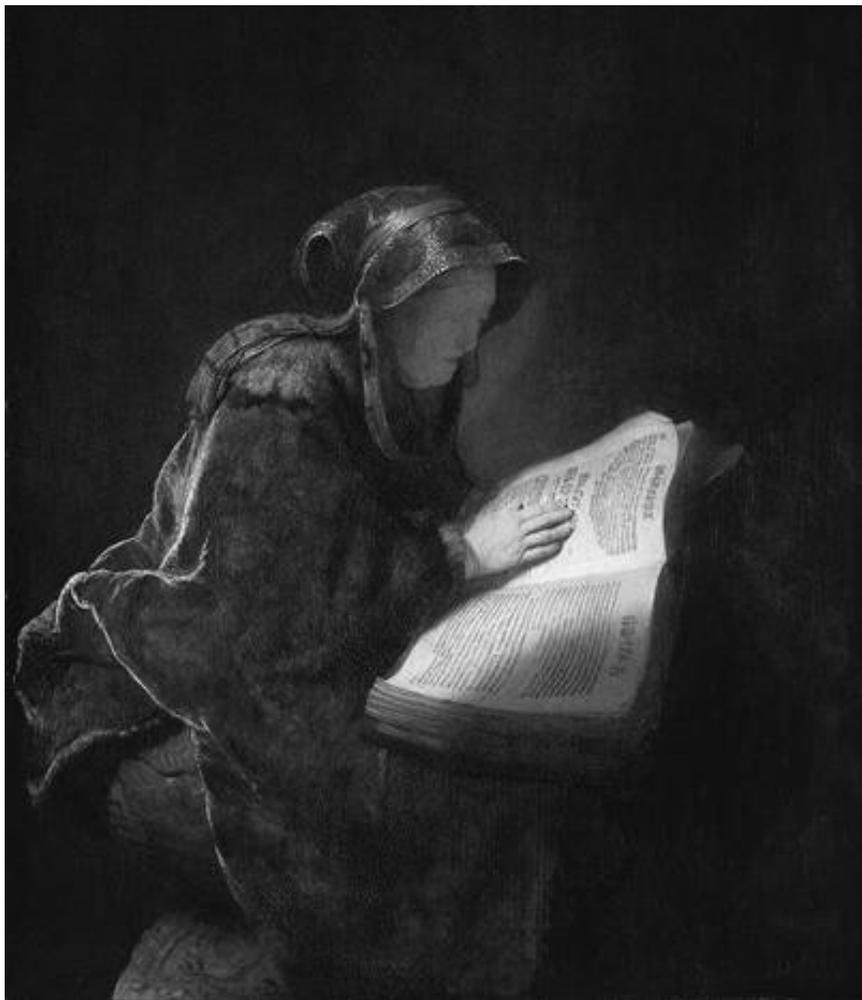


Little Saint Mary's, Cambridge

February 2016: No. 487

NEWSLETTER



This month we have a joint Evensong with the Choristers and the Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir, Conversations on Social Justice, an update on the Cambridge Homelessness Project, and the Makeni Ecumenical Centre and the usual Vicar's letter, prayers and intentions.

Highlights of February

Tuesday 2nd February

Candlemas – the Presentation of Christ in the Temple

7pm High Mass

Preacher: The Rev'd Robert Kozak, Assistant Curate of Leavesden

Wednesday 10th February

Ash Wednesday

10am & 12:30pm Low Mass with ashing

7pm High Mass with ashing

Wednesday 17th February

Lent Group I - CamTrust

7pm Mass, 7:30pm Group, 8:30pm Compline

Thursday 18th February

Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary

8pm Vespers and Benediction at LSM – *non-servers are very welcome.*

Wednesday 24th February

Lent Group II – the Medaille Trust

7pm Mass, 7:30pm Group, 8:30pm Compline

Saturday 27th February

Drop, drop slow tears: Music for Lent

7:30pm Concert *in association with the Lent Series* Conversations on

Social Justice. Music by Brahms, Elgar, Byrd and others

Performed by the Choir of Little St Mary's, directed by Simon Jackson.

