

COR Newsletter – 03 September 2008

Dear all,

This will be the last newsletter for two weeks (stop cheering at the back there!!), because I am going to Scotland to settle Claire into Stirling university. While I am gone there will be two services of Morning Prayer instead of Holy Communion but more of that later on.....

Last week

Members of our congregation have **refurbished** our Sunday school room to make things brighter and more user friendly. Not all the furniture that was in there was dumped though; we have also made a "cosy corner" next to the library that has seen use already. Speaking of the library, John has left a large sack load of new books for the library which we'll sort through next week.

Last Sunday

The eleven children present made use of the new Sunday school room and have already made their wishes known as to what other furniture they need. One more table and some bean bags apparently. We welcomed back a refreshed Florin, and enjoyed some birthday cake with our coffee - happy birthday **Jonathan**. We pray for **Mihai and Arina** who today had their wedding blessing ceremony.

Next Sunday - the 7th September

Holy Communion at 10am as usual, with **Sunday school** and our monthly **produce sale**. We pray also for **Mircea and Christina** who have their wedding blessed this weekend

Then on Sundays the 14th and 21st September we will have **Morning Prayer** at 10am on both Sundays. Alison Mutler will lead the first service on the 14th, and on the 21st September, Nicholas Hammond will lead the service. Please give them both your full support. I am in **Scotland** for the first Sunday and in **Sofia** for the second one. I will join you again in Bucharest to celebrate Holy Communion on the 28th September. This also means that the church council meeting scheduled for September is cancelled.

An updated history of our church

As you may all know when **Fr. Chris Newlands** was the chaplain here he put together a history of our church in booklet form - the standard history I still hand out to anyone who is interested. Ian, one of our current members entirely on his own initiative, has taken that history and tried to bring it right up to date and has also trawled the internet for some great photos and information to enhance the presentation, to produce a history that is up to date, good to look at and will be initially web based and I hope will find a place on our website. <http://www.churchoftheresurrection.eu> Later I hope it will also be available in booklet form. I think Ian has done a great job I **attach** the **current draft** to this email. **Take a look!** Neither I nor Ian know everything there is to know, and with the best will in the world, some mistakes and omissions will creep in. Do you have any photos of chaplains past? Or perhaps you have other information or pictures that

could be included. If you have anything to add or might seek to change - let me know by email only please.

Harvest festival

Either I hadn't heard of it before or perhaps I just haven't been paying attention (probably the latter) but I received an email from the Diocesan Environmental officer that talked of "**Creationtide**". I hadn't heard the term before. As you know, Harvest festival has been a part of Anglicanism for a long time but as a product of the urban jungle myself, I have always had the feeling that it was all very pleasant but nevertheless a bit quaint and old fashioned perhaps? It seems to make perfect sense, certainly *not* to forget the harvest and the farmers, but to widen our vision from *just* the harvest in particular to include the environment and other global concerns like wildlife conservation. A service to give thanks to God for the *whole of creation*, and to address our new and rising consciousness of our role in preserving what we have been given. In light of this, an all-age Eucharist liturgy has been sent to me for our use. As I am away for a little while, I propose to hold this "All age Eucharist" to give thanks for creation on the second Sunday of October - **the 12th of October** in order to give some time for planning. The whole church will be involved including and perhaps *especially* including the children. If you are interested in finding out more about the Christian ecumenical approach to the environment take a look at www.christian-ecology.org.uk

Advance notice of a concert in our church!

It is always a pleasure to offer a location for a concert in a good cause. James and Casa Sperantei are friends of this church so I have no hesitation in recommending the following;

"There will be a concert featuring a classical guitar and soprano at 1pm on **Saturday 13th September** at the church. The performers are touring Romania for the week with the Orchestra of Imperial College, London. The concert will have no admission charge, but there will be a retiring collection for Hospice Casa Sperantei. For more details about the tour, please contact James Niblett on james@hospice.ro or 0728 130092."

Sunday Brunch on the boulevard!

You may be aware that among the church's generous benefactors here in Bucharest are Jonathan and Johanna Soper from the famous InterContinental hotel on Piata Universitate. After church on a Sunday why not check out the following.....Starting 7th September, the hotel launches their "Brunch on the Boulevard" at the Corso Brasserie between 1200 hrs. and 1600 hrs. Live Jazz, sparkling wine, a sensational buffet selection, carving and cooking stations, a supervised kids' room with entertainment and special meals, and plenty of free parking. Adults 150 RON, under 12s half price, and under 6 yrs half price.

Thought for the day

When I used to take a lot of funerals and visit the recently bereaved (this is not a big part of ministry here in Romania for obvious reasons) I always used to say that you never "get over" the death of someone but rather that you learn to live with the new situation. Adapting to the new situation and making necessary changes in your life doesn't mean that you stop loving someone or forget them, but their absence forces these changes upon us. I also used to say that grief is a necessary part of the process.

That in fact grief was a product of love. If they hadn't loved the person, they would not be feeling grief. In the same way, if you remember, as I said love and anger are linked last week, so is love and grief. Some say that Christian funerals should be more celebratory because we are certain that the person is now "with God" I hear that but we cannot ignore the fact that the real grief induced by knowing that in this life you will never feel their touch or hear their voice ever again needs to be acknowledged and given due respect. Some Christians I fear, actually feel guilty about feeling so bereft and empty when a loved one dies because they think they ought to be happy (?) that they are in heaven. That fact may be true, but most humans I know are not put together like that. There is obviously comfort in that fact but the loss is still just as real. I believe that properly acknowledging the depth of your grief is an important part of this "readjustment" to the new situation.

I have known this take some extreme forms. A woman at one of my previous churches, one of the faithful quiet ladies who form the backbone of the church, who never swore or even raised her voice, when her husband died she arrived in church sobbing, screaming and swearing at God, she broke down in a terrible state in front of the altar. It was an embarrassing scene for others who were there, but it was honest and true and represented exactly what she was feeling - why deny the fact. She didn't in fact leave the church as many feared - she stayed and is still there now as far as I know - quiet, unassuming, never swearing, never raising her voice. But she needed to allow herself that explosion. She needed to express her hatred (yes, pure and shocking hatred) of God at that time and she needed everyone else to just be with her in her grief, to bear with her and be a part of the readjustment in her life. That was an extreme example to illustrate the point, but repressing what you really feel and think is not the long term answer. Grief is real.

From Paul's letter last Sunday - "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep"(Romans 12:15)

The **prayer for today** is really rather beautiful and is from the Orthodox funeral rite.

*May Christ give you rest in the land of the living
and open for you the gates of paradise;
May he receive you as a citizen of the kingdom,
and grant you forgiveness of your sins:
for you were his friend.*

Love and peace

Martin