

The Messenger

FEBRUARY 2024

The Parish of Dursley



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FEBRUARY 2024

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A Message from the Editors

Dear Readers

Welcome to our February edition.

As we write we hope you are able to cope with this very cold spell of weather. Perhaps you can curl up with this magazine and ignore it!!

Thank you all for your continued contributions to the 'Messenger'. If anyone else feels they could contribute, please don't hesitate to contact us.

From

Valerie and Judith (editors)

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**DEADLINE FOR MARCH 2024 ISSUE
IS SUNDAY 14th FEBRUARY 2024**

**Just a reminder please send items for the magazine to
dursley.messenger@gmail.com**



Canon Richard Morgan writes...

Dear Friends

These days, commercial pressures help make us celebrate Christmas before it comes, and see it as finished almost as soon as Christmas Day is over. But the Church officially starts Christmas on Christmas night, and continues it for twelve or even forty days, ending only with the Presentation of Jesus in the temple, Candlemass. So I write this quite early in the forty days of Christmas, and it will be published in time for the celebration of the presenting of Jesus in the temple. That is recorded by Luke to stress again Jesus' fulfilling the Law God gave to Moses, and that is important to us because it shows God's **faithfulness**. If God is faithful to his agreement with his ancient people, he will be faithful to us. The event tells of the old godly people, Simeon and Anna, rejoicing in Jesus. Mary is a young mother; we don't know how old Joseph was! Jesus was a baby. So the story reminds us that God cares for all ages.

Simeon spoke what has become one of the songs of the Church at evening services, the Nunc Dimittis – 'Now you dismiss.' He called Jesus, 'A light to give light to the gentiles, [= the nations, the non-Jews,] and the glory of your people Israel.' Jesus fulfils God's promises to Israel and opens God's love and faithfulness to us and all people. God in Christ is for all people, Jews and gentiles. Simeon's song about light is why the feast was celebrated with candles and is called Candlemass. Light is a symbol of life, freedom, truth and safety – robbers tend to rob at night, and you don't know where you are and can't do much safely in the dark. Jesus comes to give us light and final salvation – safety and fullness of life.

Simeon in the temple already looked forward to Jesus' sufferings, and warned Mary her soul would be pierced with grief's sword. And this month will also see the beginning of Lent, the time of preparation for the celebration of Jesus' dying and rising, for the fulfilment of the Passover, for Easter. The Passover celebrated God's great rescue of his

people from slavery in Egypt, by plaguing the Egypt oppressors, culminating in the death of their firstborn sons.

The Exodus is about God saving the good and punishing the wicked. Evil does indeed bring disaster – the results of greed and carelessness today are the threat of a climate catastrophe. But in Christ, God reaches out to all. And, as none of us is perfect, if God only cares for the good, it is a poor lookout for us all. On the cross, Jesus, God the Son, took the place of the lambs which were sacrificed by the Israelites so that their sons did not die too. But thus, he took the place of the Egyptian sons who died. He took the place of all who suffer, innocent and guilty, to bring us forgiveness and new life. In Egypt, the king lost his son. So we can say that, if Jesus took the place of the king's son, God the father took the place of the king, the Pharaoh. God takes responsibility for all our evils and sufferings, to bring us through to new life, shown in Jesus' resurrection. At the cross, Jesus was faithful to God and us even to death. But God the Father was faithful to Jesus, bringing him through to resurrection, and was faithful to us too, to the point of enduring his beloved Son's sufferings for us, sufferings that, as a loving Father, he shared. In that faithful love we can trust, in good times and bad, and know that, if we do not reject God's love, then, if suffering comes, God will see us through it to a final share in his eternal joy in love.

Faithfulness is something that continues over time. It requires patience, endurance, stickability. If we don't show our patience and endurance by the disciplines of waiting in Advent, let's do so in Lent. The disciplines of Lent are not some effort to show how good we are, or even to make us healthier by fasting. They are to help us respond in faithfulness to God's faithfulness. On Ash Wednesday, we read Jesus' teaching on almsgiving, fasting and prayer. These are vital disciplines and expressions of faithfulness to God and others. Alms, charity, is giving and caring for the needy. Fasting can take various forms and is of no use without giving and prayer. But to desist from constantly placing ourselves and our appetites and desires first is necessary if we are to love and care for God, who is love, and for other people and our environment. And prayer, listening to God, thinking, and talking with God, giving attention to being with God, is essential too.

So, Happy Candlemass: may we know God's light.
Happy Lent: may we open ourselves to grow in love.
And Happy Easter: may we know God's forgiveness,
and share God's life and love for ever.

February Thoughts from The Benefice Office...

by Clare White



This year Lent is starting very early, it feels like we have only just dusted off the glitter of Christmas and stopped smelling the Frankincense from Epiphany.

Our Christian year always seems to move at a pace, and I'm certainly looking forward to moving out of this winter season and into some warmer weather.

I'm hoping that I will not be forced to give up warmth for Lent- my hands have suffered this winter!

