



The Marksman

The magazine of
St. Mark's Church, Versailles
and
St. Paul's Church, Chevy.

EASTER 2011

Spring in the Air!

The headlines in this issue are obviously dominated by two big news items: the new church going up, and the Kenchingtons stepping down. Both will dominate our church life for the rest of this year at least.

In this issue we also welcome some new authors, some old authors, and some testimonies of faith. There's also news from former members of Saint Mark's, and even one or two funnies just to stop us from taking ourselves too seriously (not that we ever did!)

CHRIST IS RISEN! HALLELUIA!

John Penhallow

Contents

Page		Page	
3	A Word from Paul	19	C'est Clare ?
5	News Roundup	21	Please don't laugh
6	What a site!	22	Modern Science and Creation
8	Waters of Life	26	Extra-mural activities
11	News from Saint Paul's	27	That controversial exhibition
12	The Court Room	28	Our extended family
15	An Easter message from the Bishop	30	Diary of Events
16	To dunk or not to dunk	31	THAT wedding
18	On the lighter side		

Just for starters! Overheard on a bus:

"I don't believe in astrology because I'm a Gemini and Geminis never do"

A Word from Paul...



You will have heard by now that my family and I will be moving back to the UK in September because I have been called to the post of Priest in Charge (Vicar) of Holy Trinity Combe Down with Monkton Combe and South Stoke, in the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

I have written the full and remarkable story of how it all happened, and that is available for anyone who wishes to have it; please ask me. This whole new development has come as a surprise to us all, but the guidance of God has been very clear – and I either had to obey the calling, or completely re-write everything I have ever preached or taught on guidance! The only place that any of us can be truly content and satisfied is in the centre of the Lord's will. We each need to strive continually to be right there.

My final Sunday, when we will say our Goodbyes, is September 4th. Before then there are lots of things to be done. I am thrilled to see the REACH Project speeding ahead; each day I look out of the window to see the walls getting higher and the eventual shape of the church becoming more evident. I expect to be here through July to keep an eye on the final stages – please pray that there are no hitches and the work is finished as promised.

I am also committed to NEW WINE EUROPE in August (8th-12th). A large number of our church members have booked up to go together for this camping holiday in Belgium with excellent Christian teaching, a great children's programme, lots of time to sing and praise together, and a beautiful forested camp site to relax in and enjoy one another's company. If you have not yet decided to come, do have a look at www.new-wine.eu

Before all of that we have a new venture: "Shakespeare et tout ça" as St.Marks' contribution to Versailles' Mois Molière. It is intended to be a celebration of English language and culture and will include some well know bits of Shakespeare plus a lot of very familiar English poetry, songs and other items. It will be a great deal of fun!! Don't be put off by heavy thoughts of Shakespearian tragedy – there will be laughs, parody, a Beatles medley, and above all church members being thoroughly entertaining.

(CONTINUED)

•

If you have enjoyed the spontaneous entertainment of Alpha or Houlgate weekends, you will enjoy this. It is also a good way to invite friends along to a non-threatening social event, at which they will discover the church and see the new building developments. Do support this event if you can, on one of the three evenings: June 22,23 and 24.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Marksman, which includes testimony from those who were recently baptised or re-affirmed their baptism. It was a terrific occasion and one which I shall remember as a high-point of my ministry here. As a pre-cursor to our Easter celebrations it was an ideal way of pointing to the new life we have through the Resurrection of Christ. God is touching lives and transforming them! "God is building his Church – person by person".

Wishing you all a blessed and joyful Easter: Christ is risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

*** **

New Wine 2011 (see Diary for details) – Book soon to avoid disappointment!



News roundup

Family Time: The successful course led by John and Debs Ferrero came to a close in February. The final event was a lunch for a large number (more than 40?) people. Not only course members but also visitors to the church and passers-through enjoyed a lovely time of fellowship before the teaching began. Many grateful thanks are owed to Debs and John for all the hard work in making this happen.

St.Paul's congregation enjoyed a meal at Courtepaille. 18 people were present, several of whom worship at both St.Paul's and St.Mark's. It is good to have the connections strengthened in this way.

Mois Molière Meeting: The programme for "Shakespeare et Tout Ca" has been drawn up. The dates for performance have changed slightly and will now be June 22,23 & 24 (Wed, Thurs, Friday)

On Feb 13 there was a focus during the service on **Outreach/Evangelism @ St.Marks**. Details of some of the initiatives by members of Saint Mark's are given in this issue ("Extra-murals")

On **Ash Wednesday** (Mar 9) St. Mark's members joined a service of Imposition of Ashes at Notre Dame de Versailles. Anglicans were warmly (and specifically) welcomed and all who wished were permitted to receive the Eucharist. This is a wonderful and significant step forward. It is also worth noting that the liturgy was very recognizable to St. Mark's worshippers; lay people (men & women), including some of our own members, were involved in taking up the offering and in distribution of the ashes and the communion bread.

The traditional service of **Communion BCP** has continued in the Chapel with a congregation of around half a dozen.

Paul met with **Hugo Hoyland** who is preparing to go to Romania in August with Cry In The Dark. PK also met with Kevin & Nicky Bodsworth to consider and implement revisions to the **church website**. The **Youth** enjoyed a sleepover with games, food, films and teaching on the dangers of internet abuse. Paul was privileged to be invited to pray prayers of **blessing on two homes** of church members. Six men met for **Pizza & Prayer** on Feb 25.

What a site!

Beginning March 8th we at last saw the first builders on site, establishing the perimeter for safe building access and the facilities for the builders to begin work. A separation between access and activities was deemed advisable for safety reasons between on-site workers and the ongoing week-time presence of children. Slight delay due to availability of essential toilet facilitiesfrustration all round....and then, the first noise, the first hammering as existing concrete and roofing were prepared for the first new concrete and bricks....

