

Monday 2 January Monthly Parish Walk, 9.30 am from Torrington Lodge car park  
 Wednesday 4 January Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch  
 Saturday 7 January Churchyard Working Party  
 Sunday 8 January Motto Sunday  
 Monday 9 January Men's Fellowship Members' Exchange  
 Wednesday 11 January Monthly Prayer Meeting for everyone, 8 pm till 9.30  
 Thursday 12 January Introductory supper for new Alpha course  
 Wednesday 18-25 January Week of Prayer for Christian Unity  
 Sunday 22 January Churches Together service in Holy Trinity. 6.30 pm  
 Saturday 28 January OCMS concert: Dimension piano trio, 8 pm (£10)  
 Wednesday 1 February Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch  
 Monday 6 February Men's Fellowship: Flying for Life with David Greenwood  
 Friday 10-12 February 2006 Parish Weekend away at High Leigh  
 Friday 28 July-7 August 2006 Summer Mission to Ukraine

### REGULAR SUNDAY SERVICES

	8 am	10 am	6.30 pm
1st Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Evening Prayer
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Holy Communion Ord 1
3rd Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	All Age Service	Evening Prayer
4th Sunday	Holy Communion BCP	Holy Communion Ord 1	Evening Prayer
5th Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Evening Prayer

### WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monthly on a Wednesday (see diary above): Holy Communion (Prayer Book)  
 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, at 2 pm: Toddlers' Praise (in the Church Hall)  
 Every Wednesday, at 7 am: Prayers for 30 minutes (in the Quiet Room)  
 Every Thursday, at 3.45 pm: Intercessions (in the Quiet Room)  
 Monthly on a Thursday, at 11.45 am at Wingham Court: Holy Communion  
 4th Thursday in month, at 11.30 am at the Day Centre: Holy Communion

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50p

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A GOAL IN VIEW  
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and a great deal more  
about what's going on!

*"Unless the Lord builds the house,  
its builders labour in vain."*

Holy Trinity's motto for 2006, from Psalm 127, verse 1

## PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Holy Trinity will be hosting this month's annual service of Churches Together in Esher and Claygate to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. It will be at 6.30 pm on Sunday 22nd January, and Asa Humphreys will be the preacher.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a worldwide movement of Christians of many denominations, languages and great diversity of race and culture. Its simple purpose is to be faithful to the prayer of Jesus "that they may be one" (John 17.11).

The Week (sometimes called an Octave because it is actually eight days) always runs from 18-25 January. Look out for details of the daily services - and lunch - to be held in the churches of Esher and Claygate.

VICAR: (Vacancy)

CURATE: THE REVD DAVID KING

LAY ASSISTANT MINISTER: VALERIE BAGLEY

NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTER: THE REVD PROF LINDA MORGAN

COMMUNITY WORKER: STUART WRIGHT

YOUTH WORKER: ASA HUMPHREYS

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Happy New Year

I gave up New Year's Resolutions some time ago. It was when, one year, I made my New Year's Resolution the resolution to be more resolved about my New Year's Resolutions that I realised that perhaps I was on a losing wicket! Ultimately they don't work because they are inspired by a mixture of a vague hope that there is some chance of a fresh start with the coming of the New Year, coupled with an inability to lift myself off the sofa due to my whale-like proportions.

After a few weeks though, the year doesn't feel quite so new and whilst my whale-like proportions have not decreased, clearly my muscles have adapted to their new challenge. As Bob Hope once quipped, "You know you've reached middle age when your weightlifting consists of merely standing up."

In the book of 2 Kings, though, we read of a King who made a resolution that had a huge impact on God's people. The King was Josiah. I realise that some might think that this article has been inspired by the new arrival in the household of our community worker. My only defence is that I along with some others believe that Josiah Wright was named not after the Israelite king of the Old Testament, but after the fictional President of the United States from the TV series the West Wing!

During the planned restoration of the Temple an old and dusty book was found hidden away. It is variously described as the Book of the Law or the Book of the Covenant, but it seems almost certain that it was a copy of the first five books of our present day Bible. It seems that somewhere during the reigns of the Kings of Judah, all copies of the first books of the Bible had been lost. On Josiah's discovery of God's word, he led God's people first in repentance for the ways in which they had been ignoring God's will for them and then in a new resolve to be obedient to God. The result for God's people was that Josiah's kingship was marked by peace and prosperity.

