HOMEWOOD HERALD

July - August 2014
Web Edition
THE GASMAN COMETH---

'Twas on a Monday morning the gas man came to call. Actually it was a Wednesday, but I couldn't resist using that line form the classic Flanders and Swann song 'The Gasman Cometh'.

I knew he was coming. They had been planning to replace the gas main, and move the gas meter, for ages. They had written and visited beforehand, so it was no surprise. But I hadn't showered when they called. I had miss-read their letter, and was expecting them at 9:00 am! They were kind enough to give me some extra time. It was going to be a simple job. After all they had done it before, and would do it again. It should all be over by 3:00 pm, so I went out with a calm confidence that all would be well on my return.

I came back mid-afternoon with no gas men in sight. Worrying I thought. By late afternoon I was more than a little concerned. A quick call resulted in a response that something was amiss and they would get back to me. They didn't, so I rang again. I was somewhat keener on talking, rather loudly, than listening, but no further news!

Just after 7:00 pm a gasman knocked on the door. He didn't know anything either, but he did come bearing gifts! An electric hot plate and a fan heater. This looked bad. Very nice I said, then enquired about the possibility of an electric shower? It wasn't forthcoming.

On the Thursday morning there was no further news, but there were gasmen all up and down the road. There was a lot of coming and going but very little information other than the wish to move my meter outside, with the promise of connecting it later. I went out for the day and returned mid-afternoon to a phone call from Transco, politely asking if I had been re-connected. I wasn't quite so polite and suggested that they ought to be telling me what was going on!

With no gas, and only a couple of gasmen left in the street, I went out to get an update on the situation. A neighbour spotted me and stopped to get an update. I told her what I knew, which wasn't much, but this allowed the gasmen to escape. Now no gas or gasmen! Back to the phone! After a bit of a rant I stopped to listen. The gas main had been replaced and a fitter was on the way to reconnect my meter. An early visit would be helpful, as I was due to go out that evening. That would be no problem. And it wasn't. With the gas connected, and hot water on tap - so to speak, I even managed to get the washing up done before I went out. Thanks were offered on the phone, and to the fitter.

The whole episode was almost, but not quite, a complete disaster! Communication was pretty poor on all sides. I hadn't paid enough attention to the original letters. The gasmen didn't communicate at all when things went wrong. I was much more interested in getting annoyed with the company than listening to them. Communication, at its best, is a two way thing. It shouldn't be about talking and saying nothing. It shouldn't be one-sided. It shouldn't be just a rant, although it is perfectly acceptable to complain.

There has to be plenty of time for listening.

It is exactly the same with our communication with God – open and honest, with plenty of time for listening. Our concerns, complaints, and thanks offered in a timely way. Of course, practice makes perfect. So best if we get right to it.

Wishing you every blessing,
Paul Dawson.

NEWS OF MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

We think of, and pray for, those:

Suffering or recovering from illness:
Hazel Hogg, continuing to make progress
Rory Naish, able to go on a family holiday recently
Nancy Penny, who badly damaged her shoulder in a fall

Those recently bereaved:
Sue Gray and family, on the recent death of her father
The family and friends of Gladys Jane, whose funeral service was held at Homewood Rd on 3 June.
Dick Nunn and family, on the death of his brother

Celebrating
Alex and Charlotte Carter on the birth in San Francisco of their daughter, Eve Abigail - a granddaughter for David and Helen Mooney
Sarah and Paul Harris on the birth of their son, Ethan James - a grandson for Chris & Sian Hackett and a great-grandson for Alun & Olga Hopkins
Ben Griffiths, son of Helen and the late Keith, and Sophy Ridge, married in Sorrento on 30th May

Moved Away
Carolyn Christie and Abi Harper
The message that we have been receiving recently, from General Assembly, Thames North Synod and the St Albans Area Committee, is that the days of one minister one Church are behind us. The way forward has to be Team Ministry. And, realistically, it is the only option.

Teams will consist of Ministers, both stipendiary and non-stipendiary, and Local Church Leaders (LCLs). Although there is no clear definition of what a LCL is yet.

The St Albans area, consisting of 30 Churches, will be divided up into 3 groups. Group 2, of which Homewood Road would be a part, will consist of 14 Churches, and will therefore be the largest group. It will have the services of three ministers, Jane Weedon, Leonora Jagessar and Sue Chapman.