The trials and tribulations of our lack of heating in the church and Parish Centre have definitely been difficult. It is very sad to lose some of the regular groups who have been using the Parish Centre and the church congregations have gone down at our services. Getting new heating systems into our old buildings isn't quick or easy, but there are a team of hard-working PCC members who have been toiling tirelessly to replace our condemned boilers and make our buildings warm again.

The costs are high, as expected, and there is no magic money pot available. So it does take quite a time to get quotes from heating companies so that we are paying a competitive price.

We also need to be sure we are installing the correct system to take us forward. We are obliged to investigate alternative environmentally friendly fuel sources too.

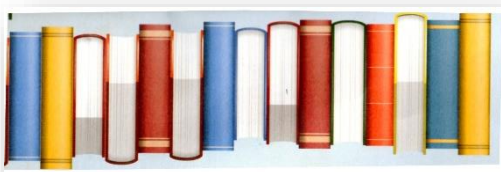
Please be assured that we will have heating as soon as is humanly possible and there are a good team of people working to make this happen.

May we enter Lent with hope in our hearts and anticipation of Easter bringing us God's warm glow.

Micah 7: 7

But as for me, I will look to the Lord,
I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.

Clive's Book Stall returned on Saturday 13th January; Clive says that we were given the magnificent sum of £143.29.



A very good start to the year and thanks to everyone who helps and more help is always welcome!!

Books can be found most Saturdays in or around St James Church



10.30am at St James, Dursley.

Harry van Wijk

A versatile musician who works as concert organist, church musician and choir director at van de Oude Helenakerk in Aalten, Holland. He has played concerts in several countries in Europe and the USA. As well as playing with the best music from organ literature he enjoys exploring film music with organ, synthesizer and percussion, or music with organ and narrator.



There is no charge, but a retiring collection will be taken, the proceeds of which will go to the work of St James' church.



(19th Series)

February 10th Harry van Wijk

(Holland)

April 27th

Paul Bailey

(St Helen's Alveston)

May 25th

Nicholas Sherwood

(St Monica's Bristol)

June 29th

Nigel Nash

(Bristol)

July 27th

Stephen Power

(Brecon Cathedral)

August 31st

Andrew Millington

(Exeter)

September 28th Anthony Burns-Cox

(Romsey)

October 26th

Nigel Davies

(St James-the-Great, Dursley)

Coffee and home-made
cake will be served from

10.30am

The music begins at

11.00am

and lasts for about 30 -
40 minutes

There is no charge, but a retiring collection will be taken, the
proceeds of which will go to the work of St James' church.



Music for February



4th	am	Te Deum in F – Ireland Woodard Service – Shephard	
11th	am	Jubilate – Sanders Mass of St James – Davies	
14th	pm	God So Loved the World – Stainer	Willan in D
(Ash Wednesday)			
18th	am	Service of the Word	
25th	am	God so Loved the World – Chilcott Missa L'Ora Passa – Viadana	

Extra Coffee Cake and Music Recital

Our long-running Saturday morning recital series usually begins in April, but this year we have the opportunity of hearing a Dutch organist as part of his UK tour on Saturday 10th February.

Harry van Wijk is a well-travelled and experienced musician who is not afraid of pushing the boundaries of established organ music to include works from the orchestral repertoire. His programme will include Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite No 1 as well as works by JS Bach and Percy Whitlock. As ever, the programme will be preceded by refreshments served from 10.15am and the recital will begin at 11.00am lasting under 40 minutes. Bring blankets and hot-water bottles to hear a real musical treat!



PASTORAL CARE

Please let Chris Raffle - left
(01453 545684 or 07517 380772), or
Revd Jane Wood - right (07983 623525)
know of those who need to be contacted or are in
hospital and we will get in touch.





Not Strictly for the Birds!



This month I've been thinking about birds. At the time I write this (January), the outside temperatures have dropped greatly and, according to the Met Office app on my phone, the temperature last night went down to minus two

degrees! Brrrrr!

Whilst watching television and wrapping the blanket around my shoulders, it crossed my mind, just how do our garden birds cope with this freezing weather? Just what is roosting and nesting, and indeed, what's the difference?

The makeup and purpose of roosting and nesting boxes differ. Nest boxes are meant for laying eggs and raising young, and birds will abandon them once these things have happened. Roost boxes on the other hand, provide shelter for several birds to cozy up together during the winter.

According to the charity, 'All About Birds', birds only nest during their breeding season (spring and summer), and they shelter or roost, the rest of the year, particularly in winter. Birds can also roost at night.

Apparently, sometimes more than a dozen birds will pile into a single box together to conserve heat. I have also read that, once the breeding season is over, birds of different species sometimes roost together for better shelter and protection.

I wondered if birds might return to the nest box to roost. This happens less frequently, as roosting birds often require a perch or roughened walls with an irregular surface to cling on to. It is possible to adapt nest boxes with these features. A good roosting box has an opening near the bottom, so that warmer air is retained near the top where the birds couch together.





