



outlook

The newsletter of Highgate United Reformed Church
Pond Square Chapel, South Grove, Highgate, London N6 6BA



Our Summer spent in Ghana

Mark Thompson writes about his and Jennifer's summer in Ghana as volunteers for the Ashanti Development charity.

Last August Jenn and I travelled to a small village called Gyetiase, situated in the Ashanti region of Ghana. For those who know the country or who are curiously looking on a map, Gyetiase is about 40 miles north east of the second city, Kumasi.

The reason for our journey was to volunteer for a charity called **Ashanti Development**. The

charity was originally set up by Ghanaians living in the UK, who wanted to help tackle the extreme poverty of their home villages in Ghana. They had already put hard-earned money into rebuilding the primary school, but wanted expert help with water and sanitation. They turned to friends in the UK, and before long, an appeal was set up to get Gyetiase connected to the water pumping station at Mampong, about two miles away. This involved laying pipes along the road. The taps were turned on in 2005 to much rejoicing, for a round trip to collect water from the stream for the women and children of the village can take up to an hour. However, it is not all good news because, for whatever reason, the water company have not felt it necessary to keep a regular flow of water coming.

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Outlook Editors: Andrea Protheroe (contact details on back page) & Laura Templeton

At the same time each house was given the raw materials for a latrine and the villagers set to work digging deep pits and constructing the framework. This has made a huge difference to the general health of the villagers. Work would probably have stopped there but for more regular donations and a commitment on the part of those in the charity to spread the work to other areas and other villages.

A medical centre was constructed in Gyetiase by the villagers, and the charity employs a local eye care nurse who does out-reach work in neighbouring villages. It is hoped a full time nurse will be employed to provide community health care. The clinic also provides rooms for volunteers from overseas, who go out as we did, to work in the village and its surrounds. The charity employs a cook and a cleaner. The volunteers pay around £50 a week for all their needs.

Other areas where the charity is helping include setting up farmers' co-operatives and micro-credit loans for the women. They have both proved very successful and the men and women relish the opportunity to earn extra money to help their families. Some of the women sell fish and others make school uniforms. Each woman works in a team and has to submit a business plan. Regular repayments have to be met, otherwise the others in the team have to make up the difference.

And so back to our journey to Ghana. We arrived late one Saturday evening having endured a painful bus journey from Accra. Fortunately other volunteers were already there and waved our taxi into the clinic with torches. The next day we met the village elders and "explained our mission". Jenn, being a primary school teacher, was to work in the junior school each morning and I, with no useful skills, was to purchase mosquito nets and put them up in a nearby village.

Jenn worked with a local teacher and taught the Junior classes each morning, and did basic English with the primary children in the afternoons. The children's understanding varied quite a bit but they were all willing learners and enjoyed Jenn's different methods of teaching. Outside the classroom the children would gather in great numbers to play skipping or listen to a story read by Jenn. One of the volunteers brought some blow bubbles which everyone in the village loved. So many times we heard the request, "Jenny, just one bubble, please?"

My work took me to Kumasi where I bought 50 mosquito nets for the people of a very poor village called Old Damman. Most afternoons I would walk the dusty road with Esther, the eye care nurse and my trusted translator. We gave a net to every expectant mother and every baby under one year. I took all the tools I needed, but some of the houses were





quite difficult to work in. Standing on rickety beds probably broke the Health and Safety rules. However, I managed to put up all the nets and no-one missed out.

One of the offshoots of this project was to spot malnourished children and provide a supplement made of roasted and milled beans, nuts and corn. Apparently it tastes nice mixed with hot water. Another little boy was

brought to us suffering from a temperature and a nasty cough. We rushed him to the hospital where he was treated for malaria and a chest infection. For the price of an expensive meal for two it was fabulous to see him fit and well a week later. Esther sent us a letter recently saying he was still doing well.

The hospitals in Ghana are quite good and the government offers health insurance to those who can afford it. Because none of the villagers fall into this category, anyone wishing to buy health insurance for a family can do so through Ashanti Development. With this in mind we bought a family of six children all under 11, health insurance for five years for less than £250. Certainly money well spent.



