



THE VICAR'S LETTER

Brussels by Eurostar

This was our first experience of Eurostar. As the 18 carriage train leaves Waterloo Station it seems to crawl through the suburbs of South London. Once in the countryside it accelerates to reach Brussels in less than 2½ hours. Very strange to arrive in a different country without being aware of having crossed the Channel! Mind you the intimate frisking at security in Waterloo was more thorough than any airport I have experienced.

On Sunday morning we went to the English speaking church in an Eastern suburb of Brussels: St Paul's, Tervuren. This church used to support us when we were in Pakistan and we last visited 14 years ago. It was brilliant to see how the church had grown even though 95% of the people were different – that is the nature of the English speaking community in Brussels!

The family we stayed with quickly initiated us into the recycling system they have in that part of Belgium. The way it works is that you buy special rubbish bags at the supermarket and the dustman will only take those. Everything that can be recycled is put in other bags which are taken away free. To stop people cheating they will check your recycled rubbish to make sure you aren't sneaking in things that shouldn't be there.



Would that kind of system help here! Whereas we only recycle 23% of our rubbish the Flemish part of Belgium recycle 70%! One of the highest rates in Europe. If appealing to our better natures won't bring that figure up then the alternative is to price our rubbish by the bag.

One of the places we visited was the battlefield of Waterloo. That was where in 1815 Napoleon was defeated by Wellington and a ramshackle army of British, Dutch and Flemish soldiers. One of the closest battles in history. Napoleon almost won and had he done so what a different world it would be now - we would be speaking French and using francs to do our shopping! Waterloo Station would have been Bonaparte Station.

What is clear from the account of the battle is that it wasn't the leaders who won or lost but each individual soldier doing his small part – some incredibly brave, some just plain confused. It is the same today where the future can be changed by each or us doing our part. A good way to start is by making this Lent special – let us use the Love Life – Live Lent booklets we are giving to everyone in St Paul's Church. (See page 5).

Christopher

DATES FOR DIARY

DATE	TIME	EVENT
1st Thursday	8.00 p.m.	Licensing of Sue Hartley
3rd Saturday		SatNav
5th Monday	7.30 p.m.	Youth Alpha
	8.00 p.m.	Lent Home Group
6th Tuesday	8.00 p.m.	Singing Group Practice
7th Wednesday	7.30 p.m.	Youth Lent Course and Highlanders
8th Thursday	8.00 p.m.	Lent Home Group
12th Monday	1.30 p.m.	Lent Home Group
	7.30 p.m.	Youth Alpha
13th Tuesday	8.00 p.m.	Churches Together Meeting in HEC
14th Wednesday	7.30 p.m.	Youth Lent Course and Highlanders
19th Monday	7.30 p.m.	Youth Alpha
	8.00 p.m.	Lent Home Group
20th Tuesday	8.00 p.m.	Family Service Planning Meeting
21st Wednesday	7.30 p.m.	Youth Lent Course and Highlanders
22nd Thursday	8.00 p.m.	Home Group
25th Sunday	10.00 a.m.	Annual Parochial Church Meeting
	5.30 p.m.	United Celebration in St. Paul's Church
28th Wednesday	7.30 p.m.	Youth Lent Course and Highlanders
31st Saturday	7.30 p.m.	Deanery Youth Service in St. Paul's Church

RESULTS FROM THE GIFT CONTRIBUTION FORMS 2007

Thank you to everyone who filled in a Gift Contribution Form this year – so far we have had 65 back and that is so encouraging!

The first part was to tick which kind of church member you reckoned you were. Here are the results in percentage terms:

Community:	1%	
Once in a While:	0%	(No indication given - 16%)
Regular:	34%	
Committed:	30%	
Core:	19%	

Brilliant that most people are in the last three categories but I would love to see more new people coming in from the community to see what church is like.

Loads of people put their names down for all kinds of things – we now have 22 on the readers list, 15 to help with craft days and 14 to do refreshments for example. A great big Thankyou to you all.

The areas which are still without anyone are mowing the grass and baptism follow-up. Cleaning the church is something we very much need more help with too.

