

ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD

Parish Church Magazine

**MAY 2016
Online edition**



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Parish Church Magazine



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MAY 2016

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)
Daily:	5.00 pm - Evening Prayer (except Fridays)
Wednesday:	1.30 pm - Toddlers' Group 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 noon - Open Church –refreshments available
Priest in Charge Day Off:	Friday

OTHER REGULAR EVENTS



Bible Study Group:	Monday, first in month at 2.30 pm	01384 379972
Prayer Group	Third Wednesday in month, 10 -11 am	393454
Mothers' Union:	Second Tuesday at 2.15 pm	392951
Music Group Practice:	Second Saturday at 10.00 am	375167
St Mary's Walking Group:	Last Saturday of the month. Depart 9.30 am	

Reader:	Mrs Kanthi Ariaraj	395115
Church Wardens:	Mrs Judy Hall	377349
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
Organist / Choirmaster:	Mr Robin Walker	01905 353939
Treasurer:	Mr Russ Fowler	442684
PCC Secretary:	Miss Katey Fletcher	378182
Magazine Editors:	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
	Miss Gemma Sutton	0121 360 0933

Church Hall and		
Coach House: - Bookings	Parish Office	441003
Parish Administrator and		
Publicity Officer:	Mr John Sutton	441003
Parish Office:	Open 9.00 am -12.00 noon Monday to Friday	441003
Church website address:	www.stmaryschurcholdswinford.org.uk	
	E-mail: st.mary.os@btconnect.com	
Facebook:	www.facebook.com/stmaryschurcholdswinford	
Magazine e-mail address:	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 MAY 2016

SUNDAY 1

Monday 2
Tuesday 3
Wednesday 4
Thursday 5
Friday 6
Saturday 7

SUNDAY 8

Monday 9
Tuesday 10

Thursday 12
Friday 13
Saturday 14

SUNDAY 15

Tuesday 17

Wednesday 18

Thursday 19
Friday 20
Saturday 21

SUNDAY 22

Monday 23
Tuesday 24
Wednesday 25
Thursday 26
Friday 27
Saturday 28

SUNDAY 29

Monday 30

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Bank Holiday
11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Croft
9.00 am Morning Prayers and Full Staff Meeting
10.30 am Holy Communion in Church
Stephen's day off.
10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Open the Book team visit to Oldswinford Primary School
Copy date for June magazine
2.15 pm Mothers' Union Meeting in the Coach House.
10.30 am Holy Communion in Church
Stephen's day off
10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour

PENTECOST

2.30 pm Tea in the Coach House
7.30 pm Magazine Committee meeting
10.00 am Prayer group meeting at the home of Marjorie Ferguson
10.30 am Holy Communion in Church
Stephen's day off
10.00 am Wedding Preparation Course in the Coach House
10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour

TRINITY SUNDAY

Open the Book team visit to Oldswinford Primary School
2.15 pm Tuesday Tea in the Narthex
7.30 pm PCC meeting
10.30 am Holy Communion—MU Corporate.
Stephen's day off.
9.30 am St Mary's Walking Group
10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Schools' Half Term Week

We are very pleased to welcome as our preacher at the 10.00 am service on Sunday 1 May, the Archdeacon of Dudley, the Venerable Nikki Groarke.

FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends,

During this month we will say our farewells to our Director of Music, Robin Walker, who has given a great deal to St Mary's, both to the choir and congregation and has encouraged us all to commit ourselves to the musical side of worship, which is our primary purpose as followers of Jesus Christ. Elsewhere in this publication and at Robin's final service we will express our gratitude to him more fully. But I wanted to focus in this letter on the changing nature of any community, not least a church community.

We all like to think that there is a sense of permanence about the communities in which we are involved, be they schools, workplaces, clubs or communities of faith like churches. If you visit a school just a few years after you have left, you are likely to be surprised at how much things have changed, in particular the people (pupils and staff). That doesn't mean to say that those people have been forgotten or that their influence has been unimportant, it is just that the institution has moved on and now new people are leaving their mark on it and helping it to move in new ways. This process of adaptation is essential to any group or organisation if it is to live. And as we say farewell to some people who have served the church, so we welcome others who will serve the church in the future.

This month as Robin leaves us, so we welcome Graham Davies as our new Director of Music. It has taken us a long time to find a new Director of Music who can help us to move forward as a church; and there were perhaps times when people felt that such a person would not be found, but, God be praised, we do have someone who will challenge both the choir and congregation in new directions in the future, and I hope that, like me, you look forward to the new challenges we will face with Graham as our Director of Music..

Graham is not the only arrival at St Mary's in the near future. At the end of June Alex French will come to St Mary's as a Curate. Alex will be expected to learn how to minister in a practical sense while he is at St Mary's. I also hope that Alex will make a difference to St Mary's, and that he will challenge the way that St Mary's do things, and that through his challenge and encouragement St Mary's will grow and blossom.

As we welcome the new members of St Mary's let us give thanks that Graham and Alex are given to us as a gift from God. Let us welcome them wholeheartedly and look forward with anticipation to travelling with them on our journey of faith together.

