



St HELEN'S WINDOW

Rethinking our Dinner Parties

The Revd Dr Jane Baun

More than 20 million people from the top to the bottom of Pakistan have been afflicted by the recent flooding of the Indus River, caused by the heaviest monsoon rains in living memory. 1,600 persons are thought to have died, and one-fifth of the country—an area the size of England—has been flooded. The UN has called the floods a humanitarian disaster greater than the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, and the 2010 Haiti earthquake combined. The DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) appeal has raised more than £54 million to date, but the need for help is only just beginning. As the waters recede, problems multiply: lack of clean drinking water, inadequate sanitation, water-borne diseases, shattered infrastructure, transport links, housing, and livelihoods, and the devastation of 14% of Pakistan's agricultural land, mean that it will be a very long time before millions of people can go back to anything like a normal life.

Natural disasters always seem more real when you know someone who has been affected.

While studying at Cuddesdon, I came to know a fellow student called Humphrey Peters, who is now the Bishop of Peshawar Diocese,



Bishop Humphrey with a flood-affected family

in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province. Nearly 100,000 Christians live in the Frontier province, on the border with Afghanistan. Of these, 50,000 belong to the Church of Pakistan, a united church within the Anglican Communion.

They have been through a lot recently—not only earthquakes and floods, but also terrorism, military operations, and violent attacks by extremists. Their spirit remains unbowed, however, as they continue their worship, fellowship and considerable charitable work through their schools, hospital, health centres, and other outreach efforts. Their province, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has been one of the areas hardest-hit by the floods, and the diocese has opened relief camps in its schools and Mission Hospital which currently house around 750 persons from the Christian and Hindu minority communities. Many more have received assistance in situ in their villages and homes.

In our Sunday Gospel reading at the end of August (Luke 14.1-14), Jesus challenged us to think differently about our hospitality, to invite to our parties those who cannot possibly repay us. The people of Pakistan cannot in any material or earthly way repay us for any help that we give them. They are the ideal dinner guests, from Jesus' point of view. Could we invite the flood-affected people of Pakistan, and especially of Peshawar Diocese, into our homes? Could we print or cut out a photo from the floods, keep it on our dining table, and pray for all those involved as part of our table grace? Could we look again at the till receipt the next time we go food shopping, and donate a proportion of what we have spent to help those who have no access to food or clean water, and are struggling to live on aid parcels? The love of Christ demands no less.

The Editors

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People in the News

Abingdon welcomes its new Team Vicar.



The Revd Paul Smith will be licensed by the Rt Revd Henry Scriven as Abingdon's new Team Vicar at 3 pm on 25 September 2010 at St Helen's Church; all are welcome.

A native of Wantage, Fr Smith trained nearby at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, and served his title at Prestwood and Great Hampden in Oxford Diocese. He has served for the past five years as

priest-in charge, and then Vicar, of St Alban's Church, West Leigh, in Portsmouth Diocese.

Having worked as a 'one-man-band' in his previous post, he has said that he is looking forward to the opportunities for mission presented by a large town such as Abingdon, and to working as part of a varied and lively clergy team.

The Team Vicar has particular responsibility for St Nicolas' and St Michael's Churches, but everyone in the parish is looking forward to welcoming Paul, and we wish him all blessings for his time among us!

Rod Hunt's quiz in the July/August *Window* proved a challenge, and kept many people busy over the summer. In the end, seven answer sheets were submitted and two had them all correct. Rod presented copies of *The Penguin Book of Word Histories* to the winners,

Susan Granger and **Gill Pett**. Gill and Tim, who submitted a joint effort, are members of the Abingdon Society of Bellringers.

Marie Hardie, who also received a copy of the book, was the runner-up, with only one word incorrect. The answers to the quiz were given in September's *Window*.

The Revd Stephan Van Os,

recently chaplain at Dalton Barracks, has sent us news that he is about to return to Afghanistan with the first battalion Royal Irish Regiment. Stephan and his wife frequently worshipped at St Helen's when he was stationed here, and they have asked for our prayers in his new deployment.