And so five or so weeks later we returned home having had an exhausting, though extremely rewarding time in Ghana. So much so, we are going back in August as Jenn and other teachers are setting up an education strategy, which includes teacher training. We are hoping to take 20 young people with us to help in the classrooms during this time. If you know anyone who might be interested please get in touch. For further details about the charity, check out the website www.ashanti-development.org

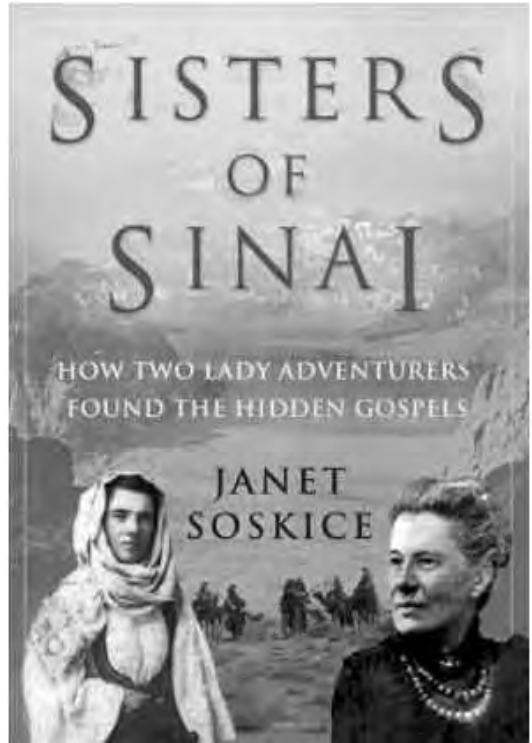
If you have any other questions please feel free to talk to Jenn or myself.

Mark Thompson

Sisters of Sinai, by Janet Soskice **(Chatto & Windus)** **2009**

This is the first popular account of the discovery in 1892 by two Scottish sisters of a Syriac version of the Gospels dating from the second century, and so one of the earliest versions in any language. Who they were and how they did it is at this distance quite as remarkable as the discovery itself.

The sisters, Margaret and Agnes, had been taught by their late father to travel, but always to learn and speak the language of the countries they visited. In this way they had already mastered Greek, Arabic and Hebrew on earlier travels in the Middle East when, in their fifties, they resolved to visit the monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai. A Cambridge academic friend had told them that the secretive Greek Orthodox monks almost certainly possessed a valuable old document in Syriac, a language close to the Aramaic of Jesus.



Agnes mastered Syriac, and the new skill of photography, and with the permission of the monks' superiors in Cairo the sisters made the eight day journey into the wilderness on camels, guided by Bedouin. As usual, they saw no need for male chaperonage. They were well received and made good friends of the monks who showed them a small, grubby, compacted volume which Agnes steamed apart with a kettle. It was a palimpsest - vellum written on and later over-written. The writing underneath Agnes recognised as the four Gospels in Syriac and of some antiquity.

They returned to Cambridge with 400 photographs of the document, to meet at first indifference and then, when the photographs were examined, hostility at the presumption of two amateurs, and women at that, to dabble in such matters. Eventually, however, the value of the sisters' find, and of their ready acceptance by the monks, was acknowledged. The sisters, and a party of three Cambridge academics, two accompanied by their wives for propriety's sake, set out to transcribe and date the document. There were tensions during the work as the academics sought to claim personal recognition for what they could see was a major find, and more in-fighting on their return, but eventually the transcription was published, with an introduction by Agnes which won scholarly praise. The document remains one of the most important Biblical discoveries of all time.

This is a slim account of the central story of the book. But also fascinating is the account of the rest of the sisters' lives. They were twins, but separated only on Margaret's honeymoon. When Agnes married, Margaret, newly widowed, went too. They were wealthy after their father's death, but neither a London finishing school, buying their clothes in London, nor living in Cambridge most of their lives quelled their Ayrshire accent or Presbyterian values. Their marriages were each too brief to change the tenor of their lives which was to use their money wisely. When they travelled it was to learn, and only once, going up the Nile, was their journeying at all fashionable. Visiting Jerusalem, by riding from Jaffa side-saddle, one hand on the reins, the other holding a guide-book and a parasol, and camping in a tent at night, was more their style.

Their particular interest to us is that it was their idea, and their money, which built Westminster College, Cambridge, where most URC ministers are now trained. There is a minor Highgate interest too in that one of their younger friends, whom they encouraged to travel, was Mary Kingsley, whose blue plaque is in Southwood Lane.

