



April 2005

The Recorder

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*An edited version of this magazine is now available on the Church Web-site.
(Personal details are NOT included.)*

Church web site: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

Trinity - A Family Church

Worshipping together - Caring for one another - Sharing with others

'And so, the end is near ...'

Rev. Michael Shrubsole

Minister of Trinity United Reformed Church

I realise what a shock it is to many of you to hear my news. And perhaps some of you have not yet heard, so here it is: I have accepted a call to become the Minister of two churches in Essex - Christ Church in Coggeshall and the Church in Great Notley. I plan to conclude my ministry here in High Wycombe and move to Essex near the beginning of August in the school summer holidays so that the boys can settle in and be ready to start at their new school and college in September.

There, I have said it! The fact is out in the open, but it doesn't get any easier to repeat. Because it is a message which is partly happy and partly sad news, there will be gains and losses, there are regrets and there are opportunities. Almost everyone I have shared the news with can see both sides of the coin, the up-side and the down-side. There have been expressions of congratulations mixed with tears. There have been words of "I'm so happy for you", whilst at the same time I could see behind their eyes as they immediately began the frantic mental assessment of some of the practical implications of the news for them and for the church. I can honestly say that out of all the people I have told, only one, a distant friend, someone who has no practical connection to my personal situation at all, has been 100% congratulatory, treating my news as exclusively good news. Everyone else, and therefore I guess this is likely to include you, can see two sides to the news.

So, we must work together as a church to make sure my final few months with you seek to deal with the two sides of the equation. I will be glad to share with you in hopes and dreams of the good things that may lay ahead and find out how to say our goodbyes in a happy way rejoicing in shared friendships and achievements. And Louise and I want you to remember that: "Nothing makes the earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance; they make the latitudes and longitudes." (Henry David Thoreau 1817-1862.)

But let us also use these remaining months to think and work and make preparations for the changes my departure will bring to the church. "Change is inevitable. . . . Change is constant." said Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881). And another politician of later years continues the theme: "He who rejects change is the architect of decay." (Harold Wilson 1916-1995). My departure will bring change - change for me and my family as we face what the future holds for us and seek to discover what new opportunities for growth and development lie ahead for us; but also - change for you as a church when we leave you. What change, with opportunities for growth and renewal will come your way? And are you ready to embrace and welcome the changes, believing that in this way there will not be decay but instead there will be new potential and new opportunities for the church? And what are you willing to practically do about it? The prayerful hope of all those who plan for the movement of Ministers is that the church people should grow and develop through the process of change. New volunteers and new gifts and talents are discovered. New ways of keeping the church well run and organised are developed. The church can grow, and so can each individual in it, if they are willing to move into the opportunities my departure creates. Are you willing?

Mike

Minister :
Rev Michael Shrubsole,

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Church Secretary:
Mrs Margaret Lewis,

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April Services

Morning Worship at 10.30 a.m.

Children of all ages meet for part of morning worship using the 'Light Years' material from Scripture Union. Adult worship usually follows the texts of the Revised Common Lectionary.

3rd April - Morning Worship with Communion

John 20:19-31; Acts 2:14-32; 1 Peter 1:3-9; Psalm 16

10th April - Morning Worship - Preacher: Revd Mike Playdon

Luke 24:13-35; Acts 2:36-41; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Psalm 116

17th April - Morning Worship - Preacher: Revd Bill Frame

John 10:1-10; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 2:19-25; Psalm 23

24th April - All-age Worship

John 14:1-14; Acts 7:55-60; 1 Peter 2:2-10; Psalm 31

Rotas for April

Not included in this version

What's on in April



Monday 11th Apr - Recipe Evening
Bring along a 'Plate' to share
(8pm. Hostess - Marie Winning)

Monday 25th Apr - Calligraphy with Louise Shrubsole
(8pm. In the Lower Schoolroom)

WOMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday 5th Apr	Favourite Prayers
Tuesday 12th Apr	Jim Tanner: The Village and beyond
Tuesday 19th Apr	An Easy Quiz!
Tuesday 26th Apr	Eileen Edwards: R.O.P.E.