2010 has seen celebrations throughout the world as the Girl Guides have celebrated the centenary of their founding. The Abingdon District Commissioner, Ms Sharon Self, describes the finale that the Abbey District Guides have planned.

Girl Guiding will be celebrating the end of their first 100 years on 20 October 2010. As a district we are holding a ceremony at St Helen's Church, starting at 7.30 pm. At 8.10 pm, together with Guides from across the UK, we will make or reaffirm our Girl Guide Promise.

We would like to invite all who have been part of the first 100 years of Guiding to come along

to St Helen's Church and join us for this short service, to see our current Brownies, Guides and Rainbows retake their promise at 9.10 pm, and to celebrate afterwards with tea and cakes. This is a very special time for anyone who has been a part of the first 100 years of Guiding, and we would feel very pleased if former Guides and leaders could join us.

If you have any questions related to this event, please call the Abbey District Commissioner, Sharon Self, on 01235 534993.

As part of the celebration of 100 years of Girl Guides, St Helen's Window would like to invite readers who have been part of Guiding to send in memories and photographs from their time in the Guides by 10 November to the Church Office or to StHelensWindow@gmail.com, for publication in the Christmas double issue.

The Sint-Niklaas Gynaika Choir

‘A cup of tea and a delicious piece of cake does make you feel like you are in heaven!’

On Sunday, 4 July 2010, the Gynaika girls’ choir, from our twin city of Sint-Niklaas, visited Abingdon and sang a concert in St Helen’s Church. Gynaika is a choir for secondary-school girls, ages 12 to 18. Founded more than forty years ago by Sister Mary Rita, who died only recently, its current conductor is Godfried Van de Vyvere. The choir has received many prizes in national and international competitions and choir festivals, appeared on television, premiered new choral works, and made several recordings on CD and DVD. They have toured all over Europe, and came this past summer to England.

The *Window* asked one of choir’s organisers, Mrs Manu Cardon, and also the girls in the choir, to tell us how they found their trip.

Mrs Cardon writes:

Last April, around Easter, my husband and I visited Oxford to prepare the yearly trip abroad for Gynaika, a girls’ choir from Sint-Niklaas. As Sint-Niklaas is twinned with Abingdon, it seemed a good idea to seek some help to organise a concert there. Everything went very smoothly; the response was overwhelming, with e-mails going back and forth constantly! We agreed on July 4th as the date for the concert. The day arrived of our visit. I had put together an activity sheet with photos and some questions on Abingdon’s history and most important buildings for the girls to do. We were received at St Helen’s Church as real VIPs, which stimulated the girls to perform at their best. The ‘tea and cake’ afterwards were much appreciated! The near-professional accompaniment on the piano by Arne Muus, an Oxford DPhil student, surely added a lot to the quality of this concert.

And from the girls:

I thought our visit to Abingdon was one of the most interesting visits of this year’s trip. The city

is very old and fascinating which I liked very much. But the concert was amazing; it was really really nice to see a lot of people who were enthusiastic and pleased with our concert. But at the end, we got tea and cake, something we are not used to in Belgium. I especially liked the chocolate cake, it was really good! Caroline (16)



The choir during rehearsal at St Helen’s Church

I have good memories of our day in Abingdon. In the morning we had a quiz with pictures to get an idea of the culture, nature and the way of life in the picturesque town. The people were very kind. I do even remember a lady who invited our little group to enter her house. In the afternoon we sang a good concert. The

audience was very enthusiastic. Finally I really enjoyed the tea and cake. Talking to the local people was a nice experience. I hope they loved our concert like we loved our day in Abingdon. Heleen (17)

All my memories of our trip to England are really fun and pleasant ones, but I consider our journey and concert in Abingdon as first-class! While we were doing an expedition in Abingdon to get to know the city and we got lost or didn’t know an answer, the locals were always ready to answer all of our questions. Then, the big moment had come, the second concert in a row... The atmosphere was not at all severe, everyone was enthusiastic! And of course I will never forget the afternoon tea and cake, I have never experienced something like that before. A nice talk with the locals with a cup of tea and a delicious piece of cake does make you feel like you are in heaven! Isabelle (17)