Stephen Agnew

SERVICES IN MAY 2016

1 May The Sixth Sunday of Easter	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Acts 16. 9 - 15	John 14. 23 - 29
	6.30 pm Evensong	Zeph 3 14 - end	Matt 28 1 - 10, 16 - end.
8 May The Seventh Sunday of Easter	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Co	WORSHIP TOGETHER	
	6.30 pm Choral Evensong	Isaiah 44. 1 - 8	Ephesians 4. 7 - 16
15 May Pentecost	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Acts 2. 1 - 21	John 14. 8 - 17
	6.30 pm Evensong	Exodus 33. 7 - 20	2 Cor 3. 4 - end
22 May Trinity Sunday	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Rom 5. 1-5	John 16. 12 - 15
	6.30 pm Evensong	Exodus 3. 1 - 15	John 3. 1 - 17
29 May First after Trinity	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Gal 1. 1-12	Luke 7. 1-10
	6.30 pm Evensong	Gen 4. 1 -16	Mark 3. 7-19

NEW CHAPLAIN FOR BISHOP JOHN

The Revd Canon Dr Stuart Currie has been appointed as Chaplain to the Bishop of Worcester. Stuart is currently Vicar of St Stephen's Church in Barbourne, Worcester and will take up his new post in the summer. He replaces the Revd Lizzie Shipp who has been in the post for five years and is leaving to become a parish priest in the Diocese of Ely.

As the new Bishop's Chaplain, Stuart will be responsible for supporting Bishop John (and on occasion Bishop Graham in Dudley) practically, spiritually and theologically, acting as confidant, participating in Bishop's Staff and other meetings, sharing in the pastoral care of the clergy of the Diocese and undertaking research and preparation of a range of materials to support the Bishop in his ministry, including his national roles.

NEW INCUMBENT AT PEDMORE

The Bishop of Worcester is pleased to announce the appointment of the Revd Sarah Northall as Priest in Charge of St Peter, Pedmore and St Andrew, Wollescote. Bishop John will license Sarah at 4pm on Saturday 21 May 2016.

Sarah is currently Assistant Curate of St Mary the Virgin, Iffley in the Diocese of Oxford. Prior to ordination, Sarah taught for twenty years in a number of secondary schools in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds.

Please remember Sarah in your prayers as she prepares to move. We congratulate our neighbouring parishes and extend our own very warm welcome to Stourbridge to Revd Northall.

CELEBRATING GODPARENTS' SUNDAY, MAY 1

This dedicated day is a response to research commissioned by the Archbishops' Council which shows the importance of godparents to families bringing their children for baptism.

'In Review', and its' sister publication 'In Focus' (publications which aim to keep people in touch with the activities of National Church Institutions) asked Revd Kate Bottley, who has five godchildren, why the relationship is important:

"My Godchildren are all so wonderfully different and I get to journey with them in faith for the rest of their lives. My husband's Godmother did the reading at our wedding and my own Godmother never forgets my kids' birthdays, she calls them her 'Great Godchildren'. My kids' Godparents pray regularly for them and when something big is happening in their lives, like exams, I always make sure to let them know so they can pray extra hard."

Bishops have also shared their Godparent stories with In Review. The Bishop of Huntingdon, David Thomson said of his Godparents: "I was blessed with three very holy Godparents – a monk, a missionary and a godmother who eventually entered a religious community too. Their prayers must have been powerful to enable a crumbly cookie like me to become a bishop! They continue to be an inspiration: my Godmother in her 80s rebuilt a hospital in Africa!"

The Bishop of Dudley, Graham Usher said: "My Godmother has always

seemed delightfully unconventional and refreshingly different. She's been in the background throughout my life and has been really committed to coming to every major life event. She says it was a bit more than she agreed to, having a Godson who has become a priest and a bishop!"

The Godparents' Sunday service liturgy can be used for a Eucharist, but could also be adapted for a Service of the Word and includes the recommended lectionary readings and authorized Collect.

The Church Support Hub website has lots of ideas from candle lighting, creating a memory box, highlighting special Godparent relationships for parish magazines and social media or hosting a tea party.

Full details of resources available can be found at:

www.churchsupporthub.org/godparentsunday

WALK OF WITNESS – GOOD FRIDAY 2016

There was a puzzled and slightly annoyed look on the faces of the shoppers who had parked their cars at St John's church to avoid paying in the multi-storey. They were now blocked in by 150 people who seemed to be about to start an outdoor church service! Fortunately, the captive consumers did not have to wait long because, after a short prayer from Revd Stephen Agnew, we were off on the annual Good Friday Walk of Witness arranged by Churches Together in Stourbridge.

From St John's we walked behind the rough wooden cross through the bus station to the top of the High Street. Here the stewards stopped the traffic to allow us to continue our walk through the town. The effect was surprisingly moving as a sudden silence fell upon the High Street, broken only by the gentle sound of the steps of the followers.

We walked to the clock outside the Old Market Hall where we were met by musicians from Our Lady and All Saints RC church, who led us in a hymn. Then Revd Nick Kalaniuck from St Michael's, Norton took us through a dramatic reading of the Passion, with him taking the part of the Evangelist and various members of the group in the other roles. Our witness ended with a stirring performance of the hymn The Servant King and a blessing from Revd Fr Alan Williams from Holy Trinity. Afterwards, we went off for tea and hot-cross buns that were kindly supplied by Revd Andrew Sillis and the parishioners at St Thomas's.

