

# **ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD**

**Parish Church Magazine  
Online edition**

**OCTOBER 2014**



# ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD



## Parish Church Magazine



**PRIEST IN CHARGE:** The Revd Stephen Agnew, The Rectory,  
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**OCTOBER 2014**

**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 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	07968 586285
	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 am and 11.00 am for Vestry Hour. You will be warmly welcomed. Tea and coffee will be available.

## DIARY FOR OCTOBER 2014

Wednesday 1	7.30 pm Baptism preparation evening
Thursday 2	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
	7.30 pm Ruth's Licensing Service at Bartley Green
Saturday 4	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
	7.30 pm Parish Harvest Supper
<b>SUNDAY 5</b>	<b>SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	12.30 pm Baptism
Monday 6	9.30 am Open the Book Team visit Old Swinford Primary School
Tuesday 7	7.30 pm 'The UK Gold' Film at St Thomas' church hall
Thursday 9	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Friday 10	Copy date for November magazine
Saturday 11	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 12</b>	<b>SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	<b>Harvest Festival</b>
Tuesday 14	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Croft
	2.15 pm Mothers' Union meet in the Coach House
Thursday 16	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Saturday 18	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 19</b>	<b>EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	3.00 pm Baptism
Monday 20	9.30 am Open the Book Team visit Old Swinford Primary School
Tuesday 21	2.00 pm Tea at the Coach House
Wednesday 22	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge
	7.30 pm Deanery Synod meeting
Thursday 23	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Saturday 25	St Mary's Walking Group meet.
<b>SUNDAY 26</b>	<b>NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY</b>
	British Summertime ends—clocks go back one hour
	Schools Half Term Week
Tuesday 28	2.30-4.00 pm Tuesday Tea in the narthex
Thursday 30	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Friday 31	12.30 pm Wedding in church

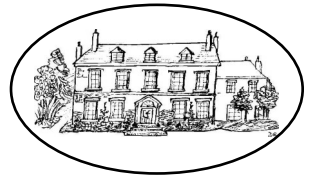
### THOUGHT FOR THE SEASON

"You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with corn, for so you have ordained it. You drench its furrows and level its ridges: you soften it with showers and bless its crops.

You crown the year with your bounty and your carts overflow with abundance. The grasslands of the desert overflow; the hills are clothed with gladness. The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with corn; They shout for joy and sing."

From Psalm 65

## FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends,

I think of life as a journey, an experience of constantly moving on, and I am very glad that just around the corner there may be the possibility of some great surprise awaiting me of which I have no premonition. Of course, the surprise awaiting me may not necessarily be a pleasant one; it may bring many challenges to me, but the fact that I am blissfully unaware of those impending challenges is in itself a comfort. I would rather not know what is going to happen, but there is a sense in which I do look forward to facing whatever surprises may await me. To me that is part of the thrill of living, the uncertainty of it all.

This particular time of year is a time when we become aware of that sense of movement and journey as we watch young children going to school for the first time, or perhaps older children moving schools. Then there is that particularly challenging moment when young people go away to University and College, and parents realise that they are no long 'their' children, but very much independent young adults (who still have a habit of returning home at times of need, financial or otherwise). All of these events are reminders of how life changes, and there is perhaps a sadness at seeing that change in the lives of children and young people, and realising that as their life has moved on, so has ours.

Despite the fact that change is all around us we are often not very enthusiastic about it, we would rather that things stayed as they were. Perhaps that innate conservatism is a particular characteristic of an affluent society; perhaps a poorer society has a greater ability to embrace change as it sees that change as a way out of poverty, or perhaps there is some much deeper aversion to change within each one of us.

There are times when the Church is seen to champion lack of change, when it focuses exclusively on an unchangeable God and rituals which go back millennia, and that championing of 'lack of change' or permanence might be seen as being faithful to the historic Christian message. But there are other times when change is embraced by the Church as a gradual revealing of God's hidden purpose for his people and his world. There have been times throughout history when the Church has championed change in areas of education, healthcare and in social concern, to name but a few examples, and without the embracing of change at those times society would not have progressed, and the standards which are taken for granted in this era would not have been reached.

