

May 2025

PARISH MAGAZINE



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The Reverend Harvey Lloyd Gibbons, M.A.
St Oswald's Vicarage, Penylan Lane, Oswestry, SY11 2AJ. Tel: 01691 653467
email: revdharvey@gmail.com

Associate Minister

The Reverend Jassica Castillo-Burley
Tel: 07809 414747 email: stoswald.minister@gmail.com

Licensed Readers

S Oswald's:

Reader Emeritus

Mr Bill Bowen, BEM

Churchwardens

S Oswald's:	Miss June Williams	Tel: 652544
	Mr Alan Neale	Tel: 07901 543287
	Mrs Muriel Jones	Tel: 653598
	Mr John Abram MBE TD	Tel: 653316
Christchurch:	Mrs Elizabeth Stanley	Tel: 676450
	Rosemary Davies	Tel: 07813757498

Parochial Church Councils

S Oswald's:	Hon Secretary: Ms Carron Boulton	Tel: 652861
	Hon Treasurer: Mr Paul Evison	Tel: 653315
Christchurch:	Hon Secretary:	
	Hon Treasurer:	

Director of Music

S Oswald's: Mr M Donkin e-mail michaeldonkin44@gmail.com
Tel: 07779 917724

Organist:

St Oswald's: Josephine Sands email: joasands@hotmail.co.uk
Christchurch:

Parish Office

S Oswald's: Church Street, Oswestry SY11 2SY. Tel: 652861
Parish Administrator: Ms Carron Boulton email: stoswald.office@gmail.com

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Goodbye.....

As I sit down to write this article, the following words came to me.

Although we've come to the end of the road, Still, I can't let go, It's unnatural, you belong to me, I belong to you...

Boyz II Men

Although this song is about a man who realised that his relationship with his friend was coming to an end, I believe this statement rings true for every relationship that we encounter. At some point in the relationship, we come to the end of the road where 'goodbyes' or 'see you around' have to be said. That doesn't take away from the times that have been shared: laughter, tears, challenges, ignorance, egos, emotions, etc, etc. Through these experiences and over time we have moments in which we can build trust and respect for each other.

However, here we are - years down the line and we have come to this point when whatever has happened in the past, we now have to say goodbye.

Today I take every hug, every kiss, every affirmation, every cup of tea, every slice of chocolate cake, every opportunity that I was given, and I place them in my safety deposit box ready for the next challenge that will inevitably come along the way.

So, in case you don't know, I am moving to Great Yarmouth to become Team Vicar there. I am so excited about this next chapter of my life, seeking a new challenge, and hopefully some career growth.

As I take this unknown journey, I am reminded of Abraham who was asked to leave his homeland and go to a new land that God would show him. Abraham, despite not knowing the destination, obeyed and journeyed with his family, demonstrating unwavering faith and obedience in God's promises.

I too hold onto this promise, and I'm encouraged by the words given to Joshua in Joshua 1:9 which says "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go". And also the words in Psalm 37:23 which says "Our steps are made firm by the Lord, when he delights in our way; though we stumble, we shall not fall headlong, for the Lord holds us by the hand."

Today I want to take this opportunity to say thanks to you all for your initial welcome, your support, guidance and encouragement. The chances I had been given to learn, grow, or contribute to a well-established community. It has been great working with you.

I want to thank you all for being patient with me and for allowing me this time to carve out my way to worship in what seemed to be an unfamiliar environment. For the occasions that you have overlooked my shortcomings and loved me still or laughed with me. And because of this I am leaving here a better person.

You will always have a special place in my heart. I will cherish the memories we have made.

... and if you fancy a trip to the seaside, give me a call...

Rev. Jassica



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NEWS FROM YOUR PCC

The ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING will take place on **Monday 19th May 2025 at 7 pm in the Parish Centre.**

Now is the time to prayerfully consider whether you could offer yourself for ELECTION to the Offices of CHURCH WARDEN (4) elected annually. New members (for one to three years) will also be elected to The PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.

These representatives have to be elected at the Annual Parochial Meeting,

QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONS TO BE ELECTED: CRR M8

(1) A person is qualified for election as a parochial representative of the laity to the deanery synod or the PCC under Rule M6(1) (a) or (b) if:

- a) the person is aged 16 or over
- b) he or she is an actual communicant, and
- c) his or her name is on the roll of the parish and, unless he or she is aged under 18 at the date of the election, has been on the roll for at least the preceding six months.

(2) But if the person has his or her name on the roll of more than one parish, he or she must choose one of the parishes concerned for the purpose of qualifying for election as a parochial representative of the laity to the deanery synod.

(3) A person may not be nominated for election under Rule (M6(1) (a) or (b) unless -

- (a) The person has indicated his or her consent to serve, or
- (b) There is in the opinion of the meeting, sufficient evidence of his or her willingness to serve.

Disqualifications

(a) a person is disqualified from being nominated, chosen or elected from serving as a member of a PCC if the person has been disqualified from holding office under section 10(6) of the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure 1977 (breakdown of pastoral relationships).

(b) to serve on the parochial church council if he or she is disqualified from being a charity trustee under the Charities Act 2011.

You will find details of the elections on the board by the South door together with nomination papers from March.

All papers have to be in to the Secretary (Carron Boulton) BEFORE the meeting on 19th May. Email: Carron either on stoswald.office@gmail.com. or carronboulton@yahoo.co.uk

Please keep the Parochial Church Council in your prayers.

Carron Boulton

ELECTORAL ROLL

The new Electoral Roll (minus telephone numbers) will be on display at the back of church from 27th April to 14th May, if people wish to check their details.

Maureen Crosby

COME AND SHARE LUNCH SUNDAY, 25TH MAY

Jassica's last service at St Oswald's will be on Sunday, 25th May and you are invited to a Come and Share Lunch in Church after the 10:30am service.

Please put your name on the sheet at the back of the church if you are able to attend and indicate what food you will contribute towards the lunch.



