

The Messenger

and Mayflower Hall News

Billericay United Reformed Church

Joint Pastorate with Brentwood and Ingatestone URCS

MEMBER OF CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BILLERICAY



*A large team of our children's leaders were affirmed in their work:
They are pictured here after the service with some of the children.*

September 2008

A Yorkshireman looks back on his life in Essex

Life in Palestine under Occupation today

***Prayer:* the power we are not always aware of**

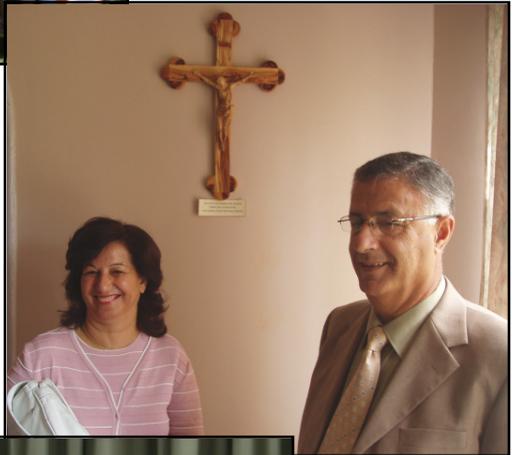
News of all our Harvest and Autumn events

Pictures of the Month



The Chernobyl Children and their hosts at the afternoon they spent at Lee Mount.

May and Ibrahim Jaber pictured with the cross donated to us by their Greek Orthodox Church in Beit Sahour



Wendy Kelleher opens messages from well-wishers as she bows out of First Steps

NOTES FROM THE CHURCH SECRETARY

If all goes to plan, we will be welcoming Kate Hackett at our worship on 31st August (this will be a busy day for Kate, who is scheduled to rush off afterwards to a Synod FURY event, in her role as Secretary for Young People's Work in the Synod.) You may recollect that Kate will be serving the three churches of our shared pastorate until next May. Naturally, we hope that this will be a fruitful contribution to her training for the Ministry. Feel free to say hello to Kate!

By the time you read this, most of you will probably be already looking back on the summer holiday break. To those of us whose holiday was in June, it seems a quite distant memory! But I trust that you are refreshed from the break.

The next few months start with a full programme in our church life. In September, there will no doubt be busy preparations for our Octoberfest, alongside harvest celebrations and Church Weekend. Some will be involved with the Essex Show at Barleylands (13th/14th September). Our weekly activities will start up again. There will be services at Hillhouse Court (18th September) and Mountnessing Court (21st September).

At our Church Meeting on 17th September we expect to continue looking at our church life. The Task Group for Review of the Future - Kenton Church, Simon Houlton, Lorna Jacob, Trevor Jamison, Rachel Stenhouse and I - plan to make a first report on the 17th. Some of you will want the Task Group to move more quickly; others may be apprehensive as to where it all might be leading. Please be assured that we will endeavour to move as quickly as possible, but starting with a careful look at where we are now, including those valuable features that make us distinctive.

Possibly less visible during September, another Task Group will be working on how we should use the Vision4Life material on the Bible; it is intended that this will be introduced to the congregation starting around Advent.

At the meeting of Churches Together in Billericay on 31st July, we also had a forward look. We learnt that the Methodists will get a new

minister – Judith Maizel-Long – on 1st September. Also on 1st September, the Billericay Prayer Network is to be strengthened through the first of what is hoped to be a monthly drop-in time for prayer and scripture reading at St. Mary Magdalen. We heard about new Alpha courses – a Ladies’ Breakfast Alpha starting on 11th September at Christ Church on Perry Street; a Youth Alpha starting on 15th September above Costa Coffee in the High Street.

As well as a presence at Barleylands, Churches Together also plan to be involved in the Billericay Fun Night on 3rd December. Longer term, the flower festival organising committee – reflecting on the June event at St Mary Magdalen – are recommending that Churches Together do something similar in 2010.

Getting to know India through the eyes of a Christian Aid Worker

On October 15 Emma Grant of Christian Aid will speak to us about her recent India journey, and the work of Christian Aid in this country. She'll be showing pictures of the people and their lives and problems, and inviting us to join in games and activities.

