

# **ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD**

**Parish Church Magazine  
Online edition**

**JULY/AUGUST 2013**



# ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD



## Parish Church Magazine



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**JULY/AUGUST 2013**

**50p**

## SUNDAYS AT ST MARY'S

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Parish Communion and Children Together
6.30 pm	Evensong
10.00 am	(second Sunday) Worship Together

## WEEKDAYS AT ST MARY'S

Daily:	9.00 am - Morning Prayer (except Fridays and Saturdays) Morning Prayer on Tuesdays will alternate between St Mary's, St Thomas' and Holy Trinity Amblecote
Daily:	5.00 pm - Evening Prayer (except Fridays)
Wednesday:	1.30 pm - Noah's Ark at St Mary's (term time) parents & toddlers
Thursday:	10.30 am - Holy Communion in Lady Chapel
Thursday:	7.30 pm - Bell Ringing Practice
Friday:	Choir Practice and Youth Groups (in term time)
Saturday:	10.00 - 12.00 am - Open Church –refreshments available
<b>Priest in Charge and Curate's Day Off:</b> Friday	

## OTHER REGULAR EVENTS



Bible Study Group:	Monday, first in month at 2.30 pm	379972
Mothers' Union:	Second Tuesday at 2.15 pm	392951
Outreach Group:	Occasional meetings	01562 851491
Music Group Practice:	Second Saturday at 10.00 am	375167
St Mary's Walking Group:	Last Saturday of the month. Depart 9.30 am	

<b>Reader Emeritus:</b>	Mr Roy Peacock	379972
<b>Reader:</b>	Mrs Kanthi Ariaraj	395115
<b>Church Wardens:</b>	Mrs Marjorie Ferguson	393454
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
<b>Organist / Choirmaster:</b>	Mr Robin Walker	01905 353939
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Mr Russ Fowler	442684
<b>PCC Secretary:</b>	Miss Katey Fletcher	378182
<b>Magazine Editors:</b>	Miss Gemma Sutton	423021
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661

<b>Church Hall and</b>		
<b>Coach House: - Bookings</b>	Parish Office	441003
<b>Parish Administrator and</b>		
<b>Publicity Officer:</b>	Mr John Sutton	441003
<b>Parish Office:</b>	Open 9.00 am -12.00 noon Monday to Friday	441003
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	E-mail: st.mary.os@btconnect.com	
<b>Magazine e-mail address:</b>	stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk	

## ENQUIRIES ABOUT WEDDINGS, BANNS OF MARRIAGE, BAPTISMS.

Please come to the Church on Saturday morning between 10.00 and 11.00 for Vestry Hour. You will be warmly welcomed. Tea and coffee will be available.

## DIARY FOR JULY 2013

Thursday 4	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 6	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
	Mission Coffee morning 10.00 am-12.00 noon in the Narthex
<b>SUNDAY 7</b>	<b>THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	3.00 pm Baptism
	4.15 pm Rotary Club Service
Monday 8	7.30 pm Standing Committee
Tuesday 9	11.30 am Holy Communion at Hollycroft
Thursday 11	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 13	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 14</b>	<b>THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	10.00 am Worship Together
Monday 15	7.30 pm PCC Meeting
Tuesday 16	7.00 pm Oldswinford Primary School Leaver's Service
Thursday 18	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 20	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
	12.30 pm Wedding
<b>SUNDAY 21</b>	<b>THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	12.00 noon Parish Picnic in Rectory Garden or Church Hall when wet
	3.00 pm Baptism
Wednesday 24	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge
Thursday 25	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 27	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 28</b>	<b>THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>

## DIARY FOR AUGUST 2013

Thursday 1	10.30 am Holy Communion
Friday 2	1.00 pm Wedding
Saturday 3	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 4</b>	<b>THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	3.00 pm Baptism
Tuesday 6	11.30 am Holy Communion at Hollycroft
Thursday 8	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 10	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
	Copy date for September magazine
<b>SUNDAY 11</b>	<b>THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	10.00 am Worship Together
Thursday 15	10.30 am Holy Communion
Friday 16	1.00 pm Wedding
Saturday 17	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 18</b>	<b>THE TWELTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	3.00 pm Baptism
Thursday 22	10.30 am Holy Communion
Friday 23	12.00 pm Wedding
Saturday 24	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 25</b>	<b>THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	3.00 pm Baptism

## FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends,

The meeting room in the Church House at Areley Kings was packed out for our 'Visioning Day' on 18 May. We spent the day talking, listening and doing an exercise which resulted in us scoring our Church life against the well-tested 'Seven Marks of a Healthy Church'. Full details of what these marks are can be found elsewhere in this magazine and at the back of church. The aim of the exercise is to point out, for our own use, those areas in our Church life which would benefit from a little sharpened focus.

As has been recorded in the reports referred to above, areas which we felt needed further thought were in particular concerned with discernment, seeking what God wants from this particular community of faith. This would include priorities for St Mary's, short, medium and long-term, and how those priorities are linked to what God is calling us to do and be. This area of focus requires us to be able to listen to the voice of God and hear the promptings of the Spirit. Of course we can safely say that times of prayer help with that focus, especially when that prayer time involves space and silence so that we can hear as well as speak. But God does not only make himself heard when we are ready, he has a habit of breaking through our busyness with his own insistent call, and those who hear that call are not necessarily those people we would expect to hear the voice of God. As in the story of the call of Samuel, God uses all sorts of people to make his voice heard. So it may just be that God speaks to **you**, and **you** become convinced of what God wants of St Mary's.

