

**St Thomas' Trowbridge**  
and  
**St John's, West Ashton**  
**Monthly News – June 2022**



**St Thomas'**  
Trowbridge

**St John's**  
West Ashton

**Kingfisher Church**  
The Mead School

**Holy Trinity**  
Trowbridge

## A Platinum Pentecost

Why are we celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June when the actual anniversary of her accession was in February? The prosaic answer is that the weather is more conducive to street parties! But there is a bit more to it than that. Although Elizabeth became Queen in February 1952, it took over a year to plan her Coronation which took place on 2 June 1953. So the Platinum Jubilee weekend actually falls on the 69<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Coronation but, by design or happy accident, it coincides with Pentecost, the Festival of the Holy Spirit.



The significance of that will not be lost on the Queen herself. At her Coronation, she was anointed with oil by the Archbishop of Canterbury, a symbol which has long been associated with consecration and empowering by the Holy Spirit. Although the Queen insisted that her Coronation should be televised for the first time in history (against the advice of her Prime Minister, Winston Churchill), she requested that the act of anointing should not appear. That shows she considered it the most sacred moment of the whole ceremony. Archbishop Fisher made the sign of the cross in holy oil on her forehead, with these words;

"Be thy head anointed with holy oil: as kings, priests, and prophets were anointed. And as Solomon was anointed king by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet, so be you anointed, blessed and consecrated Queen over the Peoples, whom the Lord thy God hath given thee to rule and govern."

In the Old Testament, prophets and later kings were anointed with oil to indicate their consecration (setting apart for God) and empowering. Gradually the term 'the Lord's Anointed' also began to apply to the longed for Messiah and so, in the New Testament, Jesus is recognised as God's

supremely Anointed One. Following the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, Christians also began to describe themselves as being anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Nowadays we can talk a bit glibly about ‘the anointing’, maybe losing the sense, so real to the Queen at her Coronation, that anointing with the Holy Spirit is a sacred and mysterious gift of God. Twenty-five year old Queen Elizabeth II was painfully aware of the responsibility she was taking on and her need of God’s grace and power to carry it out – as she has done faithfully for the last 70 years.

We may only have a fraction of the responsibility and visibility she has, but we still need the empowering of God’s Spirit every bit as much. As we celebrate the remarkable reign of our longest-serving Monarch, and her clear witness that she has only been able to do so by the power of the Holy Spirit, let’s ask God to consecrate and empower us again for His service, following the wonderful example Her Majesty.

Allan

## Tree Top Twitter

There was chatter in the trees,  
I listened as birds conversed with ease.  
I could not understand their tweets,  
or their twitters,  
but the sound was beautiful for the ear  
to hear.

Written by Neill Cadmore 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022

## Messy Church in May



The Messy Church team and helpers gathered at St Thomas' last Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> to welcome 9 Messy Church families to our session for Pentecost, a bit early I know.

As most of you know since lockdown we have been holding our Messy Church sessions on Saturdays from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. and inviting families who used to come along to our Thursday morning preschool sessions

(which we don't do anymore) and other Toddler and past Toddler families. This has obviously been difficult to organise under Covid restrictions and sensible guidelines that everyone hopefully has been happy with. We have planned 5 sessions since last September, one of which we needed to cancel due to Covid and we are now trying to get into a pattern of holding one session each school term making 6 per year. We're hoping that a fairly regular pattern will help our families to keep in the habit of coming along.

With each session our Covid precautions have relaxed a little until this time we felt able to have tables for individual crafts and allow the families to move around freely and interact with us and each other. We also provided platters of bread, cheese and nibbly bits, beautifully displayed by Kay. Therefore, to me, this felt like the first fully formed but still developing Messy Church family session.

The families arrived and were signed into the church hall and were guided to 2 tables where we had laid out colouring sheets, word searches, pens and crayons.