The meeting – actually a Church Topic Meeting – will be open to people from other churches, and we hope you'll be there too! The meeting starts at 7.30 and will be in church.

HARVEST SUPPER

Saturday 20th September

Harvest Celebrations are looming and we are having our traditional Fish and Chicken supper:

On Saturday 20th Harvest Supper starts at 5.30pm and we are aiming to eat at 6pm with entertainment continuing afterwards. If you are coming please sign the list in the Vestibule and select your food option.

Additionally, if you are able to bring apple pie or apple crumble, or can bring salt and vinegar please indicate this on the list. Remember to bring your own cutlery and hopefully you don't mind washing it up at home. Please bring your own beverage if you want an alternative to water, tea or coffee!

Finally, the cost of your meal (£4.50) is payable on the night. Please give Dianne or Alan 24 hours notice if you have signed the list but are then unable to attend. Also if you would like or are able to provide transport please indicate on the list in the Vestibule.

...And after the Harvest Supper, the Auction!

After our satisfying harvest meal the entertainment will be in the form of an Auction, the proceeds of which are going to **Health Help International**. Our auctioneer for the evening will be Simon Houlton. This will be our second auction, the first one was held many years ago when we were fundraising for our church refurbishment.

If you have anything that would be suitable for auction please contact Valerie or Simon. More details will be given in the church notices nearer the time. Dianne.

Harvest Festival Service at Mountnessing Court

On Harvest Festival Sunday, 21 September at 2.45 pm, we are holding a Harvest Service at Mountnessing Court. Colin Hunt will lead the service, but we need your support to come along to sing and socialise with the people who live there. We hope to take Harvest gifts and flowers. A list will be on the vestibule table nearer the time for anyone needing a lift.

“Er, Minister, do we have a policy on accepting GM vegetables for the Harvest Festival”



Mayflower Ladies Ploughman's Lunch for the Alzheimer's Society, Friday 19 September

Tickets are now available for the Ploughman's Lunch, which will be held from 12.30 to 2 pm in the Mayflower Hall. The tickets at £6 each are available from Shirley Moulton (Tel. 653557) The Lunch is part of this year's fundraising by the Mayflower Ladies for their chosen charity this year, which helps in alleviating the effects of Alzheimer's Disease.

Our MacMillan Coffee Morning: Friday September 26 at 9.00am – noon

Once again we will be hosting a **MacMillan Coffee Morning** at the Mayflower Hall. This will be our 12th event for this wonderful cause. All we collect will go to fund MacMillan Cancer Care in Essex. The cumulative total for the 11 so far is £2804.

Please reserve the date and bring a friend or two, you will find invitations on the vestibule table for you to use. Please give MacMillan your best support.

Dennis Jordan



On Sat 13 September
the church
will be open
to receive riders
taking part in the
Friends of Essex Churches
cycle ride,
now known as
'Ride and Stride'.

The Latest News from Health Help International

You may remember Ron Prosser who came to our church some time ago to talk to us about the work of Health Help International. At the end of August he will be retiring from the day-to-day running of HHI but he will remain as Chairman of the Trustees. Ron has been contemplating this for some time as he believes that to secure the future of the charity it is essential that younger people should be more involved with its running and new initiatives are essential to keep up with today's world. Mrs Jute Williams, who has been working for HHI Zambia for some time, has agreed to take over Ron's work as an unpaid volunteer and the other existing volunteers will continue giving her the same support as they gave Ron. I have sent greetings and best wishes for the future to Ron from our Church.

The HHI Harvest Project for 2008 is Isca Village, 15 kms outside Monza. It was being set up when Pat Cairns and I visited Monze. They have built little roundel houses for elderly people and families of disabled people to live in, and are trying to give them a sustainable life style. A well has been dug, tomatoes, cabbages and bananas have been planted and recently chickens have been added. Now Isca village needs two cows and a cow shed. This will give much needed milk and nourishment for the folk. If you wish to send HHI a donation for their Harvest Appeal please contact Margaret Dunn for details.

