



The Reverend Will Adams
Rector Astwell Benefice
Brookdale Whitfield, NN13 5TQ
Tel +44(0)1280 850683
Email:rector@astwellbenefice.co.uk

HELMDON CHURCH



NEWSLETTER

December 2007 – February 2008

THE RECTOR WRITES

The Road to Life

Earlier this June I was very fortunate to be invited to attend the National Prayer Breakfast in Westminster Hall in the Palace of Westminster. The National Prayer Breakfast is arranged by an ecumenical cross party group of members drawn from the House of Commons and the House of Lords. This year the theme was the family and Friar Timothy Radcliffe gave the address. Friar Timothy was quick to point out at the beginning of his speech that he felt ill qualified to the task as Dominican friar. This proved to be far from the case as what was to follow was a moving and uplifting discourse resulting in me along with a goodly number of others rushing out to buy his recent book, *What is the point of being a Christian?*

I was reminded of this when I came across an extract from an earlier publication of Friar Radcliffe called, *Sing a New Song* and I thought with Advent soon to be with us and in anticipation of Christmas it might be an appropriate time to share it with you.

Inculturation

Any culture which is worthy of the name is complex and fertile. Think of Jewish culture. The whole history of that culture is one of interaction, of the absorption and rejection and transformation of ideas from Egypt, Canaan, Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome. There never was a pure Jewish culture which you could pop into a deep freeze, any n more than there is a pure English or Indian or Japanese culture. If there were they would be brain dead. They bubble away like Irish stews constantly evolving.

How does the Incarnation, that epitome of inculturation, take place? It is through the most acutely creative moment of human lie, in the conception of a child. God pitches his tent among us by meeting us in our most deeply creative moment. God becomes one of us at the moment we make something new, present in the fertility of a woman.

Astwell Benefice Charity Motorcycle Ride-Out 15th September '07

What a wonderful day we had. Thirty bikers drawn from across the Astwell Benefice set off from The Links in Brackley, the regional headquarters of the national charity *Grooms- Shaftesbury*, to tour the Cotswolds and to raise money for adults with severe learning difficulties. The Service Users together with Grooms –Shaftesbury staff and bikers' spouses provided breakfast and tea. Worshippers at St Lawrence's Church, Radstone whose link charity it is, also supported them. Over £410 was raised and a splendid day was had by all.

The bikers are meeting again in January for a Curry Evening and to plan their next charity ride-out in May '08. I hope very much that these gatherings will become a regular feature of the Astwell Benefice's calendar, as they are not only a means of raising funds for really worthwhile causes, but also a source of great fellowship. If you would like to join us please do get in touch with me.

Restoration Work

No doubt many of you will have seen the vehicles parked outside the church of those who are currently repairing the East Window. This is the first of a series of works that are being undertaken. I think a number of us had not fully realised the poor state of the window arches and other parts of the building until closer examination was possible. We are indebted to the Friends of St Mary Magdalene and members of the PCC for their hard work

in raising the money necessary to begin this present schedule of work. We were not able to secure the funding to complete all the issues raised in the quinquennial report even by undertaking a number of them ourselves. A priority list was drawn up and once the present work is complete we will return to those other repairs listed in the report's pages.

I would however wish very much to thank everyone who has helped in ensuring this critical work could begin. Without your support our custodial responsibilities to maintain this magnificent building would not have been possible.

From the Parish Register (September-October '07)

Baptisms

Jack Davies 22nd September '07
Joshua Shrubsole 23rd September '07

Funerals

Kenneth Watson 30th August '07
Richard 'Willy' Watson 21st September '07
Brian Beattie 2nd October '07
Alice Hearne 27th October '07

God bless,
Will Adams
Rector

THE FRIENDS OF St MARY MAGDALENE

Thanks to a most generous individual donation and a gift from the Helmdon Young Husbands Organisation, we have been able to buy two spotlights for lighting performances in the church. These should be in action at our next event which is the annual **Words and Music for Christmas** on Friday 21st of December.

Now that the urgent work on the church has started we have committed funds that must be replenished by future efforts. Various ideas are being developed but already we have booked a return of the hugely enjoyable **Ocho Rios Steel Band** on Saturday 7th June 2008.

Roger Miles (Chair of the Friends)

SUPPER MEETINGS Good food and debate	What controversy would you like to see discussed at a BENEFICE supper meeting?
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OTHER ASTWELL EVENTS

December 07

Sat 1st St Nicholas Fair 2pm in Syresham Village Hall
Christmas Fair in Helmdon Reading Room

Tues 18th Reading Room Lunch 1pm
Helmdon School Service in church at 2pm

Wed 19th Carol Singing in Helmdon 6-9pm

Fri 21st Words and Music 7:30pm in Church

January 08

Tue 15th Reading Room Lunch 1pm

Wed 23rd MU "My trip to Argentina" - Will Adams 12A Church St.

Fri 25th Astwell Motorcyclists - Parson's Curry Evening 7:30pm at
The Bell

Sun 27th Welcoming service for those baptised in 2007 in Helmdon,
Wappenham or Lois Weedon. Service 9:30am in Helmdon

February 08

Mon 11th Helmdon School service 10:30am in church

Tue 12th Deanery Synod meeting

Tue 19th Reading Room Lunch 1pm

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MOTHER'S UNION

Astwell MU Branch is for the whole Astwell Benefice and membership is open to everyone who has been baptized and believes in the importance of family life. You don't have to be a mother or even female.

If you would like to become a member please ring Ann Smith, our branch leader, on 01295 760684.

Dec 5th 2pm Middleton Cheney Church
Deanery Advent Service

Jan 23rd 8pm 12A Church St
'My trip to Argentina' - Rev Will Adams

Feb.27th 8pm Helmdon Church
Musical Evening with finger food.
Leanne, Emma and Rosie Griffiths

Visitors are always warmly welcomed to our meetings.

Jenny Saunders on 01295 760721.