All meetings start at 2.30 in the Lower Schoolroom

1st and 15th April

at 2pm - 21 Westover Road

Scrabble

New players are always welcome. It is an afternoon of fun and friendship. For a minimum donation of £1 you get tea and cake, lots of laughter, and a few games of Scrabble.
Go on - give it a go!

Church Walk

The Chief Walker has found her maps!!

The next Walk will be on **Monday May 2nd** (the MayDay Holiday). Meet at 10:30am in the Manor Car Park (NOT by the Church) at Hughenden (grid ref - 862955) for a stroll of about 3 miles round the woods. (More details from Olive Shepherd - 01494 531943)

Not included in this version

Diary

TRINITY CHURCH DIARY DATES FOR APRIL

Church Lunch

Sunday 3rd April, after Morning Worship

Elders Meeting

(The 'April' Elders Meeting will be on 29th March.)

Church Meeting

Tuesday 19th April, 8.00pm. in the Schoolroom. All Church Members are encouraged to attend.

Prayer Circle for Healing

Sunday 24th April, 4.30pm. in the Sanctuary.

Caribbean Evening

Saturday 30th April in Crendon Hall. Food and entertainment, raising funds for our church's Restoration Fund. A great evening in store. Don't miss it. Tickets from Rose Cornwall. (see below)

Church Coffee Mornings

Saturdays 9th and 23rd
10.30-12.00am in the Schoolroom

OTHER EVENTS

(There is more on the Church Noticeboard in the Schoolroom. Do take the time to peruse its ever-changing contents on a regular basis.)

Caribbean Evening

Following last year's successful trial event, another Caribbean Evening is being organised for Saturday 30th April and we look forward to seeing everyone who wishes to attend. The event is planned to start at 7pm in Crendon Hall, and will include music, singing and fun for all ages with refreshments for everyone.

Tickets are on sale NOW at £5 each. See Rose for details.

FAREWELL TO "ANGELS"

Classic hymns have been ditched in favour of songs by Robbie Williams and Led Zeppelin as the preferred choice at funerals. A survey of Europe's favourite funeral music has revealed that the most likely song to be played at a British crem is not "Abide with me" but Robbie Williams' "Angels". Eric Idle's Monty Python song "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life" appears to be the choice of the optimistically inclined and REM's "Everybody Hurts" the choice of the gloomy. Across Europe, Queen's "The Show Must Go On" topped the funeral pops and the Germans showed a special weakness for heavy metal acts Metallica, Led Zeppelin and AC/DC. Alan Slater of the National Association of Funeral Directors said the reason that only Italians and the Spanish are opting for classical music was that "We live in a much more secular society". The Times editorial, however, expressed the hope that Muzak would be "completely absent from the afterlife".

Source: The Times (10/03/2005)

Trinity Theological Discussion Group

Future Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 10th May - "Eschatology - Talking about the End of the World"

Tuesday 12th July - "What does the Future hold for Christianity?"

All welcome to come and share in discussion and Biblical investigation.

Led by our Minister:

Tuesdays at 8.00pm. in the Schoolroom

The drunkard and the Priest

A drunk, who smelled of beer sat down, on a subway seat next to a priest. The man's tie was stained, his face was plastered with red lipstick and a half empty bottle of gin was sticking out of his torn coat pocket. He opened his newspaper and began reading. After a few minutes the man turned to the priest and asked, "Tell me, Father, what causes arthritis?"

The priest replied, "My Son, it is caused by loose living, being with cheap, wicked women, too much alcohol and a contempt for your fellow man, sleeping around with prostitutes and a lack of personal hygiene."

The drunk muttered in response, "Well, I'll be darned," and returned to his paper. The priest, thinking about what he had said, put his hand gently on the man's arm and apologized. "I'm sorry. I should not have come on so strong. How long have you had arthritis?"

"I don't have arthritis, Father," the drunk replied. "I was just reading here that the Pope does."

This little tale, whilst amusing, has a moral to it. It is easy to reach a conclusion too quickly. Remember, things may not always be what they seem at first sight!