Abingdon is a super-cool and nice city. Hospitality is great and all the people are very friendly. Also the concert was very good and one that I will never forget. The atmosphere was fantastic. Tessai (13)

Christian Events at St Ethelwold's

The Revd Laura Hodges

As many of you know, St Ethelwold's House, 30 East St Helen Street, was left in trust by the visionary Christian, Dorothea Pickering, to provide a range of spiritual opportunities to support people on their spiritual journey.

The programme is mainly of a Christian nature, but there are also interfaith activities in accordance with Miss Pickering's vision to promote better understanding between different faith traditions.

With beautiful gardens that stretch down to the river, both house and gardens are a haven of peace and provide a beautiful venue for these events. Here are just a few of the Christian events that are on offer this Autumn, some of which are already well established and others that are new ventures:

Christian Meditation

Every Friday starting at 12.15 pm, there is a time of Christian Meditation in the Sanctuary. This is open to people of all faiths and none, although the 30 minutes of silent meditation is usually begun with a short Christian reflection. This time of meditation usually finishes by 1 pm and is followed once a month by:

Holy Communion

On the last Friday of every month we move from meditation into a celebration of Holy Communion, using the Grail Liturgy. This is a gentle and beautiful liturgy that has been devised by the Revd Jonathan Robinson and which John Pritchard, the Bishop of Oxford, describes in his foreword as a liturgy that pushes 'the boundaries and which will hopefully engage the minds and hearts of many who find traditional liturgy operating in too narrow a framework.' Again everyone is very welcome.

Quiet Days

In October a series of monthly Quiet Days begins. Each will run from 10 am to 4 pm, and participants are asked to bring a contribution for a 'bring and share' lunch.

On Thursday 21 October, we have a day entitled 'Martha and Mary' which will be led by the Revd Emma Pennington. Centred on the Gospel story of Martha and Mary, we will be encour-

aged to reflect on the active and contemplative aspects of ourselves through discussion and silence.

On Wednesday 10 November, I will lead a day entitled 'Celebrating our Senses', during which we will focus in turn on each of our five senses, and explore how they can be used to bring us to an inner stillness in which we may be more attentive to the indwelling presence of God.

On Thursday 9 December, Adrian Rance will lead a Quiet Day entitled 'Advent: finding the light in the darkness'.

For each of these Quiet Days there is a suggested minimum donation of £10.

Fresh Vision

Last but by no means least, is a new group that began at St Ethelwold's on Wednesday 29 September, and will meet on the last Wednesday of every month at 7.30 pm. The Christian faith encompasses a wide spectrum of understanding and, increasingly today, there are groups of Christians who question the faith as it has been traditionally understood.

This group is for anyone who would like the opportunity to meet others to discuss God, Jesus and Christian faith from an open, liberal and undogmatic standpoint. We do not require that participants make any particular statement of faith, only that they listen to the views of others with respect and allow each person the space they need to express themselves. In order that our discussions may be the product of quiet and prayerful reflection, they take place within the context of a simple liturgy of Evening Prayer that comes once more from the Grail Liturgy.

If you think that you would like to join us for any of these events, please do come along, you will be most welcome. Or, to find out more, just drop into St Ethelwold's and pick up an Autumn programme. Entry to the House is through the side door, accessed through the open black gates on the left side of the building.

Voluntary Organisation Profile:
The Abingdon & District Volunteer Centre

Alan Joinson

‘Go and Do Thou Likewise’

Volunteering is a way of getting something useful done by cheerful co-operation between people. It avoids the endless rules and bureaucracy of government or commerce. It's very efficient and it allows me to respond to the challenge of the New Testament in a quiet and unobtrusive way.