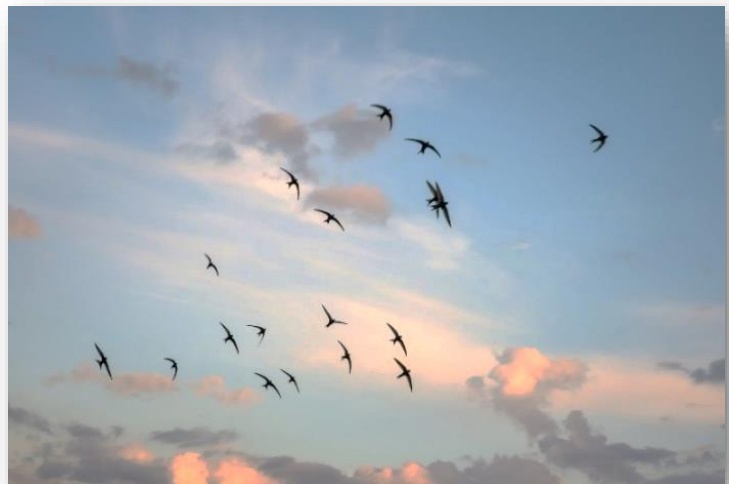
Bluetits roosting

With these thoughts in mind, I'm planning to put up a couple of these roosting pockets in our garden. I'm enjoying finding a suitable spot to put them. Tucked under the honeysuckle is a possible site. I understand, near something bushy and tucked away in a safe spot is preferable.

Swift update

As I have mentioned before, we are extremely fortunate to have the skill of Andy Ward and Ashley Pearson, who have installed two swift boxes into the tower. It is hoped that further will be installed in the coming months before the hoped for arrival of swifts from their West African migration.

Just prior to their arrival around May/June, we are also hoping to be using a swift caller for a short period. The aim of the bird call is to entice them to the tower and hopefully the nesting boxes. Again also, we very much appreciate the advice of Julian Jones regarding this.



St James January Bring and Take & Freegle Event

The recent Bring and Take and Freegle event was well attended. The morning was very busy, with plenty of people bringing and taking clothing, toys, and other items. This is terrific.

We were very grateful to Val and Lizzie for their advice and support, as well as all the wonderful cakes donated which added to the fun morning.

We are hoping to hold a similar event on a more regular basis. The next one is planned for Saturday 9th March. Furthermore are planned



for the second Saturday of the 'odd' months thereafter. Please keep an eye out for further details.

With Best Wishes
from Gill Mather
(Eco Church team member)



References

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/attract-birds-with-roost-boxes/>

Some News from Gloucester Diocese.....

Archbishop of Canterbury to visit Diocese

This May, we will be welcoming the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, to our Diocese as part of the Big Mission Weekend in May. From Friday 24 to Sunday 26 May, the Archbishop will be visiting various locations across the Diocese followed by a special service in the Cathedral on the Sunday afternoon. Read more:

gloucester.anglican.org/the-big-mission-weekend-with-the-archbishop-of-canterbury-24-to-26-may-2024

Explore Gloucester Cathedral from anywhere in new virtual tour. - Take a virtual tour of Gloucester Cathedral to explore its most-loved spaces and delve into its past in the more hidden areas. - Using modern technology, this new way of viewing the entire Cathedral has opened up this 1,000-year-old sacred space to everyone, anywhere in the world.

The virtual tour is available on the Cathedral's website, allowing users to journey through almost every corner of this remarkable building. Take a look around the Nave, Quire and Lady Chapel before delving into other historic areas such as the medieval Library, iconic Tower and subterranean Crypt. Created by local company, Virtual360toursghos, the virtual tour will allow everyone to navigate through these areas at their own pace, from wherever they are in the world.

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Lent 2024

Lent (Feb 14 to Mar 31, 2024) offers an opportunity for individuals and worshipping communities to discover new depths to prayer and spiritual growth, as we live LIFE Together.



The Church of England's Lent theme for 2024 is **Watch and Pray: Wisdom and hope for Lent and life.**



On the night he was betrayed, Jesus kneels in darkness in the Garden of Gethsemane. Though he pleads with his disciples, "Stay here with me ... Watch and pray," they all fall asleep, leaving him alone in his hour of deepest suffering.

This Lent all of us are encouraged to draw on the wisdom of Black Spirituality, particularly the practice of "tarrying" (waiting) as a community to draw closer to Jesus and to each other. Combining exuberant singing, fervent prayer and quiet lament, such services typically take place at night and last somewhat longer than the "one hour" Jesus asked of those first followers.

This year's resources have been inspired and informed by the 2024 Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book, [Tarry Awhile: Wisdom from Black Spirituality for people of faith by Selina Stone](#) (SPCK). The [daily reflections booklet for adults](#) (CHP) exploring the same themes has been written by Carlton Turner, and there is also a daily challenge [booklet for children and families](#) (CHP).

"Watch and Pray challenges us to seek God in both familiar and unfamiliar places: in darkness and in quiet; in movement and migration; in the healing and transforming work of the Spirit; in the weeping of Holy Week and in the joy of Easter morning."

Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell

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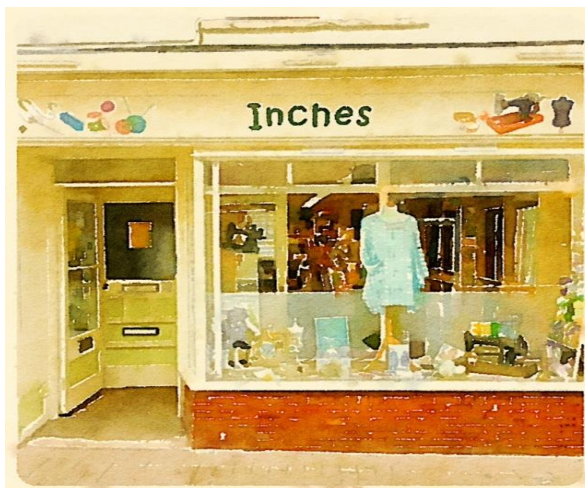
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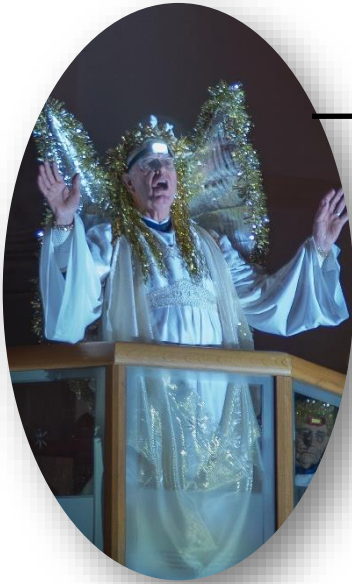
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by Barbie Davies photos by Steve White**



The Angel Gabriel foretells Jesus birth

The Inn Keeper
guides them to a
stable



The
Shepherds
visit



We Three Kings
visit



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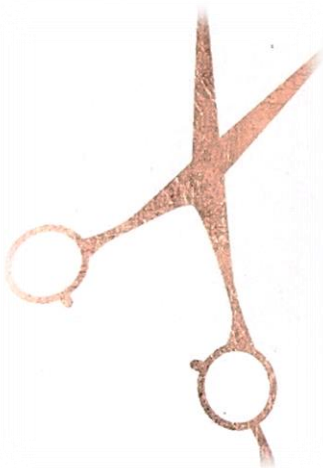


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February 2024

(Joining Zoom details on Ewelme Benefice website)

Thursday 1st February

- 9am Morning Prayer in St James
- 10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 3rd February

- 10am Messy Church at St Giles, Uley

Sunday 4th February- 2nd Sunday before Lent

- 10am Parish Holy Communion in St James

Tuesday 6th February

- 10am Warden & Staff meeting in The Parish Centre

Wednesday 7th February

- 9am Morning Prayer via Zoom
- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 8th February

- 9am Morning Prayer in St James
- 10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 10th February

- 10.30am** Coffee, Cake & Music at St James- Harry Van Wijk from The Netherlands

Sunday 11th February Sunday before Lent

- 10am Parish Holy Communion at St James, Dursley

Wednesday 14th February- Ash Wednesday

- 9am Morning Prayer via Zoom
- 12pm Communion with ashes at St Giles, Uley
- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom
- 7.30pm Communion with ashes at St James, Dursley

Thursday 15th February

- 9am Morning Prayer in St James
- 10am Holy Communion at St James

Sunday 18th February First Sunday of Lent

- 8am Said Holy Communion Service at St James, Dursley
- 10am Service of The Word at James

Wednesday 21st February

9am Morning Prayer via Zoom

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 22nd February

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 24th February

9.45am Wedding Couples preparation day at St George's, Upper Cam

7.30pm Youth team bellringing practice at St James

Sunday 25th February Second Sunday of Lent

10am Benefice Holy Communion at James, Dursley

Wednesday 28th February

9am Morning Prayer via Zoom

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 29th February

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

**Lent Prayer for Strength and Guidance**

Lord God Almighty, shaper and ruler of all creatures, we pray for your great mercy, that you guide us towards you, for we cannot find our way. And guide us to your will, to the need of our soul, for we cannot do it ourselves.

Amen

Bennett Jones



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The Shrines at Walsingham

The Anglican Shrine – part 3...by Tony King



On 15th October, 1931, known afterwards as the Feast of the Translation of our Lady of Walsingham, events began.

The day had started at 7am with a few parishioners and others present while Fr Patten blessed the new Shrine and celebrated the first Mass there. Bishop O'Rorke sang Pontifical High Mass at St Mary's at 11.30am and a procession began, with the sacred image being carried through the village from St Mary's, accompanied by some three thousand people.

When they reached the Shrine they sang the Magnificat, the image was censed, and during the Salve Regina it was carried into the Holy House and enthroned above the altar.

Finally, the Te Deum was sung and Shrine Prayers were said for the first time in the Holy House, which have never ceased daily since, 'for the conversion of England, the return of the lapsed, the sick and the whole, the living and the dead and on behalf of all who visit the Holy House each day'.



