

**9 am
9 July
Saturday
St James Centre**

Men's' Breakfast

More details or dietary
needs speak to Geoff
07759393023



Living life to the Full

Chronicle

July / August
2022

From the Editors

Sally Hemsworth and Nicki Stevens

The Platinum Jubilee celebrations are now over (well, they are still going on in many ways), but we have been overtaken by tennis (hope you enjoy the grass court season!) and soon it will be women's football. In addition, many people have planned or are thinking of planning holidays.

A lot is going on in the Parish – by the time you read the Chronicle we will have welcomed two curates into our Parish – Liam Cartwright and Josh Hordern – indeed, we will have celebrated their arrival. We hope they enjoy our Parish as much as we do.

The next edition of the Chronicle is coming out on the 4 September 2022. This is the start of a new year and we hope you will decide to continue your subscription (£4 for an A5 version, and £5 for the A4 size). All you need to do is complete the form which is inside this Chronicle and return it to the Parish Office (or leave with the Church Wardens). You might take the opportunity to encourage the person sitting next to you to subscribe? Additional forms will be available in the churches and church centre. It would be lovely to have more people on our list.

We have had lots of contributors this time, and we are always glad to receive articles, poems, book reviews, jokes, cartoons, etc – even if we cannot guarantee which edition they go in.

We do hope you enjoy the July/August edition and that you decide to renew your subscription.

Have a lovely summer.

Nicki and Sally

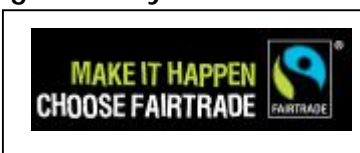
FAIRTRADE - where are we with it as a Church and Parish?

The PCC has now agreed unanimously to confirm our determination to work harder at Fairtrade Parish Status, as we declare we are living by the Kingdom principles of caring for those who produce, process and transport our food. So we have now rebooted our fairtrade commitment!



We confirm that we will stock the kitchen only with those fairtrade products which are readily available in the shops so *all such donations to kitchen supplies should be Fairtrade, please*

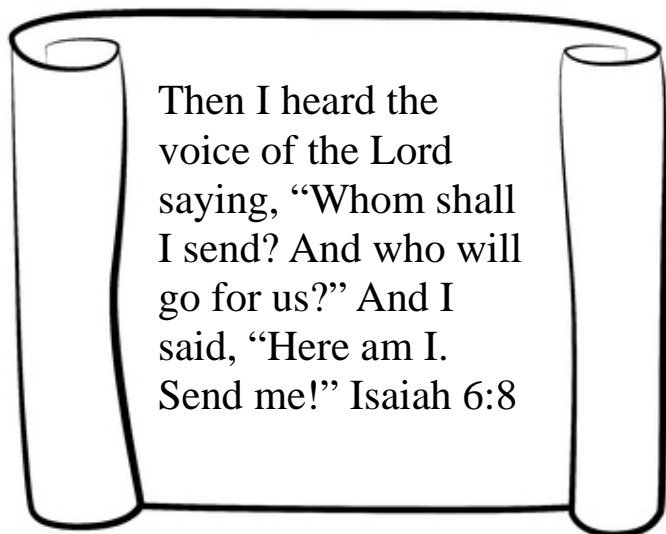
Any non-Fairtrade donated items of goods which are readily available in the shops will be graciously received but passed on to the Community Emergency Foodbank



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

A word from the Rectory

Wednesday 29th June



This morning I went down to the Cathedral to meet those who were to be ordained Deacon on Saturday 2nd July. There was a great crowd, 36 ordinands in total. Amongst them our soon to be, curates Joshua Hordern and Liam Cartwright. By the time you read this, the Lord being our helper, and Christ not yet having returned, they will both have been Ordained. We will have gathered to celebrate, in St James Church, and moved over to the Church Centre to welcome and get to know them better. I sit here with a real sense of excitement and expectation. This is a tangible expression of that passage from Isaiah: “Who shall I send - Here I am Lord send me!”

Liam and Josh are so gifted, and so different. Both are responding to a call from God to build His kingdom: To build together but using their unique insights. Liam has a history in the leadership of Church music; Josh, a focus on Christian ethics in a university setting. These passions, and links, will remain and will, I believe, be strengthened by National Church recognition and Ordination.

Liam’s curacy follows the pattern of

Gemma’s. We will see lots of him on a daily basis. But My hope and prayer is that he continues to have a border ministry in the diocese and through ‘On



Revd Liam Cartwright

fire’ (www.onfiremission.org).



Revd Joshua Hordern

Josh will continue his work as Professor of Christian Ethics in the Faculty of Theology and Religion and as a Fellow of Harris Manchester College. We will see him less frequently as he develops his role as

an MSE (Minister in Secular Employment), but he will very much be part of us. He and his family will continue their links with Grace Church. I see this curacy as a vehicle that will bring our church families closer.

These wonderful people bring to us themselves and their experience of God’s family. They may often dress differently. Their preaching will display how God has uniquely spoken, and speaks into their lives, how he touches their hearts. What they bring will complement our rich church family, adding colour to the rainbow that is Cowley Team Ministry. Liam and Josh come alongside our growing team of worship leaders and others searching out the impact of how Isaiah’s words touch our lives - each of us seeking to grow the Kingdom of God and to

walk with others into the 'life in fulness'. His desire for each one of us and for creation.

Isaiah's call comes to us all. It is picked up in the baptism commission, used at every baptism and confirmation. As I close, I remind you of this commission. May God strengthen us to fulfil his call!

Commission for all those baptised or confirmed

Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve God.

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people, loving your neighbour as yourself?

With the help of God, I will.

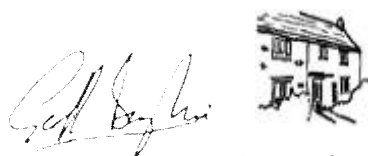
Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society, by prayer for the world and its leaders, by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth?

With the help of God I will

May Christ dwell in your heart(s) through faith, that you may be rooted and grounded in love and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. **Amen.**



