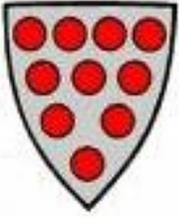


St Mary's  
Old Swinford  
Parish Church Magazine  
Online edition—January 2013



# ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD



## Parish Church Magazine



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**JANUARY 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	422677
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
<b>Church website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.stmaryschurcholdswinford.org.uk">www.stmaryschurcholdswinford.org.uk</a>	
	E-mail: <a href="mailto:st.mary.os@btconnect.com">st.mary.os@btconnect.com</a>	
<b>Magazine e-mail address:</b>	<a href="mailto:stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk">stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk</a>	

## 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 JANUARY 2013

Tuesday 1	Parish Office closed until 7 January
Thursday 3	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 5	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 6</b>	<b>EPIPHANY</b>
	3.00 pm Baptism
Tuesday 8	11.30 am Holy Communion at Hollycroft
	7.30 pm Bishop's Certificate Course
Wednesday 9	9.00 am Full Staff Meeting
Thursday 10	Copy date for February magazine
	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 12	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 13</b>	<b>SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b>
	10.00 am Worship Together
Thursday 17	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 19	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 20</b>	<b>THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b>
	3.00 pm Baptism
Wednesday 23	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge
	7.30 pm PCC meeting
Thursday 24	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 26	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
<b>SUNDAY 27</b>	<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b>
Thursday 31	10.30 am Holy Communion

### SMILE PLEASE

It is alleged that the following sentences appeared in church bulletins complete with the mis-presentations that may make you smile.....

*Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.*

.....

*For those of you who have children and don't know it we have a nursery downstairs.*

.....

*The Fasting and Prayer conference cost includes meals.*

## FROM THE CURATE



Dear Friends,

The Christmas card which stood out for me last year showed a farm scene with a group of animals with their backs to us watching and waiting for the Holy Family arriving. This struck me as being unusual; often we are looking in on the family, perhaps we are shown the crib scene with visitors arriving. The concept of being there in Bethlehem to welcome the family seemed to me to be quite different.

Probably when you read this, Christmas will have passed; the trimmings of Christmas returned to their storage boxes, the last remnants of the turkey eaten and you could turn that image of the Christmas card around as we watch the Holy Family disappear once again into the distance. January can feel like a long and gloomy month with poor weather and long dark nights and the brightness of Christmas can feel like it has faded away.

At a recent baptism I was speaking about why we give a lighted candle and asked 'Who is the light of the world'? One boy said, 'We are'. The congregation laughed until I said he's right. Jesus is the light of the world but as the prayer by Teresa of Avila says:

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours,  
no hands but yours,  
no feet but yours,  
Yours are the eyes through which to look out  
Christ's compassion to the world  
Yours are the feet with which he is to go about  
doing good;  
Yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now.*

As we leave the Christmas season behind and enter into Epiphany I would invite you to look back to times in the Christmas season when Christ's light shone through for you. Was it a special gift, time spent with family, an unexpected invitation, the joy on someone's face, a look of wonder from a child, a school nativity or perhaps a Christmas card from someone you had lost touch with. Whatever has brought you joy this Christmas hold that thought in your mind to draw on again and again in the winter days and then look for opportunities to express that joy and its light to others. The Christmas season may have passed but its joy need not if we allow it to continue to touch our hearts.

May God bless you and all those that you pray for in the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, possibly reading 'Linda', with a horizontal line underneath.

## SERVICES IN JANUARY 2013

<b>6 January Epiphany</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am	Isaiah 60. 1-6	Ephesians 3. 1-12	Matthew 2. 1-12
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 60. 1-9	John 2. 1-11	
<b>13 January Second of Epiphany</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am	WORSHIP TOGETHER		
	6.30 pm Choral Evensong	Isaiah 55. 1-11	Romans 6. 1-1	
<b>20 January Third of Epiphany</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Isaiah 62. 1-5	1 Corinthians 12. 1-11	John 2. 1-11
	6.30 pm Evensong	1 Samuel 3. 1-20	Ephesians 4. 1-16	
<b>27 January Fourth of Epiphany</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Nehemiah 8. 1-3, 5-6, 8-10	1 Corinthians 12. 12-31a	Luke 4. 14-21
	6.30 pm Evensong	Numbers 9. 15-end	1 Corinthians 7. 17-24	

