

**May 2005**

# Gridiron

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

*In The  
Spirit Of  
Giving...*

**Christian Aid Week: 15-21 May**

***From the Editor:***

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this, the District and Parish Church meetings will be over for another year and your new District Church Council will have been confirmed in office. Please pray for all the Church Officers and the Clergy, as we set out on a year that promises to be at least as challenging as the last one.

As we all know, another somewhat higher profile election took place recently in Rome, resulting in the election of Pope Benedict XVI, who by all accounts is a touch on the conservative side and not afraid to say so. This, to my mind, is no bad thing. The Church has to maintain certain beliefs and values and should state them clearly. A fundamental belief is that in the absence of God life has no meaning, purpose or hope. One of our duties as Christians is to help others to find God.

Jesus said many hard things, but was also compassionate and understanding of human failure. He left his Holy Spirit to guild his church in the future and our difficulty is to discern what proposed changes in church teaching are Spirit-led, rather than a result of what Pope Benedict terms relativism. We should pray for him as he gets to grips with his new role and also for the leaders of our own Anglican Communion and other Protestant creeds as they also debate the response of the church to the modern world.

Yours in Christ,

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



## EVENTS IN MAY

- |                     |            |   |
|---------------------|------------|---|
| Tue 3 May           | 7.30pm     | Archdeacon's Visitation, at St Mary's       |
| Sat 7 May           | 10.15am    | David & Sylvia Jewell's USPG Coffee Morning |
| Sat 7 May           | 11am – 3pm | St Peter's Book Sale                        |
| Sun 15 – Sat 21 May |            | Christian Aid Week                          |
| Wed 25 May          | 8.00pm     | Parish Prayer Group, SM                     |

### **An Irish Friendship Wish**

May there always be work for your hands to do.  
May your purse always hold a coin or two.  
May the sun always shine on your windowpane.  
May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain.  
May the hand of a friend be always near you.  
May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.

Submitted by Beryl Bond

## **Christian Aid Week: 15-21 May 2005**

‘There has been a real change because now we have more of a future. We were not expecting this kind of help, but we did need it. It has brought light back into our lives. It has turned our lives around and I am now able to share my fortune with others. My eldest children go to school and I thank God for this. Everything we have is a grace from God.’

(Antonio Fundice Tomo, whose family has received support from Christian Aid’s partner the Christian Council of Mozambique)

### **Making poverty history: the trade justice campaign**

The UK government is committed to making 2005 a year when poverty is on the international agenda. To tackle poverty it must address the injustices in world trade. Christian Aid Week this year asks churches to call for trade justice.

‘There are many women working at the sugar plantation. Before the sugar factory opened, we were very poor... Now things are better, we can all earn money and buy food from the markets.’

Louisa Mahahele

Louisa Elias Mahahele works on a sugar plantation in Mozambique, earning enough to feed her family. Her job is one of thousands that have been created since the Mozambique government helped its sugar industry by attracting investment to it. It set the price for imported sugar, most of which comes from rich countries where it is subsidised. This set price means that the locally produced sugar is able to compete with imports.

But Mozambique is an exception. Other poor countries are prevented from helping vulnerable industries and farmers. Rich countries and international institutions that lend poor countries money force governments to accept free-trade policies.

For example, in Ghana, thousands of farmers have been forced to give up farming because they are no longer able to make a living selling their pro-

duce. Kofi Eliasa used to be a tomato farmer. He now works 12 hours a day in a quarry, breaking rocks to make gravel. He struggles to earn enough to feed his family and send his children to school.

In exchange for loans, Ghana was forced to open up its markets to international trade and take away the government help given to farmers such as Kofi. This is the same for other poor countries across the world. The result is that millions of people now face an uncertain future as they lose the means to make a living.

Free trade means that governments may not interfere in the market place, and all traders – from rich and poor countries alike – must face each other in open competition. This gives the poorest no chance. To begin to make a decent living for their families they need some help from their government to support their industries – that is they need trade justice, not free trade.

This is why Christian Aid is campaigning for trade justice, not free trade. The campaign is informed by the biblical vision of a just world where the needs of the poorest people are met. To compete in today's global marketplace poor farmers and traders need special help from their governments until they are strong enough to manage without it.

To find out more go to [www.caweek.org](http://www.caweek.org) or call 08080 006 006.

## **This is how your donation can make a difference this Christian Aid Week**

£5 buys five chickens, helping to restore a family's livelihood in Mozambique.