The 14 Churches are:
- Brickett Wood
- Chiswell Green
- Dunstable, Edward Street
- Dunstable, St. Katherine’s
- Harpenden
- Luton, Bury Park
- Luton, St. Ninian’s
- Luton, Wigmore
- St. Albans, Homewood Road
- St. Albans, Trinity
- Welwyn Garden City Free Church
- Welwyn Garden City, Panshanger
- Welwyn Garden City, Woodhall Lane
- Wheathampstead

Exactly how things will work, and what effect it will have on deployment, has yet to be determined. But we shall need to come together to exchange ideas, get to know each other better, and work out how things will proceed.

To that end we have invited the 14 Churches of Group 2, of the St Albans Area Churches, to join us in a united act of worship on **Sunday, 22nd June**. Each Church will bring along a display of their Church life, there will be a bring and share/faith lunch, the opportunity to mingle and chat, followed by guided conversations on the future.

This is one step in the process of discerning God’s will for us, but it is clearly an important step. Do try to take an active part in the day; more details to follow.

Paul
You can’t miss the posters and banners around advertising Sandridge 900 at the moment. Over the next few months we will be celebrating Sandridge village and its surrounding community and in particular 900 years since the dedication of St Leonards Church.

As part of these celebrations, Churches Together in Marshalswick will be holding their annual Songs of Praise Service in St Leonards Churchyard on Sunday 6th July. This year Pam Rhodes has agreed to compere the service for us and will be interviewing a representative from each of the six Churches. They will in turn choose a popular hymn for the congregation to sing. Sarah has kindly agreed to be interviewed by Pam and will be talking about our Children’s Ministry at Homewood Road.

The Songs of Praise will take place in St Leonards Churchyard starting at 5pm and is preceded by a picnic which starts at 4pm. There will be plenty of parking in the nearby Heartwood Forest car park.

It promises to be a really wonderful event and we are hoping for a really good turn out this year – possibly, around 200 people – so please put the date in your diary and join us.
You will need to bring a chair and a picnic – (and your singing voice!)

Helen Griffiths
After starting out in a small way sending out transparencies, demand grew and the charity expanded into distributing books and teaching-aids. Since then TALC has continued to grow and has distributed millions of books, slides and accessories relating to health and community issues to thousands of health workers throughout the developing world.

TALC currently supplies over 10,000 health workers (doctors, nurses, midwives, lab technicians, etc.) with health materials - including low cost health text books, videos, CDs, weight charts, etc. TALC operates as a trading company and development charity combined.

In July we support two charities, Tools for Self Reliance and Teaching Aids at Low Cost (TALC), both concerned with helping the developing world.

Tools for Self Reliance aims to contribute to poverty reduction in Africa by working with its partner organisations and supporters in the UK to empower people to build viable and sustainable livelihoods through the delivery of technical, business and life skills training and through the provision of tools for their trades.

It works closely with local partner organisations in Africa to deliver effective and targeted support to the rural poor of the region. Moreover, its broad-based volunteer base in the United Kingdom helps to raise awareness of issues such as rural poverty in Africa, and the importance of sustainable livelihoods and income diversification. Tools for Self Reliance volunteers also assist with the charity’s tool collection and refurbishing programme.

The charity recognises the fact that tools and training are only a small part of the answer to the problems facing the poor. Consequently, it relies on local partner organisations to take a wider view of the needs of rural craftworkers. In collaboration with these partners, it strives to provide appropriate support and conditions, such as:

- ensuring availability of affordable credit
- the presence of a real and sustainable supply of spare parts and raw materials
- networking opportunities so that ideas and knowledge can be shared
- ongoing demand for products
- access to further training opportunities

This integrated approach to development helps to ensure a culture of self-reliance, not dependency.

TALC - Teaching Aids at Low Cost - was founded in 1965 by Professor David Morley when he was lecturer at the Institute of Child Health, in response to many requests from overseas students for teaching equipment to use in their own countries. It is a locally based international charity.

TALC believes good health provision should be available to all – especially those in the poorest communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In August, we support the local branch of MIND

Mind in Mid Herts is a local mental health voluntary association and charity affiliated to national Mind.