Through this short and simple act of Christian witness we had reminded ourselves and our community about the meaning of Good Friday. We had been energised by an unusual act of worship and we had found an opportunity to show Christian unity in our walk together.

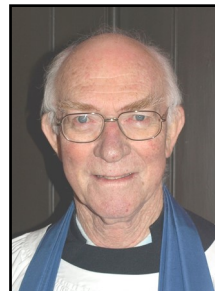
Roger King

IN APPRECIATION OF READER MINISTRY

On Saturday 16 July, from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm at De Montfort Hall, Leicester, a national event to celebrate and explore faith and discipleship will take place. The event is open to everyone, an event of workshops, worship, entertainment and activities for all ages. This is to be a day of celebration to mark 150 years of Reader ministry in the Church of England.

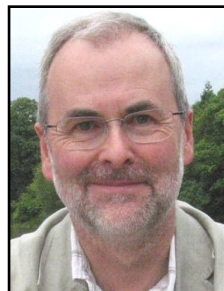
Ascension Day, 5 May 2016 will mark the 150th anniversary of Reader Ministry in the Church of England when HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Patron of the Central Reader's Council, will attend the service of thanksgiving for 150 years of Reader Ministry at All Souls, Langham Place, London.

Readers (sometimes called Licensed Lay Ministers) are lay people who come from all walks of life; they are licensed by their bishop to a teaching and preaching ministry, both within church and outside its traditional boundaries. Called by God, and trained in theology, they bring their life experience, skills and knowledge to their Christian service. Readers often have a role in equipping other Christians to grow as disciples in their places of daily living.



For many years St Mary's has been blessed with the long-term ministries of Roy Peacock and of Kanthi Ariaraj. These two people, individually and collectively, have brought much spiritual and community care, guidance and comfort to the congregations of the church and to the wider community through their leadership and preaching. The celebrations of Reader ministry will serve to help us to formally recognise the contributions of Readers throughout the past 150 years and also to focus our appreciation on the dedication, commitment and joyful thanks for Roy's and Kanthi's generosity of faith leadership in our community.

All this comes with an added significance as the Parochial Church Council has formally approved support for Roger King as he undertakes the process of discernment that will lead to his training and licensing as a Reader. Most of our readers will have enjoyed Roger's contributions to and leadership of services during the past year or so and will share in the delight and enthusiasm with which the PCC and others wish to support Roger during his training and future ministry. Please remember all Readers in your prayers, but especially Roy, Kanthi and Roger for whose gifts we thank God.



ASCENSION DAY

Ascension Day is one of the earliest Christian festivals dating back to the year 68 CE. According to the New Testament in the Bible, Jesus Christ met several times with his disciples during the 40 days after his resurrection to instruct them on how to carry out his teachings. It is believed that on the 40th day he took them to the Mount of Olives, where they watched as he ascended to heaven.

Ascension Day marks the end of the Easter season and occurs ten days before Pentecost. Depending upon the phases of the Moon in a particular year, Ascension Day is usually celebrated on a Thursday. However, some churches may choose to celebrate it on the following Sunday.



PENTECOST

Ten days after Ascension Day is Pentecost, often called Whitsun (White Sunday) in the UK where traditionally the next day was a public holiday.



In the New Testament, Pentecost was the occasion when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles and other followers of Christ (records suggest there were about 120 present) to equip them for the task of sharing the good news of Christ, the Son of God, the Light of the World.

Acts 2.1-4, "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

While those on whom the Spirit had descended were speaking in many languages, the Apostle Peter stood up with the eleven and proclaimed to the crowd that this event was the fulfilment of the prophecy ("I will pour out my spirit"). In Acts 2:17, it reads: "'And in the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my spirit upon every sort of flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy and your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams'."

In the sense that this event equipped Jesus' followers for the task of spreading the news of Christ's teachings, it is often regarded as the beginning of the Christian church. Traditionally, in many customs, Pentecost is associated with baptism and confirmation as a further expansion of the influence of the faith.

SCHIEHALLION

Apart from being All-fools Day, 1 April has little significance in the calendar of special events or festivals. However, perhaps by coincidence, it provides a reminder in my personal diary of many enjoyable experiences on that particular date. One of the most memorable, from my student days, was climbing Schiehallion in Perthshire.

This mountain has long held a special fascination for me. Its very name has an element of mystery – translated from Gaelic it is 'The Fairy Hill of the Caledonians'. It provides the back drop to one of the most beautiful scenes in Scotland which became known as Queen's View after it was admired by Queen Victoria during her visit to Pitlochry in 1866.



Queen's View

My first encounter with Schiehallion was during a school physics lesson when we learned that this conical shaped mountain had been used in an experiment to calculate the density of the Earth and the gravitational constant, G . A pendulum suspended near the mountain is deflected slightly by the mountain's mass and measurement of the angle of deflection provided the data for the analysis (see footnote).