This month's prayers from **Commitment for Life**,

Global week of action for Trade Justice 10-16th April

Cosmic God whose Spirit moved over a world of chaos, and transformed it into a world of order and structure, a world of nurture and abundance, Move among us now, in the chaos that is World Trade, and may it be transformed into a world of fairness structured to enable listening and flexibility; and with an understanding that rich countries cannot continue to use their power for the exploitation and devaistation of poor countries. May we be a part of that transforming power, this week, as we campaign and work to restore and nurture the world to an abundance once more. We pray in the power of that transforming love.

God of Justice,

Loosen the shackles of unjust trade agreements Open the way to

Balancing the scales of justice with a preference for the poorest countries Activate us to work to make Trade Justice a reality Lead us and guide us as we seek to build a different world, a world reflecting your Justice. Wake us up to the scandal that is World Trade Encourage your people to seek the truth Embolden your people to speak out Keep us and guide us as we seek to build a different world, a world reflecting your justice. **Out** of their despair they cry to you Forgive us and guide us as we seek to build a different world, a world reflecting your Justice. Active God, Challenge us To confront the lawmakers, and negotiators Inspire us to be Outraged by the system, of which we are a part Now is the time, this day, this week, this year

Freedom for the exploited, not liberalisation One-size-fits-all imposed reforms do not fit Rouse us this day, this week, this year.

Take all that is offered this week, and by your Holy Spirit may we Right the wrong that is World Trade. As we pray and listen, as we act and Dare to stand alongside, as you stand alongside, in love Even now, this day, this week, this year.

Jesus, you opened your arms and embraced the world from the cross, you Understand and you feel the pain, the hunger, the despair, the

disappointment and the Sense of betrayal of the voiceless and the powerless in the sham of current

trade negotiations.

Transform this world of power and greed, Instil within it the power of your love, mercy and Compassion, as we Embrace this day, this week, this year, in the power of your love.

Gracious God, I know that I have to be ready to make changes in my life and accept that 'rock-bottom' prices are no longer an option.

I know that I enjoy many things grown at the expense of others' water supplies and at the expense of their food and their livelihood and their freedom. I know that I spend my money in such a way that encourages the unjust and exploitative World Trade Organisation to drive even harder negotiations. I know that the E.U. negotiates on my behalf to bring 'prosperity' to me; and makes decisions on my behalf that keep poor people poor. I know, I know, I know . . . I know that this is not Your way.

Gracious God, give me the grace to take these things to heart and to strive to re-balance the Scales of Injustice, with a bias to the poor to become Scales of Justice -Trade Justice.

HoverAid

Tsunami Disaster Aid

APPEAL NEWS - 5 March 2005

Nine weeks on from the Tsunami, and your generous gifts are being put to very good use in Sri Lanka. After an immediate sum of £1000, we sent £5000 to the People's Church in January, and have now followed this up with a further £5000.

Pastor Dharshan Fernando of the People's Church in Colombo sent us this (edited) report earlier this week:

"We have been overwhelmed with work and I myself have been travelling down to the south of Sri Lanka a couple of times. Many of the Tsunami affected people are still in great distress, even with the aid received. It is great to hear about the monies raised. It will be of great help.

Let me update you on the work of the People's Church. We are now into development work. We are intending to build 100 homes in a given community for 100 families. We are intending to build 10 such communities around the nation. At present we have 300 families in the east base camp in Thirukkivil. In the same district we have another base camp in a place called Koamari where we have a camp (I have forgotten the amount of families there)

Besides this in the south of Sri Lanka (at Galle) we have almost secured a land and a community of people where we hope to start building a 100 homes. In the south people do not like to

live in camps and tents so much. Most people have moved in with relatives friends or to temporary shelters.

Similarly in a city called Kalutara (which is the close to the capital) we have our teams still working with a given community and are working with government to secure a land for housing. In these four bases we have sent out our pastoral team from our church who are permanently moving into these areas to live and work with the people affected by the Tidal waves.