At 11.10, to allow for people to sign in, we gave an official welcome announcement and told people the layout of the session. The families then moved onto the craft tables, we had prepared 5 different crafts linked to the theme of Pentecost, kites, doves, a jar decorated with flame coloured tissue paper with a battery tea light inside and a thank you banner where they could choose from 50 different languages. It was wonderful that we had 3 teenager helpers including Naomi Bowater who is on the planning team.

From the hall we moved into the Church with the families and Kay, Janet and our lovely adult helpers cleared the craft tables and set up ready for lunch. Geoff had helped us to clear the centre block in Church and we arranged chairs into a circle with Kay's welcoming patchwork quilt in the middle for the children to sit on. We had songs with lots of actions, it was lovely to have Emily playing the keyboard and the story of Pentecost. We try to aim the story at Primary age children with lots of interaction hoping to include the younger children too. The children aged from 3 months to 9 years, joined in (well, not the 3 month baby!) and on the whole listened amazingly well. Some of the youngest ones did a bit of wandering but they were brilliant, answering questions and we then followed the story with a "what this can mean to us" chat and prayer.

My particular delight came from seeing about 18 children jumping about in Church and joining in with the actions with enthusiasm even if things did get a little out of hand on the "You and you and you and you" bit of 'Big Family of God!' What an amazing use of a lovely open space.

Then we went back into the hall everyone sat at their allocated tables and platters of bread, cheese, salad, crisps, satsumas and extras were brought round. There was also tea, coffee and squash to help themselves to.

It was so wonderful to be able to move between these families freely without masks and actually be able to interact with them. We were delighted that 4 of the families were regulars at our previous Messy Church including one who we haven't seen since lockdown. It would be lovely if the families who attended on Saturday formed the core of a new Messy Church Family moving forward, we'll see what God has in store.

Thank you everyone for your ongoing prayer and support.

Jane and the Messy Church team

## Deanery Report

Deanery Synod met on 18<sup>th</sup> May at St. John's, Upper Studley. We met in their newly refurbished hall called St. John's Parish Centre. It is very light and bright and the chairs are practical and comfortable.

Our Allan welcomed one and all and opened the meeting quoting Psalm 93 and committing the proceedings to the Lord.

Allan then passed the meeting over to John Joy to continue with the business.

**Minutes** from previous meeting were accepted with no matters arising

The churches **Atworth with Shaw and Whitley** are proposing to unite their parishes and have held various meetings to discuss this. Rev. Jane Palmer is really making a name for herself over there and we can only wish her God's blessings in this venture.

Our Deanery secretary promoted the **Village Pump** which is held on Zoom on first Saturday of each month. This is organised by Canon Hancock. I will endeavour to attend the next one and see what it is about and promote it further.

A new **LPA** course is planned and already there are candidates around the Deanery. Please pray for this course and consider attending yourself and joining the team of LPA's. If it is for you, I suggest you have a word with Allan and Marjory. Clergy have been asked to consider helping run the course.

We had written reports from Chris Hicks and Claire Horton, giving a breakdown of the **Diocesan Synod** meeting. If you would like to see these reports, please contact me and I will forward copies to you.

A date for the diary – 11<sup>th</sup> September, 3pm at St. James' Church. This will be for the **licensing of their new Vicar**, Rev. Jake Eggertsen. It will also be an opportunity to see the new Bishop of Salisbury, the Very Reverend Stephen Lake.

Several Beneficiaries in the Deanery are already hosting **Ukrainian refugees** and CATA have asked Rev. Alistair Wood to co-ordinate aid and support. He will liaise with the council to ensure support.

David Robinson gave his **Treasurer's report** stating that Share for 2021 was 94% paid and that so far this year 2022, 24.7% have been received. A Fairer Share review is taking place and details will follow in due course.

John Joy gave an update on the situation in **Kadugli** with aid and trade being difficult at this time. The up and coming visit is under review, with issues of safety being of importance. The Deanery Kadugli Fund has £3100. Some of the Bishops from Kadugli are expected to attend the Lambeth Conference in August. They will then spend a couple of days here in the Bradford Deanery and Calne Deanery. Suggestions for events that the Bishops and their wives might attend have been requested. If you have any ideas, please let Allan or myself know and we can pass them on to those making arrangements.

