

Parish of Penn Magazine

The Link between
St. Bartholomew's and
St. Anne's Churches and Home
February 2011



50p

Concessions 40p



For more information on St. Bartholomew's Church, Penn visit:

www.stbarts.org.uk



SUNDAY SERVICES IN ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S

8am Holy Communion 10am Parish Communion 6.30pm Evensong
Junior Church meets at 10am in the Oak Room

SUNDAY SERVICES IN ST ANNE'S

9.30am Holy Communion (except for first Sunday in the month)
11.45am "All Age Worship" on the first and third Sunday of the month

The Calendar for February 2011

1st Tuesday	7.45pm	Penn Ladies Group (Oak Room)
2nd Wednesday	11.00am	Visiting Bell-ringing Group
3rd Thursday	7.30pm	G-Factor Youth Group (Church Hall Lounge)
	8.00pm	Alpha Course (Oak Room)
5th Saturday	5.30pm	Evening Eucharist Service
6th Sunday		5th before Lent
10th Thursday	10.30am	Holy Communion (Oak Room)
	8.00pm	Alpha Course (Oak Room)
12th Saturday	5.30pm	Evening Eucharist Service
13th Sunday		4th before Lent
	10.00am	Parade Service
14th Monday	7.15pm	Baptism Preparation Group (Lady Chapel)
15th Tuesday	2.30pm	Mothers' Union (Oak Room)
	8.30pm	Wedding Rehearsal in Church
17th Thursday	7.30pm	G-Factor Youth Group (Church Hall Lounge)
	8.00pm	Alpha Course (Oak Room)
19th Saturday	5.30pm	Evening Eucharist Service
20th Sunday		3rd before Lent
	11.45am	All-age Worship & Holy Baptism in St. Anne's
	3.30pm	Holy Baptism
21st Monday	7.30pm	Prayers for Healing Group (Lady Chapel)
26th Saturday	1.30pm	Wedding: Timothy Werrett – Susan Rawlins
	5.30pm	Evening Eucharist Service
	7.30pm	Concert in Church
27th Sunday		2nd before Lent
	8.00pm	Informal Service (Oak Room)

Front cover photograph was kindly donated by Sheila Oliver, a good friend of Dennis and Judi Harper. The photograph was taken from Sheila's bedroom window on the Northway estate, taken 7th Dec 2010 when we had days of heavy frost.



From the pen of Ben in Penn



Dear Friends,

I was thinking (rare thing for me!) the other day... God has given us many things but one of His greatest gifts of all is 'each other'.

We are all different. Thank God He has not made us all the same. Life would be boring and monochrome if we were.

I am so glad that when I am worried, upset or sad there are people I can talk to. On the flipside, when I am feeling fine there might be someone who might need my help.

There are many things I cannot do. I am so glad there are other people who can. For example, my language skills are terrible. It is a relief to know there are people who can speak French, Spanish to help me out on holiday!

People say 'you don't have to go to church to be a christian'. I suppose they are theoretically right but.... The Christian faith has never been a solo activity. It has always been something done in community (in other words... the church!)

If we are struggling with life or faith we can help each other. Even when things might be well with you there may well be someone there who needs you.

Worshipping in a group can also be uplifting and encouraging. Whilst we need to pray on our own it is not a substitute for being with others. At St. Bart's we have a good variety of services (and service times) to suit different people.

But what of awkward people? What of those who make churchgoing difficult? Well, even they can help. I often find that when I find someone difficult it says more about me than it does about them. Tricky people can be those who teach us about ourselves... those who expose attitudes that I need God to deal with in me. Coming into contact with people I find hard is frequently a growth point in my faith. It takes patience and humility but no one ever said being a Christian was easy. I seem to remember it took Jesus to the cross...!

God bless you all.

Your friend and Vicar

Disclaimer

The views, facts and opinions which appear in the magazine from time to time are the views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Clergy, the Editor or the PCC, its committee and groups etc. E&OE: Errors and Omissions Excepted.

However, your feedback is welcome which we may publish in future editions of St. Bartholomew's Church Magazine.



what's on!