So it seems that there is some hope for resolutions, but that they need to be founded on more than wishful thinking or regret. The most long-lasting resolutions we can make are those founded on a rediscovery of God's word. As our motto for the year says, "unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain". So the best challenge for us this year is to pick up our Bibles and spend some time listening to what God has to say to us. 1 John, the letter we are studying up to Easter, is a good place to start.

*David*

## From the Parish Registers

### *We welcome into the family of the Church:*

Axyl James Dillinger Brown  
(baptised on 4th December)

### *We offer congratulations on the marriage of:*

Gareth John Dutton and  
Sandra Denise Norris  
(married on 10th December)

### *We offer sympathy to the relatives and friends of:*

Ingeborg Gisela Bell  
(15th November)  
John Hardy Layton Royle  
(20th November)  
Maurice Hanssen  
(21st November)  
David Henry Bodger  
(1st December)

## Congratulations

to Stuart and Susie Wright on the birth of Josiah (Jed). He arrived on 29th November weighing 8lb 1oz, and represents a fresh challenge to Stu's youth work skills.

**Insight**  
*Contributions to the February  
magazine should reach the Editor  
by Wednesday 18th January.*

## Parish Personalities

Vicki Schmidt faces this month's Insight Inquisition.

*Where were you brought up?*

In Bishops Waltham, Winchester.

*How long have you lived in Claygate?*

For 12 years, since 1993.

*What do you like most about it?*

Being in a village environment (friendliness etc) but with easy access to London.

*And if there was one thing you could change?*  
The number of building projects all over the place.

*Where would you locate your ideal home?*

Somewhere with more sun and sea - probably the Med.

*What is the least welcome part of your daily round?*

Commuting over Hampton Court Bridge.

*Which personal trait do you struggle most to overcome?*

Railroading my ideas over everyone else's.

*What food are you most partial to?*

Mushrooms.

*And leave on the side of your plate?*

Nothing.

*What do you watch on television?*

Spooks.

*What would your desert island book be?*

*Awaken the Giant Within* by Tony Robbins.

*What is your favourite music?*

Powerful ballads, preferably sung by women!

*And your favourite hymn?*

"All I once held dear".

*Which passage of the Bible is most telling for you personally?*

Psalms 139.

*Do you have an unfulfilled ambition?*

To run my own P&L/business.

## The Churchyard Working Party

On the first Saturday of each month a dedicated band of volunteers assembles in our churchyard with a view to making it more presentable for those who visit and tend the graves of loved ones. It is an uphill struggle to keep on top of the luxuriant grass in summer and later the blanket of autumn leaves, but with the concentrated efforts of these hardworking regulars the place is soon transformed.

They have a range of talents: some are good mowers, some show great prowess with the strimmer, some are good gardeners who tend the church's borders, while others have a remarkable affinity with bonfires, suggesting a scouting background. It is hard work and one can easily lose a pound or two, but it is enjoyable. One of the highlights is the social break at 11 am when coffee and biscuits are provided; another is Gordon Raney's laugh echoing around the grounds. Gordon is our longest-serving member and must know all the tufts of grass personally, having chopped them down countless times.

As we work there are wild and naturalised flowers to admire, and our fine oak trees (now individually numbered) which are regularly tended both for their health and our visitors' safety, and of course there are gravestones to contemplate. Some of these are warmly-remembered friends and acquaintances, others recall sad or interesting stories of past Claygate residents.

True, all this Saturday activity is mainly on a practical level, for it is hard to gain much spiritual uplift from cutting grass, but it is yet another facet of the rich and varied life at Holy Trinity. Contacts: Alex McJannet (463697) and Brian Mathew (462538).

