

A word from the Rectory

By the time this is published I will have been with you 5 months, time is flying past. Christmas and Easter will have been celebrated. The Aconites, Snow drops, Daffodils and Bluebells will have flowered and moved onto seed. The rhythm of our God given lives moves on. But what does he call us onto? What shape is the house God is calling us to build?

One of my favourite songs contains these words: 'Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live, a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive'. The hymn goes on to describe one version of such a house.

In the coming months that rhythm will include change for the Chronicle. In July Rosanne Butler, our editor, will put down that role and the Chronicle will move into a new era. She has done a brilliant job moving this long established treasure from a single paged pew sheet to the crafted document we have to day. Thank you so much for all that work. But how can the Chronicle serve best our vision to "To live out God's purposes for us, make Christ known in Cowley and to raise up a new generation to love and serve the Lord". How can it best serve the family of God that worships in St Francis and St James? In the coming months we need to plot the course for such a journey. If you feel you have some ideas about the future vision for the Chronicle do please write or speak to me. We are setting up a small focus group to work on that question and we desperately need your help.

What sort of church will we need to be in 20 years' time? This is another question that circles in mind. Yes the foundation stone's will be the same. We will still be asking the question 'What would Jesus do?' We will still be committed to prayer and following his teaching. We will still be telling the story of God's love for us in Jesus and his risen life with us. But what will church life look like? And what are the steps we need to take today so that we are safely heading towards that goal?

It is with this in mind that we will be holding a 'Vision Morning'. It is morning that asks each one of us to put

aside some time, come together and share what God is saying to us. Jesus was clear he would send his Holy Spirit to live inside us and show us the way forward. It would not be the role of one or two but he, Jesus, would make a priesthood of all believers. What is a priesthood? It is a group of people who stand between God and his creation. Standing, talking, directly with our Father in Heaven about the things that concern us here on Earth. A priesthood of all believers is every one that believe and tries to follow Jesus.

So please, talk to our Father and ask him 'What should our church be like if it is to serve his world best in the years to come. Talk to him and then talk amongst yourselves and to the church.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rosanne Butler".



Benson Cottage

Chronicle

April 2016

Editor's Letter

Dear Readers

First of all I want to thank those generous people who kindly donated to the cost of a new lawn mower for the churchyard and Church Centre garden. A shiny new appliance is safely tucked into its shed at the Centre and has already been put to good use. Church warden, Dave Stanley, is thrilled to bits!

We shall soon be coming up to Christian Aid week so I hope you have looked out your comfortable walking shoes for delivering and collecting the envelopes. I know I am not your typical collector in that I really look forward to knocking on my neighbours' doors but I do hope we can reach a stunning total this year. When we look around the world and see how much aid is needed we really must try. I also realise that many of you cannot get around as collectors so perhaps a bit of extra small change in your envelope would be good.

I have only had one request for a knitting pattern for tiny baby jackets so far. (You may remember that last month I asked if anyone would like to knit for the John Radcliffe Special Baby Unit). I still have the patterns if you have had second thoughts about it.

Isn't it great to see the development that is happening in St James vestry and the lovely new kitchen at St Francis? We really must thank our talented chaps, Ed Ling and David Lord for their hard work and skill.

As far as I know no-one has yet offered to take over my role as Chronicle Editor in July. I am sure there is

someone out there who would do a splendid job in my place. Our parish magazine needs a breath of fresh air with a new focus and I am happy to move over and give someone the space, so come on, you youngsters, could it be you?

I cannot finish my letter this month without remarking on the one big and very special date of April 21st. That's right it is our Queen's 90th birthday and isn't she marvellous? She is having a big party at Windsor in May, a service of thanksgiving, a parade at Trooping of the Colour and a gigantic street party in June and good luck to her. What energy she has. Oh, and by the way, Prince Philip will be 95 this year. What energy they both have!

Well, Easter has come and gone and the clocks have been altered to summertime but I am not going to remark on the weather this month. In our last issue I mentioned that there had not been a flake of snow over Cowley this winter and what happened on our publishing day? Yes, you're right it snowed.