Tickets £10 (£5 concessions) – all proceeds to CamTrust

Note:

Several of you have been in contact about the notice in the *Cambridge News* for the funeral of Maurice and Mary Rayner. This is just a very weird coincidence and does not refer to those former members of our congregation. Maurice sadly died some years ago. Mary happily is still alive and lives in a retirement home near Norwich.

From the Vicar

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I almost never refer to the politics and debates of the Anglican Communion in sermons or newsletters. This is because either there are invariably more important matters for us to consider as a parish or I cannot believe any of you would be interested! Given the hysteria surrounding the recent Anglican row about same-sex marriage, however, I felt I ought for once to write something to you.

I want (very briefly), therefore, to address the question of same-sex marriage. The argument for it is that if two people love each other (regardless of gender) they should be able to celebrate and confirm that love by getting married. Marriage is the ancient institution by which two people commit to spending the rest of their lives together. It is a life-long covenant demanding faithfulness in good times and bad that, because of these factors, reflects and is a sign of the faithfulness of God. Two men or women are as capable of this as a heterosexual couple. It seems to me that unless you think gay relationships are in some sense intrinsically inferior to those of heterosexual people the above argument is pretty convincing. So why are some people opposed to same-sex marriage?

Obviously some people are opposed to homosexuality – either because they believe the Bible is against it or because homosexual sex is not open to child-bearing. Very briefly, I'd suggest that the Bible is more complicated than that (why is it opposed to homosexuality but not in favour of slavery for example?) and that unless you are also opposed to contraception (as our more consistent Roman Catholic brothers and sisters are) it is difficult to see on what rational grounds you are opposed to homosexuality.

To return to the question of same-sex marriage, however. Why might someone who does not think homosexuality sinful still be unconvinced about gay marriage? I think it comes down to two things: the bearing of children and the symbolism of gender. Christianity assumes that marriages will produce children. That is certainly one of the central aspects of Christian marriage and couples who choose not to (as opposed to being unable) are the exception and it is assumed they have a good and serious reason why they have made that decision. To fold same-sex couples into traditional marriage is to unhook children from marriage and make them a possible addition rather than something taken for granted. It is not unreasonable for Christians to be nervous of this development.

Secondly, Christian marriage is a sign and reflection of the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His church (as the 1662 BCP puts it). Christ is the Bridegroom and the Church is His Bride and this union is given very vivid illustration by heterosexual marriage. Again, the gendered imagery is not so easily uncoupled as we might wish and various important symbols are lost in the separation. Moreover, the dynamic between (say) two men is different from the dynamic between a woman and a man.

Homosexual relationships are different – not less, but different. Jesus tells us that in heaven no one is given or received in marriage but all are like the angels (*Matthew 22.30*). It seems to me that precisely by their not bearing children and not being about the perpetuation of the species gay relationships can offer a different symbolism for Christians. Is it too daring to suggest that gay relationships point towards the life of heaven exactly because they do not have such obvious earthly use? Marriage is a gift of God for our earthly life and is deeply practical. Maybe gay relationships are a gift from God in anticipation of our heavenly life?

At the moment the Church of England looks un hospitable because in being rightly hesitant (in my view) about same-sex marriage we have not provided any means by which faithful same-sex relationships can be blessed and consecrated to God in church. The blessing of civil partnerships would be a major step forward. It is entirely understandable that people should be keen for same-sex marriage, not least because we haven't come up with a poetic term for such relationships to complement the term 'marriage'. My worry, however, is that significant things would be lost or lessened if we took the easy route of declaring all loving relationships to be marriage. Both straight and gay relationships deserve more than that.

I hope this whistle-stop letter has given you some ideas to ponder and pray with. Good people can disagree on this subject, but the most important thing is that the church is a place where single and married, gay and straight feel loved and welcome. Join me this Lent in praying for this.

With my love and prayers, I am,
yours in the Lord, Fr Robert.