### AND ONE MORE.....TO MAKE YOU SMILE

*Weight Watchers will meet at 7.00 pm in the church hall.  
Please use the large double doors at the side entrance.*

## CONFIRMATION WITH BISHOP JOHN

Bishop John was welcomed to St Mary's on Sunday, 2 December, Advent Sunday, as he came to Old Swinford to lead the celebration of a service of Baptism and Confirmation for Thomas and Charlotte Bannister. In recognition of his presence with us at the beginning of the new church year Bishop John wished us all a 'Happy New Year' and invited us all to make New Year resolutions, to renew our promises to serve God's kingdom.

In his sermon, in words chosen specially for Thomas and Charlotte, but to which we were all invited to 'listen in', Bishop John reasoned how our concept of time so often plays tricks in our minds such that sometimes time passes more quickly than we would believe possible whilst on other occasions a short time seems to last forever. He encouraged us to reflect on the passage of time and to wonder at whilst our relatively short lives on earth may be filled with earthly experiences, God's Kingdom will last forever. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away." (Luke 3.33)

In reference to the Lesson of the Fig-Tree (Luke 21. 29-33) he drew out the comparison of how, as the opening of the leaves of the tree announce the arrival of summer, so acceptance of a life with Jesus Christ will lead one to the Kingdom of God. Faith in Christ is the way to everlasting life.

Bishop John reassured Thomas and Charlotte that in response to the promises they made on this day God will never desert them. Their acceptance of Christ in the expression of their faith would be the means through which, whatever trials life may bring to them, they would never have to face these alone. "My hope and prayer for you" he said, "is to take heart in the words of the Gospel. Be alert and pray at all times. Live your life in faith through Jesus and He will enable you to have an abundantly wonderful life."

Certainly it was the wish of all present that Thomas and Charlotte would remember this day with joy as we congratulated them both and welcomed them fully into God's family; our family.



*Thomas and Charlotte  
with Bishop John.*

## TREE OF LIGHT 2012

On Saturday, 1 December, Revd Stephen Agnew welcomed a congregation of over 400 people as St Mary's hosted the annual Tree of Light Service organised by The Mary Stevens Hospice. The Hospice Chaplain Revd Robert Farman led the service which included congregational carols, readings and prayers. Contributions of musical items were presented by children from Peters Hill Primary School and poetry items had been prepared and were read by Hospice supporters.

On a cold afternoon that might have encouraged many to stay by their fires these people attended a service which was introduced to provide a means of mutual support for those whose friends and family members have died, particularly in the past year, and to help them to reflect on and appreciate significant events in the lives of the loved ones they now miss.

In his address, Revd Robert Farman spoke of the difficult time of mixed emotions that Christmas can bring following bereavement. He hoped that the Tree of Light ceremony would serve as a moving opportunity for recalling happy memories and for finding a sense of peace. As the lights on the tree outside the Hospice shone brightly, a candle was lit in church, a light to symbolise

**HOPE** flickering in the darkness and sadness of grief

**LOVE** enduring in the darkness and sadness of our helplessness  
and loss

**LIFE** continuing to burn despite the darkness of death.

.....

## THANK YOU

Once more thanks are due to our PCC Secretary and St Mary's Christmas Market convenor, Katey Fletcher, for her leadership and encouragement that saw another successful event on the morning of 1 December. Katey's enthusiasm and drive had once again initiated similar motivation in the many stallholders and helpers who had sought contributions from far and wide and been busy making items themselves to fill stalls that were attractive and inviting. The Christmas Market 2012 was opened by our local MP, the Hon. Margot James, a long-standing supporter of St Mary's who spoke in encouragement and praise of the efforts of all who work for and support the local community in so many ways. Throughout the morning a steady stream of visitors enjoyed the attractions, spent generously and shared in a glorious spirit of mutual support that evoked much of the real meaning of Christmas. Thank you to everyone who supported this event but especially, a very big thank you to Katey.