My interest is ferrying people, often old, frail or disadvantaged to health appointments. It's an ideal voluntary job: it's *really* needed and it's one to one with someone you might otherwise never meet. It's a job I can do until I give up driving and I already know how to do it. Without a volunteer, the passenger either has a large taxi bill or a very long wait for shared transport. They are (nearly) always grateful. Our Centre has been going for 35 years, so it knows what it is doing. During the journeys you can chatter away and discover all kind of mutually interesting things. Wow – the lives some of these elderly folks have lived! The only paperwork is a claim form and the occasional receipt. All expenses (mileage, parking etc) are reimbursed every month

The Abingdon and District Volunteer Centre needs two sorts of volunteer: drivers and organisers. A *driver* needs an accessible car, a friendly manner and a commitment to do at least one or two trips a month. *Organisers* cover the office, and are just as vital. Here a good telephone manner is needed, the ability to take legible, accurate notes, and to cover the phone from 10 am to 12.30 pm on your chosen day.



A trip will always start and finish in our area (Abingdon and its nearby villages). A local trip will visit the Abingdon Hospital or any of the surgeries, opticians or dentists in the area. Typically this will take one or two hours. The other main destinations are the Oxford hospitals, which usually take about half a day, including waiting time.

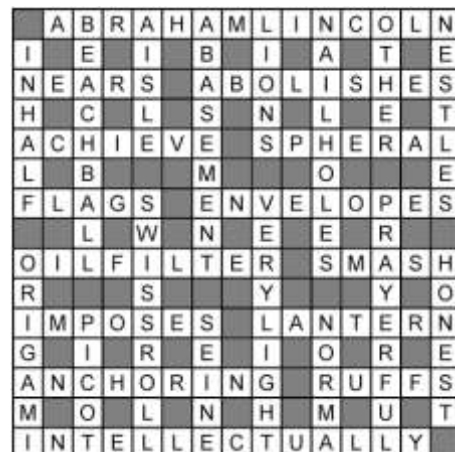
What to do next:

If you would like to help, contact Alan Joinson on 01235 521247 or e-mail him on alanj@phonecoop.coop.

If you would like to explore the many other activities that need volunteers, www.do_it.com may help you find the one that is right for you.

The Window invites readers who are involved in voluntary organisations to send in short profiles of their organisation, along with their personal insights about the work.

Solution to September's crossword by Ian Miles



St Helen's Church and Church in Abingdon News

St Helen's Church

Tuesdays 5 & 19 October
Desiring Life Reading Group
 14.15-16.00 Church Centre Lounge
 Details from Susan Scott 522960
 or susan.scott21@btinternet.com

Saturday 9 October
Celebrating Abingdon History
A Tribute to Mienke Cox
 A series of lectures
 11.00-17.30 in the Church
 Entry by programme £5 from
 Anne Smithson via Church Office,
 Mostly Books or The Bookstore

Thursdays 7, 14, 21 & 28 October
Alpha Meetings
 19.30 Church Centre Lounge

Mondays 11 & 25 October
Silent Prayer
 18.10 -19.00 Lady Chapel
 Details from Ann Moss
 annjmoss@talktalk.net

Tuesday 12 October
Mothers' Union Discussion
 20.00 Church Centre

Tuesday 19 October
St Helen's @Lunch
 12.00 onwards, just turn up!
 King's Head & Bell, East St Helen's
 Details from Susan Scott 522960

Wednesday 20 October
Girl Guides' Centenary
 19.30 service (for details see page 2)

Wednesday 20 October
Wednesday Club
 20.00 in Church Centre
Mali Development by The Revd Tim Hewes

Saturday 30 October
Coffee Morning
 In aid of Help for Heroes
 10.00-12.00 in Church Centre

St Michael's Church

Thursday 28 October
 St Michael's Fellowship
 19.45 Talk by Paul Sheppy
 "You're driving me crazy"