From that first point of 'seeking God's will' the rest of our future planning will flow. Once we are confident of the direction we are going, the challenge of 'change' being unwanted and resisted will become much less of an obstacle, and we will go forward with a sense of confidence.

So the challenge of the 'new term' starting in September is to discern the call of God for St Mary's. So I will be inviting people to pray for our Church, to give a little time to prayer, privately and corporately, and to ask for God's guidance. If we go forward without that guidance then we are wasting our time and energy, but if we align our actions with the will of God then we are on the right track and all things will be possible.

So when you see invitations to pray for our Church please grasp them, as the greatest strength of the Church is the ability to communicate with God, the maker and sustainer of life, who promised through Jesus that his Spirit would be with us 'to the end of the age.' Let us pray that that Spirit may be revealed to us for the glory of his Church.

With every blessing.

*Stephen Stanger*

## SERVICES IN JULY 2013

<b>7 July Sixth Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Isaiah 66. 10-14	Galatians 6. 7-16	Luke 10. 1-11, 16-20
	6.30 pm Evensong	Genesis 29. 1-20	Mark 6. 7-29	
<b>14 July Seventh Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am	WORSHIP TOGETHER		
	6.30 pm Choral Evensong	Genesis 32. 9-30	Mark 7. 1-23	
<b>21 July Eighth Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Genesis 18. 1-10a	Colossians 1. 15-28	Luke 10. 38-end
	6.30 pm Evensong	Genesis 41. 1-16, 25-37	1 Corinthians 4. 8-13	
<b>28 July Ninth Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Genesis 18. 20-32	Colossians 2. 6-15, (16-19)	Luke 11. 1-13
	6.30 pm Evensong	Genesis 42. 1-25	1 Corinthians 10. 1-24	

## MOTHERS' UNION AWARDS

In October 1987 Kim Bell started an evening Mothers' Union group to run along side the existing afternoon group and include ladies who could not attend afternoon meetings because of work commitments. In January 1988 several ladies were enrolled into the Mothers' Union during an evensong service. At the MU Deanery Festival held at Holy Trinity Church, Amblecote, on 21 May five ladies received their 25 years long service award from Liz Green the Diocesan President. Congratulations to Dawn Nex, Janice Sutton, Sally Frost, Margaret Moulton and Judith Dickens.

## SERVICES IN AUGUST 2013

<b>4 August Tenth Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Ecclesiastes 1. 2, 12-14; 2. 18-23	Colossians 3. 1-11	Luke 12. 1-13
	6.30 pm Evensong	Genesis 50. 4-end	1 Corinthians 14. 1-19	
<b>11 August Eleventh Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Genesis 15. 1-6	Hebrews 11. 2-3, 8-16	Luke 12. 32-40
	6.30 pm Choral Evensong	Isaiah 11. 10-12, end	2 Corinthians 1. 1-22	
<b>18 August Twelfth Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Jeremiah 23. 23-29	Hebrews 11.29-12.2.	Luke 12. 49-56
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 28. 9-22	2 Corinthians 8. 1-9	
<b>25 August Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Isaiah 58. 9b-end	Hebrews 12. 18-end	Luke 13. 10-17
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 30. 8-21	2 Corinthians 9.	

### SECRETARY NEEDED

The Coach House Charity committee needs someone to act as secretary. This is an unpaid role which would require a commitment of a few hours each month. There are four to six meetings a year where minutes are taken and agendas prepared for each following meeting. Work would normally be undertaken at home or at the Coach House when meetings are held. For further details please contact Janet Hampson 01384 374338 or speak to a committee member .

## CHANGES AFOOT

Many readers will already be aware that there are to be major changes taking place in the Dudley Archdeaconry in the coming months. The first of these to be announced was the news that Fred Trethewey is to step down as Archdeacon of Dudley after twelve years in post. He will be retiring from full-time ministry at the end of September to take up a part-time pastoral role as Priest-in-Charge of Christ Church, Brittany, France.

Bishop John said, "Fred has been an exemplary Archdeacon of Dudley and I am one among very many people in this diocese and beyond who owe him a great debt of gratitude. We shall be very sorry to lose him, but rejoice with him in this exciting new appointment and pray that God will bless him and Margaret richly in their new life in Brittany."

St Mary's has many good reasons to be grateful to Archdeacon Fred for his support and guidance during past years and for his wider work in the area since 1988. The churchwardens are specially appreciative of the encouragement provided by Archdeacon Fred and together we wish him and his wife, Margaret, great joy in their new challenge and a deserved peaceful partial retirement.

The second announcement came from Downing Street on 5 May informing that Rt Revd David Walker, currently Bishop of Dudley, is to leave the Worcester Diocese in October to become Bishop of Manchester.

Bishop David said: "Whilst I am very excited about returning to my home city as Bishop, Sue and I will also be sad to leave so many friends that we have made in the Diocese of Worcester. I'm grateful for the many opportunities that I have been given both to support the mission and ministry of the Church of England in Dudley and Worcestershire and to contribute to the life of our villages, towns and communities."

Bishop John said: "Although I shall be very sorry to lose a wonderful colleague from our diocese, I'm delighted that Bishop David has been appointed as Bishop of Manchester. As anyone who knows him will be aware, he is a person of great gifts, immense wisdom and deep personal holiness. I have reason to be profoundly grateful to him - I could not have wished for a better colleague during the last five years. The Diocese of Manchester is very fortunate, as is the wider church and I shall be joining very many others to pray for God's rich blessing upon David and Sue as they prepare to move and in their new life and ministry."

There will be a service to celebrate and give thanks for Bishop David's ministry in Worcestershire and Dudley in Worcester Cathedral during October. St Mary's will add prayers and thanks to Bishop David for his care.