The Church is facing a time of great change, and such change brings about insecurity amongst the faithful. It is sometimes hard to see where that change is leading us and the uncertainty can make us lose hope. But

the hope of the Church is and always has been hope in a God who is not constrained by time, who is both unchangeable and constantly changing. If we are able to place our insecurities about where we are going on our individual and corporate journeys onto God, then we will be released to appreciate that God is leading us forward and that God will strengthen us to face whatever challenges we must face in the future of this changing world and changing Church.

Look forward to the future because God is there just as he is there in the past and the present.

With every blessing,

*Stephen Agnew*

### SERVICES IN OCTOBER 2014

<b>5 October</b> <b>16th Sunday after</b> <b>Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	1 Kings 8: 22-30	Matthew 21: 12-16
	6.30 pm Evensong	Jeremiah 7: 1-11	1 Corinthians 3: 9-17
<b>12 October</b> <b>17th Sunday after</b> <b>Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am	WORSHIP TOGETHER	
	6.30 pm Choral Evensong	Deuteronomy 8: 7-18	Matthew 6: 25-33
<b>19 October</b> <b>18th Sunday after</b> <b>Trinity</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Isaiah 45: 1-7	Matthew 22: 15-22
	6.30 pm Evensong	Proverbs 4: 1-18	1 John 3:16 - 4:6
<b>26 October</b> <b>Trinity 19</b> <b>Bible Sunday</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Colossians 3: 12-17	Matthew 24: 30-35
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 55: 1-11	Luke 4: 14-30

## AUTUMN

### Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness

Apart from a cold, wet spell in August we have enjoyed the finest summer for many years and September is continuing to deliver warm, sunny days as we move into autumn. The start of autumn is traditionally linked with Michaelmas, the feast of St Michael the Archangel (or St Michael and all Angels) which occurs on 29 September, a few days after the autumn equinox when days rapidly become shorter and nights colder. Occasionally warmer periods return in October and these are sometimes referred to as an Indian Summer. The term is thought to be derived from 'American Indians' who would have taken advantage of mild autumnal weather to hunt and forage later in the day to build up winter food stocks.

The season is associated with harvest as crops mature and fruits ripen. Many of our traditions relate to the harvest – a time of thanksgiving for the crops and celebration at the end of hard work in reaping them. Harvest festivals are an important part in the church's calendar and services typically include church decorations of produce and foods with special hymns and prayers of thanksgiving. Regional variations reflect the nature of the harvest, for example fishing in some coastal parishes, and in the Black Country churches have often featured thanksgiving based on industrial products rather than the natural harvest. Two or three years ago St Mary's followed this pattern with a flower festival and celebration of the parish's businesses and services.

John Keats' poem 'Ode to Autumn' provides a lyrical interpretation of the beauty and bounty of the season. Most readers will be familiar with the first line but the rest of the poem is perhaps less well known. The first verse is particularly evocative.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;  
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cell.

The season also gives us the changing colours in our landscape as plant-life prepares for winter and the country-side take on its autumn hues. The natural biological processes in the changes of leaf-colour are complex

but the results can be spectacular and visits to arboreta and parks are very popular at this time of year. A favourite tourist destination is 'New England in the Fall' but drives through our own rural areas and country lanes can be very rewarding.



The end of October is marked by Halloween - the eve of All Saints Day on 1 November. Many customs have evolved from early folk traditions some of which have pagan roots. The origins of pumpkin-carving and trick-or-treating are uncertain but many Halloween activities have sadly become very commercialized in recent years as high street shops capitalize on the festival.

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## **CHRISTMAS MARKET PREPARATIONS**

This year our Christmas Market has had to come forward two weeks, to Saturday 22 November. Our first planning meeting will be on Monday, 29 September, at 7.30 pm in the Narthex.