Cover: Woodcarving of St Melangell

St Melangell, who is traditionally remembered on the 27th May, lived in the 7th century. The story is that she came here from Ireland and lived as a hermit in the valley of Cwm Pennant, west of Llangynog. One day Brochwel, Prince of Powys, was hunting and pursued a hare which took refuge under Melangell's cloak. The Prince's hounds fled, and he was moved by her courage and sanctity. He gave her the valley as a place of sanctuary, and Melangell became Abbess of a small religious community.

After her death her memory continued to be honoured, and Pennant Melangell has been a place of pilgrimage for many centuries and remains so today. It is a beautiful, peaceful place and well worth visiting. Melangell, unsurprisingly, is the patron saint of hares and is one of the female saints carved on the Lady Chapel Reredos here at St Oswald's.

Frances Major

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WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN THE WORLD IS SO TOPSY-TURVY?

Have you recently said to yourself or friends, "We are living in very turbulent times?"

Have you then thought, "But what can I do about it?" and, in so doing, dismissed the matter as too difficult to contemplate?

Well, a few of us were talking about just such things, and although we all pray on our own, felt it would be worthwhile getting together every few weeks, in a small group and bringing our worries and concerns for the world, and all who live in it, to God.



And so, our prayer group was born.....

We have now been meeting for several months and feel it would be wonderful if other small groups in our congregation could do the same, so that we develop a network of pray-ers.

All you need to start is a few trusted friends and a quiet space. If we can be of any help in this, or if you would like to join us a couple of times before setting up your own group, please do come and talk to us.

Natasha, Julia, Lindsay Sal.

MOTHERS' UNION FELLOWSHIP GROUP

At our March meeting after prayers and notices Mike Coppock gave us a talk about the Orthodox Church, whose members meet once a month in our Church for their services.

We meet next on Thursday May 8th at 2.15 in the Parish Centre. There will not be a meeting in June.

Pam Musson



DERWEN COLLEGE SPONSORED WALK 5TH APRIL 2025

A big thank you to everyone who sponsored me for the 2025 Derwen College Walk. I raised £580 on this occasion.

Olive Morris



LOCAL ARTIST JASON WAKEFIELD.
Exhibits at **DODDINGTON SCULPTURE PARK. IN JULY.**

Being entirely self-taught to work with bronze, Jason is able to tap into his intuition when moving through the creative process. It was a past friendship with someone that changed his life and opened his eyes to what he was truly capable of. This person taught him to connect directly with his intuition in order to help him work in partnership with horses when shoeing rather than struggling to work on them when they resist. As a result, he's able to engage with his creative side and he's ready to share his message.

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“COME AND JOIN THE PUDDING CLUB!”

One of the initiatives of the Pastoral Care Group is to form the ‘Pudding Club’ and our first venture is on Saturday, 17th May in the Parish Centre starting at 2.30pm



If you would like to find out more and/or offer some further ideas for entertainment, please speak to June who will be in the office on most Friday mornings.

Glenda, June, Natasha and Sally

HAYDN JONES



I am supporting Debra UK, the national research charity which supports people living with, or directly affected by, Epidermolysis bullosa or EB for short, which is a group of incredibly painful genetic skin conditions that cause the skin to blister and tear at the slightest touch.

Debra UK supports research programmes that aim to secure effective drug treatments that will slow or stop the progression of all types of EB and they provide expert specialist EB healthcare and support, as well as advocacy, information and practical help at every stage of life.

I am running the Manchester half marathon on Sunday May 18th for Debra UK. Sponsor forms are on the table in church. Thank you.

Haydn Jones

PUBLICATION DETAILS FOR NEXT MONTH

Material required in the Office SUNDAY, 11 MAY

Make-up day for working party, and publication: Tuesday, 20 May

PLEASE COULD ALL ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS
IN THE CHURCHES TRY TO SEND IN SOME NEWS - EVEN IF
YOU'VE NOT BEEN IN THE HABIT OF DOING SO.

Why not nominate a Correspondent?
Email dianedawson15@gmail.com

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE – 262

FINDING OUT ABOUT OUR CHURCH'S HISTORY, PART 4

This is the fourth and the final part of a series of articles outlining the range of written material that is available to the historian, general enquirer, in fact to anyone interested in finding out about our parish church and its long history, stretching back more than 900 years.

Some of this material is straight forward to find and to use – books and journal articles, and newspaper reports, which can be found in Oswestry Library, or church records which can be consulted at Shropshire Archives in Shrewsbury, or our parish registers (to 1900) which can be consulted at home, using the online resource *Find my past* (for a fee). And we have seen that other material is perhaps more of a challenge: records housed at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, or the National Archives at Kew, or at other archives such as the diocesan record office at Stafford.

This month, to bring this small series to a close, my aim is to give an outline of the remaining sources of material relating to St Oswald's, both published works and original records. As I said last month, no such list can ever be truly complete, as fresh material keeps on emerging, discovered (or sometimes rediscovered) in archival records, or from fresh research, and new writing on our church, or on aspects of our church history.

Starting then with other original records, one category of record in particular should be noted, with records to be seen in several local archives – at Shrewsbury, Aberystwyth, Ruthin and elsewhere – preserved alongside property deeds from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. These are documents recording the sale or transfer of pews or 'kneeling places' within our church, from person to person. This is a topic that we have examined before – in November and December 2019 – with examples given from our churchwardens' accounts from 1579 to 1615, and from deeds preserved at the National Library and Shropshire Archives. There are numerous other examples – at Aberystwyth in several archival collections including the Wynnstay, Aston Hall, Peniarth, Bettisfield, Llysdinam and Pennal Tower papers; and at Shrewsbury. There are also examples from the Wynnstay material available at North East Wales Archives in Ruthin.

These documents are very useful, both for the names of the individuals buying and selling these pews or benches, and for the detail they provide

of the church layout. As an example, from 1662, the sale by Robert Kyffin of Sweeney to Nicholas Davies of Maesbury of a seat or kneeling place in the upper part of the church's middle aisle¹. The deed describes the pew extending "from the pulpit there untill a certaine waye or passage from the middle [aisle] to the middle [or high] chauncell there, [in length] five foote or thereabouts, and in breadth fower foote or thereabouts between the ... kneeling place of John Lloyd gent on the one side and the kneeling place of Nicholas Davies [the purchaser] on the other side. The vendor reserved for himself "a sitting place within the same seate or pewe for the hearinge of divine service for & during the terme of [his] natural life and a burying place att the tyme of [his] decease". Mr Kyffin may well have continued to sit there for several years: our registers show that he lived on to the mid-1670s!²

To date, I have collected details of around 25 of these deeds, from 1570 through to 1806, and there are probably more out there, waiting to be found. I should mention too a wonderful plan of the church, from 1788, which shows the pews, numbered 1-226, with a corresponding list of names; this plan is also at Shropshire Archives³.