And many will be interested to hear that Revd Canon Owain Bell, formerly of St Mary's Oldswinford, is to retire from St Mary's and All Saint's Kidderminster at the end of September. We wish Owain and Kim a long and very happy retirement and great joy in whatever life brings to them.



## **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2013 BITE BACK AT HUNGER**

There is more than enough food in the world for everyone, but one in eight people will go to bed hungry tonight. This is a scandal.

This Christian Aid Week, the focus was on projects around the world that support communities to find ways to not only survive but to thrive, with enough food to eat not just today but tomorrow — Something we can continue to support week after week.

Thank you to everyone at St Mary's Church, Oldswinford Primary School and the local community for their help this year. Working together, we raised a total of £1984.37.

**Helen Fowler**

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### **CHOIR NEWS**

This is a tricky time of year for the choirmaster. In one hand, the tightrope balancing act of choosing the correct music for the season is counteracted in the other hand by the inevitable chorister holiday or school examination which could force silence from one of the choir's sections, making chosen music impossible to perform! Whilst keeping the youth of today interested in the singing and the work of the choir, I can do no more than accept, in full, the absolutely "non-trivial round" of the inevitable further education hunter.

So before I say any more which might drive you towards total gloom and despondency I have, once again, to thank the choir for their support over recent months. I also thank the congregation for its support, encouragement and very many kind words.

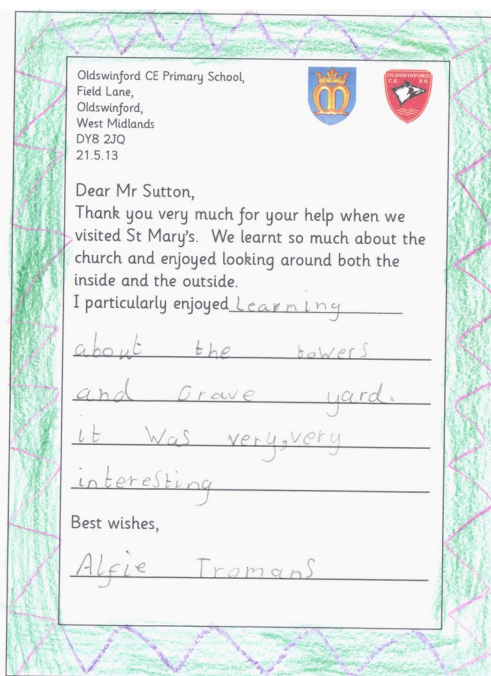
However, all this comes tinged with an enormous plea! If all goes to plan in one choir's household, the regular tenor section will be reduced by 50%. Freddie Apperley will be all alone if Jack's hopes and dreams come to fruition. The best people to recruit members to a choir are usually other choir members but people who support and listen to them week by week can also help; you are the ones who see and hear them, who know what time they give and who know how much it means to them.

May I please ask you to ask people you know, who are musically minded, to consider supporting our church choir. If it is a case of finding out more about singing in the choir then please ask them to speak to me – on the telephone or after a service in person. Your help in this respect is invaluable. If you feel you would like to ask me some questions on suitability beforehand then please do. I would be delighted to give a short voice trial and spend time with interested people.

I look forward to hearing from you; hopefully with a few names!

Please make interested people aware of my contact details at the front of this magazine.

**Robin Walker**  
**Organist and Choirmaster**



## CHILDREN AT ST MARY'S

*Recent concern expressed at the Visioning exercise, for St Mary's to be more inclusive and welcoming towards children, may well be an issue that requires further work but it is with thanks to John Sutton for his time and care we are able to share one example of how things may be better than some think.*

It has been good to welcome into church recently several groups of children from both Ham Dingle and Old Swinford Primary School.

Year 1 and Year 2 children have visited to learn more about the church and discover what's inside by carrying out a treasure hunt, spending some 'thinking' time in the Lady Chapel and by walking around the outside of the church and visiting some interesting graves.

Each visit has begun and ended with some time considering the type of building they are visiting and the significance of what happens in a church. The topic that the Year 2 children from Old Swinford Primary were studying had the umbrella title of 'Home and Away' so we also talked about how the church was linked to their school and because the majority of children attending lived within the parish it was also their 'home' church. As ever with children, the range and subject of questions asked was broad and varied but demonstrated their eagerness to learn and their enquiring minds.

The children from Old Swinford Primary School obviously followed up their visit back in school and kindly wrote me some letters.

**John Sutton**

## **BEHIND THE SCENES WITH ST MARY'S MISSION AND PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

Mission continues throughout the year in sending help from St Mary's to groups and charities, both in our local community and abroad. We have a large committee of sixteen members, with some now preferring to take an "honorary" role after many years of service, though they still help whenever possible.

We are funded by a generous and annual donation from our Parochial Church Council, specifically for St Mary's Mission work, and from our own fund-raising efforts which are always well supported by our congregation and friends. This places us in the unusual position of receiving money into our account in order to give it away as quickly as possible! We are fortunate in that a sign of our work to help others is a low bank balance.

There is an ever-increasing need in these difficult economic times and our list of people and charities we aim to assist grows each year. Usually at our committee meetings to distribute Mission funds from our Church, we try to have a balance between local and overseas donations, though in 2013 more has been allocated to local causes. Funds are always kept in reserve for an emergency need in this country or for a natural disaster abroad.

Here are a few examples of local help: St Mary's has supported The Children's Society, Top Church Training in Dudley, The Mary Stevens Hospice, Cockleshell in Stourbridge (part of the Camp Hill Trust), Mothers' Union "emergency bags" for Women's Refuges locally, The What? Centre in Stourbridge, No Limits and Clover Leaf in the Coach House and the Food Bank – food donations from St Mary's are delivered to the Food Bank every week.