As well as the regular range of stalls, this year we would like to bring in some new areas of interest such as face painting, Christmas crafts, whatever would add to the general enjoyment of the morning. As always anyone able to help is very welcome to join us at this meeting and we would greatly appreciate any ideas you have for games, themes, stalls (be they 'sensible' or whacky).

If you are unable to make this meeting, please call me on 01384 378182 or email at [kateyfletcher@btinternet.com](mailto:kateyfletcher@btinternet.com) with your ideas.

**Katey Fletcher**



## WOODLAND WILDLIFE WATCHING

Keen-eyed walkers in the churchyard may have spotted the appearance of interesting 'woodland creatures' in some trees near the footpaths. Two or three caterpillars were seen earlier in the summer and during August a hedgehog and an owl were reported. Their arrival has been a bit of a mystery although one rumour suggests that they may have migrated from Bridgnorth where a similar 'invasion' was experienced two years ago. A large collection of these animals has also been observed each year at Belbroughton scarecrow festival and smaller groups have been reported in local garden centres. Perhaps the Oldswinford visitors are en route to their annual assembly!



The intriguing models are in fact made by Glen Eveson, a local craftsman who runs a woodworking business in Lye and produces these sculptures as a side-line. There are several of Glen's family graves in the churchyard and during his frequent visits he has placed some of his products in the trees for the interest of passers-by. More may appear during the autumn and readers are invited to send pictures of early sightings of new arrivals to the magazine editors. Keep watching!



**Alec Beevers**

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

### **July Walk**

On the lovely sunny morning of 26 July, eleven walkers set off from the Riverside Car Park at Bewdley to walk alongside the River Severn, upstream towards Dowles Brook. What a pleasant surprise to see so many people sitting on the river bank watching a rowing regatta and what delight it was to catch glimpses of the boats racing past.

On reaching the confluence with the brook, we turned away from the river towards a road which we crossed, then to follow the old railway track to Drymill Lane. Here we turned off the railway and took a path that followed the course of a stream, slowly climbing up towards Unclys, which is where the artist Ruskin spent some time with other artist friends. We continued on, eventually reaching and walking through an old arch which was full of wild flowers and butterflies.

Reaching one of the old railway bridges, we crossed over and went through a small meadow where three cows were contentedly munching away, helping to keep the area under control and in good condition.

At this point we picked up a downward sloping path that brought us to Knowles Mill, where the group took the opportunity to go inside and have a look around. The mill was last worked in 1891 and is now a small museum.

From here, in very welcome shade, we continued along the route of the brook back to Drymill Lane from where we retraced our steps back along the railway track and river to the car park. We then retired to the Hop Pole Inn on the Cleobury Road where we all enjoyed an excellent lunch.

**Sylvia Cooper**

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### **TEAS IN THE COACH HOUSE**

St Mary's invite you to join us for tea and a chat amongst friends.

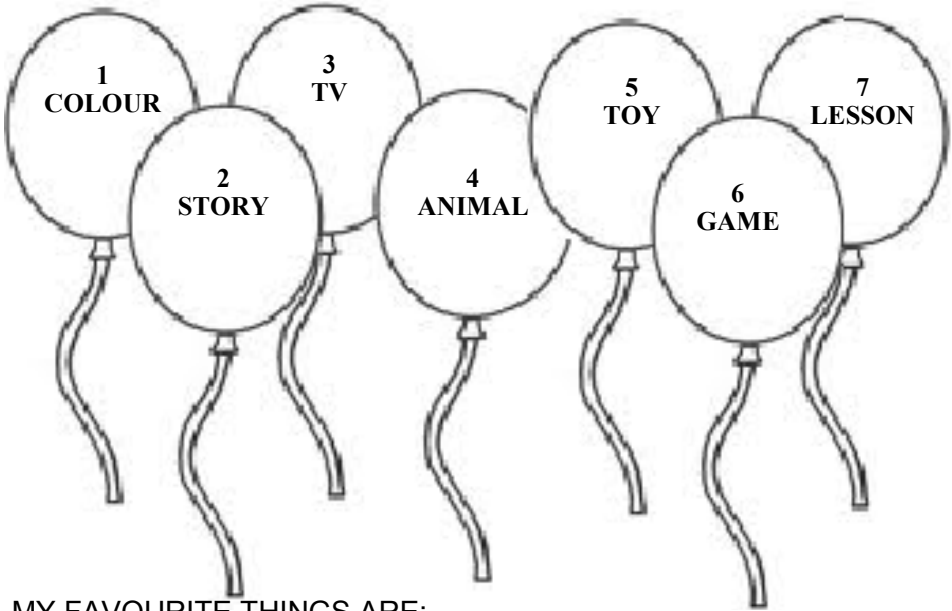
Drop in any time between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm on the third Tuesday of the month. Everybody welcome.