Besides this we are working in three other areas of which one is in the North of Sri Lanka where the LTTE (The militant controlled areas) and two in the deep south where we have two of our churches belonging to our head organisation the Assemblies of God of Ceylon. (I am kind of coordinating one of the deep south camps temporarily.)

Besides this we have just seen a 16 acre property (One hour away from Colombo) and are in the process of purchasing it for an orphanage and an elders home.

I hope I have been clear. It is late and I am a little tired. Please do keep in touch. We appreciate all your love and support.

God be with you all

Sincerely,

Dharshan

Now that the DEC appeal has closed, HoverAid has decided to close its Tsunami Appeal on 26 March 2005. However, for anyone who would like to continue supporting the relief work in Sri Lanka, HoverAid will be pleased to continue providing a channel for gifts (and Gift Aid) to the People's Church.

HoverAid website: www.hoveraid.co.uk

Project website: http://www.geocities.com/hoveraid_sri_lanka/

Email: hoveraid@btopenworld.com

‘Wake up to Trade Justice’

Vigil in Whitehall and Westminster

Friday 15th April: 10pm – 8am Saturday 16th

Candlelit vigil outside Downing Street will be the biggest this country has ever seen. So come and be part of making history that night and deliver a Wake Up Call to the Government.

Stars from stage, screen and the music world will be among thousands of people coming for the all-night vigil protest organised by the Trade Justice Movement (www.tjm.org.uk/wakeup/). There is a special gathering at Westminster Abbey (doors open 9pm).

Highlights

- See Whitehall lit up with thousands of candles and lanterns
- Have fun and dance to great music
- Hear trade campaigners from around the world
- Join the dawn procession past Downing Street
- Support the global delegation of trade campaigners

This event will be safe for everyone - with activities and workshops throughout the night, stewards, hot drinks, a fair trade cafe and warm, dry places to go.

At midnight in particular, many thousands will line up opposite the Prime Minister's office to call on the UK Government to stop pushing poor countries to open up their economies and respect their right to decide on trade policies which will help them end poverty. The vigil will then continue through the night, culminating in a dawn procession and delegations meeting representatives from the main political parties. A huge range of activities have been set up to appeal to everyone from clubbers to faith groups including:

- A club night at the Marquee Club in Leicester Square featuring Nitin Sawhney, Radio 1 DJ Bobby Friction and other artists
- Trade justice cinemas at the Odeon Panton Street and Methodist Central Hall
- Overnight fair trade café with breakfast served in the morning
- An ecumenical church service
- A fleet of rickshaws to give the public free rides to all the different venues and along the amazing spectacle of Whitehall lit up by thousands of candles and lanterns

What to bring:

Candles and lanterns, Banners, games, warm clothes and umbrella (in case!)

FURY – meet up with others at Youth Café, Mother’s Union, 24 Tufton Street London SW1P 3RB (just 2 mins from Westminster Abbey)

World Church Statistics

GROWTH OF INDEPENDENT CHURCHES - There are now 39,000 'denominations' ranging in size from millions of members to just 100's. But the most striking and accelerating development in recent times has been the rapid growth of independent, non-denominational churches, now accounting for 20% of all Christians. This will soon be larger than all the protestant denominations combined! The current 2005 status of the different groupings is:

Roman Catholics...119 million

Independents.....427 million

Protestants.....376 million

Orthodox.....220 million

Anglicans.....80 million

Marginal.....34 million

Statistics Source: World Christian Trends 2005

This trend is particularly noticeable when travelling throughout Africa and Asia, which along with South America, comprise the major current Christian growth areas. Thousands upon thousands of churches have sprung up, generally community based, owing no allegiance to any denomination. They may be loosely associated with one another, or may have few links with others. This has resulted in a shift of Christianity's population base from the European North to the Asian/African/South American South.

This rapidly multiplying organism seems not to be organised, to man's understanding, that is. The fellowships are generally small, with some notable exceptions. Lacking in resources and training, they have little spiritual oversight outside their own body; all things that we, in the West, consider essential for successful church growth. Yet they are defying the odds, and within the next few years will come into the majority within Protestantism.