It's "Musicals" for

Our Christmas Bazaar – Saturday, 8 November

Please make a note of the above date in your diary so that you can come along with your friends and have a good time. The bazaar will be from 10 am to 1 pm in the Mayflower Hall, and the theme this year is *Musicals*. We are expecting there to be bursts of songs from shows every so often during the bazaar, and the stage will be decorated with a musical theme. We hope stallholders will decorate their stalls and dress up with their choice of musical, and that the children will come in fancy dress as well.

In the meantime many people have volunteered to help and if there are others who would like to help on stalls, to have a stall or help in any way please let me know. If you have anything you can give to stallholders for their stall the following is the list:

Mayflower Ladies, contact Vera Fletcher – they are running the cake stall and bric-a-brac.

ARK – the children and parents will be having a homemade stall – cakes, jams, biscuits etc.

Robin and Margaret Derbyshire will be selling *Palestinian Crafts*. The stage will be set up for the children to have activities. There will be Guess the Weight of the Cake.

Kenton Church will be running the *Book Stall* and would like books and DVDs.

Irene Mackenzie will be running the choir stall, and would like *toiletries and jewellery*.

Ann Mynott will be running the *Traidcraft Stall*. Diane Lough is doing the *Tombola Stall* and would be most grateful for suitable items for this.

Maureen Wasp with helpers will be running the *Toy Stall* and a toy tombola. Does anyone want to run the lucky dip, or a similar entertaining stall?

Miss Martin's cards will be on sale. Peter Brierley will be organising some games. Items for the *Handicraft Stall* please give to Margaret Dunn or Alma Hickmore. Brenda Rees will be organising the refreshments and will be grateful for your support.

Thank you in advance for your help and support – especially the backroom boys!



The Yorkshireman who made his home in Essex *Peter Brierley looks back*

'Go on, say something', pleaded the fascinated local lads in the playground at Buttsbury Junior School, gathering round the newcomer from the north, who spoke with a strange Yorkshire accent they had never heard before. And so 10-year old Peter Brierley whose family had arrived post-war from Halifax had to oblige. His parents with his uncle and aunt had saved up their petrol coupons to move to the South, to make a career change from their textile-based work into agriculture and horticulture. Uncle was a textile designer, and took up work in London. They took over the orchard at Stock Brook, and moved into a house in Norsey Road. From the orchard they were able to send lorry loads of apples back for sale in Halifax and Leeds.

For Peter it was a change for the better. He left the smoky atmosphere of the industrial north with its grime covered stone buildings, and the dreary school building he had known, lacking any field or facilities for games, or even a gymnasium. The Buttsbury School – then with just 100 pupils and much smaller premises than now - had a large open field and a much broader curriculum. For example the headmistress, Miss Corcoran was very musical and took the pupils by coach to festivals at Southend, and afterwards there was even ice cream for everyone! And the family house backed on to Norsey Woods, where Jake Leyland, the owner of the woods and other property in the town manufactured palings from the coppiced chestnut wood and there were anthills three feet high and six feet across. The family kept a pig ('Grunter') and Peter took him for walks in the woods, until the tearful day when the animal was slaughtered.

Peter duly won a scholarship to KEGS, where he studied until he was 17, and then transferred to Writtle Agricultural College with the intention of taking over the family business. He used to travel to Chelmsford on the bus with boys from Orchard House, set up in Stock by the West Ham Central Mission for boys from difficult homes in the

East End of London. This is how he first got to know the boys of the house, and its work, which was later to play such a large part in his life. He also became involved in the youth work of the Congregational Church in Essex, serving as a local youth leader, and was also a member of the Chelmsford and District and Essex Youth Councils.

With the horticultural business in decline Peter went to the teacher training college in Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, qualified as a primary teacher, and taught for 23 years at Sunnymede School. Here he had a special interest in the teaching of Maths, English and Science. But parallel to this he became involved at Orchard House, helping the boys with craft work, and giving them extra tuition with reading. Nobody was left unable to read. He didn't think of this as 'work', the individual attention he was able to give to the underprivileged boys gave him great satisfaction.

There was only one paid member of staff there, the Warden (Fred Beagles, known as Skip) and Peter became semi-resident taking over total responsibility for the boys when the Warden was away. The Mission took more care over its boys than many similar institutions, establishing links with local families who acted as some substitute for the broken homes they had come from. On leaving the Mission the boys were guaranteed a job and somewhere to live, together with a new suitcase and a suit of clothes. Christian observance and values were important, and Peter tells the story of a wonderful trip to London, when he took the boys to the funfair and the circus and they finished up a memorable day in a popular restaurant. As the boys prepared to tuck into their meal one of them called for silence round the restaurant and all the many surprised customers and Nippies witnessed the saying of grace.