Another category of unpublished, manuscript material that should be noted is that of Welsh medieval poetry. Many readers will recall the talk given to us last summer in the Parish Centre by Eurig Salisbury, focusing on descriptions of our church, and poems written in praise of former vicars, including the Rev. John Price (d. 1582), from the 15th, 16th and early 17th centuries. We were provided with a fascinating glimpse of the wealth of information that poems of this nature may well hold for us, hopefully more details which shed light, and give life, to this period, giving us an insight into the character of individuals from this time.

Moving on to published material, we have already considered material on our church within the records of Shrewsbury Abbey. Before concluding this review, I should refer to some of the standard reference works, mostly produced from the original sources held at (what is now) the National Archives and published in large, very hefty tomes, covering the country as a whole. A typical example would be the 6 volume *Valor ecclesiasticus*, published between 1810 and 1825, setting out details of the great survey of church wealth – including that of monasteries - carried out in 1535 for

¹Shropshire Archives, 6000/1148

²He died in March 1675/6; Nicholas Davies lived until 1686

³Shropshire Archives, 5981/A.291

king Henry VIII. Details for Oswestry are to be found in volume 4, within the section on the diocese of St Asaph.

In the 1540s, the assets and endowments of chantry chapels, often established to provide ongoing prayer for the soul of the chantry's founder, were assessed, and seized, with clergy whose role was specific to a chantry pensioned off. Details relating to Shropshire, including four chantries at St Oswald's, are set out in the *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society* for 1910.

And, finally, the returns to the religious census held across the country in 1851, which were considered in these articles in May and June 2021, are held at the National Archives, and are an example of the material online, available to be downloaded, free of charge. The returns for Oswestry and district can be found at <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C1359820>.

John Pryce-Jones

ERASING THE DEBT

And so outside the blind blighted camp,
heaven meets earth's sheer mountained debt,
eternity reclaims, cleanses time,
the rule book's code destroys itself;
scouring sacrifice becomes our healing,
for the heart is overrun by the light:
*Mercy wrapped in darkness's blame game,
bringing release completed and offered.*

Are we fearful to receive such glory,
to be freed of Cain's endless curse,
blood-erased by the unchanging God?
Or do we prefer life's sorrowing pain,
to stay in the dry boned shadowed valley?
*Grasp our receiving moment to ask:
Welcoming Spirit, give us eternal courage.*

March, 2025

Mark Davis

It was 80 years ago, on 8th May 1945 that VE Day took place – marking Victory in Europe at the end of WW2. It was celebrated as a public holiday.

Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr

ST. OSWALD'S CHOIR

ADOPT A CHORISTER SCHEME 2025

Once again our choristers will be attending the Royal School of Church Music summer school at Kingswood School, Bath, this year from 18th-25th August. The intensive training that they receive from some of the top choir trainers in the country adds immeasurably to the high standard of singing in St. Oswald's week by week.

The cost per chorister is **£625** to include full board, music and tuition.

Please help us maintain our choral excellence by adopting a Chorister and helping towards the cost of the course.

Donations of any size will be gratefully appreciated.

If you are interested in Adopting a Chorister there are details on the Church website

www.stoswaldsoswestry.org.uk

or pick up a form on the table by the South Door.

or contact:

Mike Donkin
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**EXTRACT FROM THE OSWESTRY DEANERY MAGAZINE
AUGUST 1924**

I thought it best to save publishing this extract until after the Annual Church Spring Clean on Saturday 12th April - for fear it may have started a revolt.

Here's how it was done 100 years ago –

*“At the time of writing the **British Vacuum Company** are at work cleaning the Church from roof to floor, and we expect that as a result of their work the whole of the internal part of the Church and tower will be practically without a speck of dust.”*

Clearly the work was being undertaken in readiness for the 50th Anniversary of the re-opening of the church following the Restoration of 1874.

This advert for the company dated January 1923 offers estimates and advice - such a pity that we don't have the original estimate to tell us how much this 'Spring-Clean' cost.

The B-V-C was formed in 1902 by Hubert Cecil Booth to exploit his patented innovation, the first mechanically-powered vacuum cleaner. The cleaning was then offered as a service from a horse-drawn appliance parked outside the premises.

The company went on to produce one of the first domestic, cylinder vacuum cleaners and other domestic appliances under the trade name '**Goblin**' in the late 1930's.

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Chris. Abram

SMILE-LINES.....

Open your mouth...

My dentist is also our choir leader at church. He likes the hymn: "Crown Him With Many Crowns."

I was inspired recently at a national Church of England conference for people working on environmental issues.

Held at the British Antarctic Survey headquarters in Cambridge, we got to hold and listen to 10,000-year-old ice: as it melts, gas escapes (which sounds like popping candy or a fizzy drink) and analysis of the gas not only gives insight into the atmosphere back then, but scientists are able to use their analysis to predict potential changes up until 2050. Probably even further ahead.

Some people think church and climate an odd combination of topics, but the Bible starts with God creating the world and all that makes it up – land, sea and sky; seeds, plants and fruit; birds, fish and animals. Finally, he made humans to take care of it. ‘And God saw that it was good.’

We talk about ‘five marks of mission,’ shared with 80 million Anglicans worldwide, which are the basic things we do to express our faith. The fifth mark is ‘To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth’ and this has been backed up by various decisions made by General Synod.

The most challenging of those has been the adoption of goals to reach net-zero carbon emissions in our churches, vicarages and schools by 2030. This target is far more ambitious than our Government’s, but it is one I would agree is vital to combat the effects of climate change. It is a daunting and potentially expensive challenge when we take it seriously, but there is a scheme to help all churches work their way through the things that can be done – the quick wins (which some churches have even found saved them money) as well as the long haul. That’s the Eco Church awards scheme which guides parishes as they master bronze, silver and hopefully gold-level achievements.