## **NEW BEGINNINGS**

Many people would hazard a guess that leprosy is a disease that died out soon after Jesus's time on earth. But three million people across the globe today are disabled or blind because of leprosy. It is undeniably a 21<sup>st</sup> century problem.

Leprosy-affected people face a triple blow of disease, disability and discrimination. It is a disease intrinsically linked with poverty. The Leprosy Mission England and Wales is raising awareness of its work to break the cycle of poverty on Sunday 27 January - World Leprosy Day 2013.

Thanks to the generosity of its supporters, The Leprosy Mission England and Wales is able to provide a springboard for a new beginning to thousands each year in the 12 countries in Asia and Africa where it focuses its work. As well as providing opportunities for early diagnosis and treatment, The Leprosy Mission England and Wales offers gifts of healthcare, rehabilitation, education, vocational training, housing and a fresh water supply.

South Sudan - the UN's newest member state having been granted independence in 2011 - is where The Leprosy Mission England and Wales's latest challenge lies - a new country in need of renewed hope. A leprosy-affected community is living in tents having recently been displaced from land on the outskirts of the capital, Juba. These people had very little to begin with but now they are destitute with their only goal being survival. Their healthcare is woefully inadequate and access to education non-existent.

The Leprosy Mission England and Wales is working with the government of South Sudan to set up a programme to diagnose and treat leprosy before it causes irreversible disabilities or robs a person of their eyesight. It plans to improve this community's living conditions and send the children to school.

On Sunday 27 January, please pray for those affected by the devastating consequences of leprosy in South Sudan and around the world. If you can, please give a gift of hope to help The Leprosy Mission England and Wales continue its life-changing work. For more information ring 01733 370505 or visit <http://www.worldleprosyday.org.uk/>.

**Diocesan News**

## CHRISTMAS MARKET

The Christmas Market got off to a cracking start. Our MP, Margot James, performed the opening ceremony, remarking how attractive it all looked and that she was sure that everyone would enjoy themselves and be very appreciative of our efforts to provide interesting and useful things to buy while also giving lots of chances to win prizes such as the Christmas Hamper or bottles of drinks ranging from pop to Drambuie. Father Christmas was soon ensconced in his beautifully decorated grotto (the elves had sourced decoration from all sorts of places, including the Noah's Ark Group). The Bran Tub of presents, a chance to Decorate a Fairy Cake and of finding the Treasure on Treasure Island all proved very popular and when a rest was required there were delicious homemade mince pies with coffee or tea.

The event was also very successful in bringing together the many communities in the church and parish. Judging from the happy atmosphere throughout I think Margot James' hope that everyone would enjoy themselves came true. The various stalls raised:-

Books	41.00		
Bottle Stall	113.11	Brought Forward	924.55
Bran Tub	39.00	Groceries	37.00
Cake Stall	217.00	Jewellery	396.00
Christmas Hamper Raffle	182.00	Outreach	96.55
Decorate a Fairy Cake	35.00	Plants and Decorations	127.16
Donations	62.00	Refreshments	110.50
Entrance Fees	158.67	Soft Toys	104.50
Father Christmas	20.00	Treasure Island	34.70
Gifts	<u>56.77</u>	White Elephant	<u>77.97</u>
	924.55		
		Total	<u>£1,908.93</u>

**Katey Fletcher**

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## TOYS TO THE WOMEN'S REFUGE

The annual appeal in support of toys for children and toiletries for mothers who have had to seek the security offered by the Women's Refuge in Dudley was very well supported by those who attended St Mary's on Sunday 9 December. All your gifts were collected on Monday morning for delivery, sorting and allocation to people who are in genuine need. Thank you for your kindness, generosity and expression of Christmas good cheer.

# FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

## **ARE YOU BUSY FOR GOD?**

### **FIND THE WORD**

One word will fit all these spaces. Can you write it in.

