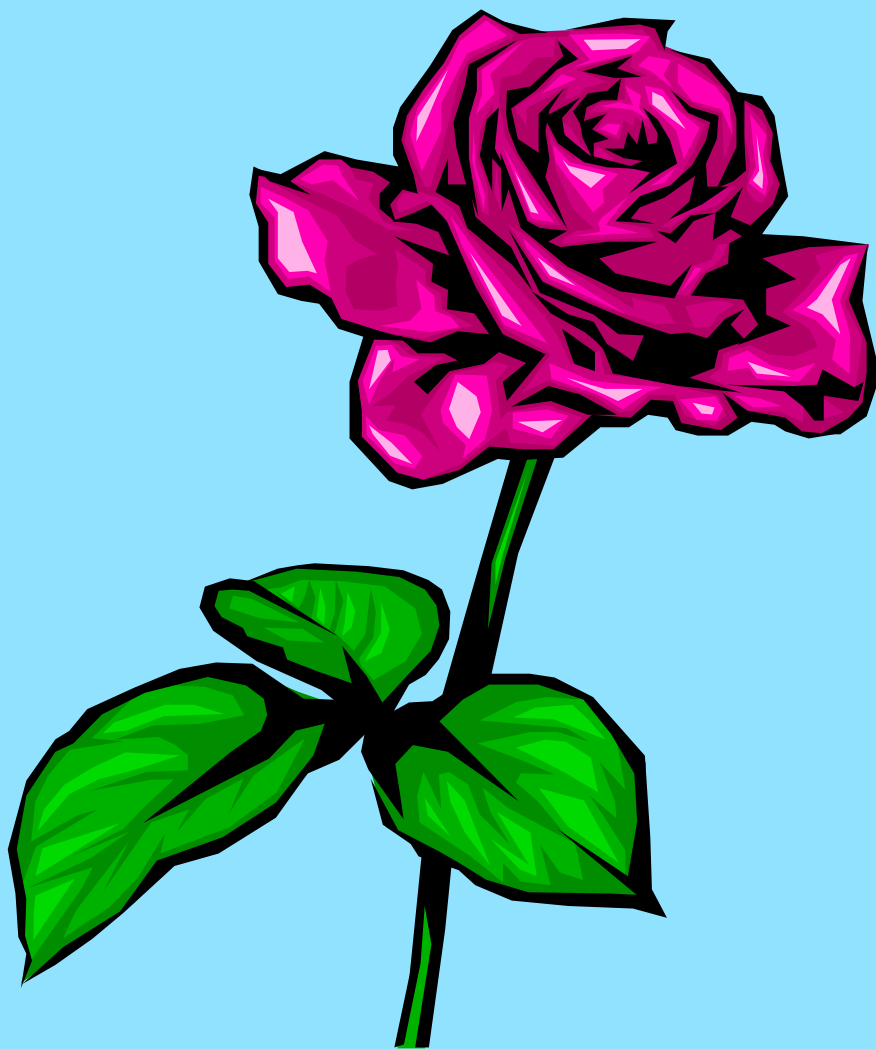


**February 2005**

# **Gridiron**

**The Magazine of Saint Laurence's Church, Upton.**



## **From the Editor:**

Dear Friends,

Before you ask, the flower on the cover signifies St Valentine, whose day means a lot to lovers, but of whom we know very little. Before his day, we mark Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Look out for details of Lent courses, which will be announced or posted in church.

As I wrote the Iraq election seems to have gone quite smoothly, despite the insurgents' efforts to intimidate the voters. Let us pray that the elected representatives are able to bring peace and stability to that country.

This issue includes articles about two other troubled parts of our world, Haiti and the Holy Land, where Christian Aid is active. We should, of course, not forget the countries devastated by the Indian Ocean tsunami, which face a very long period of recovery and reconstruction.

On a lighter note, I've included an article on the dangers to health caused by the air in churches, which I hope won't put you off coming to St Laurence's!

Yours in Christ,

Dave

Dear Friends,

Many thanks for my lovely 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration that you gave me on Boxing Day. It was such a surprise, especially with everything going on at Christmas. For many years, St Laurence's has been a second home for Beryl and me and on Boxing Day I found that great love that is always there and it felt so warm.

It was such a nice feeling having all the parish priests present. Special thanks to Andrea and Marie for the lovely cake and wine. Also for all the children present who make my life so happy.

God bless you all.