During a school field trip in 1955 I had climbed Ben Lawers and had seen Schiehallion as an adjacent peak. It was at that time that I set myself the challenge to climb this intriguing mountain. The opportunity arose a few years later when I was visiting Pitlochry with a colleague. A guidebook observes that 'Schiehallion is one of the easiest Munros (hills over 3000ft high) to climb on a fine summer's day'. However it goes on to advise that special precautions should be taken when there is snow lying. For our walk on 1 April the summit was white against a clear blue sky and we were appropriately prepared. The climb was relatively uneventful but as we approached the top we were hit by high winds and a blizzard



which slowed progress and completely obliterated the views. We reached the summit and literally retraced our steps as quickly as possible to escape the icy blast. We eventually emerged from the storm and cleared the snow-line to see with some relief Loch Tummel in the distance below us. This spurred us on to reach Tummel Bridge for a welcome rest and refuel at the bar in the local inn.

We enjoyed the chat with the company in the bar who exchanged experiences of climbs on Schiehallion. We declined an offer of a lift to our hostel in Strath Tummel, about 5 miles further on, in favour of the warmth and comfort of the bar – a decision which we were to regret an hour or two later as we staggered out with aching limbs into a frosty night with the prospect of another long walk ahead of us. However our actions were soon to be rewarded with a spectacular display of Aurora Borealis, ‘the Northern Lights’, with the silhouette of Schiehallion on the horizon – a splendid end to a most memorable April Fool’s Day. It really did happen!

Footnote. This initial experiment was conducted in 1774 by Nevil Maskelyne, the Astronomer Royal and repeated two years later by a surveyor, Charles Hutton. His calculation gave a mean density of the earth as 4500kg/m³ compared with modern measurements of 5500 kg/m³. Further reading can be found at ‘Schiehallion Experiment’ in Wikipedia.

Alec Beevers

ST MARY'S YOUTH CLUB



Our Youth Club currently has a few spaces for children aged 7+. We meet on Friday evenings between 6.00 and 7.00 pm in the church hall, next to the church and enjoy a range of activities including football, art and



craft, table tennis, air hockey, Lego and team games. The older children can listen to music in our ‘chill’ area with disco lights. Children are most welcome to come along and experience a session to see if it’s for them. We have several adult youth leaders who run things for us plus young leaders who pitch in with their time and talents to make sure everyone has a good time.



We ask for a contribution of £1 per week to help cover the costs of hiring the hall and other expenses.

We look forward to seeing you there!

FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

The Christian Bible is divided into the Old and the New Testaments.

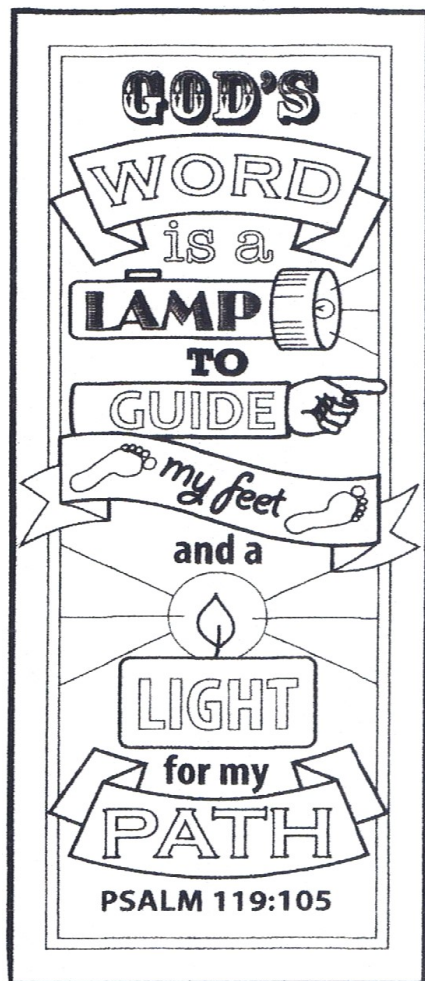
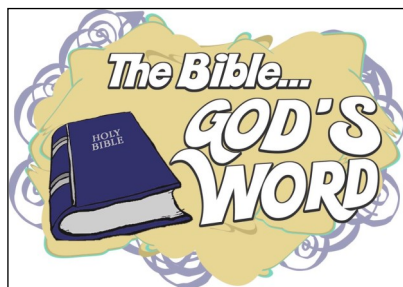
The first section, the Old Testament contains many different books that tell the story of Israel from more than 600 years before Jesus was born.

Some of the books that tell of this history include

G _ N _ SIS, E _ O D _ S,
J _ SH _ A, J _ DG _ S
and K _ _ GS.

The Psalms are the poems of the Bible. Over 2000 years old, the Psalms are poems and songs that tell a message and give us advice as to how we should behave and lead our lives.

Colour the illustration of Psalm 119. You could cut it out and use it as a book mark.



The New Testament tells the stories of Jesus' ministry. Change these words into different words which tell what Jesus did.

1. VOLE becomes _ _ _ _
2. HALE becomes _ _ _ _
3. CHEAT becomes _ _ _ _ _
4. RACE becomes _ _ _ _

The first four books of the New Testament are called the Gospels.

These tell of Jesus's life and how he died for us.

Can you name the four Gospels?

