

Chronicle



Coronation of King Charles III - 6 May 2023



May 2023

From the Editors

Sally Hemsworth and Nicki Stevens

What a change of colour in the gardens and countryside – the bluebells are out. When the sun is out the blue haze is a wonderful sight.

It has been a busy May so far with Bank Holidays on the 1st, 2nd and then for the last weekend of the month. It has been quite difficult to concentrate on preparing the Chronicle this month – May Day Celebrations in Oxford, snooker final!!, etc. Now we have the excitement of the Coronation and the awareness of the responsibilities which will fall on our new King, Charles III.

We do hope you have been busy growing plants for the Spring Sale on Saturday, 13 May 2023? There has been a lot of activity at the Centre arranging the details for the various stalls, food, etc. Help is needed, with cake making – these always sell well.

We then have the opportunity to be fed on 20 May 2023 with the Big Brunch, whilst being entertained by the Gospel Jazz Project.

We do hope you enjoy all the Bank Holidays, and we look forward to preparing the June Chronicle – for which we are sure you will send in lots of articles for inclusion.

Nicki and Sally

MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

Our little diocesan prayer group has been pretty busy lately and is continuing to be so for the next few months.

After a quiet prayerful time at our April meeting, we devoted time to planning and organising our quiz and cream tea afternoon, thus ensuring everyone knew what they were responsible for. That planning certainly paid off as the afternoon turned out to be a great success.

Our seasoned quizzers knew that they were in for an afternoon of fun, and it was very pleasing to welcome some newcomers who came to give us a try. They were most enthusiastic, and some told me that they had a 'brilliant' time. Of course, the quiz was enhanced by a very fine tea with 'posh' sandwiches, home-made cakes and scones and lots of strawberries and cream. As a MU group we were delighted that our generous guests enabled us to raise £107 towards the 'Away From it All' charity, which provides holidays for people unable to take a break with their families.

The meeting this month is going to be an expedition to Sandford-on-Thames to visit their beautiful old church. We are then going to take tea in the village hall café and shop.

Rosanne Butler

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK - 14-20 May 2023

CAW 2023 Cowley

HOW CAN I HELP apart from the obvious personal donation, either in a physical CAW envelope or on line into a virtual Parish envelope?

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/cowley-parish-envelope>

Other ways to be involved

1. 'Delivery only' envelopes will be delivered to the streets closest to our two churches, each labelled with an address to which the recipients can return them.

You can :

- ∅ stick peel off labels onto envelopes – at home or at a labelling/bundling party at St James Centre on Wednesday 10 May, 11.00 in the Ranklin Room.
- ∅ pop the envelopes through the letterboxes in one of 13 streets near St James and 3 near St Francis church – some time from 13 May.

2. fundraising stall in Templars Square on Wednesday 17 May, 11.00-3.00 with our usual limited item tombola, some games to play and buckets to collect

You can :

- ∅ provide new tombola items
- ∅ sign up to help on the stall for an hour or two

3. Saturday 20 May, 10.30-12.00 at St James Centre
Big Brunch along with live music from the Gospel Jazz Project who provided such a great concert for us during the Christmas tree festival – they will provide background music for the first hour and then we'll stop eating and listen from 11.30 am

You can :

- ∅ Sign up to help the team in the kitchen and serving in the hall
- ∅ Come and bring friends
- ∅ And donate to Christian Aid

Lesley Williams

Collect for Christian Aid Week

God, gardener of Eden,

who flung stars into space and nurtures the tiniest plant,

lift our hopes and dreams above the loss and damage of our suffering planet,

that we might share your long-dreamed vision

which values the pea as much as the plant,

fill us with your life-giving hope

and inspire us with your creative Spirit now, and in the age to come.

AMEN

Spring has been a long time coming!

I am feeling bereft just now. Spring is bursting out all over and all I have is a patch of bare soil!

We finally moved into our new-build house in Bristol at the beginning of April after over four months of living in two Airbnbs over a long, wet and cold winter.

Most of the garden-related contents of our shed and garage in Cowley went into a skip or to the tip before we moved at the end of last November. We did bring our basic tools with us and they are in the spare bedroom. We are waiting for our side access to be freed up so we can get into our garden instead of going through the house and that should happen any day now.

It would be good to get our bins in the right place instead of by the front door. Bristol has a different system for waste. We have a wheelie bin for general waste, a box for glass and paper, another box for plastics and cans and a silly bag for cardboard! There is a food bin as well. Every week a lorry turns up and the guys sort the recycling into different sections on the truck in the road!!

Anyhow, to store all these various containers, I have ordered a bin store from a local supplier which will have a living roof. Once in situ, I will be planting a mixture of sedums the top.

Our son, Tom, has a friend who has been round to look at our garden to do a layout for us and to get us a small shed. Can't have

tools in the spare room for ever!

So we hope in the next few weeks, we shall finally be able to plant!

I missed the autumn excitement of planting bulbs and sorting out the borders before we left our old house, and I am now missing the same buzz of preparing for Summer. I do have some tomato seedlings coming up on a window sill and I am itching to get going.

I will send an update when it all comes together.

I hope the sale in May goes well. I have really missed the joy of getting plants ready for a sale this year.

Joan Coleman



new and very nearly new
Spring Sale
with lunches and cakes
plants, preserves, cards
and a raffle
Saturday 13 May
11am - 1pm
St James Centre
Beauchamp Lane
Cowley OX4 3LF

not our usual full scale plant sale but there will be tomatoes, summer flowering, grasses

please bring your own bags/boxes
cash and contactless payments available

fundraising for St James Church

CHILDREN'S CORNER

When you are very quiet and listening to older people talking you may hear them say 'there's no such thing as a free meal', or 'nothing's free these days'. It never was, and is unlikely to be in the future, even if the advertisement says so. Someone paid for it - one way or another.

So is that really true? I've been asking myself this question many times and it is often very interesting to find out how or who paid for something that appears to be free. Usually, you don't pay to see a doctor, but most adults pay a fee towards the cost of any prescription. It is 'free' for old people and children, so who paid? Well old people will have paid a regular sum of money while they were employed and charged to them whether they need medical action or not, and it is also to pay for children's medicine and visits to the doctor. In addition, we have a whole army of people doing special work trying to improve hospital care and designing all kinds of equipment. It all costs money, but in this country, most people only pay a small amount towards the costs.

In some countries they have tried to do without money. Yes, it can be done. If someone is good at making clothes, they will exchange their work for food or perhaps the chance to graze their sheep in the field owned by the other person. It gets complicated but nothing is done 'for free'. Everything and everyone has their worth. Yes, it appears to be complicated.....and it is.....but although you may offer your services and help 'for free', it will cost you time. That is the one thing that everyone has and many forget it's value. We all have sixty minutes in every hour. so really we are all equal. It's what we do with the time that

is important.

On the other hand, while you can set a value of *your* time or skill, it may be more, or less, valuable than some-one else's. If you are selling apples and everybody else is also selling apples because there was a good crop that year, you may find that you can't 'buy' so much as you did last year. That means you have to work harder or find something different to trade. But if there is a shortage of apples, you could get more flour than you did before. What is so upsetting to me is to see food, and materials being wasted. Someone has paid for them. Someone has worked hard to make or grow it. And you should never throw away items that can be re-used or re-cycled. That is where you could find your 'free' items. Next time you see that something you might like to buy is advertised as '*BUY ONE....GET ONE FREE*' check to see whether the price has increased or it has become smaller. Or you may find that the *total* price has increased.

I like MARS bars. They seem to change in size every year. When I was very young, during the war, sweets were rationed - and the ration of sweets for one person was a MARS bar.....for a whole week! My mother would cut it into six slices. One per day.....none on Sunday because we would have some cake, made at home with a small amount of sugar from the weekly ration. In those days, we did get a 'free' bottle of milk each day at school. Babies had orange juice and cod liver oil. That was provided by the Government.

Take care, and give thanks

Uncle Ben

CORONATION MEMORIES



Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II 2nd June 1953

'The Chronicle' cover picture of our late Queen Elizabeth as she prepared to take on the 70 - year role of what has proved to be this country's longest reigning Monarch.