God bless

Rosanne



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Mothers' Union News

Our quiet afternoon for Lent in March was led by Jill Ling. The focus was on the family, both each members' family and then on God's family. We related our own feelings for family to how God might feel about each of us. It was an enlightening and deep-thinking session and we are grateful to Jill for leading it so beautifully.

April will be quite a busy month as we shall be celebrating St George's Day with a lunch on Monday, 18th. We hope as many members as possible will come along at 12 noon for a 12.30 pm lunch. We usually invite guests so if members are bringing someone along please let a committee member know for catering reasons. We usually ask £2.50 per person to help cover costs.

In the same week on Wednesday, 30th we are observing the worldwide Mothers' Union Wave of Prayer. We pray for our link dioceses (and they

pray for us) and their leaders. We shall meet in the church at 3.30 pm and afterwards repair to the Church Centre to put the kettle on and share a little tea party.

On the 4th April several of us have opted to journey to Gerrards Cross for the diocesan spring meeting. There will be a report on both the service and the meeting in next month's Chronicle.

This year marks the 140th anniversary of the founding of the Mothers' Union and we have been challenged to find a way to mark this. No decisions have been made in our branch yet but we have until the end of the year to choose to do something special. Would members like to put on their thinking caps and make suggestions? This might be a subject for discussion at our St George's Day lunch.

Canon Geoff interviews Mrs Rosanne Butler:

We all know Rosanne Butler and this is part of her story – the part that is linked with the Cowley Chronicle. I may have got bits wrong but if so talk about it- share the history and dream the future. The Cowley Chronicle has indeed had a long and esteemed history. At one point it was printed in standard newspaper form and was delivered free to the houses in the Cowley area by the Girl Guides. As time passed it became necessary to charge for the paper. It started at 4p and has since risen to 50p. Long before becoming editor Rosanne was asked to write for it. She would do a regular column about the things that happened in the parish. So she went out to meetings in the area. She would find groups that met and report what was happening in them. Slowly the net had to widen to find fresh material. This led to personal interviews.

Ten years ago she, with Carol the Rector's wife, picked up the reins. They had a simple vision. It saw a need for things spiritual, things news worthy and things fun. These days it is a team business. There are writers, typists, layout specialists, duplicators and distributors. So we give thanks for Rosanne and the team and we look forward to the next era. Praise the Lord!

Report from Deanery Synod Meeting held on 1st March 2016 at St Clements Church

The main message of the meeting was based on "leading your Church into growth" as part of the Mission Action plan.

The main points were to be positive, use what you have, prioritisation, having a sense of vocation, aim for small gradual growth (5% per year) to have vision, to plan, have a hunger or desire for change and growth, to have presence and think about attitude. These things broken down and analysed as best as we can and put into practice can help us get to where we want to go.

We were taught about the five values that we needed to focus on.

- ◆ Trinity (God's presence)
- ◆ Incarnation (sense of the needs of the place where we are)
- ◆ Transformational (to be a servant community serving the needs for our location)
- ◆ Make disciples
- ◆ Relational (welcome, hospitality and friendship)

Another aspect of the presentation was that we were to develop a "DNA"

- ◆ Desire
- ◆ Plan
- ◆ Action

which was further explained by the equation of: $\text{Desire} \times \text{Vision} \times \text{Holy Spirit} = \text{Change}$

We were encouraged to move from a maintenance perspective (bills, maintaining church roof and the like) to not just doing that, but also to think about vision and growth. This was further illustrated through the following points:

- ◆ Make time, space and resources available
- ◆ Search through our contacts for selfless people
- ◆ Pray for an opening and ask question
- ◆ Stay with the significant few who are dedicated to the cause so that they can affect the rest and spread action
- ◆ Draw others into ministry
- ◆ Regular time and space for reflection and prayer.

Also attention was brought to the ideas of how we welcome newcomers:

- ◆ Welcome letters
- ◆ Use of laity to go visiting as that carries more of a message than just clergy
- ◆ Pastoral groups
- ◆ Welcome drinks
- ◆ Dinners

We were also encouraged to work on deepening our faith and the faith of others and to work that into mission.

