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While still in the USA, and training for ordination in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, I met Jonathan Trigg. One of the things that I remember most about those first meetings, while getting to know him, was walking into The Olive Garden restaurant on a cold, blustery winter evening. As Jonathan, Chris Stoltz and I neared the front door Jonathan asked, quite unprovoked (if I remember correctly), “What’s the difference between an organist and a terrorist?” Chris and I hadn’t a clue, so Jonathan helped us out with the punchline: “You can negotiate with a terrorist.”

While that joke may cut too close to the bone given the situations in Nigeria, Syria, Iraq and elsewhere, the punchline couldn’t be further from the truth when the organist is Chris Harris. Chris will be retiring from All Saints’ after the second week of February. For those of us who know him, it almost goes without saying but still needs to be: He will be very much missed. I can only speak for myself but I doubt anyone will disagree when I say that Chris has been a joy to work alongside. He is always positive, helpful, energetic, professional and kind. For me, that last trait is the most important: kindness. I will always think of Chris and think of his kindness.

I asked the All Saints’ Choir to share some of their thoughts and memories of Chris for this article. Unsurprisingly, I am not alone in the sentiments expressed above. Pamela Lighthill hit on Chris’s virtues of kindness, courtesy and cheerfulness, all “in equal measure.” I couldn’t agree more. These attributes extended to his undying support of the Choir. Gary Duff-Smith says that Chris was always a “great champion of the choir,” something that any group needs—an advocate. Even more, Gary spoke of Chris’s “good sense of humour and humility.” Jane Havergal echoes this by saying that Chris is not only a very humble man (“quite unjustifiably so”) but also a brilliant teacher.
Alongside these personal attributes, Chris has also gifted the choir with many lasting memories of musical contributions. Faith Davey can’t help but “love the incredibly musical compositions” that Chris would play before services. She especially appreciated that he would weave “lovely harmonies” into his hymn playing, “usually in the final verse.” And he was no stranger to writing pieces of music when needed; the latest example of that being the Magnificat that the choir sang for the Remembrance Sunday service of evening prayer. John Havergal describes him as a “fine and caring musician.” Add to this John’s thoughts on “Chris’s versatile talent and long experience…his endless patience and insightful rehearsals” and I think we all get the picture how much he will be missed. Indeed, Choirs Mistress Val McMillan concludes for us: “When he leaves us I will miss him very much. He has been a good friend.”

All of us would like to thank Chris for his years of service at All Saints’ and for being such a positive and uplifting presence. We wish him the best of luck and look forward seeing him “on the other side” of the organ bench.

With love, sincerity and best wishes,

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**MY TIME AS ORGANIST**

by Chris Harris

or two periods in my life I have been privileged to become the organist at churches. Both happened, as it turned out, by chance rather than by design.

The first position was as Organist and Choirmaster at St. Peter’s Church, Prittlewell, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. I was barely out of the cradle in terms of an appointment such as this; a mere teenager at sixteen, and having been a choirboy at the church and practicing the organ there (I had only been learning for less than a year!) I was asked if I would like to take on the position as the incumbent Organist and Choirmaster. All of this was quite sudden as the previous Organist and Choirmaster had given notice that he had to move because of his job.
At first it was only on a temporary basis, but apparently I made a sufficiently good job of it and was asked to continue. I think the young choirboys and choirgirls thought it would all be a bit of a giggle as I was so much closer to their ages than the stalwart adult choir, some of whom were at least forty years my senior. During my time there I managed to train them up and the whole choir were invited, on an annual basis, to enter the Diocesan Choral Music Festival in Chelmsford, conducted at that time by Philip Ledger who wrote our present Communion settings which we use at All Saints’.

Now, of course, we come to our own wonderful church of All Saints’ where, once again, everything happened completely by chance. In late January, 2005, I was undertaking a market research survey in Highgate and one of the addresses I had to visit was the Vicarage. Revd. Phillip Storr Ventor answered the door and agreed, rather reluctantly it has to be admitted, to be interviewed. The result was that we got chatting; I mentioned my original appointment; he raised his eyebrows in hopeful anticipation and I was appointed organist here under the immaculate "choirmistress-ship" of Val McMillan.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my ten years at All Saints' excepting the short break I took in 2009 when I spent six months in Liverpool helping a mature student with his degree. Working with Val and our choir has been a huge privilege but it is now largely because of increasing pain brought about by arthritis in my shoulder (which I broke eleven years ago) that playing consistently is becoming more difficult and I feel it is now time to step down and give the experience of being organist here to someone else.

