

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

Saturday 28 June Linda Morgan to be ordained priest, Cathedral at 5 pm
Sunday 29 June David King to be ordained deacon, Cathedral at 10.30 am
Sunday 29 June Celebration lunch at Holy Trinity for those ordained
Tuesday 1 July Monthly youth update and prayers, 9.30 am & 7 pm
Wednesday 2 July Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch
Wednesday 2 July Open meeting on support in depression, anxiety etc, 8 pm
Wednesday 9 July Joint Homegroup meeting in church
Wednesday 16 July Jigsaw Playgroup Sports Day and Picnic
Wednesday 16 July Open meeting in church on Creation and the Fall (page 10)
Saturday 19 July Claygate Flower Show
Sunday 20 July Ecumenical service on the Recreation Ground, 6 pm
Wednesday 23 July Toddlers Praise Picnic
Saturday 26 July Parish Walk (see page 10)
Thursday 11 September Opening Supper for next Alpha course
Sunday 28 September Harvest Lunch in Church Hall, 1 pm
Sunday 28 September Informal service at 8.15 pm
Friday 12 March 2004 Parish Weekend away at High Leigh

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

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INSIDE THIS MONTH'S MAGAZINE

CRISIS FACES THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

A local perspective on a national and global problem
 Julian comments - page 2
 An Insight briefing - in our centre pages

THE NEW TESTAMENT

How it originated - page 9

PILGRIM HALL

What you missed - page 5
 and our usual features to keep you up to date with

CHURCH WEBSITE GAINS THOUSANDS OF VISITORS

Holy Trinity's website, launched at the end of last November, has been attracting an average of 100 "hits" (or visits) every day. The actual number over the six months from the beginning of December to the end of May is 17,920.

The peak month was December, its first month live, after *Insight* had advertised the existence of the website in the parish-wide Christmas issue. The number of hits that month was 4729.

Some of the website's visitors are certainly local people keeping in touch. But we have no way of knowing how many of our visitors are distant, or just how distant. If you are reading this in *Insight's* electronic version from afar, why not email us and tell us how far-flung you are?

VICAR: CANON JULIAN HENDERSON
LAY ASSISTANT MINISTER: VALERIE BAGLEY
CURATE: THE REVD DAVID KING
NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTER: THE REVD DR LINDA MORGAN
YOUTH WORKER: STUART WRIGHT
Phone: 01372 463603 Fax: 01372 464894
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Implications of the Fall

Readers of last month's magazine will know that Julian has been leading a discussion group in church for those who are not members of Home Fellowship Groups. As an extension of that, there will be a meeting, open to all, on Wednesday 16th July at 8 pm, to explore a specific aspect of God's concern for us. It will be considering the relationships between a good Creator and a fallen world.

You will be very welcome!

Fellowship Group for the depressed

There will be a meeting on Wednesday 2nd July, at 8 pm in the Quiet Room, for all those interested in exploring further the setting up of a Fellowship Group for those struggling with depression, anxiety or stress, and those caring for those who are.

The meeting will be informal, with coffee and cake, and Valerie would be glad to hear from you (on 464243) if you would like to attend, but please do not allow the lack of

BRYN HAWORTH LIVE IN HAMPTON

Bryn Haworth, the Christian singer, songwriter and guitarist will be performing locally on Saturday 22nd November at 7 for 7.30. The venue is Hampton Methodist Church, which you will find at 61-63 Percy Road, Hampton. Tickets cost £5 and are available from Wendy Salmon on 020 8286 1992 or email wig_6534@hotmail.com

CLAYGATE FLOWER SHOW Saturday 19th July

You are bound to be calling at the church tent when you visit the Flower Show, aren't you? There will be the usual attractions, such as the cake stall, face painting, secondhand books and plants for sale.



But that also means that help is needed to support those activities, so please offer your services via the clipboards in the church foyer or by giving Ted Lambe a call on 469055.

This year Holy Trinity is sharing a tent with the Church of the Holy Name with a view to being more active in promoting the Christian message locally. The Alpha course, Churches Together in Esher and Claygate, and the next day's Ecumenical Service will all be featured.