The sisters have to make do with their formidable portraits in Westminster College Hall. (But at least they hang alone as the dead white males have been shoved upstairs by the new woman Principal. They would appreciate that.)

This book is readable and full of lasting interest, as the BBC recognised by choosing it to be read on Radio 4.

John Thompson



Visiting preachers

I sometimes fear we take our visitors for granted so I asked if I could mention those we shall welcome in the first quarter of 2010.

First **Roger Scopes**. He comes as a rule twice a year, but when sudden illness prevented his visit on 3 January he promptly emailed his sermon for **Susan Chinn** to read, with other notes for prayers and a full set of hymns already agreed with Robert Manning. Susan will preach on her own account in February and we value too her willingness to do so with some regularity.

Then **Roger Orme**, the associate minister, who led two of our Christmas services. Until the summer, he will be with us once each month in the New Year except February and again I think it helps his ministry among us that we welcome him so regularly.

Donald Macarthur, the associate minister of St Andrews, Frognal, will be paying his annual visit in January. **Geoffrey Roper**, who visited Highgate for the first time last year is coming again in February. As he is relatively new to us, perhaps I could add that in retirement from Churches Together in England, where he was secretary of the Free Churches' group, he is helping Lumen, the URC congregation in Tavistock Place. He is one of the denomination's notable preachers.

We shall welcome one first-time visitor in March: **John Scott**, the URC Chaplain to a number of universities in London, including London Metropolitan which I suppose is our local university.

John Thompson

Farewell to David Trafford

The Rev'd David Trafford has been the half-time Minister at Union Church Crouch End for sixteen years. As Minister in our Area of Shared Ministry, he has occasionally led us in worship during preacher exchanges. He is taking early retirement from the pastorate but continuing his work half-time as a Synod Pastoral Consultant. His last Sunday at Union Church will be the 21st of February. We wish him well in his semi-retirement.

Focus on Prayer

During 2010 we are being encouraged by the United Reformed Church's Vision4Life process to focus on Prayer. The following prayer calendar has been composed by Norah Spence, Christa Keeler and Julian Templeton. They welcome new suggestions for prayer in successive editions of Outlook.

Prayer Calendar Pray and give thanks for...

January

Individuals with responsibilities in our congregation:

Minister – Julian Templeton
Elders – Cheryl Berkeley, Susan Chinn, Pamela Furse,
Junior Church Leader – Sára Zöld
Christian Meditation Leader – Gwyneth Wilson

Individuals in particular need of prayer

Robert Courtney – as he convalesces after a triple heart-bypass
Tony Morgan – as he seeks new accommodation

Local Church Activities

Good relationships between the churches in Highgate
Temporary residents and volunteers of the Haringey Churches' Winter Shelters

February

Individuals with responsibilities in our congregation:

Associate Minister – Roger Orme
Elders – Robert Gorrie, Christa Keeler, Laura Templeton
Director of Music – Robert Manning
Pulpit Supply Secretary – John Thompson
Administrator – John Wheeler

Individuals in particular need of prayer

Josephine Music's brother Max Gorham – for full recovery from pneumonia
Laura Templeton's sister Angela – for relief from her many long-term health problems

Local Church Activities

Churches Together in Highgate ecumenical Lent Groups
Clients and volunteers of the Muswell Hill Churches' Soup Kitchen

A prayer for Epiphany by Alan Gaunt *(altered)*

Glorious God,
In a world where nations strive for dominance,
in which rulers imagine that peace can come from war;
and where innocence is sacrificed on the false altars of high ideals,
help us to find the true ruler of our lives in the helplessness of the child whose star was followed by wise men.

And as we make our hearts his throne,
let us dare to believe in a time when the whole world will become wise enough
to kneel, and lay down all pride,
at the feet of innocence;
and where every new-born child will be loved, cherished, nurtured into wisdom,
growing up into joy,
surrounded by justice and peace.
Amen

Both prayers taken from *Gathered to the Heart of God*, Prayer Handbook 2010, London: United Reformed Church, 2009

A Prayer for Lent by Alan Gaunt

God, forgive us
when our own comfort
takes precedence over your truth.

God forgive us,
when we think we can use you:
asking for miracles
to serve our own purposes,
while people around us suffer
the inconveniences and sorrows of life.

Give us such trust in you
as the source and strength of our lives,
that we do not flinch
from the wildness and troubles of the world.