Finally it was expressed that our evangelism should be needs based.

Nick Dewey

Film Club at the Centre

In March we galloped across the Western Plains with John Wayne and his troop of US Cavalry and that made a change for us as we have rarely tangled with hoards of Apache braves! However we enjoyed the human story behind the film "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" some of us even going home humming the theme song. Again donations from our appreciative members amounted to nearly £70.

This month members need to know that film club night WILL NOT be on the second Friday of April but the third. So the date for the next showing is April 15th. Please do let friends and fellow members know. The film we plan to show is the great musical "Paint Your Wagon". It stars Lee

Marvin and Clint Eastwood who has his only film singing appearance in a lovely ballad. The show is full of wonderful songs and is great fun. Set in the days of the California gold rush and with a good story it should please everyone.



SIGNIFICANT DATES IN APRIL

3rd April 1933 saw the first aircraft fly over the highest mountain in the world. Two biplanes made the historic flight over Mount Everest.

Another first for the world happened on 6th April 1909 when Robert Peary became the first man in history to stand at the North Pole. It was his sixth attempt to do so.

The National Gallery in London's Trafalgar Square opened its doors to the public on 9th April 1838.

Bananas were displayed in a London greengrocery shop for the first time in Britain on 10th April 1633.

Webster's Dictionary was first published in America on 14th April 1828. It is famous for setting down the American spelling of English words like "color" and "theater".

On 23rd April 1702 Queen Anne became the first English monarch to be carried to her coronation. She was suffering from gout and arrived at Westminster Abbey in a sedan chair.

On the same date in 1968 the first decimal coins went into circulation in Britain. They were the 5p and 10p pieces.

On 28th April 1923 Wembley's newly built Empire Stadium had its first sporting event. Bolton Wanderers played West Ham for the FA cup. The day nearly ended in disaster as the ground was allowed to fill to double its capacity. Bolton won the match 2-1.

the Middle Ages, it was popularly believed that April 29th was the anniversary of the day that Noah left the Ark.

THE TRIALS OF A SCHOOL CLEANER

I expect you're wondering why
I'm sitting here so glum.
I'm thinking, "Is it worth it?"
Now all the work is done.

I look around the floors,
Not a sweet or spill in sight,
If only they could stay that way
I'd think I'd won the fight.

Like doing the girls toilets,
I've brushed them up real clean,
I've polished all the taps,
They sparkle and they gleam.

But, oh, on Monday morning,
When the kids all rush back in,
They'll mess up all my work.
It really is a sin.

They'll slide along the corridors.
Upon the walls they'll write.
And little bits of paper
Will be everywhere in sight.

So I sit here and I wonder.
But let me say to you,
"Hurray for all these mucky kids",
'Cos I've got a job to do!

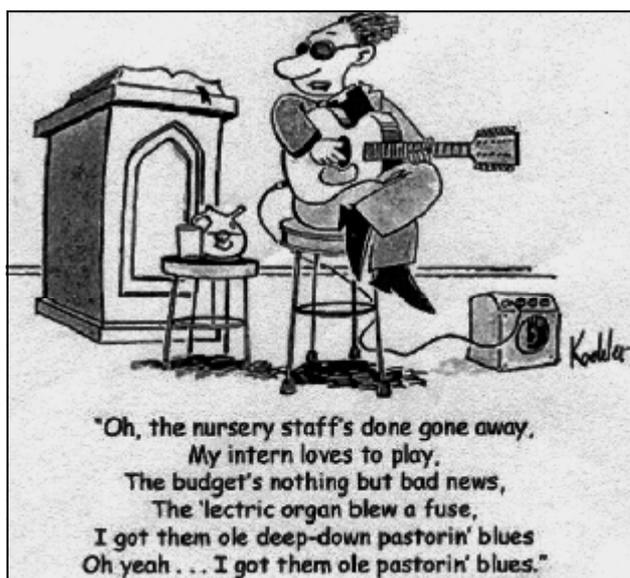
Maida Simmonds

Prayers from the Ark

By Carmen Bernos de Gasztold
Translated from the French and with a Fore-
word and Epilogue by Rumer Godden