So please make a note now to come to the **ECUMENICAL SERVICE ON THE RECREATION GROUND**

Sunday 20th July at 6 pm
(NB. That means there is no service in

Parish Walks

If you have taken to heart our report on page 4 about the last Anchor meeting, it might have already have occurred to you that one way of getting much-needed exercise is by joining Holy Trinity's monthly Parish Walks. Forthcoming dates are 26th July and 16th August. We meet at 9.15 am in the Somerfield car park. Enquiries to Jem and Rosemary Salter on 464993.

A new service is launched

An extra informal service at Holy Trinity started on Sunday 22nd June. The service has been planned on an occasional basis, to take place in the evening after the more traditional 6.30 pm service has ended.

The new service has been designed to meet a number of needs that have been felt within the church family. For example, some have been eager for a less structured form of service while others comfortable with the style of the 10 am service find themselves leading children's groups at that time. Parents of young children might welcome the chance to attend church once the children have gone to bed, and others who have been away or out for most of Sunday can be back for a mid-evening service.

The new service has a flexible format and an informal style, with music led by the Music group.

Services of this kind are planned for 28th September and 23rd November, starting at

New links with Guildford Cathedral

John Main, who has been Holy Trinity's link with Guildford Cathedral, has now stood down, and our thanks are due to him for having carried that responsibility over a number of years.

Our new links with the Cathedral are Pauline and Eric Fry, and they have already represented us in a Cathedral service by carrying forward the bread and wine in a Communion procession.

Tea for the bereaved

A tea was held on 18th May for those recently bereaved, and those who came, some from a little way away, found it a supportive and enjoyable afternoon. We offer our thanks to David Wakefield and members of the Bereavement Visiting Team for their work on the occasion and at other times.

A NEW YOUTH WORKER

Sorry, there is no news to report as we go to press - you'll have to keep your ear to the ground!

Christian Aid Week

This year's house to house collection in Claygate resulted in a total of £4389, slightly up on last year. Jane Saville thanks everyone who helped raise such a splendid sum.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

A new edition of the Church Directory is being prepared, so if you are not listed and wish to be added to it, or need to update the details of your entry, please complete one of the forms in the church foyer and make sure it reaches the Church Office by Sunday 6th July.



Anchor hear about diet research

For Anchor's June meeting, Linda Morgan very kindly stepped into the breach when Valerie Bagley, who had been planned as the speaker, was called away to the Pilgrim Hall holiday, along with over a dozen Anchor members.

However, there was a very good turnout to hear Linda talking about her work at Surrey University on the BBC Diet trials.

She gave us some frightening statistics relating to the enormous increase in overweight and obesity in the population, with late-onset diabetes sometimes now starting in the teens.

The BBC trials had used a random sample of 300 people who followed four well-known diet plans - Weight Watchers, Rosemary Conley, Slimfast and the Atkins Diet. The results had given the University much useful information to help with further research, one of the most salient facts being the vital importance of exercise.

In these days of taking the car everywhere, labour-saving gadgets, central heating etc, we all need to find time to take exercise, not only to offset the amount of food we eat, but to help to keep bones and joints strong. Needless to say, everyone was extremely interested in every aspect of this subject and there were many questions.

Gill Caporn

INSIDE THE PCC

At its May meeting, the Church Council spent some time reviewing the work of the Jigsaw Playgroup, assisted by Moira Wakefield, Chairman of the Jigsaw Advisory Group and Sophie Bessant, the Playgroup Supervisor. A great deal was going on, partly as a result of increasingly demanding Ofsted requirements, but there was good progress to report. 39 children were on the register but, with the maximum on any day limited to 26, 16 parents had had to be told their children could not be taken. All those involved were thanked and congratulated on Jigsaw's success and its Christian witness to the community.

The Council agreed to the purchase of another 72 matching folding chairs for the Church Hall, together with three trolleys on which to store them.

The Council was told that Bob Lonnon had agreed to progress the matter of the more intensive use of Church House, now that the conversion of the upper floor from residential use had been agreed by the planning authority.

