

**ST MARY'S
OLD SWINFORD
Parish Church
MONTHLY NEWS**

**MAY 2018
Online edition**

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50p

PRIEST IN CHARGE:

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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 (Monday to Thursday)
Daily:	5.00 pm - Evening Prayer (Monday to Thursday)
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

Curate Day Off Friday

OTHER REGULAR EVENTS

		Tel:
Prayer Group	Third Wednesday in month, 10 -11 am	393454
Mothers' Union:	Second Tuesday at 2.15 pm	392951
St Mary's Walking Group:	Last Saturday of the month. Depart 9.30 am	

CONTACTS

Reader:	Mrs Kanthi Ariaraj	395115
Church Wardens:	Mrs Judy Hall	377349
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
Director of Music:	Mr Graham Davies	07845 968025
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PCC Secretary:	Miss Katey Fletcher	378182
Monthly News Editor:	Mr Alec Beevers	444229
Safeguarding Officer:	Mrs Liz Fourness	394359
Church Hall and		
Coach House: - Bookings:	Parish Office	441003
Parish Administrator and		
Publicity Officer:	Mr John Sutton	441003
Parish Office:	Open 9.00 am -1.00 pm Tuesday to Thursday, 9.00 am to 12.00 noon Friday Closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday	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.

PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISMS

18.3.18	Myah Briannie Allport Frazer Christian Allport Theodore Samuel Jackson
8.4.18	Frasier Peter Cottrell
15.4.18	Sebastian Gonzales

WEDDINGS

14.4.18	Robert Moore and Julie Simpson
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FUNERALS

28.3.18	Mary Evans	Aged 93	
29.3.18	Michael Bolton	Aged 60	
12.4.18	Marilyn Johnson	Aged 72	Interment of ashes

DIARY - MAY 2018

Tuesday 1	10.00 am Assembly at OCEPS
Wednesday 2	9.00 am Morning Prayers and Full Staff Meeting 3.00 pm Holy Communion at Oriel House
Thursday 3	Polling Day Church Hall in use 7.00am –10.30pm 10.30 am Holy Communion
Friday 4	Clergy day off
Saturday 5	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 6	SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Baptisms 12.00 noon and 3.00 pm
Tuesday 8	10.00 am Open the Book team visit to OCEPS 11.30 am Holy Communion at Hollycroft 7.30 pm Standing Committee
Thursday 10	Ascension Day 10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Friday 11	Clergy day off 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm Choir Practice
Saturday 12	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 3.00 pm Wedding
SUNDAY 13	SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER 10.00am Worship Together 6.30 pm Christian Aid Week Commissioning Service CHRISTIAN AID WEEK
Monday 14	Pentecost Experience in church this week.
Tuesday 15	10.00 am Assembly at OCEPS Archdeacon's Visitation
Wednesday 16	7.30 pm PCC Meeting
Thursday 17	10.30 am Holy Communion in church Data Developments Conference
Friday 18	Clergy day off
SUNDAY 20	PENTECOST - WHITSUNDAY 3.00 pm Baptisms
Tuesday 22	10.00 am Open the Book team visit to OCEPS 2.30 pm NarthexTea with Coach House tea - In Narthex
Wednesday 23	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge
Thursday 24	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Friday 25	Clergy day off
Saturday 26	9.30 am Parish Walking Group – Great Witley 10.00 am–12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 27	TRINITY SUNDAY
Monday 28	Spring Bank Holiday Schools half term holiday week
Thursday 31	10.30 am Holy Communion in church

FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends

By now it is generally known that I will be retiring from full time ministry and therefore leaving the parish in the Autumn of this year, my final Sunday will be 30 September. As always when people move there is a sense of uncertainty, both for the people moving and for the community which is left behind. I am sure that we are all reassured by the positive message contained in the Wardens' newsletter put out for general reading over Easter and that you will support our Wardens wholeheartedly over the coming months.

Over the years a number of friends in the military have outlined to me how they prepare for retirement, spending their last year attending courses on what to do with all the time they will have when they retire, or perhaps they undertake some form of retraining, but that takes place in the context of a decreased workload in their current job as they 'run down' the clock until their day of retirement.

Lest anyone think that this is the approach adopted here, can I assure you that nothing could be further from my mind. Over the coming three months there is significant work to be undertaken in the parish relating to: the finalising of the parish vision which we have been discussing over Lent, the review of parish share 2018, embedding of the 'Calling Young Disciples' project and setting up of specific pieces of work relating to Anne Batchelor's work, a stewardship campaign and preparation for the new General Data Protection Regulations which will affect churches in much the same way that they affect other agencies, large and small. This is all on top of the work that we are normally embarking on at this time of year.