Abroad, we have supported Mission Aviation Flying with their work in flying doctors and medicines, food, Bibles, tools and equipment, toys for children etc in remote areas of the world, and we've also donated to the Ifakara Bakery Project in Tanzania. St Mary's has helped to buy mosquito nets through Christian Aid's Malaria Appeal, supported a community centre in Chamwino, Tanzania, which helps HIV/Aids orphans, WaterAid, Sight Savers International ..... and the list goes on.

Through Kanthi, our Reader, we learnt seven years ago of Sasi, a young widow of an Anglican Priest in Sri Lanka and her small son, Mark, who were living in a shed in someone's garden, having absolutely no support.

Through your generosity, St Mary's has provided a small home for

them, bought a sewing machine for Sasi to earn money, and a goat who will, we hope, have a roof soon for its pen to keep dry. Mark is now doing well at school. This support has been achieved with no expenses involved. Your help through St Mary's Mission has made a dramatic difference to the lives of these two people. Thank you.

Here, at home, our link with Magdeburg in Germany was renewed when Carmen Werner made a short visit to St Mary's on 5 May. This followed her participation with others from the Diocese of Magdeburg in the Three Confessions Conference at Holland House, near Evesham. Carmen stayed with Philip and Helen Bartram from St Mary's - thank you both for your kind hospitality. The photo shows Carmen made welcome by Stephen and Jean in the Rectory.



Mission cards on sale in the Narthex produce a steady source of income for Mission and we now have a new design entitled 'Roses'. As always, our thanks go to Elaine Smith and Ruth Atkinson who produce these lovely cards.

Our Mission Coffee mornings are always well supported, with time for everyone to sit and chat whilst enjoying an amazing selection of cakes. Please do come to our next **MISSION COFFEE MORNING** on:

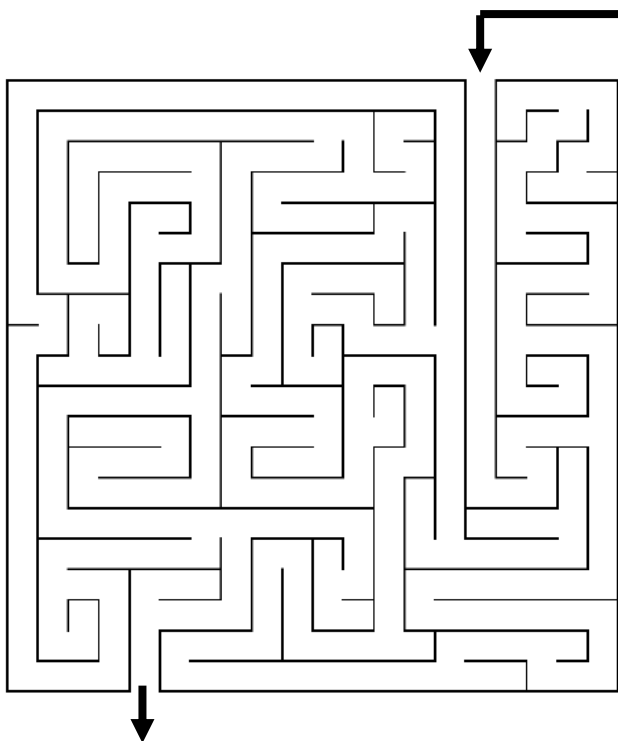
**SATURDAY, 6 JULY 2013, 10 am – 12 noon in the Narthex.**

Our Mission work, as a committee 'Behind the Scenes', is made possible through giving from St Mary's and from all our many friends, to be sent out to help others. The care and assistance we can all give to others in this way really make a difference to people's lives, as St Mary's donations are put to good use almost as soon as they're received. Thank you all for your support.

**Pamela Scudamore**  
**On behalf of the Mission and Pastoral Committee**

# CHILDREN'S PAGES

The Summer holidays are finally here and you have 6 weeks until you go back to school; what are you going to do?



Time to go swimming perhaps?  
Help these two children find their way to the swimming pool.

## SQUARE WORD

How many words can you make from this square?

Use 3 letters or more.

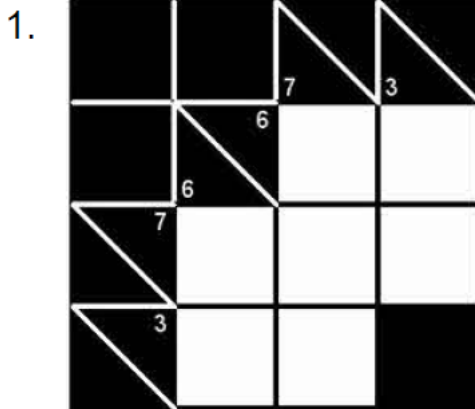
Move in any direction but do not jump a square or use one letter more than once

K	I	N	G
I	D	E	A
S	L	A	T
S	E	R	E



## EVER TRIED A KAKURO PUZZLE?

Kakuro are similar to crosswords in that there are black cells and white cells. In some of the black cells you will find little numbers which refer to the "run" of cells adjacent to them, either across or down. These little numbers are your clues and are the total to which the numbers you will put into each "run" should add up to. You must fill each run with numbers from 1 to 9, using each number no more than once in each run. For example, if the total of a run must be 4, you cannot use 2+2, but must use 3+1. Use logic to work out the order in which you must write in the numbers so that all the runs are correct. Kakuro puzzles are a little complicated to explain, but if you have a go you will be able to work it out!



## Do you know my friend Jesus?

God loves you so much that He sent you His Son Jesus.  
If you have not asked Jesus into your heart then stop  
right now and think about it.

