

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

JUNE 2018
ONLINE EDITION**

ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD Parish Church MONTHLY NEWS JUNE 2018



50p

PRIEST IN CHARGE:

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CURATE:

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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

Prayer Group	Third Wednesday in month, 10 -11 am	Tel: 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

6.5.18 Alfred Flynn Reed
Helen Jane Prince

Weddings

12.5.18 Mathew Taylor and Hannah-Marie Husband



DIARY – JUNE 2018

Saturday 2	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 3	FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Baptisms at 10.00 service and at 3.00 pm
Monday 4	11.00 am Pastoral Committee meeting at 4 Worcester Lane Evening Social Event to celebrate future work with Children
Tuesday 5	10.00 am Open the Book team visit to OCEPS 7.30 pm Churches Together in Stourbridge
Wednesday 6	9.00 am Morning Prayers and Full Staff meeting 3.00 pm Holy Communion at Oriel House 7.30 pm Warden's Admission Service, St John's, Bromsgrove
Thursday 7	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Friday 8	Clergy day off
Saturday 9	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 7.30 pm A Midsummer Soiree, Central England Camerata and Viva Musica
SUNDAY 10	SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY - Worship Together 6.30 pm Evensong
Monday 11	3.00 pm Bible Study Group
Tuesday 12	10.00 am Assembly at OCEPS 11.30 am Holy Communion at Hollycroft 2.00 pm Tuesday Tea in the Coach House
Wednesday 13	Curate's day off
Thursday 14	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Friday 15	Clergy day off
Saturday 16	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 17	THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 3.00 pm Baptisms
Tuesday 19	10.00 am Assembly at OCEPS 2.00 pm Tuesday Tea in the Coach House
Wednesday 20	10.00 am Prayer Meeting at 4 Worcester Lane 7.00 pm Mary Stevens Hospice Mid-Summer Service
Thursday 21	10.30 am Holy Communion in church 7.30 pm Coach House Committee meeting
Friday 22	Clergy day off
Saturday 23	2.00 pm Old Swinford Hospital 350 th Anniversary Service. 10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 2.00 pm Wedding 7.30 pm Friends of the Music – Will Peart Organ Recital
SUNDAY 24	CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST 5.00pm Tea launch of Stewardship Campaign with, at 6.30 pm Choral Evensong—Friends of the Music Festival
Tuesday 26	10.00 am Open the Book team visit to OCEPS 2.30 – 4.00 pm A Summer Cream Tea in the Narthex 7.30 pm PCC meeting with the Archdeacon re Interregnum
Wednesday 27	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge
Thursday 28	10.30 am Holy Communion in church
Friday 29	Clergy day off
Saturday 30	9.30 am Parish Walking Group – Studley 10.00 am – 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour

FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends

June is the month when many people think about the possibility of going on holiday. The days are at their longest and the temperature may just be warmer than other months, although in this country that can never be a certainty. Holidays are important for many people, and the business of holidays has become more and more lucrative for many travel operators.

The term 'holiday' derives from 'Holy Day', the designation of an important religious festival marked by activities which are different to the normal routine. One such day which we have just celebrated is Ascension Day. As we were marking that day this year I overheard a few people reminiscing about how the head of their church school had pronounced that Ascension Day would be a half day holiday because it was a 'Holy Day'. I remember having that same experience as a young boy, as I waited to hear the invited guest speaker at our morning prize-giving declare that the rest of the day would be a holiday. What a sense of exhilaration that gave us, a half day to do what we liked!

Our forebears marked the passing of time and seasons by religious festivals. We can see references to that in writings from the middle ages or even the Victorian era, where we might read of special events associated with St Swithun, or St Martin, or perhaps the quarter days of Lady Day and Michaelmas Day, to name but a few. These days marked out a calendar for the year, and on some of them there would be fairs or other entertainments so that people could participate in recreational activities. (Even the word 'recreation' has strong religious connotations as it refers us back to the divine 'creation' in the beginning.)

Over the course of the last 60 or more years we have moved away from such a religious perspective of life. We are inclined to rather frown on regimes which celebrate what might seem to us rather random 'Holy Days' whilst we are abroad on our holidays. But perhaps in many other countries the Christian faith is given a more prominent and central role in everyday life, and perhaps that is what is lacking in our expression of the calendar where God and any expression of faith is relegated to nothing more than personal choice.