A treat was in store! I was not certain what it was, but I had to go to bed early and was told I must try to go to sleep straight away because I would have to get up early. Early it was – it was still dark! Dad and I walked to Cowley Station. This was a regular walk for me as I very often would walk with him to Gate 9 (with the dog as company, especially on the way home) when he went to work in the early evening – years before the ring-road and the busy roundabout.

We caught a train to Marylebone Station, arriving early morning. People were still asleep on the pavement when we got there, lots of damp newspapers everywhere. I am really not certain of the route we took but remember people were trying to get me to the pavement edge so I could be closer to the procession - no fear, I was too frightened I was going to lose my dad! I remember walking around the outside of Westminster Abbey (eating cold beef sandwiches) and on to Buckingham Palace with the crowds all around. We ended the day

with supper at one of Lyons Corner Houses, downstairs in the Brasserie (with a small band playing). What a treat for a 13-year-old. I certainly cannot remember getting home – but it must have been a very long day.

Luckily the procession I missed has been televised on a number of occasions, with the actual ceremony, so I have been able to appreciate the splendour of it all.

Nowadays on our Parish Walks we are very keen to count our steps – I wonder how many I walked that day!

Sally Hemsworth

On the Coronation Day my mum, dad and I went to my aunt and uncle's house in Bartholomew Road to watch the ceremony on their television as we didn't have one. It had a 9-inch screen with a magnifying glass in front which made it a little bigger. Unfortunately, there was trouble with the horizontal hold so my uncle had to keep banging the top of the television with his hand which righted it for a little while. It was a very memorable day which I can vividly remember.

We had a Coronation Penny in a little red box given to us at school.

Chris Woodman

I am of a certain age and have dusted off the items shown in the photographs, and a few others. All part of my history and reminding me of coronations and celebrations in the past. They also remind me that things change over the years and not everything remains the same. I am not going to go into whether girls and boys are now better behaved or not, so don't get worried.

When I was a boy, and had just started school, King George V and Queen Mary had been on the throne for 25 years and were able to celebrate their silver anniversary of being King and Queen.



Then, soon afterwards, King George V died and it was expected that his eldest son, Edward, would become King. Although he was king there were several important rules that he wanted changed before his coronation, but the leaders of the land would not agree, so his brother was crowned King instead. (Older readers will find interesting comments and reports on the web).



You may have noticed that there are lots of items in the shops with King Charles III printed on them ready for the great day and it was even more surprising in those days (1937) with items on sale from the beginning of the year, yet the Coronation was not due until May 12th. When the changes were made many items had already been sold naming King Edward and could not be recalled. I had mine ...and I have kept it. Then the pottery makers and printers started to work overtime re-using the same designs, but a different photograph for all the mugs and pictures so that children especially, and others wanting a memory of the great day would not be disappointed.

A lot has been written about the history that was made during the early part of 1937. It affected us all and has caused a lot of discussion. When you look at history and are able to read some of the reports that are kept secret for 50 or more years, some of the happenings that were difficult to understand become a little clearer. You learn that being in the Royal Family is not always smiles and parties and the fuller story allows the decisions taken at the time to make sense (usually). Sometimes they have troubles like other families, and have to follow some rules or customs that do not affect us. You probably notice that they seem to enjoy life, simply because they manage to smile and that is worth a lot. Smile at yourself sometimes in a mirror. It helps, especially when you are upset to find that purse that you thought was lost, and all you had done was put it in the other pocket to the one that you usually put it in! I am sure that they love to 'switch off' and just be themselves sometimes and not feel that they are in a glass cage. We are so lucky, aren't we.

SDC

SAFEGUARDING IN COWLEY PARISH

We intend that St James, St Francis and the Anglican Asian Living Church will be safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse, including domestic violence and bullying.

We will challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust in our churches.

We follow "statute, guidance and recognised good practice" in all our safeguarding procedures and check that all users of our premises also agree to do so.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – *please be sure to report anything you observe that worries you about someone's safety or wellbeing whilst at church or on-line.*

Lesley Williams 01865 779 562
07982 439 828
safeguard-
ing@cowleyteamministry.co.uk



Not for the first time, Fiona wished there was a crèche where she could leave the children.

FAIRTRADE - where are we with it as a Church and Parish?

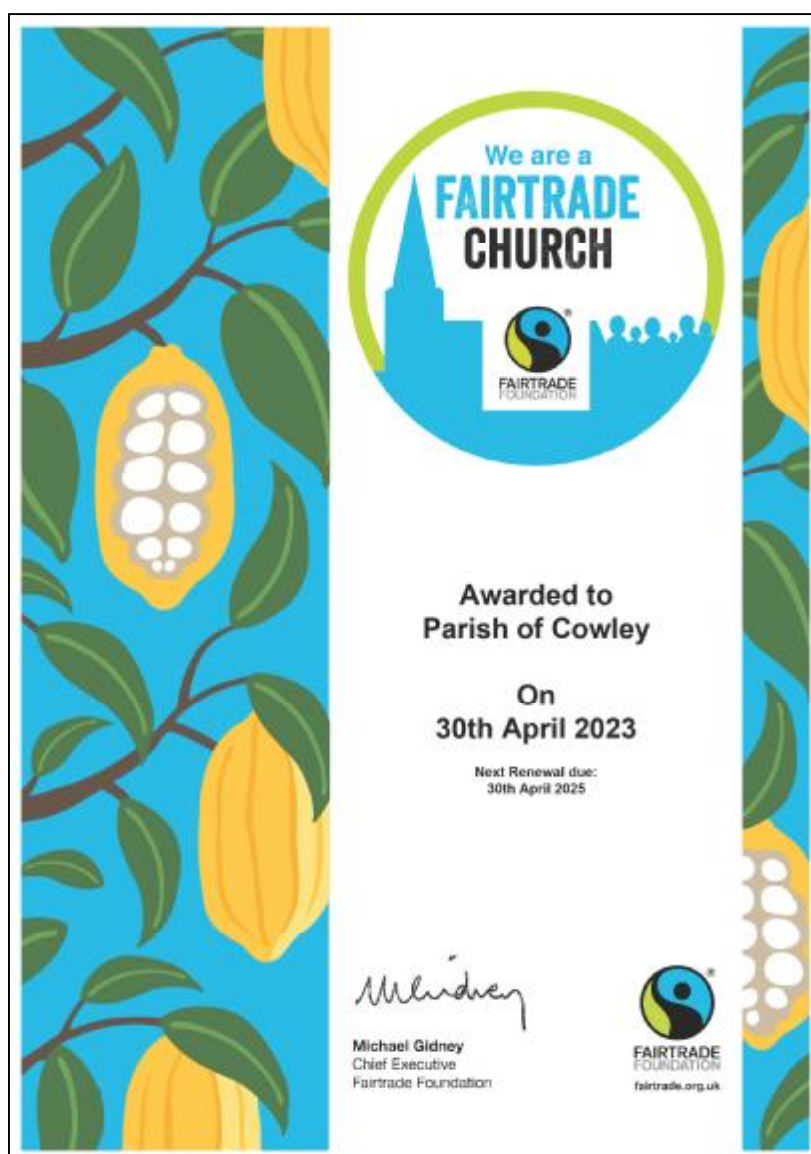
Success! We have now earned our 'Fairtrade Places of Worship' status, and have a certificate to prove it, as we declare we are living by the Kingdom principles of caring for those who produce, process and transport our food and other goods. This is good news but of course we don't just stop there; we must work harder to understand more about trading issues and their links with climate change.

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Get-Involved/In-your-community/Faith-Groups/>
<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Fairtrade-Places-of-Worship->

We confirm that we will stock the kitchen in both churches and St James Centre *only* with those fairtrade products which are readily available in the shops so *all such purchases for and donations to kitchen supplies should be Fairtrade, please.* Yes, it may cost us a little more, but it saves lives and livelihoods.

Any non-Fairtrade donated items of goods which can easily be found in the shops will be graciously received but passed on to the Community Emergency Foodbank.

Note that the Co-op and Sainsbury's, along with Headington Fairtrade are suppliers.



FAIRTRADE IN OXFORD

Following the news of national Traidcraft's demise, there has been a sad announcement for Oxford : Fairtrade at St Michael's, tucked in down the steps by the St Michael at the Northgate church shop, also closed earlier this month.