Don't miss this opportunity!! You don't know what  
tomorrow will bring.

It is really easy to become a Christian! The Lord has a  
wonderful treasure chest of blessings and joy for you to  
share with Him. They are not material treasures or  
diamonds and jewels, but they are wonderful treasures  
that are beyond your wildest dreams. He offers you a life  
with the certainty of knowing that HE loves you  
UNCONDITIONALLY!! Even if no one else loves you He  
does!!!



Want to find out more? Then visit "**The Story of the Wordless Book**" at

<http://berean.org/bibleteacher/wb.html>

## A PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND — Part Two

As we left Bethlehem and headed back to our hotel our driver kindly selected a route that avoided the anticipated queues at key checkpoints and provided us with some experience of the isolation and human cost created for the Palestinians by the building of 'The Wall'. Signs of building and apparent economic growth are evident in both Palestinian and Israeli areas, indicative of the financial support provided to each community by other sympathetic international groups.

The evening meal was specially presented as a celebration of our visit. A Sultan and Sultana were chosen for the evening. Our two and only Roger and Janet Hampson were duly enthroned and, once appropriately dressed, were dined in regal isolation. The food was paraded on platters by the chefs and we were entertained by a dancer who soon had the royal couple joining in. What fun!

Sunday in Jerusalem brought a slightly more gentle start to the day with a more leisurely breakfast before we walked the short distance to St George's Cathedral for the 10.00 am Eucharist service. An international congregation and a choir from the Netherlands added to the celebration and worship. It was interesting to note the embroidered kneelers which carried the names and motifs of churches from all over the world. At the end of the service a talented organist played a lively Voluntary which was listened to with delight and was then acknowledged with the usual form of St Mary's appreciation before we walked on to the Jerusalem Hotel for lunch.

The afternoon took us across Jerusalem to Ein Karem, birthplace of John the Baptist, to the Franciscan church and monastery of St John Ba-Harim. The church was completed in 1920, financed by the Spanish Monarchs, built on an ancient site over the birthplace cave identified by Theodosius in AD530. Statues of Mary, her cousin Elizabeth and Zacharias feature prominently in the main apse whilst the walls of the church are decorated with blue/white tiles on which are hung many paintings by C17th Spanish artists. Stained glass windows in the dome above the central apse depict various Biblical scenes including the beheading of John (Matthew 14.1-12).



On Monday we departed Jerusalem, en route to Tiberius and the Scots Hotel, our base for the Galilean days of our pilgrimage. Our route was initially eastwards, to Qasar El-Yahud and to the desert town of Jericho, then north, parallel with the river Jordan into increasingly more fertile and productive lands where modern, intensive farming techniques ensure the maximum possible output of grain, bananas, vines and cattle. During our journey the transition from the Judean desert was strikingly obvious as were the banana plantations from which hung large blue or silver plastic sacks to surround and protect the fruit as it developed.





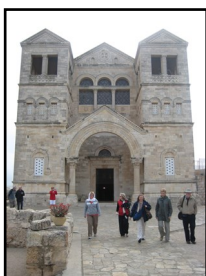
The site at Qasar El-Yahud, administered by the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, is the traditional site of Jesus's baptism. How accurate a location this may be is difficult to determine as rivers migrate across their flood plains over the years and the Jordan is now many times smaller than it used to be; a consequence of the extraction of water for irrigation. However, this evocative site, despite the surrounding heavily fenced land being clearly marked as a minefield, presents great significance to the pilgrim and was the location for our group of a particularly moving act of worship and personal reflection.



Jericho (Joshua 6.1-27), a city of much recent unrest and occupation, is now under Palestinian administration. It is believed to be one of the oldest cities in the world, where archaeologists have identified more than 20 successive settlements (Tell es-Sultan) dating back to 9000 BC. Many springs around the site provided the essential sources of water that made settlement possible. Here we read the stories of how Bartimaeus regained his sight and how Zacchaeus repented of his sins, stories of Jesus' ministry in this city. Modern-day Jericho relies on agricultural trade and tourism (eg the cable-car ride to the Mount of Temptation) although a \$150 million casino-hotel project has stalled and stands empty and forlorn.



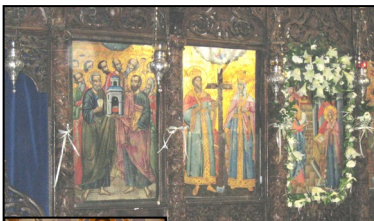
The city of Tiberius, named after Caesar Tiberius (Roman Emperor 14 – 35 AD), was founded by Herod Antipas and is nearly 2000 years old. It lies on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, was once an important fishing port but has become a residential city for mainly Jews since 1948. Today it is very reliant on the tourist trade as a holiday resort for Jews and for Christian pilgrims. In 1885 David Watt Torrance, a 23 year old surgeon from Airdrie, Scotland set up the Scottish "Mission of the Jews" in the Holy Land and developed a hospital and schools in Tiberius. They served the local communities regardless of race, creed, class or colour and through these he would teach the gospel of Christ. No longer serving this need, the buildings have been extended and developed and now provide the good quality hotel accommodation we enjoyed for our stay and maintain the presence of the Church of Scotland in the Holy Land.



Our Tuesday programme began with a visit to Mount Tabor which we ascended via the steep winding road by taxi to the Basilica, traditional site of Jesus' Transfiguration and where He spoke with Moses and Elijah. We met in Elijah's Chapel where we shared the words of Mark, Chapter 9, before appreciating the architecture of the building and the views over the plain of Armageddon with its geometric planting patterns.