Calendar and Intentions

for

February 2016

Calendar for February

LM-Low Mass, SM-Sung Mass, HM-High Mass

Mon 1st *Brigid, Abbess*
Tue 2nd **Candlemas LM 7:45am, HM 7pm**
Wed 3rd *Anskar, Bishop*
Thu 4th *Gilbert of Sempringham*
Fri 5th *Agatha, Virgin & Martyr*
Sat 6th *The Martyrs of Japan*

SUN 7th SUNDAY next before LENT (Quinquagesima)
Mon 8th
Tue 9th *Shrove Tuesday*
Wed 10th Ash Wednesday LM 10am and LM 12:30pm, HM 7pm
Thu 11th *Radegund, Abbess*
Fri 12th
Sat 13th

SUN 14th FIRST SUNDAY of LENT
Mon 15th *Thomas Bray, Priest*
Tue 16th
Wed 17th *Janani Luwum, Bishop & Martyr*
Thu 18th
Fri 19th
Sat 20th

SUN 21st SECOND SUNDAY of LENT
Mon 22nd
Tue 23rd *Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr*
Wed 24th
Thu 25rd
Fri 26th
Sat 27th *George Herbert, Priest*

SUN 28th THIRD SUNDAY of LENT
Mon 29th

Daily Intentions and *Anniversaries of death* for February

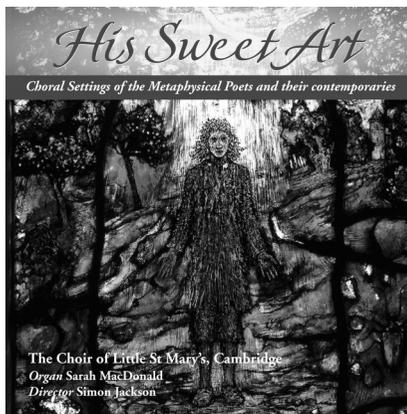
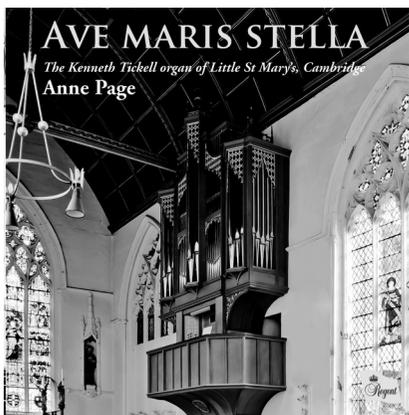
Vocations to the Religious Life	1 st
Light for those in darkness	2 nd
Bishop Stephen	3 rd
Renewed Faith	4 th
Prisoners	5 th
The Sick	6 th
Our Parish & People	7 th
Churchwardens	8 th
Confessors	9 th
Repentance of Sin	<i>Ronald Mourhouse, Bill Thomas</i> 10 th
Jimmy's Cambridge	11 th
Social Services	<i>Margaret Webber, Enid Maycock</i> 12 th
Cambridge University	<i>Alich Nilsson, Brian Poulter</i> 13 th
Our Parish & People	14 th
Westcott House	15 th
Sunday school teachers	16 th
Those who struggle with addiction	17 th
The LSM Choir	18 th
Missionaries	<i>John Lyon, pr., Audrey Sparrow</i> 19 th
Newly Married couples	<i>Mary Stubbs</i> 20 th
Our Parish & People	21 st
Nursing homes	22 nd
Peterhouse & Pembroke College	<i>Mary Dawson</i> 23 rd
The Junior Choir	<i>Frank Joanes, Percy Hays</i> 24 th
The Mothers' Union	25 th
The Diocese of Ely	<i>Arthur Peck, James Townley</i> 26 th
A good keeping of Lent	27 th
Our Parish & People	28 th
The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham	29 th

LSM Choristers' & Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir Evensong

The Choristers at LSM. will join the Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir and Sarah MacDonald at Selwyn College Chapel for Evensong at 6pm on Sunday 7th February. It would be lovely for them to have some congregational support.

The music will be:
Introit: Moore, *Through the Day*
Responses: Plainsong
Canticles: MacDonald *in A flat*
Anthem: Piccolo, *Hear us, Lord*

ON SALE NOW! £10, available after Sunday Mass or any choral service. Contact the Director of Music (directorofmusic@lsm.org.uk), Patricia Davies (01223 234791 pedavies@tesco.net) or any other member of the choir.



or **BUY ONLINE!** www.lsm.org.uk/worship/music/cds.html

Also, find new videos on the choir's page on YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMTGM7eep4KKIVfOByxS41w>

Choir member Francesca Nour will be singing *Pie Jesu* in Fauré's Requiem on Wednesday 3rd Feb at 6:30pm in Jesus College Chapel with JCMS in aid of the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust.