We ended the business section and enjoyed the hospitality of St. John's with lovely cakes and hot drinks.

### **Guest Speaker**

The second half of the meeting had us all sitting on the edge of our seats. What a breath of fresh air! Anna Hardy works as Giving Advisor at the Diocese. She is funded by the National Church and working for us, with us for the past six months. She gave a PowerPoint presentation which is too large to show here but hopefully she may be invited to encourage one and all on being an even more cheerful giver. She is an exciting young lady who clearly loves her job. A few more like her working from the top would, I believe, enthuse the least of us at the lower levels. I pray it will happen.

Next meeting will be 12<sup>th</sup> October at St. Michael's & All Angels. Our own Judy Wright will be one of the guest speakers.

Barbara Hakes

Deanery Rep

## CPAS Webinar Report

### CPAS Webinar – PCC Tonight -An evening to explore how to make PCCs better

In place of the PCC meeting in on 10 May, PCC members joined a CPAS webinar, looking at our role and the effectiveness meetings. It was a well-led and interesting time – when we registered we gave to our church names so that we could be put in the same break out room discussion



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The evening started with a ‘Quick Quiz’:

Did you know that the PCC legal status started in 1919, prior to that all ‘power’ was held by the Vicar and Churchwardens; the youngest age that a church member can be elected to the PCC is 16; PCCs have to register with the Charity Commission when their income exceeds £100k; and that there are approx. 125,000 members of PCCs and it is estimated that £1.5 million hours (513 years) are spent each year on PCC meetings!!!

We then went on to ‘Purpose of a PCC’

- 1) To enable the church to play its part in God’s mission in the world – the church in this country is the biggest provider of youth work, food banks, debt advice and work with refugees and schools as well as providing Sunday worship and sacraments.
- 2) To co-operate with the minister in sharing leadership. Members have different skills/gifting needed
- 3) To ensure legal compliance with charity/ecclesiastical law. PCC members are trustees, responsible for ensuring that finance, safeguarding, data protection, employment are handled correctly

- 4) To care for the buildings and churchyard. Preservation of the historic buildings and churchyard are important but they need to be 'fit for purpose' for the present.
- 5) To be a channel of communication within the wider church (General, Diocesan, Deanery Synods) bringing appropriate matters to our church and feeding back to these bodies - feeding up as well as feeding down.

In our break out room we discussed the points above

We came back centrally and looked at 'Common Dysfunctions'

- 1) Lack of Clarity of Purpose – we need to know our purpose
- 2) Confusion over identity – are we a committee, a leadership team, a support group?
- 3) Tricky group dynamics – this can happen and needs to be handled well and sensitively when it does
- 4) Poor Organisation – agenda and reports not out in time; poor timekeeping.
- 5) No follow through – no decisions agreed or when they are agreed action not taken
- 6) Inappropriate membership – bring the question of standing for PCC to the church much sooner rather than encouraging people to stand at the APCM, and we need to know what we are likely to be looking at in the next few years and encourage those with interest in the particular subject (s)
- 7) Relational Difficulties – we need to recognise that different people have different preferences
- 8) Poor communication – with the church and in the PCC

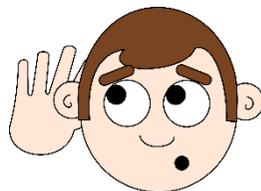


Next, we looked at a 'Quick Questionnaire' answering 20 questions on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) including questions on purpose; timing; all member participation; handling conflict; follow up; and values – and do we enjoy being part of the PCC! In our next break out

room we looked at how the above points affected our meetings and what could we do to improve them.