Christopher



St. Paul's Church Hainault

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

During the Morning Service at 10.00 a.m.
Sunday 25th March, 2007

Please make a point of coming to this service. The meeting will be part of our Holy Communion Service that day. We will be electing the Churchwardens and new Parochial Church Council and looking ahead to what this next year holds.

At this moment no one has come forward to be churchwarden alongside Jill James. If you feel called to do this please speak to me or Jill about what is involved.

There will be an activity in the hall for the younger children and we would like the Highlanders to stay in the service.

Christopher

LOVE LIFE LIVE LENT

This year we are giving everyone a little booklet called Love Life Live Lent. It contains 50 things to do between now and Easter. Lent doesn't need to be a time for giving things up. This year make it a time for doing something new.



For example the first thing is 'Make someone laugh'. That was the task for February 19th but no harm in doing it again – tell someone a joke and see what happens!

If you find something good happening through following 'Love Life Live Lent' then tell Nicky Cleaver – he will be putting together the next edition of the church magazine and would love to have anything suitable.

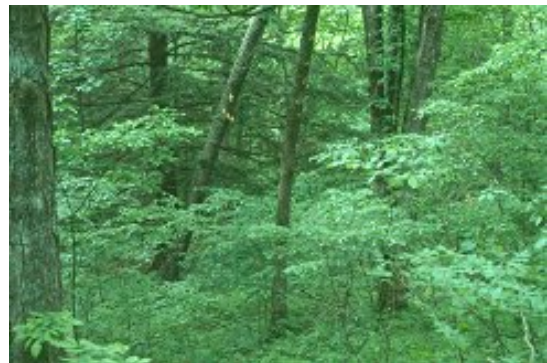
There are still copies of the booklet at the back of church – blue for adults, green for younger ones – cut-off age is around 16 but they are both fun.

Christopher

GREEN MATTERS

Carbon Offsetting

What is carbon offsetting? Many activities of people or organisations involve the direct or indirect emission of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Carbon offsetting is the process by which the person or organisation emitting the carbon pays for carbon reductions elsewhere with a view to neutralising the climate change effects of the emissions resulting from those activities.



How is carbon offsetting done? There are an increasing number of companies which can be contacted via the Internet. Typically, they will have a carbon calculator where you state which activity you wish to offset and a facility for quantifying this activity. The company will calculate the carbon emitted and offer you a single price for offsetting that carbon which will go towards their offsetting projects.

What are these offsetting projects? There are four main categories:

- tree planting;
- improving the efficiency of, or changing, a process (e.g. paying for high efficiency light bulbs or for micro hydro electricity units in the Himalayas to displace the use of kerosene stoves);
- capturing existing emissions and treating them (e.g. landfill gas from a tip in Brazil or emissions from farm slurry in the USA);
- buying green emission allowance certificates from a carbon trading or renewables scheme.

What are the problems of offsetting? Offsetting is a fairly new activity and, accordingly, is largely unregulated. Carbon calculators from different companies produce different answers. Carbon is only a simple measure of climate change impact (e.g. flying can cause several times the warming effect per tonne of carbon that a car does) and how this is addressed in the offsetting calculation varies. The trend with UK offsetters is to

ignore this aspect in their carbon calculators. The price at which green emission allowance certificates can be bought does not reflect the true cost of the climate impact of the carbon they have 'saved'.



Planting trees ignores the fact that they release their carbon back into the atmosphere when they die. Many of these projects, such as tree planting, involve offsetting an emission made today by relying on carbon savings, or capture, over a long period of time, often decades. Many scientists are arguing that we cannot wait for decades before taking action to reduce our emissions.

There is a real danger that the opportunity for offsets is being taken up so that people can feel good about not changing their behaviour. Friends of the Earth recommends that you only consider buying offsets as a last resort. I don't want to discourage people from planting trees. It is just that the logic that this justifies more emissions from fossil fuels is flawed.

If you do wish to offset your carbon emissions, the government has recently proposed a voluntary standard for offsetters and commented last month that only four (of 59 schemes that they looked at) currently comply with this standard. These four are:

<http://www.puretrust.org.uk/>

<http://www.global-cool.com/>

<http://www.ebico.co.uk/en/open/pages/equiclimatteen.php>

<http://www.carbon-offsets.com/>

Ian Smith

(Ian has worked in the electricity industry for many years, latterly on renewables projects)

WHAT ARE SENIORS WORTH?