Surrounded by the world's anguish, grief
and shame,
and with all life's temptations
to power, influence and wealth,
let us never stop worshipping and serving
you.

Turn our stony hardness
into your living bread, with Christ,
to feed the world.
Amen

Revised Common Lectionary

- 17 January** John 2:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10
- 24 January** Luke 4:14-21; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19
- 31 January** Luke 4:21-30; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6
- 7 February** Luke 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13); Psalm 138
- 14 February** Luke 9:28-36 (37-43); 2 Corinthians 3:12 - 4:2; Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99
- 21 February** Luke 4:1-13; Romans 10:8b-13; Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91, 1-2, 9-16
- 28 February** Luke 13:31-35; Philippians 3:17 - 4:1; Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27
- 7 March** Luke 13:1-9; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8

Diary Dates

January

- Tuesday 12** 10:30 am CTH Visit to 'The Sacred Made Real' exhibition at the National Gallery, meet at Archway Underground Station
- Wed 13** 7:45 pm Home Group, 'The Lord's Prayer', 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
8:00 pm HASM Discussion Group 'Is the book dead?', Pond Square Chapel
- Friday 15** 12:30 – 1pm Christian Meditation
- Sunday 17** 10:30 am Worship led by Rev'd Donald Macarthur
- Monday 18** 2 – 4 pm Open Door Gathering
- Wed 20** 7:45 pm Home Group, 'The Lord's Prayer', 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
- Thursday 21** 9.45 am TLS LITE Study Group, 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX
- Friday 22** 12:30 – 1pm Christian Meditation
- Sunday 24** 10:30 am Worship led by Rev'd Julian Templeton.
Sermon: "...and in the life everlasting"
11:45 am **Church Meeting**
6:00 pm United Worship for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Highgate School Chapel, North Road, N6
- Monday 25** 8:00 pm CTH Theology Group, Athanasius' 'The Incarnation', 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
- Wed 27** 7:45 pm Home Group, 'The Lord's Prayer', 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
- Thursday 28** 7:30 pm Management Committee
- Friday 29** 12:30 – 1pm Christian Meditation
- Sunday 31** 10:30 pm Worship led by Rev'd Roger Orme

February

- Monday 1** 2 – 4 pm Open Door Gathering
8:00 pm CTH Theology Group, Athanasius' 'The Incarnation', 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6
- Tuesday 2** 2:30 pm St Michael's Fellowship, 'Theological Diversity in the OT', Rev'd Dr Thomas Renz, StMPR
- Wednesday 3** 7:45 pm Home Group 'The Lord's Prayer', 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG

Abbreviations:

HASM Highgate Area of Shared Ministry **CTH** Churches Together in Highgate

FURY Fellowship of United Reformed Youth **StMPR** St Michael's Parish Rooms, South Grove, N6

Thursday 4	9:45 am	TLS LITE Study Group, 42 Onslow Gardens, N10 3JX
Friday 5	12:30 – 1pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 7	10:30 am	Worship led by Rev'd Geoffrey Roper
Monday 8	2 – 4 pm	Open Door Gathering
	7.30 pm	CTH Representatives' Meeting, St Joseph's Church, Highgate Hill, N19
Tuesday 9	2:30 pm	St Michael's Fellowship, 'The Gospels in the very Early Church' Rev'd Prof Leslie Houlden, StMPR
Wed 10	7:45 pm	Home Group, 'The Lord's Prayer', 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
	8:00 pm	HASM Discussion Group, 'The Cathars', 31 Fordington Road, N6 4TD
Friday 12	12:30 – 1pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 14	10:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev'd Julian Templeton
	6:30 pm	United Evening Worship at PSC with London Gallery Quire, Sermon: 'The Psalms in Christian Devotion' led by Rev'd Julian Templeton
Monday 15	2 – 4 pm	Open Door Gathering
	8:00 pm	CTH Theology Group, Athanasius' 'The Incarnation', 17 Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SD
Wed 17	11:00 am	Ash Wednesday Service of Holy Communion at St Michael's Church, South Grove, N6, followed by
	12 noon	Talk by a representative of 'Children in Distress, Romania'
	1pm	Lunch
	7:45 pm	Home Group, The Lord's Prayer, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 19	12:30 – 1pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 21	10:30 am	Lent 1 Worship led by Susan Chinn
Wed 24	7:45 pm	Home Group, Lent Course, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 26	12:30 – 1pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 28	10:30 am	Lent 2 Worship led by Rev'd Julian Templeton