I have made many friends here both in the choir and members of the congregation and will continue to put in an appearance. I wish the Church and all within it well for the future.
WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO?

By The Revd Dr Edward Dowler

t Augustine of Hippo (354-430AD), the first of the theologians discussed at the Highgate Theology group is often described as the ‘father of the western Church’ because his influence both on Catholic and Protestant Christianity. As a way into Augustine’s thought we read three passages from some of his best known works.

The first passage was taken from Augustine’s Confessions: his spiritual autobiography, written around the year 400. Nowadays we are used to people writing autobiographies in which they lay bare their inner thoughts and feelings, however this was most unusual in the fifth century and the Confessions have a good claim to have originated this now very familiar type of writing.

In book 2 of the Confessions, Augustine recounts a time when, as a teenager, he and a group of friends, stole some fruit from a neighbour’s tree. The fruit was actually unpleasant and the boys ended up throwing it away but they still very much enjoyed the excitement of stealing it.

This slightly whimsical anecdote illustrates one of the key themes that we associate with Augustine: that of original sin. The central idea is that all human beings after Adam are in some way predisposed to get things wrong, to mess up and, in a sense, to enjoy doing so, even though it is ultimately destructive. A modern writer, Francis Spufford in his book Unapologetic (Faber: 2012) describes this as the ‘HPtFtU’: an acronym which (in a very slightly altered version) stands for the ‘Human Propensity to Foul things Up’. ‘I had no motive for my wickedness,’ Augustine writes, ‘except wickedness itself. It was foul and I loved it’. Augustine is sometimes described as the ‘Doctor of Grace’ because, for him, it is ultimately only God’s grace (given pre-eminently in Christ but then again and again in all sorts of ways) that can heal this deep flaw that goes through all human beings and societies.

This brings us to the second piece that we explored, which came from Augustine’s massive work
The City of God. In Book Fourteen of this work, Augustine contrasts the earthly city (all human societies) with the heavenly city (the Kingdom of God) in the following striking terms:

Two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord.

Augustine lived at a time when Christianity had become the state religion of the Roman Empire: a development particularly associated with the Emperor Constantine (272-337). Several of his contemporaries were convinced that the Christianisation of the Empire would lead to a golden age: a view that turned out to be seriously mistaken. Augustine was far less convinced about this on theological grounds: because of original sin, he reasoned, all human societies are imperfect. The virtues they foster are not necessarily real virtues and the peace that they can bring about is, at best, only imperfect – more like an armed truce – and far different from the perfect peace of the heavenly city.

Augustine’s thoughts on this matter show that he was and is an enemy of the ‘utopian’ idea that it is possible to build the perfect society here on earth. As the history of several twentieth century (generally strongly atheistic) dictatorships abundantly shows us, grand utopian visions generally leads to endless brutality as individual men and women who fail to fit in with the guiding idea are sacrificed in their thousands, if not millions (names such as Stalin and Mao Tse-tung spring to mind). Augustine’s theology also challenges modern groups such as ‘ISIS’ who, again, think that it is possible to build what they regard as a perfect (in this instance) theocratic state through coercion and military power.

However, the fact that it is dangerous to completely identify any human society with the Kingdom of God does not mean that Christians have no duties to the societies in which they actually live:
Augustine is clear that, as Jesus himself taught, we do have a duty to give Caesar that which is due to Caesar (see Mark 12.17): in other words to fulfil our civic duties and be loyal to our country and our society, albeit that our loyalty to the Kingdom of God is ultimately greater.

For all that he was a distinguished theologian, Augustine did not spend his ministry in a university. He was bishop of the Church in the coastal town of Hippo (this town is now called Annaba, situated in Algeria on the north coast of Africa). Bishops in the early Church were somewhat like parish priests are today, with a much smaller area of responsibility than modern bishops have. Every day Augustine would celebrate the Eucharist and preach to his congregation and much of his theology is worked out in these sermons.