Dates for 2014:

21 October, 18 November, 16 December.



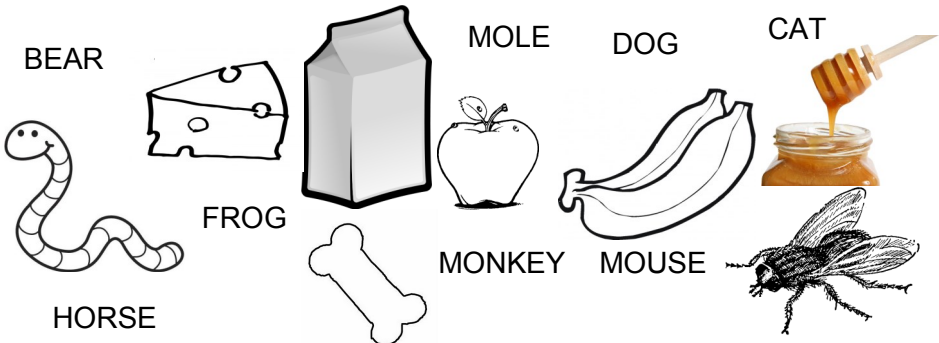
# OUR FAVOURITE THINGS



MY FAVOURITE THINGS ARE:

1	_____	2	_____	3	_____
4	_____	5	_____	6	_____
7	_____				

**ANIMALS** like to eat lots of things but which animal do we associate with which food? Draw a mapping line to join them together.



## DOING THINGS WELL

Very often the things we can do well become our favourite things.

Perhaps this is because they give us pleasure.

Can you fill in the spaces to tell about people in the Bible who could do things well?

1. Joseph could interpret \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ could play the harp
3. James and John could catch \_\_\_\_\_
4. Noah can build \_\_\_\_\_

What can you do well?

I can \_\_\_\_\_

### TRACK SQUARE

Track from one square to another, up, down, sideways and diagonally. Do not jump squares or use the same square twice.

How many words of three letters or more can you find?

What is the nine lettered word? It means the same as talents.

17 words = Good

20 words = Excellent!

I	A	I
T	L	B
I	E	S

God wants us to use our gifts and talents to help other people to know of God's love for them. Can you help?

### LET US PRAY

Thank you my God for the day you have given us!

Thank you because you are great and worthy.

Thank you for another day of living,

Thank you for each breath we have taken

Thank you for dying on that cross my God For our sins!

Thank you, Amen

## From the Archives

*Our January 2014 issue included an article about the new church clock mechanism which automatically corrects for the changes in the hour at the start and end of British Summer Time. This year BST ends on Sunday 26 October. It is timely to reflect on the tower and clock features as reported in the Parish Magazine about 50 years ago.*

### THE TOWER AND THE CLOCK

The solid red sandstone tower at Old Swinford Church is the only really old part of the Church, dating back to the end of the fourteenth century. When the spire was added is by no means certain but it is much more recent than the tower itself. It is reported that in 1552 the tower was surmounted by a steeple, but at the end of the eighteenth century this had been replaced by a spire as at present. This spire underwent major repairs in 1842, and to a lesser extent in 1885, 1910 and 1938.