Young overseas workers return and depart

Nicola Steeds has now returned from the Gambia, where she was participating in the SMILE (Serving Mankind In LovE) youth programme of the Crosslinks charity, and was interviewed about her experience by Julian at the 10 o'clock service on 22nd June.

Greg Stallard, who has been supported by Holy Trinity in his Christian leadership training over the last year, has recently returned from his spell in Kenya.

Steve Mills, Fran Hunt, Hilary Coy and Ben McEvoy are all now off to spend a time in overseas work, in the knowledge that our prayers go with them.

WEDNESDAY COMMUNION

The next midweek service will be held at 11 am on 2nd July, when David King will for the first time preach at Holy Trinity. A light lunch will be available afterwards. The midweek service after that will be on Wednesday 3rd September.

We continue our series on THE BACKGROUND TO THE BIBLE

The beginning of the New

The Church of Christ was founded when, just a few weeks after Jesus had been crucified and been restored to life, the Holy Spirit came upon his followers and gave them new life and power. They went out and preached the good news, in Jerusalem and steadily more further afield.

At that stage, the early Christians had no written materials to refer to. Jesus himself had left nothing in writing. His disciples knew nothing of the modern practice of recording events in diaries or notebooks. What they preached was based on experience and memory.

No one seemed to think it necessary in those early days to compile a written record of Jesus' life and teachings. One reason for that could be that the early Christians, having been told that Jesus would come again, assumed that the Second Coming was imminent (James found it necessary in his letter to urge patience). When you are waiting for Jesus to return at any moment, compiling documents for the benefit of succeeding generations may seem an irrelevance.

Many people think that in the early days collections were put together of the "Sayings of Jesus". This could be one explanation of how we sometimes read exactly the same words in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke: they were all quoting from the same source. And if you look at Acts chapter 20, verse 35, you will see the Apostle Paul, who had not known Jesus, quoting a saying of Jesus that does not appear in any of the gospels. Where did he get that from?

But if the "Sayings of Jesus" did exist, no copy of it has ever been found. Instead, the earliest documents coming down to us are letters. Even though there was no incentive to commit to writing the full story of Jesus, letters were written to deal with specific

and urgent problems and issues. Moreover, letters fitted in very well with the way Paul worked, travelling almost constantly, preaching the gospel and setting up churches in one town after another. He kept in touch from afar with the churches he had established, often striving to save them from going astray, through letter-writing.

The earliest letter we have from Paul - and therefore the oldest book of the New Testament - is the first letter to the Thessalonians. It dates from about 50AD, and was followed by Galatians, Philippians and Corinthians. But although these letters had a specific purpose, they were recognised to contain valuable teaching, and so copies were made and passed on to other churches, who copied them again, and so on. The ancient documents which survive today are copies of copies, not originals.

As time went by, the church began to lose its original leaders. Peter was martyred in Rome in 65AD, and Paul in 67AD. It may be that the realisation that the time would come when the church would no longer have leaders with first hand experience of Jesus prompted moves to tell his story in writing. The first of the gospels to be written, by soon after 70AD, is commonly thought to be Mark's, and it was followed a few years later by Matthew's and Luke's. Each was written for a specific audience, but again was copied on to others.

Luke, the historian, followed up his account of the gospel with the story of the early church, in the Acts of the Apostles. It seems clear by this stage that the Second Coming no longer had the same priority in the church's thinking, and Luke seems intent on assuring future generations of Christians that they are part of a church which is in continuity with Jesus and the Apostles and which has developed under

It is a huge sadness to me that the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion is in crisis. I feel dismay and distress that some within the Church are trying to change the ground rules, but without appearing to do so. Appointments are being made of people who believe and live outside the given framework of the broad base on which the Church of England currently rests. But I believe that while the boundaries of that broad base lie where they do, those who are chosen to serve as leaders within the church ought to be able to sign up to, support and teach the agreed doctrines and practices of that Church. We are in the mess we are in, because the church has not been clear or direct enough about encouraging and enforcing those boundaries.