Benson Cottage

You are invited

christian aid big brunch

Saturday 17

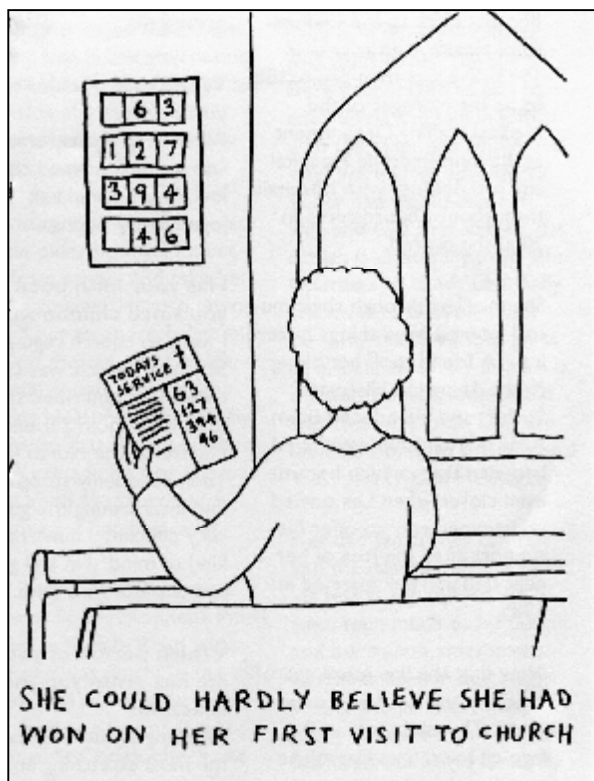
September 10.30 – 11.30

St James Centre – Beauchamp Lane

**bacon baps – scrambled egg – crumpets
toast – croissants – yogurt
fruit – tea – coffee – good company**



all donations for Christian Aid



MEMORIES OF THE FALKLAND WAR:

On reading the article from Hugh Williamson (in the April Chronicle), the forgotten war and the remembered life of Ian Hall, it made me recall that time very vividly. I also went to see Mrs Hall to offer my sympathies. It was indeed a very sad occasion.

I have to say I must agree with Hugh it was in some ways for political gain that Margaret Thatcher sent the Task Force, to defend the Islanders, and we must never forget the sacrifices of all the young lives lost on both sides of the conflict, in the grim events that followed.

Our son Richard was in the Royal Navy at that time aged 20 years. When the defence of the Falklands began, Richard was serving in the establishment of Sir John Fieldhouse in London. One afternoon we had a telephone call from Lady Fieldhouse. She invited us to go to London to have tea, as she had something she wished to discuss with us. It transpired that Richard had constantly been putting a chit (as it was called) to be released from his duties and to join his comrades, to defend his country. Lady Fieldhouse needed our help in stopping Charlie (as Richard was known). as it was explained to us that under no circumstances could this happen. Sir John spent all his time in the war rooms and must have known people who knew how the Establishment was run and who he could rely on. We had a chat and the problem was dealt with.

On August 2nd of that year, while our family and friends were together at the home of my brother in Standlake to celebrate my parents 50th Wedding anniversary Richard was released and he flew out of Brize Norton to the Falkland Islands. The hostilities were at an end and we had defended in victory, but to what cost. Richard never did tell us about the aftermath of the conflict, only to say "Mum some of the Argentinians were boy soldiers taken from their classrooms."

It brings back the feelings with the terrible situation at this time in Ukraine.

Pat Chambers



Shaun Guard

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CHILDREN'S CORNER

Hello. What's your name? Usually our first introduction wherever we go. School, hospital appointment, team listing or even baptism. And some names are unusual not to mention odd. We usually have at least two. Our first name, or Christian name and a family name. The first name or names, give you a particular identity in your family, instead of just being a number, and the family name may be for all sorts of reasons.

One section is to do with the work that your father does and is fairly obvious, like Carter, Smith or Taylor. And we have all heard of the Sons of David (Davidson) or Peter's son (Peterson). Or he might have been know as John the post, or Tom the baker. Another way of identifying families was to name the town that they were born in, like Joan Cowley or Christine Kent. I have heard of a John Early, a Mary Leight (late) and Tom Waite (Wate). Other family names changed over the years because people travelled from other countries and we didn't spell the names the same when they were written down, or misspelled by bad writers who couldn't write themselves but tried to copy the marks on the paper. If you refer to your computer you will be able to look up the history of your family name and see the origins to many first names. There are special sites showing family history but this needs a fee in many cases so don't get involved without adult help and agreement to pay the fees.

When I was seeing a lot of letters in my job in the motor industry, I came to recognise handwriting and when a letter was received from

the same man a couple of years after he had written before, I was able to recognise the writing before remembering his name. I saw some very odd names from real people, but I think it was unfortunate that one family who wrote to us had the name of Sidebottom, pronounced Sidy Botome! On the other hand, I couldn't ever forget the letter written by Mr Coldbottom. Yes really.

Not only is your name unique, and yours alone, so is your handwriting! It is still good to practice handwriting even though you may prefer your computer. There are even people who say they can judge the character of a person by their handwriting, and the way the letter is written, so be good, and strong and show your character in any letters you write. No scribble please. And make sure you sign your name clearly. You should be proud of it because it is yours alone, and there is only one YOU. You can send me a letter if you want to, via the Editor.

Uncle Ben

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**Kate Reid MCFHP MAFHP
07952127534**

kate@nurturefootcare.co.uk

MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

The June meeting of our diocesan prayer group was very well attended. We welcomed Abi Griffin as a visitor, and she brought with her a poem she had written based upon the needs and anxieties of single people living on benefits in our area. Discussion ensued about the present-day crisis of spiralling costs, loneliness and stress that so many people are experiencing. Our prayers focussed on these issues, not just for people we know, but for families world-wide.

Abi continued her presentation by talking about the word 'home' and concluded that the word 'heart' could be a substitute – because for children, home is embedded in the hearts of their mothers. We discussed this and she likened this to Jesus' home being deep in the heart of his mother, Mary.

Prayers followed and afterwards we had a light-hearted session planning our July 'Summer Party'. Each member is bringing a contribution for the tea and also a 'treasured' possession to tell us about.

The party, we hope, will be held on the Rectory lawn or, if it's wet, in St. James' Church.

At the party we will plan our forthcoming programme for the autumn.

Rosanne Butler

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.

RECIPES

Well, it should be something with strawberries around Wimbledon, even if you prefer a bowl of strawberries with cream!



Easy Fresh Strawberry Cake

Makes one (8-inch) cake or 8 slices

115g unsalted butter, softened
200g granulated sugar plus 1 teaspoon for strawberries
2 large eggs, separated.
2 teaspoons lemon zest
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon almond extract
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
195g plain flour
125g sour cream or plain yogurt
8 oz fresh strawberries, hulled and halved
Icing sugar for serving, optional

1. Position an oven rack in the lower third of the oven and heat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Butter and flour an 8-inch by 2-inch round cake pan.
2. In a large bowl, beat the butter and granulated sugar with an electric mixer on high speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the egg yolks, lemon zest, vanilla, and almond extract. Beat until smooth and blended. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl, then beat in the cinnamon, baking powder, and salt.
3. Fold half of the flour into the batter until only a few streaks of flour remain, then fold in the remaining flour. Mix the egg whites and sour cream on low speed just until smooth and fold into the mixture.
4. Spread the cake batter into an even layer in the baking pan.
5. Arrange the strawberry halves on top of

the batter in a circular pattern, covering the top of the cake. Sprinkle one teaspoon of granulated sugar over the strawberries.