## "Another generation grew up who knew not the Lord...."

Matt Summerfield, the Director of Crusaders, came to speak to the December meeting of the Men's Fellowship. He told us what had led to the founding, a hundred years ago this year, of the organisation which reaches out to children and young people with the good news of Jesus Christ. He went on to give an overview of the growing need for such work, as awareness of the Christian message diminished in the population at large, especially among young people (see Judges 2.10, from which our heading comes), and how Crusaders had developed a new vision for meeting the challenge. Their short term aim is to be able to reach 50,000 children through 1000 local groups - a modest aspiration in terms of the numbers of unchurched children, but nevertheless one which represents a major expansion of their present activities.

Matt spent some time answering questions from members, including, for example, on the organisation's name; Matt confirmed that they were indeed considering a change, because perceptions in some quarters (not Muslim ones) tended to be an obstacle to their work.

## Preaching Plan for the New Year

Sunday sermons through the first three months of 2006, for all three services, will be examining the first of the Letters of John. They will enable us to focus on the characteristics of a follower of Jesus Christ, learning the fundamentals of what it means to be a Christian.

## The New Year

I am the new year.

I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living.

I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last twelve months.

All that you sought and didn't find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it but with more determination.

All the good that you tried for and didn't achieve is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting desires.

All that you dreamed but didn't dare to do,

all that you hoped but did not will,  
all the faith that you claimed but did not have  
- these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose.

I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to Him who said:  
"Behold, I make all things new."

## A Wedding text

*The couple getting married who had experienced some hair-raising times together thought it would be nice to have an appropriate Bible text on their wedding cake, from 1 John 4.18: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear". Unfortunately, the baker who was given the reference didn't realise there was a difference between John's letters and John's Gospel, and when inscribing the cake turned to John 4.18: "You have had five husbands and the man you now have is not your husband".*

## The perfect minister

*As we seek a new Vicar...!*

A recent survey has identified the qualities that people expect from a perfect minister.

The perfect minister preaches for exactly 12 minutes.

He/she frequently condemns sin but never upsets anyone.

He/she works from 8 a.m. until midnight and is on call 24/7, but is always relaxed, with time for a coffee with you whenever you like.

He/she receives £200 a week, wears good clothes, buys good books, drives a good car, and gives about £100 a week to the poor.

He/she is 28 years of age, but has been preaching for 30 years.

He/she is wonderfully gentle with everyone and always gives people in the church their way, but the church is run supremely efficiently.

He/she is amazingly good-looking and eligible, but too committed to the church to want a private life.

He/she gives of themselves completely, but never gets too close to anyone, to avoid criticism.

He/she speaks boldly on social issues, but never becomes politically involved.

He/she has an outstanding 'street cred' with the teenagers, spends many happy hours each week lighting up the lives of the church's senior citizens, and is very popular with all the mums and tots.

He/she makes 15 daily calls to church families, visits shut-ins and the hospitalized, spends all his time evangelizing the unchurched, is something of a notable scholar (writing an authoritative book on Hebrews), and is always in the office when needed.

We are assured that our Patrons have this on board.

## Hearing about Tearfund and its work

The Anchor group met in November to hear Yioula Taliadorou talk about Tearfund and her 20 years of association with the charity. She had grown up in Cyprus but her family left the island at the time of the troubles and came to London where God guided her to Tearfund. 2005 had been a momentous year for Tearfund: first the tsunami had struck in South Asia; then Tearfund was much involved in the Make Poverty History campaign, working closely with a supportive government; but this was soon to be followed by the tragic earthquake which struck Kashmir.

Tearfund's principal aims are to bring relief where needed and to provide and improve water and sanitation facilities. It works through evangelical churches around the world who are aware of local needs and conditions. Support through prayer, donation or voluntary help is always welcomed.

The Anchor Group met again in December to celebrate Advent. We shared an excellent meal together in the Church Hall, prepared by two very talented members, and we all left full of Christmas spirit and prepared for the festive season.

## Parish weekend

The deadline for signing up for the weekend away at High Leigh (it's from 10th to 12th February) has now passed, but if for any reason you missed it and would like to join us, please have a word soon with the Church Office, because there are still some vacancies available.