February 2011

Penn Ladies Group Our first meeting of 2011 will be on Tuesday 1st February when Ann Paterson will be talking about Modern Embroidery.

We meet at 7.45pm in the Oak Room.

Women's World Day of Prayer Is on Friday 4th March. The service has been prepared by Christian Women of Chile on the theme 'How Many Loaves Have You? Our service will be in St. Bartholomew's at 7.30pm when the speaker will be Canon Rev. Georgina Byrne of Worcester Cathedral. Everyone is welcome, men, women, young or old.

Penn Flower Club Penn Flower Club meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in the Victory Hall, Lower Penn at 7.30 p.m. The next meeting is on 8th February 2011 and will be the Annual General Meeting. Subscriptions for the coming year may be paid after this meeting. New members and visitors are welcome. Further information is available from 338351.

G-Factor Youth Club

G-Factor is a youth club for 11 - 14 year olds. We meet every other Thursday evening at 7.30pm until 9pm. At present we meet in the Church Hall lounge and our leaders are Mick and Val. Activities include games, quizzes learning about God and making friends. The next dates are: 3rd Feb, 17th Feb, **10th Mar, 24th Mar**, 7th April.

The Bash

A monthly worship event for parents and children together. It takes place in church after school until 4.30pm. We are on the lookout for people who can make refreshments, man a craft table, help with music or the computer equipment. If you would like to be part of the team contact Val (Youth and Children's Worker) 07792658752

St Bart's Office Opening Times

Monday	9am	-	12pm
Tuesday	9am	-	12pm & 6pm - 7pm
Wednesday	1:15pm	-	3:15pm
Thursday	1:15pm	-	3:15pm
Friday	Closed		

St Bart's Magazine Advertising Rates

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Whole Page	12 months	£500

Contact Eunice Craig on 01902 330625



February 2011



The Penn Townswomen's Guild meet in the URC Hall, Penn Road at 7.15pm on Wednesdays, the Guild's activity for February are:

Wed 9th February - Reiki Healing and Demonstration - Mr. Rob Fellows

Wed 16th February - A Knit and Natter evening

Wed 23rd February - Ludlow - Mr. David Vodden

Any further information can be obtained from Mrs. Ursula McInnes telephone number 339057.

Penn Friendship Group meet on Thursdays in the URC Hall, Penn Road between 2.30pm and 4pm, our activities for February 2011 are:

February 3rd Charles Ashbrook - "Holiday in the Holy Land"

February 10th Keith Cheetham - "My Colourful Career in Tourism"

February 17th Jean Owen - "My 50 Years Behind the Counter"

February 24th Margaret Woodhall - "Songs From Yester-Year"

For the Diary

New Girl Guide Unit

St. Bart's Girl Guide Unit opened in September. We are now up to full capacity and have a waiting list. If you would like to join the waiting list please phone Catherine Pollard on: 01902 652 536 **OR** Louise Selman on: 07779 115 678 or email fifthpennguider@yahoo.co.uk We are also looking for additional Adult helpers so that we can increase numbers in our Unit.

A date for your diary – March 5th

The CWAGMS are coming to Penn!! Who are the CWAGMS? (Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Music Society) Find out more in next month's magazine.

Many Thanks

Muriel and I would like to thank all our friends at Church for the many cards and letters of sympathy on the sad loss of our daughter Angela – we found them a great help in our grief. Thank you once again.

Charles Ashbrook



Rob Bell - Repainting the Christian Faith

Rob Bell - Who is he?

Rob Bell is the Founding Pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church. He graduated from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, and Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. He and his wife Kristen have three children and live in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

He is the author of Velvet Elvis (repainting the Christian faith) and Sex God, and is a coauthor of Jesus Wants to Save Christians. He is also featured in the first series of spiritual short films called NOOMA.

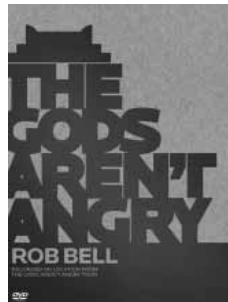
At the age of 40 Rob is considered to be in the top 10 of the most



of short films called NOOMA. Each one of his 10 minute films addresses a combination of philosophical, biblical and creative issues which he

communicates to us in a succinct and simple style using modern day language and music.