\_\_\_\_\_ out, \_\_\_\_\_ load



\_\_\_\_\_ top,



house \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ shop

\_\_\_\_\_ station, home \_\_\_\_\_



### TOOLS FOR THE TRADE

Many jobs or trades have their special tools. Do you know

1. Who might use an anvil?

2. A \_\_\_\_\_ uses a stethoscope

3. A \_\_\_\_\_ uses a crook?

4. Who might use a plough?

5. Who might use an excavator?

6. Who might use a spanner?



Winter Word Search



m h s l e d c s  
 w a q j l l o n  
 i t d n x w l o  
 n b o o t s d w  
 t m i t t e n s  
 e c o a t g y o  
 r s z s c a r f  
 w k k i c e j m

- |         |      |
|---------|------|
| BOOTS   | COAT |
| MITTENS | HAT  |
| SCARF   | SLED |
| SNOW    | ICE  |
| WINTER  | COLD |

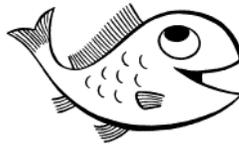
God has a job for all of us



N R A S T V E S

**JOBS IN THE BIBLE**

1. Can you name 4 fishermen?
2. Who worked as a tax collector?
3. John the Baptist's father was a .....?
4. What work did Jesus do before he began preaching?
5. Paul could make .....
6. What did King David do when he was a boy?



How many words of four letters or more can you make from the eight letters shown above?  
**Every word must contain T.**  
**No plurals allowed!**

21 words = Good  
 27 words = excellent

**We work for God when we care for others.**

Think of people you know who are carers and write their names or the jobs they do on the lines.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## TRACING OLDSWINFORD ANCESTORS – Part 1

The TV series 'Who Do You Think You Are?' has made the hobby of tracing one's family tree extremely popular in recent times. But where does one begin? In these articles I hope to give a few helpful pointers, with particular reference to Oldswinford families. When I started my personal research many years ago, it was normal to approach a local clergyman, who would trawl through his parish registers and often then charge you pro rata for the number of years inspected. All this has radically changed since the growth of computers and internet access, together with the expansion of county record offices. This has made the hobby much easier and cheaper to pursue.

I myself have been more fortunate than most, because I still live within the bounds of the ancient Oldswinford parish, a location where my paternal ancestors have lived for at least the past three hundred years (apart from a few short absences). But some families may be able to go back even further than myself, as a list of families living in Oldswinford Manor in 1578 shows local surnames (in order of popularity) to be Hart, Wall, Pearson, Smith, Wilson, Bradley, Briscoe, Cole, Cox, Hill, Lea, Perkes, Taylor, Wakelam, Brookes, Bullas, Darby, Dixon, Dunn, Forrest, Gregory, Greenaway, Hall, Harris, Hodgkins, Milward, Potter, Steward, Sparry, Watkins, Reed, Round and Sidaway (amongst others). Many of these names are still numerous in Oldswinford today. But do always start your research from yourself and work backwards – never make the mistake of taking a historical person bearing the same family name as yourself and trying to work forwards; to do this would usually take you down a false path and waste precious time!

A good genealogist has to be a detective. Start by questioning the oldest members of your family. Note down in a permanent book information relating to your parents and grandparents - their dates and places of marriage; maiden names; dates in birthday books; addresses and house names; dates and places of burial and location of gravestones; occupations; their brothers and sisters; any colourful stories about them (obviously these may be exaggerated!); any photos (make sure names are written on the reverse); certificates and similar documents; other living relatives who might remember more facts. Next join a local family history society – the Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry (BMSGH) has a Stourbridge branch which meets at Pedmore Parish Hall at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of every month. There you may meet other persons interested in the same surnames as yourself and obtain general help with the hobby. Always aim to write an interesting story about your ancestors, rather than merely a list of dates and place names.

Although not essential, it will not be long before you need to access the internet via a computer or other hand-held device. If you do not possess one, visit your local library and book an hour or so on their machines, all free of charge.

Next join an on-line record site, such as Ancestry or Find My Past. These can be a little expensive, but are invaluable for locating indexed information on births, marriages and deaths, census copies, wills, the names of other persons worldwide who are researching your name, and much more. To reduce the cost of using these sites, either find a library or record office that allows you access to them on their computers, take out a free limited time trial, or purchase a copy of the Family Tree Maker software (useful in itself for building a copy of your family tree on your home computer) which includes a free six month subscription to Ancestry. These sites could save you a large amount of research time and travelling costs.