One person was not present – the Bishop of Norwich. Well aware that his demand for the removal of the statue was not being carried out in the way he expected, he had visited Walsingham during the building work and muttered as he went away, 'Deplorable, deplorable!' Worse was to follow. Father Patten had the Foundation Stone of the Shrine inscribed in Latin. Translated it read, in part,

'This Shrine, founded in the year 1061 at the will of the Blessed Virgin Mary in honour of the mystery of the sacred Incarnation ... and afterwards utterly overthrown by the King who raged with the most foul love of gain ... for the first time in the year 1931 and on the ninth year of the pontificate of our most holy Lord Pius XI, was restored, Bertram, Bishop of the Church of Norwich and Hope Patten parish priest of Walsingham holding office, A.M.D.G.'

Somebody sent the Bishop a cutting from the Catholic Herald describing the Foundation Stone.

He wrote to Fr Patten,

'My dear Vicar,

If this is true, is there any need for my name to appear? Would not the date be adequately given otherwise, without my appearing as a kind of Consule Manlio?' (A reference, I understand, to a person being present in spirit only!)

Fr Patten obliged by filling the engraved letters of the bishop's name with plaster of Paris – long since fallen out.

The two men were, however, about to embark on a more serious confrontation, regarding the celebration of the Mass in the Holy House. Before the blessing of the Holy Shrine, Fr Patten had written to the Bishop explaining that he was planning to bless the Shrine on Thursday 15th October and say Mass, and continuing, 'I know that you will not personally approve (but) at the same time you will not positively forbid me and then put us under a ban'.

'Positively forbidding him' was what the Bishop thought he had expressly done. In his reply he said, '... I do not think it proper for the Holy Communion to be celebrated publicly except in a chapel licensed for that purpose.'

This conflict rumbled on for some years with the Bishop reiterating his desire/demand that Fr Patten should stop, while Fr Patten replied that the spiritual needs of the pilgrims required it and that the elderly and sick at that end of the village made it desirable.

A solution came in 1938 when one of the Guardians made a discovery. If the ancient foundations found during building works were indeed of the original Shrine, or some other medieval church, then the new Chapel could be regarded as consecrated, since it was a rebuilding of the original. Counsel's legal opinion was sought and Mr Marshall Freeman declared that as the original Shrine had been a 'peculiar', (i.e, extra-diocesan) a right that had never been taken away in law, a reconstruction on the same site might be considered to be in the same position

The Bishop was intrigued, and, although he was too astute to put anything in writing, he withdrew his objections and never again opposed Mass being said in the Shrine.

Work continued on the more extensive Shrine Church to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers of pilgrims.

To be continued

I am indebted to the book 'Walsingham - Pilgrims and Pilgrimage' written by Fr. Michael Rear, for much of this information

CULTURE AND ME by Katrina Fletcher...David Vonberg says...'For our February "Messenger" Katrina has worked hard to explore the alley ways of her memory and taste'. Katrina also played Mary in the Live Nativity. (see pictures on page 14).

Do you have a favourite author or book?

Not really - I love reading but struggle to find time to read much since having the boys! I have found more recently that audio books work well for me. I can definitely listen to a book while driving to and from work, or while out walking the dog. I suppose if I had to pick just one book, I would probably choose something from when I was a child - I loved A Little Princess by Frances Hodgson Burnett.

What are you reading at present?

The Last Devil to Die, by Richard Osman.

Is there a book which you feel you should have read?

When I was in school, I always felt like I had missed out not reading Lord of the Rings - however, not so much concerned by it now.

Is there a song or piece of music you turn to, to cheer you up?

Again, not really one clear winner. I grew up listening to lots of sixties music so I guess that's probably a genre I turn to for comfort, and feel good music.

Do you have a favourite piece of music?

I have lots of favourites for different reasons - the music we had for our wedding, The Heavens are Telling - Haydn, or Only You - The Platters which was our first dance, or perhaps the soundtrack from the Greatest Showman, which I have sung repeatedly with the boys.

Do you play a musical instrument. If not, what would you like to have learnt?

I play the piano a little, Mrs Theaker (Joyce) had the privilege of teaching me 😂. I was not really very good at it, and much preferred to sing.

What is your favourite film?

Honestly, Pretty Woman is probably the longest lasting favourite. I had a friend who I would watch it with every weekend! I think we were desperately hoping for a millionaire to come and sweep us off our feet and whisk us off to a fabulous life in America.

Do you have a favourite play?

I would have to choose Hobson's choice - but only because it was the play I did props for as part of DODS when I was about 15. I think it was the first time I had been given the responsibility of doing Props.

What about a favourite television series?

My husband will tell you, I watch a lot of rubbish! And he is absolutely right. I could list so many. I love a crime/drama series. If I had to choose one though, it would be "Only Fools and Horses". Proper Sunday night watching with my Dad.

If there was one painting you could own, what would it be and what is special for you about it?

I studied Georgia O'Keeffe at school, and loved her paintings. I would be happy to own any of her work!

Do you have special building which means a lot to you and if so why?