George

### **St Laurence's Giving 2004**

CA Afghanistan appeal	196.97	inclusive of gift aid
CA Sudan appeal	272.00	
CA General funds	159.47	
OD Bishop Fund	148.72	inclusive of gift aid
CTRT	100.00	
Breakthrough	100.00	
ME Society	100.00	
CMS	100.00	
MU Literacy	100.00	
Corrymeela	100.00	
<u>Total</u>	1377.16	

### **St Laurence's Giving 2005**

Children's Society	230.56	
Crisis	55.18	
Christian Aid Tsunami appeal	875.00	inclusive of gift aid
Christian Aid general funds	103.05	

## Haiti – A Year To Remember

A year ago, the people of Haiti should have been celebrating 200 years of their country's independence. Instead, political upheaval and natural disasters made 2004 a year to remember for all the wrong reasons. Most recently, in September 2004, hurricanes ripped through the Caribbean causing over 3,000 deaths and destroying hundreds of thousands of homes and livelihoods.

Lydie Dubuisson, Christian Aid's Emergency Officer in the region, reflects on her experiences. 'Since hurricane Jeanne, life has become more precarious. The Haitian people feel frustrated and disappointed. Government officials have failed to show themselves capable of assuming their responsibilities and of bringing about change. We have lost our hope for a government that will take our needs into account.

'When I visited Christian Aid partners after the hurricane, the first shock was when we crossed the city of Gonaives. We walked in the putrid mud, and the smell was overwhelming. We saw people's despair but we saw also their determination to move on. This was quite amazing: they weren't sitting waiting for help, but instead they were cleaning up, healing, searching, mourning, and telling you that they needed the outstretched hand of friendship to help them get through it. I felt frustration, anger, powerlessness – but also compassion and a desire to help.

'In the northwest the situation was different, but no less alarming. The roads were damaged - no trucks could cross for some days but people were already busy repairing what they could with the tools they had. This was their way of saying that life must go on. What I realised was that the situation allowed people to get closer to one another, to feel concern for what happened to their neighbour. It was a good way of helping people to deal with the crisis.

'What we need now is quite simply compassion - true compassion where we feel it is our responsibility to help one another and where we are moved by the needs of our people. And, in addition to this solidarity and mutual concern, we need the right social structures that will provide adequate help to people in need.'

From the Christian Aid website

## Planting hope

Suleiman Zawahra lives in Bethlehem. He and his family have farmed the land in this area for as long as anyone can remember. But all of that seems set to change. His house is now closed off on three sides by the separation barrier that the Israeli government has built in order, it says, to protect its citizens from terrorism. Some 60 acres of Suleiman's land now lie on the other side of the barrier where he can no longer get to them and no longer farm them. As he looks out of his windows he can see across two fences (one of them electrified) and the wide security road to his land and the Israeli settlement of Har Homa perched on the hill opposite.

With his land lost to Har Homa, it seemed as though life could not get worse for Suleiman. But the Israeli army are now saying that his house is too close to the road that they have built right next door. And rather than move the road they will force Suleiman to leave his home too. Yet he has no intention of leaving. In the narrow strip of land just outside his house the YMCA have planted olive trees, paid for by supporters world wide, through the YMCA olive tree campaign. Planting the trees is a small act of resistance, to try and halt the appropriation of land for Israeli settlements. But it is also an act of hope that someday, when the trees mature, Suleiman may again be able to harvest olives once again.

There is a traditional Palestinian proverb that says: 'If you have a bottle of olive oil, you won't starve'. Planting now may seem desperate, but while Suleiman's olive trees survive, so too does his hope.

From the Christain Aid website

**MOTHERS' UNION – UPTON-CUM-CHALVEY SLOUGH BRANCH  
PROGRAMME FOR 2005**

*All are open meetings*

**Morning meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at St Laurence's.**

Doors open 10.30am, Service at 10.40am, Talk at 11pm, Coffee 12noon approx., followed by a light lunch.

**Afternoon meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at St Peter's 3pm.**

Meeting followed by tea.

**Evening meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month at St Laurence's,**

7.30pm, followed by supper, beginning on 6<sup>th</sup> January.

**Prayer Group: Last Wednesday of the month at 8pm;** Winter months at St Laurence's, Summer months at St Mary's.

Wed 16 Feb      Tradecraft & Fair Trade

Tue 1 Mar      Neil Mullins: Feed the Children

Wed 16 Mar      Bert Leonard: Talk of Lent

Wed 20 Apr      Holy Communion & AGM

Tue 3 May      Joan Jenks: Medical Bygones

Wed 18 May      Fishermen's Mission

**NEXT MONTH'S GRIDIRON**

Please let me have any articles for the March issue by **Sunday February 13<sup>th</sup>** at the latest!