A flurry of activity to get the insurance in place, the contracts signed in January and February, the first proper on-site meetings (fortnightly now, and regularly attended by Paul K, Barry , and Jerome), and now the building is growing daily. Kevin (ably aided by Nicky) has been putting frequent photo updates on facebook since those first days, and there is a full detailed link on the St Mark's website (see www.stmarksversailles.org) which is really worth consulting – even for those

who come each Sunday, the photos and information are quite impressive. Please do communicate this link to other friends, and of course to ex-St Mark's congregation who may have moved on.



*(above: "A tower of Strength"
right: artist's impression of the
finished building)*

•

This new building will provide for over 250 people properly accommodated for worship, and include proper access and space for a minimum of 6 'handicap' places as well as wheelchair access and parking. The ownership of the site and buildings by the ICS will ensure its availability to future generations of congregations for as long as it is discerned that there is work to be done for the Lord in Versailles, just what form that work will take in the next few years will be exciting for us all to see and to be part of.....

The decision to proceed first, in the light of available funds, with the new worship area may enable us to hold a first service there at the beginning of September. Formal acceptance and use of the building though will need us to overcome a number of hurdles, but we have been greatly blessed so far and we believe that the step of faith taken by the (previously elected) PCC in deciding to begin work will bear fruit. This said, we do have a funding gap (being assessed further, but maybe around 40,000€) in order to complete even the "clos et couvert" stage of the new worship space. We also have up to 200,000€ to find in order to finish the internal décor and to obtain full formal completion (including increased car parking required) for this phase we have called phase 3A. If we were to decide to proceed shortly with the enlarged hall and entrance area (phase 3B), yet another 250,000 to 300,000 would probably be needed.

We are anticipating a Gift Day for the Church in May and continuing thanks in prayer for God's goodness; seeking of our part - each one of us - in this phase as we go forward, is something we can be doing daily. Prayer for our growth is of course not limited to bricks, and the spiritual growth of the congregation in the REACH Vision rests pivotal especially at this time of great change!

As of the time of writing, we are working on the internal electrics plans and soon we will be looking at aspects of décor, and more members of the congregation are getting involved. We will also have to start considering the 'downstairs' layout once the 'upstairs' is completed, and the PCC has to decide in May on the next steps. One next major visible and exciting event will be the delivery of the central timber roof beam, which will involve a big crane to lift it over the building from the road, around the end of Maymore stunning pictures!!

Meanwhile, do greet the builders if you come over during the week - they seem happy to be working on this Church site, and we are surely happy they are here, and hopefully some of the love of God will embrace them whilst they are with us.

Barry Saunders

Waters of Life

On April 17th, four members of our church family were baptised (or confirmed their baptismal vows). Here are their testimonies:

Aurea

The eldest of three girls and originally from the Philippines, I was baptized as an infant and brought up in Iran as a Catholic in a Muslim country. I received Jesus into my heart at age 10, thanks to Protestant friends.

Returning to the Philippines as a teen because of the Iranian Revolution, I studied architecture and befriended an American Pentecostal family. Then I met a Frenchman and got married to him, and came to live in France 22 years ago. Through my spouse, an alcoholic and ex-drug user, I became part of the spiritual AA movement. With the birth of my two children, I decided to drop architecture to teach English. I brought my children to the St Mark's Mothers & Toddlers group, and became more and more a part of this church because of the warmth of its people and because I identified with the other ex-pats.

Increasing alienation from my spouse brought me to separate from him, and we divorced officially in 2009. I found myself turning more and more to God for guidance and comforting. Having strayed from Him in my first ten years in France, I felt like the prodigal daughter. I am utterly grateful to Him that my ex-spouse and I are maintaining a positive relationship for the sake of the children.

In having me baptized as a baby, my parents expressed confidence that I would not be so foolish as to turn down the marvelous gift that the Lord was holding out to me : « For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord » (Romans 6 :23). I feel compelled today to testify to others of this gift: it would be a shame to keep it to myself. I feel God has put me in the teaching profession to touch others.

Having actively fought for the environment for a long time, I realize today that the battle is first and foremost a spiritual one, against our mortal enemy who encourages the physical and spiritual destruction of our world. In choosing to be baptized I align myself officially with God's armed forces.

Waters of Life (cont.)

I run the race today for and towards Christ (Philippians 3 :14), for an imperishable reward is the only one worth having (1 Corinthians 9 :25). With God's grace I will endure, for His glory.

Bernadette

As well as my seven siblings I was brought up in the midst of nowhere by a loving, Catholic, faithful grandmother who sacrificed for us all she has, thus making a life-long impact on us.

After university I worked in Germany and in Algeria, but the war there brought me back to France. All the time I remained a faithful churchgoer in remembrance of my Grandmother, but I did not know the Lord

1995: retirement – finally time for learning English, and for discovering next to my home the Anglican church I had never noticed before. I introduced myself as “not interested in God but only in speaking English”. I was nevertheless warmly welcomed and immediately overwhelmed by the joy the faith and the love all around me during the first service I attended. I thought “I want to have it!”

After months of regular attendance – services, bible study, prayer meetings, I was one day literally pushed forward to commit my life to Jesus and to ask for the blessing of the Holy Spirit. I did so, but felt not transformed - just disappointed. But later on, the BIG SHOCK. Walking in the gardens of Versailles I heard clearly “There is a Father for you” – no-one around, but then again “There is a Father for you”. What a joyful excitement! God himself was speaking, making clear that He had led me to Saint Mark's to be a member of this church and part of the Anglican Communion. Then Jesus became a friend, walking by my side, telling me “Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest (Matthew 11 v 28)

I had no choice but to follow Him whatever the cost. Not easy.

After so many years there are always so many fears, so many times of feeling a failure. That is why I strongly desire to go down into this life-giving water, expecting “to rejoice in the Lord always” (Phil 4 v 4), and “not to become anxious about anything” (Phil 4 v 6) through Him who gives me strength (Phil 4 v 13).

Waters of Life (cont.)

Marge

It has been about 20 years since I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord. I remember very clearly saying, "Yes, Lord. I believe you died for me. I repent of my sins". I also recall a great weight being lifted from my heart and from my body. I felt very light! I recall being happy and telling my good friend and sister-in-law about this unique moment.