Our church is incredibly special to me, there is barely a moment of my life that hasn't been intertwined with the church in some way. My parents were married in our church, and I grew up in our church. I joined the choir when I was 7 years old. I have since had a few breaks from the choir for university and having my boys. However, I still seem to have found my way back to the choir again. I remember St James before we had the new back of church - when there were little red curtains at the back doors of the church, when the font was at the back of the church, which was where I was baptised. I was married in our church and my children Dylan and Rohan have been baptized here too. My second son Callum had his funeral in our church, as did my Grampy Mac, and my Grandma had her memorial at the garden of remembrance due to Covid. Our church has always been very special to me, and I imagine it always will be.

Is there a place (town, village, a county?) where you have felt happiest? Cornwall is my happy place - we holidayed there each year as children, and we still go there every year as a family now. I love the beach and I am more than happy to spend an entire day scuffling around, boarding, swimming, paddling or rock pooling.

You are having a fantasy dinner party for five – who would you invite?

Audrey Hepburn, Diana Dors, Billy Connolly, David Tennant, and Emma Thompson.



Bellringing *by Frank Byrne*

Ringling for Christmas and the New Year

We had 7 ringers to ring for the 11:00 'midnight' service on Christmas Eve and the same number to ring for the 10:00 service on Christmas Day. This is the first occasion in living memory that we have not rung for the 08:00 Christmas Day Service, reason being that, until this year, the 08:00 service was the only one held at St James' on this day. Several people expressed regret at the absence of bells at the earlier time including some ringers. Others were thankful for not being disturbed so early or having a longer lie-in.

New year's ringing began at 11:30 and finished soon after midnight. 12 ringers took part and the countdown to midnight was masterminded by the Assistant Ringing Master, Andy Binstead. All eight bells ring just before the hour, then each one drops out, in turn, leaving the tenor bell to ring 12 stokes very slowly, completing the 12th exactly at midnight when all eight bells join in again the welcome the New Year. Getting the timing exactly right needs precision to the nearest second or two - often beyond us.

J. S. Bach

ST MATTHEW PASSION

 **GCS**
GLOUCESTER CHORAL SOCIETY

Saturday 9 March 2024
4-5.30pm and 7-9pm
Gloucester Cathedral

Bach's St Matthew Passion is considered to be one of the greatest works of choral music ever written. It will be performed by Gloucester Choral Society under their conductor Adrian Partington, with the Musical and Amicable Society, and soloists Alex Ashworth as the Evangelist, Emma Walshe, Simon Ponsford, Greg Tassell and Quentin Hayes.

Tickets £25, £18, £10, students and under 25s £5, from the Gloucester Choral Society website or from the Box Office 01452 768928.

Chris Morgan's talk...

**'Safaris in Kenya and Tanzania', in aid of Julius & Dora Children's Centre, Kenya
held on 14th January.**



Thank you to everyone who made the Presentation possible – to the stewards of the Methodist Church, for providing a warm place, to Brian Wetton for managing the AV, to Clare White who organized the tea and cakes, to those who made cakes and to all who came and so generously donated.

For those who couldn't make it, Julius Adoyo was a Kenyan Archdeacon in the Anglican church and Dora was his wife. They left land in Western Kenya to provide a home for abandoned children. Children in the region are abandoned for many reasons, but the main ones are being born as a result of rape or incest, and the newborns are left by the roadside or in some cases, on rubbish tips. Intended to provide a loving home for 14 children, the Centre now has 40, of whom it is hoped five will be rehomed with other family members shortly. The home is managed by one of the daughters of Julius & Dora, and another is Chair of the Friends of Julius & Dora in the UK, which provides its funding. So far, in addition to paying for the five members of staff and living and education costs for the children, we have built two accommodation units and installed a rainwater harvesting system. Our challenges ahead include the increased number of children, inflation, and the cost of secondary education as the children get older. All secondary schools in Kenya are fee paying and most are boarding. All money raised by The Friends in the UK goes to the Centre, with the exception of the bank transfer fees. If you would like to know more, or feel you could help in any way, please look on our website

www.janddchildrenscentre.org or
contact me, Chris Morgan on
01453 549062 or
chrismorgan194@btinternet.com.



Leopard in a tree photographed by Chris

Message from Bishop Robert.

Published: Tuesday January 16, 2024

I love maps. On a day-to-day basis, GPS is great for getting me from point A to point B in the shortest time, but I love maps, especially if I am going somewhere new. With a map, I have to think about the journey – where I am beginning, how I want to travel, what I might see and learn along the way, as well as where I hope to arrive.

As I think about the journey, I need also to plan. Some of this is practical. Having an electric car, I need to think where I might need to stop and charge the battery, and what I might do while I wait. If I am going up a mountain, not that it happens often, do I have snow chains or socks? If it's going to be a long journey, do I have some snacks to keep me going (very important!)? Other parts of my preparation are more about what I might see on the way, who I might meet, not to mention who I might travel with.