THE PRAYER OF THE CAT

Lord
I am the cat,
It is not, exactly, that I have something to ask
of You!
No –
I ask nothing of anyone –
but,
if You have by some chance, in some celestial
barn,
a little white mouse,
or a saucer of milk,
I know someone who would relish them.
Wouldn't You like someday
to put a curse on the whole race of dogs?
If so I should say,
AMEN



COWLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

After holding the Annual Meeting in March, Cowley Women's Institute next meets at the Church Centre on Wednesday, 20th April at 2 pm when there will be an illustrated presentation about St George, the Patron Saint of England.

We look forward to seeing you then.

Ann Withers
President, Cowley WI

DIARY DATES TO REMEMBER

Mothers' Union

Monthly Meeting on 3rd Monday of month
from 2.30pm.

St James Church Centre

Women's Institute

Monthly Meeting is on 3rd Wednesday of month from
2 – 4.30 pm St James Church Centre

Coffee, Cake and Communion

Monthly meeting on 3rd Tuesday of month
from 10.30 a.m.

With Rev Skye at the Vicarage, 27 Don Bosco Close
(Tel: 434160)

Film Club

Friday, 15 April 2016 – "Paint Your Wagon"
St James Church Centre, commencing at 6.30 pm
with coffee and cake

Cowley Local History Society

Tuesday, 19 April 2016 at 8 pm
"The History of Oxford Brookes University"
An illustrated talk by Brian Brown

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday, 17 April 2016, at 12.15 pm
St James Church Centre

Parish Sunday Lunch

Sunday, 24 April 2016 at 12.30 pm
St James Church Centre

St Francis Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, 24 April 2016, at 12.15 pm
St Francis Church

St James Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, 8 May 2016, at 12.15 pm

Plant Sale

Saturday, 14 May 2016, 12 noon – 3 pm
St James Church Centre

Christian Aid Week 15 – 21 May 2016

Cowley Festival of Christmas Trees 2016

Planning Meeting, Friday, 20 May 2016 at 9.30 am
St James Church Centre

History of Cowley – Series of 4 talks:

6 April, 11 May, 8 June and 6 July 2016

6.45 pm for 7 – 8.30 pm

St James Church Centre

£5.00 an evening

In aid of St James Old School

St James Church Centre

Welsh Male Voice Choir Concert

Saturday, 11 June 2016— 7 for 7.30pm

St James Church

DO NOT FORGET – Tuesday Lunches at St James

Church Centre from 12.30 pm



Plant Sale
Saturday 14th May 12 – 3pm
St. James Church Centre
Beauchamp Lane
Cowley

Tomatoes, herbs, herbaceous perennials, annuals,
house plants and much, much more.
Refreshments, raffle, bric-a-brac, preserves
Bring your bags!

SAINSBURYS ACTIVE KIDS

As in past years we will be collecting vouchers for 'Seashells' and 'Little Stars'. Boxes for their collection will be in both churches (or you can give them straight to me MM). Start date is 27th January 2016 and the closing date will be 3rd May 2016 - every one counts.

Many thanks.

May Morgan

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES OLD SCHOOL

Our own 'local historian' Rosanne Butler is presenting her fascinating series of 4 talks on 'The Story of Cowley', on Wednesday evenings, once a month April to July, with refreshments - 6.45 for 7.00, £5 per evening, in St James Centre:

- April 6 (1) How it all began – Cufa's Ley*
- May 11 (2) 3 settlements and stone*
- June 8 (3) The bread basket of the university*
- July 6 (4) Victorian Cowley*

No need to book. Information from Rosanne (01865 453257) or Lesley Williams (01865 779562), oldschoolcowley@gmail.com.