£6 maintains one girl at the Bridge School in India for a month, giving her a chance of education that otherwise would not be available.

£66 will pay for the internet connection for a computer school for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS in the Democratic Republic of Congo. £11 will buy the network card to access the internet, so students can train in computer programming.

£112 buys a water tank for a Peruvian village. This means that the villagers can get water without having to walk to the nearest stream which could be over 2 km away.

When making your donation don't forget about Gift Aid!

Gift Aid is a government scheme that allows Christian Aid to claim back the tax paid on any donation made by a UK taxpayer. If you are a UK taxpayer then all you need to do is fill in the declaration on the red CAW envelope and your gift is worth 28 per cent more to Christian Aid. If everyone does this it will raise at least an extra £1 million for the world's poorest communities.

To find out more or make a donation, visit [www.caweek.org](http://www.caweek.org) or call 08080 006 006.

## **Prayers for Christian Aid Week**

For our incapacity to feel the sufferings of others,  
And our tendency to live comfortably with injustice,  
God, forgive us.

For the self-righteousness which denies guilt,  
And the self-interest which strangles compassion,  
God, forgive us.

For those who live their lives in careless unconcern  
Who cry 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace,  
We ask your mercy.

For our failings in community, our lack of understanding,  
We ask your mercy.

For our lack of forgiveness, openness, sensitivity,  
God, forgive us.

For the times we were too eager to be better than others,  
When we are too rushed to care,  
When we are too tired to bother,  
When we don't really listen,  
When we are too quick to act from motives other than love,  
God, forgive us.

Holy Spirit of God,  
light a flame within me,  
burning for justice,  
glowing with kindness,  
shining with hope  
for the end of poverty  
and the peace of all people  
in this ever-turning world. Amen.

**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

## **Thoughts Looking Back on Easter**

Some loosely connected observations and thoughts:

It was late in the evening after dark on the Wednesday of Holy Week. The sky had cleared, and the moon was shining brightly. I happened to look up as momentarily the moon appeared to be at the intersection of two aircraft vapour trails across the sky. Both vapour trails were lit up by the moon, forming across with the same shape as our Palm Sunday crosses. Of course, the symbolism was unwitting, but had a spine-tingling effect when I saw it.

It was at an earlier special occasion in the supermarket where I work part time to supplement my income, as one of the “front-end staff”. As a group, we probably represented at least five different faiths, and had been working extra hours, coping with hundreds of customers. We needed refreshment, and one of us, a Moslem I think, bought a pack of hot-cross buns (!), which he cut in small pieces, so that we all had a share. The re-vitalising effect of this meal shared in friendship was quite surprising.

The Christian communion is not only a meal shared in friendship, but has much more-than-symbolic value. In the Agape on Maundy Thursday, this was brought together with a re-enactment of the forerunner of communion in the Passover meal.

Mike Macleod

## **Feed The Children**

From a small boy's plea for five cents to buy a bread roll in Port Au Prince, Haiti, in 1979, Feed The Children has grown into a worldwide children's and humanitarian relief organisation working in nearly 30 countries. It aims to develop sustainable communities and provide food and other necessities for those in great need.

Feed The Children first formed in the UK in 1989 and has helped countless thousands of needy children and their families both abroad and at home. It relies on gifts from caring companies, individuals and organisations for the goods and financial assistance to support its various humanitarian and relief projects.

At home, Feed The Children supports local communities with breakfast clubs in areas of deprivation and social exclusion, where there are schools with 50% or more of pupils qualifying for free meals. The benefits of a nutritious breakfast include increased levels of attention and concentration, which improve learning ability and behaviour, benefiting both the pupils and their community.

Abroad, Feed The Children responds to disaster, crisis and emergency situations as they arise, donating food, clothes, water purification equipment, medical supplies and other items. They also supply educational materials.

For further information, telephone 0118 932 0095, or visit [www.feedthechildren.org.uk](http://www.feedthechildren.org.uk).

Barbara Hillier

**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.

Tue 3 May	Joan Jenks: Medical Bygones
Wed 18 May	Fishermen's Mission
Mon 23 May	(7.30pm) Deanery Open Meeting, St Andrew's Hall, Stoke Poges.
Wed 15 June	Rosemary Pierce: The Congo
Sat 18 June	(2.30pm) Cream Teas at 16 Dolphin Road
Tue 5 July	Gillian Hopkinson: Making Time for God

**NEXT MONTH'S GRIDIRON**

Please let me have any articles for the June issue by **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May** at the latest!

Dave