From that point on I carried on outwardly as before, but my spiritual life began to develop and I yearned for Sundays to be every day of the week. I attended services here at St Mark's more regularly and for many years became involved in serving to the best of my ability on various rotas. I also joined two Alpha courses and prayed and studied Scripture in a housegroup. I really felt my faith deepening as I read and learned more about Jesus in the Bible. As he says in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me". This knowledge brings me peace even in moments of trial or sadness.

I believe with my lips, I believe in my mind, I believe in my heart. By reaffirming my Baptism I asking Jesus publicly to let his Holy Spirit pour over me and complete his work in me so that my faith and my love for God will be even greater and I will be better equipped to fulfill his purpose in my life.

Alexandre

I have always believed in Jesus. I can even recall when I was a young child that I would jump up and down praising the Lord's name. I've even sometimes felt his presence along with a feeling a great joy and happiness. I know



that Jesus is the only Lord to be praised. I am convinced that Christianity is the true and only religion. When I see how God has made my parents so happy and helped them go through difficult moments I can be assured that the Lord is always looking upon us. And, for me, baptism is like a marriage between me and Jesus, it's a proof of my love to Him and my commitment to Him. This is why I wanted to get baptized. To show the Lord how much I love Him and how much I believe in Him.

News from Saint Paul's



St Paul's ministry represents St Mark's outreach to the community in Chevry (Gif-sur-Yvette) and offers services every Sunday at 5.30 pm. The ministry is led by the Reverend Elaine Labourel, and the congregation therefore benefits from having a permanent chaplain, rather than "sharing" one with the St Mark's congregation, as was the case in the past. We worship in a church building, which belongs to the Gif-sur-Yvette Mairie, known officially as a "centre culturel", as it is shared with various other catholic and protestant

Christian communities.

St Paul's has a home group, which meets fortnightly at the Cottons' home.

This year, the Sunday club, led by Lori Bridal, has continued to offer three rather than the previous two Sunday Club sessions per month. Five children aged between 3 and 9 are regular Sunday club participants. The youngest member of our congregation, aged 2, also joins in occasionally and shows every sign of wanting to take part in all of the "big" ones' activities... Two Sunday club teachers, taken from a pool of six, lead the sessions each time. Elaine is also preparing the two older children for communion.

The carol service was the highlight of the year. Snowy weather had led to cancellation last year and our nerves were put to the test, as another cancellation looked likely in the morning, again because of snow and ice. However, a very timely answer to our prayers was received in the shape of a lunchtime thaw and the service duly went ahead. It was a truly joyful celebration of the birth of Christ, and as usual, it was very well attended. There were the familiar beautiful carols and readings, extra singing was provided by the Arabesque choir, who had kindly accepted to join us on this occasion, and the Sunday Club children, dressed as angels, added the "aw, sweet" factor, with their rendition of *Away in a Manger*. Quantities of delicious mulled wine and homemade mince pies topped things off nicely, even if it was rather a crush to get to the goodies.

We also had a couple of gatherings with a barbecue in the summer and a congregational dinner in a restaurant recently. Both occasions were very much enjoyed for the opportunity they provided for fellowship.

It was another good year at St Paul's. We are keen, of course, to see more people join our friendly and close-knit community, so keep praying with us that this may happen.

And if you happen to be in the area, why not come and join us in our worship?

The Court Room

The court room filled and filled and filled. It was as if the whole of humanity had been summoned, past and present and obeyed. So, so many people, yet no-one seemed far in that all could be clearly seen. The young, the ancient from babes to centenarians, men and women, came, as if each had a personal interest in this case, the trial of an everyday, nondescript individual for no spectacular crime. Architects, bankers, builders, business men, child minders, communications experts, housewives, pastors, prostitutes, secretaries, school children, teachers, thieves and zoo keepers, each and every occupation under the sun seemed to be represented. Every tribe, nationality, race, religion, creed and philosophy, every size and configuration, the fit, the healthy and not, seemed to be present. Was it the very ordinary character of the case that made it so relevant to all?

The courtroom filled in orderly fashion, each finding and taking a place without an usher, without crowding, bustling or pushing, each seemingly knowing and finding their predestined place and the court room accommodated them. They were orderly, patient, expectant, yet not really knowing what to expect. This court commanded the respect of all and this was the first time they would witness the justice system at work. Waiting, some gazed, some wondered, some looked around, a few searched for familiar faces, for contact, for some degree of comfort, a flicker of recognition, of acknowledgement even from a stranger. It was an unfamiliar context, a rather destabilising context. Some looked around just to be noticed, as if they gained credibility by being seen, others preferred not to be, some didn't really care. Not many spoke and the few that did did so with low voices, generating a droning murmur, punctuated by the occasional sputtering of distinctive but barely intelligible syllables. Time seemed not to matter.

The droning eased, silence reigned and all heads steered to face the court, as if by the sole, commanding presence of high authority, yet no voice had spoken and the court had not yet risen.

There was the judge, the law book, the prosecutor, the accused, the advocate for the defence. No jury was present.

The accused was an ordinary, non-descript person of indefinite age, neither alluring, nor off-putting, with the remarkable quality of being representative of anyone. It was somebody, a passer-by, a neighbour, someone you knew, even a friend, or possibly a family member.

•

In fact there was a growing and disconcerting familiarity that made the accused like someone close, not quite recognisable yet so disconcertingly close that everyone began to identify intimately with that person. Despite the vast crowd, everyone could see, could focus, observe and now, shockingly identify with the accused as if perceiving their very own selves.

The court rose. Formalities, if there were formalities seemed hardly to matter, as everyone understood. The accused was called to stand and the charges were read. There were very many and mostly mundane. Yet each charge came like a dull blow on yet another nail on an unseen coffin. The accused's coffin, but everyone felt as if it was personally directed at them and so in a terrifying way, on their own unseen coffins.