## The Alpha course

Holy Trinity's new Alpha course will be running on Thursday evenings between 12th January and 23rd March. Each evening starts with supper at 7.30 pm and will finish by 9.45 pm. Readers of this magazine should by now be familiar with Alpha, but please draw this opportunity to the attention of friends and neighbours. The course offers an introduction to the Christian faith in which doubts and uncertainties can be aired: no question is regarded as too simple or too hostile. Brochures and application forms are available in the church foyer.

## Exchanging experience

The January meeting of the Men's Fellowship, on Monday 9th January, will feature a panel of four members, moderated by Chairman Keith Havelock, discussing issues of life and work, with the opportunity for more general discussion.

## Walking it off

By the New Year Bank Holiday, Monday 2nd January, you (or your body) may be calling out for fresh air and exercise. The Parish Walk sets off from the Torrington Lodge car park at 9.30 am. Enquiries to John and Maureen Amos on 466047.

## CONCERTS IN HOLY TRINITY

Saturday 28th January at 8 pm  
The Oxshott and Cobham  
Music Society present  
**DIMENSION**

This piano trio are all former pupils at the Yehudi Menuhin School and hold the 2005 Parkhouse Award for outstanding young musicians. They will be playing works by Suk, Shostakovitch and Tchaikovsky. Tickets at the door cost £10.

## NEWS FROM THE PCC

At the last meeting of the Church Council, Simon Botham made a presentation, and answered questions, about the Baptism Preparation course, which he and Selina, now helped by Andrew and Helen Forbes, run three times a year, each time involving four evenings. All baptism parents are required to attend the course. The concept of the course continues to evolve, and quite a number of the participants had subsequently moved on to do the Alpha course.

The PCC also approved the church's budget for 2006. The Finance Advisory Group had earlier advised what could reasonably be afforded, as a result of which the Ministry Leadership Team had made judgements about where the priorities should lie.

The PCC also heard from the Missionary Team about the allocation of Holy Trinity's outward giving, which continues to represent 10% of the Church's income. The Barnabas Fund was identified as the beneficiary of Holy Trinity's Christmas Appeal.

## Best church magazine

It was announced on 29th November that this year's award for the best church magazine produced in-house had been won by St Nicholas and St Barnabas Kenilworth for their magazine *The Grapevine*.

Price Reminder  
From this month, *Insight* goes up to 50p a copy or £4 for an annual subscription.

## Progress in finding a new vicar

As this issue of *Insight* was going to press, Holy Trinity's representatives were meeting with the Patrons and the Arch-deacon of Surrey to decide which of those who have applied to fill the vacancy here should be placed on a shortlist for interviews next month. The strength of the applications received was said to make those decisions far from easy.

Since the interviews are programmed for 23rd January, please do not expect any news to be available in time for next month's magazine.

## Planning for Ukraine

Stuart Wright and Andrew Tarcy will be making a preliminary visit to Ukraine this month to lay the foundations for this year's summer mission, for which 40 volunteers, 30 of them from Holy Trinity, have enlisted.



*Mabel, I can't help thinking you're taking this risk of bird 'flu a bit too seriously!*

## Learning from the Bible

*"One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead..."*

Philippians chap. 3, verse 13.

New Year is a time when we look forward. Many of us make resolutions for the year ahead, usually aimed at self-improvement. This might mean giving up something which is bad for us (like smoking), or doing something which is good for us (like taking more exercise), or changing our pattern of behaviour in a way that will make us a better friend, neighbour or servant of God.

What seems like a good idea on 1st January so often loses its attraction or its impetus before many days have passed. The urgency evaporates. It has been said that the busiest day of the year is "someday", because that is the day which has been earmarked for so much by so many people. Paul's letter to the Philippians shows us a better way. The paragraph in chapter 3 which comprises verses 12 to 14 offers an example that is valuable for us all.

There are three elements of what Paul says on which we can focus. First, he is "forgetting what is behind". Whatever is in the past is not going to get in the way of where he wants to go. Just as Paul had a regrettable history of persecuting the followers of Jesus, there are negative things that can generate guilt or bitterness or despair within us. And as Paul had achieved success in spreading the Gospel and establishing new churches, there are positive things in our lives which might make us contented or even smug or complacent. In either case those feelings can hold us back from making progress in our lives. Our past can have a paralysing effect on our present,

and unless we can shed the burden it represents, our spiritual growth is bound to be hampered.

