

Rector's Ramblings

September 2007 - No 4

Dear Friends,

It has been a long time since the last Rector's Ramblings; there are a variety of reasons for this, and I hope that you have been kept informed in the intervening period by other means. I intend to make this a more regular means of communication from now on, especially as there is a lot happening at the moment, which I am very excited about, and I want to share it with you!

September always brings new beginnings, not only for all those involved in the world of education, but also for the church. Many people will have come back refreshed from summer holidays, and from summer conferences such as New Wine, Soul Survivor, Greenbelt, and Grapevine, and will be re-energised for serving God. Those of us who attended New Wine were very encouraged by it, and one fruit already in evidence is the new Friday evening prayer time from 9-11pm. I would strongly encourage you to take part in this time - its focus is very specific: prayer for the church, for the community, and the interaction between the two.

A theme which has emerged from several conferences, and around the country in other ways, is that we should be taking the Good News of Jesus into our communities in imaginative and relevant ways. This is, of course, something the Church has always been in the business of, but it seems to be at the top of the Lord's agenda at this time. Let's put it at the top of ours, too!

With every blessing,



ALL SAINTS MILTON

New All Saints Milton logo

You may have noticed a new All Saints Milton logo appearing around the place, and might be wondering where it came from. Well, there is a story behind it! I was being prayed for after one of the talks at New Wine this summer, and, quite suddenly and without warning, a picture of the old All Saints logo (the arch with the cross inside) popped into my mind. I had the very strong impression that the Lord was saying to me that it had to go, and be replaced by something else. This seemed rather random and trivial, so, as I asked the Lord about it, he reminded me of something the speaker had said, 'During the charismatic renewal in the 1970s and 1980s the Dove (the Holy Spirit) was trying to get into the church. Since then, the Dove has been trying to get out!'

The old logo could be seen to suggest that the Gospel/God/the activity of God is inside the building, and anyone who wants access to any of that needs to come to us. However, we are committed to an outward focus at All Saints, and to taking the Good News of Jesus to our community. So the old logo, although it has served its purpose well, should be replaced. That was all fine, but it then took another two weeks before the Lord led me to a new one!

The new logo, as you can see, is modern, friendly, slightly humorous (with the halo above the letter 'i'), and contains the name of our community. The letter 't' as a cross shows that the Cross of Christ is still at the centre of our life and message, and is the means by which God makes us his saints, his holy ones. The word 'all' on its side links Saints and Milton, and shows that the two are inclusive of one another. I hope you find the new logo helpful, and useful. You can download a copy of the logo from my website for use in documents, presentations, etc at: www.revdc.net/logo.html.

Road to Maturity - A new course by Mary Pytches

As Christians we are all on the road to maturity but sometimes the journey is made harder by unresolved issues from the past which block our path. This course is designed to uncover what these might be and to implement their removal so that we may continue along the road unhindered by the past. The course runs for six weeks on a Monday evening, starting 17th September. Full details from Julia, David or the Church Office.

I would be glad to receive your comments or suggestions about any aspect of the life of All Saints Church.

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On Sunday 30th September, we will be introducing **Hope 2008** to All Saints Church.

This is a national initiative, the vision of which is to make 2008



in our villages, towns & cities

a year of hope for our villages, towns and cities, with linked activities throughout the year bringing the hope of Jesus to our communities through word and action. The idea is that this should not just be for 2008, but that it will build a legacy for the future. I am very excited by the possibilities that Hope 2008 offers, and I hope (!) you will share that excitement when you find out more about it. If you can't wait until the 30th, check out the website at: www.hope08.com.

2008 - Year of Mission

At the PCC in July, on the recommendation of the Mission and Giving Group, it was agreed to apportion 10% (£9,300) of our expected general unrestricted income for 2007 in varying proportions to the following organisations: Neil and Jackie Hutchinson; Tear Fund; CMS; African Enterprise; Open Doors; Mission Aviation Fellowship; Cambridge Youth for Christ; EACH (Hospice); New Wine; Jimmy's; plus a small amount for a Rector's Discretionary Fund for local emergencies. (Full details are available from Hamish Kidd, PCC Secretary.) It was also agreed that we would make 2008 a *Year of Mission*, with a focus on each of these organisations each month at our 'All Together' services. It would be good to have a local representative for each of these groups - if you would like to help with this, please speak to me. My hope is that this will raise the profile of Mission, help our prayers, and keep you all better informed about the very worthwhile causes supported by our corporate giving.

2007 Alpha Course - you can be involved!



Alpha

As you will have heard, we're running an Alpha course this Autumn; it will start with the Alpha Supper in Church on Wednesday 26th September. Eleanor Williams will be leading the Course, assisted by Alan Skull and others. Please continue to pray for this - and if anyone would like to volunteer to host the course in their home on Wednesday evenings from 3rd October to 12th December, I would be very pleased to hear from you. (It could be divided between more than one home, so that one was not committed every week.) We also need volunteers to provide meals for each week - the more who volunteer, the better! Please make your offers to Helen in the Office about this.

Most importantly, please prayerfully consider who you might want to invite to the Supper. As you know, Alpha is primarily intended as an introduction to the Christian faith, so I would hope to see a majority of people who are not yet Christians on the course. However, if you want to invite someone, and think it would be helpful to accompany

them on the course, that will be fine. Also, if you've been around the Church for a while, and would like to brush up on the basics of the Christian faith, and have never been on Alpha before, then it's for you, too! Invitation cards will be available from the Office soon.

Alpha has been mightily used by God around the world as an introduction to the Christian faith, and we have seen it impacting lives in our own Church in the past - please give it your full support.

Are you a prophetic person?

One of the things that came to me very strongly from the teaching at New Wine this year was that the early Church operated with a five-fold ministry consisting of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers (see *Ephesians 4*). The ministry of the Body of Christ was on the basis of gifting, not office. A key verse is Ephesians 4.7: *'But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it...'* The five-fold ministry is for *everyone* who is a part of the church; all will have some call to one of these areas.

The other day, I read through the book of Acts at one sitting, to get an overview of the way the early Church functioned, and how the Good News was spread so effectively by so few people in such a short time. One of the key ingredients was the role of prophetic people. At virtually every point where a change of direction was required, or a major decision had to be taken, a word, vision or dream was made available to guide the mission, to warn, or to direct.

In my own experience, such prophetic words have been extremely valuable in guiding decisions and ministry. However, I feel that this aspect has been somewhat neglected at All Saints in recent times, and one of my notes from New Wine simply says, 'Who are our prophets?' Are you someone who hears and listens to God? Do you enjoy being alone with God, waiting and listening? Do you receive pictures, words, impressions, dreams or visions? Do you often feel that these are significant for yourself, others or the Church? Would you like to meet up with others and explore this area of ministry together? You are invited to a brief meeting after Morning Worship on Sunday 16th September in the Small Hall, to find a time to meet together to discuss and pray about this important area of ministry. If you can't make the 16th, please e-mail me and I'll send you more details.