Witnesses were not required. The facts were plain, everyone knew, everyone could see, everyone was a witness, against themselves. Everyone seemed compelled from within to echo the culprit's own acknowledgement, to confess, though they could not hear it, for the accused stood bowed and silent, and so did they. Such was the piercingly pure, exposing power of the court that everything, past and present was displayed all at once, like a brilliant light highlighting every little relief and every pebble on a vast plain.

The law and the requirements of the law were also so very clear that each charge rang with leaden and unchallengeable finality. Justice, everyone knew, is the clear identification of the proven facts and the unbiased application of the law. No offense, no judgement no penalty. Where there is offence, the legally defined judgement and penalty must be applied. Just, simple and unavoidable in this court of all courts. One nail would have sufficed, but there were so many. Every member of the public felt several at least cut into their own hearts. Even the self-righteous found that they were gradually stripped and exposed.

Then the advocate for the defence was called to rise. He was known to be compassionate and wise. Could he refute, could he argue against such clear a case? He was also known to be one of great integrity and a firm upholder of the law. Did he have the right arguments, would he try? He did not. There were no arguments and he and the whole court knew it. But he also knew that there were no possible charges against him-self. He owned none of those penetrating nails and none yet pierced his heart. The judge, in fact all present in the courtroom knew this to be the case.

•

All eyes were on him as he too solemnly acknowledged each of the charges against the accused, just as he also accepted the just requirements of the law for those many crimes, death. Here was an advocate for the defence who confirmed rather than defended! He was known to be the judge's own and only son, but righteous justice not partisanship reigned and everybody knew it. The finality of the situation was overwhelming. The penalty had been proclaimed. Death, death, death, death, as many times as there were charges against the accused and as many times as the law required it. Everyone facing the court felt their own, just but terrible condemnation.

Then the advocate for the defence and the judge conferred, but no-one else could hear. The judge raised his head in a sign of solemn agreement. The advocate of the defence went over to confer with the accused at the bar. The accused, completely overwhelmed, broke down, cried out, rejoiced with tears of relief, of praise, of thanks, of worship and could not rise again until the advocate reached down and gently raised him. Many in the court room were cut to the heart. They knew, they had already received and they too rejoiced in tears of liberation. Others stiffly resisted or irrationally rejected.

The advocate let the officers lead him away as a condemned criminal, to bear the penalty in place of the accused. The accused rejoiced, he danced, a new person, freer than ever possible before.

David Logan

*** **

Alone in a church, a man is pouring his heart out to God in prayer. At the end he asks "When I pray to You, why am I the only one of us talking?" And God replies "Maybe because I'm the only one of us listening".

An Easter message from the Bishop

Jesus comes preaching the kingdom and rule of God; he challenges and confronts the abuses of the religion of his day; he brings 'good news to the poor, and recovery of sight to the blind.' Who he is challenges his closest followers – Peter confesses him as 'the Christ, the Son of the Living God', and then denies him; Judas, one of the Twelve, betrays him. And so the one who has 'the words of eternal life' ends as a scarecrow figure tortured on a cross, screaming at the darkened heavens 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?' That death is not only the death of this God-bearing man, but the death of the hope and faith he had kindled in those whose hearts he had touched. The world on the day of this man's dying, which echoes and fulfils the dying of so many crushed under the evil tyrannies of the world be they be past or present, leaves us hopeless and helpless. The sun of righteousness is blotted out.

Yet the story of Jesus that we tell, and go on telling, is not a story of darkness, despair and death, it is a story of victory and transformation and new creation. That dying was absolutely real; the evil encountered was no illusion. The God whose creative word called all things into being, is the living word who calls the new creation into being through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The story is now crucifixion-resurrection, a deep rhythm resonating in every situation of despair – in martyrdoms and persecutions down the ages; in the gulags of Stalin's Russia; in our unique coming to the point of death. 'Christ is risen and the demons are fallen! Christ is risen and hell has lost its prey! Christ is risen, and life reigns!'

As we come again this year to enter into the mystery of our Lord's death and resurrection it is that we may be transformed by the sacrificial love which reaches into the heart of darkness, and catches us into new and eternal life. Pope Benedict in his remarkable new book *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week from the entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, writes of how 'in the trials of life we are slowly burned clean; we can, as it were become bread, to the extent that the mystery of Christ is communicated through our life and our suffering, and to the extent that his loves makes us an offering to God and to our fellow men....In the message of the New Testament, and in the proof of the message in the lives of the saints, the great mystery has become radiant light.' 'In Jesus' Resurrection a new possibility of human existence is attained, that affects everyone and that opens up a future, a new kind of future, for mankind.'

To Dunk or not to Dunk...

Is it *really* a question?

Have you heard the following good advice?
Don't just *do* something. *Stand* there!

It's not as silly as it seems. And it's not a misquote either.

As Christians we always seem to be rushing around, busy, busy, busy *doing* things. If we pause for a minute to catch our breath we're off on a guilt trip. So many people who've never heard of the Beatitudes, so many hungry mouths to feed, so many babies being either legally slaughtered or dying of starvation, so many homeless, loveless, friendless, people on this planet earth, we simply haven't *time* to sit down and draw breath.

Jesus said "go ye into the world and preach the Gospel to all nations." Some of us take it literally forgetting that the world can be our own backyard, our family, our immediate friends, our neighbours, the cashier at the supermarket. Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not suggesting that we grab a soap box and rush out to evangelise willy-nilly. I'm suggesting that we take our example from our Saviour who lived and moved within a radius of a few miles from the place where he was born with twelve mostly bedraggled, illiterate and probably uncouth followers in tow and yet managed to change the face of the world. We don't *have* to race frantically halfway across the globe to carry out his instructions.

Which is where "stand there", comes in.

In the NT we read that Jesus stood in the Jordan to be baptised by his cousin John. He didn't rush in for a quick splash and out again because he had so many things he needed to accomplish in his short life. No, he stood quietly in the water.

And that one act has become probably one of the most divisive acts among present day Christians denominations and indeed through the ages.. To dunk or not to dunk.