The Church of England along with all other mainstream Christian Churches has always believed that the marriage of two people of the opposite sex is the only right context for sexual activity. Adultery, promiscuity, living with someone before marriage and homosexual practice (and a lot else!) fall outside that boundary. They are called sinful in the eyes of God and need to be repented of. The fact that the world has changed and these may now be commonplace and acceptable in our western society does not mean they are now pleasing to God. The calls of some for the Church to catch up with the world is in direct contrast to the call of the Scriptures for Christians to be different and to give an alternative to the world's ways and lifestyle.

In this crisis I want to keep on saying:

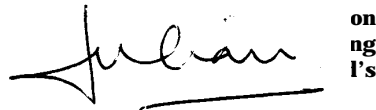
- that the issue currently at stake in the Church is not a sexual one primarily, but one of authority. Do we decide something is right because of someone's experience or because the Bible teaches what a godly way of life looks like? I believe we must stick with what God has revealed in His Word and understand our experience in the light of it, not the other way round.

- that believing homosexual practice to be against God's will is not being homophobic. There are many sins that the Bible encourages the people of God to speak against, but that does not mean Christians hate the people who do those things or are campaigning against them as people. While we accept the differences in personal sexual orientation and welcome all people to come and offer their lives in the service of Christ, we must try as best we can to teach a way of life that is fully pleasing to God. If that means we have to be unpopular, for example like John the Baptist, so be it.

- that the first command of the Gospel is to repent. This is unfashionable today, but it is a sign of the faith of the Christian to turn from something which God declares to be against His will and to embrace His way instead. Many of our natural instincts and cravings are dishonouring to God and need to be repented of, rather than affirmed.

- that it is wrong to claim a person's public life is all that matters. The New Testament makes it very clear that leadership in the church ought to be in the hands of those whose private lives reveal a godliness and holiness and obedience to Scripture. And that applies to a host of issues, including matters of faith and sexual practice. It is not enough to say that a leader will toe the party line, but accept that at the same time their private convictions are rather different. Such inconsistency and hypocrisy can only but harm the witness of the Christian community.

While these matters remain unresolved, we must sneak the truth in love. we must balance a fight for the faith as once delivered to the saints with all Christians, and alongside our private prayers our head above the parapet, taking some action and holding our Word.



Parish Personalities

Roger Hidden steps forward to be subjected to this month's Insight Inquisition.

Where were you brought up?
In Twickenham.

How long have you lived in Claygate?
For 27 years.

What do you like most about it?
The village feel and the countryside.
And if there was one thing you could change?

House prices (for the next generation).
Where would you locate your ideal home?
Milford on Sea.

What is the least welcome part of your daily round?

Getting out of bed.
Which personal trait do you struggle most to overcome?

Indecision - I think!
What food are you most partial to?
Italian.

And leave on the side of your plate?
Only the pattern.

What do you watch on television?
History, films and gardening.
What would your desert island book be?

The Lord of the Rings.
What is your favourite music?

Sixties folk and opera.
And your favourite hymn?

"Thine be the glory".
Which passage of the Bible is most telling for you personally?

Matthew 6. 25-27.

Do you have an unfulfilled ambition?
To ski properly.

From the Parish Registers

We welcome into the family of the Church:

Catherine Elaine Welsh
Susannah Jane Welsh
Emily Rose Blake
Amy Elizabeth Smith
(all baptised on 1st June)

We offer congratulations on the marriages of:

Dylan Gareth Howells and
Julia Margaret Dallimore
(married on 31st May)

Steven Paul Edlin and
Colette Janine Smith
(married on 20th June)

Matthew Benjamin John Seabrook
and Andrea Taiwo Moritiwon
(married on 21st June)

We offer sympathy to the relatives and friends of:

Margaret Valerie Jones
(21st May)

Florence Christine McNiece
(30th May)

Grace Ethel Nightingale
(4th June)

Peter James Compton
(4th June)

Insight

Material for the September issue should reach the Editor, please, by Wednesday 20th August.

A Moment to Meditate

"Are you envious that I am generous?"

Matthew, chap. 20, verse 15

Some of the recent days of scorching heat we have enjoyed - or maybe not, depending on what you had to do or your tastes in weather - have brought to mind the story Jesus told of the labourers in the vineyard. Some of them had endured the burden of the day and the scorching heat, having been recruited early in the morning for a day's work. At the end of a long and hard day, they found cause to be disgruntled.