In Lichfield diocese we currently have about half our churches enrolled in the scheme, with nearly fifty reaching the silver level and we were thrilled to have our first gold award last spring. Even the diocesan office and our cathedral have achieved silver awards. It can lead to lasting improvements for our buildings and our churchyards – some even make life easier such as designating part of a large and old churchyard as an eco-meadow! Reducing the frequency of mowing can enable flowers, bees, butterflies, birds, insects and small mammals all to benefit as well as making our churchyards pleasant places to be.

Of course, we can't measure progress if we don't know where we're starting from. So we're actively encouraging churches to complete the Energy Footprint Tool which takes a straightforward look at the circumstances and usage of energy in our churches. Last year around half of churches completed that challenge, and our goal is to encourage all to complete it this year. It's not just a dull bit of bureaucracy, it can be very enlightening for creative and practical people to help their community – do ask your church leaders about your church.

A highlight of our conference for me was to hear the Church's lead bishop for the environment, Bishop Graham Usher. In his presentation he said something significant that stuck with me (paraphrased). 'We are all living in the Garden of Eden, we've been called to tend it and we have a responsibility to do that.' Would you Adam and Eve it?!



Jan Firth (lower) is Diocesan Environmental Officer, assisted by Fiona North (above), Parish Project Support Officer.

The penguin performs no useful role in the diocese. For more information about the Eco Church scheme, contact Jan at jan.firth@lichfield.anglican.org or visit the A Rocha website, www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk



MUSIC NOTES - MAY 2025

NEWS OF THE CHOIR

You will have noticed that, since February, we have had a succession of different organists playing for our services. This is because Jo's husband, Bill, suffered a stroke and has been in hospital in Telford since then. Jo has had the strain of travelling daily to Telford to care for Bill as well as maintain all the other aspects of her life. She has, therefore, been granted compassionate leave. The good news is that Bill is expected to return home in the near future and, once Jo has settled into a routine she will return to us.

I would like to acknowledge the generosity of those organists who have, so willingly, given of their time to play for us and allow us to keep our choral tradition going. They are:- Anthony Dowlen, Christopher Symons, Duncan and Sarah Boutwood and Paul Bellingham.

Anthony and Chris will be well known to most of our congregation, having played for us on many occasions in the past. Duncan and Sarah are a husband and wife team; both organists, who teach at Packwood Haugh School. Paul Bellingham actually learnt to play on the St. Oswald's Organ. He now teaches in Surrey but maintains a link with Shropshire.

The standard of playing from all these organists has been universally high and I am most grateful for their contribution to our worship.

We expect that, all being well, Jo will return to us on 15th June

VACANCIES IN THE CHOIR

A new term brings the opportunity to consider joining the Choir.

At the end of this term, we will lose Eleri Roberts, our Assistant Choir Trainer, who will be leaving to go to university. We have not, as yet, replaced those who left for university last year so there are spaces in the Treble / Soprano section. We are looking for girls and boys, ideally from 10 to 13 years of age but will take younger children if they are keen to sing. We also have room for some adult sopranos who can blend with the young voices on that line.

We can do with two tenors and, in September, Jools Brennan will leave us to take up a place at Queen's University, Belfast to study for a Masters degree, so another Bass would also be welcome.

If you are, or know of anyone who is, interested in joining please contact me. The details are given below in the Adopt a Chorister section.

ADOPT A CHORISTER

Once again, a number of our choristers will be attending the Royal School of Church Music Summer School in Bath during August. The Summer School has now become a tradition with the choristers. More importantly it is one of the ways in which we maintain the high standards of singing that grace our services week by week.

The total cost per chorister this year is £625. It seems a lot but it includes full board for a week together with all teaching including special voice coaching sessions and music and transport from the school to Bath Abbey.

The 'Adopt a Chorister' scheme is now open for this year. More information can be found on the church website music pages.

If you would like to sponsor a chorister, please send your donation to:-

Michael Donkin,
Director of Music, St. Oswald's Church, Oswestry
Cae Bach,
Llanfechain
Powys SY22 6UT

or see me after any service in church

Any amount, however small, will be gratefully appreciated.

Mike Donkin
Director of Music

A BIRTHDAY THANK YOU

I would like to thank every one for their cards and messages sent to me on the occasion of my 21st + a lot of V.A.T and the support that has been given to me.

Muriel Jones



Services at S. Oswald's

May 4 08:00 Holy Communion
Easter 3 10:30 Parish Eucharist with sung setting
 18:00 Evening Prayer

May 11 10:30 Parish Eucharist with sung setting
Easter 4

May 18 08:00 Holy Communion
Easter 5 10:30 Parish Eucharist with sung setting
 18:00 Evening Prayer

May 25 10:30 Parish Eucharist with sung setting
Easter 6 18:00 Reflective Space

Thursday May 29 10:30 Eucharist BCP
Ascension Day 19:00 Festival Eucharist

Every Thursday 10.30 Holy Communion (BCP)

MORNING PRAYER is streamed online through the church Facebook page at 9 o'clock on Wednesday and Friday. Sunday worship is on the YouTube page.

Enquires for Baptisms, Marriages etc should be made to the Parish Office. Please email the Parish Administrator (stoswald.office@gmail.com) for an appointment.