Church in Abingdon

Thursdays 7 & 21 October
"Back to 35"
 10.30-11.30 Baptist Church Hall
 Opportunity for chat and fellowship
 7 October *MG Story* with Brian Moylan
 21 October *Abingdon Operatic Society:*
Behind the Scenes with Tricia Cook

Sunday 17 October
CiA Annual Celebration
 Focus on children's & youth work
 15.00 All Saints' Church, Appleford Drive
 Followed by light refreshments

Wednesday 27 October
Fresh Vision
 A new monthly Group with a simple service &
 discussion led by Revd Laura Hodges
 19.30 at St Ethelwold's, 30 East St Helen's Street
 More details from Laura 527654

Future Events

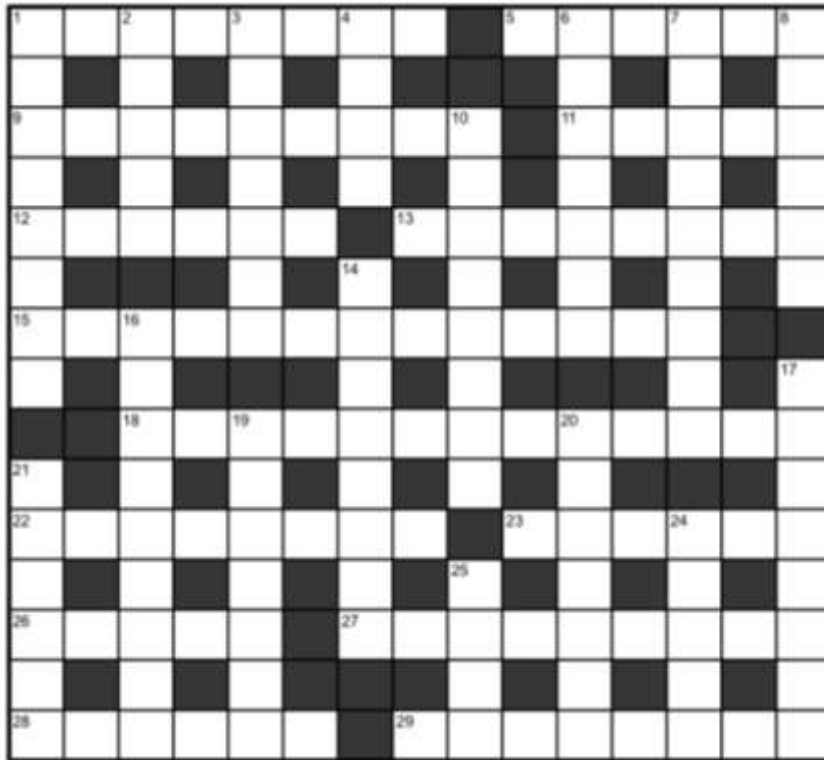
Ecumenical House Groups are being planned
 for the first 3 weeks of November -- an opportunity
 to meet with Christians from other churches.
 Material will be from the York Study course.
 Look out for further details.

Monday 1 November
A Good Neighbour Scheme is being proposed:
 15.30 & 19.30 meetings at the Resources and
 Wellbeing Centre, Audlett Drive. Details from
 Colin Pattenden, 530080 or
 colinpat7@hotmail.com

If you would like an event listed on this page let us
 know by the 10th of the previous month and we will try
 to include it. Contact Silvia at alanj@phonecoop.coop
 or tel: 01235 521247

Steer off course

by Eccles

**ACROSS**

- 1 * My coarse adjustment (8)
 5 Street money in London venue (6)
 9 Robin's rats breed frantically (9)
 11 * Red Leicester holds it in reserve (5)
 12 "When ___ came out of Egypt" (6)
 13 * I am called out, though penniless (8)
 15 * Stale Arab joke (5,8)
 18 Source of power to control flow of water (6,7)
 22 Shocking rude goat caused severe annoyance (8)
 23 Twice_crossing_park in_Gloucester (6)
 26 * Charles lost his bearings and went out of control (5)
 27 Speed of bird on the loch (9)
 28 Defy reformed sister (6)
 29 Looked for Gothic feature in Wimbledon attraction (8)