I find that I still tend to refer to seasons by their saints' days and navigate my way around the calendar by way of the greater and lesser Christian saints, and in so doing feel that I am celebrating time as a God-given gift, and that indeed all of life is God-given.

I hope that you enjoy your 'Holy Days' and can find some 'recreation'.

Stephen Agnew

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

Our branch leader, Anne May, led a quiet remembrance for Hazel White who had died in a nursing home and condolences were sent to her family.

Our May meeting coincided with Ascension Day and Revd Alex French led a service and meditation to mark the occasion. Acts 1 v.1-11 was read and Alex pointed out that a shoe could remind us of the present position of Christ in glory: S - seated; H - High; O - Over; E - Everything.

We were also led into a deep reflection of Salvador Dali's picture of the Ascension of Christ. The artist painted this following a cosmic dream in 1950 after he read accounts of the nuclear splitting of atoms.

We ended with the Ascension passage from Mark 16 v. 14 - 20 where Christ takes all disciples, even us, with Him into the fabric of the Universe to empower others to tell of His love. Alleluia, what a Saviour!

Next Meeting Tuesday 12 June at 2.15 pm in the Coach House
"Walking in Mary Sumner's Footsteps"
Speaker Mary Wear

All are welcome.

Dawn Nex

A ROYAL OCCASION

Many readers will know Susan Price as a long-serving member of the worldwide Mothers' Union and also as the daughter of the late Canon Hurley. She was nominated as a recipient of Maundy Money this year and attended a special service in St George's Chapel, Windsor on Maundy Thursday for the presentation.

Susan now lives in Bewdley and she wrote about her experience of the day for the 'Bewdley Bridge' Magazine. We are pleased to reproduce some of her letter here.



"Before the service started the Lord High Almoner (our own Bishop of Worcester) told us about the service, then the Yeomen of the Guard, pikestaffs and all, entered as the sun streamed through the windows. Then the Queen arrived and was presented with the nosegay of flowers.

At the point in the service when the purses - one white, one red - were being presented, six Yeomen carried them on solid gold dishes. They were obviously very heavy. I can also confirm the Queen does have a wonderful complexion and a warm and genuine smile. Bishop John told the Queen that my husband had sung at her father's coronation and she spoke to me which was a great honour.

Afterwards we had a reception in St George's Hall, then a very wet drive home.

I will never forget the 2018 Maunday Service".

Susan Price

RICHARD HICKMAN 1792 – 1855 (PART TWO)

In Part One of this article we left Captain Richard Hickman living comfortably in his home The Castle at Old Swinford. He had just purchased two pieces of land from the railway company. 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, under a railway arch, to Chawn Hill. This track was used as a public footpath from the church to Chawn Hill, and it now cut straight across his garden, in full view from the windows at The Castle.

To make matters worse, the public had the habit of “easing themselves” in the railway arch. Richard therefore attempted to get the footpath diverted further south, beyond his garden, and out of sight of his windows. His application was approved at meetings of the parish Vestry with only one dissenter, a local brewer called Stephen Hipkins.

Hipkins operated a brewery in Old Swinford village, just opposite the church and next door to the fine Georgian building then known as The Laurels, and now more commonly known as Oldswinford Old Hall. He claimed a right to use the existing track to draw water from the brook that was crossed by the track and flowed into Richard’s pond.

The brewer then proceeded on a campaign of direct action. On many occasions during the following two years he broke locks and fastenings on Richard’s gates to gain access. Richard’s response was to put a watchman on his gates during daylight hours. But one night Hipkins turned up with a gang of local toughs and smashed down the gate at the church end.

Richard re-built his gates but this time, in broad daylight, Hipkins and his roughs removed them, accompanied by cheers from a crowd of local people who had collected to witness the spectacle.

The matter was resolved, after a fashion, in the suit of “Hickman v Hipkins” heard before Mr Justice Crompton and a special jury at Worcester Assizes in July 1854. Nothing could be established conclusively, one way or the other, but a compromise of sorts was cobbled together, which seemed to satisfy both parties.

