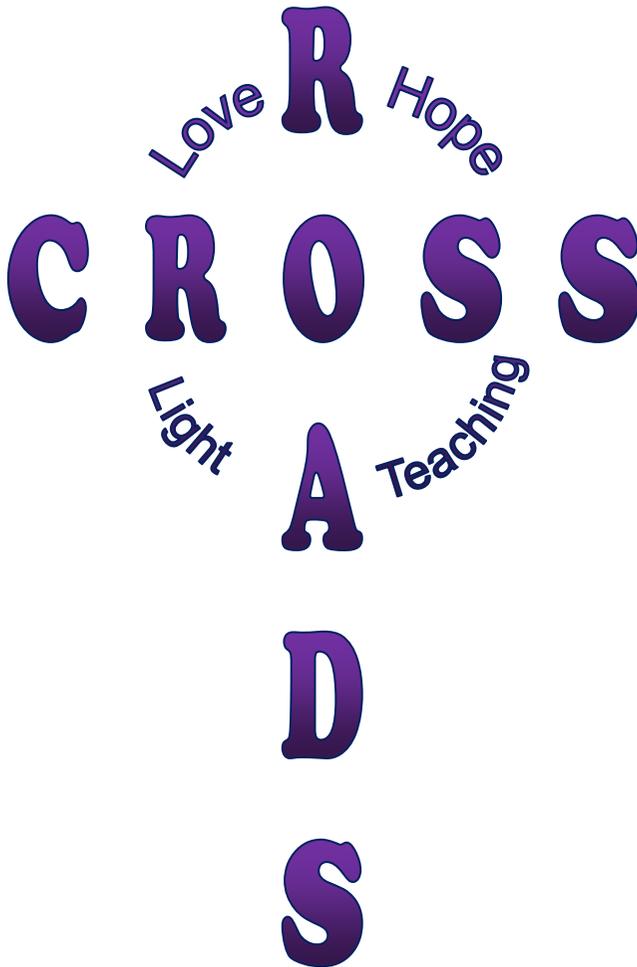


The magazine for the
Benefice of Gloucester St George,
with Whaddon



FEBRUARY 2017

50p

Worshipping, Caring, Pioneering

**THE BENEFICE OF GLOUCESTER ST GEORGE
with ST MARGARET, WHADDON**

Website: www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk



Now on Facebook at

St. George's, Tuffley and St Margaret's Whaddon

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*Crossroads and Signpost are now available
for free on our Benefice website; www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk
Check it out!*

Please note that the views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Parish or the Church of England

THE VICAR WRITES...

Dear friends

Aspirations

In recent sermons I've encouraged each of us to resolve this year both to 'follow the star' God has given us that points to Jesus, and to 'be a star' that points others to His love, a compassionate love that has the power to transform our lives individually, as a community, and right across society.

And what is the true 'star' that God has given us all? Not the 'star sign' of astrology and horoscopes that so many turn to. No. Our creator God has revealed himself and his purposes in the Bible. This is God's *written* word that points us to Jesus, God's *living* Word.

And there are many excellent resources available to help us. The 'Books Plus' shop at Gloucester Royal Hospital has a range. The Bible Reading Fellowship also publish booklets – see Sarah Kingscote. And the Bible Society produces a range of inventive ways to bring the Bible alive; see <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/latest/>

May we all aspire to follow God's 'star', and to be His star for others, throughout this year. And enjoy!

God bless you

BRUCE

CONFIRMATION?

Someone has expressed interest in being confirmed. Bruce will be delighted to host a group of people interested for a few sessions to prepare together: if you think this might be for you, please let him know by 12 February.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

St George's

Virginia (Ginny) Farmiloe

Crematorium

Roy Brierley

Keith Worrall

Sidney Tocknell

Betty Worth

Alan Barnard

WORSHIPPING, CARING, PIONEERING?

Becoming a “Pioneering community” will not be a one-day-wonder, or even a three-year-effort. It is a direction we’re heading, and there’s no turning back. Remember Lot’s wife who looked back and became a pillar of salt! Neither is it a new-fangled attempt to get more folks in church on Sundays.