Services at Rhydycroesau

Easter 3 09:30 All Age Service
May 4

Easter 4 09:30 Holy Communion
May 11

Easter 6 09:30 Holy Communion
May 25



Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr

Music List - May 2025

Sunday 4th May

Easter 3

10.30 Parish Eucharist

(St. Oswald's Singers)

Setting: Shephard - Addington Service

Anthem: Now the green blade rises

18.00 Said Evening Prayer

Sunday 11th May

Easter 4

10.30 Parish Eucharist

Setting: Thorne - Mass of St. Thomas

Anthem: The Lord is my shepherd - Goodall

Sunday 18th May

Easter 5

10.30 Parish Eucharist

Setting: Mathias - Communion Service in C

Anthem: Ubi caritas – Gjeilo

18.00 Said Evening Prayer

Sunday 25th May

Easter 6

10.30 Parish Eucharist

(St. Oswald's Singers)

Setting: Shephard - Addington Service

Anthem: A Gaelic Blessing - Rutter

18.00 Reflective Service

Thursday 29th May

Ascension

19.00 Festival Eucharist

(The Gentlemen of the Choir)

Setting: White in E flat

Anthem: The Lord ascendeth up on high - Praetorius



Christian Aid Week
11–17 May 2025



CALENDAR FOR MAY 2025



Friday 2	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Saturday 3	0900	Orthodox Divine Liturgy
Tuesday 6	1030—1230	Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 7	0830—0940	Oswestry School Assembly
	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Thursday 8	1415	Mothers' Union Fellowship Group—Parish Centre
Friday 9	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Monday 12	1000	Clergy Eucharist and Meeting
	1430	Ladies Group—Parish Centre
	1930	St Oswald's Book Club in Parish Centre
Tuesday 13	1030—1230	Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 14	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Friday 16	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Saturday 17	1430	"Pudding Club" - Parish Centre—see page 13
Monday 19	1900	Annual Parochial Church Meeting—Parish Centre
Tuesday 20	1030—1230	Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 21	0830—0940	Oswestry School Assembly
	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Friday 23	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Monday 26	1930	St Oswald's Book Club in Parish Centre
Tuesday 27	1030—1230	Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 28	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Friday 30	1000	Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre

COFFEE ROTA FOR MAY

4	Ann Sagar	Dilys Lloyd	Olwen Phillips
11	Mary Jones	Natasha Bell	Sally Wright
18	Jane Mayne	Chris Abram	Jean Lawrence



Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr, Oswestry

Do you like to sing?

There is no better way to develop your voice than in a good church choir



Some of the Choristers with Director of Music, Mike Donkin at Bath Abbey during the RSCM Summer School

St. Oswald's Choir is recruiting for

CHORISTERS - Boys and girls aged 10 - 13

We offer excellent singing and musicianship training through the Royal School of Church Music's *Voice for Life* scheme

All Choristers receive free singing lessons

Termly choir pay and fees paid for singing at weddings

CHORAL SCHOLARS – Young people aged 14 - 18.

Choral Scholars should have some experience of singing or playing an instrument. We offer excellent training in both voice and musicianship. Choral Scholarships are particularly appropriate for young people taking GCSE Music.

All Choral Scholars receive free singing lessons

Termly choir pay and fees paid for singing at weddings

ADULT CHOIR MEMBERS

Sopranos

We welcome adult sopranos who can blend with the treble sound of the Choir's top line.

OTHER PARTS

We have vacancies for **2 tenors and 1 bass** and are interested in hearing from adults in any section who would like to sing in one of the finest church choirs in the area with a wide repertoire.

For further details contact Mike Donkin, Director of Music on 07779 917724 or via email at michaeldonkin44@gmail.com

Beyond Easter: *'Stranger on the Shore'*

Just over 60 years ago, a melody entered the world which shot straight to the top of the British hit charts, and it became the largest selling solo instrumental of all time. Originally named by Acker Bilk after his daughter 'Jenny', it was adopted in the early 60's as the theme tune for a BBC children's programme and renamed 'Stranger on the Shore'. For many people it is a haunting tune, timeless and evocative, perhaps speaking deep within us of a reality that we sense is there but somehow miss.

Does anyone play a Clarinet?

Jesus stood there, a stranger on the shore. His presence was deeply etched into the being of the disciples but now it was as a haunting memory. How the years with him had sped by! What sights they had seen when they were with him! How tinged with mounting horror had been those last months as he turned towards Jerusalem! That Friday had been simply awful. Saturday was dreadful. Sunday was frankly bewildering. Confusion was everywhere. The women had said he was alive. They themselves had found his grave empty. Later some of them said they had met him whilst trying to get away from it all. In the end, they had gone back to what they knew they could do well. They'd gone fishing. At the very least, it would give them a living and keep their families.

That was the theory. It wasn't turning out like that, though. They had put down the nets where they always got a catch, after all they knew this lake and its funny ways. Fishing could be iffy but, with a bit of patience and some local know-how, they usually brought home enough to keep the wolf from the door. But today, it wasn't looking good. They weren't netting anything, and it wasn't for want of trying. Things were going from bad to worse. To be honest, they were only fishing because they needed to escape the desolation they felt back in the village. Living without Jesus was ..., well, they really didn't want to think about it.

But the stranger stood on the shore, observing their every movement, reading their body language, sensing how they were feeling and, perhaps, from the slightly raised vantage point of the shore, seeing what they could not see. There were fish there, fish they would see if only they would look in the right direction. Fish they would catch, if only they would drop the nets in the right place.

For the moment, though, the stranger remains just that. When he calls out to them, there's nothing to suggest who is speaking. Never before has he

addressed them in a way that suggests he does not know who they are. His question is similar to that which many of us have asked fishermen. Have you caught anything? Only when the conversation is going, does he tell them where the fish are.

It is only when they do as he tells them that fortune turns, and only then do they realise who has been speaking to them. Perhaps the sequence rang bells. Had there not been that massive catch right at the beginning of their relationship with Jesus when he had told them to let down their nets? The penny dropped. The Stranger on the shore was Jesus! He was still with them! The resurrection appearances to others and to them were not just passing illusions. Even though they had not recognised him, He was still with them! No wonder, Simon Peter jumped overboard, his nearly disastrous earlier attempt to cross water to meet Jesus quite forgotten.

The story in Acts tells us that Saul had a somewhat similar experience. He had as close to a royal mandate as it was possible for any Jew to hold, a licence to root out this nonsense about Jesus of Nazareth. Like some first century human Dalek his constant cry was 'exterminate, exterminate'. Maybe even before he had begun, he'd got to know quite a lot about Jesus and his accursed followers. Certainly, as he had tracked them down, he'd learned a lot more. Though he had not been aware of it, all this was working away within him, like yeast in dough. But even so, Jesus was a stranger to him – until that extraordinary happening on the road to Damascus.