I assure you that I will be giving myself whole-heartedly to the parish over the coming months and I ask you for your support as we tackle these areas and continue to see the mission of St Mary's flourish so that when a new priest arrives at Old Swinford they are greeted by an enthusiastic and energetic parish and congregation who are yearning to go forward in mission and ministry.

With every blessing.

Stephen Agnew

AGAPE SUPPER

On Thursday 29th March forty people gathered in the Church Hall to share an Agape meal and service for Maundy Thursday. The service is interspersed with the three courses of traditional food to represent the Passover meal Jesus shared with his disciples at the Last Supper.

The first course is an acknowledgement of the bitter herbs, we use watercress. The main course is always a lamb dish and the Social Committee try to find a recipe that reflects some of the spices and other ingredients that would be familiar in Biblical times. This year we had a Moroccan lamb casserole with couscous. Our dessert was Um Ali, something similar to a bread and butter pudding.

The atmosphere was wonderful and the singing really brought us all together. During the eating there was much talk and laughter in contrast to the service which was quiet and calming, nothing to be heard at times but the tick of the clock. Towards the end of the service we shared Communion with each person giving the bread and wine to their neighbour.

Leaving a contribution for the meal people left in semi-darkness and silence to reflect on the evening. After expenses for the food we were left with £112 for Church funds.

Several people asked about the lamb dish and so I attach the recipe for those who would like to try it for themselves.

Sue Wakeley

Moroccan Lamb

Serves 8

1.5kg lamb shoulder cut into chunky strips	1 teasp ground cinnamon
250g ready to eat dried apricots halved	1 teasp ground cumin
250g stoned ready to eat prunes halved	2 tablesp olive oil
6 tomatoes roughly chopped	1 large onion finely chopped
grated rind and juice of a lemon	4 garlic cloves thinly sliced
4 tablesp roughly chopped fresh coriander	720ml hot lamb stock
1-2 teasp harissa	

Preheat oven to 140 fan/ gas 1. Mix spices with salt and pepper then rub into lamb. Heat oil in a large flameproof casserole dish and cook the lamb pieces for 2-3 min stirring until they are beginning to brown.

Stir in the onion and garlic and cook for 1-2 min until just starting to soften, then stir in the apricots, prunes, hot stock, harissa and tomatoes and bring to the boil. Cover and transfer to the oven for 1.5 – 2 hours until the lamb is tender.

This can be cooked the day before it is needed. When required heat up and then stir the lemon rind, juice and coriander into the lamb, season if necessary.

Alternatively you can cook this using a slow cooker.



FRANK IN A NEW NO-LIMITS CHALLENGE

Frank will be undertaking 28 miles of Dudley Trail on Sunday 6 May. Two members of NO LIMITS, Adam & Tom will be walking with him. If you would like to sponsor Frank his sponsorship form will be at the back of church or, ask Chris Morgan. Thanks for your support.

Chris Morgan

OPEN THE BOOK

Every other Tuesday in term time, pupils at OCEPS enjoy a different sort of assembly. Called 'Open the Book', the purpose is to bring alive favourite, as well as less well known stories and characters from the Bible. This is done by actors playing the parts of people in the stories, the actors being men and ladies from St Mary's Church. Occasionally children are also involved. To make the stories more exciting everyone taking part dresses up. From time to time, all the children have a part to play when cards are held up encouraging us to be involved using words, sounds or actions!

These assemblies help us to a better understanding of many stories and parables that we learn about.

Connie Pittaway

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK - 13 TO 19 MAY 2018



For more than 70 years, with the help of our amazing supporters, Christian Aid has been helping change the lives of people, of all faiths and none, living in poverty around the world.

Be it when we run a refugee camp for 50,000 Rohingya people in Bangladesh, or work with the peace and justice commission in Colombia or support vulnerable children in Kenya, Christian Aid continues to reach out to people, regardless of colour, creed, gender, age, sexual orientation and economic or social status

Please do what you can to support Christian Aid Week this year. Please contact Mike Blaxland if you are able to help with the delivery and collection of envelopes in the local area. Mike's email address is mike.blaxland@btinternet.com or Tel 01384 390537.

Mike Blaxland

THE HICKMANS OF OLD SWINFORD CASTLE

Richard Hickman 1792 - 1855 (Part One)

Set into the wall by the steps to the western side of the church is a stone marking the Hickman Family vault. One of the family members interned in this vault is Captain Richard Hickman.



Captain Hickman was a grandson of Edward Hickman, detailed in a previous article. He is sometimes referred to as having been a “colourful character”. He was a Captain in the Yeomanry Cavalry, a noted horseman, and acquired the nickname of “Tommy Trot”.