6. Bake for 40 minutes, testing to ensure cake is cooked.

Raspberry Butterflies (makes 12)

(from *Cakes, Bakes, Puddings and Prayers* by Susan Over)

110g (4oz) soft margarine
110g (4oz) caster sugar
2 medium eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
110g (4oz) self-raising flour
½ teaspoon baking powder

For the filling:

50g (2oz) butter, softened
½ teaspoon vanilla essence
110g (4oz) icing sugar
Fresh raspberries and chocolate matchsticks to decorate

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 5/190 degrees C /375 degrees F. Line a 12-hole bun tin with paper cake cases.
2. Place margarine, sugar, eggs and vanilla essence in a bowl. Sift in flour and baking powder and beat together until blended.
3. Divide mixture between the 12 paper cases and bake in centre of oven for 20 minutes until well risen and golden.
4. Cool on wire rack.
5. For the filling, beat butter and vanilla essence together and gradually sift in icing sugar.
6. Cut tops from cooled cakes and slice each top in half to make wings.
7. Place a blob of icing on each cake, replace wings and arrange three smallish raspberries down the centre to make the body of the butterfly. Add chocolate matchsticks to look like antennae.

It's too darn hot!

I had wanted to visit Villandry and a trip to the Loire Valley in France has been on our bucket list for some while. The gardens at the chateau are said to be the finest in the country.

We were treated to a clear sky at the quayside in Portsmouth and watched the gorgeous full, strawberry, moon rise higher against a foreground of cranes. Quite a lot of French motorcyclists were returning home, possibly, we surmised, after visiting the Isle of Man TT races but after the ferry docked, off came loads of sports cars, some with race numbers, obviously returning from the Le Mans 24 hour race that had just taken place.

On our drive south, after our overnight crossing, we decided to stop at a small town called Thury Harcourt. It was market day and walking around the square I noticed an information board with the name Staffordshire prominent. Being proud of my birth county, I read that Thury Harcourt was subject to an occupation by the Germans in 1944 where every building was razed to the ground. The 59th Staffordshire, made up of territorials, came over as part of the Normandy landings. Their badge included symbols of a slag heap and pit-head winding gear representing the coal-mining areas that the men came from. Note: Staffs is a largely rural county. I come from the dairy farming middle!

The 59th was able to take the town eventually after "hedge to hedge" fighting and a heroic Staffordshire man, Ernie Blinklow, is commemorated in the name of the town square. Thoughts of the current war in Ukraine came as I looked at the pictures of the devastation from German bombing. The town was completely rebuilt to the same

street plan as before in the early post-war years.

After that sad experience, it was lovely to see the majestic Loire river and the surrounding countryside full of growing maize, sunflowers, wheat and barley as well as vineyards, for which the area is famous, and a lot of woodland too. It was hay-making time and the vision of a river-side and newly cropped field with about 30 white cattle egrets catching and fighting over frogs, will stay with us.

On to Villandry on a day of energy-sapping 104 degree heat! The chateau was built in the first half of the sixteenth century with a Renaissance garden which was destroyed to create an "English – style" park in the 19th century. A new owner in 1906 decided to recreate the original garden using literary sources and archaeological surveys. It is a triumph of precision containing an ornamental garden of box hedged borders, a water garden, a sun garden, a maze, herb garden and a vegetable garden.

The latter, and largest, is made up of nine squares of equal size but with different geometrical patterns within. Single varieties of vegetables are planted within these producing a multi-coloured chessboard effect: blue leeks, green lettuces, red cabbages etc. Standard roses are set symmetrically: a nod to the monks who tended this type of garden in the middle ages. I particularly liked the low step-over apples used to enclose the beds.

I would have loved to have spent more time here but the heat defeated my usual enthusiasm!

Joan Coleman

A WARTIME CHILDHOOD

(Part 21)

One of the biggest challenges for our mums in those years of the war was feeding the family. Food rationing became quite stringent, so clever ways of using what resources you could get was the order of the day. Being country folk, of course, made it a little easier. For instance, the 'one egg per person per week' became a joke because we all kept chickens – *so no problem there then!*

The margarine and butter rations were a different story, except that full-fat creamy milk was readily available. My mum used to get me to shake a Kilner jar full of milk all through Sunday afternoon until a little pat of butter would appear, enough to spread on our tea-time bread. *That was a labour of love, I can tell you!* That same creamy milk made wonderful milk puddings – especially rice, with a gorgeous skin on top. Mind you, sugar was also rationed, so sometimes those puddings had to be sweetened with honey. The other sweetener for a great standby, was golden syrup. With creamy porridge on a cold winter morning a blob of golden syrup stirred in was a real treat.

In the autumn, the Women's Institute was allowed extra sugar (some of which would be kept back for Christmas) to provide them with a chance to make jam. My mum made lots of jam from the fruit in our garden – plums, damsons, greengages and raspberries.

But what about main meals? Now *there* was a problem, because the meat ration was meagre. You might save enough coupons for a little joint on Sunday, but the scraps and bones had to provide *at least* another meal in the week. 'Bubble and Squeak' was popular on Mondays if you could get enough dripping

from the Sunday joint in which to fry it. Dripping also went into the making of lovely cakes and by spreading it on toast, gave a nice tea-time treat.

Fish was not rationed. So my mum would go into Witney on the market-day bus (Thursday) and queue up for whatever she could get. She often brought me a little pot of shrimps for my tea. The other source of fish which became a lifeline was thanks to our village 'carrier,' who would make a weekly journey to Oxford Station and get hold of whatever fish he could – mainly kippers or herrings. He would bring these back on Saturday evening. I would pop down to his office on my bike to buy enough for us to feast on at suppertime. My mum was delighted.

There was also the occasional *black-market* treat (which I can now reveal after eighty years), when the same nice carrier man would come up our lane after dark with a sack on his back. Inside would be a whole ham (riches indeed) and mum would boil it in the stone copper housed in our old scullery. *I was warned to keep the whole process strictly secret!!*

The one mainstay of our meat provision was rabbit. These creatures swarmed all over the farmland and the farmers were only too pleased to encourage our dads to go rabbit hunting. Oh, how delicious were my mum's rabbit casseroles, cooked very slowly in our cottage oven range – with carrots, onions, sometimes swede or turnips from the garden.

Vegetables were very important. -'*Dig for Victory*' was the government call, and we all did! Potatoes, of course, were very important,

augmented by all the leaf-vegetables, beans, peas, and root vegetables too. If we were a little short, I would be sent on my bike to ask our local farmer if he could spare a swede or a couple of turnips for a casserole or vegetable soup.

The fields were also an occasional source of supply. Mushrooms popped up overnight in the fields, while the valuable blackberries and nuts – such as hazel and walnuts – grew

in the hedgerows and farmyards. Almost every garden had fruit trees, especially apples. Baked apple with cream off the top of the milk was a really yummy pudding.

Come to think about it – we grew up with a pretty healthy diet. I sometimes wonder if that's one of the reasons why so many people nowadays are living into extreme old-age, myself included.