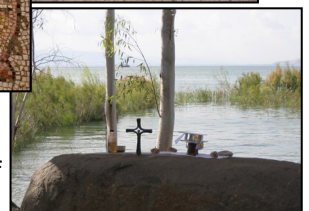
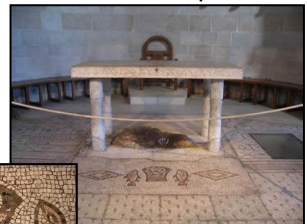
We continued our coach travels to Nazareth, the largest arab city in Israel, formerly a very small village where Mary and Joseph raised their son. Our first stop was at the reconstruction site of a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Galilean village where the history and lifestyle of such people were creatively displayed and re-enacted, providing the pleasure of meeting these warm and caring folk. Following lunch we walked on to the Catholic Basilica of the Annunciation, traditional site of Mary's house where Angel Gabriel appeared and announced to Mary that she is to give birth to Jesus. This two-storey church, completed in 1969 on a site of at least four previous churches, includes in a shrine on the lower level, the remains of a small cave which may have been Mary's home. The upper floor, which serves as a parish church, is well illuminated from a large central dome and contains much interesting decorated glass and paintings.



Close by, on the site of several previous churches, is the 1767 Greek Orthodox, St Gabriel's Church, the alternative site of the Annunciation, built over the spring which serves Mary's Well. The spring is accessed from the church via a short passage to the shrine. On the Templon, the ornate wooden screen that separates the hall of the church from the altar, are highly decorated icons whilst the walls are covered with detailed paintings.

Our third visit in this small area was to the Synagogue Church, a Catholic-Greek church built in 1877. According to Christian tradition, the synagogue of Nazareth stood here, and it was here that Jesus started spreading His word. We moved on the short distance to Cana, the scene of Jesus' first miracle, where, in a chapel room kindly reserved for us, we shared the words of John, Chapter 2 and then six couples in our group renewed their wedding vows.

The last full day of our pilgrimage in Israel began with a visit to the Church of the Loaves and Fishes, commemorative site of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Here, in the floor of the church is the restored 5th Century mosaic of two fish flanking a basket of loaves, the earliest known example of a figured pavement in Palestinian Christian art.



We celebrated Holy Communion on the shores of the lake at Tabgha, a very special act in a very special place.

In the beautiful grounds of the Convent of the Beatitudes we listened to the words of Matthew (C5,1-11) and reflected on how blessed we were to have shared the past days together in such wonderful places and to have walked in the footsteps of Christ. These familiar words held another message for us as they require us to consider how our life is practised and encourage us to think anew.



We travelled on to Capernaum and the extensive excavated ruins of this ancient village which was the base for Jesus' Galilean ministry and home to the apostles Peter, James, Andrew and John and the tax collector, Matthew. Most of the earliest buildings were of local black basaltic boulders but later buildings, like the 5th century synagogue, were built using white limestone. Archaeological and historical records have

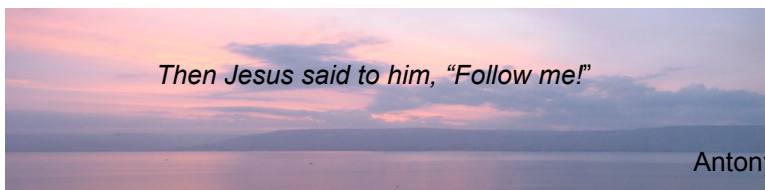
enabled Peter's house to be identified with considerable accuracy and in the 5th century a limestone church was built over the remains. In 1990 a striking modern church was built, suspended over the site of St Peter's house in such a way as to leave the ruins clearly visible through the glass floor.



Our return to Tiberius was by boat, across the Sea of Galilee. As we left the berth the captain raised the Union Flag in our honour and played 'God Save The Queen' before we sat and admired the views as we sailed towards our destination. For our short voyage the waters remained calm, something on which we reflected in a short Act of Worship (Luke 8. 22-25) whilst the boat hove to and rocked gently on the wavelets. We came alongside in Tiberius a happy band of pilgrims all too aware of the approaching end of our journey and conscious of all we had gained from the experience.

Our evening dinner provided the opportunity to acknowledge with gratitude the immense contributions of our guide, Oliver and the leadership provided by Revd Canon Greville Cross and to enjoy the company of strong friendships.

Leaving our hotel the next morning we headed towards the Mediterranean coast, to Caesarea and the impressive remains of this important Roman town with its aqueduct and restored amphitheatre. We walked onto the sandy beach, to a quiet spot where, with a makeshift altar, we sang hymns and shared together one last Holy Communion.



Antony Tatford

## PARISH VISIONING DAY

At the Parish Visioning day on Saturday 18 May, Stephen led the group in an exercise that sought to identify how those present viewed the current performance of the St Mary's Community in terms of seven measures of a 'healthy' church.

Those present were asked to score St Mary's on a 1 to 6 scale (1 being low, six high) for each of the seven identified 'MARKS'. When collated, the higher scores indicated opinions of high levels of performance, the lower scores suggesting a less-successful degree of compliance.

The seven marks of a 'healthy church' and the scores attached to them by the group were:-

<b>MARK 1: ENERGIZED BY FAITH</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>MARK 2: OUTWARD-LOOKING FOCUS</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>MARK 3: SEEKS TO FIND OUT WHAT GOD WANTS</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>MARK 4: FACES THE COST OF CHANGE AND GROWTH</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>MARK 5: OPERATES AS A COMMUNITY</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>MARK 6: MAKES ROOM FOR ALL</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>MARK 7: DOES A FEW THINGS AND DOES THEM WELL</b>	<b>136</b>

*(Full details/explanations of these 'Marks' are available in a handout at the back of church)*

The two highest scored Marks were 5 and 7. It was felt that these identify the true heart of what goes on at St Mary's; where teams of people enjoy caring for and providing for others, individual or worldwide, with the support of effective leadership. The essentials are done well by a community that utilises its strengths and assets to good effect.