Mind in Mid Herts came into existence through the amalgamation of Mind in Welwyn Garden City/Hatfield, and Mind in St Albans on 1st March 2007, with a remit to provide services across the Mid Hertfordshire area. It has strong governance with Trustees providing broad expertise and service user participation. Mind in Mid Herts draws on an active volunteer base and a professional staff team, led by an experienced and well qualified Chief Executive. Services receive very positive feedback from service users.

Service Provision

Mind in Mid Herts aim to provide services that:

- All persons who live in the locality can easily access.
- Promote Social inclusion
- Provide facilities for early intervention
- Work cooperatively with partners, such as Herts Mind Network, Social Services and the NHS
- Provide effective support for groups and individuals
- Support carers
- Are user led

Please support these very worthwhile charities if you are able. The first Sunday of the month is Retiring Collection day, so do come equipped - our donations are much appreciated by the charities concerned.
THURSDAY STUDY GROUP

The Thursday afternoon Study Group resumes on 5 June, running through for 6 weeks until 10 July. We will be looking at the Parables.

As usual we will meet in the back hall at church, starting with tea or coffee at 2.00pm, and will finish around 3.30pm. Come as and when you can - don’t worry that you may be missing some weeks; that is not unusual, and each session is self standing.

Paul

FEED PROJECT

Please continue to support this valuable and much needed project by putting items in the collection box in the foyer, There’s a list on display too, to provide inspiration as to what to donate. But it’s easy, really - just buy one for yourself - and an extra one for FEED! We are also helping with the bi-monthly collections outside Marshalswick, organised by Churches Together in Marshalswick. They will be advertised in the church notices. They run from 10.30 to 12.30, and there will be a list at the back of the church to sign up for 30 minute slots.

Thank you all for your past, and future, support.

HAND CHIMES

The church’s Hand Chimes Group, which gives much pleasure to participants and audiences alike, is in need of some new members. The Group meets at the church at 8.30am on Saturday mornings - giving you the rest of the day free!

The Group entertains from time to time at various social clubs and church events - mostly during the day.

You don’t need to read music to play hand chimes - so why not give it a go?

Contact Ann Williams (854128).

COFFEE CLUB CAKE STALL

The next cake stall, in aid of The Stroke Association, will be in the hall after the Festival Service on Sunday 29 June. Please bring cakes along - as well as your money to buy some!

And finally -------

CHARITY KNITTERS

We are coming to the end of a major project, knitting for Haven in Romania. All the items were gathered together on Wednesday evening 4 th June, bagged up and taken to Marjorie and Jim Parkinson, who will then take them to Essex where they will be passed on to the charity.

Our next project is knitting hats and gloves for Operation Christmas Child as well as making knitted items to sell on our Winter Fayre stall. Half of the proceeds from our stall go to the church and half is used to buy more yarn to make more items. We had enough in our funds to be able to purchase some underwear for the children at Haven in Romania – we didn’t think they would appreciate knitted underwear although I suspect some of you may well remember such items.

We do still need volunteers to sew knitted squares into blankets, please contact me if you are able to help with this.

Gill Fraser

LONDON HISTORICAL WALK

21 st JUNE 2014

This year’s guided London historical walk organized by Jonathan Kiek will take the following route:

Temple, St Clement Danes, Lincoln’s Inn Fields and Dr Johnson’s House (£3.50 entrance fee pay on the day).

Details

Meet - St Albans City station at 9.30 am
Lunch – take a picnic
Return – 4.00 pm approximately

If you are interested in joining the group, please either sign the list at back of the Church or let Linda Lovett know (841524)
The Friends of St Saviours
Day Trip to Rochester by Coach

Saturday 26th July 2014

Leaving St Saviours at 9.00 am
Arrive Rochester approx. 10.15 am
Leaving Rochester at 4.00 pm
Arrive St Saviours approx. 5.15 pm

Air conditioning and toilet on board the coach

£20.00 per person

There is so much to see and do in Rochester.

“Historic Rochester has maintained much of its Victorian charm – with its wide pavements, ornate lamp posts and buildings of great architectural and historic interest. Explore the stunning Rochester Cathedral or enjoy the breathtaking views from the top of one of the tallest keeps in the country at the magnificent Rochester Castle.

