



Beauty is in the eye of the listener...

I love listening to the radio. And I prefer listening to talk rather than music. So I have the kitchen and the car radios permanently tuned to BBC Radio 4 (except when the cricket is on, obviously!).

I was delighted recently to be in the audience at Broadcasting House for a recording of one of Radio 4's many brilliant comedy programmes, Clare in the Community.

Yes, it's one of those absurdly punning titles of which the BBC is so fond. It's about a social worker and the centre she manages, intercut with sections of her domestic life. Needless to say, she's not particularly good at managing either.

You might not think it's particularly exciting watching people record a radio programme. After all, they're not acting as such, are they, just reading scripts?

How wrong you'd be! It's a whole new experience, different from either listening to the radio or watching a play being acted in the usual way. Because although the radio audience only get to hear them speaking, you - in the radio theatre - see them laughing at the funny lines and sharing the joke with the studio audience. You see them wearing clothes completely inappropriate to the part. You see them conjure an imaginary dog or imaginary baby. You notice how the same actor plays different characters with different accents.

But those are just incidental treats. The main objective of the recording is to create a story in the listener's mind's eye. It is designed to be heard at home, or in the car. You can picture the social workers' office, or Clare and Brian's

bedroom. It's all communicated by the lines and by the way the actors deliver them, without benefit of props, makeup, scenery or clever camerawork.

A radio play or comedy appeals directly to the listener's imagination. Your mind is not distracted by being invited to find a particular actor attractive or unattractive. You are invited to respond to them through what they say and how they say it.

Behavioural psychologists - people-watchers - tell us that you can test the authenticity of what someone says by listening without looking. In other words, it's not the visual

clues - the hand movements, the shifty eyes or other tricks of body language - that give a liar away, it's their speech. Because it's what we say and how we say it that expresses who we truly are.

Radio, then, invites us to focus on who people are and what they are really trying to say. That's why the interviews with politicians on the radio can be so revealing! We are not sidetracked or put off the scent by the clothes they're wearing, or how old or young they are.

We can judge their values and opinions for what they are. This is a refreshing change in a world that is eager to pigeon-hole people; it's more difficult to do that if you can't see them!

Being attentive to what people say, listening to people's values and opinions without the yardstick of age, ethnicity or gender to influence us is a fascinating way to learn in a world obsessed with youth, beauty, wealth and power. It combines openness with prudence. We would all do well by listening more attentively to others and letting our inner eye see who they really are.



*Radio invites us to focus on who people are
and what they are really trying to say*



Rev Michael Kingston



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On a wing and a prayer...

Maradona thanked the 'Hand of God' after helping Argentina beat England illegally in the quarter-finals of the 1986 World Cup in Mexico.

Twenty-four years on, England will seek some divine inspiration of their own when they attempt to become world champions in South Africa - and to help them on their way, the Bishop of Croydon, the Right Reverend Nick Baines, has written three World-Cup-based prayers.

The first calls for all who work and play in the tournament to be guided, guarded and protected.

In his second, he asks God to smile on the host country, South Africa, and all those who travel to "join in the party".

The final one is for those who may not be watching, but may need to show family, friends and colleagues understanding and patience over the coming weeks and possibly sympathy if their team is knocked out.

"More than half the population pray at some time and everyone will be affected by the World Cup in one way or another, so it makes sense to have some prayers for those that want to use them," said the bishop, who had help from Rev Peter Moger in writing the prayers .

"This isn't just about football; it's about the rainbow nations of the world celebrating together with the people of South Africa."

The World Cup kicks off on 11 June, with 32 countries playing 64 matches over a month. The final takes place in Johannesburg's Soccer City on Sunday, 11 July.

England, coached by Italian Fabio Capello, begin their quest against the USA on 12 June in Rustenburg's Royal Bafokeng Stadium.



Parish picnic

This year's parish picnic will take place in Crystal Palace Park on Sunday, 17 July.

The annual event is fantastic family fun and, if the weather permits, we will have food, drinks and a barbeque this year.

There will be games for the children and a relaxing time is guaranteed for all.

It is a great way to get to know people while enjoying the sunshine - hopefully!

Look out for further details!

PRAYER ONE:

Lord of all the nations, who played the cosmos into being, guide, guard and protect all who work or play in the World Cup.

May all find in this competition a source of celebration, an experience of common humanity and a growing attitude of generous sportsmanship to others.
Amen.



PRAYER TWO:

God of the nations, who has always called his people to be a blessing for the world, bless all who take part in the World Cup.