Rosanne Butler

JOHN SHREEVE'S ARTICLES FROM PAST CHRONICLES

Confirmation - THEN

June 2010

Some years ago, when we were young, Pentecost Sunday wasn't called that, it was called WHITSUN. Whitsun was a shortening of the words WHITE SUNDAY, so called because all the young ladies wore white dresses then, for it would have been the time of their confirmation. Most of the confirmations took place on that Sunday, and they tended to be much more serious and formal occasions than they are now. There was a strict code of dress, the boys had to wear dark suits, white shirts and ties, and the girls, white dresses – which were often home-made. Ruby and Marion of St James, and Marlene of St Francis all remember this quite clearly. Ruby recalls the fact that the right material wasn't available in her time because of wartime shortages. The girls had to wear either muslin or parachute silk, neither of which were very suitable. Marlene remembers her mother taking a great deal of care when making her dress and being anxious that it shouldn't become creased or spoilt before the service. Their ages would have been about 12-14 years old. Marion and Ruby were confirmed by the Bishop of Oxford, Marlene was confirmed in Kent by no less a person than the Archbishop of Canterbury, the famous Dr Ramsey

Preparation beforehand was very thorough, and the candidates had to learn their catechisms by heart, and there was talk of "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace". After the service they were given a little red book containing prayers and instructions on preparing for Communion. I don't think that there were formal sponsors then. Candidates simply came forward for the laying on of hands when their names were called out.

Although things were more serious then – they were very happy occasions and became a benchmark in young lives.

After being confirmed, Marlene remembers taking things quite seriously, and regularly cycling to Communion Service at the local Parish Church for a number of years.

People were proud to be members of the Church of England and felt that they had grown up a bit – spiritually.

John Shreeve

OXFORD FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

24 June - 25 July 2022

Based at Magdalen College School but in venues all around the city

With the theme 'AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WAYS' commemorating the 500th anniversary of the first ship circumnavigating the world, Oxford Festival of the Arts 2022 is a celebration of the world in a multitude of ways – and of Oxford's scientific, literary and creative achievement, too.

A full programme of exhibitions – talks – concerts – lectures – theatre – sport

<https://artsfestivaloxford.org/around-the-world-in-80-ways/>

Featuring:

GAIA - a touring artwork by UK artist Luke Jerram

University Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street

24 June – 10 July

Monday – Saturday 9.30 - 6.00

Sunday 12.00 – 6.00

Free, booking not required

Measuring six metres in diameter, *Gaia* features 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the Earth's surface. The artwork provides the opportunity to see our planet on this scale, floating in three-dimensions. The installation (which was present at COP26 in Glasgow) creates a sense of the *Overview Effect*, first described by author Frank White in 1987. Common features of the experience for astronauts are a feeling of awe for the planet, a profound understanding of the interconnection of all life, and a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment. The artwork also acts as a mirror to major events in society, providing the viewer with a new perspective of our place on the planet: a sense that societies of the Earth are all interconnected and that we have a responsibility toward one another.

A specially made surround sound composition by BAFTA award-winning composer [Dan Jones](#) is played alongside the sculpture. In Greek Mythology, Gaia is the personification of the Earth. Gaia has been created in partnership with the [Natural Environment Research Council \(NERC\)](#), [Bluedot](#) and the [UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres](#). With supporting partners Culture Liverpool and Liverpool Cathedral.

Exhibited in collaboration with [University Church of St Mary the Virgin](#).



British Society of Master Glass Painters Centenary touring exhibition
The Chapter House, Christ Church Cathedral

Coming to Oxford from the cathedrals of Ely, Winchester, Wells and Worcester, this touring exhibition of stained glass panels celebrates the centenary of the [British Society of Master Glass Painters](#).

Over 90 artists from across the UK and overseas contributed to the exhibition. The tour highlights 60 of these panels that celebrate the unique art of glass. The works have been created using both traditional and modern glass techniques, demonstrating the extraordinary range of stained glass currently practiced.

The artists explore a variety of subjects such as the environment and the beauty of nature. The exhibition portrays an understanding of the concerns of glass artists a hundred years after the society was established to help stained glass remain relevant today. Displayed in the Chapter House of Christ Church Cathedral, this exhibition will also give the visitor the chance to explore the Romanesque doorway and interior.

The display will be open whenever the Chapter House is open. If you would like to visit specifically to see the exhibition [please book via eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/british-society-of-master-glass-painters-exhibition-at-christ-church-tickets-358362791757) <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/british-society-of-master-glass-painters-exhibition-at-christ-church-tickets-358362791757> to ensure that you arrive when the Chapter House is open. Please enter via Tom Gate on St Aldates.

SMILE

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending, and to have the two as close together as possible.

George Burns

The Twenty and the Five

A well-worn five-pound note and a similarly distressed twenty-pound note arrived at the Bank of England to be retired. As they moved along the conveyor belt to be burned, they struck up a conversation.

The twenty-pound note mused: "I've had a pretty good life. Why, I've been to London, Las Vegas and Hong Kong and even a cruise to the Caribbean."

"Wow!" said the five-pound note. "You've really had an exciting time!"

"So, tell me," said the twenty, "Where have *you* been?"

The five-pound note replied, "Oh I've been to the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church, the Anglican Church and once, even to the United Reform Church...."

The twenty-pound note interrupted, "What's a Church?"

MOSES REVISITED

Nine-year-old Joey was asked by his mother what he had learnt in Sunday School. "Well mum, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, he had his engineers build a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then he radioed headquarters for reinforcements. They sent bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved". "Now, Joey, is that really what your teacher taught you?" his mother asked, somewhat alarmed. "Well, no mum. But if I told it the way the teacher did, *you'd never believe it!*"



Study scammers' ways and beat them – Citizens Advice

Much as we hate them, we must concede that today's scammers are thoroughly up to date and quick off the mark. In very recent months scammers have pretended to be energy companies offering great deals; local councils speeding up Council Tax rebates; and government departments tendering financial support– each attempt closely following on the heels of breaking news and timed to exploit any sign of vulnerability or need.

Be on your guard generally. To help you defend yourself, here are a few things which should ring alarm bells:

- Someone you don't know contacts you unexpectedly
- An entity that you normally deal with contacts you in an unusual way (for instance, DVLA emailing you when it has never done so before – this actually happened in one scam)
- A telephone caller asks for you by your last name, mumbles the name of his business and adds "how are you?" (watch out for callers who end every phrase with a question)

If worst comes to worst and you think that you have been tricked (or if you simply want to report an attempted scam), contact your bank right away to stop any payments, change your computer log-in details if appropriate, and report the scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040. You can also use their online reporting tool at <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk> Action Fraud can sign you up for email alerts so you will know what scams are on the way. And lastly, they can also give you a useful crime reference number. Another source of help is the National Trading Standards scams team: their website has lots of useful information.

Citizens Advice can help, and our advice is free and impartial. For online scams you can talk to our specialist scams action advisers on 0808 250-5050, or by webchat; or you can call our Consumer Service on 0808 223-1133; or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk for more information.