Secondly, Paul is "straining towards what is ahead". He is not content simply to let life take him, or to gaze expectantly into the future. He has a focus and a determination, and he is exerting himself to ensure that he gets where he wants to be. The image we get here is one that Paul used elsewhere, of the running of a race, and we can all picture the intense concentration that we see in athletes competing to achieve their best. We cannot afford to be casual if we have something we want to achieve.

Thirdly, and crucially, Paul knows where he wants to be. He has a goal, and it is "to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus". It is something he wants more than anything else, and surely something that can be our goal as well. Having a goal that we not only know is important, but feel to be important, to be the object of passion on our part, makes the process of achieving it less daunting. If we can make it central to our thinking, the factors that could hold us back, whether they be inhibitions from our past or the need for exertion on our part, fade into insignificance.

Paul went on (verse 15) to say "All of us who are mature should take such a view of things". Amen to that.

*Scribatus*

*Life is too short for us to do everything we want to do, but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do.*

## Young people today....

Ahh, January and another new annum blossoms with a burgeoning hope of all that is new and exciting about beginning again. I could trawl through some hackneyed story of looking back in order to look forward, but let's for a moment consider the New Year as a young person would. Namely, as just that; a moment. Its transitory presence and celebration of actually just a calendar digit change is worthy, really, of only a moment's reflection. It is, truly, a good excuse for a party.

Similarly it does mark neatly (or in most cases otherwise) the end of the Christmas festivities that seem to lengthen with indirect proportion to their depth each year. But in essence it is of no note. I have never heard a young person say, "I am so looking forward to New Year's day!" Or indeed anything approaching it. Christmas, yes. But never New Year. Is this a comment on the cynicism that is seemingly endemic amongst all those born after Challenger exploded our optimism? Or is it our overweening expectation that borders on the vicarious, for those of a younger persuasion? Or just maybe, it highlights a more pertinent and refreshing truth: that our young people are not fools.

Perhaps, just perhaps, the celebration of New Year is as vacuous as it sounds when you sit down and try to explain why we celebrate it. If that is the case, then the momentary reflection afforded it by young people today seems, at least, prescient, at most, generous. I have learnt the hard way that young people will always spot you if you are being disingenuous. I know this to be true to such an extent that I have just

stopped trying to pretend to be pleased if I am not, or excited if I am not. They hate it and, unlike those of us who remember the Flying Pickets, they are unafraid to point it out and give such disingenuousness the respect it deserves; i.e. none.

Commentators are quick to point out the faults of young people across our country with things such as 'Operation Blunt' singling out young people as high risk knife users and 24 hour licensing providing thinly veiled opportunities to tar all young people with same brush. But this New Year let us reflect with joy the truth that is all too often whispered quietly: that whilst our young people may at times be our worst, they are also our best. Just reflect for a moment on the Anthony Walker case and you'll know what I am driving at. I have the great privilege of seeing in real life Technicolor both sides of this argument, but I know that for all the darkness of the worst, the light that many of our Youth Fellowship shine forth is made all the more bright. It should be noted that to emphasise the radiance of a diamond, it is always set against a jet black background.

In this time of moments, it is the commitment from many of our young people to live their whole life, in every sense of the phrase, for Christ that is most refreshing and brings true hope. Let us together augment that brightness, not by being part of that background, but by burnishing the jewel we have in our midst through joy filled prayer throughout this New Year.

*Asa*

*An old parish church wished to reassure visitors, so posted a notice saying:*

*In this church, many are cold, but few are frozen.*

# "How good it is to sing praises to our God"

Those words from Psalm 147 have struck a chord with Christians through the ages. A God to whom we owe everything must be the object of our thanks, worship and praise. That is a constant, as is God himself, but the ways in which we express ourselves in singing his praises are bound to change with time. This is less to do with what we think God wants or expects - he has seen it all - but with what people find natural and appropriate as they contemplate their Creator and Redeemer.