The story of Rochester and the development of Medway is told wonderfully at the Guildhall Museum. Visitors can explore the city on foot, following in the footsteps of Dickens and seeing the buildings he wrote about in his works. Dickens used many of Rochester’s heritage buildings in his work, including Six Poor Travellers House (97 High Street) and Restoration House (17-19 Crow Lane). One of Dickens’ most treasured possessions, his Swiss Chalet, can be seen in the gardens of Eastgate House (High Street).

Rochester boasts a wide choice of independent speciality shops where you can find that unusual gift or souvenir to take home. There are ample places to eat and drink on the high street, from quaint old world to modern bistros and cafes. The arts and crafts scene has become highly developed in the art galleries, attractions and cafes that can be found there also.”

To book your seat on the coach, please send

cheque payable to The Friends of St Saviours by 1st July

or cash to

Mandy Marson 47 Boundary Road, St Albans, AL1 4DH

If you have any queries, contact: Mandy Marson 07971 090092

Email: mandymarson@hotmail.co.uk
ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Over the last couple of months, all of our regular activities for children and families have continued. More@4 has had two successful sessions on the theme of Easter and the Good Shepherd. Our June More@4 should be very fiery as we have a look at the story of Pentecost and in July we plan to have a More@4 style communion service. Do come along and support these services as we learn to worship and share fellowship together in new ways.

On Sunday August 10th, More@4 is joining up with the Messy Church at Chiswell Green for a fun day. The theme will be 'All things bright and beautiful' and the event will take place at Chiswell Green church between 3 and 6pm. The afternoon will include crafts, games, activities and a bbq. This is a great opportunity for our two congregations to come together and share fellowship with one another so please do come along and invite others to come along and support this event. Also, if anyone is interested in helping out on the day, all offers will be gratefully received! Please speak to Sarah for more details.

Children’s Church

Children's Church have looked at a whole variety of themes over the last few months, including, Ascension, Fair-trade and Christian Aid as well as following some of the stories that took place after Easter. Join us every Sunday morning during the main service for games, stories, crafts and lots of fun.

Play and Praise

Play and Praise continues to grow, with new people coming almost every week (although never all at the same time!). We meet every Tuesday morning at 10.30am for candles, singing, dancing, stories and prayers. If anyone is interested in coming along to help out then please do get in touch with me.

At the last two church meetings I’ve talked a bit about the Charter for Children in Church that the URC produced 25 years ago. We also used some of the clauses from this charter in the questionnaire we gave out at the church meeting in April. I’ve been continuing to reflect on this charter and what it might mean for us here at Homewood Road so I thought I would put a copy of it in here so that, if you wish, you could have a further look at it and use if for your own reflections.

Children are equal partners with adults in the life of the church.

The full diet of Christian worship is for children as well as adults.

Learning is for the whole church, adults and children.

Fellowship is for all – each belonging meaningfully to the rest.

Service is for children to give, as well as adults.

The call to evangelism comes to all God's people of whatever age.

The Holy Spirit speaks powerfully through children as well as adults.

The discovery and development of gifts in children and adults is a key function of the church.

As a church community we must learn to do only those things in separate age groups which we cannot in all conscience do together.

The concept of the ‘Priesthood of all Believers’ includes children.

Happy Birthday

We wish many happy returns to;

Jack Francis on 14th June
Sam Wilson on 20th June
Kameron Lall on 26th July

Sarah Green
The Parable of the Sower

But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. Matthew 13:23a

Based on Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (NIV)
Creator God
who breathed this world into being,
who is discernible within
the harmony of nature,
the perfection of a butterfly's wing,
the grandeur of a mountain range,
the soaring eagle and humming bird,
thank you for this world
which you have created.
Thank you for summer sun,
which reminds us
that your creative breath
is still alive and active.
Thank you for the warmth of your love,
sustaining this world,
your garden

The warmth of the sun's embrace,
the gentle breeze swept in by incoming tide,
the rhythm of seasons,
of new birth,
death and recreation.
All these speak so clearly of your love,
your power
and your beauty.
All are expressions of your creativity,
and more importantly of yourself.
As an artist might share his personality
within each brushstroke,
so within the myriad colours of a butterfly's wing
you share the exuberance of your love

Read more at: http://www.faithandworship.com/Prayers_Summer.htm#ixzz33a8IR15G
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# CALENDAR

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* HC = Holy Communion

Copy for next edition of HH to Lesley King (see details overleaf) by **Sun 3rd August 2014** please.