March

Monday 1	2 – 4 pm	Open Door Gathering
Tuesday 2		Deadline for Outlook submissions
Wednesday 3	7:45 pm	Home Group, Lent Course, 14 Southwood Park, N6 5SG
Friday 5	12:30 – 1pm	Christian Meditation
Sunday 7	10:30 am	Lent 3 Worship led by Rev'd Roger Orme

Thought for the Day

5 November 2009

BBC
RADIO

92–95 FM &
198 LW



Rhidian Brook

I knew I had a problem when I found myself attempting to read my emails on my laptop while sitting in the bath. I'd even filled the tub with my wife's pine oils so that I could enjoy a moment of relaxation, and yet I just couldn't stop myself from balancing the computer over the bubbles and checking those messages. The next day my addiction was confirmed by my daughter who, when I offered to listen to her reading said: 'what's the use Dad, you'll still do your emails at the same time.'

It seems I'm not alone in my struggle to keep the necessary but addictive traits of communication technology from becoming a tyranny. Over half of us spend more time with our computers than our spouses; while researchers at Loughborough University have found that an office worker works an average of three minutes before being interrupted by email – and that it takes them 64 seconds to recover their train of thought after that. That's a lot of people struggling to think straight.

The technology adds a lot to life and I'm not sure I could do my work without it; but there are times when I feel the constant access creates a kind of restless, electronic fidgeting – and a dependency that not only eats up the mental attention and makes intellectual focus hard; but that blurs the distinction between rest and work leaving me un-relaxed, tetchy and actually less likely to communicate well.

When Samuel Morse sent the first 'electronic message' in 1844 with the words: 'What hath God Wrought?' he was already anticipating that newer and quicker forms of communicating would be both a blessing and a curse. The challenge for us – with technology about to unleash a platform that will allow us to simultaneously twitter, phone and email – isn't so much to put up a Luddite resistance as to ask 'how we can best live with this stuff?'

There's no question that we're creatures wired for communication but it can't just be about speed and immediacy – or even about words. Indeed, the monastic traditions saw self-control, listening and not speaking as essential for the kind of deep communication some believe we were created for. 'Be still and know that I am God' – the psalmist wrote, or to paraphrase: 'switch off, dial down and tune into another kind of communication – the kind that allows the mind the experience of a deeper, uninterrupted level of thought – where creativity and complex thinking can happen and where we may even hear a different voice.

I once tried an experiment just before starting work of sitting in a chair for half an hour without doing anything, thinking anything or trying to communicate with anyone. It's an exquisitely difficult exercise and one I failed badly. But before I drop my laptop in the bath or ignore my daughter again, I'm going to give it another try and maybe, with God's help, I'll be able to sit there not sending messages – until I get the message.

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Christian Meditation



Meditation

Half an hour
of stillness

All Welcome

Every Friday
12.30 – 1.00

This is held every Friday from 12:30 – 1:00 pm in the Chapel and everyone is welcome. We have a brief introduction, meditate for 20 minutes in silence, and end with a short prayer. At Meditation on Friday 6th November our group of Meditators was very sympathetic towards the writer Rhidian Brook's dilemma about the addictive nature of communication technology. We were also appreciative of his comments about how sitting doing nothing for 30 minutes is "an exquisitely difficult exercise"! (see opposite)

Freewill Offering

Hopefully everyone in the church has been sent the leaflet on the changes we are making with our freewill offerings. Here is a reminder of it and please don't forget to fill out your Standing Order form and give it to your bank.

If you have any questions, please contact David Woolcock on 020 7272 7294 or Julian Templeton on 020 8444 5076.

How Standing Orders can help your giving

Do standing orders pay many of your household bills? If so, then giving by standing order is a very practical way to take seriously Paul's teaching to the Corinthians.

- It underlines the importance of our giving by making it a priority alongside all our important financial commitments
- It helps us plan our giving as part of our normal expenditure. We know that we are giving what we decided to give
- It helps us plan our giving in relation to what we receive or earn
- Standing orders mean no more last minute desperate searches for cash to put in the envelopes

- If you cannot be in church for any reason you know that your giving is up to date

How Standing Orders can help the church

Giving by standing order is enormously helpful to the church and treasurer

- It makes administration much easier – we will no longer have to open, count and record envelopes – and keep them for six years
- It is more secure than taking cash to the bank
- It helps the treasurer judge the cash flow situation and minimises bank charges
- It keeps income steady even when people cannot be in church.