Captain Richard Hickman died on 5th September 1855. In his time he had been a Justice of the Peace for Worcestershire, and he also became a JP for Staffordshire. In 1832 he had been appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for Worcestershire. He had been a Governor of King Edward’s School and was heavily involved with the local races at Pedmore. He was laid to rest in the family vault in Old Swinford churchyard.

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

Stephen Howard

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP - APRIL WALK

The Parish Bounds

Being our closest walk date to Rogation Tide we decided this year to walk around the bounds of our parish. The last time we did this was in 2008 when we sought sponsorship in aid of our stonework appeal. The weather forecast was poor but nonetheless it stayed rain free throughout our walk, we had 10 walkers and one dog out, plus another walker who joined us for lunch at "The Crabmill". We tried to keep as near to the parish boundary as was practicable and clocked up approximately 6.5 miles.

We left church passed the hall then under the railway before ascending to Wollescote via Ham Dingle. Then passed Stevens Park to Pedmore Technology College before crossing over to the Rufford Road trading estates. We went under the railway in Junction Road then via Stepping Stones and Sandy Acre Way to the town Bus Station. Then over Hanbury and Pepper Hill to Heath lane and Mary Stevens Park; we circled this anticlockwise, including the lake, before crossing "The Bogs" to Beech Road. After crossing Oldswinford Cricket Ground we gained height again to reach Love Lane, and via Oakleigh Road came out on Hagley Road almost opposite Mary Stevens Hospice. A short walk took us to The Crabmill where we enjoyed a well-earned and convivial lunch together.

Mike Blaxland

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 23rd June – 7.30 p.m.

Sunday 24th June – 6.30 p.m.

Saturday 7th July – 7.30 p.m.

Organ Recital

given by Will Peart

Choral Evensong

The Amicus Ensemble

directed by Will Croft

Please consider joining the Friends and completing the proforma contained in the Friends leaflet available at the back of the church. All proceeds will go to Friends of the Music.

Graham Davies

SUNLIT EVENSONG

One of the joys of summer months is long, sunny evenings - on Midsummer's Day the sun sets at about 9.30 pm and it stays light for another hour. During its annual cycle the sun appears to move north in spring and summer, and on sunny evenings from May to August it shines on the north face of St Mary's church.

Evensong during these months often takes on a special quality as the sun streams in through the lancet windows. The first glimpse of sunlight appears as a thin sliver of brightness on the wall above the vestry door at slightly different positions and times depending on the date. This light from one of the windows quickly widens to a bright vertical strip which then slowly moves towards the pulpit. On Sundays near the solstice - 21 June - the first light appears near the apex of the vestry door before the psalm, reaches the pulpit during the sermon and, for the finale, the coloured light from the stained glass at the top of the window shines into the chancel at the end of the service.

Far from being a distraction these observations enrich the service as a reminder of God's presence and the wonders of His universe. The experience is also particularly fitting for the words of the favourite evensong hymn "The day thou gavest" which includes the verse:

The sun that bids us rest is waking
Our brethren 'neath the western sky,
And hour by hour fresh lips are making
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

Alec Beevers



DID YOU KNOW?

Psalm 118 is the Bible's middle chapter.

Just before it is Psalm 117 which is the Bible's shortest chapter.

Just after it is Psalm 119 which is the longest chapter.

The Bible has 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 after it.

If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118 you get 1188.

If you take the number 1188 and interpret it as chapter 118 of Psalms verse 8 you will find the middle verse of the entire Bible which reads,

'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put your confidence in man'

Could this be not just the numerical centre of the Bible but the central message?

From Chris Morgan

BELL RINGERS CORNER

Hugh C. Nash - Died 29TH MAY 1917

Hugh Nash was a bell ringer at Old Swinford St Mary's Church. He was one of the 1400 ringers that died on active service during the Great War. He attended Old Swinford Church of England School, and had shown some artistic ability in winning a gold medal for a national painting competition.

He was also a popular member of the church of St Mary's, singing in the choir and being a bell ringer. He enlisted in 1916 and joined the 9th Battalion of the Worcesters, sailing for Mesopotamia on 11th July 1916.

Hugh was a regimental barber for a time and then batman for the Battalion Transport Officer. The battalion suffered heavy losses when engaging the Turks at Kut, but the British advanced through Ctesiphon and all the way up river to Baghdad. Private Nash, who had come through some very severe fighting died from appendicitis in a military hospital near Baghdad.