The final passage we looked at was his exposition in a sermon of Psalm 42, which starts with the words As a deer longs for springs of water, so does my soul long for you, O God. This was a well-known psalm in the North African Church of Augustine’s time. When, after a three-year course of instruction, men and women were baptised, confirmed and given their first communion (the normal date for this was Easter each year), the candidates for baptism would process to the font singing the psalm and thus expressing their longing to be immersed in the baptismal waters.

Augustine uses this psalm to reflect on what it means to long not just for baptism but for God himself: such longing, for him is central to Christian life as we can see from the famous words at the start of the Confessions: ‘you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you’. The preacher’s task is not just to instruct and inform the congregation but to try and stir up that longing for God: a holy desire to be united with him for ever.

Fr Edward is Vicar of St John and St Luke, Clay Hill; Continuing Ministerial Education Officer, Edmonton Episcopal Area. He presented a more extended and in depth talk on “What should I know about Augustine?” at one of the
Highgate Theology and Fellowship meetings this past Winter. Please join HTFG in the future for more exciting talks.

Winter Programme 2015

ASH WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 18TH

11am Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes

12noon Charity Talk on the work of The Children’s Society by Louise Paine-Davey (Regional Fundraising Manager)

1pm Charity Lunch (There is no charge for the lunch but we ask you to give as generously as possible to The Children’s Society)

TALKS ON WORLD RELIGIONS, BELIEFS AND CHRISTIANITY

Tuesday February 24th

10.45 for 11am - Judaism by The Revd Patrick Morrow

Tuesday March 3rd

10.45 for 11am - The New Atheism by The Revd Dr Edward Dowler

Tuesday March 10th

10.45 for 11am – Hinduism (speaker TBA)

Tuesday March 17th

10.45 for 11am - Islam by Dr Barbara Roggema

Monday March 23rd

10am to 4pm - Lenten Quiet Day at 130 Highgate Hill N6

Led by The Revd Gaz Daly, Associate Vicar at St James, Muswell

Cost for Quiet Day is £15 which includes lunch. Please contact Bryce Wandrey at 020 8351 6083 or brycepwandrey@gmail.com to register for this day by Tuesday March 17th

PLEASE JOIN US FOR ANY OR ALL OF THESE EVENTS.

ALL SAINTS’ MISSION ACTION PLAN

At our PCC meeting on May 21st 2014 the proposed Mission Action Plan was adopted unanimously. This is a plan which gives our
parish church some goals and vision for the next five years. It is not necessarily proscriptive in nature but more so a document that we can use to keep us motivated for mission over the next five years.

Plans for putting into action the plan have already begun. The first working group has met a couple of times and is taking on the challenges of the Mission and Ministry portion of the document. Because some of the aspects of our Mission and Ministry are already being addressed by events organised through the Fellowship and Outreach Team it was decided that proposals would be made to engage and invite our local community to be part of the ministry of All Saints’ through things more focused on worship, prayer and learning about the Christian faith. The following are the four main initiatives that we will be pursuing throughout the course of this year.

I. A NEW ALL-IN SERVICE

There is nothing better than being able to worship as a complete body. This sentiment became obvious in our initial discussions. Many of our families would really appreciate the chance to worship “all-in” on occasion. While our Sunday School teachers are doing a magnificent job of leading and teaching our children (more on this to follow), they also felt that it would be beneficial for there to be a monthly “all-in” service: a service where all ages stay in the church and worship together.

With this goal and desire in mind, beginning in March, we will be trialling a new “All-in” Service. Around 4 years ago such a service was taking place at All Saints’ but was abandoned in order to offer Sunday School on an every Sunday basis. This new “All-in” Service will, hopefully, be something that everyone can find engaging while still being prayerful and worshipful. That is a mighty task to accomplish, which means this will also be a learning and growing process.