The final third session looked at 'Top Tips'

- 1) Keep the focus on Christ – Jesus is head of the church and we are there to serve Him – our meetings should include prayer, study, worship.
- 2) Get to know one another – we work better together when we know one another better, fellowship as well as 'business'.
- 3) Start and finish on time – maximum of 2 hours to include prayer, worship, study and fellowship.
- 4) Create appropriate space – not just in the same space every meeting, for example if we are discussing HT, meet at HT
- 5) Create good agendas
- 6) Listen carefully, speak sensitively
- 7) Relish Conflict – not always easy – we all have different passions!!
- 8) Review very meeting before the meeting breaks up – what have we achieved – how do we move forward?



'Your Next Steps' was the final stage – what do we want to action from this event? what do you hope your PCC will embrace from this event? Our break out discussion thought that we do need to include more prayer, worship, study and more fellowship, and take on board all that we have discussed!!



And the reward for this great seminar – an extra PCC meeting on Tuesday 7 June – who is going to provide the cake for the fellowship????

Pat Kerbey

## Update on Ukraine



We have just heard that the family we were hoping to sponsor have decided not to leave Ukraine at present, however, the same charity is now offering us another family. This family includes a Mum, with three children (12), (8) and (3). Her husband is not able to travel. Her sister is also planning to come and they are about to apply for visas.

We are viewing rental houses to assess what is on the market to enable us to be able to make a decision once we have firm details of their arrival and to steward our resources wisely. We would value your prayers that the right property comes on the market at the right time.

As soon as we find a suitable property we will need money to pay for deposits and furnishings so, if you have agreed to donate a gift of money, and are still able to, would you please pay it into the church account clearly marked for Ukraine. The church **sort code is 40 44 33 a/c no. 21223194**. If you are unable to make an online transfer would you please contact Marjory Wade or Pat Kerby to discuss the best way of making your contribution. We will contact those who have offered goods and furniture once we know what we need.

We are very pleased to tell you that Kingstons Estate Agents have generously offered us a donation of £5,000 towards our sponsorship and this means that we should now be able to rent a property for a year. Thank you for your continuing interest, support and prayers.

Mandi and Marjory

## Update on St John's

The month of May being a warm month has seen the grass growing in the churchyard big time. The daffodils have been cut down and grass being kept under control (I wish!). The ivy is retuning and trying to overtake the field perimeter walls, even though it is removed, it stubbornly returns! The entrance garden has been cleared and replanted. St John's still holds two services a month - our second service in May on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May had two new visitors. One being Revd. Liz Gifford from Upper Studley who took the service and was welcomed and the congregation appreciated her time and ministry. The second was Robin Jackson F.R.C.O, an organist from Corsham, (an organ recitalist, retired head of student music in Bath Uni and retired examiner in Trinity College London). He certainly put our little Sweetland organ through her paces. The two "newbies" to St John's did us proud and we were very grateful of their visit. We now head on into June and the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. The village celebrations are a little muted due to holidays, etc. but St John's has a commemorative church service on the 5<sup>th</sup> June at 10.30am when the church will be decorated to honour our Queen's seventy years reign. (During the Queen's reign she has seen 14 Prime Ministers: Churchill; Eden; MacMillan; Douglas-Hume; Wilson; Heath; Callaghan; Thatcher; Major; Blair; Brown; Cameron; May; Johnson. Plus an ever-changing world).



The Queen wrote the following in 2002:

"I know just how much I rely on my faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings, and to put my trust in God – I draw strength from the message of hope in the Christian gospel".

She continues to serve God and country well.

## Help For A Ukrainian Refugee Family



The congregation of St John's, West Ashton donated the sum of £400 to this worthy cause being organised by St Thomas' .

The amount raised was from the congregation and a small amount from the church funds.

A big thank you goes to all who contributed.

Jean

## Day Trip to Kew Gardens



We now have a new date for the trip to Kew Gardens – it is now **Tuesday 21 June 2022** – to pick up at the Lovemead car park in Trowbridge at 8.45am, leaving Kew at 4.00pm hopefully to be back to Trowbridge at 6.00pm

The cost of the coach will be £20 per head. Book your own entrance tickets: £15 in advance, £19.50 on the day; concessions £14 in advance, £17.50 on the day – but better to ensure we have enough people on the coach to ensure we run it.