A spiral staircase of 86 steps leads from the West Porch, up the South West corner of the Tower and leads on to the parapet from where a good view of the neighbourhood is obtained. Internally the tower is divided into four levels, the lowest, of course, being the West Porch. Above this lies the Ringing Chamber from which the bells are rung, and above this again the Clock Chamber where the mechanism for working the clock is situated. At the highest level is the Bell-chamber where the bells themselves are hung, the ropes having come through the clock chamber from the ringing chamber two floors below.

The clock has two faces, one looking towards the West and the other the North. Originally these faces were of slate, but in the year of the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary (1935) these were replaced by the present white glass, and illuminated at night. One of the old slate dials is now in the Rectory Garden. The flood-lighting of the spire combined with the illuminated clock dials make the Church visible from a considerable distance at night.

There appears to be no record of when the clock was first installed, but a scribble in pencil on the side of the case states 'clock started Sept. 30, 1865", and a plate on the iron frame says that it was made by Charles Frodsham, clock maker to the Queen, of 84 The Strand, Among the pencil marks on the case are the names of mechanics who have serviced the clock and their dates, and one has written "Happy Days !" A cheerful note. The mechanism for driving the hands and chiming the quarters and the hours is mounted in a strong iron frame and driven by massive weights.

The raising of these weights is a laborious business having to be performed at regular intervals by the Verger, who also controls the time of the clock by means of a small repeater dial fixed to the side of the frame, showing the position of the main hands. This clock has given good service to the church and the Community, for over 100 years and will do the same for many years to come.

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

21 members of our Mothers' Union hosted the Deanery Wave of Prayer in St Mary's Church on a beautiful sunny day on Tuesday 9 September.

Our M.U. Deanery President, Liz Green, and 23 visitors from neighbouring M.U. Church groups joined us for the service which was based on the theme of "Building the future together". It was led by Roy Peacock.

Following the service Roy gave a very informative short talk on special features of the church building and the social contributions given by many famous past parishioners.

Our guests stayed for refreshments and we enjoyed a time of fellowship together.

Dates for your diary:

Next meeting: Tuesday 14 October 2.15 pm in the Coach House  
PILGRIMAGE - the Revd Stephen Agnew

Deanery Coffee Morning: - Saturday 18 October 10.00 - 12.00 noon  
At St Michael's, Norton. All are welcome.

**Dawn Nex**

## CHANCE AND COINCIDENCE

Most of us will have experienced at some time a chance event which apparently defies statistical expectation - such as unexpectedly bumping into friends or neighbours while on holiday in some remote foreign location. Analysts would say that such coincidences are not unusual and may be explained by numbers and circumstances. After all, 'one-in-a-million' events occur every week as someone wins the national lottery. However the chances of multiple coincidences with the same person must be much more remote.

During a flight for a business trip to Japan I fell into conversation with a fellow passenger in the adjacent seat who, it transpired, lived quite close to me, was engaged on scientific research and we shared several mutual acquaintances. After our flight we parted at Narita airport and went our separate ways. However the greater coincidence occurred a week later when we literally almost bumped in to each other in a shopping centre in the middle of Tokyo - a teeming metropolis of about ten million people.



A similar double coincidence occurred through a meeting with a fellow student during my undergraduate days in Newcastle when we discovered that we had been living next door to each other in Worcester as we engaged on separate work experience programmes prior to our course of study. Our paths were to cross again unexpectedly forty years later when I visited his company in Bath in a professional capacity.

Circumstances which lead to chance recognition can also be very unusual. A meeting with a visiting academic from USA in a folk dance club in Cambridge led to a discussion in which he recognized my north-east accent as similar to that of his colleague in Indiana - who happened to be my brother. My north-east roots resulted in another happy circumstance during a parent-teacher meeting at my daughter's primary school. We were discussing the October half-term holiday which I had referred to in passing as 'potato picking week' as it was commonly known in County Durham. The teacher immediately responded with similar recognition and discovered that we had attended the same school. She had in fact been a contemporary of my sister and knew of our family history.