When Jesus spoke, Paul was dumbfounded. Though he asked who was speaking, there can be little doubt that he knew that it was Jesus. The inner spiritual blindness that had afflicted him for so long became clear. What a telling image it is, of a man who had seen everything so sharply in black and white now being led by the hand into Damascus - like some victim of 1st world war gassing. But that event was the beginning of healing and release, because the Lord whom he had been persecuting was there.

So, what do these stories say to us? It would be easy to see them as just stories for this post Easter period, stories that call our minds back to the events that really gave birth to the church, and to the people caught up in them. It is in fact very easy to let the distance of the years colour our understanding of their meaning for us. They become part of the past's haunting, there but disconnected from today's reality. If that is the case for any of us, we need to think again.

The resurrection did happen. Jesus is alive. Whether we know it or not, He is still with us. Simon Peter and Saul both had direct knowledge of Jesus. For us the situation is quite different. We have to depend on the stories we read in scripture and on the testimony of other people. In that sense, we are distanced - but we are not necessarily disadvantaged. The initiative in the stories was taken by the risen Jesus. The situation of the followers of Jesus in the boat and that of Saul with his murderous warrant in hand could not be more dissimilar. But it did not matter. For both, Jesus took the lead and spoke to make a dramatic difference. His presence changed everything.

There can be little doubt that many yearn for such a change in their lives. Deep within they know that all is not as it should be. In the Old Testament the writers give us a yardstick by which to measure that dissatisfaction. The Psalm writer speaks about being *surrounded with joy* and Zephaniah says *the Lord will sing and be joyful over you*.

Jesus wants both to be true for each of us. As the Stranger on the shore, he wanted something better, much, much better for those fishermen. As the unknown Lord, he wanted Saul's spiritual blindness lifted. C.S. Lewis described the transforming moment as being 'surprised by joy'. Jesus is still standing, albeit as a stranger, on our shore that we might all share that surprise.

In West Country dialect 'Acker' means Friend. The Stranger on the shore stands there in friendship. He speaks to us in friendship. In friendship He tells us what we should be doing. And, in friendship, today Jesus says to us again, '*Come, follow me*'.

Brian

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A LENT COURSE WITH A DIFFERENCE!

Encouraged by a friend I joined a **Lent 2025 Knitalong** that had been set up by a church in the Bristol area.

My friend, Ruth, had participated in their Advent 2024 Knitalong and had so enjoyed the experience she had signed up for their Lent challenge which was then due to begin in two days' time – Ash Wednesday, 5th March.

I was told it would be a Mystery Knitalong because although potential participants would know they would be knitting a textured lap blanket of a given size in chunky weight yarn, knitters would have no idea what the finished design would look like in advance – all would be revealed as they went along!

I had enough chunky weight wool to hand that had been awaiting a suitable project so being curious I decided to give it a go.



After Week 1 - documents containing daily reflections/ meditations and knitting instructions for the subsequent weeks were available to download each Friday ready for the following Sunday.

The final release, Week 6, was made on Friday 11th April ready for Holy Week starting on Palm Sunday and finishing on Good Friday.

Today it is Maundy Thursday and here is the finished article - yes, I cheated a little by packing two days into one, so that, with a busy week ahead, I could finish the knitting early!

So thank you Ruth, the course was both thought provoking and productive – it certainly was a Lent Course with a difference!

If any of you reading this article might be interested in taking up a similar challenge during Advent 2025 – do let me know!

Chris. Abram

ST. OSWALD'S LADIES GROUP

For our April meeting we welcomed Chris Birdsell-Jones the General Manager of Oswestry's Wynnstay Hotel and a retained firefighter in Welshpool, who had been on a special mission driving a fire engine all the way to Ukraine. Chris and eight other colleagues from Mid and West Wales were among over one hundred members of the British Fire Service from all over the country who delivered thirty three appliances to beleaguered fellow firefighters at the Ukraine border. It was organised by the Home Office working in partnership with Fire Aid, NFCC National Resilience, English and Welsh fire and rescue services and the Fire Industry Association.

He told us that it was a tremendous honour and very humbling to be part of the convoy including twenty fire engines, eight incident command units, one aerial ladder platform and a 4 x 4 vehicle, two mechanics vehicles and a HGV carrying over 2,800 items of surplus equipments all vital when handling an emergency.

They all met at Ashford in Kent before driving from France into Belgium through Holland into Germany and on through Poland to the Ukraine border where they handed over all the appliances and kit to their Ukrainian colleagues. The journey of over 2000 kilometres took five days and they were hosted by fellow fire-fighters all along the way sleeping in all manner of accommodation including a boarded-over rink floor.

It was so fascinating to hear a first hand account of being in Ukraine and seeing the dangers they had to face. He was a very brave man.

Our next meeting will be on the second Monday in May because of the bank holiday - May 12th at 2.30 p.m. in the Parish Centre when we welcome Julie Dean, Ellesmere Honey Company, to be our Speaker.

If you would like further details of our group please contact me on 01691657903 or email ann_sagar@btinternet.com.

Subscriptions for the year are due £15 with no increase from last year.

Ann Sagar
Hon. Secretary

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LEARNING TO LOVE MOLES!

Many of us rarely if ever see an actual mole and apart from Moley in *The Wind in the Willows*, the other famous mole is '*the little gentleman in black velvet*' toasted by Jacobites as William of Orange is said to have died following a fall after his horse tripped on a molehill.

We do however see signs of moles, their molehills. Moles breed in spring, between February and June and this is a time when we see new molehills that have been dug by male moles expanding their tunnel network in search of female mates. They also create spherical nests which they line with dry leaves and grass and the moles will sleep in these nests as well as rearing young there.

Male and female moles spend most of the year alone, living underground and feeling their way around their network of tunnels using their sensitive noses and also their tails. They have poor eyesight and are at risk from predators when above ground but underground they are in their element, using large, spade-like forelimbs to expand the tunnel network as needed. Most of the tunnels are permanent and quite deep and may cover hundreds of metres. Moles are fiercely territorial, familiar with their own tunnels and using them to suit the season. In colder or drier weather they head for their deepest tunnels where their main food, earthworms, will be found. A tunnel network is thought to last for many years, through several generations of moles.