The landowner had seen as the day progressed how much work there was still to be done in his vineyard. We are not told what the work was, but it was clearly a peak time of the season, for pruning, tying in of shoots or harvesting grapes. So he had repeatedly gone out to the market- place to recruit more workers. He went for a second time at 9 o'clock, then again at noon, at 3 and even again at 5.

Work finished at 6 o'clock in the evening and it was time for the workers to be paid. The standard rate for a day's work at that time was one denarius, and it was the most recently recruited workers who were called first to receive their wages. They were given the full day's rate even though they had worked only the last hour.

We can imagine those who had worked all day rubbing their hands at this point, thinking that with such a generous employer, they who had done so much more would be rewarded proportionately. But it was not to be. They received just the usual daily wage. So they grumbled and complained.

The landowner pointed out that he was doing them no wrong: he was paying them the amount that had been agreed when they had been taken on. Was he not allowed in dealing with other people to do what he

chose with what belonged to him? Were they simply envious because he was showing himself to be generous?

Envy is a common human fault. Was it unnatural of the exhausted workers to resent being treated the same as those who had done only a little work in the cool of the evening? How would we have felt in their place? But the story is a warning about what our reactions ought to be when we see the way a generous God works.

Although Jesus did not explain the story, he prefaced it by saying "The kingdom of heaven is like this", so the point is clear. It might have been aimed in the first place at Jews who, having considered themselves God's people for centuries, saw Gentiles welcomed before them. But it is equally applicable today to those who forget that God's mercy and generosity totally override any notions of what is deserving or fair. Let us simply rejoice that we, and others, can benefit from it.

An actor's view of prayer

If you don't have faith, pray anyway.
If you don't understand or believe the words you're saying, pray anyway.
Prayer can start faith, particularly if you pray aloud.
And even the most imperfect prayer is an attempt to reach God.

An enjoyable break in East Sussex

The Senior House Party is now a well-established annual fixture in the Holy Trinity diary. Jem Salter reports on this year's Pilgrim Hall holiday.

On Monday 2nd June thirty three experienced holiday makers assembled at Pilgrim Hall, a Christian hotel and conference centre at Easons Green, near Uckfield in East Sussex. With them was Faith Aguha who not only had never before had a holiday in England but had never previously seen a swimming pool - let alone been to the seaside!

Most of the party were members of Holy Trinity but we also welcomed Pam Cowan, a former member now living in Chichester, and Dennis Crafer from the Claygate Evangelical Church in Common Road. Newcomers this year - in addition to Faith - were John and Maureen Amos, Horace Fox, Brian and Margaret Mathew.

The daily programme allowed plenty of free time for everyone to enjoy the facilities of Pilgrim Hall including splendid grounds awash with colour from rhododendrons, a swimming pool, a games room, a Christian bookshop and a very relaxing lounge. There were opportunities for handicraft, reading or completing diabolical quizzes. A service was held each morning at which Julian (a day visitor) on Tuesday and Valerie on Wednesday and Thursday gave well appreciated talks under the heading "Lord, teach us to pray".

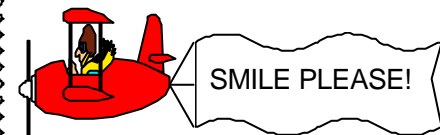
After lunch each day most people set off on visits to places of interest including castles, gardens, steam railway lines and Eastbourne. Inevitably,

tea-shops were located at the appropriate time before a return to base and a pre-dinner swim.

During the evenings short services of hymns, readings and prayers were held and these were followed by board games, bridge or whatever. On Wednesday, the true meanings of words were cleverly hidden amongst rather doubtful ones during the traditional session of "Call my Bluff", expertly organised by Ken and Val Hibberd; as usual, the Ladies team won.

All these activities were interspersed by the provision of marvellous food from the kitchens of Pilgrim Hall - three cooked meals each day.

Didn't go, but might be interested next time?



A trouble shared

They had just become engaged.

"I shall love," she cooed, "to share all your troubles."

