

Bishop's flood appeal gives helping hand

The Bishop of Oxford's flood appeal has raised more than £33,000 in the month since he launched it to help those affected by the summer floods across the Thames Valley. A number of grants have already been paid out – and now Bishop John wants to encourage more applications.

The fund is intended as a source of small grants to help people get back on their feet again. The first grants include money given for warm clothing for an elderly lady washed out of her home; for a family to buy new children's shoes; and for replacement carpets and kitchen appliances.

'I'm enormously grateful to the clergy and their

congregations for responding so generously,' says Bishop John.

'We know many lives were turned upside down by the flooding, and the misery continues long after the water has receded. This fund is a way of offering immediate, practical support for people trying to rebuild their lives.

'Now we need to make sure the money gets out to the people who need it most. If you know of anyone in your community suffering as a result of the floods, please alert them to the fund and encourage them to apply.'

Application forms can be found on the diocesan web site at www.oxford.anglican.org

(Pod) casting the net

You probably know that today is Racial Justice Sunday. What you might not know is that you can listen to a lively discussion on contemporary racial justice issues on the diocesan website. To find out what Raj Patel (Racial Justice Adviser), Alison Webster (Social Responsibility Adviser) and the Rt Revd Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham, have to say on the subject why not click onto our brand new podcast (www.oxford.anglican.org/podcast) area? Follow the instructions on how to download the discussion onto an MP3 player or just listen online.

This is the first of a pilot series of podcasts, which are intended to help Christians engage in contemporary issues. The next one will be on Back to Church Sunday.

'Tell Bishop John'

The Bishop of Oxford is appealing to people who have given up coming to church to tell him why – and let him know what might bring them back again.

The *Tell Bishop John* campaign, launched this week on BBC Radio Oxford, ties in with Back to Church Sunday on 30 September.

Bishop John says: 'We know people fall out of the habit of coming to church for all sorts of reasons, sometimes simply because they move house or their family circumstances change. Whatever the reason, I'd like to try and understand – and to find out how we can make our churches as welcoming as possible to all comers.'

People can contact Bishop John by visiting the website www.tellbishopjohn.com or by writing to 'Tell Bishop John' at Diocesan Church House.

REFLECTION

Many people returned to work – and school – this week after the summer break. The Church of England has just published a selection of prayers to help weary workers kick the post-holiday blues. The prayers, two of which you can read below, were chosen to give busy people a chance to reflect and recharge with God's help.

A Commuter's Prayer
I failed to get a seat – again,
too many people on the train.
We're stuck in a tunnel;
everybody's sighing;
we're not moving.

I breathe in –
'Let me know your peace and grace.'
I breathe out –
'And help me share it with the people here.'
Breathe in.
Breathe out.
For the sake of my sanity.
For the sake of my kingdom.

Sheridan James

Before Work
Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go,
My daily labour to pursue,
Thee, only thee, resolved to know,
In all I think, or speak, or do.

Charles Wesley

*Taken from Pocket Prayers for Work,
published by Church House Publishing,
and available from Christian bookshops.*

This week please pray for: **Sun 9** Racial Justice Sunday: We give thanks for ethnic and cultural diversity, and for the work of the Diocesan Committee for Racial Justice: patron – The Bishop of Buckingham; chairperson – Beverley Ruddock; adviser – Raj Patel; the archdeaconry link-persons. www.ctbi.org. **Mon 10** Wootton with Glympton and Kiddington: clergy – Stephen Jones; licensed lay minister – Jenny Wagstaffe. **Tue 11 Wycombe Deanery.** For area dean – Malcolm Macnaughton; associate area dean – Robert Jennings; synod lay chair – Ann Cartland; ecumenical representative – Tony Dickinson. **Wed 12** Flackwell Heath: clergy – Christopher Bull, Martin Courtney, Graham Philip Hartnell; licensed lay minister – Sue Simpson; youth and children's worker – Ellie Wartew. **Thu 13** Great Marlow with Marlow Bottom, Little Marlow and Bisham, Team Ministry: clergy – Nick Molony, Elizabeth Macfarlane, Dani Munoz-Trivino, Gabrielle Smith; licensed lay ministers – John Bustin, Peter Kent. **Fri 14** High Wycombe Deaf Church: clergy – Ben Whitaker. **Sat 15** Hambleton Valley Group: clergy – Malcolm Macnaughton, Mieke Gaynor; licensed lay minister – Annette Jackson.

PRAYER DIARY

COMINGS & GOINGS

The Revd Shane Owen Griffiths, assistant Curate, Icknield Benefice, is to be Priest in Charge, Mullion & the United Parishes of Cury & Gunwalloe, Diocese of Truro; The Revd John Hunwicke, House for Duty assistant Curate, Lifton Group, Exeter Diocese, is to be House for Duty Priest, Oxford St Thomas; The Revd Lorne Denny, Team Curate, Cowley, is to be Priest in Charge, Holy Trinity, Milton next Sittingbourne, Canterbury Diocese; The Revd Richard Blakeway-Phillips, is given Permission to Officiate in the Oxford Diocese