For more information contact: Francesca Nour, chessnour@gmail.com



CONVERSATIONS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Social Responsibility Group at Little S. Mary's is holding a series of five CONVERSATIONS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE during Lent, as part of our commitment to thinking through, and acting upon, a Christian response to poverty, hunger and social injustice, as well as direct engagement with problems which are tackled by the charities we support, including mental health, disabilities, vulnerability at home and in the streets. The format of each conversation will be a 15- or 20-minute talk given by a representative of one of our projects, followed by a 20- or 25-minute theological reflection.

17 February: CAMTRUST, John Clarkson (*Trustee*); Zachary Guiliano (*Ordinand of the Diocese of Ely, Westcott House*)

24 February: THE MEDAILLE TRUST, Pamela Cressey; Ruth Jackson, (*Post-doctoral research fellow at CRASSH*)

2 March: Jimmy's, Henry Brown (CEO); Paul Dominiak (*Dean of Chapel, Jesus College*)

9 March: FORUM LUNCH CLUB, Fiona Blake (*Consultant Psychiatrist*); Max Kramer (*Assistant Curate at LSM*)

16 March: FRIENDS OF FULBOURN HOSPITAL & COMMUNITY, John Nicholson (Chaplain); Hannah McManus (*Pastoral Assistant at LSM*)

Cambridge Churches Homeless Project

from Lucy McKitterick

This year's project runs from December 2015 to February 2016, and our friends and supporters may be interested to see a mid-term report.

At the mid-point of the season we had provided food and shelter to 32 different guests, with a total of 545 bed places over 47 nights (11 or 12 guests on average each night). Eight churches and one synagogue had hosted the project, and the total number of volunteers across the project this season is in the region of three hundred.

Behind these figures lies a remarkable commitment of time and energy from a very considerable number of people, not only from those actively engaged in hosting, cooking, cleaning, driving kit, and washing those 545 sleeping bag sheets, but also from our wider church congregations as well, whose support and willingness to allow our buildings to be used has made so much possible. Equally important has been the financial support which continues to enable the project to flourish: contributions from St Columba's, St Edward's, the Rotary, the Swiss Laundry and the Society of St Francis have been among the generosity received this year.

One of the many blessings of being involved with the organisation of the project is that one sees and visits each of the host churches (and synagogue) as well as one's own. People often ask "where else the project is being held": this year's hosts include (from last year) Emmanuel URC, Little St Mary's, Castle Street Methodist, Great St Mary's, Our Lady and the English Martyrs, Castle End Mission (with a team from St Bene't's), St Giles and St Paul's, with (new this year) the wonderful newly built Beth Shalom Synagogue on Auckland Road. It has been a joy to include their community among our volunteers: while the Catholic churches in Cambridge gathered support to host the project for 5 nights at OLEM over Christmas, the synagogue hosted for the New Year. These are difficult times for guests with the many memories and associations which come with them, and so good that our early start in December this year made the "festive season" a time of safe and kindly shelter for them.

This season has not always been easy, not least because the visible increase in homelessness in Cambridge since last winter has put pressures on the project for which it was not always possible to plan. Last winter we offered ten spaces and often had fewer guests; this winter we offer ten

spaces for referred guests (from Jimmy's, from the previous night, or from other sources) and a further two places for "one night only" walk-ins. The reality however is that there have often been more people asking for shelter: and a further number coming as supper guests, sometimes just to eat, sometimes as a vital link with us when no longer able or willing to stay the night. The work of balancing the different needs of guests, volunteers and churches continues.

