



“JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW”

No 4

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PROGRESS WITH THE CHURCH BUILDING

At the time of writing (27 Feb) the roof of the octagon is covered and should be weatherproof. The present estimate is that it will take a further three weeks until the building is finally finished. In any event, we will certainly be fully functioning in time for Holy Week and Easter. Never-the-less we did read prayers in the church on Sunday 15 February although this was rather like an open air service!

We knew that work was being done in the factory and reference to *completed sections* created the impression that construction at the site would be swift. There was a difference of terminology! To the builders, *completed* meant the skeleton framework of the various panels. On site, these panels have to be insulated, and plaster boarded inside ready for plastering. The exterior has to be given its cladding, a type of white weather-boarding, with all the decorative features. At the moment, another three weeks seem like an agony of waiting but clearly it will be worth it. Everyone who has been to see the progress of the work has been visibly impressed. The builders have established a website to display pictures of the work. This can be viewed at www.timberchurches.co.uk but only shows the first few days so far. One oddity is that they have included the artist's impression of the finished church. However, this picture shows the original proposal with a square central section, whereas, we are actually building the revised design with the octagonal main part of the church, as authorised by the Broads Authority planning department.

MEDIA INTEREST

The fact that the Media has taken an interest in our church is no surprise because building a Russian style Orthodox church in a Suffolk village is unusual. We can take comfort from the fact that, if the general public remember anything about the recent crop of articles, it will be simply that there is a new church in Mettingham. The Eastern Daily Press article had the heading *That's not a garden shed - it's my garden church*. Some parishioners were offended by what appeared to be an attempt to belittle our church. Of course, the headline was not really either clever or funny. The situation is not helped by the fact that Tim James, the builder, has

two trading names. The company that he started is called TJ Creations but, when he took over another firm called Suffolk Sheds, he also retained that name. The Beccles and Bungay Journal published an article under the heading *Back Garden Worship*, which also created a down-market impression. Although the site of the church is at the back of the house, it is about 30 metres from the house and set in three acres of grounds with lots of trees. So when you come to see the church it will be rather more spectacular than a shed in a back garden. Indeed, there never was a shed 8½ metres high complete with onion domes!

A breakthrough was made recently in our on-going research into the devotion of our ancestors to the Mother of God in this area. We know from various historic sources that there was an important image of the Virgin Mary that was enshrined in the college chapel dedicated to the Mother of God in the grounds of

AN AMAZING DISCOVERY

Mettingham Castle. Tragically, as with virtually all of these beautiful and ancient images of our Lady and the saints, this image was destroyed in the 16th Century and we have no textual description about what it was like.

However, whilst looking at an old article in an archaeological journal on the history of Mettingham Castle we happened, by God's providence, to stumble across an engraving of the beautifully preserved wax seal of the Master of Mettingham College that can be accurately dated to 1408-9. Wondrously, the seal depicts a very striking image of the Mother of God in which she is shown seated in a throne with a crown on her head and holding a sceptre in her left hand. What is unusual about this image is that the Christ Child, who is usually depicted sitting on her knee, is standing virtually upright on her right knee, slightly supported by her right hand, with His left hand pointing to His most holy mother.

This is very probably a copy of the renowned image that was venerated in the chapel and about which, other than the impression on this seal, we would have absolutely no information. The image bears a remarkable resemblance to two important Russian ikons: the Kazan Ikon of the Mother of God which also depicts the Christ Child standing upright and the Reigning Ikon of the Mother of God, which was re-discovered in 1917, in which she is shown crowned and enthroned as our Heavenly Queen. More recently, the image also closely resembles the Ikon of the Mother of God of Walsingham that was painted by Archimandrite David, of pious memory, also from a seal which depicts the Mother of God enthroned, with crown and sceptre.

Following the exciting discovery of this seal, we discussed with Leon Liddament at the ikon studio in Walsingham, the possibility of painting an ikon of the Mother of God based on Our Lady of Mettingham for the ikonostasis in our church. Thus once again, after an interval of almost exactly five centuries, Our Lady of

Mettingham is returned to her rightful place as proper veneration to her is restored in this area. Glory to God!

METTINGHAM TROPARION - Tone 4

Rejoice, Our Lady and All-Pure Virgin Mary, for thou art enthroned once more; as Mettingham's joy and Waveney's glory. Guide and protect us, we pray thee, strengthening our Faith in thy Son, leading us into the Way of Salvation, since thou art both Mother of God and Queen of Heaven.

This text is being submitted to Archbishop Mark for approval.

WEBSITE - '<http://www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk>'

The website for new church is almost complete having been professionally designed for us by our friend, Justin Reynolds. The new website should be ready and on-line in the next few weeks and will display contact details, location and service times. We hope in the next few months to add further pages and links.

GREAT LENT

The fast of Great Lent begins on Monday 2 March and we do not eat meat, fish and dairy again until Easter Day. Although on days such as the Annunciation (25 March) and Palm Sunday there is a relaxation of the rules which allows fish to be eaten. Great Lent is a spiritual pilgrimage to the Easter, the triumph of Christ's Resurrection. Thus, we should not approach Great Lent thinking of it simply as a time when we eat less (well less choice of foods) but as a time when we pray more.

On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the first week of Great Lent (2 - 5 March) we will read Compline and the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete. We had hoped to do this in the church but this will not be possible, so we will do it in the house.

FURNISHING THE CHURCH

We are very grateful to all who have offered gifts to the new church. One supporter has suggested that people need more information concerning the cost of the numerous items that will be required. So here are some guidelines that may be helpful.

Altar table (<i>Prestol</i>)	£1,800	Proskomedie table	£630	Choir desk	£750
Chalice set	£1,200	Shroud of Christ (<i>Plashtschanitza</i>)	£150		
Gospel Book for the altar	£35	Apostol (Epistle Book)	£35		
Dikiri & Trikiri (2 and 3 branch candlesticks for use when the bishop is here)	£250				
Censer	£100	Analoy	£450 each (2 required)		
		30 metres of gold brocade for vestments and altar cloths	£480		

100 metres of gold braid £100 Ikon lamp (with bracket) £35 each
3 wooden stools for the clergy seats in the altar £30 each
Hand-painted ikons will cost upwards of £500 each but printed ikons mounted are around £20 each depending on their size
Altar wine costs £5 per bottle. At the moment we do not have prices for items like light fittings, electric heaters, carpets etc but will give details later.

THE NUMBERING OF THE PSALMS

The Orthodox Church uses the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. This translation, into Greek, was made a century and a half before the birth of Christ. It is the most accurate text of the Old Testament. In most English books the Psalms are identified by the number given in the King James translation of the Bible but there are some differences between the two versions as can be seen by the following list.

SEPTUAGINT

Psalms 1 - 8
Psalm 9
Psalms 10 - 112
Psalm 113
Psalm 114
Psalm 115
Psalms 116 - 145
Psalm 146
Psalm 147
Psalms 148 - 150

KING JAMES VERSION

Psalms 1 - 8
Psalms 9 and 10
Psalms 11 - 113
Psalms 114 and 115
Psalm 116 verses 1 - 9
Psalm 116 verses 10 - 19
Psalm 117 - 146
Psalm 147 verses 1 - 11
Psalm 147 verses 12 - 20
Psalms 148 - 150