No. It is a genuine thrust to engage better with the 10,000 or so people in our community who have no connection with church, any understanding or appreciation of the good news of Jesus; to engage them with His love, and with His Spirit, just for the sake of it.

It is about being faithful to our call and purpose as Christ’s church where we are. And it is about trusting God to bring the fruit. How and when we leave to God, who is Lord of the harvest!

If we’re really committed, we’ll never be the same: our worship and life together will be enriched, as we reach out with love and care and welcome in, and reach out more and welcome in...

Yes it’s a bit scary! But we’re safe in God’s hands. And what a joy it is to share together in this the most important purpose of all, to live in

God's love with all. And how wonderful that, largely because of so many people's generous pledges and prayers, we now have the opportunity for someone to 'come and help us' as our new Families and Community Pioneer.

The advert is now out (you can see details on our website, and in church porch). Closing date is 24 February. Interview day is 15 March. Please continue to pray for God's appointment!

Lord help us to grow

- *more compassionate in serving our community,*
- *more confident in sharing the good news of Jesus, and*
- *more creative in reaching out to new people,*

in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

**Archaeologists make the best marriage partners.
The older you get the more interested they are in you!**

ALL AGES AT FAMILY WORSHIP

The service booklet we've used at St George's on the third Sunday of each month has served us well over the years, in making our worship more easily accessible to all ages. However it will not have escaped your notice that we experience no more children that Sunday than any other.

Our recent weekly service booklets aim to help our worship to be meaningful every Sunday for all who come. The PCC has agreed that for the next three months from February we will base our worship on the same booklet each week, adapting as appropriate for those who join us, and continuing the monthly birthday and anniversary celebrations that are so popular.

During this transition period please bring any comments to Bruce.

THANK YOU

LENT LUNCHES *BACK TO BASICS*

Mike and Laura Mumby are catering for Lent Lunches this year which will start on Friday 10 March and continue for five weeks. Profits from the lunches this year will go towards supporting the homeless and the menu will reflect this: -

A bowl of homemade vegetable stew
with a chunk of bread
followed by tea or coffee

For a suggested donation of £5.00

Lunches will be served at 12.30pm on the five Fridays in Lent

ST MARGARET'S ROOF –NEW YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

It's time for an update on St Margaret's roof project.

We went out to tender in November, the results being anxiously awaited. How would they compare with the budget figures on which everything had been based? Also, it was imperative that we got at least three valid prices - this being a requirement of the government's Roof Repair Fund, who are giving half the entire cost of the job. (NOT Heritage Lottery Fund, as wrongly stated in the Citizen).

The results were interesting to say the least. Out of five contractors invited to tender, one failed to respond and another put in a colossal price - almost double our budget. Another was substantially over budget, leaving a choice of two. This is where our surveyor, David Newton, had to work very hard, for there were various oddities in the

tenders, and questions which had to be resolved before we could make a final decision.

We have agreed to go with the lowest offer, from Messrs D A Cook, of Winchcombe. They have done a lot of church reroofing around the Diocese, and have a good reputation. Their figure was actually below our budget, but we will probably take up the option of a temporary overall roof. This will give us peace of mind if we run into prolonged or severe adverse weather conditions. The temporary roof takes the price more or less back to our budget figure.

The only disadvantage is that Cooks can't start till 1st July which means the job will run on into the autumn. This isn't ideal, but we will have to lump it. With our internal ceiling we hope that we should be able to carry on using the church, although the organ will be sheeted up and out of use, and I daresay there will be dust to be cleaned up regularly. The Thursday holy communion service may have to meet elsewhere for the duration, as the work will be noisy.

And now, a huge thank you to all who have contributed to our appeal. We hoped to raise £3,000.00 locally. By the end of 2016 the year the figure was £4,799.00. That speaks for itself. The Sponsor a Stone Slate idea has really caught on, and in addition there have been some very generous individual donations. Apart from that we had two fundraising lunches – a Ploughman's and a sit-down meal - for which many thanks go to Jilly and all her helpers. Meanwhile all the necessary consents are in place and all the hoped-for grants have materialised - in two cases over our expectations.