On Thursday 23 February, the directors of Fairtrade at St Michaels had invited shareholders to an 'extraordinary' meeting to discuss closure of the shop and dissolution of the cooperative, citing the whole background situation.

- ∅ Since the pandemic, neither sales or footfall had returned to pre-Covid levels.
- ∅ Since the Westgate opened and more businesses are moving or having to close, central Oxford is no longer a destination of choice, leaving the shop without the retail traffic once enjoyed.
- ∅ Inflation is ramping up costs and prices both for retailers and shoppers.

When the directors recognised the scale of the financial challenges, they embarked on a series of external events to inspire a new generation of shoppers, but to no avail.

Social media and other digital marketing efforts have not been able to entice new customers to the shop, either physically or online. The threat of further issues with local transport (including the 6-month closure of Botley Road) did not bode well. The directors and staff had considered alternatives including different premises, pop up shops, and reduced opening hours among other ideas, but none were financially viable or ticked the cooperative objectives.

The decision was therefore taken that the best port of call was to close now while the closure could be well managed: supporting staff, volunteers, suppliers and of course the Fairtrade producers.

Although this is an incredibly sad time, it is also a mammoth achievement for the shop to have been promoting Fairtrade in Oxford so successfully for 20 years; it's one that should be celebrated.

The online shop closed on Friday 10 March and the shop on Cornmarket on Sunday 15 April. Headington Fairtrade continues to trade successfully.

Transform Trade

LESLEY WILLIAMS IS CYCLING 500 MILES IN MAY FOR TRANSFORM TRADE

She didn't really mean to seek any sponsorship, especially with Christian Aid Week also this month, but has succumbed to the challenge and sponsored herself. If anyone would like to add a little to the pot, there's a paper form or an on-line page.

During this May, she has committed to join the Transform Trade Team Trek – she has pledged to cycle 500 miles (805 km) to reach the team goal of 8,000km - which is equivalent to the distance the very first fairly traded Traidcraft products covered from Bangladesh to Newcastle in the 1970s.

She has generally been covering around 300-350 miles a month so will have to "up" her daily round town 10-20 rides or plan a couple of much longer ones, out on the road.

<https://www.transform-trade.org/trek>

TRAIDCRAFT AND TRANSFORM TRADE

Here is a further update on the closure of TR AidCRAFT which ceased trading in mid January, leaving their worldwide suppliers, the shops which stocked their products and their volunteer sellers with many life supporting and logistic problems to solve.

But there's some cheerful news, as outlined in an email received from Transform Trade (previously Traidcraft Exchange) at the end of April

"Transform Trade has been formally recognised as sole custodian of the Traidcraft name, brand and mission going forwards. The Traidcraft Foundation* has granted Transform Trade sole use of the Traidcraft brand.

Transform Trade will continue to build on Traidcraft's pioneering vision - to support producers around the world and to advocate for a fairer trading system for everyone. Transform Trade is a registered charity, and our focus will be on using the Traidcraft brand to support producers and ethical businesses.

As in any administration process, the assets of Traidcraft plc have been sold. Whilst Transform Trade will take control of the Traidcraft brand and are expected to be given the Traidcraft website, the database of customers' personal contact details has been sold to the highest bidder.

If you were a Traidcraft customer, you will likely hear shortly from We Are Fair Trade Ltd, which is a for profit, limited company set up in 2023. They have also purchased old Traidcraft stock, including last year's Christmas cards, which they will be reselling.

Neither the Traidcraft Foundation, nor Transform Trade, has any relationship whatsoever with We Are Fair Trade Ltd.

We will be launching our own range of Christmas cards this year – and 100% of the profits will support Transform Trade's work. These will be available directly from Transform Trade later on this Summer.

As always, our focus is on the people who matter most – the producers and artisans fighting for a fair deal. We promise that every decision we make has producers, not profit, at its heart. We won't allow the Traidcraft brand to become associated with anything less than highest ethical standards.

We have exciting plans for the future of the Traidcraft brand and are partnering with a number of ethical businesses which sell fair trade products and go above and beyond in their relationships and support to fair trade producers."

Fairtrade Foundation <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk>

Transform Trade <https://www.transform-trade.org/>

Caring & professional

Foot Health Practitioner

Routine nail trimming; corn & hard skin removal; diabetic foot care and advice; mildly ingrown, thickened and fungal nails

Home Visits or clinic appointments - Full PPE- sterilised instruments -insured & DBS checked

**Kate Reid MCFHP MAFHP
07952127534**

kate@nurturefootcare.co.uk

A WARTIME CHILDHOOD

(Part 29)

Sometimes when I step into my lovely, warm power-shower I think of the bath nights on Saturdays in our tiny cottage about eighty years ago. Oh yes, Saturday nights were bath nights to be sure – but what an incredible effort it involved!

At the side of the cottage was a brick-built scullery which housed a great many things, like our bicycles, the gardening tools, buckets and so on, but most importantly it housed a stone 'copper', so necessary on washing days and also to heat the water for our weekly baths. Behind the door, propped up against the wall, stood a full-length galvanised metal bathtub.

On Saturday afternoons, enough water had to be drawn up bucketful by bucketful, to fill the copper. This water was drawn from the well which was situated outside the cottage by the door. It was then carried into the scullery. A fire was lit under the copper and kept going in order to heat the water sufficiently. By about six o'clock it would be ready and daddy would scoop the hot water from the copper into the bathtub. I would be first to sit in the bath. As we had no other heating in the scullery except the fire under the copper, on winter evenings you didn't lounge about in the bath – it was quick in and out!

In those days, of course, there was no such thing as 'bubble bath', so you would swish the soap around a bit to soften the water. Soap was precious, as it was rationed, so you used it down to the last tiny flake. You could also get a small cage-like contraption into which you put your last shred of soap and swish that around in the water. My Mummy's favourite soaps were 'Knight's Castile', Palmolive and Lux.

When I had had my bath daddy would wrap me up in a big, warm towel and carry me out of the scullery door and along the garden path and in through the front (and *only*) door of the

cottage. I was then settled in front of the kitchen range to get dry and pop on my clean nightie or pyjamas while mummy went out to jump into the bath for her weekly sluice (same water of course). After her, went daddy, no doubt adding a little more hot water, while a squeaky clean mummy would be preparing our Saturday evening supper.

After his bath, daddy had the onerous pleasure of emptying all the water, again bucketful by bucketful out into the garden, before the bathtub could be cleaned and hung back up behind the scullery door.

Saturday night supper at the cottage was always something of an occasion. It would sometimes be a fry-up (if our bacon ration would stretch to it) or maybe a much-prized sausage each or an egg, (eggs from our own hens were plentiful), a slice of fried bread and, maybe, mushrooms from the fields. On other occasions we enjoyed fish, which we could buy in the afternoons from Mr. Bint. He went each week to Oxford station in his lorry to collect coal for the village and often returned with boxes of kippers or herring. Fish, of course, was not rationed.

I learned to love herring for my Saturday supper. Daddy taught me how to fillet it and remove all the little bones, so with a slice of bread and a scraping of margarine I was a very happy little girl.

There was always something good to listen to on the 'wireless' and the war seemed a long, long way away.

Of course, my parents still had to do the washing-up, a kettle of hot water and a bowl on the kitchen table, but I didn't know anything about that because after my bedtime story I was tucked up in bed, said my prayers and looked forward to church the next morning.

Rosanne Butler

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

From the website of the Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage

<https://csmv.co.uk/2023/04/27/sister-lizzie-ruth-received-as-a-sister-under-promise/>

SISTER LIZZIE RUTH - ALLELUIA!

We are delighted that Novice Sister Lizzie Ruth was received as a Sister under Promise on Wednesday 26th April and became Sister Lizzie Ruth CSMV.

We had a beautiful Sung Eucharist at which our Warden Fr Toby Wright received Sr Lizzie Ruth's Promise and presided and preached. It was lovely too, to be joined by Sr Lizzie Ruth's family including two very small nephews who gave great delight, together with Community friends. Thanks be to God.

We knew Sister Lizzie Ruth as Lizzie Hartley, eldest child of Stephen and Sharon. They are very proud and delighted to share the news

THE REVD LIAM CARTWRIGHT will be ordained priest by The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford, in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, at 3 pm on Sunday 25th June.