There is however very much to be thankful for – seven of our guests helped into further accommodation as of 17th January, as just one visible "good result" - and a still greater thankfulness due for the help we cannot see or count but which engages at a deep level with guests who may not have felt they "matter" for many years. Working with our guests is always a humbling experience but never more so than late at night after a difficult evening when a guest says of the project "You've given me space and you've cared – none of the other places I've been did that" – or when one sees, as a new guest peels off shredded socks and the awful blisters come into view, the everyday suffering of trying to keep life together on the streets. It is work, too, which brings with it an increasing awareness that homelessness – the lack of a roof – is only one aspect of the needs of our guests, a symptom often of something much deeper rather than the problem itself, as guests tell their stories and reveal themselves as the unwilling victims of grief, trauma, bereavement or abuse. The work of the CCHP has always included time with guests "beyond" the nightly care of supper and shelter, but there is so much needed that we don't have the resources to give: so much work to be done to give hands and voice to the compassion and mercy of God for the people on our streets.

Prayer is never very far from the work of the CCHP: whether as a beginning and ending for our meetings, in occasional moments with guests who ask it, or in the hearts of volunteers working with guests who don't. Please do, as our supporters, continue to keep the project in your prayers too: for this season, and especially as we begin to think about next year, and how to respond to the need around us.

GARDEN

There will be a work party meeting in the garden on Saturday 27th February. Meet Malcolm and Sue Munro any time from 9:30am. All welcome - many hands make light work!

Spiders in the Manger: A Christmas in Cape Town

from Mary Ward

Christmas in the Southern Hemisphere is flooded with light and heat. The sun rises at 4:30am and does not set until nearly 8pm. Much of the traditional imagery from our well-loved carols thus becomes redundant or faintly ludicrous. Where is the snow, the bleakness, the candles, the dead of winter and above all the cosiness of Christmas? When I arrived in Cape Town on the 18th December, it was high summer, with blazing sunshine from dawn until late sunset. Interestingly there was also little sign of much commercialisation of Christmas in the shopping centres.

In *'Under African Skies': Reflections for Advent and Christmas*, Carolyn Butler writes: 'Advent has to do with arrival, with coming. Life springing forth from the root of Jesse. Seeds sown and sowing in preparation for the Kingdom of God.' In her introduction she also reflects that 'Christmas resonates much better for us when approached the African way – via the seasons of the South.' Her book of biblical readings therefore focuses on 'the connections of climate and geography and culture between Africa and the Holy Land.'

Fr Robert writes in the January 2016 LSM newsletter that 'Christmas is the breaking in of a new way of living and seeing things' and I am very grateful that I was given the opportunity to do so, half a world away in South Africa. Christmas 2015 was my first Christmas away from England and I was due to spend the Christmas period with my son-in-law's family, the Adams family, near Knynsa on the Garden Route at Pinelands. Christmas fell on a Friday, a holy day for both Christians and Muslims, the 'mother of all days'. The whole Adams family staying at the resort were determined to make Christmas Day special for me, and the rest of this article attempts to explain how this happened.

Yazeed, my son-in-law, leaving his young family on Christmas morning, drove me to St George's Anglican Church in Kynsna. It was packed, with extra chairs and an overhead projector for the carols. The preacher had turned his attention rather surprisingly to the spider, consulting Google for

helpful information. The essence of his sermon was that there must have been spiders at the Manger. He discovered that despite its apparent fragility, the spider's thread is miraculously strong. Therefore, through our weakness and human frailty, we should in trust and faith, like the spider, acknowledge the strength God gives us.

The Adams men, plus the young male cousins, Mikaeel and Zachariah, attended mosque, where similarly, their preacher spoke about the significance of Jesus, the much-loved messenger, and of Mary. All Muslims were to honour and respect Christmas Day and to keep Christians in their prayers. We all celebrated Christmas Cape Malay style with a wonderful feast, and present after present for me! The whole family were 'called to the dance' as the carol said afterwards in a splendid dancing competition. I think the grandparents won – but all ages took part including Ali and Iri my grandchildren. This incarnational outpouring of love surely is at the heart of Christmas:

'I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love.' *Song of Songs 2.3,4*

Hot Cross Buns for Jimmy's Nightshelter

from Penny Robson

A belated thanks to all who contributed so generously to Jimmy's at Christmas. Our efforts are greatly appreciated by staff and guests alike. We will begin our regular first Sunday of the month collection of fresh produce, as well as the on-going donations of non-perishable food, on Sunday 7 February. Please be sure your donations follow the 'wanted' list posted on the top of the box, are within the best-before date and are placed in the blue Jimmy's box on the table in the Parish Centre. There will be further reminders of another Hot Cross Buns drive during Holy Week. Thank you for your continued support for Jimmy's.