Booking forms are available and have been sent out by email.

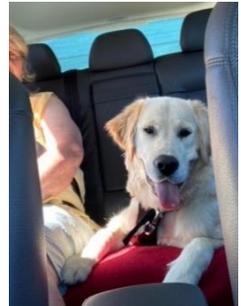
Pat Kerbey

## Guide Dog Esselle

Now nearly 8 months old Esselle is almost fully grown and weighs about 22 kgs.

Although she is very much still a puppy, she is growing up in some ways, she doesn't 'steal' things in the same way that she did. But when she did take things it was never to destroy them, it was just a trophy. If she jumped up in the kitchen it wasn't to help herself to food, it was to take a cloth!! She does still quite like to take things out of the washing machine if the door is left ajar!!

She still doesn't like to get in the car, but once in there she is fine especially now that we are trying her on the back seat rather than in the boot. I have been sitting in the back seat with her, but she now likes to lie across the whole seat (while she isn't a very large dog she is quite long!!) as I now sit back in the front.



She had a lovely day recently with her 5 year old friend Quentin and a 13 week old puppy, Gibson. She was so exhausted after that, that she got in to the car and stood in the footwell between front and back sets and fell asleep resting her chin on the back seat.

Her adventures have been curtailed at the moment as she is in season – so we can't take her out at all for the next three or four weeks. She is going to miss out on a family platinum jubilee celebration which would involve a journey of three trains; and a 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party.

She will also miss 2 training sessions. When we went to the first one she wasn't very good at the exercises, this week I went so that I could do the training at home, but the other dogs there were as playful this week as she was previously – it gave me a good laugh.

Pat Kerbey

# Platinum Jubilee Weekend at St Thomas' and St John's

Thursday 2 June to Sunday 5 June

As a church we are planning to celebrate this historic event in a similar way to how we celebrated Her Majesty's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.



Our main celebration will be on Friday 3 June when we will combine with Parents and Toddlers to have a street party with games and crafts and lots of fun. There will be activities (and food) for the older children as well.

Alongside that we will have an afternoon tea for older church members to which we will invite members of our user groups and local residents



We will also invite children of our users' groups and local families to the street party.

Pat Kerbey



## *Queens Platinum Jubilee*

### *West Ashton Village Hall*

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June**  
**Coffee Morning 10am – 12**  
**Guided Village Ramble 2pm**

Start at Village Hall and ending at the hall for refreshment  
Approx 1½ hrs...Suitable footwear required...

**Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Platinum Jubilee Pub Night** – Start 7pm to late  
Watch The Buckingham Palace Jubilee Concert on the  
Big Screen – Bring Your Own Picnic/Food/Flag

**Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Service** in St John's Church  
West Ashton at 10.30 am  
**Model Railway Exhibition 10am– 4pm** & Display Of Classic Motorbikes  
Refreshments available



## Viney Hill Weekend Away

**30 September to 2 October 2022**

Viney Hill is a wonderful place in the Forest of Dean, near Lydney in Gloucestershire.



Accommodation: there are a limited number of rooms in the lovely Old Vicarage; and camping – bring your own tent or use one that is already on site

Meals are provided by the St Thomas' team, but we will be asking for willing volunteers to sign up over the weekend to assist with cooking and washing up. (Bring your own alcohol!!)



Facilities include large communal areas; a large kitchen; BBQ; volleyball/badminton court; and stone circle for campfire. There are many walks within the forest – a good opportunity to collect firewood for the campfire.

The 'official' activities are restricted to those aged 8+ but there will be plenty organized for kids. You can bring your mountain bike to ride in the forest and there will be opportunity to swing on a rope.



The official activities that we have booked are low ropes; crate stacking; rocket science; archery; and rock climbing. These are all optional extras (with an extra cost), or you can just sit and relax.



Booking forms now available – but please book soon to avoid disappointment!