Smile on South Africa in her hosting, on the nations represented in competition and on those who travel to join in the party.
Amen.



PRAYER THREE:

Lord, as all around are gripped with World Cup fever, bless us with understanding, strengthen us with patience and grant us the gift of sympathy if needed.
Amen.

Have you heard the one about Pentecost Festival?

I had never been aware of the Pentecost Festival held in central London until very recently.

I only came across it by chance, finding a booklet advertising the annual event at the back of St Bart's church a few weeks ago.

As I flicked through the pages, I discovered it was a unique and rather eclectic gathering of artists from different walks of life, coming together to share the good news from a thoroughly modern point of view.

The festival boasted a host of minor celebrities from the world of music, theatre and the associated arts, performing at cost price in the hope their involvement would stimulate discussion and commitment from the younger generation - and goodness knows the church needs that!

It was with some trepidation that I picked up the phone to book tickets for Tim Vine, my favourite comedian of the moment, at the Metra nightclub in Leicester Square.

Expecting to be told that the show had been sold out weeks ago, I was pleasantly surprised when the voice of the young box office assistant replied: "Two tickets? Wonderful, you're the first to book!"

Now I don't know if you are familiar with the etiquette of a stand-up comedy gig but let me just say that usually it involves a rowdy and raucous audience of drunken young men, heckling any poor individual who

is brave enough to walk out on to stage, take hold of the microphone and attempt to make people laugh. That's what usually happens, but it was certainly not the case at the Metra.

The mixed audience of young and old sat patiently and quietly, perhaps a little conservatively, while they waited for their comic Christian hero - and he did not disappoint.

The first night of the Pentecost Festival proved to be a sold-out success as Tim rattled off his quickfire one-liners to an appreciative crowd.

My favourite joke of the evening was when he asked any Anglicans to raise their hands. When only a reluctant and nervous few did so, he remarked: "Typical Anglicans!"

Pulling out his phone and telling us he had a "pray as you go contract", he eventually left the stage to rapturous applause after entertaining us for a 40 minutes.

It was then left to the compere of the evening to remind the patrons that the nightclub was open until 2am and if anyone wanted to stay they were welcome to!

I got the impression this audience were not about to take up the generous offer, content to wander off home to their comfortable semis in middle-class suburbia instead and wait for the next promotional leaflet to appear at the back of their church.

Richard Dax, co-editor



For info about Pentecost Festival 2011, go to www.pentecostfestival.co.uk



**Tea Party in St Bartholomew's Church
Wednesday, 30 June, 2010
2.30-4pm
All Welcome!**

That's entertainment!

More than 70 events spread over three months - Sydenham Arts Festival is back for a second year and bigger than ever.

After the success of last year's inaugural event, which ran for 10 days in July, organisers have gone to extra-special lengths in 2010 to bring us music, dance, drama, comedy, film, poetry, visual arts, children's events and workshops from a number of venues – indoor and outdoor - across SE26.

From an Alice In Wonderland tea party to jewelry making and a paella cooking demonstration and lunch, the Festival has it all - and more!

For more information about events and how to book, visit the website at www.sydenhamarts.com.

Parishioners held their collective breath on Sunday, 23 May as Father Michael began the draw for the St Bartholomew's Spring Raffle.

Well done to all the winners. We hope that you enjoyed the many wonderful prizes on offer, including a hand-made and personalised piece of jewellery from St Bart's regular Gill Rice and her company... www.jesselina.co.uk.



The poster features a photograph of a group of people in a workshop setting. The text 'Sydenham arts festival' is at the top left in a colorful, blocky font. Below it is a quote: 'Happy proof that the most ambitious and adventurous arts programming is south of the river.' attributed to MICHAEL HODGES, TIME OUT. On the right, 'Sydenham Arts Festival 2010' is written vertically in large yellow letters, with 'Summer Season 6 June - 11 September' written vertically next to it. At the bottom, there are logos for 'enterprise rent-a-car' and 'propertyworld'.

Many thanks for the opportunity

As this is the penultimate issue of Sydenham Life that I shall write and co-edit, I thought I would take this opportunity to reflect upon my time in the hot seat and thank all of those parishioners of St Bart's who have taken the time to comment on the magazine and thank me for my contributions.

I have greatly enjoyed writing for this wonderful magazine and must thank the PCC for its support. It has put great faith and trust in us and our attempt to reflect the views of the church and the parish.

Sydenham Life is a life-line that connects the church to its parishioners and I do hope that the next editor keeps that in mind during his or her reign.