We have a new historical mystery: I love this aspect of the digital age - out of the blue this week came an e-mail from North Yorkshire, questioning the use of the Old School building as a summer overspill Youth Hostel, after its closure as a school in 1975. I quote:

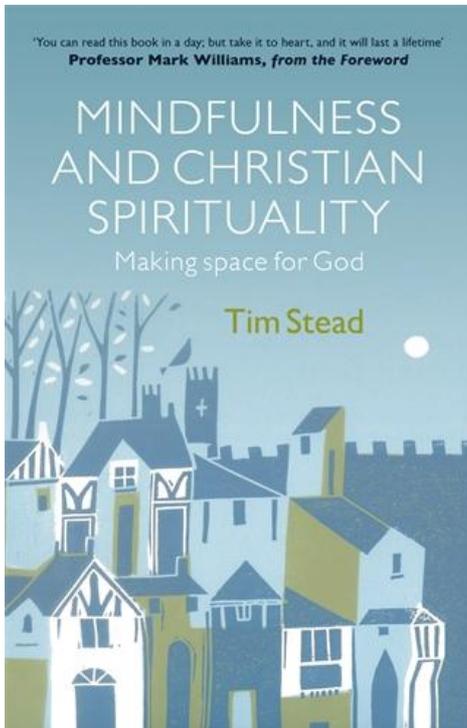
"I hope you will forgive a historical query concerning St James Old School, Cowley.

I am working as the volunteer archivist for the Youth Hostels Association. One of my tasks is to research the history of our many properties, former and current, as a series of Illustrated Profiles, to keep in perpetuity in our Historical Archive. I have just returned from a week's work in Oxford investigating the two long-term youth hostels, at Jack Straw's Lane and Botley Road, and a further half dozen or so fascinating temporary summer hostels used as overflow, in places as diverse as the Rookery at Ruskin College, Old Marston reading rooms, Old Marston old school, Old Marston new village hall, Josca's Little Theatre and Slade Park old school.

It was while I was looking further into these today that I came across a surprising and for me exciting online news article of 16 January 2014 about attempts to find a new use for Cowley St James old school. The article states: *The Beauchamp Lane buildings were used for a few weeks as overspill accommodation for the Oxford Youth Hostel, then in Jack Straw's Lane, Headington.*

That Oxford Mail article just reported the fact from one of the documents we have on file, with no knowledge of its author. Even Rosanne Butler cannot verify the information. *Please does anyone remember this usage and if so, can you fill us in on the actual years or any more details about the kit-tling out as a hostel, wardens, visitors etc.* John Martin, the volunteer archivist, would love to add to the somewhat vague reference!

You can still of course join the 'Friends' for just £10 a year: pick up a leaflet and registration form in St James Church or Centre.



MAKE SPACE FOR GOD IN YOUR LIFE

Mindfulness and Christian Spirituality
by Tim Stead

Mindfulness practice is hugely popular these days! But what, Tim Stead asks, does it have to offer Christianity? How might it help us to transform the way we manage stress and open up more completely to the promised 'life in all its fullness'?

Key is the definition of mindfulness as being more fully aware of our own experience in the present moment in a non-judgmental way. Stead finds that 'distractions', so often the bane of those trying to pray, can be taken note of without our being caught up in or taken over by them. A non-judgemental approach seems entirely consistent with talk of grace, and as

Christians we know we can only ever experience God in the present moment. Tim reflects: 'If I feel loved entirely without judgment, I will gradually dare to allow every aspect of myself to come into the light of God's gaze and so into relationship with the rest of myself – and this is how healing comes.'

'The book on mindfulness that many of us have been waiting for! Tim Stead writes with disarming honesty for anyone seeking a fruitful and truthful way to live.'

John Pritchard, former Bishop of Oxford

Tim Stead has been an ordained Anglican priest for 20 years and is currently Vicar of Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry, Oxford. He is an accredited mindfulness teacher with the Oxford Mindfulness Centre and teaches their eight-week MBCT course as well as running mindfulness courses and retreats in the parish and for clergy in the diocese.

For more information or to request review copies, please contact Sarah Head:

Email: shead@spck.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7592 3946

PLANT OF THE MONTH— MAGNOLIA

Cowley is good at growing magnolia bushes (or are they trees?) There is a fine example in Littlemore Road, another in Lytton Road and yet another along Hollow Way and I guess our readers could point out more. There is also a lovely magnolia in the churchyard at St James which during the recent winter has had to be quite drastically trimmed. However, it was rather taking over and it will grow back. In the meantime the glorious pink buds, which look so beautiful against a clear blue sky are already showing promise.