**Mark 3** received the lowest score of 78, a score which is approximately mid-way in the overall ranking process, i.e. 'average'. Many expressed concern as to how we might accurately identify what God wants us to do and this is an obvious challenge. It may be that the answer will become evident as a consequence of prayer and discussion so that a consensus may be arrived at. It is for each one of us to contribute to the process of determination in the manner we feel most able to do so. In this way our opinions, influenced by the widest possible expression of God's hopes of us and for us, will be shared and will contribute to identifying the way ahead.

**Mark 4** suggests we should be accepting of and be prepared to face up to change rather than to resist and fear failure. St Mary's has coped well with enormous changes in the past few years and there is a need to accept that we will face other changes day by day. Change will never please everyone but it is important that we recognise the expectation for personal and corporate sacrifice as we live out our faith together.

The scoring outcome and the expression of people's own convictions suggest that **Marks 2 and 6** are those we, as a church, might be addressing in the immediate future. There is some recognition that we need to make a closer and a more inclusive contact with our wider community, be this other churches, non-church attending members of the parish and other groups that make use our buildings. The success of recent Harvest Festival and Jubilee events stand as testament to the potential in such activities. Equally, there is a desire in many for us to find new ways of inviting and encouraging new members into our community. Our desire to see more children in and involved with our church probably requires us to find new, different and sometimes challenging ways of providing the means to attract their parents also and to prove that St Mary's has something that can contribute to their lives.

## ST MARY'S WITH ST JOHN'S MOTHERS' UNION

Members at the June meeting were led in a reflective service by Judith Dickens. We were reminded that, for so many people, the Christian journey is one of challenge, doubt and pressures as well as providing positive elation. These all test body, mind or spirit. We were urged to hold on to the love of God, and though He may let us dangle from our fingertips, HE will NEVER let us go. We were also thankful for the support we share in the Christian fellowship where many have experienced similar problems.

Mrs Rosemary Moss then spoke on her "Basket of Treasures". We were challenged to check the nature and value of "treasures" and read Matthew 6.19-21. All the items which were special to her, whether gifts or photographs, reflected people who had meant so much in her life.

What would we value so much that we would try to keep? Does the mobile or ipod become essential or do we have keepsakes or memories of people?

Rosemary's final item was a palm cross. Her conclusion was that the empty cross of Christ is our hope and our eternal treasure. What would you choose?

### **Dates for your diary:**

Tuesday 9 July, 2.15 p.m. at 10 Rectory Close, Gardeb Party.

Thursday 8 August, 7.30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Amblecote, Mary Sumner Day.

Tuesday 10 September, 2.15 p.m. in Narthex, St Mary's Oldswinford, Anniversary Service, Wave of Prayer and Celebration.

**Dawn Nex**

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## SCOUTS HELP OUT DURING COMMUNITY WEEK

As part of their response to Scout Community Week, members of 17<sup>th</sup> Stourbridge Pedmore Scout Group spent two afternoons working in St Mary's Churchyard. On Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 June, with the guidance of their leaders and volunteer supporters, the scouts energetically tackled areas of overgrowth with saws, secateurs, shears, loppers, and trimmers to reduce some of the rampant growth to more manageable levels. Several areas of the churchyard are very much improved as a result of the efforts of these young people who responded to the challenge to bond with the local community in scouting's biggest UK-wide fundraising and awareness event of the year.

One example of what they achieved is immediately visible by the gate leading onto the path by Mary Steven's Hospice. An immensely overgrown and out of control ivy plant had completely buried several graves under a bush that had grown to over three metres high and extended over an area of many square metres. Now the area, and the graves and headstones have been revealed in all their glory, accessible for the first time in many years.

No doubt, in true scouting tradition, this exercise of woodman's skills brought some elements of enjoyment and satisfaction to a group of young people who clearly recognise what community spirit is all about.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this event and set such a good example of what our younger generation is capable of when given the opportunity and necessary support to prove themselves.

Well done.

**Tony Tatford**

## **THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CRISPY MACKEREL**

This is without doubt one of my favourite fish. It's sustainable, healthy, quick to cook and inexpensive, what's not to like!

- 1 lemon
- 1 small piece of fresh ginger (optional)
- 4 large tablespoons of breadcrumbs
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds or flaked almonds
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 large mackerel fillets
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce (optional)

Pre-heat oven 180Cfan/200C/Gas 6

For the topping, add the finely grated zest of the lemon and finely grated ginger into the breadcrumbs. Add the nuts or seeds and sprinkle with the olive oil. Put the mackerel onto an ovenproof tray..... I usually line it with baking parchment. Spoon over soy sauce and a good squeeze of lemon juice. Scatter the crumb mix on top of the fish, pat down lightly and bake for 20 minutes until the topping is golden.

I like to serve it with crispy stir fried vegetables.

**Ann Jennings**

.....

## **AND FOR THE WINE.....**

Fish cuisine can find companions across the range of white wines: crisp and lightly-fruited; weighty and mouth-filling; aromatic to match a dish served with a saffron sauce perhaps. Here we require something in between to combine the distinct flavours and weighty texture of mackerel and the oriental touches present in the recipe. Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc are the principal white grape varieties of Bordeaux. The weight of Semillon and the zingy fruit of Sauvignon Blanc combine perfectly for a fish such as mackerel and we are grateful to the wine-making traditions of the Graves and Pessac-Leognan areas that such a blend is available. In truth, these two varieties are quite widely planted around the world. South Africa and Australia follow the French lead and successfully bottle Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc blends.