In future articles I shall suggest different types of records to use to learn more about your family past. These will include census returns, certificates of births marriages and deaths, entries in parish registers of baptisms marriages and burials, monument inscriptions, newspapers, wills, trade and postal directories, maps and other less well-known Oldswinford parish archives.

**Nigel Perry**

## **CHRISTIAN CHARITY PROVIDING MONEY ADVICE**

The impact of financial stress is felt in many families across our county, and not just those in poorer neighbourhoods. In the last few years, many households have had reason to reconsider their spending priorities. For some, a change of circumstances - ill health, loss of job, relationships change - has meant that what was a balanced, manageable budget is now under extreme pressure.

We may enjoy receiving Christmas cards in the post, but many will not welcome the post-Christmas credit card bill. Two Pennies Money Advice is a local Christian charity that supports people with free, professional advice, and our advisers frequently feel that a person's situation could have been more easily resolved if they had met that person earlier in the spiral of debt.

We have an extravagant approach of remaining with our clients through their journey to resolution, a kind of chauffeur-driven service. This service is available to all but it is best suited for those who are less likely to regain control of their finances without this hand-holding approach.

Please remember our clients in your prayers, as they deal with stress, low self-esteem, guilt, anger, shame and many other emotions as well as tackling the practicalities of resolving their money worries.

*Please pray for Two Pennies Money Advice as they express God's love for people in our community. And pray for their twin challenges for more funding and more volunteer time.*

Two Pennies Money Advice: 01905 27001, [www.twopennies.org.uk](http://www.twopennies.org.uk). Donations: [www.justgiving.com/twopennies](http://www.justgiving.com/twopennies).

**Diocesan News**

## **AN EVENING WITH THE CHOIR**

*Continuing our series of 'looking behind the scenes' of St Mary's Church groups this month we visit The Choir.*

The choir is at the heart of our music in worship at St Mary's and we appreciate their contribution to our services throughout the year. Led by Organist and Director of Music, Robin Walker, their performances add a special joy to the weekly parish communion and evensong, and provide encouragement for the congregation to sing our hymns of praise. It is evident that the choir's work requires great commitment to achieve such professional standards and I visited them at one of their Friday evening practices.

As I arrive at 7.00 pm the practice is already underway with the trebles preparing a Christmas anthem – A Spotless Rose – and Robin takes them patiently through the piece line by line with his piano accompaniment. The rehearsal continues with more Advent and Christmas music including 'Adam lay ybounden' before a break for refreshments provided by Janet Peart. During the interval Robin reminds me that the choir had recently performed in the Annual Diocesan Choirs Festival in Worcester Cathedral where four members received awards. This is a particularly busy time for the choir as they extend their repertoire for the special Advent and Christmas services.

After the break the full choir assemble for the rest of the practice and file in from the vestry to the choir stalls as they do for a normal service. As they rehearse some familiar and other less well-known hymns and carols Robin plays the piano and conducts, stopping occasionally to repeat and improve timing and interpretation. Now they are working on 'King of glory, King of Peace' the anthem for next Sunday's Parish Communion service. When it is right they have a final performance with organ accompaniment. I am impressed by the skill and professionalism with which the team respond to the conductor's direction as they move quickly on to new items including a psalm for evensong. At 8.30 pm Robin pauses to make some brief announcements and the choir join in a prayer before the trebles leave. Janet is still in the vestry where, as 'Seamstress of the Robes', she checks that all the choristers' robes are in order for forthcoming services. I listen to the rest of the choir as they practise more carols including one of my favourites, 'People look east' and I look forward to their performances in coming weeks. The practice ends with a check on the hymns for the following Sunday's services. As the members relax and disperse I feel privileged to have had an insight into this weekly activity and to have shared in the enjoyment of the choir's work and social fellowship.

By the time this magazine is published the music of the choir will have been enjoyed by several hundred worshippers over the Advent and Christmas period. We acknowledge the dedication of the choir members who provide us with this wonderful enrichment of our worship.