The extraordinary thing about these plants is that they pre-date the dinosaurs as fossil evidence has confirmed. Along with the ginkgo tree they are the earliest vegetation to inhabit the planet. The other interesting fact about them is that, unlike other such flowers, they do not rely on moths, butterflies or bees for pollination. How do we know that? Because in the evolution of the insect world they did not appear until after the extinction of the dinosaurs. Instead they rely on tiny beetles (who were around at the time) to crawl into the heart of the flower seeking nectar. So if you see little bugs on the petals of a magnolia you'll know what they're up to!

The earliest magnolias to reach Europe came from America. Francisco Hernandez, physician to Philip II of Spain, described a Mexican magnolia in the 1570s but, as far as we know, the first magnolia – a Virginia or swamp magnolia – was sent to Europe by a man named John Banister in 1688. The magnolia grandiflora was growing in Britain by 1717. That is the species we see frequently in gardens in Cowley. A German botanist, Georg Ehret who made his home in

England between 1736 and 1770 would walk three miles each day from Chelsea to Fulham to study the opening buds of a magnolia in the garden of his friend Sir Charles Wager.

Very fine species of magnolia were sent to Sir Joseph Banks at Kew from China in about 1780. They were much hardier than those from the New World. At first they were considered to be tender plants and were grown in a greenhouse with almost disastrous results.

The plant was named in France after Pierre Magnol, Louis XIV's doctor who was also a professor of botany at Montpellier University. The deep pink variety appeared in Britain in 1826. They were the result of a chance cross pollination in a garden near Paris and found their way to our shores. Monsieur Soulange in whose garden the new plant appeared had been tutor to the Empress Josephine's children and superintendent of her gardens. He was also patron of the artist Redouté who painted flowers, especially roses, so exquisitely.

One interesting fact about Pierre Magnol which has had huge influence in the botanic world is that it was he who was the first person to divide plants into "families" something which gardeners take for granted in the modern world.



OF APPLES, STONES AND MOWERS....

Spring has finally arrived! We have had some cold days and nights but now, after the equinox and moving into British Standard Time, the season is finally here.

Frog spawn in our garden pond has been late this year and appeared on March 20th. Only one large mass so far, at the time of writing, as we tend to have visits from neighbourhood cats who like to play with the frogs and so dissuade them from staying around.

My new back border now has two apple trees, a Charles Ross and Sunset. Sunset is a dessert variety and Charles Ross is multipurpose. We have grown this variety before and it yields large rosy-cheeked fruit that look like they have come from a children's story book. We have also planted a Victoria plum and a Concorde pear. I have yet to pick up the fan-trained nectarine which will go in the centre of the fence run. Some foxglove plants have gone in at the back and I am now waiting to see what comes up so I can hoe it off before I direct sow some annual flowers later when the ground is warm.

At the border boundary at the front I have been doing some dry stone walling! Lots of a really attractive blue stone had been used in the past to define border edges in the garden. I had piled it up out of the way ready for this job and, in stages, it is coming along.

Our lawnmower decided that it wasn't to cooperate this year, so we have replaced it with a cordless one. The new one arrived the day after ordering online and is much lighter and therefore easier to use than the old one with the added

advantage of not having to worry about a flex you could slice through. It also means that we can take it to the allotment to cut the grass paths. Sweet!

Finally, the Other Half has begun the spring digging on the plot. Nothing has gone in yet as the soil is still cold and there are no reliably-settled warm days on the horizon. My onion sets and shallots are rooting and shooting nicely in modules in the greenhouse in readiness. My seed potatoes are growing strong shoots also ready for their planting.