Liam will celebrate his first Mass at St Francis of Assisi, Hollow Way, Oxford at 3 pm on Saturday 1st July. The preacher will be the Rt Revd Beverley Mason, Bishop of Warrington.

All are warmly welcome to attend both services - Ember cards are available at the back of St James and St Francis Churches.

THE REVD JOSH HORDERN will be ordained priest by The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford, in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, at 3 pm on Sunday 25th June. Josh will preside at communion for the first time at the 11am service at St James' on Sunday 2nd July, after which all are welcome to stay for some cake, along with Josh's family. Prayers are welcome for Josh, his family, all those being ordained and for the whole Church of England at this time.

DAVID BENSKIN will be licenced as Team Vicar in the Langtree Team Benefice at St Leonard's Church, Woodcote on Thursday 6 July at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Prayer Space

Gracious God,
however often I thank you,
I can never thank you enough,
for your blessings are too many to number and your goodness is too wonderful for words.
So I come, as I have come so often before, to express my gratitude for all I have received
from your bountiful hands.
Amen.

Taken from Prayerfully Yours
By Nick Fawcett

To you we come, God, our Creator,
Strength in our weakness:
Light in our darkness:
Peace in our distress:
Presence with us always:
Support us when our hearts are heavy.
Comfort us when we feel alone. It will
Refresh us when life feels like a desert:
Be a home to us when we are as aliens in a foreign land.
Lord as you abide with us, let us abide in you.
To you we come, God, our Creator.
Amen

Taken from The Awesome Journey
By David Adam

CAP Life Skills Course



The next CAP Life Skills Course is due to start in a few weeks' time. The team is one of the CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Services in Oxford. They are part of Emmanuel Church, Cowley and work in partnership with other churches supporting the Oxford Debt Centre. Together they aim to help those struggling to manage at this difficult time.

What is a CAP Life Skills group?

It's a relaxed and friendly place where people can learn how to manage better on a low income. The course looks at the following topics.

- ∅ How to manage our money, shop within a budget, and develop better purchasing skills.
- ∅ How to construct a personal budget
- ∅ Managing home energy costs
- ∅ Healthy Cooking on a budget
- ∅ Keeping healthy, in body and mind
- ∅ Maintaining positive relationships

Attendees will be supported by trained volunteers who will guide and assist them as they work on practical exercises each week.

The group will meet once a week, for a total of 8 sessions. The course is completely free, and each session finishes with a simple lunch. Everyone receives a helpful workbook, packed with useful information and practical tips, to help them put things into practice. A creche is also provided, if required by those who attend.

Details of the next Course:

May 9th – July 4th (Half term holiday on May 30th)

At 'The Venue', 242B Barns Rd, Temple Cowley, OX4 3RQ

Time: 10.30am to 12.30pm, followed by optional light lunch

All attendees must book a place with Helen Gallagher, CAP Life Skills Manager, 07926596225.

She works two days each week. Details can also be seen on [CAP UK](#) | [CAP Life Skills](#)

Relationships: What is the current situation in the Church of England?

There are 4 related articles in this month's Chronicle. Each serves a different purpose. They are related and, in my opinion, need reading together. Some are simple reports others contain personal convictions and reflections.

In the following pages you will find an article first released in 'Premier Christian Magazine'. It is a report following the 'National Church of England Synod' in February, where the issues of the blessing of same sex relationships were debated. Reporting on this dominated the national newspapers for several days. Yet still, it seems, many people are a little unsure what the outcome was, or even what was under discussion. It is not my custom to reproduce articles from other magazines, but current circumstances have led me to make an exception. Do please take a few minutes to read it. It will be helpful before you continue reading on!



Finding a suitable report of the discussions has been challenging. Some reports are simple headlines, written to 'grab people's attention' but not tell the story. Within others, the 'feet of the author' are firmly planted in a particular position. Such bias can heavily shape an article and make it more of a campaign document, than a report. No one is ever going to tell a perfectly unbiased story, but I hope the reproduced account tells the story in a way that is helpful and informative.

So, why am I writing this article in May, 3 months later? A very important question. I have in previous months attempted to introduce material that prepared the way for discussions about sexuality, gender and relationships. There was little appetite to engage. Yes, one or two individuals expressed a desire, but not enough to generate a feasible group representing the church as a whole. Since February, national discussions have started to shape local church life. Some of our loved members have felt they can no longer be a part of a Church that blesses the relationship between a same sex couple. Others are questioning their future involvement. This means that what have been issues that felt distant have become very real and very local. I no longer feel I can stand on the side lines.

When you read Heather Tomlinson's article you discover that, at present, nothing has changed. The guidelines for what is permissible, and what is not, have not moved. The debate did not change what can be done in Church of England parish churches, or what can be done by Church of England ministers. There is no current scope for marriages or blessings of same sex couples. The theology of the Church of England is as it has ever been. I cannot say this will continue to be the case, but it is the current situation. As Heather explains, very few people are content with this. Some want more radical action; some want a stabilisation and affirmation of the historic positions.

Where are we as a local church? In many ways we are waiting to see. You will find in later pages the text of the motion that was finally agreed at national Synod in February. My understanding, (taken from the Church of England website) is that: "Synod's comments will now guide the bishops as they refine those texts carefully and prepare new pastoral guidance for the Church on sexuality and marriage in the coming months before the prayers are formally commended for use in churches." In due course, maybe July, further guidance will be put in place. But what that will be is only speculation. Whatever arrives will have been shaped by each of the clauses agreed. These include

"That this synod, recognising the commitment to learning and deep listening to God and to each other of the Living in Love and Faith process, and desiring with God's help to journey together while acknowledging the different deeply held convictions within the Church:

g): endorse the decision of the College and House of Bishops not to propose any change to the doctrine of marriage, and their intention that the final version of the Prayers of Love and Faith should not be contrary to or indicative of a departure from the doctrine of the Church of England."

Heather Tomlinson addresses the question: "So this could split the church?" and responds; "Yes. Both in the wider Anglican Communion, but also in the Church of England itself". At a meeting in Rwanda last month Anglican leaders from Africa and other parts of the world, representing 85% of all Anglicans in the world, expressed a deep disquiet about any changes which might take place in England and their intention to distance themselves from such changes. The tension felt by our local congregation is just one expression of this anguish. As yet, the Church of England has not expressed how it will respond. It is a decision that Synod will make. We may gain some understanding of possible responses by looking at history. With the issue of female Priests, the Church responded by offering 'Alternative Episcopal Oversight'. This enabled churches to ask for another Bishop, one with more traditional views, to be their recognised spiritual leader. On occasions such as Ordinations and Confirmations these Bishops step in. It has been a practical response to a challenging difference in theological understanding. Currently, there are no suggestions on the table.

We are indeed in an in-between time. My belief is that we should both 'watch, wait and pray'. In that time, we can, in love and patience, talk and discuss these matters. I am very happy to sit over coffee or tea and talk. It is worth contacting our National Synod representatives and expressing your views. These include Bishop Steven (bishopoxon@oxford.anglican.org) and other National Synod reps (<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/general-synod/>). Amongst these there is a full representation of different positions.

The motion agreed following the General Synod debate GS2289;
Living in Love and Faith - A RESPONSE FROM THE BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND

There are four related articles in this month's Chronicle. Each serves a different purpose. They are related and, in my opinion, need reading together. Some are simple reports others contain personal convictions and reflections.

That at this synod, recognising the commitment to learning and deep listening to God and to each other of the living in love and faith process, and desiring with God's help to journey together whilst acknowledging the different deeply-held convictions within the church:

- (a) lament and repent of the failure of the Church to be welcoming to LGBTQI+ people and the harm that LGBTQI+ people have experienced and continue to experience in the life of the Church;
- (b) recommit to our shared witness to God's love for and acceptance of every person by continuing to embed the Pastoral Principles in our life together locally and nationally;
- (c) commend the continued learning together enabled by the living in love and faith process and resources in relation to identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage;
- (d) welcome the decision of the House of Bishops to replace Issues in Human Sexuality with new pastoral guidance;
- (e) welcome the response from the College of Bishops and look forward to the House of Bishops further refining, commending and issuing the Prayers of Love and Faith described in GS 2289 and its annexes;
- (f) invite the House of Bishops to monitor the Church's use of and response to the Prayers of Love and Faith, once they have been commended and published, and to report back to Synod in five years' time.
- (g) endorse the decision of the College and House of Bishops not to propose any change to the doctrine of marriage, and their intention that the final version of the Prayers of Love and Faith should not be contrary to or indicative of a departure from the doctrine of the Church of England.