The family had been permitted to build a house on the site of the orchard, as it was deemed necessary for the efficient and secure conduct of the business, and it was named Lee Mount after the district in Halifax. Although the orchard no longer produces apples for sale, this is where he still lives. When it was built there was very little traffic on Stock Road, the occasional doctor's or farmer's car, or perhaps the car of his illustrious neighbour Lord Perry of Stock Harvard, Henry Ford's right hand man in Britain, who had set up Dagenham in the thirties, and lived in Lilystone Hall at the top of the hill.

Peter became more and more engaged in Special Needs teaching, even when he retired from Sunnymede. For example he took part in a project for eight-year olds in Hackney schools. He finds that as youngsters master the skill of reading they take on a much more confident attitude to life. He even had a serious complaint from one mother that, whereas before he could read her son was quiet and compliant, now he was so full of confidence and initiative that she didn't know how to control him any more!

Orchard House closed in 1980, as the trend to fostering in families reduced the role of large institutions. However Peter continued his interest in youth work. For several years he has been closely involved in the CTB's Schools Ministry, which currently has its operating base in a caravan in the grounds of Lee Mount.

He reflects on the youth club he ran at this church for a while, and how it brought young people into church life, some of whom helped with Junior Church, and the discussions which developed at Friday evening club. Some of these former members are now going on to university. 'It is no good simply telling youngsters what they should believe', he says: 'they need to explore it. Sitting still for long periods is not for them. They have to challenge what they hear, they are idealistic, they cannot be manipulated, or if this happens, the results are likely to be short term. They should be given responsibilities in their homes, and not be spoon-fed. The aim is to develop socially responsible adults, who are not seduced by the all-consuming drive for material things.'

Apart from his involvement with young people, Peter works hard in very practical ways on other aspects of CTB's witness in the town, especially Barleylands and the annual Praise in the Park. He's even been known to assist with the local clergy's fraternal (sorry, fellowship) as an honorary, non-ordained member. The former orchard is now a well-equipped children's playground, which the Chernobyl children, among others, enjoy on their visits.

This month Peter celebrates a rather special birthday, and all his many friends will be wishing him many more years of active and enthusiastic engagement in the many-sided Christian witness of the church in Billericay.

'This cruel, inhuman, illegal military Occupation'

Ibrahim Jaber's bleak account of life in Palestine today

When Ibrahim spoke to us in July, inevitably his talk contained much that was sad and challenging, an eye-opener for those who only get their news from the British media. *'This is our side of the story' he said: 'our difficulties, our problems, our harassments'.*

Both May and Ibrahim can trace their roots back in Beit Sahour, the Shepherds' Fields part of Bethlehem, for 700 years – all that time their families were Christian. 'We were Christians before you. It is we who exported Christianity to you and not vice versa'. But the numbers of Christians in the Holy Land has decreased ever since 1947, when many were forced out of their homes in Palestine. 'We have lived with our Muslim neighbours for centuries and yes, nowadays, there are a few tensions – but the key factor is the cruel, illegal, inhuman military occupation under which we are living. In 10 or 15 years' time, when you visit the Holy Land, you may find only the dead stones of the empty churches, not the living stones, the Palestinian Christians.'

The present Situation in Palestine

We Palestinians in the Occupied Territories are about 4 million – 2.5 million on the West Bank and 1.5 million in Gaza. Since 1967, the Israeli military has issued 1500 military orders, small pieces of paper that manipulate the lives of Palestinians like a puppet show – you can lose your house, your land, your life through a military order.



Today, there are 147 settlements- 'colonies' is a better word - for Jews on the occupied Palestinian land of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. They contain 450,000 settlers. All such colonies are illegal under international law. Many are on the hilltops: the people of Bethlehem used to have a hill, a 'lung', covered with trees. These trees have now all been cut down and replaced by an



ugly settlement, which is spreading ever further down the hill slopes. Israelis will tell you they bought this land, but only 7% was actually bought. The remaining 93% was confiscated from the Christians and Muslims to whom the hill belonged.

