

# Grapevine

February / March 2007

Parish Magazine

St. Luke with St. Bartholomew



## Punjabi / Urdu Service Launched at St Luke's



Nigel Hardcastle

The fourteenth of January 2007 was a historic day. It was the launch of the Punjabi / Urdu service for Reading. It will, we hope, take place every week at 3pm.

There were between 75 and 80 people present for the service and the meal that followed. There were many guests from other Punjabi / Urdu congregations. We don't expect such high numbers every week. Representatives came from Oxford, Southall and Redhill. They provided the drum and harmonium players.

The welcome was made by Younas Nawab. The opening prayer by Anjam Sohail. Augusten Masih led the service and Richard Christopher preached the sermon. Since there were half a dozen or so people present who speak neither Urdu or Punjabi, he preached this in English and Punjabi. (Spoken Punjabi and Urdu are very close. Urdu is however written in Arabic script.)

It is quite interesting being at a service where the majority of the words are in a language you don't know and where the music is very different in style. Perhaps a small taste of what people with other first languages find our strange services like.

Richard has been working with the Reading Asian Christian Fellowship for some time. With his help house groups have been set up for the different language groups. The Punjabi / Urdu speakers are probably the largest group and want to try a proper regular service.

*Well done Richard and all the best for the future.*

# Whisperer

 Sue Webster

Brittle,  
skittish,  
running scared -  
I need a whisperer.  
I will not  
be bound,  
blindfolded,  
broken,  
abused -  
I need a whisperer.  
A soft hand on my neck,

a gentle voice,  
a steady eye -  
I need a whisperer.  
I will not  
be forced  
or fettered,  
for I will break my chains.  
No-one will scrape my side  
with spurs,  
they will never  
hold or halter me.  
I am too strong  
for captivity,  
and much too soft  
for pain;

but I have a wild, wild spirit  
and a heart that has burst into flame -  
and Jesus is the Whisperer  
*who quietly calls my name.*

*"To all who are angry or afraid,*



*I wish you a visit from the  
Heavenly Horse Whisperer!"*

## *Christmas is for sharing*



Pat Stevens

***"Christmas is pointless if we can't share it with our neighbours "***

so said **Christian Aid** at the end of last year.

**Christian Aid is a charity working with people of all faiths and none, helping them to find their own way out of poverty.**

Christian Aid is all about partnership. From their earliest days, they have based their work on the conviction that local people in poor countries are best able to understand the causes of their problems and how to resolve them.

As a result they became committed to working with local organisations that would provide the analysis, responses and person power while Christian Aid provided the resources. They call these organisations their partners.

More than 50 years of experience has encouraged Christian Aid to aspire to genuine partnership with others and strive to embody a spirit of equality, transparency, trust, cooperation and mutual respect in all of their relationships.

**In particular Christian Aid's partners in the Middle East are at the forefront of the crisis which is affecting civilians in Lebanon, Israel and Gaza.**

In Lebanon, where thousands of people have lost their homes after intensive bombing, partners have provided supplies, relief centres and medicines. They are now helping people slowly rebuild their lives.

In Gaza, air-raids have damaged electricity and water supplies. Clean water is scarce and there is an increased

threat of disease from untreated sewage.

Christian Aid's partners in the region have provided water tanks to affected areas, distributed food and medicines to the poorest families and been able to keep essential health centres open.

They will be involved in the long-term, helping rebuild affected communities and re-establish their partners' development work

### ***So what did WE do?***

All the collections from our special Christmas services (just over £750) were sent to Christian Aid's Middle East appeal.

### ***What MORE can we do?***

In the UK & Ireland, Christian Aid also have a partnership with their supporters. During **Christian Aid Week**, an estimated 300,000 volunteers collect door-to-door through 10,000 national Christian Aid local committees and networks.

*This year **Christian Aid Week** is **May 14-18 2007**.*

Teams from our two churches join with volunteers nationwide, collecting door-to-door ( in our own parish) through the week. We are **constantly** in need of more willing helpers. As a long term volunteer I can assure you that it is not as intimidating as it sounds. In my experience people have always been courteous even when they do not wish to support Christian Aid and we must respect their decisions. But there are **always** those (often elderly people) who have their envelope ready and are eagerly waiting your visit.

So put the date in your diary and get your walking shoes ready!

# The Gang and I

 Alice Warren

When I first joined The Gang, one of my main concerns was fitting in. I'm never hugely enthusiastic about joining clubs, unless I'm joining with a friend.

But when I arrived on my first evening, everyone was extremely friendly and all my worries about not fitting in disappeared more and more as the evening progressed.

By the time my first evening was over I had realised that it wasn't like any other club I've ever joined because everyone acted like they knew me already. I especially enjoyed meeting people from Wesley!

Another great thing about Gang is that it gives me something to do at the weekends.

I've given up hope of ever making the 2012 Olympic swimming team, or becoming the next Darcy Bussell in ballet.

So I've dropped my swimming and dance classes and there's not many places an eleven year old can go on a Saturday night.

For me, The Gang has provided a lot of new experiences. I probably never would have gone ice-skating, snow tubing and on some of the scariest rides in Thorpe Park if I hadn't joined!

I recommend joining if you want to meet people, face new experiences and have a whole lot of fun whilst doing so!!!