However the flavours of ginger, soy sauce and the stir-fried vegetables signal a spicy aromatic dimension. Torrontes or the more obscure Furmint and Gruner Veltliner grapes would bring a spicy note.

A fully paid-up member of the aromatic club - Fiano, Viognier or a good

Pinot Grigio may well be too expressive. A perfect solution might be to stay with our winning combination of Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc but add in a measure of the more aromatic Muscadelle. Not easy to find but this is exactly the blend in many dry white wines of Entre-Deux-Mers and Bergerac. We really should see more of these wines but much never leaves French soil. So, introduce yourself to a bottle and join the campaign! Enjoy your wine-sipping.

**Richard W. B. Ryan**

.....

### **ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP**

On what promised to be a lovely sunny day eight people set off from Worcester Woods Country Park to walk over the Park Meadows towards Spetchley.

Negotiating the A4440 we picked up a path that led us along a good track and up the only small climb on the walk to a ridge where we had superb views over as far as the Malverns Hills. It was so clear we could easily pick out the buildings on the side of the hills.

We continued on our way and entered Spetchley Park from where we had a good view of Spetchley Hall. We walked on through the lush meadows of the estate following the perimeter of the deer park (but were disappointed not to see any deer) and eventually we picked up a bridle path that took us to the bottom of the village of Whittington. From there we were only a couple of meadows away from the end of our walk.

By this time the weather, which had lived up to its promise of being a glorious day had brought out lots of visitors but we managed to find a table that accommodated us all where we enjoyed our picnic together. All agreed it had been a good day.

**Syvia Cooper**

### **NOTE: Change of details for the walk on 27 July**

This will be a linear walk starting from Whitlocks End. The group will take the train at 9.39 am from Stourbridge Junction to Whitlocks End. The walk is towards Birmingham and we will return by train from Small Heath. If you have an age concession pass please remember to bring it with you. We will meet on Platform 2. The leader, Sue Solley will check at the church at 9.25 am.

The walk is not as long as described in the programme, being about five miles, not seven, and is flat with no stiles. There will be an opportunity to stop at Sarehole Mill.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING THIS SUMMER?

Are you going somewhere different, new and exciting this year or perhaps you are visiting a favourite spot you feel particularly able to enjoy and will refresh you? The editors would welcome details of places you have visited that may be shared with others. Please send your recommendation of places you visit this summer, or perhaps have visited in the past, to the editors for inclusion in future editions of this publication.

PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

19 May	Maisie Faith Southall Elijah Felix Stuart
2 June	Darcey Rose Gascoyne Francesca Emma Fellows

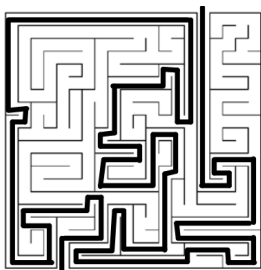
Weddings

17 May	Lawrence Gaskin and Nicola Wilkinson
25 May	Richard Beaujoy and Amanda Sibley
8 June	Aaron Davies and Samantha Heeks

Funerals

21 May	Florence Audrey Brown	Aged 81
22 May	Wendy Axford	Aged 75
23 May	Victoria Garratt	Aged 33

Children’s Page Answers



1.

		7	3
	6	4	2
7	4	2	1
3	2	1	

*The letter from the Bishop had not arrived by the time this edition went to press because of delays imposed by the current ill-health of Bishop John's wife, Denise. We send our best wishes to Bishop John, Denise and all the family as they face this challenging time and we ask you to remember them all in your prayers.*

## **2013 FESTIVAL OF CHURCHES**

### **14-15 September 2013**

Local Tourism Groups and Historic Churches Trusts have joined with the Dioceses of Hereford, Lichfield and Worcester to launch this regional festival. It is intentionally the same weekend as Ride and Stride run by the Historic Churches Trusts and the national Heritage Open Days when, as a nation, we celebrate our built heritage.

We are starting to think about what we at St Mary's can do to contribute to this Festival of Churches and to celebrate the setting and the building in which we worship. Roy Peacock has kindly agreed to provide a supervisory eye on the preparations. Roy will undertake to provide an exhibition and talk for visitors which will focus on Mary and Earnest Stevens as benefactors to the church and the neighbourhood. Certainly we hope for the church to be open and accessible to visitors during the festival but it may be that you have ideas for other things we can do to celebrate St Mary's.

The festival is a fantastic mission opportunity to get people through the doors of our churches, tell our Christian story and build connections with the wider community.

#### **The objectives of the Festival are:**

- Encouragement for communities to make greater use of church buildings
- Closer community cohesion and sense of identity
- Wider understanding of the needs and values of parish life and activities
- Additional income for church budgets
- Getting people through a church door they have never been through before
- Provide a fantastic mission opportunity to tell our Christian Story
- Raise funds for the Historic Churches Trust in your county, which in turn will allow more funds to be allocated to church buildings requiring repair and restoration.

All churches are encouraged to open their doors and to stage an event, large or small, of whatever nature a parish chooses. The success of the scheme will depend on wide participation but those churches that join in will benefit from the broad publicity and awareness which the Festival will undoubtedly produce.

#### **Event ideas to get you thinking**

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| *Concerts   | *Lunches, dinners, etc.               |
| *Sale of local produce (cakes, jams, garden produce and plants, etc.) |                                       |
| *Exhibitions – art and photographic                                   | Guided tours of churches              |
| *Churchyard events  | *Fairs and garden parties             |
| *Afternoon teas   | *Flower festivals                     |
| *Organ recitals   | *Organised competitions, raffles, etc |



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