As a boy he lived in Old Swinford at The Castle with his mother. In 1808, a few days after his fifteenth birthday, he enlisted in the Royal Marines as a Second Lieutenant. These were days when England was at war with the French, and young Richard saw seven years of wartime service.

By 1815 when the war ended, Richard had acquired a wife and was now retired on half-pay. Over the next few years his movements are uncertain. He is recorded as living in various places around the country, moving from one rented property to another.

By 1829, after the death of his mother, Richard had returned to Old Swinford and taken up residence at The Castle. He was the eldest son, his older brother having pre-deceased his mother. Nevertheless, under the terms of his mother’s will, he was required to purchase his siblings’ interest in the property from them, before he could obtain outright ownership of the property himself. Included in Richard’s purchase were three pews in Old Swinford church. Two in the south aisle and one in the north gallery.

In 1845 an Act of Parliament sanctioned construction of the railway line now serviced by Stourbridge Junction railway station. This railway line passes only two hundred yards away from The Castle itself. In the course of acquiring land for the railway track, the railway company bought several fields close to The Castle. Only thin strips of the land purchased were required for railway tracks, the surplus was then re-sold.

Captain Richard was able to purchase two pieces of land adjoining his property. These purchases completed the extensive gardens that once surrounded his home. One of the pieces of land was known as Churchyard Field. This field abutted a piece of parkland called “the pleck”, also owned by Richard. Between Churchyard Field and the pleck ran a cart track which led from the road outside Old Swinford church to Chawn Hill. This track was to cause Captain Richard a great deal of trouble one day. More of this in Part Two.

Reference: The Hickmans of Oldswinford. M.V. Herbert

Stephen Howard

MUSIC NOTES



The month of June is the first anniversary of the Friends of the Music at St. Mary's and to mark the occasion there will be some special events in church, which I hope you will support and encourage your family, friends and neighbours to as well.

Here are the details: -

Saturday 23 June – 7.30 p.m.

**Organ Recital given by
Will Peart**

Sunday 24 June – 6.30 p.m.

Choral Evensong

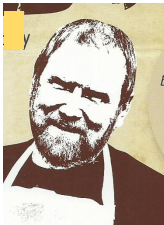
Saturday 7 July – 7.30 p.m.

**The Amicus Ensemble
directed by Will Croft**

Please take leaflets and posters for these events from the back of the church, which will provide full details. All proceeds will go to Friends of the Music.

Graham Davies

JESUS MY BOY



On Saturday 24 March St Mary's Church became a theatre for the evening as it hosted the Worcester Repertory Company's production of Jesus My Boy. The play provided a thought-provoking introduction to Holy Week and the church was an appropriate setting for the play which was based on the life of Jesus as seen through the eyes of Joseph.

The one-man show was cleverly staged on the chancel steps and the actor, Jonathan Darby as Joseph, kept the audience engrossed in his narrative. While many of the passages followed our contemporary interpretation of the Bible stories his portrayal of the Nativity departed from the popular image of the stable and the babe in a manger. Instead we were told that the birth took place in a cave and Darby played a challenging, if not humorous scene of Joseph as the midwife, before carrying us through all the emotions of joy and sadness in Jesus' life.

Afterwards the audience admired the skilled performance and were able to reflect and discuss the play with the actor over refreshments in the narthex. Thank you to the Worcester Rep team for choosing St Mary's as a venue for your touring production and giving us such an enjoyable show.

Alec Beevers

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP - SATURDAY 24 MARCH

17 people plus one dog starting the walk was good, considering it was very damp and overcast. The walk started from The Sun & Slipper at Mamble and the proprietors were very good, as they opened up for us to use the facilities, and also to book our meals, before setting off.

It was a little challenging, with lots of undulations and an interesting fallen tree to negotiate, also several steep climbs up from a couple of brooks.

About half way round at our scheduled coffee break at Bayton Church, we were fortunate that there was a coffee morning going on. Several of our walkers took the opportunity to purchase cakes and enjoy refreshments.

We carried on through the grounds of a large country estate and through woods. Bonny, the dog, took full advantage of being off the lead. After leaving the wood and crossing a few fields, which were a little muddy, Mamble came into view.

As we approached the pub we could smell the food cooking, which made us very glad we had already booked our meals. Katy and Sue who were just coming for the meal were already there, waiting for us. I think everyone thought the food was really good and I am sure it will be frequented by a lot of us again soon.

Jean & Ray Drew

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

In April Tony Maidment led our service and meeting. He told us of his life working as an evangelist for the Church Army which is a branch of practical service in the Church of England. He was posted to work for a children's charity in NE England and lived in a caravan. Later having married he moved to a large parish in Putney where part of his work centred on a hostel for ex-Borstal boys (young offenders).