Voting was as follows: Bishops 36 for, 4 against, 2 abstained; Clergy 111 for, 85 against, 3 abstained; Laity 103 for, 92 against, 5 abstained.

Explained: What the Church of England has decided about gay relationships

There are 4 related articles in this month's Chronicle. Each serves a different purpose. They are related and, in my opinion, not together. Some are simple reports others contain personal convictions and reflections.



By Heather Tomlinson (February 2023) a freelance journalist and regular contributor to Premier Christianity magazine. She likes to communicate the Christian faith to anyone who will listen: find more on her blog - [heather](#)

Clergy in the Church of England will be able to host services of blessing and thanksgiving for couples in same-sex relationships, but not marry them. Heather Tomlinson answers your questions.

Why do I keep on hearing about Synods?

The Church of England has just held an important General Synod, where recent proposals on same-sex relationships from its bishops were debated. The bishops proposed new prayers are introduced, which can be said over same-sex couples in church, following their civil marriage ceremony [at another venue]. These prayers have proved particularly newsworthy and controversial in the lead up to this meeting.

What is a Synod, anyway?

A Synod is a group in a church that decides things. The CofE's General Synod is a bit like a parliament for the established church. It's held three times a year, and all the different dioceses (which are like the local councils of the CofE) have to elect both lay people and clergy to attend these meetings. So there are a lot of ordinary Christians who can speak and vote – although it does tend to attract campaigners for change within the church. There are bishops, too.

So why's there a fuss about prayers? I thought the church was keen on prayer.

The bishops' proposal makes it clear that it's more than just a prayer. The press release says the new "Prayers of Love and Faith" will "enable same-sex couples to come to church after a civil marriage or civil partnership to give thanks, dedicate their relationship to God and receive God's blessing."

Conservatives say this goes too far by recognising a same-sex partnership as valid in God's sight. But they go nowhere near far enough for liberal campaigners, who want to be able to hold a gay marriage within CofE churches.

Why are they arguing about sex again?

Probably because it's the subject where there is the biggest gap between the traditional church and mainstream culture's more sexually permissive and pro-LGBT attitudes. There's been a lot of pressure from government and from liberal campaigners for the Church of England to change since gay marriage was legalised in Britain in 2013 – especially as it is the 'established Church' and has certain privileges within the UK government. A lot of CofE folk - vicars, bishops and ordinary people in the pew - also believe that the church's doctrine should be changed and think that gay relationships are not sinful.

This particular bout of arguments follows a five-year consultation called "Living in Love and Faith" where bishops consulted with people of different sexualities and opinions on the matter.

Why does everyone seem so unhappy?

The "prayers of blessing" compromise that the bishops came up with doesn't seem to have pleased anyone.

The people who want gay marriage in the church argue that they don't go far enough. Veteran gay rights campaigner Peter Tatchell called them "an insult" as "blessings are what the Church gives to pets like dogs and guinea pigs" as he was protesting with placards outside this week's Synod.

However the more conservative members of the CofE think that blessing same-sex unions is a step too far, as they believe scripture does not allow for this.

Aren't they meant to love each other, and all that?

Well, being Christians, there were touches of kindness at this recent Synod. Before the debate started they handed sweets around to each other. And everyone gave Geoffrey Tattersall KC, who had the tricky task of chairing this debate, a standing ovation at the end.

They may intend to love each other, but in reality, they disagree what that looks like – and they disagree about what is true.

So when is the Church of England going to conduct gay marriages?

It doesn't look likely, any time soon.

Can our LGBT friendly vicar bless a same-sex union this week, then?

No. The bishops are going to go away and tweak the language of the new prayers on the basis of what's been discussed at Synod.

But if the government and the bishops want gay marriage in church, why hasn't it happened yet?

A lot of bishops do support introducing gay marriages in CofE churches, and a number have publicly changed their minds recently. But there are still plenty of CofE folk who hold to the traditional view of marriage – and they are more likely to be in larger churches that are growing, which gives them a significant say.

However, the potential consequences of this debate are much wider than what happens in English churches. The CofE is part of the broader Anglican Communion – the third largest group of Christians after the Roman Catholic church and the Orthodox churches.

Most parts of this Communion are much more conservative than the CofE, and a number of countries have said they will leave the Anglican Communion if there is any kind of recognition of gay marriage, especially from its head, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby. It's particularly unpopular in Africa – and Welby is reported to have said he thinks keeping the Communion together is more important than introducing gay marriage in the CofE.

So this could split the church?

Yes. Both in the wider Anglican Communion, but also in the Church of England itself.

So why did it take two days to discuss all this?

There were a lot of amendments proposed to the bishops' new plans. In the end, the amendments were not accepted, and the Synod voted in favour of the new prayers.

But it's not over, yet.

Both sides will be fighting to make the CofE align with their way of thinking. And either disestablishment from the British State, or a breakup of the Anglican Communion, could be the result.

'A personal reflection on "Relationships: What is the current situation in the Church of England?"

There are 4 related articles in this month's Chronicle. Each serves a different purpose. The related and, in my opinion, need reading together. Some are simple reports others contain p convictions and reflections.

I have attempted to keep my opinions out of the other articles. I may, or may not, have succeeded. But I hope this article will tell you something of where my heart is.

The Church of England is in a messy time. Happenings at National Synod, and the resulting consequences have not yet come to a stable position. I do not know what the final outcomes of the current debates will be. In consequence I can not be sure where my final position will be.

It is no coincidence that hymns such as 'let us build a house' appear regularly in our weekly worship. The words of this hymn run like this:

... 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
... Built of hopes and dreams and visions
Rock of faith and vault of grace
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions
... All are welcome, all are welcome
All are welcome in this place

It goes on to talk of a place where: prophets speak, where love is found. A place where: the cross shall stand as witness; where the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space.

Many of you will have come across 5 compelling ways God guides us; Commanding Scripture (Bible), Compelling Spirit (Holy Spirit), Counsel of the Saints (Church/Christian community), Common Sense (Reason), Circumstantial Signs (Providence of God).

As I consider the title question of this piece, all 5 come into play. Each one of us is called to build a church where all are welcome. But take note that we are called to build a 'church' where all are welcome, not build a 'place' where all are welcome. What does it mean for it to be a church? Is a church just any old group of people?

The Church is the people not the building. We, the followers of Jesus, are the Church. As Jesus' followers, his disciples, we are shaped by his character. To build a Church means to build a community of people who are shaped to be like Jesus: To live lives the Jesus way. That is our focus and, as church builders, our aim.

This is written at a particular time, a time of transition. I can most helpfully talk about things

that, to me, have clarity. So, let's start there: What do I believe?

I believe the church should welcome everybody. It does not matter if people arrive as individuals or as couples of mixed or the same gender: our calling is to offer the welcome of Jesus. Just as God loves each one of us and welcomes each one of us, so the church is called to be Christ like. To love and welcome.

I believe in marriage. We know that Jesus supported a marriage in Cana in Galilee (John 2). I believe marriage stems from the early creation narratives found in Genesis chapter 2. Narratives that lead to the pastoral introductions of our current wedding service.

"Marriage is a gift of God in creation through which husband and wife may know the grace of God. It is given that as man and woman grow together in love and trust, they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind, as Christ is united with his bride, the Church."

I can only see marriage existing between a man and woman. The coming together of two sets of material, one carrying 2 'X' chromosomes and the other an 'X and Y'. Whilst the government has a right to redefine words for secular use, I do not believe they have the power to do so in either a scientific or theological settings. Yes, this may be driven by my scientific background but for me it sits comfortably with my understanding of scripture.