Remember this, old folk are worth a fortune, with silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in their shoes and gas in their stomachs.

As for me, I have got a bit older since I saw you last, and I have changed a bit too. Quite frankly I have become more frivolous and I don't care who knows it! I am seeing six fellows every day. Well, as soon as I wake up, **WILL POWER** helps me out of bed, and then I go to see **JOHNNY LOO**. Then **CHARLIE CRAMP** takes hold of me and demands my full attention until **ATHUR ITIS** takes over and won't leave even after a good breakfast. He doesn't like me to say in one place too long, so he takes me from joint to joint. You can imagine, after a busy day like that I'm tired and glad to go to bed with tasty **JOHNNY WALKER**. What a life! I'm doing my best to fight off old **AL ZHEIMER**.

The minister called yesterday, he said I should be thinking about the hereafter. I told him I am always doing that, in the shops, in the kitchen, upstairs and downstairs. I say to myself, 'What am I hereafter'.

**Thanks to Pam Kirby
for sharing this article with us,
from the Age Concern Redbridge Newsletter**



THE 24TH UNLOCK LONDON WALK SATURDAY, 21ST APRIL, 2007

Unlock is a Christian organisation that has been around for almost 30 years. It exists to help urban churches of any denomination to respond to the challenges in their areas. Unlock are especially concerned with communication in a tabloid (non-book) culture.

Unlock's work is about Christian Mission, urgently focussed on bringing God's Good News to those who have often been ignored as unimportant, here, on our own doorsteps, in our own UK cities. Traditional urban communities are one of the few places remaining in British culture where there is still a degree of respect for the Christian Faith, but those very communities have not had opportunities to explore that faith for themselves, because church style and language are inappropriate for their culture and just put people off. Unlock works to plug this gap, by providing urban communities with ways of exploring faith that are designed specifically for them, and meet their particular needs. With 30 years of experience and expertise, they train, pay and resource workers in city locations, offer insights and experience to others working in urban mission, make resources available, free of charge, to anyone who wants to use them in their work of developing discipleship.



Walkers in Charlton at the 2006 Unlock London Walk

Every year Unlock hold a sponsored walk around London churches, and this year it's around Bermondsey and the Isle of Dogs.

The Unlock walks started in 1983 and have taken place every year since. Each year they raise thousands of pounds for Unlock's work, and anything from 600 to 1,000 walkers take part. The route usually includes urban churches and religious centres, a range of urban landscapes and housing, heritage locations and places of interest, places of rest and refreshment, and a place where walkers can encounter some of Unlock's work. The Unlock London Walk is a great day out, so good that some walkers have never missed a walk in the last 23 years, and you get to see what God is doing in this part of London. But, however good an experience it may be, it is actually a means to an end. It exists to raise money to fund Unlock's ongoing work in developing urban discipleship in the UK, and raises around half of Unlock's running costs - the 2006 walk raised £20,981.81.



Walkers from St. Paul's Church at the 2006 Unlock walk

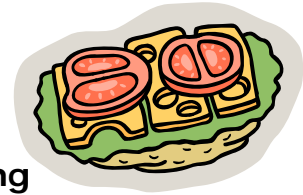
Kathryn and Rob Whittaker will be leading a group of walkers from St. Paul's Church, so if you would like to join them, why not give them a call on 8500 4398 and put your name down for this enjoyable day out?

If you would like more information on the Unlock London Walk or the work of Unlock, then visit their website at www.unlock-urban.org.uk.

Courtesy of the Unlock website

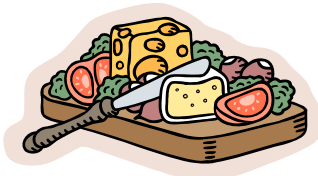
'IN A MANNA OF SPEAKING'

Saturday 3rd March 2007
at 7.30p.m.



A buffet and Entertainment Evening
in aid of

THE MANNA HOUSE
The Barkingside Christian Centre Project



To be held at

Gants Hill Methodist Church
Gants Hill Crescent

Tickets: £6.00 Adults, £3.00 Children
Available from: The Manna House 8551 9993
Allan 8500 7738 or Margaret 8500 3871