The Israelis have constructed a so called security barrier. It is partly a wall, 8 metres high, and in other places a 'fence' but not as you think of a fence, a small division between neighbours. It is planned to be 723 kilometres in length, three times as long as the Berlin Wall and twice as high. It is supposed to separate Israelis from Palestinians but it makes deep inroads into Palestinian land. Over a million trees have been uprooted to construct it and over 250,000 of those are olive trees. The Palestinian farmer has always had a special relationship with his olive trees – so you can see what it means when olive trees are targeted. Each kilometre costs US\$ 1.5 million. *Will it bring any peace or security? The answer is 'No'.* It separates Palestinians from their orchards, their farms, their schools, their hospitals and brother from brother.

Strangling Bethlehem

As a boy, I used to go by bicycle or on foot the 7 kilometres from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. In the darkest days of the history of our land, Bethlehem was never cut off from Jerusalem – till now, but today Bethlehem is surrounded by the Wall, by large settlement blocs and by bypass roads, for the use of Jewish settlers only.



To go from Bethlehem to Jerusalem today we Palestinians must pass through a large checkpoint with revolving doors. We give it a jokey name- the “Chicken cleaner” - that is the name of a machine that spins round and takes feathers off chickens. Every time I go to meet a group in Jerusalem, I have to pass through it and show my permit; sometimes it is closed and I do not arrive at all. When May and I travelled from Beit Sahour, Palestine to Amman, Jordan before flying to England, it took us fourteen hours for a journey that used to take about an hour and a half by car. We had to queue at five checkpoints till the Israeli military let us through.

Some of you have asked about Hamas. It's a fundamentalist organisation which wants this whole country to be Islamic, just as there are also Jewish fundamentalist parties in the Israeli Parliament who call for the removal of all Palestinians from the Holy Land to Jordan. I myself do not want to see Israel destroyed, and the majority of Palestinians denounce some aspects of Hamas. But since 1991 peace talks have accomplished nothing. Many more settler colonies have been built and Palestinian land has become ever more fragmented. So Hamas became popular. In 2006 Palestinians held an election that was 100% democratic, and Hamas was elected. So you boycotted it. You condemn Mugabe for not having a democratic election. We held one and you didn't like that either. Why should the Gazans and the Palestinian people be punished for this?

We Palestinians are prepared to accept Israel on 78% of historic Palestine, but the kind of state we are being expected to accept is a swiss-cheese map of disconnected bantustans. The Arab Summit initiative of 2002 offered Israel a Palestinian state living alongside Israel in peace on the 1967 borders of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but Israel wouldn't accept it. We Palestinians are the weak side of the equation. Peace can only be made by the stronger side - it will not come with walls. It can only come with an end to this illegal and unjust occupation of the Palestinian people and their land.

What you can do – so Peace can prevail one day

1. Remember us in your prayers – that is very important.
2. Come and visit us, and don't be put off by Israeli propaganda that you will not be safe in Bethlehem. I can assure you that you will be.
3. Inform yourselves – do not believe all your media tell you. Dig much deeper.
4. Write to your MP or MEP and tell them what you know and ask them to change their government's policy.
5. Boycott Israeli goods, especially those labelled from the West Bank. I am not asking you to boycott Israeli goods for ever, but just as long as the Occupation under which we Palestinians live continues.

Prayer is.....

Many people remember the series of cartoons, 'Love is...' They were often thought-provoking, showing many different facets of love. Prayer is somehow seen as different, as one-dimensional, something we put into a box certain times in our worship, or at particular times in our daily lives. Perhaps that is why many people feel they are not good at prayer, the formal way. We should remember that Jesus showed his disciples that prayer was not just for specialists, but for all those ready to turn to God, in thanksgiving, in need and in penitence.



at
so
in

It does not need a special language or fixed words, though those may help us find the words we want to use. It is like the yeast in the dough, something whose power we are not always aware of, but essential to the bread of life. It can be the same in the life of the church.