As mentioned, this will be a once a month service and it will take place on the 4th Sunday of each month. The first “All-in” Service will be on Sunday March 22nd. We will also be trying out some different styles of musical leadership in the service (guitar, piano, etc). While this means that some of the music will be of a more
“contemporary” nature a lot of it will be music you are used to singing and praying with.

The service will begin on a six month trial basis with the hope that at the September PCC feedback will be considered and, with that feedback taken on-board, the service will become a regular part of our Sunday morning worship schedule.

Bryce is currently in discussion with Andreas Spanring in regards to the musical leadership of the service. Andy was formerly the Youth and Family Worker at St Michael’s and has been working as a barrister in the City for the past year and a half. He is eager and willing to be part of the service and will bring with him not only musical talents but his experience of working with Youth and Families in Highgate.

We hope that this service will both strengthen our community as we worship “as a whole” once a month but also, we hope, that it will be a service that “outsiders” find welcoming and engaging. If you know of anyone who would appreciate this “All-in” service please do not hesitate to invite them.

II. MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church is a Church of England initiative and a way of worshipping that focuses upon crafts and activities to “open up” Bible stories. As their website says, it “is a way of” worshipping “for families involving fun;” it is an act of worship, “not a craft club, that helps people encounter Jesus as Lord and Saviour is found across the world;” and its “values are about being Christ-centred, for all ages, based on creativity, hospitality and celebration.”

A lot more information, including videos of Messy Churches, can be found at http://www.messychurch.org.uk/. Please do visit that site to learn more about this worship opportunity.

Our ultimate goal is to offer Messy Church at All Saints’ on a once month, midweek basis. We are aiming for it to be on a Tuesday around 4.15pm. Our hope is that this will attract parents/carers to bring their children after school, stay with them,
and worship and learn about Jesus Christ together.

The main elements of Messy Church are: 1. A gathering time over drinks (juice, coffee, tea); 2. A call to worship with prayer and song; 3. Various “stations” which use craft and activity to teach and engage in the chosen Bible Story/topic of the day; 4. A coming back together for summary, prayer and song; 5. A meal to conclude the service.

While such a service may seem for families only, many of the Messy Churches have found that it isn’t only families that find the service enjoyable and prayerful. Ultimately, our hope is that Messy Church will be an opportunity to reach out to our local community, in mission and ministry, and give everyone one more opportunity to regularly experience the love of God.

Before we confidently offer this though we need to gauge the interest and availability of volunteers to help organise Messy Church. It will involve setting up and helping out at the various stations of craft and activity. It will also involve the making of tea, coffee, juice and the preparing of the meal for after the service (probably something like sausages, chips and beans). In order to find out if we can make Messy Church a reality at All Saints’ we are having a meeting on Tuesday January 27th at 3.30pm at the Vicarage. If you are interested in helping to organise and be part of Messy Church please come to this meeting. If you want to be part of Messy Church but can’t make that specific day please email Bryce at brycepwandrey@gmail.com.

III. THE PILGRIM COURSE

As the Pilgrim Course website says, “Pilgrim is a major new teaching and discipleship resource from the Church of England. It aims to help every local church create a place where people can explore the Christian faith together and see how it can be lived out each day. Pilgrim takes a different approach to other Christian programmes. It approaches the great issues of faith not through persuasion, but participation in a pattern of contemplation and discussion with a group of fellow travellers.”

The course comes in two stages, each with four parts. The first stage is “Follow” while the second is “Grow.” More information on the
course can be found at www.pilgrimcourse.org.

We will be going through the first book of the “Follow” stage entitled Turning to Christ beginning on Monday April 13th at 8pm (venue TBA). This first book is based upon the six questions asked at a person’s baptism: Do you turn to Christ?; Do you believe and trust in God the Father?; Do you believe in his Son Jesus Christ?; Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?; Do you repent of your sins?; and Do you renounce evil?

While this course is appropriate, and would prove beneficial for everyone, it is especially appropriate for anyone who is wondering what the Christian faith is really about or that person who is unsure if they want to take the next step in exploring faith (being baptised, being confirmed). It will also be a course for anyone who has taken a step back from their faith for a period of time and wants to re-engage.