Moles feed mainly on earthworms they create a winter 'larder' by storing earthworms in a chamber, keeping them alive but immobilising them with a bite to the head segment. Up to 450 worms have been found in one chamber.

Moles used to be killed in large numbers by trappers to make moleskin clothes from their pelt, and were thought of as a problem needing controlling. Actually, moles are both friend and foe to the site manager, friends as they eat many pests such as wireworms, slugs and snails and also aerate the soil with their tunnelling, foe as they throw up molehills which some see as a problem. There are numerous theories as to how to get rid of moles: burying glass bottles, garlic or elder twigs pushed into the molehill to name a few. Poison and traps are cruel and are not recommended. Actually, getting rid of your resident mole may not be a good idea as it leaves a territory open for another mole to move in. It may be best to learn to live with your mole and to press molehills back into the

ground or move the soil to flowerbeds or planters. The bare ground they produce also makes space for wildflower seeds to germinate which may not happen in a tight grass sward. So all in all, moles add to the rich diversity of life found within our churchyards and we need to learn to love them!

Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, harriet@cfga.org.uk,
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code diomem22



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2025

As signs of spring surround us and Easter celebrations begin, we are reminded of the hope that Jesus brings to our lives. Through lessons, workshops and assemblies the schools work project seeks to spread that hope through our local schools.

Diary of a Disciple workshops have been a great success over the last few weeks. Pupils have had the opportunity to discover more about the life of Jesus and the Diary of a Disciple workshops have been a great success over the last few weeks. Pupils have had the opportunity to discover more about the life of Jesus and the difference he can make in the lives of those who believe. These workshops will continue in April so please continue to pray for all those taking part.

- Assemblies this month focused on the message of Easter and the hope of Jesus.
- The Christian unions are looking at the book of James and how we can apply it's message to our lives today.
- I will be helping with an Easter Journey day at Whittington Primary school this month. Please pray that the Children will encounter Jesus through this event.

Thank you for your faithful support of the project.

Blessings

Jane Webber

Things to Pray For

- The final Diary of a Disciple workshops taking place this month.
- Easter Journey day in Whittington Primary school.



ST OSWALD'S
UNDER 5's PLAYGROUP

St Oswald's Parish Centre
(access on foot from the Broadwalk, off Church Street)

WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY
10:00 - 12:00

Please bring snacks and drinks for your children
Tea, coffee & hot chocolate is provided for adults
Parking available

For more information contact The Manager,
stoswalds.u5s@gmail.com



On December 11th 1974, at an open meeting in the Wynnstay Hotel Oswestry, we held a meeting to attempt to form a new Lions Club - "The Lions Club of Oswestry". At that time, it was necessary to have at least 20 members to form a new group. At that meeting, 21 people joined!

We are now inviting new members to form a new Lions Club in Oswestry. Among the remaining members of the current Oswestry Lions Club are two of the original founding members; PDG Derrick Francis and PDG Bill Bowen (both of whom are in the middle to upper 90s!) Bill and Derrick have both received a Lions Chevron and citation for their 50-year service. How remarkable.

YOU can replace them if:-

- You are someone who has, so far, had an enjoyable and good life and would love to give something back to the life of Oswestry;
- Care for those in our communities who are less fortunate than ourselves;
- Who would like to enjoy the fellowship of similar minded new friends who enjoy their lives in Oswestry;
- Who would love to be the new leading members of the Oswestry Lions Club and share some of the good fellowship and friendship.

Please come to the **Sweeney Hotel on Tuesday, 6th May at 7.30pm** and re-form this well respected and much admired club to go on for the next 50 years and beyond.

For 50 years we have supported numerous local charities and schools and enabled young people to do things they would have been unable to do without the support of Oswestry Lions. It's now time to give back!

Your Lions Club Needs You.

It was....

75 years ago, on 13th May 1950 that the first Formula One World Championship race was held, at Silverstone. (Also known as the 1950 British Grand Prix.)

30 years ago, on 1st May 1995 that the World Health Organisation (WHO) published its first annual survey of global health.

BONUS BALL

Congratulations to the March winners of the weekly Lotto Bonus Ball draw who have each received £29. The winners were:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ball Number</u>	<u>Winner</u>
1 Mar	53	Revd Brian Thomas
8 Mar	21	June Williams
15 Mar	28	Paul Crosby
22 Mar	26	Janis Gill
29 Mar	19	Bill Bowen

The new Bonus Ball year started at the beginning of March may I remind members that payment for your Bonus Ball number(s) for either 12 months (£52), 6 months (£26) to the end of August or just 3 months to the end of May is now due.

I know of two numbers which are now available and to maximise the benefit of the Bonus Ball all numbers need to be allocated; if you would like to join the St Oswald Bonus Ball please let me know.

Paul Crosby
658606

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Easy

Sudoku

Medium

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PUZ?LES

**Solution
on page 43**

This year is the 1700 anniversary of the Nicene Creed. Athanasius is the theologian behind that creed, and his feast day falls on 2nd May.

Athanasius (296-373) was born into a prosperous family in Alexandria in Egypt, and entered the ministry. He was 29 years old when he accompanied Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, to the Church's first great ecumenical Council, at Nicaea in 325. There he saw the Council debate the Person of Christ. How was He the Son of God and also Man? Did He really exist before He was born? If we worship Him, does that mean that we are worshipping two Gods?

When the heresy of Arius, which taught that Christ was not divine, and not eternal, later threatened the church, Athanasius worked with his bishop, Alexander, in framing what became known as the Nicene Creed. Our Lord's full divinity was safeguarded in the words, 'eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father.'

For the next 45 years Athanasius' devotion, scholarship, and forceful leadership established the Nicene Creed in the Christian Church. His enemies, both in Church and state, conspired against him, and he was exiled five times from the See of Alexandria and spent a total of 17 years in flight and hiding.

Athanasius' name will always be linked with the triumph of New Testament Christology over every form of reductionism (lessening of the Person of Christ.)

