



THE BANSFIELD BENEFICE

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CHURCH NEWS



Volume 7, Issue 12



February 2007

Dear friends,

Jesus was at a wedding in a place called Cana, in Galilee, when the wine ran out, a major catastrophe! So, after prompting from His mother, Jesus ordered the stewards to fill six water jars with water, each holding twenty to thirty gallons — huge standing jars, still and immovable. St. John, telling the story, also points out that the jars were the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing. Furthermore, they were made of stone, the same material on which the Law itself had been carved; the same material which Moses had split asunder with Aaron's rod to provide water for Israel in the desert.



But water was no longer sufficient. Something more was needed to slake the spiritual thirst of humankind and God had sent Jesus to provide it. Although Jesus knew the time had not yet come for this provision to take place, his mother insisted he at least save this wedding from disaster.

What happened next would serve as a trailer to the big picture to come — what John calls "a sign".



Jesus told the stewards to fill the jars with water. Now as long as the water stood in those stone, ritual

jars, symbols of the old religion, it was nothing but plain old water. It was only when the stewards drew the water out, at Jesus' request, and took it to the master of the banquet to drink, that it was transformed. By this movement, by this participation in the banquet, the water was glorified.

By this willingness to leave the old and take on the new, the water was transfigured into wine — not just everyday wine either: we specifically learn that it was better than all the other wines tasted at the party up to that point. The salvation offered by Jesus is not just sweeter than the water provided by Moses but more refreshing than all the other faiths that have been tried, as many and varied as all the vintages that had probably been drunk over the several days that a Jewish wedding could last!



What Jesus did to that water, He'd already done to the disciples: He'd called them from their old life to something new. The leading disciples were fishermen; living off the water, probably knee-deep in water when Jesus strolled along the shore of Lake Galilee and called them into a new kind of faith that was dripping with the wine of the Father's grace. At this wedding in Cana the disciples have a first "sign" of how bountiful and miraculous that grace can be.

Isn't every generation called to leave the

water? Isn't it our turn now to assess honestly what we can sustain and what we need to leave behind — for some, perhaps even walking away from the building where we've always worshipped? Christ is calling us to draw the water and taste the wine. It may be painful, but our Creed is one of personal humility and sacrifice. The Body to which we belong bears the wounds of crucifixion. In Communion we drink wine that recollects the blood from those wounds.

The coming years are going to be an exciting time of sharing and learning to be the Church better. New ways of being church in our communities; new forms of Ordained and Lay Ministry developed; more flexible use of our buildings encouraged; and possibly more creative worship devised.



But we can't answer Christ's call if we keep the cold, stone ritual jars of water locked up tight, afraid of the Son-drenched, Spirit-filled power of the wine whose drinking celebrates a new communion with God.

Mary, Jesus' mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you." - and so do we if we wish to taste the new wine which Jesus offers.

Come and join us in following Jesus and drinking of the new wine He offers.

Rev. Ian Finn

CHURCH & VILLAGE EVENTS : February 2007

- Saturday 3rd 10.00am Traidcraft Coffee Morning in the Benefice Hall
- SUNDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2007 CHRISTINGLE SERVICE 4pm Wickhambrook Church—raising money for The Children's Society
- Wednesday 7th 7.30pm Churches Together planning Committee in the Benefice Hall
- Thursday 8th 10.45am Stansfield church PCC meeting
7.00pm Wickhambrook School Governor's meeting
- Monday 19th 7.30pm Lent Group first meeting—studying USPG booklet—Going Global (booklets available free)
- Tuesday 20th (Shrove Tuesday) 12.30pm Lenten Lunches in the Benefice Hall—donations to charity. Offers of help please.
- Wednesday 21st (Ash Wednesday) 8.00am Morning Prayers (Wickhambrook church)
10.00am Holy Communion + ashing of penitents (Lidgate church)
7.00pm Holy Communion + ashing of penitents (Wickhambrook church)
- Monday 26th 7.30pm Lent Group meeting in Benefice Hall
- Tuesday 27th 12.30pm Lenten lunches in Benefice Hall
7.30pm Wickhambrook church PCC meeting
- Wednesday 28th 7.30pm Benefice Ministry Team meeting at the Vicarage
- Friday 2nd March WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 7.30pm ecumenical service at Wickhambrook Church



SERVICE ROTA FEBRUARY 2007

February 2007	St. Nicholas DENSTON	All Saints STANSFIELD	St. Margaret STRADISHALL	All Saints WICKHAMBROOK	St. Margaret COWLINGE	St. Mary LIDGATE	St. Peter OUSDEN
Sunday 4 th 3 rd b. Lent	10.30am Matins BCP Fiona Evans	9.30am Matins BCP John Dennis		4.00pm CHRISTINGLE	9.30am HC CW IMF	9.30am HC CW Bob Torrens	11.00am HC BCP IMF
Tuesday 6 th			10.00am HC				
Thursday 8 th							10.00am HC
Sunday 11 th 2 nd b. Lent	10.00am Benefice HC BCP IMF						
Tuesday 13 th							
Thursday 15 th							
Sunday 18 th Next b. Lent	9.30am HC BCP IMF	8.00am HC CW IMF	3.00pm Evensong BCP IMF	9.30pm Family Paul Bevan	9.30am Morning Prayer CW Philip Draycott	9.30am Matins BCP Ann Jones	11.00am HC BCP IMF
Tuesday 20 th ASH WEDNESDAY				LENT LUNCH 7.00pm HC CW IMF		10.00am HC 10.00am HC BCP IMF	
Thursday 22 nd		10.00am HC					
Sunday 25 th LENT 1					10.00am Benefice HC CW IMF		
Tuesday 27 th	10.00am HC			LENT LUNCH			
Thursday 1 st					10.00am HC		

HC = Holy Communion CW = Common Worship service BCP = Book of Common Prayer Service IMF = the Vicar

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LENT 2007

**Mondays (from 19th Feb.) in Lent
7.30pm**

Lent Group

USPG LENT COURSE 2007

'Going Global'

Booklet available.

Let the vicar know if you want to use the booklet

**Tuesdays (from 20th Feb) in Lent
12.30pm**

Simple lunch

in Benefice Hall

Donations to charity

Volunteers to supply one lunchtime?

ASH WEDESDAY (21st February 2007)

8.00am Morning Prayer BCP (Wickhambrook Church)

10.00am Eucharist & Ashing (Lidgate Church)

7.00pm Sung Eucharist & Ashing (Wickhambrook church)