Likewise, his books and tour speeches follow a similar style.



influential religious leaders in the USA.

Why Rob Bell?

He has the ability to make complex theological issues simple; that are in tune with today's attitudes, and sociological and political ways of thinking.

In essence Rob, reaches out to us all primarily through a series

In his sermon's and presentations, Rob's delivery is very distinctive and individual - which makes his talks fascinating to listen to. The way he pauses and repeats the more important issues encourages the listener to hold on to his words.

To put it in a nutshell, Rob's 'Values' or "Mission" statement goes like this:



Extract from... Drops Like Stars

Why Jesus died on the cross?



Mars Hill - Their Mission

"Can you imagine what would happen if a group of people with untold resources, passion and energy started asking the question, "How do we hear the cry of the oppressed?" What if they were actually willing to wade into the cultural, economic, racial, global and personal issues involved without fear, with the confidence that no matter how painful, messy and volatile it got, Jesus would guide them the whole way? You'd have some church on your hands.

We want to steward our human, spiritual, technical and financial resources into some timebound, measurable goals. By working toward these goals, we hope to become more like Jesus through caring about the things that he cares about."

Since coming into the Christian faith, I've always had difficulty getting my head round the reason why Jesus died on the cross. Then I stumbled across Rob Bell's DVD: Drops Like Stars and about half way through, Rob gives us this explanation which resonates perfectly. This is a transcript from the DVD:

Rob Bell addresses the audience:

Is anyone here wearing a cross?

I need a big cross.

Do you have a cross, can I borrow it?

If I can borrow yours for a minute.

What's fascinating here, is if I asked, does anyone wear the new guillotine earrings or an electric chair tattoo? The answer would be NOPE! But if I went around the room a large proportion of you would be wearing a cross.

The cross was a first century execution device invented by the Romans to make a statement of



what happens if you defy the Roman Empire.

The Roman Empire was a massive global super power which, 2000 years ago, dominated a huge part of the world extending from England to India.



The Roman Empire would charge in to a province and with the tip of a sword, would say to the people, confess, Caesar is Lord. If you said OK then your region would become a part of the Roman Empire and you would pay taxes to help build a bigger army to help conquer more lands. The Roman Emperor Caesar believed that he was the son of god sent to earth to bring about universal peace and prosperity. They would say "Confess, Caesar is Lord". If you said "NO", they would hang you on a cross as a way of saying this is what happens when you defy the Roman Empire. This was their version of peace which of course was dependant on which end of the sword you were on.

Never-the-less, the significance of

8

the cross was they had to keep

the victim in as much agony as possible, but keep them alive for as long as possible in order to show people this is what happens to you when you defy the Roman Empire. If the person was in great anguish and pain but died straightaway, it wouldn't have had the same effect. Likewise, if over a long period of time, the person didn't suffer much pain, this wouldn't have had a great effect either. So the issue was: how much pain and anguish the Romans could put them through, over the longest possible length of time, to let everybody know who was in charge.

Roughly 2000 years ago a movement exploded within the Roman Empire, within a group of people who insisted that in this Jesus of Nazareth, who was executed on a Roman execution stake, the cross, they insisted that in some profound way that he had been the divine in flesh and blood. In one of their earliest texts, it had been written that they believed the devine had moved into their neighbourhood and taken on flesh and blood.

Argue with me now!

So for them, this Jesus who was executed on a cross brought about a whole new way of viewing the world.

The way of the Empire was a way of peace through coercive violence.

For them this Jesus introduced



the world to a whole new kind of peace, that didn't come through coercive violence, but came through sacrificial love.

Then the resurrection of this Jesus a few days later was essentially vindication that this was the way of God.

For them, at the heart of it all, was the insistence that God is not distant and detached and somewhere else, but that God was present right in the midst of the worst kind of suffering a human could endure.

For them, God was not somewhere else, for them, God was present in the bloody, naked Jesus on the cross.

They called this divine in flesh and bloodness of Jesus, they called this 'the incarnation' the 'in the fleshness of God'.