Update from Makeni Ecumenical Centre (MEC) and the Saint Nicholas Orphanage

from Sarah Hinton

One of the particularly strong aspects of MEC's work is their holistic approach to helping children get an education by tackling the barriers that exist in the local communities. During 2015 MEC's HIV/AIDS project has continued to work in the community, and engaged in a programme of work at a cost of K150,000 (about £9,000), with financial support from the NGOCC (Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council).

In March MEC embarked on advocacy programmes against early marriages and teenage pregnancies. The aim of the programme was to build capacity in local people to advocate against early marriages and teenage pregnancies to their peers in their respective communities, with the aim of eventually ending the practice.

Teenage pregnancy and early marriage account for a very high dropout rate in school among teenagers in adolescence. They have increased poverty in the communities and the infection rate of HIV among the youths. They also exacerbate drug abuse, drunkenness and lawlessness among the youths in the communities.

To combat these issues, strong alliances of both youths and adults are being created to handle cases of early marriages and teenage pregnancies in the communities. The message is gradually gathering momentum in the rural outreach sites of Mwomboshi, Kalwelwe, Chisamba, Shikatende and Munyati. One example of success was in Mwomboshi where a child was to be married, but she changed her mind and decided to go back to school. This was facilitated by the contact group which also enabled the dissolution of four early marriages in Mwomboshi. The case was also similar for Kalwelwe. Evidently there is a slogan amongst men in these communities saying jokingly "Makeni is ending people's marriages!"

In Munyati, reports to the police on cases of child marriage have increased and many such marriages are being ended. In Shikatende, school authorit-

ies and headmen assisted in ending two child marriages, with the help of the Shikatende Police. School authorities in all the five schools where the campaigns against child marriages and teen pregnancies were done have reported positive changes in a number of pupils' mentality, especially girls. In some schools, teachers have taken the central role of being contact persons and change agents, not only in the schools, but also the communities around them.

Once again, many thanks goes to all the individual sponsors at Little St. Mary's and to the Church as a whole, for continuing to support the valuable work at St. Nicholas AIDS Orphanage at Makeni Ecumenical Centre.

Honorary Treasure Needed

a message from Rosemary Watson of Great S. Mary's

The MB Reckitt Trust (mbreckitttrust.org) is seeking a new Honorary Treasurer to carry out a small but vital role after the retirement their current treasurer, William Steel.

The role does not require a background in accounting as they have a professional accountant to draw up their annual accounts. It does, however, require someone who is sympathetic with their aims of enabling people of faith to bring about societal change for the common good. It involves liaison with fund managers, explaining to the trustees what the assets are and how much we have to give in grants, assessing and maintaining liquidity levels, paying the grants and expenses, keeping records and liaising with the accountant. They are looking for someone who enjoys dealing with money, and perhaps has a little knowledge or experience in wise investing. The trustees only meet once a year, actually making the job a very small commitment. The person could come from anywhere in the country, and belong to any denomination. Meetings are usually in London at Methodist Central Hall, in June.

Those interested, contact: Rosemary Watson, Development Co-ordinator and Trustee, rosemary.watson@talk21.com , tel 01223 319527

Do you enjoy baking?

If so, we are looking for more people to join the Social Committee, to provide food and refreshments for certain events. If you are interested and think you may like to help us, even on a very occasional basis, please have a chat with Vicki Farmer.

Have something to add to next month's newsletter?

Contact ***melissaguiliano@gmail.com***

Deadline Monday 22nd February

*Front Cover: Rembrandt, An Old Woman Reading/The Prophetess Anna,
1631, Rijksmuseum. Amsterdam*

Little S. Mary's, Trumpington Street, CAMBRIDGE CB2 1QG.

Tel: 01223 366202

Open daily for prayer and visiting, 7:30am to 6:30pm

www.lsm.org.uk