For over a year, a few of us have been exploring the ways that praying together can strengthen our life of faith and be a sharing of concern for one another. The Prayer Fellowship has been meeting on the first Saturday of each month for half an hour from 9.15 am, with a cup of coffee and a chat at the end. Do join us for all or part of this time if you are able; requests for prayer are welcome.

Within our community and in the wider world, the need for prayer is an ongoing one. So if you, or someone you know, would like someone to pray with you or remember you at a specific time, please get in touch with us. The prayer board in the Church vestibule is also there for you to place any prayer requests. Angela Christian, Margaret Dunn, Robin Derbyshire and Ken Woods are among those who are part of the Prayer Fellowship.

Margaret Derbyshire (651689) and Pat Stockdale (623037)

Walking for exercise, health and company

The Fellowship meets the Ramblers

“Forget the image of woolly hats and boots”. Mrs Anne McLaren from the Ramblers Association told the Fellowship Group in June. Ramblers can be from 9 months to 90 years. She herself preferred strong sandals with good soles, but some walking groups insist on boots. She showed the lightweight bag that carried the essentials needed – a good map, a compass, first aid equipment, a cagoule, a bottle of water and good sturdy poles, with shock absorbers at the end. All equipment should be as strong but as lightweight as possible.

The Ramblers Association was founded in 1935, three years after the Mass Trespass on Kinder Scout in Derbyshire. One of the six brave souls who led the Trespass was Benny Rothman. Anne said that he had once asked her what was the largest group she had led and she said 65 people. He reminisced about the occasion when he could see a continuous stream of people going up hill and down dale as far as the eye could see.

The Ramblers Association now has 19 groups in Essex, 9 of them founded by Anne. The organization has many achievements to its credit through its campaigns to protect rights of way and access to the countryside. In 1949, footpaths (right of way) were included on Ordnance Survey maps. The 1968 Countryside Act meant that signposts on the road indicated where those footpaths were. The detailed work by the Ramblers on footpaths known as the Blue Book is now an authoritative guide in the legal definitions needed in public enquiries. Ahead lies the Marine Bill, giving access to all coastal areas. Essex has the second longest coastline of any country. The bill is now in draft, but if successful in the next Queen’s Speech, then a walk round the whole coast should be possible in the future.

The Access to the Countryside Bill would not be on the Statute Book without the tireless work of many volunteers, who have all helped in the compilation of the Definitive Maps of footpaths held by the Highways Agency. The Ramblers Association aims to preserve as much of the countryside as possible. Terry Foster is the area officer responsible for the area affected by the proposed extension to Stansted airport.

Most of all, the Ramblers Association promotes walking, through a variety of groups covering long and short walks and different ability levels. Walking brings many benefits – good exercise, health, friendship and company, as well as seeing more of the beauty of the countryside. The Ramblers Association produces books (Anne has written six herself), maps and guides, DVDs, as well as special leaflets such as the one about walking on restricted Ministry of Defence Land. More information is at www.ramblers.org.uk and www.essexarearamblers.co.uk

PRAISING TOGETHER

We pray as individuals and we pray together, seeking in our restless and over-materialistic world to find wholeness, to seek peace and to find stillness in the presence of God. Two short prayers express that longing. The first comes from Sacred Space prayer network. The second is from a little book published some years ago by the Leprosy Mission called 'Escaped as a bird'; in Japan a group of leprosy sufferers, including Nagata, found hope in the Christian message as they struggled with their condition.

God is with me, but more, God is within me.

Let me dwell for a moment on God's life-giving presence
in my body, in my mind, in my heart,
as I sit here, right now.

My Lord in me has found a dwelling place

And I in Him. Oh, glorious boon to gain

To be His temple! Gladly will I face

In His great strength all bitterness and pain!

O Lord, teach us to know you as we continue our journey and may we be your temples of faith, sharing your Gospel message with others in quiet humility. Amen.

Endpiece – by a member of the congregation

Give thanks to the Lord – singing the Songs of Harvest

When I was young, our church really did 'Harvest'. It was not so much a display of fruit and vegetables, but of the choir and congregation's stamina. Three services with a visiting preacher, and at each of them we

sang 'We plough the fields and scatter.' That detail from those times remains, whilst the spiritual message of the occasion has not been remembered. Singing the Lord's praises at Harvest was a cherished tradition in our church.