In March the office for national Statistics reported that approximately 1.7 million people in the UK were experiencing self-reported long Covid. Over half of these had symptoms such as fatigue, loss of sense of smell and inability to breathe, for at least a year. This can have a far-reaching impact.

In the short term, if you are employed and ill, sick pay may be available and there is information about this on our website www.citizensadvice.org.uk if you think you are not receiving the correct amount. If your income has dropped, an online benefit calculator will show whether you may be entitled to additional financial help, such as Universal Credit, Council Tax Reduction and personal Independence Payment (PIP) etc. Details of how to claim benefits, including contact numbers, are on our website. An unexpected drop in income means that debts can quickly mount up and it is better to take action to manage the situation sooner rather than later. You can talk to an adviser on our Debt Helpline: 0800 2404420. There is also a link to webchat in the debt section of our website.

If you are being dismissed from work due to long-term illness, there is also advice about this on our website, or you can speak to an adviser by phoning Advice line: 0808 278 7907.

There is ongoing research into long Covid as so much is still unknown, and new groups are forming to provide information and mutual support.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 15-21 May 2022 caweek.org

Every gift. Every action. Every prayer. Every one of us can change lives.



An update : some more donations came in following last month's announcement and our final total was £614.35. Thank you again.

Prayer Space

O God, the Spirit of truth,
help us to be truthful with one another.

O God, the Spirit of gentleness,
help us to be gentle with one another.

O God, who knows what is in our hearts
more clearly than we do ourselves,
help us to hear one another.

O god, lead us in the way
of truth and love.

Richard Harries

Lord Jesus Christ,

forgive me that so often I love only myself, my every thought for my own welfare, my own ends, my own esteem, my own pleasures.

Forgive me that, at best,

I reserve my love for the exclusive few - family, friends and relations.

Teach me to reach out to this troubled, divided world, recognising the call of my neighbour in the cry of the needy.

Teach me what it means to belong

not just to the community of faith

but also to the family of humankind,

and in serving them may I equally serve you, to the glory of your name. Amen

Taken from Prayerfully Yours

By Nick Fawcett

During the Conflict in the Ukraine

Two prayers from Reinhold Niebuhr which might be helpful.

Reinhold Niebuhr (1892 – 1971) was Professor of applied Christianity at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. He was passionately concerned with the revelation of God in the Bible and the political and social problems which beset mankind. The shadow of world war darkened many of his prayers.

For Victims and Tyrants

We pray to you this day, mindful of the sorry confusion of our world. Look with mercy upon this generation of your children so steeped in misery of their own contriving, so far strayed from your ways and so blinded by passions. We pray for the victims of tyranny, that they may resist oppression with courage and may preserve their integrity by a hope which defies the terror of the moment. We pray for wicked and cruel men, whose arrogance reveals to us what the sin of our own hearts is like when it has conceived and brought forth its final fruit. O God, who resists the proud and gives grace to the humble, bring down the mighty from their seats.

For Brotherhood

O God, who has ordained that all men should live and work together as brethren, remove, we humbly beseech you, from those who are now at variance, all spirit of strife and all occasion for bitterness that, seeking only what is just and equal, they may ever continue in brotherly union and concord. Lead us out of the night of this conflict into the day of justice in the affairs of mankind; and patience in dealing with all the sins and selfishness of men, and humility in recognising our own, that we may judge wisely between a man and his brother, between nations and peoples; and, by composing their dif-

Film Club at the Centre

Film Club continues to flourish. Four new members joined in June, thus bringing us nearer to our quota.

The film "Fisherman's Friends" was unanimously acclaimed as a great success. (We do love a good story with a happy ending!)

The films chosen for July and August should also meet with members' approval. For July we have the film "Saving Mr. Banks" originally a request from one of our members. It tells of the intriguing true incident of the difficult relationship between P D James (the author of the Mary Poppins books) and Walt Disney, who made the film. In the film itself,

the father of the two children was made to appear something of a dragon, whereas in the books he was a typical hardworking fairly strict father. P D James came into conflict with Disney over this and the result is a highly amusing story of two immovable characters and the eventual outcome.

The film for August is a happy-go-lucky affair, "Calamity Jane", one of Doris Day's best performances. Most people will have seen it, but it is such a light-hearted show full of wonderful songs and very suitable for a summer evening.

Rosanne Butler

From the Archives

MAXIMILIAN KOLBE – Christian Witness Amidst 20th Century Suffering

Some people's lives seem to epitomise the suffering of millions, but also to shine with a Christian response to it.

One such person was Maximilian Kolbe, 1894 – 1941, a Franciscan priest of Poland, and publisher extraordinaire. Maximilian was born at Zdunska Wola, near Lodz, where his parents, devout Christians, worked in a cottage weaving industry. Like thousands of others at the time, the family and their village were ground into poverty by Russian exploitation. In 1910 Maximilian entered the Franciscan Order and studied at Rome. After his ordination in 1919, Maximilian returned to Poland, where he was sent to teach church history in a seminary. But a new factor had entered his life: he was diagnosed with Tuberculosis.

Living in post-war Poland was difficult enough, but with tuberculosis as well – most people would have quietly withered away. Not Maximilian Kolbe!

Instead, the tuberculosis gave Maximilian a sense of urgency – a sense of the brief transitoriness of his life. He knew his time was slipping away. Instead of teaching history, he was determined to do something to help the Christians living in Poland now, in the tatters of Europe after the First World War. So he founded a magazine for Christian readers in Cracow, who badly needed effective apologetics to help them hold to their faith in a chaotic world.

Soon, the obsolete printing presses (which were operated by Maximilian's fellow priests and lay brothers) were working overtime – the magazine's circulation had leapt to 45,000. Then the printing presses were removed to a town near Warsaw, Niepokalanów, where Maximilian now founded a Franciscan community which combined prayer with cheerfulness and poverty with modern technology. Daily as well as weekly newspapers were produced and the community grew and grew, until by the late 1930's it numbered 762 friars.

Then, in 1939, the Germans invaded Poland. Maximilian sent most of his friars home, to protect them from what was about to become. He turned the monastery into a refugee camp for 3,000 Poles and 1,500 Jews, and the presses continued – taking a patriotic, independent line, critical of the Third Reich.

Kolbe was arrested by the Gestapo along with four friars. They were taken to Auschwitz in May 1941. Their names were exchanged for tattooed numbers; and they were sent to brutal forced-labour camps.

But Maximilian Kolbe continued his priestly ministry. He heard confessions in unlikely places and smuggled in bread and wine for the Eucharist. His sympathy and passion for those even more unfortunate than himself was outstanding.

Then came the final scene in his hard life. At the end of July 1941, several men escaped from his bunker at the camp. The Gestapo, in revenge, came to select several more men from the same bunker who were to be starved to death. A man, Francis Gajownniczek, was chosen. As he cried in despair, Kolbe stepped forward. "I am a catholic priest. I wish to die for that man. I am old – he has a wife and children". The officer-in-charge shrugged his shoulders – and obliged.