1. M _ T T _ E _
2. M _ R _
3. L _ K _
4. J _ H _

Bible Creatures

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                L O
            X H M S R H M U L E J G F I
        K U K B A T S E R A H O F L B
    Z V Q V Q N O I L Y H I D O V E
S W G D P D Y F E E W Q A X T C
G T G K I B Y E K N O D B E W
V L U C G L V T H O R S E S I
    T O O N R B J C R L A C
        U C A M E L T T A C R K B
    W Q B T R K I W O P E E H S V
    R L B D Q A A K T S U C O L T
    C I D W Z N U Z   G H O W Y E
        W R Z A S Q           G N L E
            L P S B                 J V
    
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Bats
Bear
Camel
Cattle
Cock
Colt
Coney
Donkey
Dove
Fish

Foxes
Goat
Hares
Horses
Lion
Locust
Mule
Owl
Pig
Quail

Raven
Sheep
Snake
Sparrow
Whale

Can you find the animals in the puzzle?

ROBIN WALKER'S RETIREMENT

During this month we say farewell to Robin Walker, our Director of Music, as he retires.

Robin was appointed in May 2007 to take over on Richard Hall's retirement and we are grateful to him for maintaining the musical standards of our worship that we appreciate so much.

Robin has given much pleasure through his choice of organ music, his hymn accompaniment, and his ability to extemporise. The resources of our fine organ have been used to the full.

The main part of the work of the Director of Music, however, is the recruitment, training and rehearsal of the choir, most of which is invisible to the congregation. In addition to this regular part of the work there is the preparation of choristers for RSCM awards, accompanying them for these, taking part of RSCM festivals, arranging visits to cathedrals to sing services, and social events. In all of this Robin has been untiring and so many choristers have reason to be grateful for the musical grounding he has given them as well as many wonderful musical experiences.



In addition to his musical care of the choir, he has also shown great personal care of our choristers; this is greatly appreciated by them and has helped to maintain the family spirit of the choir, and its central place in the life of the whole church family. His welcoming manner and refusal to get into a flap have helped enormously!

Robin indicated his wish to retire two years ago, and it is only now that our long search for a worthy successor has borne fruit. During this period Robin has shown great loyalty and dedication in continuing his work unabated, and we owe him a great debt of gratitude for this, as for all that he has done during his time with us.

In thanking him we wish him well in his retirement, which will no doubt include much music-making but without the commitment to regular travelling to and from Worcester.

We would also like to add our thanks to Mark, who has supported the choir in a singing capacity during Robin's time with us, and to Janet Peart, who has acted as Wardrobe Mistress during that time.

Tony and Judy - Churchwardens

Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything. - Plato

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

At our April meeting members sent congratulations and best wishes to our indoor member Betty Taylor, on her 90th birthday.

Kanthi Ariaraj led a meditative service showing how different important turning points or experiences in our lives like childhood, partners, children, illness etc can be focused through a variety of beads linked together on a string. It could remind us too that aspects of our life in faith are held through God's grace, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The M.U. speaker June Young spoke on "Are you up a tree?" This title had intrigued us but all was clear when she read the account of the dramatic life change of Zacchaeus in the sycamore tree when he was challenged by Christ (St Luke 19: 1 – 10). Then in small groups we discussed how we would feel and answer such as personal confrontation in our daily lives and during communion. What changes would we make in our walk of faith? What would you do?

Next meeting: Tuesday 10th May 2.15 pm in the Coach House.
Side by side – Speaker Louise Rees.
All are welcome.

Dawn Nex



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 15–21 May 2016

This is the week we love every neighbour

Jesus calls us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and not just the ones next door or at the end of the street. Christian Aid Week unites over 20,000 churches to put this love into action. Christian Aid works globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty as well as its root causes.

St Mary's church will be carrying out its door-to-door collection during the week 15 - 21 May; please look out for the red envelopes and respond generously.

Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love. - Lau Tzu

ANNUAL ARCHDEACON'S VISITATION

Each year the churchwardens are invited to the Archdeacon's Visitation, an occasion when churchwardens present to the Archdeacon the outcome of the Articles of Enquiry which have been asked of the parish and to share reports about the life of the church and signs of God at work within the parish. This year the Visitation will be on Tuesday 10 May and the questions asked are being considered by members of the PCC. A copy of the Articles is displayed on the notice board in church. Please do read them and if you wish to express an view please share your ideas with one of the wardens.



TO CELEBRATE THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY



I hope you have seen the information circulating in church and on the noticeboard about the 'Bring and Share' celebrations being planned for Saturday 11 June. By now, information should have been displayed on our pewsheets and details are being circulated more widely throughout the parish. Please try to be involved, either with the plans in advance or on the day itself. There is an information sheet at the back of church which will be kept up to date as ideas develop.

A CHANGE OF DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

We are very pleased to be able to announce the appointment of Graham Davies as Director of Music at St Mary's to succeed Robin Walker who is retiring.

The process of finding a new Director of Music has taken a considerable time, but we are confident that we have now been able to make an appointment which reflects the importance we attach to the music at St Mary's.

Graham is a committed Anglican and has considerable experience as an organist and choir director, having worked in places such as Malvern Priory, Bath Abbey and Wimborne Minster and many parish churches. His musical interests extend beyond church music and he has had much involvement in arranging concerts and performing in a solo capacity and as an accompanist.