Dave



## SERVICES AT ST LAURENCE'S

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday:	8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) 11.00am Family Service
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday:	11.00am Sung Communion
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday:	9.45am Children's Service 11.00am Sung Communion
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday:	11.00am Sung Communion
Thursdays:	10.00am Holy Communion



### PARISH EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

Wed 9 8.00pm Ash Wednesday Service (SM)

Sat 26 12 noon Malcolm Stowell's 800<sup>th</sup> concert at St Mary's

### Wanted: Stamps

Mons is collecting used postage stamps which can be sold to raise money for good causes. If you can collect some, Barbara or I would be pleased to receive them on Mons' behalf.

Dave Kill

## **Church Air is 'Threat to Health'**

Air inside churches may be a bigger health risk than that beside major roads, research suggests.

Church air was found to be considerably higher in carcinogenic polycyclic hydrocarbons than air beside roads travelled by 45,000 vehicles daily. It also had levels of tiny solid pollutants (PM10s) up to 20 times the European limits.

The study, by Maastricht University, The Netherlands, is published in the European Respiratory Journal.

The researchers say that December, with churches lighting up candles for Christmas, could be an especially dangerous month for the lungs. It is now believed that respiratory health is increasingly at risk from so-called "indoor pollution" in the home, workplace and other enclosed spaces. The Dutch team set out to examine the air quality in churches, as they are often poorly ventilated, with candles burning all day, and frequent use of incense. Both could, in principle, be expected to have some harmful effects.

### **Simulated service**

The researchers analysed the particulate matter concentration found in the air of a small chapel and a large basilica in Maastricht following lengthy use of candles or a simulated service in which incense was burned.

Fine particulate matter is a major ingredient in air pollution. Consisting of solid particles with a diameter of 10 microns or less, it contains different types of toxic chemicals, including soot, metals and various carcinogenic molecules. The particles can penetrate very deep into the lungs and trigger various lung and heart conditions.

The researchers found that, after nine hours of candle-burning, the church air had PM10 levels of 600 to 1000 micrograms per cubic metre - more than four times higher than before the start of the first morning mass.

This represents 12 to 20 times the European allowed average concentration over 24 hours. The study also found very high concentrations of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, also known to be carcinogenic.

### **New free radicals**

It also uncovered various types of free radicals, including some previously undocumented ones.

Free radicals are highly reactive molecules that damage lung tissue and can trigger or exacerbate inflammatory reactions, including those connected with major respiratory conditions such as asthma and chronic bronchitis.

The researchers say priests and people working for long periods in churches are at greater risk than ordinary worshippers. However, worshippers devout enough to spend several hours each day in church could also be affected. Researcher Dr Theo de Kok said: "While we still have to assess more precisely what level of risk these people are running and how toxic the newly identified free radicals are, this discovery is very worrying."

A spokesman for the Church of England said that during candle and incense-burning ceremonies the doors of churches were often open, with people coming in and out. He said many factors would govern pollution levels, such as the height of the church, and whether the high level windows were open. He also took issue with the idea that churches were poorly ventilated - pointing out that many are notorious for being draughty. However, he added: "This study certainly bears further investigation, and we will keep a watching brief."

Dr Richard Russell of the British Thoracic Society, said: "Particle pollution, whether it be in an outdoor or indoor environment, can be a danger to lung health and cause respiratory diseases such as emphysema and bronchitis.

"More research needs to be done in this area but we would also recommend that churches look at ways to reduce indoor air pollution such as improving ventilation."

From the BBC website

### **Worth thinking about...**

The shortest distance between a problem and a solution is the distance between your knees and the floor.

The one who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything.

## **PRAISING GOD FOR LIFE!**

Whoever came up with this must have had some divine guidance!

- **A** lthough things are not perfect
- **B** ecause of trial or pain
- **C** ontinue in thanksgiving
- **D** o not begin to blame
- **E** ven when the times are hard
- **F** ierce winds are bound to blow
- **G** od is forever able
- **H** old on to what you know
- **I** magine life without His love
- **J** oy would cease to be
- **K** eep thanking Him for all the things
- **L** ove impacts to thee
- **M** ove out of “Camp Complaining”
- **N** o weapon that is known
- **O** n earth can yield the power
- **P** raise can do alone
- **Q** uit looking at the future
- **R** edeem the time at hand
- **S** tart every day with worship
- **T** o “thank” is a command
- **U** ntil we see Him coming
- **V** ictorious in the sky
- **W** e’ll run the race with gratitude
- **X** alting God most high
- **Y** es, there’ll be good times yes some will be bad but...
- **Z** ion waits in glory... where none are ever sad!

Submitted by Andrea Dean

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Revd Henriët Oostra	(Associate Minister)	01753 531267
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District Churchwarden:	David Kill	01628 776856
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St Laurence's Church is part of the Anglican parish of upton-cum-Chalvey, which also includes St Mary's and St Peter's.

Web-site: [saint-laurence.org](http://saint-laurence.org)