

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

A clear sky, crisp white frost plus a line of twinkling candles leading to the church door set the scene. After a greeting, the Vicar, the Mayor of Richmond and the MP for Twickenham were led into the service by the choir singing *Once in Royal David's City* with the first verse sung solo. The nine lessons gradually unfolded the well-known story from the *Creation* to the *Birth of Jesus*, interspersed with carols for congregation, choral and orchestral items. The orchestra led by Janet Smith and conducted by Harold Lester, our musical director, played superbly and complemented fine singing by the choir. After the Blessing, the Vicar thanked choir and orchestra and we left the church to cross the road where mulled wine and mince pies awaited us in the church hall.

Sheila Cooper

Midnight and Christmas Day

Packed congregations celebrated with these very moving, traditional services with the children showing their

presents on Christmas day. We are so privileged to be able to take part in such joyous Christmas celebrations with so many people contributing to it. Very many thanks also go to Harold Lester and the choir for all the inspirational music provided over this period, the flower arrangers with their beautiful decorations and a special vote of thanks to our Vicar, John Cleaver for his leadership.

Veronica Baker

The Barnes Choir – *Unsung Heroes*

On Saturday, February 16th at St John the Divine, Kew Road, Richmond, *Artsrichmond* in collaboration with the Barnes Choir call all Choral Singers to come and join them for a day in which the richness of the English Choral tradition comes to life through the music of three undeservedly forgotten and masterful composers – William Lloyd Webber, Benjamin Dale and George Dyson led by Andrew Charity. Please contact Jose Shantonas on 020 8979 3848 by 13th February for details.

ST MARY with ST ALBAN Teddington Parish Church



NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2008

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

Confirmation

The most important event in our Church this month is the Confirmation and First Communion on Sunday 3rd at 10.00am. Please remember in your prayers the 4 adults and 6 young people who are to be confirmed that morning:

Lesley Alexander
Roger Avins
Nawtej Dosanjh
Kate Vickers
Jonathan Bell
Sarah Cassidy
Joseph Cassidy
Nina Dalton
Tom Dalton
Laura Ramsay

Please give them every encouragement as they each take this momentous step in their lives, by coming to the service and supporting them with your presence.

This is the last time we shall welcome Michael, Bishop of Kensington, as our Bishop as he is to become a Canon Residentiary at St Paul's Cathedral. He has been a good friend to this parish and we are grateful for all that he has done for us over the past 11 years. We plan to mark his leaving at the Confirmation.

The Confirmation will take place in the weekend of Candlemas, which is the *Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple*

recorded for us in St Luke's Gospel and which will be the Gospel I shall read at the service. This was when old Simeon recognised the baby of Mary and Joseph as the Son of God the Light of the World, and said those words that have come to be known as the *Nunc Dimittis*:

"Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word."

The theme of the day is light and this will be marked in our opening hymn at the end of every verse with "Let there be light!"

Many people have written about light in a religious context. Here are three examples:

St John wrote in his first letter:

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." (1:7)

These words were written by a retired engineer and machine designer as an aid to Communion:

"They stripped you bare and stole your clothes,
And jeering passed you by;
They stretched you on a wooden cross
And hung you out to die.

Now I before an altar stand,
Nor find a place of death
But with a living Lord contend,
And my indwelling breath.

For you are my Salvation, Lord,
My hope and vision bright;

SERVICES: SUNDAYS: Holy Communion (Prayer Book) at 8.00am
Family Communion (Common Worship) and Sunday School at 9.45am
WEDNESDAYS & SAINTS DAYS: Holy Communion (Prayer Book) at 9.30am

VICAR: The Revd. John Cleaver, The Vicarage, 11 Twickenham Road, Teddington TW11 8AQ (8977 2767)

CHURCH WARDENS: David Power, 76 Field Lane, Teddington TW11 9AS (8943 5194)
Sheila Cooper, 3 Thelma Grove, Teddington TW11 9AQ (8977 7206)

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Harold Lester (8878 0021)

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR & HALL BOOKINGS: Gillian Burgess (8943 2262)

CHURCH SCHOOL: St Mary's and St Peter's, Somerset Road, Teddington
Headteacher John Logan (8943 0476)

NEWSLETTER EDITORS: Susan Jacobs (8943 0503) and Veronica Baker (8255 7178)

PARISH WEBSITE: www.stmarywithstalban.org

The all-revealing living Word
And my indwelling light.