Graham has recently moved back to the West Midlands with his wife to live at Upton upon Severn and is very much looking forward to taking up this appointment. He will be joining us on the first Sunday of May. We look forward to extending a very warm welcome to Graham,

Many people have contributed much time and expertise to the process of identifying a successor to Robin. We are very grateful to Robin for the patience he has demonstrated during the past two years and to all members of the choir and our Music Group who have faced some uncertainty during this time. To Revd Stephen Agnew, Richard Hall and all those who have contributed to the selection process a big thank you is due.

The Church Wardens

INSPIRATIONAL!

Judy Hall recently received the following response to her communication with Chris and Chantal Bryan who many will remember.....

We are really touched that St Mary's still remember Jonathan in prayers, and I feel rather bad that apart from a Christmas letter we haven't kept you all more up to date with what is happening with Jonathan.

Jonathan is now, incredibly, 10 years old. None of us can quite believe that he has made it to 10 and we've been celebrating for about a month. I told him he could choose 10 ways to celebrate and the first thing he wanted to do was 'bake every day', which is a strange choice for a boy who is only fed through a tube in his stomach. However, Jonathan has told us that he likes baking and giving away the things he has made. On Saturday he organised and baked for a very successful coffee morning for Traidcraft which raised a whooping £181.50.

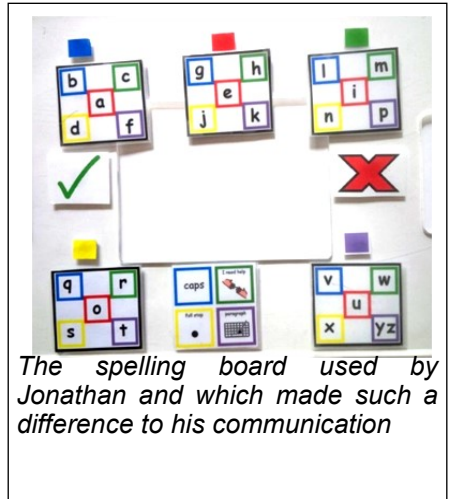
About a year ago Jonathan's life changed dramatically when he got good enough with his literacy (I had been teaching him reading and writing at home for a few hours a day) that he could use

a spelling board with his eyes to spell out everything he wanted to say or write. Suddenly we were able to ask him anything and he could answer without us having predetermined a number of answers for him to choose from. The most surprising and amazing thing he has been telling us about has been a time when he went to 'Jesus' garden' when he was in intensive care in hospital, and he has basically been describing for us a time when he went to heaven. He describes the people he met there (particularly a little boy called Noah and his mother who both died when we lived in Lechlade), and what it was like for him to have a body that worked. It has been really incredibly moving and has been the inspiration behind the story he has written for the Radio 2 500-word story competition.

Since 'spelling for speaking' we've found Jonathan has a profound faith in Jesus and a wicked sense of humour. It's been so much fun for all of us to 'hear' him. We've also found that he is very intelligent (as in gifted and talented intelligent) so he now has some home school in the morning for literacy and numeracy, and goes to the local primary school for the afternoon to join in the lessons with his peers. He also goes to a local youth group and our church group for his age.

Susannah is now 6 and enjoying school (she goes to our local one like Jonathan) and ballet, and Jemima is 4 and goes to pre-school and will go to school in September.

As well as teaching Jonathan every morning I also run a pre-school service in church once a week and a group for key stage one



The spelling board used by Jonathan and which made such a difference to his communication

Continued on Page 18

once a month. The day to day managing of Jonathan's care team and needs also keeps me busy. Christopher has 8 rural parishes here which keeps him on his toes.

Please do continue to pray for Jonathan - although intellectually very capable his body is still very frail. He is on oxygen all the time and is also ventilated over night. We know one day he will go to Jesus' garden forever, but want to enjoy the time we have with him now as much as we can.

Best wishes and God bless,

Chantal Bryan

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP

26 March 2016 6.6.miles Stourport Circular

The March walk started from the Blackstone car park at Bewdley. There were ten people on the walk which was a good number considering it was Easter Saturday, the forecast was not good and there were flowers to arrange in church!

We set off along the bank of the River Severn and followed the footpath towards Stourport. At times it seemed we might walk into the river as the water level was high and some flooded areas were right up to the footpath. Fortunately, following a few dry days, the path near the first caravan site was still dry enough to walk across. Out on the water were a few hardy rowers, all of whom seemed to be battling against the flow of the river. Our stop for coffee was as we entered the grassed area near the large car park in Stourport. There were several benches available and we shared a few small Easter eggs before continuing towards the fairground area.

We kept to the right of the entrance to the fair to walk across the lock gate on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal and on to the canal basin. Walking up the main road we crossed on to the canal towpath and continued along it passing through built-up areas of Stourport and a large cemetery on our left until we got to Bullock Lane bridge. Here we turned off the towpath, went over the canal bridge and up to the A451 where, with great care we crossed the dual carriageway and onto the Wyre Forest Golf Course.

As there is a lot of earth moving activity here the path changes each time one passes this way and route-finding is made more difficult by the absence of signposts. Successfully crossing the golf course and seeing more mountains of earth than golfers we entered the nature reserve at Burlish Top and continued along the Stourport Circular route down to Blackstone and finally over the A456 back to the car park.