Jesus was "dunked". Did he have to be in order in order to carry out his ministry? I don't think so. He would have performed incredible miracles, preached wonderfully challenging sermons, harangued the church leaders, condemned hypocrisy, raised women who were no more than chattels 2.000 years to a status where he honoured them and gone to the cross for us whether he had been baptised by John or not.

•

But he made a public stand.

Baptism by immersion is called the baptism of repentance and nothing can be more humiliating than to have to publicly repent. Saying sorry is bad enough. But repentance goes deeper. No-one who doesn't truly believe would ever willingly consent to it. It's not glamorous, it's not exciting. It is an inelegant experience especially for a woman to be drenched in public. To stand before a congregation of mostly familiar faces in a dripping wet nightshirt with her carefully coiffed hairdo hanging in rats tails around her ears. You may be thinking, well why this silly act which apparently serves no useful purpose. Isn't it enough to trust and believe? Why do I have to take a bath in public? Being dunked doesn't change anything. It's only water after all. What does baptism *do*? Baptism does nothing by itself. But it is a symbol. In all its forms it, is an act of beginning, a statement to the outside world that that person has begun a new life. And it changes the person who submits to it.

Does this make those who baptise in other ways wrong? Those who are sprinkled instead of dunked? Of course it doesn't. Does this mean that an Anglican baptism is invalid? Certainly not.

Baptism began 2.000 years ago as an adult rite by which followers of Jesus entered the church. As time went on baptism became less and less of an adult rite and more and more for children. Most of us who are Anglicans were baptised as infants, we don't remember anything about it. Babies cannot decide for themselves so an Anglican baptism has a different meaning. It is an introduction of a child, usually as a young baby, into the church, a rite which should be followed up in later years. It is an "avoir" if you wish on the confirmation of baptism which that infant will undertake when he or she is at an age to decide, or not, for himself, or herself. Like adult baptism by immersion confirmation is a calculated thought out decision. There is no pressure. Unlike infant baptism, it is a voluntary act on the part of the participant. To say that an Anglican infant baptism is invalid would be to invalidate the faith and love of the child's parents and their "home" church. Our infant baptism was a symbol of our parents hope for our future faith which many of us confirmed during our teenage years.

Then why the controversy? The dissention? The bitter words which have been exchanged about the validity of one or another kind of baptism? Why can't we of different Christian denominations concentrate on what unites us, rites we all believe in, instead of fighting and quarrelling, often tearing one another apart over details which when brought back to base are really very unimportant.

So perhaps that advice I heard years ago and passed on to you at the beginning of this article could be put to good use. Instinctively we know that a good life is a life based on both contemplation and action, not too much or too little of either. We stand and then we do. So why not take time off from doing and just stand, and think, weigh the options and *then* decide.

If we haven't yet been dunked, doused or sprinkled perhaps now is the time to consider doing so..... But only you and God can answer that one.

Noreen Riols

On the lighter side

WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

Gerry is merry
Ozzie is fuzzy
Dawson is awesome

Abe's a babe
Nancy is fancy
Dick is quick

Larry does tarry
Oswald is bald
Vic is sick
Ernest is honest
Shirley is curly

Hannah's good mannered
Evan's in heaven

Eddie is ready
Andy is handy
Charlie can parley
Harry wants to marry

Len has the gen
Otto plays lotto
Veronica plays the harmonica
Emily has family
Shaw is poor

Olga's from the Volga
Frank has rank

Yve's alive
Owen loves rowin
Una eats tuna

Tim is slim
Hugh is huge
Emma can't remember
Mary is scary

Tracy is racy
Odette's in debt
Oscar's a star

*** **

"If you want to know why Christianity is different, try thinking of something blasphemous to say about Thor."

G K Chesterton

If you suffer from insomnia, instead of counting sheep; try talking to the Shepherd

Anon

C'est Clare ?

In 1979 I moved to Yvelines to work as a Norland nanny and thanks to contact with Julian Brown in Oxford I immediately started attending St Mark's on Sundays and was adopted by the Yakovleff, Brown and Chedgey families, attending a homegroup in Noisy le Roi on Saturday evenings. I fell in love with the church family and was very impressed with the bilingual nature of family life here. St Marks supported me with love and prayer as I went off to Theological college and a year later I came back to visit with my new "friend".... a young ordinand called Paul. Phyllis Yakovleff immediately said she would pray he would become the chaplain of St Mark's...

Paul was a French language graduate so when he was ordained and we were married we used to think it would be fun if God called us to France and in particular to St Mark's. In 2004 through a chance conversation with a mutual friend of Jackie Whitbread's in Hong Kong I found out there would soon be a vacancy for a chaplain at St Mark's and Paul and I knew God had just opened a door...

We have LOVED the last 6 years here with you; although our eldest two sons have not shared in the experience of living here, Toby and Nick jumped straight into life here and school in the International section at Buc. They were really helped by friends who made the enormous transition to French "scholarship" much easier. They were then 10 and 13, and are now nearly 17 and 20!

For me it was wonderful to move from the centre of a bustling city to an old vicarage with beautiful garden conveniently near the forest so we can often enjoy walks straight from the house. I will never forget the moment of arriving from the airport in April 2005 to see the garden at its best, the house full of flowers and all our meals arranged for that week. Two evenings later we were taken to the theatre (International Players) to see the Pirates of Penzance and that is where we met several of our new congregation, so on the following Sunday Paul was able to celebrate his first communion service here knowing over 50% of the congregation by name! We loved that sense of community.

Of course everyone agrees that the hardest thing about St Marks is losing friends, often several in a batch. We all hate that and can feel bereft and discouraged. But, as we know, St Mark's is a superbly WELCOMING church and new lovely people come and join us. Thanks to home groups it is possible to make close friends and find the support we all need. Our Tuesday evening group started six years ago with just a few members, Mike, Pat and Bernadette are still regular and faithful, but we have grown to 14. I also attend a morning Ladies' group where loving friendships and prayer support are also fundamental.