Athanasius	T P Y G E T P N Y N Y Y E B N	From
Nicene	S N E N S G P I G H G D E Y S	Light
Creed	A E X I L E D P O O C G L T T	True
Theologian	A I R D N A X E L A O S I U A	One
Egypt	S H R I T E W O O T U L G F T	Substance
Council	C U H H T O T E T I N A H P E	Devotion
Bishop	E E B B R S E E S I C N T N N	Scholarship
Debate	P O H S I B N A I C I R R O I	Church
Christ	T N H R T F N C R U L E I S V	State
Person	P I H S R A L O H C S T U R I	Exiled
Worship	P C T O H A N I C U O E M E D	Flight
Divine	N E M T R U E C G V R C P P E	Hiding
Eternal	U N A I G O L O E H T C H G E	Triumph
Begotten	D E B A T E D D N T T S H R S	Christology
God	C R E E D V H I D E N O C D E	Alexandria Christology

Across

- 1 Infant (Luke 2:12) (4)
- 3 Luis must (anag.) (8)
- 8 What Jesus called the devil (John 8:44)(4)
- 9 'My God, my God, why have you — me?' (Matthew 27:46) (8)
- 11 Anglican form of church government(10)
- 14 'Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like — ' (Isaiah 40:31) (6)
- 15 Ministers of religion (6)
- 17 Make stronger (1 Thessalonians 3:13) (10)
- 20 Devoutness (1 Timothy 2:2) (8)
- 21 The father of Jesse (Ruth 4:22) (4)
- 22 Pool where Jesus healed a man who had been an invalid for 38 years (John 5:2) (8)
- 23 [Jesus] said to them, " — here and keep watch"" (Mark 14:34) (4)

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Down

- 1 Follower of Christ (Acts 16:1) (8)
- 2 One of the punishments endured by Paul (2 Corinthians 6:5) (8)
- 4 Soldiers (Exodus 14:9) (6)
- 5 Scholarly study of melody, harmony and rhythm (10)
- 6 'I am God, and there is none — me' (Isaiah 46:9) (4)
- 7 'And how can they preach unless they are — ?' (Romans 10:15) (4)
- 10 Favourable reception (1 Timothy 1:15) (10)
- 12 Hip orbit (anag.) (8)
- 13 End of life (Isaiah 22:14) (5,3)
- 16 'About midnight the sailors — they were approaching land' (Acts 27:27) (6)
- 18 He married Jezebel (1 Kings 16:30–31) (4)
- 19 'According to your great compassion — out my transgressions' (Psalm 51:1) (4)

PUZ?LES SOLUTION ON PAGE 43



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Medium

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5	2	8	7	3	1	6	9	4
1	3	6	4	2	9	7	8	5
7	4	9	5	6	8	2	1	3

T	P	Y	G	E	T	P	N	Y	N	Y	Y	E	B	N
S	N	E	N	S	G	P	I	G	H	G	D	E	Y	S
A	E	X	I	L	E	D	P	O	O	C	G	L	T	T
A	I	R	D	N	A	X	E	L	A	O	S	I	U	A
S	H	R	I	T	E	W	O	O	T	U	L	G	F	T
C	U	H	H	T	O	T	E	T	I	N	A	H	P	E
E	E	B	B	R	S	E	E	S	I	C	N	T	N	N
P	O	H	S	I	B	N	A	I	C	I	R	R	O	I
T	N	H	R	T	F	N	C	R	U	L	E	S	V	
P	I	H	S	R	A	L	O	H	C	S	T	U	R	I
P	C	T	O	H	A	N	I	C	U	O	E	M	E	D
N	E	M	T	R	U	E	C	G	V	R	C	P	P	E
U	N	A	I	G	O	L	O	E	H	T	C	H	G	E
D	E	B	A	T	E	D	D	N	T	T	S	H	R	S
C	R	E	E	D	V	H	I	D	E	N	O	C	D	E

B	A	B	Y		S	T	I	M	U	L	A	S		
E		E			R		U		I		E			
L	I	A	R		F	O	R	S	A	K	E	N		
I		T		A		O		I		E		T		
E	P	I	S	C	O	P	A	C	Y					
V		N		C		S		O		P		D		
E	A	G	L	E	S		C	L	E	R	G	Y		
R		S		P		S		O		O		I		
				S	T	R	E	N	G	T	H	E	N	
A		B		A		N		Y		I		G		
H	O	L	I	N	E	S	S		O	B	E	D		
A		O		C		E				I		A		
B	E	T	H	E	S	D	A			S	T	A	Y	

SMILE-LINES.....

What did I do with the car?

As I left a meeting at our church, I could not find my car keys. They were not in my pockets. They were not in the church. Then I thought – I’ve left them in the car! As I burst through the doors of the church, my heart sank: the church car park was empty. With a heavy heart I called the police, confessed that I had left my keys in the car, and that it had been stolen. Then I made the really difficult call, and told my wife that the car had been stolen. There was a little gasp. “You did not *have the car*. I dropped you off. Remember?”

My heart sang as relief flooded through me. “Of course! Well, come get me quick – I am already running late... what is keeping you?”

My wife replied with ominous calm: “What’s keeping me? I’ll tell you what’s keeping me. The police are here. They think I’ve stolen the car...”

REGISTERS



We welcome in HOLY BAPTISM

S Oswald's

March 23

Teddy James Rogers

As God has lent them to us, so we say farewell and give back in HOLY DYING:

S Oswald's

March 26

Jean Rosemary Roberts, aged 87

March 27

Terence Philip Rogers, aged 75

April 4

John William Humphreys, aged 81

April 10

Roger Owen Derwas, aged 56

April 11

Vera Brunt, aged 99

April 14

Christopher Ellison, aged 72



We are a group of volunteers running advice sessions in Oswestry Library, to assist the general public with Family and Local History. Our sessions are free and include access to Ancestry.com, Parish Records, Local Maps, Photographs and copies of the Advertiser 1849 to date. Family and Local Historians available: Monday: 10:00-12:00 Friday: 13:30-16:00
No appointments necessary

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Oswestry Parish Church exists to propagate and nurture the love of God through the teachings of Jesus Christ thereby serving the needs of the whole community and enriching everybody's lives, through worship and prayer.

Derwas of Oswestry

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