This was the end of a much enjoyed walk and the start of a short drive along the Bewdley by-pass to the 'Running Horse' where we enjoyed a tasty and well-earned lunch.

Sue and Tony Wakeley

BIBLE EMERGENCY NUMBERS

“My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” (Exodus 33.14)



When in sorrow call John 14
When men fail you, call Psalm 27
When you have sinned, call Psalm 51
When you worry, call Matthew 6.19-34
When you are in danger, call Psalm 91
When God seems far away, call Psalm 139
When your faith needs stirring, call Hebrews 11
When you are lonely and fearful, call Psalm 23
When you grow bitter and critical, call 1 Corinthians.13
When you feel down and out, call Romans 8.31-39
When you want peace and rest, call Matthew 11.25-30
When the world seems bigger than God, call Psalm 90
When you want Christian assurance, call Romans 8.1-30
When you leave home for labour or travel, call Psalm 121
When your prayers grow narrow or selfish, call Psalm 67
When you want courage for a task, call Joshua 1
When you think of investments/returns, call Mark 10
How to get along with fellowmen, call Romans 12
For great invention/opportunity, call Isaiah 55
For Paul's secret to happiness, call Colossians 3.12-17
For idea of Christianity, call 1Corinthians 5.15-19,
If you are depressed, call Psalm 27
If you want to be fruitful, call John 15
If your pocketbook is empty, call Psalm 37
If you're losing confidence in others, call 1 Corinthians 13
If people seem unkind, call John 15
If discouraged about your work, call Psalm 126
If you find the world growing small, and you great, call Psalm 19.

With thanks to Chris Morgan

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY TO VISIT WORCESTER

Archbishop Justin Welby will be visiting the Diocese of Worcester, Friday to Sunday, 7-9 October 2016.

Opportunities to share in the visit include an 'In conversation' event on Friday evening at Worcester Arena and an event on the theme of reconciliation being planned for Dudley. As more details become available these will be shared with you. Make a note of the dates in your diary....

THIS MONTH'S RECIPE QUEEN ELIZABETH CAKE

I was looking for a recipe to celebrate this Special Day, I was surprised that there were not more cakes and bakes associated with great royal events. Perhaps everything else has been overshadowed by the famous Victoria Sponge and Coronation Chicken.

This is a cake with quite an interesting story. The tale goes that Her Majesty used to enjoy home baking from time to time, and would make this recipe herself in the Buckingham Palace kitchens for it to be sold for charitable purposes. In fact, this was the *only* cake she would make. With this sort of regal endorsement, I just had to try this recipe. I have adapted the recipe, not changing the ingredients, just the amounts, and adjusted the cooking times to suit modern fan ovens. This makes a large firm cake that cuts into lots of pieces ideal for celebrations.

For the cake:

250g chopped dates
40g softened butter
350ml boiling water
2 large eggs
200g dark muscovado sugar
150g ground almonds
150g chopped walnuts
350g Self Raising flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ level teaspoon ground cinnamon
 $\frac{3}{4}$ level teaspoon mixed spice

For the glaze:

75g soft brown sugar
75g double cream
25g butter
30g desiccated coconut, toasted

Pre-heat your oven to 180°C or 160°C fan. Grease and line a tray-bake tin or roasting tin. My tin was 10"X9".

Place the chopped dates and butter in a small bowl pour the boiling water over the top and stir well. Set aside, leave to cool.

Whisk the eggs and sugar together in a separate bowl, stir in the date mixture and add the remaining cake ingredients. Stir until just combined and then pour into the lined pan.

Bake in the oven for 45 mins to 1 hour, check the cake regularly. A skewer inserted into the middle should come out clean. Let it cool in the tin for 10 minutes before removing from the tin, peeling off the baking paper and placing on a wire rack to cool completely.

While the cake is baking, make the glaze. Put the sugar, cream and butter into a saucepan, and keep stirring until the mixture comes to the boil. Remove from the heat and set aside until cold. Pour the glaze over the cake spreading it evenly.

Sprinkle over the toasted coconut. Leave to set and then cut into small pieces.

Ann Jennings

AND FOR THE WINE...

The 'King of wines' / 'wine of Kings' tag is employed for selected exalted wines but what can we find that is fit for a Queen ? !

The regal theme can throw up a few possibilities - although it was as recently as February that we recommended a glass from the Royal Tokaji Wine Company. Moreover, it salutes a different Royal Court altogether, so let us move on. We might well be flying celebratory bunting on the day, but again the red, white and blue theme doesn't really take us far.

So, as landmark follows landmark and diamond jubilee celebrations are followed by 90th Birthday festivities, perhaps we should seek out something really special. Indeed a deluxe Champagne might be called for: Perrier-Jouet's Belle Epoque with its magnificent Chardonnay fruit; Dom Perignon; Roederer's Crystal or Pol Roger's Winston Churchill Cuvee would all shine.