Jesus' ministry, of course, is marked by a number of journeys. As an infant from Bethlehem to the temple and to exile; as a child back to Nazareth and then the temple; in his ministry around the Galilee and beyond; eventually to Jerusalem and around the city to the High Priest, Pilate, Herod; to the cross; and to the empty tomb of the resurrection. We are invited to join in this journey. We have already begun keeping Advent and Christmas in the Epiphany but now our eyes turn with Jesus to Jerusalem and the journey we will keep in Lent. It begins in just under a month with Ash Wednesday on 14 February, as we walk the way of the cross with its destination of resurrection life.

Like all journeys, to do it well we need to prepare, to find our place on the map, to know how we are beginning and what we need to do along the way. To do it well asks of us some honesty about the state of our lives, our life of prayer, our care for the planet and its people, not least those on the margins of society. That will help us reflect on the markers we should look for on the way, to study the route, and know what we might take up and give up. We look for the things that will give us the courage to make the journey with Jesus, to stay the

course, arrive at our destination and find life renewed in the resurrection dawn.

The good news is that we are not quite yet at the start of the journey. There are still four weeks for preparation before we set off, and that gives us the time we need to think and plan for how we will live it. Even better, we are not without help in making those plans. Do look out for what is being organised locally in your parish, community or deanery, a study group, an opportunity for corporate prayer, to go alongside whatever personal discipline is right for you – perhaps a daily time of prayer and reflection, or abstaining from some food or activity. You might join in a national campaign, for example with Christian Aid who are focusing on climate justice, details [here](#).

Whatever is right for you, it's good to start to think now, so when it comes, we begin Lent well and keep the journey – finding life not just for ourselves, but for our world and its people, a life renewed.

+ Robert

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February Acrostic.

February is after January
Eager to see what the rest of the year 2024
Bring
Remembering our Benefice Canon Michael leaving
Us
And the
Rest of the
Year 2024 we can look forward to.



Thank you Barbie.

Thank you Barbie for letting me
Have the opportunity to take part
As a Shepherd in the
Nativity Play; we did this in memory of Glenis Ewer
Kind donations were given.
Your support goes to
One of Glenis's favourite charities the Donkey Sanctuary
Unbelievable.
Both performances we had a full
Audience
Round of applause,
Barbie was most
Impressed and
Everyone enjoyed themselves.



Glenys Ewer RIP

Barbie Davies
photos by © Steve White



Friends At Christmas.

Friends At Christmas we were served
Roast turkey and the trimmings,
It went down very well
Entertained by someone playing the piano, crossword and a word
search
Now we thanked all of the volunteers who
Did our lunch and
Sharing their Christmas Day; we
All applaud
Them all
Christmases
Have past
Remembering
Important people that can't be here
So kind and thoughtful
Treasure many
Memories
And remember today for
Sure

*Sally has been busy with her acrostics and the Friends at Christmas
one was published in The Gazette. Well done and Thank you...*

I WISH I HAD DONE BETTER.....Jennifer Kendrick

It was 1943, in the middle of WWII and I was six years old. My father had volunteered to join the RAF and was away from home. My mother's health was in steep decline following a recent traumatic stillbirth. There was no NHS; doctors visits cost money and resources were scarce.

My brother was 4 years my senior, at an all-boys school which had begun admitting girls in exceptional circumstances. He was a promising scholar, with a good record of diligence and responsibility so, to make life easier, I was able to join him there. It took us an hour to walk each way every day, up over the hill, through a lonely park and along a main road. Not without hazards, I vividly remember, the siren going to signal an imminent air raid as we were halfway home one afternoon and we sat quietly watching, mesmerised and understandably excited as planes flew overhead, presumably on a bombing mission. There was no discussion when we got back to our house and life went on. For whatever reason I always felt safe no matter the circumstances.



I loved the hurly burly of the school playground and our teacher, Mrs Wall made learning fun, often singling me out for special mention in the classroom, which added to my inflated ego without any effort on my part! I also fell madly in love with a fellow pupil, the object of my affection being Sniffy Snelling, aged maybe 8 or 9. He was thin, pale, very smelly, with pebble glasses and a nose permanently running with green gunge! He was cruelly bullied and abused and ostracised by teachers and pupils alike. We were best friends. To me, he was gentle, kind, quiet, caring and an oasis of calm in a mad and noisy chaotic world. I, of course, did not understand the wider implications, nor did I consciously seek a solution, but something moved me to take positive action. I was a devout Brownie so knew all about doing good deeds, and Sunday School was a huge influence in my thoughts and actions as was my beloved Granny (the one with comforting wobbly untethered bosoms, elastic arms and a hot line to Jesus)! . I did not need permission to do what I carefully considered a good deed!

Without reference to anybody, I gathered some of my brother's freshly laundered clothes and packed them very carefully in my beautiful brown leather satchel that shone like a burnished conker! Next day at break time I took my friend into the school toilets to get him cleaned up. There was no hot water and I had not brought a towel or soap, which didn't matter as fussing grown-ups suddenly appeared without warning and I was hastily launched in front of the incandescent Headmaster all ready with a cane in his hand! I was sent home in disgrace with no opportunity to explain or chance to remedy the situation.

I have no memory of the immediate aftermath, never saw my friend again and can only imagine my parents' utter despair with everybody in the turmoil of uncertainty and any suitable sanctions or advice non-existent, but not long afterwards I found myself in a prissy girls' school forced to behave like a little lady!