Perhaps I have been lucky in enjoying so many happy coincidences and in experiencing these one-in-a-million events. However I have not been tempted to push my luck on the national lottery - although my occasional successes in the church raffles might appear to be ahead of statistical expectations.

**Alec Beevers**

*If you have stories of unusual coincidences or experiences, we would be pleased to receive your contributions for publication in the magazine*

**The Editors**

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### **THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY APPEAR**

*This little story caught our imagination and reminds us that things aren't always as they appear.*

A man was flying from Seattle to San Francisco. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would reboard in 50 minutes. Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind. The man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Guide dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight. He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and, calling her by name, said, "Kathy, we are in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?" The blind lady replied, "No thanks, but maybe Buddy would like to stretch his legs."



Picture this: All the people in the gate came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Guide Dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

**Submitted by Bill Freeston**

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## THIS MONTH'S RECIPE

### LAMB CASSEROLE WITH CHESTNUT MUSHROOMS

A great dish for preparing ahead and lighter than more traditional beef casseroles. Feel free to ring the changes. I often omit the mushrooms and add a can of drained and rinsed chick peas with a couple of teaspoons of harissa for a spicy kick towards the end.

Serves 6

2 tablespoon olive oil  
900g lamb neck fillet, cubed  
1 large onion sliced  
2 cloves garlic crushed  
25g plain flour  
300ml red wine  
150ml stock  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire Sauce  
1-2 tablespoon mint jelly  
250g chestnut mushrooms, thickly sliced

Pre-heat oven to 160c/140 fan/gas3

Brown the lamb in 1 tablespoon of the oil - do this in batches to get it brown.

Set aside.

Add the rest of the oil to the pan and gently fry the onions to soften and brown, add the garlic at the end.

Sprinkle over the flour, gently cook the flour. Add the wine and stock; bring to the boil to allow the wine to reduce. Put the meat back in with Worcestershire Sauce, mint jelly and season with salt and pepper.

Cover the pan and cook in the oven for 1 ½ to 2 hrs until the lamb is tender.

About 15 mins before the end of the cooking time fry the mushrooms in a little oil and add to the casserole. Check the seasoning.

**Ann Jennings**

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

Flavoursome pasture-grazed autumn lamb might have us reaching for the key to the premium wines cabinet.....a fine Bordeaux perhaps. However, as we dice up our neck of lamb, we should think hearty farmhouse fare and rein in such extravagance! Lamb can be quite versatile and Ann sensibly encourages us to ring the changes with the flavour combinations. A herby gravy with rosemary invites the flavours of southern France - the crushed berries of a Grenache-based wine would certainly drink well alongside a spoonful of redcurrant jelly. A Cabernet Sauvignon, preferably from Western Australia suits best if you go for a really minty dish. A Rioja or its Tempranillo cousin Ribera del Duero is my choice with a fine cannon of lamb: the succulent

meat matching with the sweet notes of oaky vanilla. However, here we are dealing with some earthy flavours as accompaniment - whether chestnut mushrooms or chick peas with a spicy harissa kick. An old-vine Carignan from the Languedoc region of France sounds the answer: a little more expensive than a basic Corbieres, but the price will not be too unfriendly. Otherwise, our search for a hearty red which will be comfortable with our earthy flavours will hit a successful note with either of the Greek standard-bearers: Nemea (produced from the Agiorgitiko grape) or Naoussa (featuring the Xinomavro variety). Sounds like holiday wine time again!