DOWN

- 1 Honest poker hand (8)
 2 * Raced around Lebanon (5)
 3 Rich diet perhaps for this actress (7)
 4 Gather in some of the mature apples (4)
 6 Neither out or in (7)
 7 "___ ___ ___ bells on earth shall ring" (3,3,3)
 8 Roger Whitaker's home town ? (6)
 10 Tarts can perform (8)
 14 Layers of elegant living-stones (8)
 16 Birds stop and go south (9)
 17 Strained upside-down puddings (8)
 19 Arrives at the upper site in Abingdon (7)
 20 Mick's little red wake-up call (7)
 21 * Non-U car (6)
 24 * Heard at 5 across (5)
 25 * Starts to play in New England (4)

* The asterisked clues relate to the title in some way and do not have a definition.

Footnote: Some alternative titles for this puzzle were rejected by my family because they were too obscure. They were *Leaves Home* and *Irish Numbers*.

October at St Helen's Church

Divine Services

Morning Prayer	09.10	Monday to Friday
Evening Prayer	17.10	Monday to Friday
Holy Communion	08.00	Sundays
Sung Eucharist	10.00	every Sunday with Junior Church
Silent Prayer	18.10	Mondays 11 & 25 October
Wednesday Church	10.30	every Wednesday (Holy Communion followed by refreshments)

3 October	Michaelmas	10.00 Sung Eucharist with Welcome to Newly Baptised
17 October	Stewardship in-Gathering	10.00 Sung Eucharist
31 October	All Saints' Day	10.00 Processional Eucharist

Sunday Evening Services

3 October	18.30	Eucharist
10 October	18.30	Taizé
17 October	16.30	Choral Evensong
24 October	18.30	Wholeness & Healing Service
31 October	18.30	Evensong

Meetings and Gatherings all in Church Centre unless marked

Alpha Group	19.30	Thursdays
Baby and Toddler Group	09.30 & 11.00	Mondays except 25 October
Baptism Preparation	20.00	Tues 5 & 19 October
Beavers	17.00	Weds except 27 October
Brownies	18.15	Tues except 26 October
Clergy consultation	19.00	Weds by appointment
Cubs	18.20	Weds except 27 October
DCC meeting	19.30	Thurs 7 October
DCC standing committee	20.00	Mon 11 October
Desiring Life	14.30	Tues 5 & 19 October
Marriage Preparation	20.00	Wed 6 October
Mothers' Union	20.00	Tues 12 October
Wednesday Club	20.00	Wed 20 October



Promenade Concert and Choral Evensong

17 October

From 15.00, come and enjoy the music with a cup of tea and cake.

16.30 - 17.30
Choral Evensong

Events (more details on page 6)

Abingdon History Event	from 11.00	Sat 9 October	in Church and Centre
Advanced Bell-ringing Practice	21.00	Mon 11 October	St Helen's tower
Girl Guides' Centenary Service	19.30	Wed 20 October	St Helen's Church
Coffee morning	10.00	Sat 30 October	Church Centre
Newly Weds' Drinks Reception	18.30	Sat 30 October	Church Centre

*The services and events listed here are correct at the time of going to press
- please consult the weekly Newsheet if in doubt.*

To arrange baptisms, weddings and funerals contact the Parish Office.
Clergy are available in the Church Office between 19.00 - 20.00 on a Wednesday.
Call the office to book an appointment.

Rector:	The Revd Dr Charles Miller
Assisting Priest (NSM):	The Revd Tim Hewes
Curate (NSM):	The Revd Dr Jane Baun
Curate (NSM):	The Revd Dr Simon Thorn

Director of Music:	Christopher Fletcher-Campbell
Parish Administrator:	Linda Barker

St Helen's Church Office: St Helen's Court, Abingdon, OX14 5BS
01235 520144
[normal opening hours 09.00 to 14.15 Mon, Tues, Wed; 09.15 to 14.15 Fri]
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