This of course was an astounding claim that God was found here.

In the last novel, in the Starbridge Series, written by the great British author, Susan Howatch, she tells the story of a self righteous, confident Bishop, Charles Ashworth who finds his boxes smashed and insulators destroyed when his beloved wife, Lyle, dies.

He ends up in a conversation with an old acquaintance who can't get over how vulnerable and honest the bishop is being with him.

"God, isn't life bloody sometimes!"

"Yes."

"Are you just saying that to be nice to me?"

"No,"

"Thank God. Lord this is a damned odd conversation to be having with a bishop! Excuse me while I just pinch myself to make sure I'm not dreaming."

"It's no dream. Good to meet someone else who's gone through hell lately."

"Isn't it wonderful? Makes all the difference to know there's someone else screaming alongside you - and that's the point of the incarnation. I can see that so clearly now. God came into the world and screamed alongside us.

Repeats: "God came into the world and screamed alongside us."

Interesting idea that."

Perhaps that's why people across the religious spectrum, for thousands of years, continue to identify with the cross. It speaks to our longing to know that we're not alone, that there's someone else "screaming alongside us."

Is the cross God's way of saying:

"I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL".

**I KNOW
HOW YOU
FEEL**



From Ron Price:

Your local neighbourhood policing team



**Police Sargeant
Ron Price**
Penn and Merryhill
Wolverhampton
Local Policing Unit

Hello,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am Sergeant Ron Price and lead your local neighbourhood policing team.

The team is based at Pennwood Court flats in Leasowes drive, Merryhill and cover the following areas - Merryhill, Warstones, Penn, Springhill, together with a small part of Bradmore, Finchfield and Pennfields.

I have been in my current role as neighbourhood Sergeant for 2 years now and have Policed Wolverhampton for the past 16. I was very pleased to be given responsibility for the Penn area. I attended Colton Hills School as a boy, and extended my links locally by taking up residence in the Penn and Merryhill area and playing

football for a nearby pub. (Battle of Britain).

I have a brother who lives locally and his children attend St Bart's School. So you can see my links to Penn extend over a few years.

The purpose of this article is to share with you not only issues that affect Penn, but to share with you some good news stories also.

Anti-social-behaviour. (ASB)

Penn suffers very little from Anti-Social-Behaviour and I am proud to say regularly features at the bottom of a published table of 21 policing areas across Wolverhampton. We do have isolated incidents but in the main no persistent problems. I have 2 Community support officers that take ownership of ASB reports. They deal with offenders in a very robust manner. They also attend



local schools and deliver talks surrounding an array of topics that include ASB, knife crime and respect issues.

In addition I have 6 Police constables on my team. They also manage ASB together with crime investigations.

Crime.

The main issues of concern for our area surround Burglary and Vehicle crime. Again levels are quite low in comparison to other areas. However, Penn is a lovely area with nice houses and nice cars and does get targeted. To give you some idea of what we experience I have collated a few figures for you.

Burglary - October, November, December saw 4 / 1 and 5 offences committed respectively. Vehicle crime saw 4 / 4 and 6 offences committed respectively.

Burglars like dark houses that give the appearance that no one is in. Please do all you can to change that appearance. Also, please don't leave garden tools outside as burglars use them to break in. Car thieves love to take cars left running to de-ice windows. They also target vehicles with property on show. Offenders don't like to search, they want a quick, easy steal, so please don't tempt them.

I run regular surgeries and meetings during which I give away crime prevention goodies. I also give in depth information surrounding local issues. Please feel free to attend any of these meetings that I have listed below.

I also have an email distribution list that I utilise to inform residents of local crime trends. I also send out scam alerts that I become aware of. If you would like to be included within the list, please email me at the email address below and I will add you.

Meetings.

Police surgeries.

- Tuesday 18th January
- Tuesday 15th February
- Wednesday 16th March
- Tuesday 12th April.

Police surgeries are a drop in facility at Pennwood court police base at Leasowes Drive, Merryhill. Pop in at any time between the hours of 7 and 9pm to discuss any issues or concerns you may have. Alternatively, just pop along to meet me and share a cuppa.