•

It has been a privilege to talk about Burma and Christian Solidarity Worldwide, thank you for your interest and response. It has been thrilling to welcome ladies and men to the Prayer Breakfasts and I will never forget the Nights of Prayer we had a few years ago, nor the fantastic barbecues, Carols Under the Stars, Nick's baptism and more recently Marge, Alexandre, Aurea and Bernadette... THRILLING!!! God is at work. The cardboard testimonies in November were awesome, Paul and I just sat and wept as so many of you testified to what God is doing in your lives. You know sometimes it can be quiet and lonely and it might be difficult to see God at work but on Sunday mornings as we stand and worship Him together and on occasion when we testify to each other what He is doing, there is no place I would rather have been.

Now, just as dramatically as in 2004, God is calling us away. As Alan Kendall said at the AGM, Paul's ministry is bigger than St Mark's and St Mark's is bigger than Paul. Hallelujah! This is GOD'S church, not ours, although I have felt like your mummy for over 6 years, He knows the plans He has for you. He wouldn't call us away unless He had someone in mind just right to come and serve the Lord with you.

Thank you for your love and fellowship.... hold on... already I have heard, "All the best" and "We'll miss you"... sorry, but not yet folks, I am NOT ready to say Goodbye!!!!

Clare Kenchington

*** **

Please don't laugh

The Police Nationale have asked the Marksman to publish the following message : last Saturday at around 15h10 a police vehicle backing *out of* the courtyard of the Versailles Commissariat was hit by a police vehicle backing *into* the courtyard. Nobody was hurt but both vehicles were badly damaged. If any member of the public witnessed the incident - please shut up about it.

*** **

Thieves last night broke into a police warehouse and stole the entire stock of dark blue trousers.

Police are looking.....rather silly.

**** **

A thief last night broke into a warehouse and stole a carton of cigarettes and a bag of carrots.

Police are looking for a rabbit with a bad cough

Mind how you go



Modern Science and Creation

This article is a condensation of an article that I found in the French economic magazine VALEUR ACTUELLE. It's the compilations of the findings of scientists from a variety of different disciplines giving an amazing explanation in scientific terms of the 7 days of creation according to Genesis. An underlying assumption of this article and one that most Theologians and Christians adhere to, is that the word "day" referred to in Genesis, is a relative term. It's not a time lapse of 24 hours, but rather billions of years.

THE FIRST DAY

Genesis 1:1-3 "In the beginning when God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate. The raging oceans that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness and the power of God was moving over the water. Then God commanded: "Let there be light and light appeared."

A vast majority of the scientific community subscribe to the commonly known "Big Bang" theory. Briefly, it states that the origin of the universe was a result of the transformation into mass of the energy of a huge explosion which occurred some 15 billion yeas ago. It's the reverse of what happens in a nuclear reaction where mass is transformed into energy according to Einstein's equation $E=MC^2$; The vibrations from this explosion can still be detected to this day which substantiates the theory. We read in verse 1 of Genesis 1 that the earth was "formless". Indeed it was because the newly created mass which would later become Earth was still in the form of individual particles which were being hurled into space in complete disorder with incredible velocity.

Previous to the Big Bang and before the formation of the atoms, the fundamental physical constants such as the speed of light, the Newtonian gravitational force, the mass and electrical charge of neutrons and electrons (the building blocks of the atom) had to have been established. to an astounding degree of precision.. If not, the nature of the universe as we know it today would be radically different . For example, if the mass and electrical charge of the neutrons and electrons where different, the universe would consist of only hydrogen atoms. There would be no oxygen atoms and therefore no water. With no water, life could not exist. The following question has to be begged: Who established these constants to such a degree of accuracy? It could not have been hazard! The answer is God, the master planner of infinite intelligence.

And further in Genesis 1:1-3 , we read that the "raging oceans covered everything". How does science explain this since the Earth had not yet been formed? We know that celestial bodies contain vast amounts of ice. To give an example , a comet collided with the Earth in 1910 with a force equal to a 12 megaton thermal nuclear bomb. It was nothing other than a huge block of ice. Thus we can account for the "raging ocean". And raging is it was, as the water vapour which would later form the oceans was also being projected into space at horrendous speed

Then we read that God commanded: "Let there be light". When reading this passage, one normally takes this to mean the light of the Sun but not at all. In fact the Sun does not appear until verse 16, or the fourth day of creation. What then was this "light"? At the instant of the explosion, the energy from this primordial ball of fire was in the form of plasma. As the plasma expanded, creating mass, it released an enormous amount of electro-magnetic energy. A large portion of this energy was in the visible wave length spectrum. This same light was detected by the Astronomers Penzias and Wilson which earned them a Nobel Prize!

THE SECOND DAY:

Genesis 1:6-7: Then God commanded: "Let there be a dome to divide the water and to keep it in 2 separate places and it was done. So God made a dome and it separated the water under it from the water over it. He named the dome "Sky".

What does this mean in scientific terms? As we saw above, the universe is made up of in large part of ice; The oceans make up just a minute fraction of the total water existing in the universe. For example, the core of the planet Saturn known as the Ice Planet, consists mainly of water ice and helium ice. The famous rings around Saturn are blocks of ice and rock, . Thus science is in exact agreement with the Bible on this account. The water on the earth is separated from the rest of the water in the universe by the "sky", with exception of course of the odd comet which collides with the Earth.

THE THIRD DAY:

Genesis 1: 9-10: Then God commanded: "Let the water below the sky come together in one place so that land will appear and it was done. He named the land "Earth" and the water that had come together, he named "Sea".

In 1912, the German meteorologist Alfred Wegener postulated that the continents were formed from a single land mass and travelled thousands of kilometres to their present location. At the time he was not at all taken seriously. Now this is considered by present day Geologists as fact. Even the layman can see as he looks at a globe how South America and Africa fit together like a giant jig saw puzzle. If the water came together in one place, then the land also had to be in one place before they split and formed the continents. Here again science is in complete agreement with the Bible.

THE FORTH DAY:

Genesis 1: 14-16: Then God commanded: "Let light appear in the sky to separate the day and the night.....So God made 2 larger lights, the Sun to rule over the day and the moon to rule over the night.