PLEASE DONT TURN OFF YOUR PHONE IN CHURCH!

Frontier Youth Trust (FYT) has launched a project that will lead to a huge increase in Christian youth work that is on the street alongside young in the UK! They want to grow at least 36 new local StreetSpace projects in the next 3 years and develop a national network of Christians who are working with young people in their own neighbourhoods. FYT have secured £60,000 to start the project, but needs to raise a further £100,000 to make it all happen.

For 3 years FYT has piloted StreetSpace effectively and creatively engaging young people on the streets in the South West. The project has been welcomed by young people, local police, councils and Christians and has requests to start or support similar projects across the UK.

To make StreetSpace happen nationally FYT is launching the 'widow's mite appeal'. FYT is asking Christians everywhere to text their individual mite to make a huge difference".

So please turn on your phone (even in church) and text the word MITE to 82540 calls will cost £1.50 and over a pound will go directly to the StreetSpace initiative. Text with all your mite (excuse the pun). www.widowsmite.org.uk

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Evening Worship

Finding it a struggle to get out of bed on these cold and dark winter mornings to come to morning worship? We have the perfect solution: come to evening worship! On **Sunday 24 January, 6:00 PM at Highgate School Chapel** there will be a service for the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**. The Chaplain will lead, the School Choir will sing, the Minister of the Hinde Street Methodist Church will preach, and there will be wine and nibbles served afterwards. On **Sunday 14th February, 6:30 PM** at the Pond Square Chapel there will be united worship with authentic West Gallery Psalmody provided by the **London Gallery Quire**. Julian will lead and the sermon will be on the Psalms in Christian Devotion.

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A note of thanks from Norah Spence

May I take this opportunity to thank the six members of the church who have so kindly over the past few years driven me to and from the church to take part in Sunday services and other church functions. They have not only used their cars but have armed me across a sometimes slippery courtyard, put me in the lift, and delivered me to a good seat. I am very much indebted to them for allowing me to be as active a member as I can. A happy New Year to them all!

HASM Discussion Group

13 January 8pm Subject: **Is the Book Dead?** Leader: **Heather Floyd** (8348 5963)

Venue: **Highgate URC**

What is the future of the book – indeed the whole idea of reading – in our increasingly visual age where the average attention span is about eight seconds. Indeed, does it have a future? Why do people feel increasingly guilty about sitting and reading a book, evidently preferring their computers or watching TV, which they feel are bona fide activities. Will electronic books make any difference? Or will we lose the ability to create our own images in our own minds altogether – in short, our imaginations?

10 February 8pm Subject: **The Cathars** Leader: **Simon Abbott** (8455 6537)

Venue: **Mary and Graham Stacey, 31 Fordington Road, N6 4TD** (8883 3131)

It has been said "Catharism was the most successful heresy of the Middle Ages. Flourishing principally in the Languedoc in France and Northern Italy, the Cathars taught that the world is evil and must be transcended through a simple life of prayer, work, fasting and non-violence." The story is a bit more complicated, with links back to the Gnostics and – inevitably forward to the Da Vinci Code; and also as part of the web of Languedoc culture. The priests really were good or "Perfects", and they included women. They were cruelly suppressed by a Crusade of Northerners, avaricious for land and wealth. But is there a continuation. . .?



Coffee and Flowers

A new blank rota is up on the noticeboard in the Lounge and we hope that those who enjoy being served refreshments after worship will also take a turn serving refreshments to others: **PLEASE sign up on the rota**. If you would like to put flowers in the church, please put your name beside the date you choose.

Redesigned Church Website

www.highgateurc.co.uk

Laura Templeton has completely redesigned and expanded the church's website using WordPress. The result is an attractive site that can be easily navigated to find information. There are many more photographs included (if there is photograph of you or your children on the website that you want removed, email laura@templeton.me.uk). Currently, there are six sermons that can be downloaded as pdfs (under the 'worship' pull-down menu) and we intend to make 'Outlook' available to download as a pdf. The website can be updated and amended quickly and easily, so if you have any suggested changes or additions, please email Laura.