Partners and community together meeting.

- Wednesday 16th February
- Thursday 19th May
- Wednesday 10th August

Partners and community together meetings are held at Springdale School, Warstones Drive. Meetings start at 7pm and usually last for approx one and a half hours.

During this meeting I present detailed reports of all crime committed locally. This is an opportunity for you to voice your concerns and meet members of your local policing team.

continued overleaf...



Partner agencies attend and include
- The police / Anti-social-behaviour
unit / Housing / Neighbourhood
wardens / Members of the Local
neighbourhood partnership / YWCA
/ Highways department and drug
intervention workers to name but a
few.

And finally my email address and
contact telephone details.

**Police Sergeant Ron Price
Penn and Merryhill**

Wolverhampton Local Policing Unit
West Midlands Police

Tel: Switchboard/Internal:

0345 113 5000 (ext 7630 6088)

Email:

r.price@west-midlands.police.uk

**Penn Support
Group for
Compton Hospice**

We are pleased to announce 'An
Evening with the Gentlemen
Songsters Male Voice Choir'. The
concert will be held in Church on
Saturday 26th February at 7.30pm.

Tickets costing £6 (to include a
glass of wine or fruit juice at the
Interval) are obtainable from Jean
Wellsbury (332294) or Gill Skitt
(339478). We look forward to
sharing a very pleasant evening
with you and, as always, depend on
your support.

**CIVIC CENTRE
ART EXHIBITION
2011**

Painting In Penn has been invited
to formally showcase its 4th
Exhibition on the Ground Floor of
the Civic Centre, St Peter's
Square from 10.00am on Monday
7th March until 2.00pm on Friday,
11th March 2011. There will be
over 65 paintings including
landscapes, portraiture, animal
portraits and still life on display.
The media will include
watercolour, acrylic, oils, pastels
and, pen & ink

It is a prestigious event within the
local arts calendar and will attract
interest from many quarters. The
artists richly deserve the support
of both the local and the city-wide
community in the promotion of
such a wonderful event with its
increased exposure of their
artistic skills. The group meets
each Tuesday and Wednesday at
St Bartholomew's Church Hall,
Penn.

Ron Mottram
Art Co-ordinator.



Questions raised after Christmas

The Significance of Gold, Frankincense & Myrrh

Where did Christmas gift giving come from? If we go back to the first Christmas story when God sent Jesus to earth, we recall that Jesus was given three gifts by the three wise men or Magi, which serve as the inspiration for all our Christmas gift giving today.

The Magi presented Jesus with gold, frankincense and myrrh. These gifts were very prophetic for they spoke of our Lord's offices of King, Priest, and Saviour.

GOLD: This carries obvious significance. It's precious and worthy across all cultures and times. It's a gift fit for royalty. It says to the Christ child, You will be a King. The camels from Sheba, Isaiah foretold, would bring gold as a gift to the Lord. It does not tarnish or rust, for that reason it is a sign of immortality. Which is why the Pharaohs of Egypt were buried in gold coffins, with gold masks and gold gloves.

FRANKINCENSE: The name for this resin likely comes from incense of Franks since it was reintroduced to Europe by Frankish Crusaders. Although it is better known as frankincense" to westerners the resin is also known as olibanum, which is derived from the Arabic al-lub ("the milk") a reference to the milky sap tapped from the Boswellia tree. Frankincense has been touted for its medicinal and soothing properties. Herbalists say it is calming,

restorative, gently clarifying, and meditative. Frankincense oil is thought to have stimulating, toning, and warming properties. The ancient world used it for treating depression. We recognize the word incense in its name. Ancient people burned frankincense, believing it to carry their prayers to heaven. Its use as incense illustrates His role as our Priest.

MYRRH: This is perhaps the most mysterious of the Gifts. It is a resin produced by a small, tough, scraggly tree that grows in semi-desert regions of North Africa and the Red Sea. Myrrh is an Arabic word for bitter, and it is considered a wound healer because of its strong antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties. Calling it mo yao, the Chinese used it for centuries to treat wounds, bruises and bleeding and to relieve painful swelling.

