

NEWSLETTER FOR AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2011

Looking back on July.....

- On 3 July we said farewell to Hannah Brewer, who has been our organist for the last year - we wish her well for her future career back home in California.
- On 7 July we hosted the **Deanery Church Schools** leavers' service - a very successful event, at which Jan told the children something about the history of the National Society which funded many of our schools in the 19th century (and celebrates its bicentenary this year).
- We welcomed **Rosamund Stocks** from Gateshead for a week's placement as she explores the possibility of ordination; she sends her thanks and best wishes.
- On 17 July we held a **parish barbecue** to mark our 282nd anniversary, eating indoors because of bad weather, but no less enjoyable for that - it was a very happy occasion, with wonderful and copious food and lots of good conversations.
- We joined in various end-of-term **school events**, including the leavers' service in church, their splendid dramatic presentation (co-ordinated by Simon Thompson, the year 6 teacher) and their 'graduation' ceremony, which was a very 'civilised' occasion: they sat at tables with name-cards, programmes and flowers, and staff and pupils made speeches. The careful planning of such events, initiating children into social rituals, is one of the hallmarks of our school. Terry Bennett and Darren Rubin, the head and deputy, joined us at July's PCC meeting to update us on school issues.
- On 23 July we had three times as many 'normal' visitors, on foot and bike, as for those signed up for **'Ride + Stride'**, visiting a range of participating churches to raise funds for the National Churches Trust. The 'normal' visitors were puzzled when I offered to sign their cards to show that they had called here! The hero of the day was Alan Green, our Area Dean, who visited 25 of the 43 churches on his orange sit-up touring bike: see <<http://www.justgiving.com/father-alan>>
- On 25 July Trevor Critchlow was installed as **Rector of St Dunstan Stepney** - a church in our 'cluster' - and we look forward to welcoming him. The Rector has known Trevor since his student days in Lancaster when he was the college chaplain!
- On 29 July some of us attended the **rally** at the East London Muslim Centre in relation to the EDL plans to march on Tower Hamlets in September. There were 40 speakers, including three trade unionists from Norway, and Bishop Adrian, in his first public appearance as the Bishop of Stepney. More details of what we plan to do by way of response to this threat to 'One Tower Hamlets' will be announced in church and by email over the summer holidays - and see opposite on the day of fasting. Along with other churches, we also hope to ring the bells on 3 September, the day of the march (if it goes ahead - which we hope it will not.) Tower Hamlets is far from perfect, but we are committed to the diversity which has long been a feature of its life. Follow this link <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qsnlm4c6cRg>> for a video made by Toni Davey and friends.....
- As July draws to a close, we are bidding farewell to two faithful members of our congregation, **James and Beth Smith**, for whose marriage we gave thanks last year. They are opting for a more rural life, which we are sure they will enjoy - and some lucky church will benefit from their catering and organisational skills; but we shall miss them! Thank you, Beth and James, for all that you have contributed to parish life here.

...and ahead to August and September

- During August, the **Parish Eucharist** will be at 10.15am and the **Tuesday Eucharist** at 12.30pm each week as usual. The Rector will be away for part of the month, and we are grateful to Canon Michael Seward and the Revd Fiona Stewart-Darling for leading Sunday services, and the

Revds Peter McGeary and Pat Wright for Tuesdays.

- The third **concert** in the series by F-IRE Klang Codex, curated by Fred Thomas, will be on Thursday 18 August. Tickets are available on the door (£8, £5 concessions) and the performance begins at 8pm.
- For our Muslim neighbours, **Ramadan** falls during August this year - the hardest time to keep the fast, as the days are longest and the weather may be hot. We pray for them, and that it will not provoke any violence or fighting. We are inviting church members to keep Friday 26 August as a **day of fasting** in repentance for race and faith hate, and a witness against EDL's plans to march in our borough the following weekend, and we plan to break our fast that evening with some Muslim neighbours.
- All are invited to the **service of welcome** for Bishop Adrian and Rachel Treweek, our new area bishop and archdeacon, at Christ Church Spitalfields on Tuesday 6 September at 7.30pm.
- On Sunday 11 September Rachel will be licensed at St Paul's Cathedral at 3.15pm Choral Evensong, and again all are welcome. At that same service **Jeremy Crossley** will be installed as a Prebendary, so that's an extra reason for being there. Jeremy has been, and remains, a good friend of our church and is held in great affection by church people of all traditions across London, so this is a welcome, and richly-deserved, appointment: our congratulations!
- We hope to welcome **Lydia Sargent** as our new organist from 11 September (she will also be playing on 28 August). Lydia's family home is in Wiltshire, but she is studying music and German at King's College London, and is preparing to take the Associate of the Royal College of Organists exam.
- Probably in the last week of August and first of September, the exhibition marking the 25th anniversary of the '**Siege of Wapping**' will be on display in church (weekdays from 11am-5pm), telling the story as it affected local residents.

Other news

- Please hold **Harry Willer** in your prayers; he is currently in hospital, following a mini-stroke, and having cared devotedly for him at home Ann has been persuaded that she can no longer cope, but that he needs full-time residential care, which is being arranged. She (and the children) plan to spend as much time with him as possible.
- Remember also **Bill Cooper**, whose wife Bridget died last month; he is now in hospital, and struggling.
- Fr **Ken Leech** suffered a massive heart attack while undergoing routine surgery, and the prognosis for him is not good. For all the years he was in East London (beginning with the Franciscans on Cable Street), and since his retirement back to his roots in the north-west, he has taken a keen interest in our parish, and is the chronicler of radical Christian thought and action in the East End, and author of many books on a wide variety of subjects. He also happened to be the preacher when Jan was ordained to the priesthood in Manchester diocese.
- Congratulations to **Sybil Yates**, marking a significant birthday on 27 August with a party organised by friends.
- Finally, look out for (and listen to) the pair of **peregrine falcons** who perch on the top of our tower, and on the various cranes round about. We are considering letting London Peregrines install and maintain a nesting box in the tower to encourage them to breed next season, and look forward to photographs (and maybe a webcam) of their activities.