This magazine is delivered to more than 3,000 homes 10 times a year and is a great source of information. It can also provide comfort to those members of our society who often feel disenfranchised.

I'd also like to thank the collators and deliverers, who have devoted many an hour ensuring the magazine reaches as wider audience as possible.

Charismatic

Then there are the many and varied advertisers whose financial backing keeps the magazine going. Without your support, it could not survive.

Finally, I would like to thank St. Bart's itself. This incredibly charismatic and majestic church continually provides me

with inspiration not only for my writing but also for my life.

The building is warm, welcoming and generous and has always embraced me as a worshipper and provided many answers in times of reflection and soul searching.

It has helped me celebrate my faith, quietly question my beliefs and at times guide me in my thinking as a Christian.

I will always be grateful to this magnificent building and the constant empowerment that it provides.

Above all I am thankful for the fellowship of St Bart's and I pray the new editor of Sydenham Life has just as much fun as I have had.

Richard Dax, co-editor

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday@Six 20 June

Our special celebration of the Eucharist for children. Special music, address and prayers for the 6-12 age range. We shall be trying to answer the question: What's the Point?

Ordination Sunday 4 July, 6.30pm

We are proud to be asked to host the ordination of priests for the Woolwich Area of Southwark diocese. This will of course include our own curate, Heidi, as she completes her first year here. The service will be conducted by the Rt Rev Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Woolwich. There is limited availability for seats.

In the Anglican tradition, a person is first ordained deacon and usually stays in that order for one year. It is a kind of probationary period, as the curate becomes accustomed to ordained ministry. After one year, a second ordination takes place, so the person becomes a priest. Now for the first time, they can preside at the Eucharist, give the blessing, declare God's absolution and officiate at weddings, things they have only assisted at as a deacon.

Service times for St Bartholomew's

Sundays:

8am: Eucharist 10am: The Parish Eucharist
6pm: Evening Service or Sunday@Six
(Note: 6pm service is monthly, check for details)

Weekdays:

Morning Prayer: Monday – Friday 9am, Saturday 9.30am
Evening Prayer: Monday – Saturday 5.30pm
The Eucharist: Wednesday 9.30am, Thursday 12.45pm

From the Parish Registers

Baptisms

16 May: Nancy Morgan, Quben Boucher, Shanice McDowell, John, Megan and Reggie Ayres

Funerals

4 May: William Banner McEwan (75)
25 May: Norman Jones (76)

First Communions

9 May: Patrick Elliott

Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord

FLOODLIGHTING

6 June

For Elsie on her 94th birthday.
Arthur

14 June

Sydenham Society

28 June

In memory of my mother, father and two wonderful brothers

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A member of staff is available for consultation about weddings, baptisms etc on Saturday (10am-11am) in the church.
Vicar's day off: Monday.

Co-editor:

If you have a comment or contribution to make, please send it to

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Views expressed in Sydenham Life are not necessarily those held by the clergy, and vice versa.

Sydenham Life cannot be held responsible for its advertisers.

Driving force

It seems almost everyone is talking about environmental issues these days.

And more often than not, it is the government who leads the way when it comes to matters green.

But St Bartholomew's attempted to do its bit for the planet last month when it hosted an eco-friendly event designed to make people think about the impact they have on the environment and show them ways to reduce their carbon footprint.

Representatives from the Energy Saving Trust shared their wisdom with the general public while numerous displays and demonstrations helped get the message across.

Perhaps the most popular exhibit was the driving simulator which helped to show people how their driving habits can be a major contribution to pollution.

There was also a plant stall as well as barbeque and cake stand to ensure punters did not leave empty-handed.



Sydenham Life needs advertisers

Sydenham Life is a non-profit-making magazine serving the parish of St Bartholomew's.

Each edition costs £400 to produce - and that money comes entirely from advertisements. In recent months, we have struggled to break even. Not surprising given the economic climate.

If you have a business, you may be interested to note Sydenham Life is distributed 10 times a year to more than 3,500 homes in the area. For more info, contact advertising manager Kate Gordos on 0208 659 3815 or kate.gordos@lineone.net.



Rev Anthony Buckley had an egg-stremely unusual way of keeping parishioners interested during a guest appearance at St Bart's last month.

Speaking about the great joy and anticipation that Pentecost brings and with it the everlasting hope of the Holy Spirit, the chaplain of Alleyn's School in Dulwich tried to lob an egg into a bowl placed a few feet away from him.

He missed - but Anthony fooled us all. He had used a fake egg.

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