## REMARKS FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

It is a great pleasure and privilege to lead a group of singers in a church where the musical worship plays such an important part. I consider myself very fortunate to have heard about the vacancy so soon after arriving in Worcester. A choir of the parish church kind relies greatly on loyalty and for the most part, the choristers at St Mary's offer this rare commodity, by today's standards, in spades. That said, getting them there in the first place is not easy. The call on time from many other groups and distractions is great and despite the welcome and support given by the Headmaster and staff at Old Swinford Primary, recruiting and retention is becoming more and more difficult.

This time of year and the run-up to Easter are busy times and striking the balance between finding the anthems the choir enjoy singing and challenging them with new ones can be like a balancing act! Add to this the extra practice needed for away fixtures – 2013 Tewkesbury Abbey – does stretch the valuable Friday night time to its limit!

I am always grateful for the time the choir gives; the choir is grateful for the support you offer and the comments you make about what we sing. Thank you for all that – we will continue to try and support and aid your worship at St Mary's.

**Robin Walker**

## DIOCESAN MAILING

John's Gospel tells us that 'the Word – that is Jesus - became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood'. God immersed himself in the human experience.

There is no substitute for experience. God's knowledge of the human condition is gained from the inside out. It is not an abstract knowledge. It does not come to him second hand. It is knowledge that comes out of the day-to-day trials and tribulations of life (that is what experience literally means). Christmas is a celebration of that extraordinary event when God experienced humanity from the inside out.

The word experience is also used in a collection of exciting resources developed in the Diocese of Gloucester and now available nationwide.

In this diocese, Emma Pettifer will be offering training in the use of 'Experience Easter' in January. This is a very exciting resource that allows people to see and touch and hear things that draw them into the Easter story.

Cont'd

We piloted it in a few parishes last year. One person described it as 'wonderful, prayerful, moving, and humbling' and another (who led a group of year 6 children) said 'It seemed to me that the children were understanding Jesus's feelings at each place visited and finding personal feelings themselves'. There is no substitute for experience. Why not therefore try this out for yourself?

God bless

**Roger Morris, Archdeacon of Worcester**

.....

### **THIS MONTH'S RECIPE 'NOT CHICKEN TONIGHT'**

I named this dish after a student said she had cooked one of my healthy chicken dishes so often her husband suggested something new! If you have time marinade the chicken for up to a day to allow the flavours to develop. I often double up the recipe for a simple lunch. Any leftovers can be chopped up and added to a little Greek yoghurt and served in flat breads or pitta breads. It is low in fat and the ingredients are readily available. Serves 4

4 boneless chicken breasts, skin on. Pop them into a plastic bag and with a small pan flatten them out slightly to allow them to cook more evenly. Slash each breast three times.

1 teaspoon coarsely ground peppercorns

3 cm piece of ginger, grated

2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 tablespoon soy sauce

Zest and juice of one large lime

1 teaspoon oil with a little extra for brushing

Put the ginger, garlic, soy sauce, pepper, oil, lime zest and juice in a bowl, mix and pour over the chicken. Leave to marinate.

Line a grill rack with foil, dull side up and brush lightly with oil, place the chicken on the foil and turn up the edges to catch any juices.

Grill under a moderate heat for 6-8 minutes on both sides. Don't be tempted to overcook them.

Transfer to a serving dish pouring over any remaining juices.

Serve with extra lime wedges for squeezing over.

There are two kinds of Soy sauce - light and dark - the light soy being more salty. I tend to use dark soy sauce and find Kikkoman a good brand.

**Ann Jennings**

## AND FOR THE WINE

Chicken may have stepped aside whilst other poultry and game birds took centre-table over the Christmas period but the variety of dishes we can create with chicken means we are never stumped for a wine accompaniment. Here soy sauce, ginger and garlic provide strong flavours which would kill any subtly-fruited aromatic wine. We should call for a boldly-fruited white; Torrontes is the leading candidate – peach, golden gooseberry and rose-water. Viognier, Fiano and Albarino offer aroma and good weight of stone fruits; apricot, peach, mango but without the edge and spicy notes present in the marinade. We can consider the lychee-flavoured Gewurztraminer, although it may lack a little acidity; avoid the softer styles from warmer countries.