As mentioned, we will begin the course on Monday April 13th and continue over the next five Mondays. “Signing up” for the course is important so that we can obtain enough of the books. If you, or somebody you know, would be interested in the Pilgrim Course please email Bryce at brycepwandrey@gmail.com.

IV. SUNDAY SCHOOL

In November our Sunday School began using Scripture Union Materials to help aid in learning about the Bible and faith. These materials not only provide the teachers with an excellent resource in helping to plan the lessons but also provide the children with colourful worksheets on a weekly basis.

Currently our Sunday School, and the Scripture Union material, is geared for the age range of 5 to 8 year olds. We have been blessed to have so many children at our Sunday morning services, and Sunday School, over the years. Many of our children are now older than this age range and are in the 9+ range. For this reason we are
looking to expand our Sunday School and break it into two different classes: 5 to 8 year olds and 9+’s. In order to do this we will need more volunteers to teach. We currently have approximately six regular volunteers but will need this number to grow to somewhere near 10 or more (hence four to five more volunteers).

**Could you help our Sunday School by volunteering to teach on a monthly basis?** We will be ordering Scripture Union material for the 9+ class if we can get enough teachers. This material will provide you with materials to plan the lessons while also providing worksheets for the children.

If you are interested in helping please contact Bryce as soon as possible. Thank you.

**HEEDING CHRIST’S TEACHING TO SHARE IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

By Adam Parsons

In Christianity, the need to share is central to the teachings of Jesus and a major theme throughout the New Testament. According to Luke, the earliest Christians tried to put Jesus’ teachings into practice by sharing what they had so that the poor among them would be provided for. And there are many quotes and parables from the Bible that elucidate Jesus’ instruction to care for the sick, the poor, the widowed and the least fortunate within society. Those who are more privileged than others should always open their heart to “do good and share with those in need”, as written in the final exhortations to the Hebrews. Indeed the essence of Christ’s teachings was focused on the need to serve and love others, to share and not hoard wealth, and to seek justice for the poor and dispossessed.

What, then, would Jesus make of the world we live in today? Regardless of the advancements of modern society through mass education, a communications revolution and economic globalisation, still humanity is characterised by super-divisions between the very rich and the very poor. Total global wealth has grown to record levels, yet the bottom half of the world population own less than 1% of all
this financial abundance. The number of billionaires doubled between 2009 and 2014, and now 67 people possess as much wealth as the poorest 3.5 billion.

To be sure, our social order is at odds with the basic teachings of every major religion, all of which expound the importance of sharing wealth and essential resources fairly. And perhaps nothing describes the lack of sharing in our societies more than the incidence of hunger and poverty within affluent nations like Britain, where growing numbers of people on low-incomes are turning to food banks to survive. But there is no escaping the fact that the impact of extreme poverty is generally far more severe in less-developed countries, where millions of people face constant food insecurity and starvation—despite there being enough food available in the world to feed everyone one-and-a-half times over. As a consequence of life-threatening deprivation and inadequate social protection, around 15 million people die every year from largely avoidable causes—equivalent to more than 40,000 people every single day.

Christian churches and groups are long aware of these disturbing facts, and many concern themselves with the need for a fairer distribution of wealth and resources in the world. Charities in the UK such as Tearfund, Christian Aid and CARE do their best to raise awareness of the scourge of poverty amidst plenty, and campaign for dramatic changes in government priorities to ensure a decent standard of living for all. For example, Christian Aid point out that the wealthiest 20% of the world’s population account for 80% of consumption of global resources, whereas the poorest 20% lack the resources to have even a decent standard of living. We are also using 50% more natural resources than the Earth can sustain, which is having devastating impacts on poor people and the planet. In addressing this epochal challenge of the twenty-
first century, we will have to heed Christ’s simple message like never before: to think of those less fortunate than ourselves, to make sacrifices where necessary on behalf of others, and to share the world’s resources through compassion and goodwill.

If Jesus’ instruction to share was truly embraced by all peoples and nations, it would clearly have radical implications for the relationships between countries in our divided world. To begin with, a massive redistribution of resources will be called for on an international scale, with a view to securing the long-agreed human rights of the poorest people as a foremost global priority. However, overseas aid alone will never be enough to transform society along more just and spiritual lines. At present Africa is losing $192bn every year to the rest of the world, more than 6 times the amount of aid given back to the continent. Developing countries as a whole lose about $1 trillion each year through tax evasion and other corrupt practices, which is nearly 10 times the size of the aid budget.