I believe that God created us to live in community. Genesis is clear Adam was not good on his own. He needed a partner. My views on marriage do not lead me to believe that the only successful partnerships can be between a man and a woman. The Church has long recognised the strength of single sex communities (for example in religious orders), and same gender working relationships. Whenever I encounter one of these do I think that a 'marriage' has taken place? I don't think so.

I believe in 1 John chapter 4 verse 10. *"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins"*. I profoundly believe that I cannot 'earn my way' into God's good books. It is only Jesus, our Father in Heaven, and the Holy Spirit, who know the deep truths hidden inside our lives.

Once I listen carefully to the sermon on the mount (Matt 5 to 7) I can have no belief that I deserve a place at God's side for eternity. I repeatedly fall short. Life is not like a video game where I can push a reset button and start the game again. Once I fall short, I am totally reliant on God, in Christ, pushing the reset button for me. And He does that again and again. Paul is so clear in Romans chapter 3 verses 10b to 12. *"There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."* Is it surprising we hear Jesus, still on the mountain side, saying, *"first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye"*.

We all carry our brokenness. For that reason, we must work hard to ensure that all are welcome. We are called to love first and to extend that hand of love at all times.

I believe in sanctification, the process of becoming more Christ like. The longer we live with Jesus, the more like him we become. Jesus takes us on a journey using the 5 compelling ways: Commanding Scripture (Bible), Compelling Spirit (Holy Spirit), Counsel of the Saints (Church/

Christian community), Common Sense (Reason), Circumstantial Signs (Providence of God).

I believe in blessing, and I believe we are called to bless. My mind immediately turns to 2 examples: Aaron blessing the people of Israel in Numbers chapter 6, and Jesus blessing the children in Mark chapter 10. In neither case do I expect to find perfect innocence-*for all sin and fall short of the glory of God.*

Ian Paul in an article written about the recent synod reminded me:

'The proposals that the bishops brought to Synod were that the doctrine of marriage, as a lifelong union between one man and one woman, would not change, but within the constraints of that they would propose some 'Prayers of Love and Faith' which might be used to bless those people in same-sex relationships of some forms or other (as yet unspecified), but not function as a proclamation of God's blessing on the relationship itself. What Synod narrowly voted for, after about eight hours of debate on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning, was for the bishops to continue to work on this, with some serious qualifications.

Each week I pray blessings on the community of Cowley. I do so, not believing Cowley is perfect. I pray recognising it is not, asking God to sanctify it. For me the very act of Jesus entering the World (John 3:16) is a symbol of blessing poured down because we need God.

As we build His Church, His people, I believe it is these compelling ways that Jesus uses to shape our journey of sanctification. Do I want to be part of a Holy Church, yes, I do! Am I part of Truly Holy Church. No, I am not. Why not? Because I am part of that church, and I am broken! I need to hear his voice calling me each day. Do I know how I will respond when we 'the Church of England' have completed this next step of synodical government? No, I don't. When I reach that point I will, by the grace of God, be able to follow his lead.

If this raises more questions than answers, please find a time to sit down with me and talk. Together might we walk with Christ.

Geoff

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace",

Mark 10: 16; "Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them". The Greek word used here is eulogeo, which means to 'praise, celebrate with praises. to invoke blessings'.

Romans 3

<https://www.psephizo.com/sexuality-2/what-exactly-happened-at-synod-on-the-prayers-for-love-and-faith/>

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING/ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, 23 APRIL 2023

A bring-and-share lunch started the meeting in good spirit, and at the Annual Parish Meeting Maureen Stone and Christine Woodman were appointed as Church Wardens.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting followed immediately. The Parish is allowed 12 Parochial Church Councillors. Current members are:

- Sally Hemsworth
- Andrew Swallow
- Lesley Williams

This means that it was hoped nine people would be nominated but unfortunately nominations were only received from:

- Marie Paterson
- Sue Philcox
- Emily Sommerlade
- Norah Shallow

So, there are still five vacancies. Please speak to Geoff or Sally Hemsworth if you would like to be co-opted on to the PCC. This is still possible, and you are very much needed for this important role.

The Deanery Synod is appointed every three years, and this year we needed to appoint three members. Two people were appointed:

- Maureen Stone
- Christine Woodman

There is, therefore, one vacancy. Please speak to Geoff if you would like to be considered for this vacancy.

The meeting considered the Annual Report which includes the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the parish generally, the 2022 Accounts, Mission Giving and the Parish Mission Prayer and Giving Policy, the report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the churches, and the proceedings of the Cowley Deanery Synod over the last year.

This report, together with the signed Accounts for 2022, will be available in the churches from Sunday, 7 May 2023.

Sally Hemsworth

St James Church Centre
Beauchamp Lane OX4 3LF
Saturday 20th May 10:30am



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THE BIG PEA CHALLENGE

Welcome to the Big Pea challenge – a fun and interactive way for the church and community to come together to raise funds this Christian Aid Week 2023!

This Christian Aid Week, we celebrate how Christian Aid partners in Malawi are helping farmers transform their livelihoods using the humble but mighty pigeon pea: a drought-resistant, soil-revitalising, high-protein, low-cost, delicious crop. It's an essential part of the diet of millions of people around the world and for thousands of farming families in Malawi, pigeon peas are a route out of poverty.

Inspired by the transformational pigeon pea, The Christian Aid Big Pea Challenge invites us to hold our own pea-themed fundraiser this May – so it will be a feature of competitions at the stall in Templars Square – Wednesday 17 May, 11.00-3.00 and at the Big Brunch, Saturday 20 May, 10.30-12.00. Watch out for recipes.

This Christian Aid Week we share the challenges experienced by communities in Malawi : Covid, climate change, conflict in Ukraine and the cost of living crisis mean that in Malawi, soaring costs of food and essentials are crushing dreams, keeping people in desperate poverty.

But there is hope.

Together with their partners, Christian Aid empowers vulnerable communities to find practical and sustainable ways out of poverty, including giving them the skills to:

- Grow crops (like pigeon peas!) that are more resilient to the climate crisis.

- Restore soil fertility

- Increase harvests

- Learn business skills

- Join co-operatives to earn more for their crops.

Recipe prayer

Breadmaking God,

You take a large measure of pigeon pea flour grown with dignity and dedication,

a pinch of salt to season and celebrate diversity,

a tablespoon of sugar to encourage and enable,

a teaspoon of yeast to inspire and dream,

and a glug or two of water to bring us all together.

Leave us to rise, to stretch and learn,

then bake us in an oven of justice and love.

The smell of baking bread invites us to the table,

where all have equal worth,

to take, break and eat,

until all are fed and hunger is no more.

For this is a celebration of community, of God's presence among us. AMEN.

ROSANNE INTERVIEWS

JO DUCKLES

If you are fans of A. A. Milne's 'Winnie the Pooh' books, you will understand when I describe Jo as a 'Tigger' person. For the uninitiated reader let me explain that Tigger is a cuddly tiger in the stories and Tigger 'bounces'. So does Jo!

However, when she came to see me on a dark, cold winter's evening after a long day's work it took a large mug of tea (and a slice of cake) to bring this young lady back to her bouncy self.

Jo was born and brought up on the outskirts of the Yorkshire city of Hull. An only child, she describes herself as 'not spoilt, but rather indulged' – which is a different thing altogether. As a very young child she found her early days at school quite daunting, and says she struggled all through her time at her local primary school. However, things got much better at secondary school and she flourished. So much so, that she passed all the necessary exams to qualify for entry to Leeds University. There she studied English literature and social studies.

After university she went on to do a course at a journalism college. Since quite a youngster Jo had always written stories, so it was almost inevitable that a career in journalism was calling. The campus was in Sheffield, where she had a whale of a time enjoying discos, clubbing and letting off steam in the swimming pool. Then it was time for her to spread her wings even further and began her career at the 'Driffield Post', a local Yorkshire newspaper. From then on, her life in journalism took flight with years at Bridlington and Basingstoke before, aged 27, she moved back to Hull, where she worked on a big daily newspaper. So how is it that we find her finally in Oxford? *Well*, the Oxford Mail of course!

As a very sociable girl she made scores of friends along the way including her best friend Jenny, who lives locally. For 4½ years she worked at the Oxford Mail, had a brief spell in London, and then returned to Oxford where she became editor of the former diocesan newspaper, 'The Door'.