So Maximilian went to the death chamber of Cell 18, and set about preparing the others to die with dignity by prayers, psalms, and the example of Christ's passion. Two weeks later, only four were alive: Maximilian alone was fully conscious. He was injected with phenol and died on 14th August, aged 47 years.

He was beatified by Paul VI in 1971. In 1982 he was canonised by Pope John Paul II, formerly Archbishop of Cracow, the diocese which contains Auschwitz. Present at the ceremony that day was Francis Gajownniczek, the man whose life Maximilian Kolbe had saved.

The English Church recognises Maximilian's courage by being included as one of the 20th Century Martyrs depicted above the door of Westminster Abbey.

PARISH EVENTS etc.

July 2005

Artistes at St. Francis' Music Hall

Saturday, 18th June saw another evening of song with Thelma Telling and her group from St. Francis. Using music mainly written in the 1890's for music hall artistes, the small band of enthusiastic (rather than note-perfect) singers led with verse and encouraged full participation from the audience for the choruses.

Fancy dress was optional for all – the Artistes were in full regalia – with hats to rival Ascot both in the audience and on the front line!

It was a very enjoyable evening and requests were made for further song evenings from different decades. It raised £114 towards the Heating Fund. This was somewhat ironic considering how warm the evening was!

Thank you everyone for coming and raising a happy noise!

Researched by Les Hemsworth

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 safeguarding@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JULY 2022

Sunday, 3 July 2022, 10.30 am
at St James Church

Joint Parish service at St James Church to welcome new curates Liam and Josh
Followed by a bring and share lunch with jacket potatoes at St James Church Centre

Saturday, 23 July 2022, 4.30 pm
at St James Church Centre

St James Day Singalong, entertainment, bring & share puddings

AUGUST 2022

Saturday, 27 August 2022, 3 – 5 pm,
The Rectory, Beauchamp Lane
Rectory Tea Party

Tuesday, 30 August 2022, 10 – 11.30am
at St James Church Centre
Messy Church

SEPTEMBER 2022

Sunday, 4 September 2022, 10.30 am,
at St James Church
Joint Parish service with Bishop Steven
Followed by light refreshments at St James Church Centre

Monday, 5 September 2022, 5 pm
ZOOM MEETING
Mission and Social Planning Meeting

Saturday, 10 September 2022, 10 am – 6 pm
at St James and St Francis Churches
Open Doors and Ride & Stride
Wedding Open Day

Saturday, 17 September 2022, 10.30 – 11.30 am
at St James Church Centre
Christian Aid Big Brunch

Sunday, 18 September 2022, 9.30 am,
St Francis Church
Harvest thanksgiving, with light refreshments

Sunday, 25 September 2022, 8 am and 11 am,
St James Church
Harvest thanksgiving, with light refreshments

FROM THE CHURCH WARDEN

June has been another busy month. On 5 June we enjoyed Songs of Praise at St Francis to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We chose some hymns which we thought the Queen would like and had a really good sing song. Alexander came and played for us which added to the celebration. Afterwards we ate a bring and share lunch with a few of us sitting outside watching the passing traffic and asking people to join us and one or two did.

Lesley arranged a Christian Aid Quiz which took place on Saturday 25 June during the afternoon. Rosanne was quizmaster and provided all the questions and we had a really good fun afternoon. During the interval we enjoyed a cream tea with homemade scones and cakes and many of us decided we wouldn't need very much to eat for our evening meal when we got home.

We are looking forward to welcoming Liam Cartwright and Josh Hordern who are joining us at St James as curates at the beginning of July. They are being ordained in Christ Church Cathedral on Saturday 2 July and will be present with us on Sunday 3 July at 10.30 in St James with a bring and share lunch in the church centre afterwards. We are looking forward to Liam and Josh joining us and send our prayers and very best wishes to them and their families.

During these celebrations we were given the sad news of the death of Mary's dear father and Doug Treadwell's lovely wife, Mavis. Our love and prayers are with them and their families at this sad time. It is comforting to know that they are now at peace with God the Father in his heavenly kingdom.

Enjoy the summer whatever you are doing, holidaying or enjoying time at home or with family. Don't forget we have a tea party in the Rectory garden on Saturday 27 August from 3-5pm. We look forward to having time together with tea and cakes and a good chat.

Chris Woodman

A GOOD READ

The Summer House by Santa Montefiore

Julian Fellowes, who wrote Downton Abbey, said of this book 'I couldn't put it down' which is a good recommendation.

Antoinette's world had fallen apart when her husband, George, the man she had loved for as long as she can remember, had died tragically in an accident. He was the man she knew better than she knew herself, or at least so she thought.

When she arrived at the church for the funeral she saw a woman she had never seen before, Phaedra. She also loved George. What is about to be revealed will change their lives forever.

Chris Woodman

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CHRONICLE

Editorial Team- Sally Hemsworth, Nicki Stevens

Deadline for the next edition: Monday 22 August 2022

If possible, please send entries by email to Sally at chronicle@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.

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.

Come and have fun, fresh air and exercise as we prepare the St. James Church Centre garden for another beautiful spring and summer showing. If possible bring your own tools but some will be available. Both heavy and light work available plus coffee and cake.



Do you shop on-line with Amazon? If you do you may be able to help us raise a bit of money towards the toilet in St James Church.

Smile.amazon.co.uk is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on Smile.amazon.co.uk, the Smile.amazon.co.uk Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

We are listed as the charity: The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Cowley, Oxford



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THOUGHTS

PULL UP A CHAIR

He is close to all who call on him sincerely – Psalm 145:18

The old man was very ill, so his family called the minister. When the minister came in, he noticed an empty chair by the bed and said, "I see I'm not your first visitor today."

The old man smiled and said, "Let me tell you about that chair. Years ago, I found it difficult to pray. A friend told me not to worry about it. He said, 'Just sit down, put a chair in front of you and begin to talk to him as you would an old friend.'" Then the old man added with a smile: "I've been doing that for the last thirty years and it's been wonderful. It really works!"

Soon, the old man died. His daughter called for the minister. She said, "When I left him this morning, he was sleeping comfortably. But when I came back, he was gone. Then I noticed something. His hand was on the empty chair beside the bed. Isn't that strange?"

"No," the minister replied. "The one in the chair just took him by the hand and they left together."

If it helps you, pull up a chair today and spend some time with the Lord. Come to him confidently, for He couldn't love you more than He does at this moment – and that will never change. The Bible says: "Let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy and we will find grace to help us when we need it." (*Hebrews 4:16*).

WISE WORDS

Setting a good example for children takes all the fun out of middle-age.

When I was young there was no respect for the young. Now that I'm old, there's no respect for the old. I missed out coming and going.

J.B.Priestley

Our minds are like horses. You must exercise them if you wish to keep them in good working order.

To get back to my youth I would do anything in the world, except take exercise, get up early or be respectable

Oscar Wilde

Well, here I am – thirty-eight,
Well, I certainly thought I'd have longer to wait.
You just stop in for a couple of beers
And – gosh, there go thirty-seven years.