Riesling has many of the attributes required but can vary so much in weight. We meet lighter, sweeter styles in some German wines and in the different strain of Riesling found in eastern European Rizlings. The warmer Pfalz and Baden regions of Germany and the vineyards along the Danube in Austria produce a fuller, drier style but are less easy to find. Alsace Rieslings bring the same fullness combined with acidity and good definition of fruit. They may still have a touch of sweetness but in view of that squeeze of lime providing a top note on the chicken it may just edge out Torrontes on this occasion..... Enjoy your wine sipping.

**Richard W. B Ryan**

### **MIGHT YOU HAVE A FEW SPARE HOURS IN THE FUTURE?**

Over the coming months we are hoping to renew some of the sadly dilapidated features of St Mary's furnishings. Hymn and Prayer books are being covered with film in order to ensure many more months of use from these before incurring great expenditure on new books. Thank you to the team.

Once materials are available the pew kneelers are to be re-covered with carpet and a small team is preparing to take on the huge task of renewing cushions on the side pew seats.

If you can spare a little time to help with sewing cushion covers, fitting covers to the kneelers or whatever, please add your name to the list at the back of church or speak to Sue Tafford or one of the wardens. We hope to organise work groups for the new year.

With thanks in anticipation.

**The Churchwardens**

## PARISH REGISTER

### Baptisms

18 November

Simon Jonathan Burch  
Amelia May Burch  
Eloise Poppy Burch  
Jakey John Burch  
Liam Joshua Burch

2 December

Presley John Chamberlain  
Harry Fenwick Clough  
Thomas Ethan Joseph Bannister  
(Also confirmed)  
Charlotte Elizabeth Aimee Bannister  
(Also confirmed)

### Funerals

15 November

Tracy Martin

Aged 55

21 November

Minnie Vaughan

Aged 90

27 November

Megan Hingley

Aged 77

28 November

Dorothy Hipkiss

Aged 79

28 November

Jim Lovell

Aged 82

## Dru Yoga Class

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**Emma Higgins**

**07968 419517 or [lotusyoga@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lotusyoga@hotmail.co.uk)**

### CHILDREN'S PAGE ANSWERS

FIND THE WORD.....The word is WORK

TOOLS FOR THE TRADE.....1. Blacksmith

2 Doctor

3 Shepherd or Bishop

4 Farmer

5 Builder

6 Mechanic

JOBS IN THE BIBLE

1. Peter, Andrew, James, John.

2. Matthew

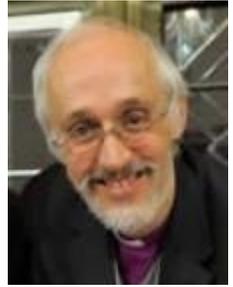
3. Priest

4. Carpenter

5. Tents

6. Shepherd

## LETTER FROM BISHOP DAVID



It doesn't seem like it, but the days are getting longer.

At this time of year we gain less than an extra minute a day, and what are traditionally the coldest months of the winter still lie ahead of us, but the solstice is past and each night is that little bit shorter than the one before. The light is advancing, the darkness is forced to retreat before it.

I'm not one for New Year's resolutions. Often overambitious, they collapse within days if not hours. Resolutions give the false impression that life is made up of grand decisions which lead directly to great moments of change. Such things do happen, indeed for some of us there is a particular life-changing moment of conversion, when Jesus Christ bursts into our lives and nothing is ever the same again. But human life is less a series of such critical instants and more a case of small increments imperceptible in themselves but leading to an irreversible and significant change. Indeed even moments of conversion, such as that of St Paul which we commemorate this month, are less the product of an instant than the culmination and consequence of many smaller events over time. God has been readying Paul for this moment at least since the day when he stood and watched Stephen's martyrdom.

So try to make this first half of 2013, between now and midsummer's day, a time of small but steady and irreversible change. You could get up a minute earlier each week and add that to your prayer time, by the end you would be praying for almost half an hour more each day, and you wouldn't notice the difference week by week. Or every week add another five pence to what you put in your collection envelope at church. Or add a minute a week to how long you spend reading the bible.

And as you hold to this steady but gentle discipline let the increasing length of the daylight be a reminder of your intent. And the God who rules over sun and moon, day and night, will be your strength and shield.

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