It was time now time to talk about her involvement with the Church. This is where her much-loved Auntie Jean comes in. This lovely auntie began taking Jo, aged 11 years, to church with her. Young Jo found her faith and by 13 was confirmed. She confessed that, like many teenagers, she became distracted for a while – but the Holy Spirit called her back and has been at work in her life ever since. She has written stories about various churches, got involved in the Festival of Oxford, has been networking for the Christian Anti-Poverty Charity, become senior press officer for CAFOD and much more. In 2020 she took on the role of publishing officer for World Vision UK, also freelancing for the Community Interfaith Organisation. Alongside her friend Jackie she also works for UNICEF. You see what I mean about 'bouncing'?

So, what brought her to worship at St. James' Church in Cowley? Well, during the COVID lockdown Jo, like many of us, missed regular Holy Communion so she logged on to social media and discovered that her nearest local church which was managing to offer communion in the safest possible way was St. James'. She arrived for morning service, found a warm loving wel-

come and has become part of our church family.

She now works at Brookes University and is their news and media relationships officer, which, she told me, is a very busy and demanding post. Living in a flat in Reliance Way (which is off Cowley Road), she is hoping one day to afford to buy a little house with a garden.

Obviously she enjoys living in Oxford and is planning to stay for the foreseeable future.

Tell me about your earliest memories.

Going to our local park with my parents and grandparents to feed the ducks.

What were you like as a young child?

I loved reading. I began to write stories when I was about seven or eight and I have never stopped.

How were your schooldays?

Varied. I think I liked it – but it was partly bamboozling and partly great.

What was your childhood ambition?

I was going to be a writer and also a comedienne.

Since you were a teenager, what has changed for the better?

I think equality for women is better – also we are more aware of looking after people.

And what has changed for the worse?

Political correctness can sometimes go too far. I think inequality in society has got worse.

When you have time to yourself (freetime) what do you do?

Read, walk, run, swim, write poems (lots!), hang out with friends, enjoy the theatre and cinema, and I can't count the number of triathlons I've taken part in. I also help look after friend's dogs.

Is there anyone who you would describe as a hero or role model?

Auntie Jean. She taught me about Jesus.

What do you see yourself doing in (say), 10 year's time?

I hope, and pray, God willing, that I am still active and still using my communication skills.

I also like dogs, so when I get my little house, I shall have a dog.

Rosanne Butler

From the Archives

JANUARY 2006

'Happy birthday, SPAM!'

2006 marked the 70th birthday of SPAM – the much-loved canned luncheon meat which took the world by storm in the 1930's and 1940's.

It was back in 1976 that an American company, George A. Hormel, of Minnesota first created the tasty blend of chopped pork and ham. Having got the recipe and the canning process right, they had a problem. What should they call this new 'meat'?

It is said that Jay Hormel – the son of George Hormel – held a New Year's party for the purpose of naming his 'baby'. Guests were entitled to one drink for each name they came up with and, for the winner, a prize of \$100. The host said afterwards, "by the fourth drink, people began to show some imagination."

The names suggested are now lost in the mists of history, but the name of SPAM was put forward by the brother of the Hormel vice-president – and approved immediately. It was catchy enough for everyone to remember and perfectly summed up the contents of *shoulder of pork and ham!*

So, SPAM was introduced to America in 1937, and to Britain in 1941. It was an immediate hit! It was such an inexpensive meat that even poor families could afford it. SPAM even appeared on the first ever singing TV advert, to the tune of ' My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean'.

SPAM was highly nutritious and could be used cold in sandwiches and salads, or hot in stews, pies and omelettes. The 'meat miracle' as it was known, even helped Russia when Germany invaded. Nikita Krushchev once said: "*Without SPAM, we would not have been able to feed our army*".

Today SPAM is still popular and sold in 50 countries throughout the world, with sales still growing. There are even SPAM fan clubs in both USA and UK.

Editor's note: Yes, SPAM is still available today.

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2023

Friday, 9 – Sunday, 17 December

Sorry to mention the C word in May's Chronicle but the planning starts now! Our first meeting is on Thursday 11 May, 8.30-9.30 in the Ranklin Room and as usual the very small organising team would be DELIGHTED to welcome new members to share the load, bring new ideas for the organisation and associated events and establish new contacts.

The theme will be 'love' but we have yet to decide on the snappy title.... Love Actually *or* Love is all you need *or* All you need is love *or* something else.

LesleyWilliams

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JANUARY 1957

Film Club at the Centre

The film shown in April met with unanimous approval for its storyline, beautiful countryside setting but most of all, its fine acting. John Thaw as 'Mr. Tom' played one of his finest roles in this film and moved several of our members to tears. *And*, of course, the film had a happy ending – so what more could you want on a dark, dreary evening?

This month the film to be shown is *Bright Star*, the title given to the poet John Keates by his fellow poet Byron. Given a 5* rating

and high praise by the press, we are in for a treat!

This period drama takes place in London in 1818 when a secret love affair begins between a struggling poet and the respectable girl next door. All does not go well for the couple as we shall see when the film unfolds. Described as "*an exquisite piece of film making*" members can look forward to an enjoyable evening on 12th May 2023.

Rosanne Butler

GARDENING PARTY



HELP REQUIRED – COME AND BOOST THE NUMBERS LOOKING AFTER THE AREA AROUND ST JAMES CHURCH AND ST JAMES CHURCH CENTRE.

LAST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH (EXCEPT DECEMBER) – 9.30 AM ONWARDS AT ST. JAMES CHURCH CENTRE.

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FROM THE CHURCH WARDEN

.Holy Week is always a very poignant time for us in Church. On Wednesday 5 April we watched the final episode of "Broken". All who attended were of the same opinion that the Lent Course had been a time of examining society as a whole and making us think very seriously of our own situations and how we could try and make the world a better place. The film had given us a good foundation for serious discussion each week.

On Maundy Thursday we enjoyed a lovely supper before joining together for the service and a period of silence in St Luke's Chapel.

After a quiet hour in Church on Good Friday we went to St Francis for Stations of the Cross.

Service of Light was at sunset on Saturday followed by Compline after which the altars were dressed for Easter Day.

As always, Easter Day was a joy with an explosion of colour which is so beautiful to see after a period of time when we don't have flowers in Church.

The cream tea and quiz held on 22 April was a good fun afternoon. Rosanne provided all the questions, a huge task, which made us all put our thinking caps on. Thank you to her for all her research.

The next day we were present at the APCM with a bring-and-share lunch which brought us together over a meal and serious Church business.

Look out for details in The Link of the cafe which we hope to start in June at St James Church. A chance to chat over coffee and cake for a couple of hours on a Saturday morning in Church, or outside, weather permitting.


Another busy month growing the Kingdom of God in Cowley. Please remember, help is available for anyone who needs a chat or help. We are a family to give love and understanding to one another.

God bless
Chris Woodman

MOX


Museum of Oxford

The City Archivist and his team of volunteers invite you to...




OXFORD
CITY
COUNCIL

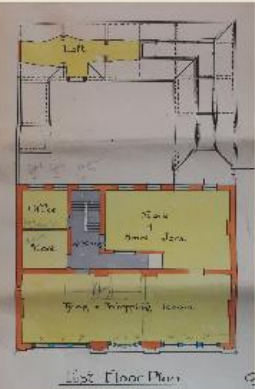
Plans, Plans, Plans!



Exterior View



Structural B/E



1st Floor Plan

A chance to see some of the thousands of building plans which are stored in the basement of Oxford's Town Hall. This treasure trove contains architects' drawings and plans going back to the 1880s of every kind of building in the city – private houses, public buildings, factories, pubs, shops, cinemas, ice rinks, churches, housing estates, and many more.

Come and explore these fascinating documents; learn about how we are cataloguing this vast resource; and find out whether we hold the plans for your own house!

At the Museum of Oxford, Tuesday 23 May, 10am-1pm.
Free entry, all welcome, no booking required.