Or maybe we opt for quite simply the very best! Her Majesty's cake with its dates and nuts would work very well with a Vin Santo. Whilst the Trebbiano grape is the basic Tuscan Vin Santo ingredient, the Vin Santos of Greece use the more characterful Assyrtiko grape. Similarly, the secondary grape for Italy's sweet vinous delight is the more noble Malvasia. Just occasionally you can find a Vin Santo which features this grape more prominently and the very rare Vin Santo from San Giusto a Rentennano can comprise 90% Malvasia. I will omit all the superlatives and say quite simply it is the best wine I've ever tasted ! If Her Majesty knocks on my door, I still have a bottle of 1995 intact: fit for a Queen to sip say !

Enjoy your celebrations.....

Richard W. B. Ryan

THANK YOU FOR EASTER

'Thank you' was heard a good deal in church following each of the many services that were scheduled during the Easter season. To Stephen, Kanthi and Roger and all our music makers thanks are presented for the many opportunities for meaningful and thought-provoking reflection and worship.

Thanks are also due to the Flower Guild, the Holy Dusters and to Wendy Tranter for the presentation of the church in all its traditional beauty and glory. Thanks to John and all those who contributed to the administrative tasks that ensured the many service sheets were prepared. Thank you to all who attended services, the schools who shared Easter services and the Stourbridge Unity Service on Tuesday 22 March when so many young voices filled the church.

PARISH REGISTER

Weddings

2 April David Gripton and Laura Sidaway

Funerals

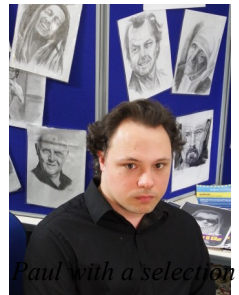
26 March	Richard Ryan	Interment of ashes
29 March	Ann Shepherd	Aged 79
5 April	Edward Winter	Aged 86
9 April	John Cartwright	Interment of ashes

‘NO LIMITS’ OPEN DAY - 6 APRIL 2016

The ‘No-Limits Community Project’ group celebrated World Autism week with an Open Day in the Coach House. The event provided an opportunity for visitors to learn more about the work and achievements of the group as they show-cased their activities through table-top displays and video presentations. These included happy reminders of the past year’s events such as the mid-summer concert in the church hall and Frank McGain-Harding’s sponsored challenge of his trek along the Llangollen Canal. Guests were able to enjoy the social fellowship of the occasion with refreshments and cakes as No-Limits members discussed their experiences.

Also on display was a collection of pencil-drawn portraits by Paul Gribben; these pictures are quite remarkable in their detail and accuracy. Paul has described his work and experience in a fascinating article in the recent No-Limits group’s magazine (issue 4) and invites commissions which can be arranged through the group’s chairman Chris Morgan. The magazine also contains interesting and inspirational articles from members and other contributors relating to autism experiences.

Thank you Chris and Frank for an interesting and informative Open Day.



ANSWERS TO CHILDREN’S PAGE.

GENESIS, EXODUS, JOSHUA, JUDGES and KINGS

CHANGE THE WORDS.....1 LOVE, 2 HEAL, 3 TEACH, 4 CARE.

NAME THE GOSPELS..... MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, and JOHN

LETTER FROM THE ARCHDEACON OF DUDLEY

Thy Kingdom Come

Many of us lack confidence in talking about our faith – perhaps we're only just beginning to realise how easy it is to share a story of how God has been at work in our life with a friend, or perhaps we've yet to be convinced. Hopefully what we can all do, however long we have been a disciple of Jesus, is pray!



This month there is an opportunity to do this in an intentional way, praying for our friends to discover what it means to have a relationship with Jesus. Churches across the country are signing up to join a great wave of prayer for our nation to know Jesus Christ. In the week before Pentecost this year (8th – 15th May), the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have invited every church in England to pray for all Christians to be blessed with new joy and confidence to share their faith.

Many churches are considering hosting 24-7 prayer rooms. Some prayer rooms will be held across a rural benefice or deanery, others in larger churches or with sisters and brothers from other denominations and streams. There'll even be a dedicated prayer room at the heart of Lambeth Palace, the home of the Archbishop of Canterbury. A round the clock prayer room can sound a daunting prospect, but when I was involved in one in my curacy parish in London it was a really powerful experience, where my faith grew enormously. We've committed as a diocese to pray for the week, with sign up slots on the website, so you can join in from home if you can't make it to an actual prayer room. Perhaps sign up for an hour with a few friends from your church, and pray for five people each!

There are lots of ideas about how to pray on the website: <http://thykingdom.co.uk/>, including some inspiring videos, encouraging stories and practical ideas. In the letter to all clergy announcing this wave of prayer the Archbishops said:

"At the heart of our prayers will be words that Jesus himself taught us – 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.' It is impossible to overstate the life-transforming power of the Lord's Prayer. It is a prayer that is reassuring enough to be on the lips of the dying and yet dangerous enough to be banned in cinemas. It is famous enough to be spoken each day by billions in hundreds of languages and yet intimate enough to draw us ever closer into friendship with Jesus Christ. It is simple enough to be memorised by small children and yet profound enough to sustain a whole lifetime of prayer. When we pray it with sincerity and with joy, there is no imagining the new ways in which God can use us to his glory."

As the kingdom people of the Diocese of Worcester this prayer is a core part of our life together. I do encourage you to pray it with faith as you pray for your friends, as part of this national wave of prayer.

The Venerable Nikki Groarke

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