If we see tensions today between those who are attached to tradition and those who think it right to embrace popular culture - between, say, the robed choir and the music group - we must avoid thinking that there is anything new in such controversies. After all, there was a time, three hundred years ago, when Bach's then modern church music, with its "strange tones", was criticised for confusing the congregation, a time, two hundred years ago, when the Church of England refused to accept the hymns by Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley that were making the new dissenting chapels so popular, a time when a group of musicians in the West Gallery was a new-fangled idea, and a time when their phasing out in favour of organs was the subject of ill-feeling.

Music is predominantly a matter of personal taste, but it is important to many of us. It possesses the capability to resonate at the deepest level of our being, and to lift us to connect with God in a way that mere words cannot. That is why it is crucial in the context of worship, helping us to reach out to the divine and to be moved by an awareness of God's presence with us, deepening and enriching the spiritual experience of coming together in his name.

If we look at today's church, within a context of an overall decline in churchgoing, it is noteworthy that growth is most evident in evangelical churches which are in their music engaging most effectively with popular culture. What is also clear, however, is that there is also growth in the numbers attending worship in cathedrals, a bastion of a more traditional musical culture, though one where there is frequent use of modern compositions. There is a demand for both styles, but combining them is scarcely realistic. Holy Trinity does something to provide services of different appeal, even if our choral tradition has gone.

None of us is likely to be completely satisfied about the music we find in church. But that should never be the basis for divisions in the church. The Bible doesn't say much about styles of music, but it has much to say about unity among the followers of Jesus Christ.

Whatever the style of music, our aim has to be to offer to God the best that we can manage. The second-rate is never good enough.

What do you think?

*If matters of theology can divide church leaders, at grassroots level it is more often music which divides churchgoers. This month we take a look at church music.*

## A story

Old farmer Joe went to the city one weekend and attended the big city church. He came home and his wife asked him how it was. "Well," said the farmer, "it was good. They did something different, however. They sang praise choruses instead of hymns."

"Praise choruses?" said his wife. "What are they?" "Oh, they're okay. They are sort of like hymns, only different," said the farmer.

"Well, what's the difference?" asked his wife. Joe said, "Well, it's like this - if I were to say to you, 'Martha, the cows are in the corn' - well, that would be a hymn. If on the other hand, I were to say to you:

"Martha, Martha, Martha,  
Oh Martha, MARTHA, MARTHA,  
the cows, the big cows, the brown cows,  
the black cows, the white cows,  
the black and white cows,  
the COWS, COWS, COWS  
are in the corn,  
are in the corn, are in the corn, are in the corn,  
the CORN, CORN, CORN.

"Then, if I were to repeat the whole thing two or three times, well, that would be a praise chorus."

The next weekend, his nephew, Charles, a young,

new Christian from the city came to visit his Uncle Joe and Aunt Martha. He attended their local village church. When he went home his mother asked him how it was.

"Well," said the young man, "it was good. They did something different however. They sang hymns instead of praise choruses."

"Hymns?" asked his mother. "What are they?"

"Oh, they're okay. They are sort of like praise choruses, only different," said the young man.

"Well, what's the difference?" asked his mother.

The young man said, "Well, it's like this - if Uncle Joe were to say to his wife, 'Martha, the cows are in the corn' - well, that would be a praise chorus. If on the other hand, he were to say to her:

"Oh Martha, dear Martha, hear thou my cry  
Inclinest thine ear to the words of my mouth  
Turn thou thy whole wondrous ear by and by  
To the righteous, inimitable, glorious truth.

"For the way of the animals who can explain  
There in their heads is no shadow of sense  
Hearkenest they in God's sun or His rain  
Unless from the mild, tempting corn they are fenced.

"Yea those cows in glad bovine, rebellious delight  
Have broke free their shackles, their warm pens eschewed  
Then goaded by minions of darkness and night  
They all my mild Chilliwack sweet corn have chewed.

"So look to the bright shining day by and by  
Where all foul corruptions of earth are reborn  
Where no vicious animals make my soul cry  
And I no longer see those foul cows in the corn."

"Then," concluded Charles, "if Uncle Joe's minister were to suggest that the congregation sang only verses one, three and four and do a key change on the last verse, well that would be a hymn."