The Egyptians made it famous in Biblical times, having acquired myrrh about the fifteenth century B.C. from Africa where cammiphora trees were abundant. It was used in incense, perfumes and holy ointments and also medicinally as recorded in the Ebers Papyrus. But its most notable use to them was that of an embalming material, used in Egyptian mummies. As an embalming ointment it signified that He was born to Die for the world. In fact, Myrrh was one of the burial spices of Jesus (John 19:39).

Information from: Magi Gifts, LLC - Alpharetta, GA and Wikipaedia.com



2nd December 2010

Patrol Base 1 Afghanistan

Dear Sirs, Madams & Children

Firstly thank you very much for the kind gifts you sent through Louise & Jane for the locals here in Afghanistan. I distributed these gifts this morning to the villagers of Masucei & they went down very well.

The village of Masucei is a long thin village of around one hundred families that runs parallel to the Apboshat Wadi, one of the many Wadi's that run in to the Helmand river in the lower



Most people are farmers, one man, 'Janan' is a Taxi driver and there is no school as the Taliban burnt it down two years ago. The children learn how to read and write from the Koran in the Mosque twice a day. The Taliban have not been seen for a few months when we drove them over the Wadi to the east and down to the south west where the fighting is now.

The farmers were given wheat seed and vegetable seed at a cheap rate



Gheresk Valley in the Nane Serage district of Helmand province. The nearest large towns would be Gersasht to the North East and LashGhar to the south west. The village has three Mosques each with its own well. There is a small shop that sells sweets and tobacco and a clinic which is open once a week to distribute medicine.





from the government but the majority will still grow poppy seed for the smugglers as they will get a better price for this at the market. Western demand for these drugs has driven the raw price for such goods to \$2000 per kg, so a farmer will only grow wheat for food and not to sell.

There is talk of a new school being built soon, but we shall see. We are trying to train the Afghan police and army to protect their own land, but they are not able to do this on their own just yet.

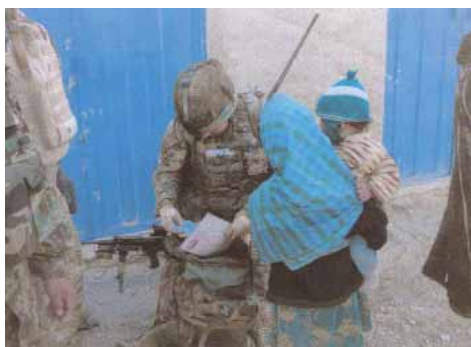
To distribute the gifts we went on a patrol to the village, spoke to the elder of each compound (each family lives in its own high walled compound) & gave the children the gifts. One old man said he would give the socks to his wife as he would stop her nagging him for a week!

A true sign of how things have changed is the the number of children you see playing all over the area. There are bad areas still, and

not far away. When we go to fight the Taliban we have to travel less than 2km. But we (ISAF & the ANA) are winning and the people want us to win.

A soldier who patrolled with me today said how nice it was to show the locals we are here for peace not war. Everyone came back full of joy from this patrol. So thank you.

We are soldiers, we are here to defeat the evil that is the Taliban. But what amazes me is how the clothes



you sent will give us more friends than any number of bullets & bombs.

Because of your generosity the children of Masucei village will stay warm this winter, so thank you.

**I have the honour to be,
Your Obedient Servant
PJD Shergold MERCIAN
Captain**

Advisor 34

3 Company, 1 Irish Guards.



Family Skittles Evening & Ploughman's Supper

Saturday 19 February in the Church Hall

We are organising a Family Skittles Evening with Ploughman's supper on the above date, commencing at 7.30pm.

Please bring you own alcohol.

Soft drinks will be on sale.

Tickets are £5 per person which includes the supper

If you are interested then please

contact Margaret Mottram 01902 343528 for tickets.

Photos from the Victorian Christmas Fayre





FAIRTRADE IS MORE THAN JUST CHOCOLATE

In 2010 the Panorama programme “Chocolate: the Bitter Truth,” reported on the continued problem of child labour in West African cocoa farms. The programme included FairTraid producers, so Traidcraft, wanted to give more information about issues raised in the programme.