News of Friends

David Harker sent good wishes to the Church and to "those who remember me". He and his wife, Jill, are kept busy with Church and other duties and now have two grandchildren.

Donald and Betty Richter send greetings and write, "It was so lovely to see all our old friends from Highgate. It was a great treat for our whole family. Thanks to all of you for arranging such a wonderful program of such variety for all of us to enjoy. Please give our holiday greetings to all at the URC and relay our gratitude for including us in all the wonderful anniversary celebrations. We have lots of happy memories and Martha, David and Laura enjoyed walking themselves and Emma and Eric down their memory lane after 6-7 years in London. What a treat!"

Jean Gauld sent us a cheque in remembrance of the Buchanan family and we will use part of this to put flowers in the church in January, after the Christmas tree and decorations are removed.

Robert Courtney had his triple heart bypass operation on 4th January at the National Heart Hospital. When Julian visited him on the 6th he was making a good recovery.



My Favourite Charity The Commonwealth Countries League

Marion Uglow writes:

The Commonwealth Countries League (CCL) is a voluntary pan-Commonwealth civil society organisation. It was founded in 1925 by a group of women from many countries that make up today's Commonwealth. The objectives are to secure equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women and to promote mutual understanding throughout the Commonwealth. It promotes the education of girls and young women and links women's organisations throughout the Commonwealth. In particular, it raises money for its associated charity the CCL Education Fund. This charity sponsors bright, needy girls to give them equal opportunities for secondary/high school education in their own countries. Nearly 3000 girls from disadvantaged backgrounds have been supported in this way. Their progress is closely monitored and their success stories are heart-warming. The CCL believe that educated girls with a well-developed sense of responsibility are more likely to provide a better future for themselves as well as for their communities. Sponsorship has enabled needy girls to enter many professions. The CCL raises money for the Education Fund through informative talks and social functions. Their largest fundraiser is the annual Commonwealth Fair organised in association with spouses of the Commonwealth High Commissions. This is a wonderful, vibrant, colourful fair usually held in the autumn in Kensington. If you would like to know more about the CCL, please contact the Executive Chair, 37 Priory Avenue, Sudbury, Middx., HA0 2SB, Email info@ccl-into.org, or speak to me. It was through CCL that I found Zakia Ahsan who kindly came twice to talk to us about Bangladesh.



Theology Group

January & February 2010

Monday Evenings: 7:45 for 8:00 PM start

Venue: 17 Southwood Lawn Road, Highgate, N6 5SD

On the Incarnation Athanasius

New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996

(limited copies available from Julian Templeton at £10)

25th January Sections 1-18, pp. 25-47; Creation & Fall – Incarnation
(Leader: Maxine West)

1st February Sections 19-32, pp. 48-64; Death and Resurrection of Christ
(Leader: Maxine West)

15th February Sections 33-57, pp. 64-96; Refutations of Jews and Gentiles
(Leader: Julian Templeton)

Coordinator: Julian Templeton julian@templeton.me.uk 020 8444 5076

Spring Ceilidh?

We are hoping to organise this for mid March, so any one interested in assisting in any way, please phone Laura on 020 8444 5076 or email laura@templeton.me.uk.

Wednesday Evening Home Group 7.45 - 9.50pm.

After the Christmas break, we are continuing our reflections on the meaning and application of The Lord's Prayer. During the season of Lent we shall be following a specially prepared Lent course which will run for five Wednesdays leading up to Palm Sunday. Details are listed below:

Wednesdays, 13, 20, 27 January; 3, 10, 17 February – The Lord's Prayer.

Wednesdays, 24 February; 3, 10, 17, 24 March – Lent Course.

Our weekly gatherings at 14 Southwood Park, Southwood Lawn Road, N6 5SG are friendly and informal and we should be delighted if you would like to join us. It is not too late to make this one of your New Year resolutions!

Should a temporary change of venue be necessary, this will be announced during the previous Sunday morning service and listed in the 'events' on the church website (*see page 3*). Lifts, door-to-door, can be arranged – please let me know.

Roger Orme. 020 8458 2144 or 07966956160



Nativity presentation by the Junior Church

The Nativity Play this year was as wonderful as ever. As the children grow older, so does their confidence so lots had a speaking part using the microphone so all could hear their words. The children were not the only performers on the day. Julian had everyone in the congregation doing an action song based on the Christmas story. Why should children have all the fun!