A study done in the US throws a light on one of the reasons behind this. For the newer the church, the more effective it is in leading people to Christ. The Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, USA, found that statistically, there is a high correlation between the age of a church and its effectiveness in winning souls for the Lord. The age of the church is related to the number of Christians necessary to lead one person to Christ.

Over 10 years old.....85 Christians

4-7 years old.....7 Christians

Less than 3 years old.....3 Christians

So the more momentum a movement generates, the more new churches that are set up, the faster the 'movement' (if you can call independent churches a movement!) is likely to grow.

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THE 'COLOURING' OF THE CHURCH - The church has moved from being dominated by those of European descent to those with permanent suntans!

*** *In 1900 81% of the church worldwide was white.*

*** *In 2005 this had dropped to 43%.*

Statistics Source: World Christian Trends 2005

Non-whites moved into the majority during the early 1980's.

One effect of this change can be seen in the Anglican Church's debate on homosexual priests. African and Asian representatives, now representing a large majority of church membership, 'flexed their muscles' against acceptance, contrary to the wishes of the US and the English branches of the church.

Now too, we are seeing many missionaries coming from traditional mission fields to the new mission fields of the West!

We need to understand what God is doing. He is taking those of a submissive heart, wherever they might live, and using them to further His kingdom. Whether He uses you or me, depends upon our obedience, irrespective of creed or colour. We simply need to be available to do His will.

(Source: WALKING WITH JESUS MINISTRIES - PRAISE GOD IT'S MONDAY! Weekly Newsletter. enquiries@wwj.org.nz)

MakePovertyHistory Campaign briefing

Commitment for Life: March 2005

MakePovertyHistory has three key demands: **Trade Justice**, **Drop the Debt** and **More and Better Aid**.

Many of the statements coming from the Government showed that they were taking a lead in the international community in seeking to raise the quantity of aid, and to cancel the debts of the poorest countries. This led some to believe that **MakePovertyHistory** was in fact a Government campaign, backed by the non-government organisations. ***That is not correct.***

While the Government rhetoric on both aid and trade sounds positive, there is still a great deal that actually needs to be delivered. For example, the UK has declared that it intends to reach the 0.7% of GNP in aid by the year 2013 – if all things go well. The **MakePovertyHistory** campaign seeks to have this date brought forward.

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But the greatest difference between the **MakePovertyHistory** campaign and the Government lies on the issue of Trade Justice. The UK continues to press hard for the liberalisation (opening up of markets) of developing nations. After the failure of the Cancun meeting of the World Trade Organisation to reach a deal, the British Government has pursued a rigorous liberalisation policy through its Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), and also through its backing of water privatisation (and other service provision under GATS). The Government has also given little ground in terms of ending export subsidies or removal of tariff barriers, which effectively keep developing country goods out of UK markets.

However, the language in the Africa Commission Report is very different. It declares that poor countries should not be forced to liberalise their economies, so meeting the key demand of the **MakePovertyHistory** campaign.

*“Forcing poor countries to liberalise through trade agreements is the wrong approach to achieving growth and poverty reduction in Africa, and elsewhere.”
Tony Blair 11th March, as a signatory to the Africa Commission Report*

This is a major achievement. Christian Aid’s Head of Campaigns, Martin Drewry, was told by Bob Geldof that this turnaround would never have happened but for the incredible flurry of passionate campaigning. A huge thanks to all of you. But, the report is not official Government policy.

Another success of the campaign has been the announcement by the Government in early March that it will no longer use conditions attached to aid to force poor countries to privatise industries and open their markets. This is a public acknowledgement that enforced liberalisation doesn't work and a real success for the trade justice campaign.