**Richard W.B. Ryan**

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### **AT HOME WITH RUTH**

Many friends accepted the Revd Ruth Atkinson's invitation to her 'Open House' on Saturday 6 September to wish her 'Goodbye'. Helpers provided tea and cakes for a steady stream of visitors who came to share in fellowship and reflect on experiences during Ruth's ministry in Old Swinford. Among the late afternoon visitors were the team of helpers from the second 'Messy Church' event which had been held in the Church Hall that day. They reported that the activities had been enjoyed by all participants and Pauline Pettet gave Ruth a cup cake from the group which demonstrated that their creative skills weren't all messy!

We were interested to know more about Ruth's new parish as she discussed her challenges, hopes and aspirations in her future appointment in the diocese of Birmingham. Her removal date was still uncertain as she was awaiting completion of maintenance work on the vicarage. However one certain fixture is the date of Ruth's licensing which will be held at St Michael and All Angels, Bartley Green on Thursday 2 October at 7.30 pm and many of the St Mary's congregation will be attending that special event.

**Alec Beevers**

#### **COUNTY HARVEST FESTIVAL**

*Sunday 5 October, 6.30 pm*

*Worcester Cathedral*

Including a Young Farmers Choir and preacher: George Dunn - FCN  
Chair of Trustees. Collection in aid of Farming Community Network.

## PARISH REGISTER

### Baptisms

17.8.14	Dylan Patrick Jordan Gracie Amelia Village Richard Iain Bradley Rebecca Jade Stepney
23.8.14	Isobel Rose Bradford
24.8.14	Rupert James Hitchman
7.9.14	Kieran James Nutting

### Weddings

16.8.14	Mark Beasley and Victoria Kendrick
5.9.14	Alex Martin and Heidi Griffiths
6.9.14	Maxwell Smith and Natalie Ellwood

### Funerals

14.8.14	William Raymond Edwards	Aged 84
21.8.14	Iris May Rose	Aged 82
23.8.14	Alan Thomson	(Burial of ashes)
26.8.14	Colin Slater	(Burial of ashes)
1.9.14	Joan Maiden	Aged 80

### CHILDRENS PAGE ANSWERS

#### ANIMALS:

Bear—Honey  
Dog—Bone  
Horse—Apple  
Cat—Milk  
Mole—Worm  
Mouse—Cheese  
Frog—Fly

#### DOING THINGS WELL:

1. Dreams
2. David
3. Fish
4. Boats

#### TRACK SQUARE ABILITIES

## LETTER FROM ROBERT JONES

Nearly venerable?

There are many, shall we say, eccentricities about the Church of England, and not a few surprises, not least that archdeacons are known in their title as Venerable. Why venerability is seen to apply to archdeacons alone, I do not know. As my dad said when I told him this about my new appointment, 'I don't think I can take that seriously.' And I agree with him; 'hardly venerable' seems nearer the truth. But maybe that's a good thing: taking ourselves too seriously is always dangerous!



It has been a humorous conversation point, along with the comments about drains and gutters. Archdeacons are closely involved in the care of church buildings, which might seem tedious to some. Certainly it involves business and planning meetings. But it is a practical care, alongside the pastoral care of clergy and lay people in the parishes. I take it to mean that I will be more intimately involved in encouraging local Christian presence, in both people and buildings, and I'm looking forward to that.

This new ministry begins for me on Sunday 16th November with a service in the cathedral at 4pm. Please pray for me, and come if you can! I have been overwhelmed by messages of support and good wishes since the announcement. Hearing from people in parishes where I've worked, I have realised something else. When you move on from one post to another in the Church you think that you leave much behind, but in fact you take much with you. In these past few weeks I have had a sense of gathering up so many experiences and relationships, of belonging to the extended family of the diocese.

There's been much made of the 'Ice Bucket' challenge in the media recently. I'm thinking my ice bucket challenge begins on 17 November. But there's also a 'thankfulness' challenge doing the rounds of Facebook, where you have to list three things you're thankful for each day.

So I thank God for

- the community of the Church in this diocese, expressed in all your kind greetings;
- the committed presence and engagement of Christians locally in the parishes;
- and the gift of humour, taking God seriously enough, but not ourselves!

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