The Harvest celebration so dear to churchgoers is not a specifically Christian festival. Harvest fits rather uneasily into our hymnbooks. In 'Congregational Praise' (CP) published in 1951, Harvest hymns form a small group in a section towards the end of the hymnbook entitled 'Times and Seasons'. Here can be found the rousing hymns so beloved of my home church choir: 'Come, ye thankful people come'; 'Praise, O praise, the Lord of Harvest' and others. We absorbed a message of thankfulness, of God's purposes and of a final harvest home as we sang.

Forty years later, the new hymnbook 'Rejoice and Sing' (R & S) retained 'We plough the fields and scatter' for congregations even less familiar with direct growing of food crops. The hymn appears in the first part of the book 'God the Creator' under the theme of 'Praising the God of Creation'. Between the publication of these two books, a huge revolution had taken place, not least in the fresh food crops which we think of as our harvest, but now coming all the year round from many different parts of the world. As a society, we take for granted the abundance of food – thankfulness to God is not something many bother to think about.

The two books mirror different approaches to the world and to faith. In 1951, CP revealed the thinking of the time in its section of hymns called 'Social and National' with sub-sections 'The love and service of man' and 'peace and brotherhood'. Here and there in the book, there are echoes in one or two hymns of the fading British Empire which drove the missionary spirit, but this is much less evident than in its predecessor 'Congregational Hymnary'. R& S moved the hymns chosen into a different era. The 'Gospel in the World' covers the themes of 'Love in action'; 'justice and peace'; healing and reconciliation' - a need for a greater emphasis on a spiritual harvest as fruits of the Gospel, and a sense that God's harvest is a worldwide inclusive one, in which all have a right to share. This is also a message for our own society too.

I believe that each generation needs a new hymn book to challenge it to move forward, in proclaiming God's message through song. (This might

be an outrageous idea to many!) In our complicated modern world, we understand more about 'harvest' than previous generations did. There is not yet a Fairtrade hymn, but caring for those who are disadvantaged and powerless is part of the Gospel message and we can give voice to that.

There are hymns in our current hymnbook, 'Rejoice and Sing' which give us a searching understanding of the meaning of harvest and its fruits – in our own lives and in the world around us. One such hymn is 'For the fruits of all creation' by the late and very respected hymn writer, F. Pratt Green (R & S 42). It is a great hymn of thankfulness, for the fruits of creation, for the just reward of labour and for the harvest of the spirit. There is much to think about in its words:

... “in our world-wide task of caring/for the hungry and despairing,/ in the harvests we are sharing,/God's will is done.” (verse 2)

... “For the harvests of the Spirit../for the wonders that astound us/for the truths that still confound us,/most of all that love had found us,/ thanks be to God.”

May God grant to his world and to each one of us a harvest of his Spirit, and that through this we may learn a song that will reach out to one another in love.

The Messenger

Please let Dianne Lough have your copy for the October issue by **Sunday 14 September 2008**. Articles are welcome. Please speak to Robin Derbyshire at any time about any proposal you have.



Saint Alive!

This new sculpture of Nelson Mandela was spotted at the west door of Salisbury cathedral, alongside a now unidentifiable saint from another century.

Reform Magazine

What did you think of your free July issue of *'Reform'* magazine? Are you interested in subscribing for 2009? Please let Dianne know.



Into the Limelight Dance School



In the Mayflower Hall

Come along, have fun and learn to
Waltz, Cha Cha Cha, Foxtrot, Rumba, Tango, Samba,
Viennese Waltz, Paso Doble, Quickstep, Jive, Salsa, Argentine Tango.

Every Friday from 5.00pm

First class is free.

Please contact Emma on 0797 1313 100
for more details.



DO YOU WANT TO DANCE?

No partner needed

**COMPLETE NEW BEGINNERS
** LINE-DANCE CLASS****

**TO COMMENCE
WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER**

11.00 – 12.00

MAYFLOWER HALL, CHAPEL STREET

**SIMPLE ROUTINES TO NICE MUSIC – HAVE FUN, KEEP
FIT, MAKE NEW FRIENDS. PLEASE TELEPHONE IF YOU
NEED TO KNOW ANYTHING FURTHER**

PAULINE 01277 657387