The greenhouse is getting fuller every day. I have 5 different varieties of tomato already pricked out into small pots as well as other stuff coming on for the Plant Sale on May 14th. Do please try, if you can, to contribute to the display. As well as tomatoes, other veg plants will be welcome as well as herbs, bedding and house plants and all kinds of herbaceous perennials. We also need help on the day and anything you can contribute to the raffle, bric-a-brac and jams/preserves. See you there?

Joan Coleman

Any astronomer can predict with absolute accuracy just where every star in the universe will be at 11.30 tonight. He can make no such predictions about his teenage daughter.

5TH COWLEY GUIDES.

Since January we have been busy working as a group on two badges - World Cultures and Laughter Challenge. For the challenge the girls have taken part in silly sports, treasure hunt, tying friendship knots, and other fun activities. For the other badge there were activities such as a fashion show, shadow puppet show, cooking food, body painting with Henna and board games. As well as this the three patrols also decided on their own Go For It badge and completed them. The different patrols selected Globalistic, Be a good sport and Blast from the past.

This term we have had some Brownies join us from 2nd and 3rd Cowley Brownies and hopefully will be making their promises soon.

Cynthia Retter

COWLEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Tuesday 19 April 2016 at 8.00pm

TALK

The History of Oxford Brookes University
(to include Oxford Technical School,
Technical College, Cheney Technical School)

An illustrated talk by Brian Brown

At United Reformed Church, Temple Road, Cowley
Annual Membership fee £18 (OAP £16)
Visitors welcome £3 per meeting

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REPORT FROM PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

A PCC meeting was held on the 13 March 2016 when the inspected accounts 2015 Accounts were accepted and referred to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

There was discussion on the need for the pruning of trees in the grounds of the Church Centre. Estimates were considered and the PCC recommended to the St James Church Committee that one of the estimates should be accepted. The St James Church Committee held a special meeting and accepted the recommendation of the PCC and this will allow the work to proceed as soon as the necessary planning permission (needed because the trees are in a conservation area) is received.

Both of the current church wardens have been in post for over six years and, because the current church wardens could be nominated again, the APCM will be asked to pass a resolution that the six year rule does not apply to this parish. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The dates for PCC and Church Committee meetings for 2016/2017 were agreed, and it was confirmed that a Vision Day would be held on Saturday, 18 June 2016.

The Parish has to pay a copyright fee for use of music. The cost of this is a substantial cost and the need for cover for the three properties is to be investigated.

It was agreed to investigate the possibility of concrete posts for the new fencing at St Francis Church, subject to an acceptable cost.

The PCC considered Rosanne Butler's resignation from the post of Editor to the Cowley Chronicle, and it agreed that a steering group should be set up to consider the future of the journal. If you are interested in being on the steering group please contact Geoff, the Parish Office or me.

A Foundation Governor of Church Cowley St James Primary School is required. Please contact Geoff if you are interested in learning more of this role.

Sally Hemsworth

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES OLD SCHOOL



THE STORY OF COWLEY

A monthly series of four talks by local historian Rosanne Butler, telling the history of the village of Cowley, from early days until Victorian times

**St James Centre, Beauchamp Lane, OX4 3LF
Wednesdays**

**6.45 refreshments for 7.00 – 8.30
£5 per evening**

April 6 (1) how it all began – Cufa's Ley

May 11 (2) 3 settlements and stone

June 8 (3) the bread basket of the university

July 6 (4) Victorian Cowley

no need to book

information from Rosanne Butler – Membership Secretary
Friends of St James Old School
01865 453 257

Lesley Williams – Chair
Friends of St James Old School
07982 439 828
oldschoolcowley@gmail.com

www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk/The-Parish/St-James-Old-School

LLM TRAINING

In Oxford, Lay Readers are called Licensed Lay Ministers or LLMs for short. Oxford likes to be different! I am in the second year of the three year Diploma course (over-seen by the University of Durham) which is what LLMs undertake before being accepted for licensing by the Bishop.

The core ministry of Lay Readers (celebrating 150 years of existence in June) has always been preaching and leading worship. This has evolved over the years and Readers are now involved in many other aspects of the spiritual ministry of the Anglican Church, such as pastoral care, evangelism, taking funerals and so on. There are some rural churches, where there is no vicar, where spiritual leadership is more or less undertaken entirely by Readers.