Further Action is needed:

- We commend to you <http://www.pressureworks.org.uk/dosomething/act/AfricaTB.html>, send a letter to Tony Blair to get him to turn his words into action.
- Contact WDM www.wdm.org.uk or www.dirtyaid.org or ring 0207737 6215 to get “Dirty Aid, dirty water” cards to send to the Secretary of State for International Development, to stop the UK pushing water privatisation and using aid money to fund consultancies which promote water privatisation.
- Get ready for the **Global Week of Action for Trade Justice 10-16th April**
The events planned are:
10th April - Service for Trade Justice
ask for the order of service so your worship can join millions of others across the world.
11th April - Fast for Trade justice in solidarity with the millions who do not have enough to eat.
Visit <http://www.christian-aid.org/worship/502gwa/reflect.htm> for prayers and other ideas for the fast.
15th April - Vigil in London
see page 9 for details

What every church can do:

- Create the opportunity for the issues of MakePovertyHistory to be raised in your church.
- Write postcards to our politicians. White Band cards or Vote for Trade Justice ballot cards. Contact Christian Aid on 08700 787 788 to get more copies of the postcards, the Vote for Trade Justice ballot cards, or Global Week of Action Guide, or worship pack. Or the WDM “Dirty Aid, Dirty Water” card.
- Plan ahead: Flyers for Edinburgh 2nd July now available and details of banners (different sizes) for your church for 1st July White Band day.

VERY QUICK QUIPS!

- Those who jump off a bridge in Paris are in Seine.
- A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.
- Dijon vu - The same mustard as before.
- Vuja de - The feeling that what you are experiencing has never happened before.
- Shotgun wedding: A case of wife or death.
- Does the name Pavlov ring a bell?
- Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.
- When two egotists meet, it's an I for an I.
- A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two-tyred.
- Definition of a will: A dead give away.
- In democracy your vote counts.? In feudalism your Count votes.
- She was engaged to a boyfriend with a wooden leg but broke it off.
- A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
- With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.
- When a clock is hungry, it goes back four seconds.
- The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.
- You feel stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
- Local Area Network in Australia: The LAN down under.
- Every calendar's days are numbered.
- A lot of money is tainted - It taint yours and it taint mine.
- A boiled egg in the morning is hard to beat.
- A midget fortune-teller who escapes from prison is a small medium at large.
- Those who get too big for their britches will be exposed in the end.
- Once you've seen one shopping centre, you've seen a mall.
- Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.
- Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.
- Acupuncture is a jab well done.

The Cross

A young man was at the end of his tether, seeing no way out, dropped to his knees in prayer.

"Lord, I can't go on," he said. "I have too heavy of a cross to bear."

The Lord replied, "My son, if you can't bear its weight, just place your cross inside this room. Then, open that other door and pick out any cross you wish."

The man was filled with relief said, "Thank you, Lord," and he did as he was told.

Upon entering the other door, he saw many crosses; some so large the tops were not visible. Then, he spotted a tiny cross leaning against a far wall. "I'd like that one, Lord," he whispered.

And the Lord replied, "My son, that is the cross you just brought in."

When life's problems seem overwhelming, it helps to look around and see what other people are coping with. You may consider yourself far more fortunate than you imagined.

[continued on back page]

*The next edition of the Recorder will be published on 24th April
Closing date for contributions is Friday 15th April.*

Recorder Editor : e-mail : editor@trinity-urc.org.uk

Church web site: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

prayer page
(prepared by the choir)

We thank you, Lord, for the fellowship of our Lent study groups. Bless us as we go forward into the life-changing experiences of Easter. Plant your Springtime in our hearts, Lord.

Come upon us quietly Lord, and take us by surprise, speak our names and take our breath away. Roll back the stone, release us from our mourning and through the amazing encounter of Easter day, impel us into joy.

O Lord Jesus Christ, carpenter of Nazareth, from the wood and nails of the cross you have constructed a crutch for our souls. Grant us grace to use that crutch to support us until we reach the end of our pilgrimage. *Amen*

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**“Thine be the Glory, risen conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o’er death hast won!”**

[Judas Maccabeus - Handel]

“Lord Jesus Christ
I would come to You,
Live my life for You
Son of God.

All your commands I know are true,
Your many gifts will make me new
Into my life your power breaks through,
- Living Lord!”



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YOUR CROSS

Whatever your cross,
whatever your pain,
there will always be sunshine
after the rain.

Perhaps you may stumble,
perhaps even fall,
But God's always there to help you
through it all.

[with thanks to Andrew W for submitting this item]