



KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Deja view

Sometimes everything seems like Groundhog Day. Another year, another X Factor, another Band Aid and another batch of suicidal turkeys getting flu. And we are only half way through the 60 days of Christmas.

Like anything that endlessly repeats itself, Band Aid is so far past its sell by date that someone has finally noticed that it is a load of patronising drivel wrapped up in One Direction's spare underwear. And, it still has Bono.

All right, it makes money for charity and stops people forgetting who Bob Geldof is, but the only really good thing about it is it stops Simon Cowell's latest victims topping the charts at Christmas.

When it comes to raising cash, let's have Bank Aid where for one year all London's bankers donate their annual bonus to charity. Last year the bonus pot was measured in billions, but even if kids will spend their pocket money on a download to stop Ebola, I won't hold my breath waiting for bankers to do the same. Generous bankers with a social conscience? That's about as likely as a turkey voting early for Christmas.

And now, just like a bad smell, bird flu is back, followed by panic buying as a terrified population fears it won't have anything completely tasteless to eat on Christmas Day.

In the face of a turkey shortage the only thing to do is find some other poor unsuspecting bird to stuff in the oven. According to the Dutch it's all the fault of migrating swans. So, that settles it, let's eat swan.

According to tradition only royalty are allowed to eat swan, but there are too many out there for the Queen to eat them all so it's our job to help. The problem is the cooking, not the eating, as swans weigh in at up to 30 pounds and are too big for the suburban oven. I thought Delia could help, but there's no recipe in any of her books and you can't buy swan in Waitrose.

I'll just have to annoy the squirrels and do a nut roast. It's either that or pigeon.

St Mary's Catholic Church

279 High Road London N2 8HG

website: <http://www.stmarys-eastfinchley.co.uk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysN2>

Christmas Services

Sunday 21st December

3.30 pm Carol Service followed by refreshments

Wednesday 24th December

6 pm Children's Mass for Christmas Eve

10 pm 'Midnight' Mass

Thursday 25th December Christmas Day

10 am Family Mass

12 noon Mass partly in Latin

East Finchley Baptist Church

Just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue, N2



Sundays at 10.30am

Come & Celebrate Christmas with us!

Sunday 21st December

10.30am - 11.45am:
All ages Carol Service



6.00pm - 7.15pm:
Carols by Candlelight



Christmas Day (Thurs 25th Dec)

10.30am - 11.15am
Christmas Morning Family Service

For more information please contact
the Church Office, Tel: 020 8883 1544
web site: www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk

Minister: Simon Dyke

Visitors Always Welcome

Harvest between two nations

By Rev Michael Giles

This year's harvest festival at East Finchley Methodist Church was celebrated for the first time using material from the newly launched fundraising and awareness initiative All We Can. This year the focus was on Burundi, the small landlocked country in the heart of central Africa, known as a "Land of Potential".



Harvest time: Burundian ambassador Deo Sindayihebura, centre, visits East Finchley Methodist Church.

Philomene, one of our church members, works for the Burundian Embassy, which led to a meeting between her, me and Ambassador Deo Sindayihebura at the end of September to talk about the work of All We Can and to swap tales about living and working in central Africa, a place close to both their hearts. This in turn led to an invite to our harvest supper.

Flag know-how

It took place amid a rich and varied display of African pots and printed fabrics and alongside the usual harvest of fruit and flowers from East Finchley allotments there were crops from Burundi such as coffee, maize, sweet potato and cassava.

The Embassy lent us a huge Burundian flag, which after some discussion was hung correctly; the stars that form a triangle in the centre symbolise the tribes of Burundi and must point upwards. Everyone at East Finchley Methodist Church knows this now.

Burundi rebuilds

The Ambassador gave a stimulating talk on life in Burundi. He spoke about 12 years of civil war, the impact of hunger and poverty, the move to peace and now a massive, entirely self-funded rebuilding programme of schools and health centres. He talked about the inspirational leadership and dedication of the First Lady of Burundi, herself a Reverend, who was passionate about the poor of her country rather than "shopping trips and shoes".

Mr Sindayihebura explained that our two countries are linked not only by people but also by weather, as in Burundi "we also have the raining of cats and dogs".

Our church has set itself a target of £500 towards the All We Can Harvest Appeal and £245 was given at the Harvest Service alone.

Soulful singing at St Mary's

Punchy rhythms, the sound of the drum and young voices in harmony came soaring from Soul Sanctuary, a London-based gospel choir that visited St Mary's Catholic Church in the High Road for its Family Mass at the end of October.

Helen Doran, representative of the parish council, added: "Variety is the spice of life, and the gospel choir created a wonderfully exuberant atmosphere."



Sweet sounds: Soul Sanctuary sing at St Mary's Church

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