Child labour is a serious and urgent issue in West Africa (it is estimated that up to 800,000 children are trafficked each year in the region) and it is inconceivable that FairTrade cocoa producers could escape being affected by these issues.

The FairTtrade system explicitly prohibits child labour and when it is found by FairTrade auditors, actions are taken to tackle the situation. FairTrade is thereby, part of the long term solution to child labour.

A guaranteed minimum price, premium payments for investment in communities, and the democratic organisation of producers, all help to alleviate poverty and address the issues which otherwise result in children being forced into work.

That is why so many FairTrade producers now report that, because their livelihoods are improved, they are able to send their children to school.

It was encouraging to see in the programme how FairTrade producer group Kuapa Kokoo in Ghana, the



supplier of cocoa to Divine chocolate, handled the discovery of child labour by a FairTrade auditor in an effective and appropriate manner.

Running a large co-operative of 45,000 cocoa farmers to such high standards is a credit to the work of the farmers and to Divine chocolate. But we must also recognise that there is much more work for FairTrade to do to help address the serious issue of child labour across the whole region. The practical nature of FairTrade means that at the very least we can support FairTrade producers by encouraging more sales of their products.

The cocoa used in Traidcraft’s own brand chocolate products comes from a variety of FairTrade sources and organisations throughout Europe, Latin America (Bolivia, Peru, and the Dominican Republic). It is in Geobars and Chocolate Spread, from West African and Latin American FairTrade Certified producers: mostly the Dominican Republic, Ghana and also the Ivory Coast.

The programme also raised the challenge of the price of chocolate?

Cocoa prices have slumped in the past 40 years from \$2.50 per lb in 1970 to less than \$0.80 per lb in 2008 despite the recent speculative commodity price hike.

Do we as consumers pay enough for our chocolate?

Actually, the answer lies in the reality of the situation in West Africa and the cocoa farms there, and the grim reality of life where they don't have shoes to wear, they don't have electricity and running water. Whatever we think of their Governments, are we in the west prepared to pay a little more for the luxury of high quality chocolate, so the farmers and their families can enjoy a decent standard of living, and more importantly that they don't have to use child labour?

Sophi Tranchell who began Divine Chocolate puts it this way. "Even during an economic downturn a chocolate bar is a comparatively cheap indulgence and experience has shown that when times are hard consumers enjoy cheap treats. She sees a distinction between organic and fair trade. "Organic is about something being good for me," she explains. "Fair trade is about it being good for somebody else."

FAIRTRADE AND FAIR PLAY

What part do supermarkets play?

The UK Competition Commission is an independent body which has been investigating supermarkets for two years. Traidcraft has been following this investigation closely and in April 2008 the Commission issued its final report.

It found that supermarkets transfer "excessive risk and costs" onto suppliers by:

- Forcing down the prices they pay to suppliers;
- Demanding payments from them for marketing and other costs;
- Insisting that suppliers take the hit when customer demand changes;
- Leaving orders to the last minute (creating uncertainty).

These pressures get passed on to workers in the form of low wages, poor conditions and long hours.

At the moment the four biggest supermarkets are governed by a voluntary Code of Practice, introduced in 2001, but the Competition Commission's findings show that this is simply not working and that instances of abuse have actually increased.

The Commission wants to implement a tougher new code which will be expanded to include the 11 biggest supermarkets. However, it's pointless improving the Code of Practice if there is no effective enforcement, which is why a watchdog is needed.

Traidcraft are therefore asking supporters to show supermarkets and politicians that they care about people who produce our food and we will buy food knowing that it has been produced without exploitation.

Of course chocolate, tea and coffee farmers are not the only producers to be exploited by the industrialised world.

FairTrade Cotton began with 10 small pioneer companies selling clothing using cotton grown by farmers from 9 countries in the developing world. As many as 100 million rural households around the world are involved in cotton production. Most are small-scale cotton farmers especially vulnerable to exploitation and injustice by the international trade rules.

FairTrade certification brings cotton

farmers the assurance of a fair and stable minimum price. Farmers also receive the FairTrade Premium – additional funds to invest in social and economic development projects. The Premium is most often invested in education and healthcare, farm improvements to increase yield and quality, or better processing facilities to increase income. These projects can bring long-lasting positive change to the whole community.