When the news reached Old Swinford, his fellow bell ringers rang a half muffled peal of Grandsire Triples on Saturday 16th June as a mark of respect. The peal lasted for three hours and ten minutes and included 5040 changes

In the North Cloister of Worcester Cathedral is a window recording the names of Worcestershire ringers who died on active service during the 1914 to 1918 conflict. Private Nash's name is included on that window.

On 11 November 2018, 100 years since the Armistice, bells will ring out in unison from churches and cathedrals in villages, towns and cities across the country. Big Ben will also strike at 11am to mark the centenary.

To mark the final year of the First World War centenary commemorations, 1,400 new bell ringers will be recruited in honour of the 1,400 that lost their lives during the First World War.

If you think that you, or a family member or friend, might be interested in learning about bell ringing, and being one of the ringers that participates in the commemorations on 11th November this year, then contact John Sutton on 01384 441003.



Stephen Howard

DEMENTIA FRIENDS

An Alzheimer's Society Initiative



On Monday 23 April we were invited to the Coach House to hear a very interesting talk given by Margaret Pamplin on behalf of Dementia Friends. We were reminded of the five key messages about dementia:

1. Dementia is not a natural part of ageing
2. Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain
3. Dementia is not just about losing your memory - it can affect thinking, communicating and doing everyday tasks
4. It's possible to live well with dementia
5. There's more to a person than the dementia.

We were each given 'Bingo' cards to match up what we perceived to be correct answers to selected questions; this brought up much discussion between the participants and lightened the mood of a very serious subject.

The meeting gave us a better understanding of the condition and ways of how we might interact with sufferers of dementia.

Margaret invited us all to be a "Dementia Friend" by joining the UK's biggest initiative to change the way people think, act and talk about dementia.

A vote of thanks was given by Sue Tatford who presented Margaret with flowers.

Janet Beevers

HE DID IT!

Frank & another NO LIMITS Member Adam completed the 28 miles of the Dudley trail in 9 hours and in midday temperature of 25 degrees C. What an achievement and both *almost* blister free.



If you sponsored Frank we will be happy to receive your sponsorship money.

As always, our thanks to all of our church family who have sponsored Frank. We are very appreciative of all your encouragement & support.

Chris Morgan

CONCERT - SATURDAY 9 JUNE

A MIDSUMMER SOIREE

Given by CENTRAL ENGLAND CAMERATA and VIVA MUSICA

7.30 pm in St Mary's Church

In aid of Mary Stevens Hospice

Tickets available from ardviolinist@gmail.com or phone 07967 728588

LETTER FROM THE DIOCESE

Modern Slavery



The roadside sign to have your car washed for £3 is so tempting. With busy lives, and when time is precious, this amount is small change. You can have your car cleaned in a few minutes by a team of people, generally from overseas, while you catch up on emails or read a magazine. For many of us it's a no-brainer.

Then you begin to hear that some car washes (although certainly not all) are places where the victims of modern slavery are forced to work. Along with nail bars, brothels, domestic service and horticulture, these are the places where people are found caught up in this vile trade in human beings. The trade includes children as well, often violently coerced into illegal activity, and there is a horrifying international trade in the poorest people having their organs trafficked for the benefit of people who are ill and wealthy enough.

If you thought slavery ended with William Wilberforce then think again.

Each and every human being is made in the image of God – the Imago Dei – so anything less than human flourishing is an affront to God. Any behaviour that values some human beings less than others, or exploits or abuses them, is contrary to God's will. This is why, as Christians, we must take a stand against modern slavery in all its forms. In such a way, we follow in the steps of Jesus in proclaiming release to the captives and letting the oppressed go free.

Working to combat modern slavery is the responsibility of us all. The Church of England's Clewer Initiative is working to bring these crimes to the attention of the wider public. It is also helping us to spot the signs that are there, often in plain sight before us, if only we had the eyes to see.

For further information about their work and what you can do to help, please see www.theclewerinitiative.org, and for indicators of trafficking, domestic servitude and labour exploitation, see their "spot the signs" page.

Together we can make a difference and banish the scourge of slavery in our midst.

Bishop Graham

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