You are my indwelling Good,
A presence all divine;
Of God in human form bestowed,
To be holy, to be mine.

So when I take you in my hand
My Lord, to life the key;
To all the world just bread and wine,
To me your guarantee.” John Rae

And finally a fine prayer by Robert Louis Stevenson:

“Grant us, O Lord, the royalty of inward happiness and the serenity that comes from living close to thee. Daily renew in us the sense of joy, and let the eternal spirit dwell in our souls and bodies, filling every corner of our hearts with light and gladness. So that, bearing about with us the infection of a good courage we may be diffusers of life, and meet all that comes, of good or ill, even death itself, with gallant and high-hearted happiness, giving thee thanks always for all things.”

With best wishes to you all.

John Cleaver

Christmas

St. Mary with St. Alban celebrated a wonderfully joyous Christmas.

The Christingle Service

The Sunday School Christingle in aid of the Children’s Society was held in the Church Hall and a very enjoyable afternoon for all raised £289.36. St Mary Teddington Bells entertained the audience beforehand with a selection of favourite carols which established a very festive atmosphere.

The Christingle itself opened with prayers, read by some of the Sunday School children, for children everywhere in need at Christmas time, then the show began. The play was a traditional Nativity with several very funny additions, such as a splendid Welsh granny, some wise-cracking

shepherds, lively narration and some surprising new information – even the Vicar was unaware that the Stable at Bethlehem had those *busy curtains*. Despite all the humour, the children told their story very well, and reminded us of the importance of the first Christmas.

The Vicar then presented the children with their Christingle oranges, which consist of an orange to represent the world, wrapped in a red ribbon to symbolise the blood of Christ. A candle is placed in the top of the orange to signify Christ, the light of the world, and the orange is pierced with four cocktail sticks covered with sweets to represent the four seasons and the fruits of the earth.

Thanks must go to Ian, Hugo, Joy, Susan and all the Sunday school staff and helpers, and to Georgina for her excellent piano accompaniment, and also to all those who put together the beautiful Christingle oranges. It was a wonderful start to the Christmas season.

The Crib Services

At the very popular Crib Services on Christmas Eve the Vicar explained the links between the Nativity and our own Christmas celebrations – how the presents we give each other are a reminder of God’s gift of Jesus to the world, and that just as Jesus was visited by kings and shepherds, we are also visitors or visited at Christmas, and it is a time for welcoming everyone.

Several favourite carols were sung, with the Vicar’s traditional singing competition (Ladies and Girls v Men and Boys) during *While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night* and *Good King Wenceslas*. Mr Lester, the organist, was called on for his professional opinion, and the competition resulted in a draw (although many felt the Ladies and Girls were quite clearly robbed).

The service finished with prayers for our families, for all those who had to work over Christmas and for anyone ill or unhappy over the festive period.

Minnie Harris

Lent

As in previous years there will be a series of five weekly morning discussion meetings during Lent, beginning on Wednesday 13th. The topic this year will be Prayer and the sessions will be informal and open to all.

Susan Jacobs. 020 8943 0503

Diary for February

Sunday 3rd	Candlemas (Presentation of Christ in the Temple). Confirmation and First Communion at 10.00am. There will be no service at 8.00am.
Wednesday 6th	Ash Wednesday. Holy Communion with the imposition of ashes at 9.30am. First Wednesday Club in Mina Hogan Room, 12.30-2pm. Topic: The Meaning of Easter.
Sunday 10th	First Sunday in Lent. Holy Communion at 8.00am. Family Communion and Sunday School at 9.45am. Holy Baptism at 2.45pm.
Wednesday 13th	Holy Communion at 9.30am. Lent group meeting in Parish Office upstairs in Parish Hall, 10.30-12 noon.
Sunday 17th	Second Sunday in Lent. Holy Communion at 8.00am. Family Communion and Sunday School at 9.45am.
School Half term 18th – 22nd.	
Wednesday 20th	Holy Communion at 9.30am. Lent group meeting in Mina Hogan Room, 10.30-12 noon.
Sunday 24th	Third Sunday in Lent. Holy Communion at 8.00am.
Wednesday 27th	Remembrance of George Herbert. Holy Communion at 9.30am. Lent group meeting in Mina Hogan Room, 10.30-12 noon.

And looking ahead

Saturday, 1st March	St David’s Day. Holy Communion at 9.30am.
Sunday 2nd March	Mothering Sunday. Holy Communion at 8.00am. Family and Parade Service with presentation of flowers at 9.45am.