B&Q is also one of the stakeholder partners, working with FairTrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in their pilot programme, exploring how FLO's recently announced FairTrade Timber standard can extend the benefits of FairTrade to small-scale Producers in the forestry sector through FLO/FSC joint-labelling of timber products. The partnership will enable the organisations involved to meet shared strategic objectives and enable forest communities to earn improved returns for their responsibly sourced timber.

The Churches and individual Christians were among the earliest supporters of fair trade in the UK and without the bedrock of support they have provided, the fair trade movement would not have been able to achieve the growth, profile and impact which it has today.

Their championing of fair trade made, and continues to make, a huge difference to the lives of millions of people who are able to build better lives for themselves, their families and their communities as a result.

Traidcraft was started by a group of people who wanted to express, in a practical way, the Christian call to love our neighbour and seek justice for the poor.

"We take our Christian commitment

seriously and Jesus' command to "go the extra mile" lies at the heart of our approach to what we do and how we do it"

(This article has been compiled using information from the web sites of the Fairtrade Foundation and Traidcraft. Further information can be found on their websites).

Please pray that during this uncertain economic climate consumers will continue to support the work of Traidcraft and FairTrade through the purchasing of certified FairTraded products from producers around the world.

And that these organisations can continue to build lasting relationships with producers so that people in developing countries can successfully trade out of poverty.

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Molly Helen Hall	Sedgley
Ellie Louise Joyce Taylor	Links Road
Anthony Harcourt Williams	

THE FOLLOWING WERE MARRIED RECENTLY

Adam Stuart Perry Hill – Kelly Elaine Goddard

THE FOLLOWING HAVE DIED RECENTLY

Irene Darlington	aged 89 years	Linton Road
Stella Morris	aged 52 years	Perton
Desmond Piper	aged 83 years	Springhill Lane
Frank Corfield	aged 87 years	Wombourne
Lawrence Dams	aged 96 years	Merridale Road
Alfred Whiles	aged 79 years	Rookery Lane
Shirley Price	aged 75 years	Butts Road
Sylvia Bellingham	aged 90 years	Chamberlains Lane
Alan Benjamin Berrow	aged 79 years	Coalway Road

We shall remember all these people in our prayers

COLLECTIONS AND COMMUNICANTS – December 2010

Date	5.30pm	8.00am	10.00am	Total	Cash	Envelopes	Total
5th	26	19	134	179	81.43	1053.33	1134.76
12th	23	40	225	288	202.98	974.72	1177.70
19th	12	11	71	94	187.98	547.11	735.09
Christmas	Midnight 174	35	152	361	469.66	---	469.66
26th	--	--	45	45	14.00	800.69	814.69

Excludes Standing Orders and other sources

CHURCH BRASSES:

Please refer to Leah Bevan

MAGAZINE DATES:

March copy by 7th February 2010, distribution by Sunday 27th February

Regular Activities at St Bart's

Mondays	7:00pm	Slimming World Oak Room	Wednesdays	11:00am	Gentle Exercise Oak Room
Tuesdays	9:30am	Painting in Penn Church Hall		6:30pm	Painting in Penn Oak Room
	1:00pm	Painting in Penn Church Hall	Thursdays	2:00pm	Bart's Butterflies Lady Chapel
	6:00pm	General enquiries Parish Office		7:45pm	All Age Ladies Keep Fit Church Hall
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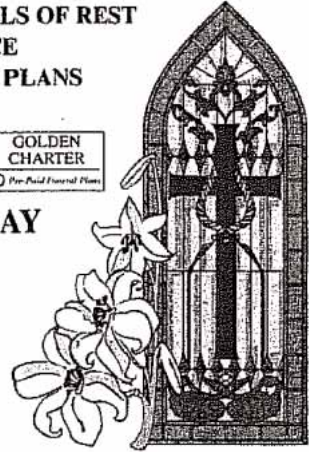
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Child Protection Officer Jim Storer

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Church Warden Margaret Mottram, 39 Peterdale Drive

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