Until this point in time the full light of the Sun was obscured by dust still existing in the Solar System

Dust was also created by meteorites colliding with the Earth. When the dust near the Earth coalesced forming the moon, the light of the Sun (and the moon itself) appeared fully on the Earth.

THE FIFTH DAY

Genesis 1: 20-23: Then God commanded: "Let the water be filled with many kinds of living beings and let the air be filled with birds. So God created the great sea monsters, all kinds of creatures that live in the sea and all kinds of birds.

It is universally accepted that life began in the sea and later birds appeared on land. Here there can be no quarrel.

between the Bible and modern science. What science cannot explain and never will is how life its self began.. The conclusion has to be drawn that the 150 billion atoms that make up the DNA molecule, which is the building block of all living beings, could not have haphazardly come together and then decide to duplicate itself!

THE SIXTH DAY

Genesis 1: 24-26: And God commanded: Let the Earth produce all kinds of animal life and it was done. And God made them all. Verse 26-27: Then God said: "And now we will make Man he will be like us and resemble us. So God created man making him to be like himself".

We note here that the word "make" is used referring to the animals whereas God "created" the fish. The difference between the verb to create and the verb to make is important to consider in this context. When one makes something he

transforms basic materials into something more elaborate like making a statue out of a lump of clay. Whereas when one creates something, he brings into being something entirely new that didn't exist before in any form. What relevance does this have in our discussion? Simply that God created life in the sea but He didn't recreate life on the land in form of animals. He transformed sea life in order to "make" animals. However when we read verse 26 we see that God created man. This means that God created something 'new". Here we come in conflict with Darwin's theory of evolution which states that man evolved from apes.

In fact, many anthropologists are beginning to doubt the validity of the Darwin theory. The anthropologist Steven Stanley observed from a study of fossils of animal and plant life of identical species spanning over millions of years, that very little change occurred. Recently a living survivor of a prehistoric fish was found. Astoundingly, it is identical to its fossilized ancestors that lived literally millions of years ago.

With regard to man, the species "Homo Erectus" which is considered to be the predecessor of Man according to Darwin's theory, didn't evolve much over its 1.2 million years of existence as compared to the spectacular development of the "Homo Sapiens" (Man) in his relatively short period of existence (from 160 000 BC). In other words there is a sharp discontinuity of the normal evolutionary curve. The conclusion being that God created something entirely new when He created Man. Anthropologists have yet to find the famous and allusive "missing link" between Homo Erectus and Homo Sapiens. We they ever?

I add this comment as a footnote because it was not discussed in the article nor is it in the same context. In verse 26-27 we read "God said: and now we will make man and he will be like us". This phrase is in the 1st person plural so therefore he was speaking to "someone". Who was that "someone"? It was Jesus of course, the second person of the Eternal Trinity!

(Thanks to Paul Simmons who contributed the nuclear physics paragraph which was not in the original article that I translated)

John MILLER

Extra-mural activities

It is said that the Church is the only association that exists mainly for the benefit of non-members. Marksmen and women are active in all kinds of ways in the wider community in the Versailles area. Here are just a few of their initiatives. To avoid their blushes, (and remembering Matthew 6 v 3) we'll call them Able, Baker, Charlie etc.

Able gives English lessons to inmates in a high-security prison, and works at encouraging more non-church associations to use our building.

Baker uses his office job to engage with people; it's not just a case of avoiding any dishonest finangling, he says; just answering the question "why don't you come down to the pub at lunchtime?" can spark a discussion about our faith and what it means to us.

Charlie organizes weekly meetings attended by young mothers with their children. She aims to create a definitely Christian, but non-threatening environment which particularly welcomes those who for whatever reason do not attend church.

Delta conducts a telephone campaign directed at people with English-sounding names in the Versailles area. He aims to reach out to people who don't know of St Marks' existence.

Echo Foxtrot and G (along with a whole band of others from two other local churches) offer Saturday breakfast to SDFs and anyone else who needs a coffee, a croissant and (most importantly) an ear to listen.

These are only a few of the things that the people around you on Sunday are doing Monday to Saturday. What about you? Don't leave it to others. (Remember Luke 10 v 2!)

That controversial Avignon exhibition

There's always an opportunity to speak of the Good News!

I recently signed a petition against an exhibit currently on in Avignon, which includes an image of the cross in a glass of urine, by an American artist.

I also wrote the following to the people responsible for organizing this exhibition:

To the trustees,

You have agreed to exhibit these dishonorable "works of art" in your institution. I am not writing you as an offended Christian but as a challenged believer. It's very difficult to write such an email because I do not know where you are individually with regards to the Good News of Jesus Christ. Have you not heard of it at all or do you totally reject it? Maybe you don't have any opinion about it and you have accepted this exhibition in the name of the so-called "liberty of expression"?

I know only one thing: that God loved us so much that he sent his only Son to die in our place, to reconcile us to Him. Thousands of humiliating exhibitions could never erase this truth, could never sever a believer from the love of God. I only hope that you, the trustees, will meditate on this. At least this exhibition will have had a positive impact, apart from soiling the image of Avignon.

Aurea Laranang

(a few days ago this exhibit was attacked and damaged by what the press reported as "un groupe catholique". Some Christians, while deploring the violence, defended the action as justified in the face of extreme provocation. What do you think?)

Ed

Our extended family (news from former members)

Jonathan Wilmot, former chaplain of Saint Mark's, now Vicar in a UK parish West of London, writes:

"We are enjoying life at Greyfriars', though we are facing challenging decisions about best use of our (700 year-old) buildings. I joined Sue on a Bible Society trip to Tanzania with some great fun supporters in November looking at projects - and a couple of game parks".

Sue Wilmot enjoys the people she spends time with at Bible Society and the work it involves. She went on a fascinating trip to China in 2010 and will return in 2011 with some supporters. She and Ciffy (daughter) had a wonderful time taking her father to visit relatives in Australia. Jonathan and Sue have two sons: Tom works with Vodafone and lives in Oxford. Mike graduated from Sandhurst last year and is now serving with the Household Cavalry.