It did nothing to alter my feelings about grief, gross injustice and misunderstanding of situations, something I still struggle with, 80 years later! I remember others for whom my best was just not good enough, and try hard to accept there are limits to our honest efforts and ministry.

I still have my final report from that irate headmaster declaring
« *she is rather a madam when let off the leash* »!

I can live with that.

MOUSE DIARY



Well I don't know, said MBFTLP, who had called by one bright and breezing February morning, you seem to have your feet up. What about that Welsh mouse who is so neat and tidy and does lots of housework? Ahem, I said, well I was getting ready for making pancakes and Aimiee seems to have disappeared. Perhaps she is in the broom cupboard. That sounds like delegation to me, said MBFTLP, have you been on one of those management courses now that you have been promoted to Community Engagement Mouse Management Executive? Well, I was thinking I might, I said, after the pancakes. Speaking of which Aimiee popped up at that moment with a big pan all ablaze. As the pan was twenty times bigger than her things were rather difficult but you know how microchips are these days, they can do anything as AI is all the rage. Fortunately, Mr Dinosaur was also on hand to help out and his big paw was useful for catching the pancakes as they came down the other way. In the end of course he had rather a lot on his head in a rather lopsided pile. What about the squeezey lemon, I said, carefully disentangling one pancake from the top of his head. I think Baby Roo ran off with that thinking it was his special medicine, said Aimiee, whilst running from pillar to post to try to keep up. Well, at least they did not end up on the church roof this time, said MBFTLP, optimistically. Somewhat better than last year. Ahem, I said, it must be all those courses I've been on. I do recommend Stroud College. I'm so small and don't take up much space. So they let me go on the courses for a small fee. Now, that is how to win friends and influence people, going a bit squiffy eyed having put too much lemon on the corner of her pancake. Can we have maple syrup next time? See you next time for a pancake free March.

Mouse was helped in the writing by Elizabeth Oakley

Winter

It might be imbued with love
And in the service of love.
But here's a dry darkness
Colder and indeterminate,
As the bird flies to nowhere,
The engineer climbs the pole,
The plane climbs a cathedral of air
In wide international ambition:
The land seems tight with
Winter contrition.



Elizabeth Oakley - A Dursley Poet

2023 ANSWERS TO DAVID VONBURG'S CHRISTMAS QUIZ

David says "I was delighted that we sold over 50 copies of the quiz and I had 6 totally correct returns and 8 ones returned with only one wrong answer each.

Well done and thank you all."

Ruth	Ruthless less less (4)
Judges	Bewigged court officials (6)
Daniel	Don't shout! (6)
John	A US Loo (4)
Acts	Stack gets confused when you remove a kilo (4)
Galatians	Young Asian women? (9)
Amos	A mosquito loses the capital of Ecuador (4)
Haggai	An evil eye (6)
James	He loves jam especially when inside (5)
Hebrews	The man makes a cup of tea. (7)
Deuteronomy	Caused by Ronald or myself (11)
Jeremiah	A German bog (8)
Genesis	Jennifer's sibling (7)
Mark	Making a remarkable kite is initially a good thing to solve this clue (4)
Isaiah	Raise your vision a bit, would you say? (6)
Romans	Romance ending before the Common Era but adding a pole (6)
Revelation	A very happy vicar (10)
Nehemiah	Close to a muddy patch? (9)
2 Peter	To dwindle (3 5)
Ezekiel	A simple part of a boat (7)
Hosea	Seller of socks (5) Seller of socks (5)
Lamentations	Woe is me for I am undone! (12)
Job	Employment (3)
Luke	Use your eyes! (4)
Titus	Terribly ineffective teenager uses sponge to start with (5)
Psalms	Date trees include a sibilant (6)
Proverbs	Very much in favour of action words (8)

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS.



FUNERAL.

We share our thoughts and prayers with the families of those who mourn the loss of those they love.

16th January Cyril Pullin's Funeral at Gloucester Crematorium

25th January Gordon McKillops' funeral at St James

25th January burial of Eileen Pugh's ashes at St James

FLOWER ROTA FOR FEBRUARY

Feb 4th & 11th

High Altar

Marion Paisey

Tanner Chapel

Kim Pugh

Lady Chapel

Chris Raffle

There will be no flowers until March 31st as it is Lent.



100 CLUB

Sarah says subs are nearly all collected and the draws for January and February will be in next month's Messenger. Thanks for your patience.

If you would like to join or you need to pay your dues please pay by BACS, cheques payable to (Dursley PCC) or cash, to Sarah, David Wood or Philip Staddon.



Mrs Toni Holford-Wright – Principal

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[email: bandbweldon1@gmail.com](mailto:bandbweldon1@gmail.com)

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St James Church is open each day
between 9.30am and 12 noon.

Useful Telephone Numbers

TO BOOK THE PARISH CENTRE.

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E-mail: ewelmebenefice@gmail.com

BELLRINGERS

Elizabeth Byrne Tel: 543536.

100 CLUB

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