Ogden Nash

It's never too late to have a fling,
For autumn is just as nice as spring.
And it's never too late to fall in love.

Sandy Wilson's song from 'The Boyfriend'

FROM THE BELL TOWER

Become a Bell Ringer

If you love the sound of bells and have at least some sense of timing, why not consider becoming a bell ringer?

Church bells are incredibly heavy – ranging from 6cwt. to more than 28cwt. per bell – but anyone is strong enough to ring them. Ringers range from schoolchildren to teenagers, from the middle-aged to retired people. It's a wonderful pastime for breaking down the generation gap.

After you reach the ringing chamber, the practise begins. There are a lot of instructions to remember:

Don't look up, look straight ahead.

Don't anticipate the sally too soon (the stripey bit of rope).

Get closer to the rope.

Flick your wrists away.

One foot a little ahead of the other.

Pull down slowly, not too fast.

Use your elbows etc.!

You don't need strength. Once you've got the bell going, it's just a matter of keeping the rhythm of your pull steady on the rope. There is no strain on the back: you simply stand straight and relaxed. If you have the all-important sense of timing, the rest comes with practise.

Some people master the art in as little as four months, others take almost a year. But one day, when you least expect it, you will find you have 'got it' at last. A bit like learning to ride a bicycle!

If you are interested in learning to ring, please have a word with Mary Bayliss and we can organise lessons!



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READERS' LETTERS & ARTICLES

CLOTHES

I have recently become a '*label scrutinizer*' – some might say a 'boring old label scrutinizer'!

But there are two main things which concern me about the clothes we buy:

1. What are they made from?
2. How far have they travelled?

From what I understand, our oceans and water courses are filling up with micro-plastics which are released every time we wash clothes made from man-made fibres such as polyester, acrylic, nylon etc.

That's one reason I'm into checking labels and I was horrified to see that my two fleeces – *which I've had for years* – are both made of 100% polyester.

The best thing we can do to minimise the damage we are all doing to the environment, is not launder these fabrics too often. But clothing that is made from wool, cotton, linen or viscose (plant-based such as bamboo) does *not* leach microplastics.

I realised that one of my everyday jackets is made from 100% polyamide and the lining polyester, so that was an unwelcome discovery when I bothered to look closely at the label, even though I've had this jacket for years. Then to make matters worse, I saw that it was made in China (or PRC – People's Republic of China). There are two reasons why I'm not happy about *that*:

1. I don't want to be supporting a cruel, repressive regime.
2. I would rather buy things that haven't been transported so far, bearing in mind 'carbon footprints' and all that!

If, like me, you find that some of your clothes are from man-made fibres, the best thing is to be mindful of how often we wash these clothes. The less the better. Does anyone else remember a childhood where socks and pants were changed daily but a school shirt, jumper or even vest could last a whole week??? – Makes you think!

On the subject of washing clothes, I heartily recommend using some soda crystals to soften the hard water and only half the amount of laundry liquid or powder recommended. I've run this little 'experiment' for years and it really *does* save money. Adding a dash of Sainsbury's 24/7 disinfectant (39p a bottle) into the dispenser drawer means that you have no need to worry about bacteria if you wash your clothes at low temperatures.

Saving on energy bills: Saving on laundry products: What's not to love??

Ruth Goodwin

*Perhaps one reason we wash our clothes so often now is the ease of using washing machines/detergents and the use of dryers. No more having to light boilers or coppers, or soap bars to struggle with – and no worries about drying if it's raining! Is it all *too* easy now? LEH

'Times have changed'

Rules for Teachers – 1914

1. You will not marry during the term of your contract.
2. You are not to keep company with men.
3. You must be home between the hours of 8pm and 6am unless at a school function.
4. You may not loiter downtown in any of the ice-cream stores.
5. You may not travel beyond the city limits unless you have permission of the chairman of the school board.
6. You may not ride in carriages or automobiles with any man except your father or brother.
7. You may not dress in bright colours.
8. You may under no circumstances dye your hair.
9. You must wear at least two petticoats.
10. Your dresses may not be any shorter than two inches above the ankles.
11. To keep the classroom neat and clean:
you must sweep the floor once a day.
scrub the floor with hot soapy water once a week.
clean the blackboards once a day.
start the fire at 7am to have the school warm by 8am – when the scholars arrive.

Stanley Cook

FROM THE OX4 FOOD CREW - MEALS ON MONDAYS

- Pay-as-you-feel lunches for all *every Monday, 12:00 – 2:00*
but not during the summer break
- FIRST MONDAY of each month: at the Ark-T Centre, John Bunyan Church, Crowell Road
- along with a Community Hub Day
U5s *soft play* 9:30-11:30
chat, *newspapers* and games 2:00-3:30
- at The Venue, Barns Road
10:00-11:00 Dementia information and advice - 1:1 benefits, housing and debt advice
- ALL OTHER MONDAYS – at Flo's café, the Place in the Park, Rymers Lane.

Pay only what you feel / can afford, with the option also of donating more / 'paying it forward' for those who are able – cash or card. All funds raised go towards helping the tackling of food poverty in OX4

No need to book – just turn up! www.ox4foodcrew.co.uk

CHRISTIAN AID MIDSUMMER QUIZ AID

Saturday 25 June 2022 With a strawberry cream tea



It seems that the Saturday afternoon family quiz, crafts, toys and tea concept – so successful for our Valentine's event in February - is more suited to winter/spring and not so attractive on a sunny summer afternoon.... but, whilst lacking families, three teams cheerfully contested for the winners' box of Celebrations on 25 June - and it was very close at the top.

Unicorns:	4	1
Ladies of a certain age:	40 ^{1/2}	
Swallows:	33 ^{1/2}	

There was also an excellent raffle with a prize for everyone and a few to spare for next time.

There was only one major altercation with the quizmaster – and this time she would not be over-ruled – although she was corrected by the Rector on a boating question. Thank you Rosanne

We acknowledge donations of strawberries from the Littlemore Road Co-op; scones and posh biscuits from the Templars Square Co-op. We raised £120

Our next Christian Aid event will be another BIG BRUNCH on Saturday 17 September, 10.30-11.30

contact : Lesley Williams : 01865 779 562 07982 439 828
link@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

COWLEY FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS TREES 2022

Theme - Peace of Earth

Dates : Friday 9 December – the opening reception – through to Sunday 18 December - the closing carol service

We met on 23 June, happily joined by Jo, a member of staff from Ark-T, helping us to forge links with the artists and groups who meet there. She went away to talk to artists about the design of the 2022 poster and card and hopefully to involve the youth groups in making a giant willow- framed globe to hang in the church.

We also began to develop an exciting idea for one or more Christmas tree of peace 'posadas'* to travel daily during the festival – or all through Advent - between schools, churches, community centres, homes – lots to develop on that.