Tackling the root causes of poverty and inequality will therefore demand major structural reform of the global economy, based upon a genuine form of multilateral cooperation and economic sharing.

We cannot conceive of a ‘global sharing economy’ in the truest sense until everyone has their basic needs met within the environmental limits of our living planet. And this will require an entire rethinking of our political and economic systems, our global governance institutions, even our conception of ourselves as human beings. A recent spate of scientific literature contradicts the notion that selfishness and greed are innate human characteristics, and shows that we are naturally predisposed to be altruistic and cooperative. These findings challenge many of the assumptions that sustain our unequal societies, and give hope and inspiration that we can build a fairer world that nurtures solidarity, compassion and equality.

In the end, there can be no solution to world problems unless we inculcate spiritual values, such as loving kindness and generosity, into our everyday practice of politics and economics. To resolve the interlocking crises of our civilisation we have no choice but
to acknowledge our global interdependence, and to accept that humankind is part of an extended family that shares the same basic rights and entitlements. Hence all of the food, raw materials, energy, knowledge and technical know-how of the world must be used for the benefit of everyone, and shared more equitably according to need.

The call for sharing is already on the rise in diverse countries, and underpins many existing initiatives for social justice, environmental stewardship, true democracy and global peace. But a significant shift in public debate is needed if the principle of sharing is to be understood as integral to any agenda for transformative change. In this light, our London-based organisation has launched a campaign that aims to influence public opinion around the need for a global movement of citizens who embrace sharing as a common cause. By signing up to our campaign statement, anyone can pledge to raise their voice for greater sharing in our societies, and help spark public awareness and a wider debate on the importance of sharing in economic and political terms.

To sign up as an individual or organisation, please visit: www.sharing.org

Adam is the editor at Share The World’s Resources, a civil society organisation campaigning for a fairer sharing of wealth, power and resources both within and between countries.

NOVEMBER REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Submitted by Pamela Lighthill, PCC Secretary

At this meeting, Jonathan Trigg reported on the PCC Extraordinary Meeting held after church on 5th October. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a proposed change of leadership in the parish, although the decision would rest with the Bishop. As Bryce had increasingly been taking charge at All Saints, it was generally agreed that his leadership should become a reality. Subsequently the licensing of Bryce as Priest-in-Charge and of Jonathan as Assistant Curate took place at the Midweek Communion
on 29th October, with Bishop Peter presiding.

Other matters raised included the Bellway proposals, but there was nothing new to report. Austen Worth spoke about outreach to families. There was a plan to have a monthly midweek session of Messy Church for families, with a meal at the end. Also discussed was a proposed monthly “all-in” service. A formal proposal to begin this in March and continue for 6 months was unanimously approved.

There was discussion about the Sir William Orpen weekend, which had been an enriching event for All Saints. The Remembrance Sunday breakfast had been very well attended and c. £170 had been raised for Help for Heroes. Bryce reported that posters were already up for the Christmas Fair.

Fabric and Finance were also discussed with reports given by Bryce, John Havergal and David Bulgin. David reported that the Hall Fund was doing well, and thanks were expressed to Jean Johnson, the Hall Secretary.

Under Any Other Business, Bryce reported that the Sunday School had raised over £1,100 for Save the Children’s ‘Ebola’ appeal. He also passed on the news that Kate Kilborn and her family were moving away from London. Thanks were expressed to Kate for her contribution to the work of the PCC. Bryce showed the Meeting a draft Christmas card and it was agreed that 2000 copies be printed at a cost of £45.00, for circulation around the parish.

PARISH REGISTRY 2014

Baptism
Isabelle Ireland – 27th September

Weddings
Richard Holmes and Anna-Marie Bloomer – 18th January
Adam Parsons and Sylvia Monkhouse – 17th May

Funerals
Anne Neil – 3rd April
Matej Schwitzer – 10th November