter, but belonging to one another does.

Dates for your diary

- **All Souls Day**, Friday 2 November
- **Remembrance Sunday**, 11 November - Bishop Adrian's first visit here: keep the date free, and pass the word around!