Our next meeting : Thursday 23 September, 9:00, Ranklin Room

We would love others to join the planning group – or maintain contact with ideas - just send them to ctf@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

* (in Mexico) a ritual re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's search for a lodging in Bethlehem, performed just before Christmas

WORKING PRIESTS (Part One)

The following is an article from the Church Times published on 25 February 2022 - *Hugh Williamson* meets ministers whose places of secular work are their mission fields:

AN ASSISTANT curate in Maidstone, the Revd Anthea Mitchell, has none of the usual problems starting conversations about faith. "I have a hundred times deeper conversations about faith with scissors in my hand than in church."



The Revd Anthea Mitchell at work in her hair salon

Ms Mitchell is a full-time hairdresser. "Since I wear my dog collar in the salon, it's easy to get into conversation. People are fascinated how my faith and life fit together. I tell them I'm not a hairdresser one day, and a curate the next. I'm both at the same time. It's such a myth that people are not interested in faith."

Fr Mark van Beeumen, a [Roman Catholic](#) priest who, until recently, was a checkout worker at a branch of Tesco, has similar experiences. "I was given a certain respect and trust, maybe because I'm a priest. People with personal problems sometimes asked for a chat."



Fr van Beeumen with his leaving gift from Tesco colleagues

"Having a regular job gave me a sense of normality, like other people. Sometimes, priests are seen on pedestals, looking from top down. For me, it's a ministry of presence, being there for people".

Ms Mitchell and Fr van Beeumen are both worker priests — or ministers in secular employment (MSEs): ministers who see their secular workplace as central to their [ministry](#). Talking to them, and others like them, reveals a refreshing approach to faith, focused on how

we express and support faith in everyday settings, not only in church buildings. And it challenges the Church to reflect on what ministry means.

Prebendary John Lees is the Church of England's national officer for [self-supporting ordained ministry](#). "MSEs are not usually about workplace ministry, but about the presence shown by ordained ministers in the workplace. This is largely invisible in the Church these days, but it's so important that it's going on. And there is a wide range of people doing this work".

A look at the lives of these MSEs also casts new light on the debate on the use of self-supporting ministers (SSMs) to cover gaps in parish coverage ([Comment, 14 January](#)).

MSEs are not there to fill gaps, Prebendary Lees says. "One of the original purposes of ordaining unpaid clergy, when it started in the 1960s, was to extend contacts into the workplace. These days, MSEs are only a small proportion of SSMs, but they were the original core team, and they are still with us — often despite efforts by the Church to divert them, during their training, into traditional parish roles."

The priests I spoke to are often in precarious work, such as insecure manual or service jobs. They came to their jobs along different paths, and have varied approaches to declaring their status as priests. But they have a similar sense of [mission](#), and they work hard to earn their living.

MOST mornings, Ms Mitchell, whose father was also a hairdresser, is at her studio, Hair Professional, by 6.15 a.m., and works until the evening. These are hours well spent. "Theologically, I find a lot of Christians a bit scary. They have every right to their theology, but they are often very certain of everything, This is different from most people I meet. I'm more comfortable outside church than in it. I find it easier to be among people with doubts and questions.

"As an MSE, I'm better placed to have an intellectually honest conversation with ordinary people. I can make more of a difference, here."

She is well organised, juggling work with IME training; she was ordained deacon last Pentecost. She leads services at St Paul's, Maidstone, three times a month, and preaches regularly. "I often put the colour on [a customer's hair], then have to wait 20 minutes. In this time, I might write next Sunday's intercessions, or work on a sermon."

Customers understand her dual position better than the Church does, she says. "Many in the church hierarchy don't get being an MSE, and just say, 'Stop messing around, love: a priest has a church and a parish.'"

The Archdeacon of Maidstone, the Ven. Andrew Sewell, who was Ms Mitchell's ministry facilitator, concurs. "It was hard, during her training, to keep the Church focused on Anthea's calling. The gravitational pull toward parish ministry is difficult to resist."

But she did resist it. After our Zoom call, she emails me a photo of the certificate hanging in her studio, issued by the Bishop of Dover, the Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, commissioning Ms Mitchell "to serve as an MSE in Hair Professional in Maidstone".

FR VAN BEEUMEN had no certificate, and didn't broadcast that he was a priest. He never wore a clerical collar during his 12 years as shelf-filler, community-liaison officer, and checkout worker at Tesco, in Aston, a multi-ethnic district of Birmingham. He did not want to stand out.

He is now back in Belgium, his home country, and preparing for the next phase of life in his religious order, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

His last phase, for him, is very much present. "I didn't tell Tesco I was a priest when I applied: they'd have thought I'd be preaching all day," he tells me with a smile, on Zoom. The news trickled out slowly. A colleague asked whether he had another job, as he was part-time. "I said, 'No, I'm a member of religious order of Catholic priests.' She was a bit surprised." Colleagues heard the rumours, and, one day, Pauline Walsh, a Roman Catholic who served in the staff canteen, confronted him in the queue. "Are you a priest?" Fr van Beeumen mumbled, but eventually acknowledged that he was. "Pauline is a lovely person, but she has a rough edge and talks straight. She said, 'I'm sorry, Mark, for swearing so much.'

"I said, 'If you swear when I'm not here, you should do so when I'm here, too, and vice versa!' "F**k off,' she said, with a laugh."

People thought that, with his experience, he could have become store manager, but he did not want this. "I want to be on the ground-floor level with the people." He sees himself as a labourer, like his father and grandfathers, who were all manual workers.

"Being a priest is not, in the first place, about sacraments and preaching: it's about how you deal with people. When people are low, you can say something funny. Or I would offer: 'Would you mind if I pray for you?' People who didn't believe in God appreciated it when I thought of them".

These settings — a hair salon and a supermarket — remind me of a poster that Prebendary Lees mentioned. He had pinned it up during his curacy. It showed a Teesside chemical plant with venting towers. The caption read: "Where do you see God in this picture?"

POEM

Luxury!

A Soho Farmhouse weekend, a silver Rolls Royce car,
Luncheon at the Ritz, of course, beginning with caviar,
A private jet to whisk you off to Monaco in the sun
And sip champagne on a magnate's yacht while watching Formula One.

The royal box at Wimbledon, or a Philip Tracey hat
To wear in the Ascot enclosure with a friendly royal chat.
A pure silk dress at Henley as you're picnicking in style,
A box at Covent Garden, a cruise upon the Nile.

A diamond ring from Tiffany's, a pair of Jimmy Choos,
A penthouse on Park Lane, perhaps, with wonderful views.
Some people call theses luxuries, but all I ask instead,
Is a downy pillow, crisp clean sheets and a lovely comfy bed!

Rosanne Butler

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

Self-supporting Ministers

Revd Canon Mark Oxbrow

01865 461953

Email: markoxbrow@aol.com

Revd Max Diaz Butron

mazdiazbutron@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 Coop). Enquiries to Mark at 01865 461953

Rosanne Butler Alternate Thursday mornings, 10-11.30, but weekly during Lent. 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

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Paper contributions to the Parish Office.