"But darling," he murmured, "I have none."

"No," she agreed, "but I mean when we are married."

'Gay' tensions are threatening church unity

What does the Bible say?

References in both the Old and the New Testament express disapproval of homosexual behaviour.

In Romans 1. 26-27, Paul included as part of God's response to mankind's rebelliousness against him "God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error."

In 1 Corinthians 6. 9-10, Paul describes the kind of immorality that will deprive people of salvation: "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Neither the sexually immoral nor idolators nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers will inherit the kingdom of God."

Old Testament law was explicit. In Leviticus 18. 22 it was laid down by God that "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination." This is reinforced in Leviticus 20. 13, which says "If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death."

What the Bible says is not disputed. But approaches to its interpretation and to its place in contemporary decision-making vary. Some argue that scripture is one strand of authority alongside tradition, experience and reason. What the Bible says may reflect the cultural attitudes of a very different society, and some point out that there are plenty of rules laid down in Leviticus, for example, that no Christian sees it necessary to keep today. Others see the Bible as the word of God and will find it more difficult to move to a position which accepts something that is clearly

Exploring the issues in more detail...

A 60 page booklet *True Union in the Body* was recently endorsed by the Anglican Primates. Copies can be ordered for those who would like a fuller understanding.

This month Insight looks at the background to the crisis facing the Church of England and the worldwide Anglican Communion, arising from differing attitudes towards the acceptability of homosexual behaviour.

It looks increasingly as if liberal moves to 'normalise' homosexual relations will lead to a split in the church

Shifting attitudes in the secular world and the Church

Until 1967 homosexual relations constituted a criminal offence. In that year Parliament accepted the argument that something that was morally wrong need not necessarily be treated as criminal, and behaviour between consenting adults in private ceased to be punishable in the courts.

That was a watershed, and there has been a steady - and remarkably speedy - process by which homosexuality has become increasingly accepted. People have found it easier to admit their homosexuality and even to celebrate it publicly. Equality between those of different sexual orientation is promoted as it is between the sexes and the races, and opposition castigated as "homophobia".

The churches have lagged behind this secular movement, but even here liberal voices have grown more confident. The biggest question over the appointment of Rowan Williams as Archbishop arose from his known liberal views on this subject, but he undertook to respect the accepted Church line.

Part of the dilemma for the Church lies in its stance towards public attitudes. Some argue that the Church will lose support and influence if it pursues a line that most of the public regards as out-dated and negative. Others argue that the role of the Church is to reflect God's will rather than the ways of the world, and to be prophetic in the face of human waywardness.

Tensions within the Church

Debate on the issues surrounding the Church's attitude to homosexuality goes back over several years. The House of Bishops of the Church of England drew up a policy statement *Issues in Human Sexuality* in 1991, and this remains their current position. It says, for example, that clergy of a homosexual orientation are expected to abstain from sexual relations.

Until recently, pressure on the issue seemed greater in the international context than in this country. The 1998 Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops from around the world struggled to contain the tensions between liberals from North America and conservatives from the growing churches in the developing world. Its resolution on the subject rejected homosexual practice as incompatible with scripture and advised against the legitimising or blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of those involved in such unions, but contained emollient words about homosexuals being loved by God and being, along with all baptised, believing and faithful people, full members of the Body of Christ.

Liberal moves in North America have continued despite this. This year, the introduction of a liturgy for the blessing of same-sex unions in a Canadian Province and the election of an openly homosexual Bishop in New England have fuelled the flames. Sections of the Anglican church elsewhere have declared themselves out of communion with New Westminster in Canada.

Suddenly, the Church of England finds itself not on the sidelines but at the heart of the crisis. The Bishop of Oxford has appointed as the Suffragan Bishop of Reading Canon Jeffrey John (NB. *not* J John the evangelist), who has had a homosexual partner for many years, though he says the relationship is now platonic. Nine other diocesan bishops have taken the extraordinary step of objecting publicly to the action of a brother bishop, and the Archbishop of Nigeria has indicated that the action may precipitate a rift between his church and the C of E.

The serious consequences flowing from the appointment appear to threaten the unity not only of the worldwide