 @museumofoxford

01865 252 334

museumofoxford.org

RECIPES

We have a lovely challenge for you all – the recipe for a Bible Cake, submitted by Rita Augar. Now, who will let the Chronicle have an interpretation or, indeed, a cake to sell at the **SPRING SALE!!**



Ingredients:

1. 6 oz Judges 5 v 25
2. 6 oz Jeremiah 6 v 20
3. 4 of Jeremiah 17 v 11
4. 8oz 1 Samuel 30 v 12 (stoned)
5. 8 oz Nahum 3 v 12 (chopped)
(substitute dates if you prefer)
6. 2 oz Numbers 17 v 8 (blanched and chopped)
7. 10 oz 1 Kings 4 v 22
8. 1 tsp 2 Chronicles 9 v 9
9. A pinch of Leviticus 2 v 13
10. ½ tsp Amos 4 v 5 (interpret as baking powder)

Method:

Beat 1 and 2 to cream.

Add 3, one at a time, still beating.

Add 4, 5 and 6 and beat again.

Add 7, 8, 9 and 10 previously sieved together.

Use a 7" cake tin. Bake in a slow oven for 2 hours (1 hour 150°C, 1 hour 140°C and cover for the last hour) or until cooked.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Art and Faith Group

1st Saturday of the month at 10 am
St James Church Centre

Film Club,

Friday, 12 May 2023, from 6.30 pm at St James Church Centre
"Bright Star"

Coronation Tea Party

Saturday, 6 May 2023, at 3 pm
St James Church Centre

Spring Sale with lunches and plants

Saturday, 13 May 2023, 11 – 1 pm
St James Church Centre

14 – 20 May 2023 – Christian Aid Week

Special Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

Monday, 15 May 2023, at 1 pm St James Church Centre

To agree the 2022 Accounts

Big Brunch

Saturday, 20 May 2023, 10.30 – 12 noon
Gospel Jazz Project concert
St James Church Centre

Messy Church

Tuesday, 30 May 2023, from 10 am
St James Church Centre

CHRONICLE

Editorial Team- Sally Hemsworth, Nicki Stevens

Deadline for the next edition: **Monday 22 May 2023**

If possible, please send entries by email to Sally at office@cowleyteamministry.co.uk. Paper contributions should be left at Parish Office for the attention of Sally.

The Editorial Committee in no way accepts responsibility for goods or services supplied by our advertisers, errors and omissions excepted.

JOHN SHREEVE'S ARTICLES FROM THE PAST

THE CHURCH AND THE YEW

September 2012

Quite often on our travels we look for places of historical interest and England is full of them. Occasionally, however, we come across them by chance and that is even more remarkable and exciting. Then again, sometimes it is not the buildings themselves that we find the most interesting, but something outside which fires our imagination and gives us cause to wonder. Such was the case at Crowhurst, a small village on the Kent/Sussex border. We had not even planned to stop there but having lost our way on badly signposted minor roads and needing a break from driving for a while, we suddenly spotted the church laying back from the road. We came round a bend and decided on the spur of the moment to come to a halt and take a breath of fresh air. It was typical in design of so many of our medieval churches, with some good features and some rather dull. It was not until we were about to leave that we noticed a prominent poster giving details about an historical Yew Tree of great age to be found in the churchyard. It declared that this amazing natural phenomenon was no less than 4,000 years old and was authenticated and signed by Robert Runcie (the former Archbishop of Canterbury) and Robert Hardy (the famous actor and expert on yew trees and toxophily). We hurried outside to take a look – and there it was tucked away in a corner behind the church. There was no mistaking its age. The vast gaunt green frame was supported in places by posts to hold up its sagging lower branches and a notice nearby stated that it was one of the 50 greatest English trees. We saw that its aged trunk had been split wide open at some time and there was room inside for several people to stand up.

We found out later that this damage had been caused by a cannon ball hitting it at some time in the past. The bark had been removed and the naked wood shone in the sunshine, feeling as hard as iron to the touch. There was no doubt the tree was still alive, for the leaves on its upper branches were green and healthy.

This tree had been there long before William the Conqueror came to our land, back in the midst of time. If only it could talk, what a tale it could tell! It's girth round the trunk is about 11 yards, an amazing sight. We could only stand and gaze at it with awe and wonder.

How glad we were that we had made our unscheduled pit-stop.

John Shreeve

RENEW OXFORD

seeking the peace of the city



PAUL WOODMAN



Dr MARTIN REEVES



CAROLYN MERRY



Dr DANIEL MAUGHAN



10 JUNE 2023 | 9.30 – 3.30PM



In June 2022, people from more than twenty local churches gathered at **Renew Oxford** to ask, 'How can we be good news for the city?'

This June, we look forward to reporting on progress achieved during the last year, and together asking 'what next'? The prophet Jeremiah famously called God's people to "seek the peace (shalom) of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf." We want to continue in that calling today, led and energised by the Spirit of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

We will enjoy a range of speakers and workshops to help us see how we can work together to bring peace to troubled minds, relationships, homes and communities. There will be time to forge new connections, and also to pray together.

Tickets cost £20/£10 (concessions), including lunch.

Please visit our website for the latest programme updates and to book.

On behalf of all 'Love Oxford' churches, this event is hosted by Oxford Community Church.



RENEWOXFORD.ORG



POEM

ASCENSION

And if I go
While you're still here,
Know that I live on
Vibrating for a different measure
Behind a thin veil you cannot see through.
You will not see me
So you must have faith.
I wait for the time
When we can soar together again
Both aware of each other.
Until then live your life to the fullest
And when you need me
Just whisper my name in your heart.
I will be there.

SUPPORT PHONE NUMBERS

NEEDING ADVICE OR HELP? or just want to talk?

SOME USEFUL LOCAL NUMBERS:

Citizens Advice:	08082 787 909
Oxford City Council:	01865 249 811
Oxfordshire Mind:	01865 247788
Red Cross <i>coronavirus support line</i> :	08081 963 651
Samaritans <i>available 24/7</i> :	116 123
The Archway Foundation:	01865 790 552
Mental Health helpline <i>available 24/7</i> - NHS Oxford Health:	
Adults:	01865 904 997
Children/young people:	01865 904 988
Age UK—new telephone service for older people	01865 411288

Have you been receiving a lot of scam calls on your phone, some of them quite scary? If you are concerned about them, you can obtain help by:

- phoning 03450 700 707 – that's a special department set up by the police *OR*
- Silver Lines, open 24 hrs for assistance on 08004 708 090 - this is a charity set up by Esther Rantzen, primarily to assist those elderly people in need of assistance and who live alone and are in fear of being abused.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ST JAMES CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

ST FRANCIS CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

8.00am	St James
9.30am	St Francis
11.00am	St James

The Parish Office in St James Church Centre is staffed by volunteers and is not covered continually.

Please leave a message and someone will get back to you.

Contact details: Tel: 01865 747680

Email: office@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Out of hours tel: 01865 778596

Website: www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

MID-WEEK SERVICES & MEETINGS

Monday	10.00-11.30am	Little Stars Playgroup— St Francis
Tuesday	10.00am	Seashells Toddler Group— St James Church Centre
	12.30pm	Tuesday Lunch Club, St James Church Centre (numbers limited—booking essential. If interested contact Chris Woodman)

Team Rector:

The Revd Canon Dr Geoffrey Bayliss

Tel: 01865 747680 (o) 01865 778596 (h)

Email: rector@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Curates

Revd Liam Cartwright

Email: cowleycurate@gmail.com

Revd Josh Hordern

Self-supporting Ministers

Revd Canon Mark Oxbrow

01865 461953

Email: markoxbrow@aol.com

Revd Max Diaz Butron

Email: maxdiazbutron@icloud.com

HOME AND STUDY GROUPS

Mark Oxbrow Alternate Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm, Mark's home, 13 Annesley Road (just behind the Rose Hill Co-op). Enquiries to Mark at 01865 461953

Rosanne Butler Alternate Thursday mornings, 10-11.30.. *Contact Rosanne 01865 453257*

Churchwardens:

Christine Woodman Tel: 778078

Maureen Stone Tel 747950

St James Church Centre Manager:

Chris Woodman Tel: 778078

Hall Bookings:

St James Church Centre, St James Church, St Francis Church: Please contact the Parish Office Tel: 747680

Cowley Chronicle—Editorial Team:

Sally Hemsworth, Nicki Stevens

Articles to be emailed to:

office@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Paper contributions to the Parish Office.