Parallel to his working life Tony developed his hobby as a magician. He was elected as a member of the Magic Circle and served as president of the Fellowship of Christian Magicians of Europe. He used this skill in his ministry to entertain us with his special gift.

Since retirement Tony is now a member of the Gideons' organisation which distributes New Testaments in schools, colleges, hotels, hospitals etc.

We all felt encouraged to travel the Christian pilgrim journey with fellowship, love, help for each other and joy in the service of Christ.

Next meeting: Tuesday 8 May at 2.15 pm in the Coach House,
Speaker – Revd Alex French

All are welcome.

Dawn Nex

FROM THE DIOCESE

Rogation Sunday - 6 May

Rogation Sunday is the day when the Church has traditionally offered prayer for God's blessings on the fruits of the earth and the labours of those who produce our food.

The word "rogation" is from the Latin *rogare*, "to ask." Historically, the Rogation Days (the three days before Ascension Day) were a period of fasting and abstinence, asking for God's blessing on the crops for a bountiful harvest. Less of us today directly derive our livelihood from the production of food, yet it is good to be reminded of our dependence upon those who do and our responsibility for the environment.

Traditionally a common feature of Rogation days was the ceremony of beating the bounds, in which a procession of parishioners, led by the minister and churchwardens would proceed around the boundary of their parish and pray for its protection in the forthcoming year. As it is no longer practical to follow exact boundaries many services will be held that have a focus on specific elements of creation such as livestock, fields, orchards and gardens.

Sam Setchell

Thy Kingdom Come 2018

Pray for more people to come to faith from Ascension Day (10 May) to Pentecost (20 May).

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement, which invites Christians around the world to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus Christ. What started out as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 2016 to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.

The hope is that:

- people will commit to pray with God's world-wide family - as a church, individually or as a family;
- people will be empowered through prayer by the Holy Spirit, finding new confidence to be witnesses for Jesus Christ.

Archbishop Justin Welby says: "I cannot remember in my life anything that I've been involved in where I have sensed so clearly the work of the Spirit. In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities."

Across the Diocese, we are encouraging parishes and deaneries to set up prayer stations and hold prayer walks and events. There will also be two events on Pentecost Sunday, 20 May to which everyone is invited – a Praying for Dudley event in Priory Ruins at 2.30pm and a service to pray for the whole diocese in the Cathedral at 6.30pm.

Please come and support us at these events.

LETTER FROM THE DIOCESE

A worldly faith?

Sometimes we imagine that our faith is about becoming more religious. However the French priest and palaeontologist Teilhard de Chardin said, 'We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.' A palaeontologist is someone who studies fossils, and like any scientist is an observer of things in a search to discover more about them. I think what he meant was since we are created in the image and likeness of God, as we grow as humans we grow more and more into God.

He also said, 'by virtue of Creation, and still more the Incarnation, nothing here below is profane for those who know how to see.' Our humanity in all its shapes and sizes is God's way of fleshing out and manifesting His beauty. 'Nothing is profane for those who know how to see': Heaven isn't very far away, and faith isn't about religious stuff. Indeed common humanity is the home of God: this is what Christmas is all about, when God in Jesus made his home amongst us.

So we should tread the earth lightly: We are already walking on holy ground. Perhaps that is why Jesus gives us such an earthly prayer as the Lord's Prayer: we pray that God's kingdom will come here on earth as in heaven; we ask God to give us our daily bread, just enough for today. In the Gospels Jesus shows us God by the way he looks, listens, speaks and touches. Galilee sees signs of heaven in everyday life.

This is why the heart and high point of Christian worship is the Eucharist, when we take the raw material of the world, bread and wine, and it is transfigured by God's Holy Spirit and shows us God. The Orthodox Church speaks of the 'sacrament of the world'. The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins writes that 'the world is charged with the grandeur of God.' And this month we celebrate the feast of Pentecost: we celebrate when the Church is born, very much here on earth, to live the life of Jesus, very much here on earth.

Pentecost is the moment when the penny drops for the apostles and they begin to see clearly what Christmas, Good Friday and Easter Day mean. Pentecost completes the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus as the birthday of incarnate Christianity. Far from taking us out of this world, the Spirit, which brooded over creation from the very beginning, empowers us to see everything in a new light: the whole world is charged with the grandeur of God.

So let's not become too religious: our faith is world-facing and life-affirming. St Paul even makes the great claim that our bodies are 'temples of the Holy Spirit': this is who we really are, spiritual beings having a human experience. The Church is being truly faithful when we live out Jesus' message to love God, neighbour and self, seeking to encounter him not just in worship but in the faces and concerns of the people we meet day by day. No wonder the liturgy ends with the words 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.' Go where He may be found!

Archdeacon Robert Jones

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