The Church is keen to train younger people as LLMs, one of whose roles is seen as interpreting Christianity in the life of the workplace.

It was made quite clear at my Selection Day at Diocesan House, Oxford (now moved to Kidlington) that LLMs are Lay Ministers; we are not clergy, although some LLMs do go on to ordination. The church itself is in a bit of indecision about the role of LLMs. Lay Readership is said to be a ministry in its own right, distinct from that of clergy but there seems to be no absolute definition of the role. I have recently written an essay on 'Reader Upbeat!' – the latest guidelines on LLM ministry – and I latched on to the idea proposed there that LLMs should serve in the areas where their particular and individual gifts can be best used and developed.

I have placed booklets about Lay Ministry in the church and I can always get more. There are also booklets detailing the four main areas of training: Ordination, Religions, Church Army and Lay Ministry.

The idea of training began for me when I went on a week's Mission Trip with St Aldates to a Spanish Anglican Church to help set up a 24/7 prayer room. Ed and Jill Ling's daughter, Anna, was on the same trip. After giving a short talk during the Sunday morning service, a lady came up to me and said, "You must be a Lay Reader, I take it?" I'd never thought of myself being called to Lay Readership but it triggered something in me. I continued to pursue the idea when I came to St James and Howard (our previous Rector) referred me to a Vocations Adviser. This Adviser suggested attending a Vocations Day at Dorchester Abbey. I thought I would find a natural home in the Church Army but surprisingly I was torn between Lay Ministry and the life of a nun.

This led to an interview with the LLM Vocations Adviser who put me forward to a Selection Day in April 2014. After that, I was put forward to the Bishop as a suitable candidate for training! I did talk and pray with Helen Beetham about whether or not to go ahead with training; it was not a decision made lightly.

My training was also approved by Howard and St James PCC although somewhere in the process the reference he did for me was lost (I know he did one because he let me read it!) and Skye had to do another one. Skye kindly took me under her wings as my training commenced

in September 2014 which more or less coincided with Howard's departure. Geoff is also keeping an eye on me in case I espouse any dodgy doctrine!

Rosanne asked me to include some funny stories about LLM training. When I relayed this to the others at our weekly evening lectures, we laughed ruefully, some even bordering on the hysterical. For those who work and/or who have families, LLM training can seem an unending slog of essays, practical assignments, portfolios and extra Training Days. We have a lady who took a First in maths at Cambridge who sails through academically but we also have others who are in their fourth or fifth years of study – I guess they like meeting up every week! We were told quite forcefully at the start of

training that if we were going to drop out, that was the time to do it, not half-way through. Lay Readers are called in many different ways and as a whole seem to be a group of people happy to be able to serve God in their churches and who find being an LLM fulfilling and worth the effort. I am looking forward to November 2017 when I hope to find myself being licensed by the new Bishop of Oxford.

Alison Lockhart
LLM in Training

**A woman is like a tea-bag.
You have no idea how
strong she is until she gets
into hot water.**

Children's Church, St James

As usual we've just had another packed and fun-filled term in Children's Church! Before half term we learnt about St Paul's life, re-enacted his shipwreck and worked together to construct a small model of his ship (although the sails of his actual ship probably weren't covered in sequins like ours was!). We also looked at the prophet Jeremiah and explored worship with dance and instruments as we used Psalm 150 as inspiration to write our own Psalm.

After half term we looked at the story of Ruth and Naomi and learnt that God can use us to look after other people. Finally, as Easter approached we looked again at the Easter Story, and (with the help of glow sticks!), pondered the way God's power broke into the darkness of the tomb and raised Jesus to life! We also had a lot of fun making empty tomb scenes out of jammy dodgers, mini eggs and some very green icing!

Thanks as always goes to the Children Church team for all their hard work this term: John Booty, Caroline Hartley, William Hartley, Jill Ling & Harriet Stevens. Also, a special thanks to Mary Bayliss for coming out each week to teach us the actions to our new songs and Geoff for his great guitar playing!

Catherine Hartley