Only very senior members of Saint Mark's will remember **David Vail** who was Chaplain here from 1977 to 1982. On Easter Sunday a year ago he and his wife Sue were officiating at a dawn Communion service on Lake Baringo in the Rift Valley, where twenty members of their far-flung family were present. In September 2010 he suffered a heart attack, and thanks God and Reading Hospital for his survival and recovery. Last Christmas David and Sue hosted a Grand Family Gathering with sons and daughters flying in from East Africa and New Zealand. David worships regularly at Greyfriars' Church (see above) and he regularly meets not only the Wilmots but also former St Mark's members **Audrey Haydock** and **Mary Chorley**, both living close by.

John and Joan Pickles divide their time between their flat in Singapore and their home near Aberdeen (Scotland), although John's job means he has been spending most time recently in a South Korean shipyard. They suffered a shock and a financial setback when their house in Scotland was extensively damaged by blizzards. They are now arguing with insurers (not easy when you're on the other side of the globe). John writes:
"We are currently in Victoria, Australia having just a few days holiday in our new motorhome. It will all be over in 2 days. I then return to Korea and Joan to Scotland."

Steve and Murielle Ozanne (who joined us for worship just recently):

“It’s been two years now since we last visited since Marks so it was a real pleasure to catch up with so many friends just before Easter. It was also very special to be there for the baptisms. We have been living in Guernsey for nearly three years now and feel really settled. We have joined an Anglican church in St. Peter Port which is fairly similar to St. Marks. Steve has returned to work for the local telecommunications company he used to work for and Murielle is a part time infant teacher. Chloé loves school and Nicolas, who currently attends pre-school three mornings a week, can’t wait to start real school in September. We really appreciate living close to family and a slower paced way of life”.

Beki and Nathan Lambert write: Just wanted to let you - our friends at St. Marks - know that Beki and I are expecting our first child!! It's obviously fantastic news for the two of us. Due date: October 30th 2011. Big love to all of you, and thanks so much for contributing to our blessed spell at St Marks.

*** **

French for advanced students

The *passé simple* is a tense few people ever use once they’ve passed their Bac. A pity, it can brighten up your correspondence (and probably baffle your readers). Try these for size :

C’est dans ce tonneau que notre vieux vin fût.

Les moines brassèrent la bière et la burent

C’est bien parce que vous m’avez invité à goûter votre Beaujolais que je vins

Comment ? D’enfiler correctement ce pantalon, incapable vous fûtes ?

Diary for May-Sept 2011

May

May 8th Ladies' Prayer breakfast 7h30

May 14th Pizza and Prayer 8 pm

May 18-21 France Archdeaconry Synod

May 28 Men's prayer breakfast 8h30

May 29 Infant Baptism

June

June 2 Ascension Day

June 5th GUEST SERVICE

June 10th Pizza and prayer 8 pm

June 12 Pentecost Sunday

June 13-17 ICS Conference, Beatenberg, Switzerland

June 22-24 Mois Molière: "Shakespeare and All That!"

June 25 Wedding of Mikael Schetter & Murielle Gardret @ St.Mark's

August

Aug 8-12 New Wine Europe, Leuven, Belgium

September

Sept 4th Paul & Clare's departure

October

Oct 8 KINGDOM TRAINING DAY

THAT wedding!



Robin Kenchington and Louise Wellman were married in a civil ceremony in the Swan Hotel in Wells, Somerset, UK on April 11th. Louise is a Primary school teacher near Chard and Robin is based in Yeovil flying Lynx Helicopters as a Flight Observer in the Navy. The best man was Phil Kenchington and Nick and Toby both read during the service. Nick, Phil and

Vanessa had all flown in from Singapore in the days before and managed not to show too much jet lag! The official photographer was none other than Laura Simmons, do see her website for Franglais Photography if you want to be impressed.

Lieutenant and Mrs. Kenchington left afterwards for a honeymoon in Italy.



St Mark's Anglican Church, Versailles
In the Diocese of Europe
founded in 1814

St Mark's is a self-financing chaplaincy working in partnership with:
The Intercontinental Church Society, 1 Athena Drive, Tachbrook Park,
Warwick CV34 6NL United Kingdom

“Reach out for God and find Him...”

31 rue du Pont Colbert, 78000 Versailles

Tel: 01 39 02 79 45 Email: office@stmarksversailles.org Web: www.stmarksversailles.org

Chaplain:	Paul Kenchington	01 39 02 79 45
Associate Chaplain St Paul's:	Elaine Labourel	01 69 04 09 91
Administrator:	Kevin Bodsworth	01 30 95 84 49

Evangelism Coordinator:	Kevin Bodsworth	01 30 95 84 49
--------------------------------	-----------------	----------------

Music Ministry:	Paul Kenchington	01 39 02 79 45
Children's Programme Coordinator	Hilary McCullough	01 45 37 28 73
Churchwardens:	Alan Kendall	01 39 18 62 28
	Barry Saunders	

Deputy wardens:	Mike Hudson, Karen Thorley, H��l��ne Wilkinson
------------------------	--

Lay Council:	Elizabeth Coy, John Ferrero (Tres) Davy McCullough, Mark Richerds, Paul Simmons (Secr), Nigel Reavley
---------------------	---

Archdeaconry Synod Representative:	Jim Watkins
---	-------------

Worship:

St Mark's	9.00am	1st Sunday	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.30am	1 st Sunday	Morning Worship (CW)
		2 nd & 4 th Sundays	Holy Communion (CW)
		3 rd Sunday	All-Age Family Worship
		5 th Sunday	Praise & Prayer
5.30 pm		Evening service	
St Paul's Chevry	5.30 pm	1 st , 3 rd & 5 th Sundays	Holy Communion (CW)
		2 nd & 4 th Sundays	Evening Prayer (CW)

Association Culturelle D  clar  e (d'apr  s la loi de 1905)