So everything is on track, but we cannot rule out unexpected snags or additional cost when work starts. "Expect the unexpected" is a good maxim. Thank you again to all who have helped thus far.

JONATHAN

A Mother was reading a Bible story to her young daughter. She read "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt." Her daughter asked "What happened to the flea?"

ST MARGARET'S CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Thank you so much to all those of you who contributed towards the Christmas flowers. It meant that I was able to purchase some lovely flowers in memory of our loved ones. I do hope that you were able to see and enjoy them. Have a good year

GLORIA

INVITATION
to Afternoon Tea including (Teacakes and Crumpets)
with The Famous Five
on Sunday 26 February 2017
from 4.30pm onwards just £5.00 each
If you are able to join us, please sign up
when the list is put up in the porch
We look forward to seeing you at 4.30pm

PLEA FOR PEACE

Lord of all, prince of peace, we plead for Your kingdom of peace to come;
Hear the cry of the suffering,
The voice of the little ones denied the light of this world,
The sorrowful plea of the poor and those most in need of peace,
The victims of war that sullies people with hate and the earth with arms,
Our sisters and brothers living under threat of bombs and forced to leave
their homes into the unknown, stripped of everything – we plead for peace
Our brothers and sisters of the crucified one who like he was are now
wounded and parched and are given the bitter vinegar of rejection
All who encounter the deafening silence of indifference.
Lord hear and answer; bring in your kingdom of peace.

[Based on an article in the 'Redemptorist' Nov 2016]

PS if you find a prayer that helps you, please share it with us! – contact the editor

**AN INVITATION TO JOIN A PILGRIMAGE
TO THE HOLY LAND – NOVEMBER 2017**

The Revd Geoff Crago of Highnam has been leading Holy Land Pilgrimages since 1997 and he invites you to join his 20th anniversary pilgrimage.

The group leaves on 6th November 2017 and will spend six nights in Jerusalem and three nights by the Sea of Galilee. There will be the opportunity to meet local people as well as visiting all the key Biblical sites.

For full details please email g.crago@btinternet.com or telephone 01452 750575, or see

Website: <http://crago.co.uk/holyland.html>

One of our Churchwardens, Mike Brammer, was given the following article by Beryl O'Brien it is a reprint of an article Beryl wrote for St George's Magazine in 1987...

**VISIT TO DUNKIRK
JUNE 1987**

My story started forty-seven years ago, when my brother who was a Sergeant with the 5th Glosters, was killed in France in 1940. From then on I had a dream, I prayed that one day I would visit his grave in Dunkirk.

I sent a photograph of some of the men killed with my brother to the 'Bygone Gloucestershire' section of the Citizen. Soon afterwards, I received a telephone call from the Revd Felix Watkins of Parkend who told me that he was my brother's Corporal and that my brother was killed on the Ledringhem Road, towards Dunkirk, after being hit by a shell. Later, I read in the Citizen that the people of Ledringhem would like to meet the relatives of those men killed defending their village. My sister and I got in touch with the Secretary of the Dunkirk Veterans Association. We were then invited to spend the weekend

with them. We stayed with French families, they gave us a marvellous welcome and we came home with some new friends and promising to meet again.

I read this poem in an old Glosters Gazette and felt I must copy it out as it made me feel nearer to my brother, as it described how he was killed. It was an emotional but very happy time as I had at last had my prayers answer. Thanks be to God.

BERYL O'BRIEN

On Dunkirk beach a soldier lay
Thinking of home so far away,
Wounded, footsore, tired and worn,
One of the heroes, British born.
He lay for hours on the golden sands
Which filtered slowly through his hands.
His thoughts were of the folk at home
Of the English vales he used to roam.
When from the sky a Heinkel came
Spitting death at this chap so lame,
He did not shout or cry aloud
He was but one of a suffering crowd
Who on a blood-bespattered shore
Thought of the friends they'd see no more.
The daylight faded fast away
With it this hero sad to say.
He was but young - just nineteen
But he died just like a British son.
So when this mighty struggle is o'er,
And Dunkirk beach knows peace once more
Think, my friends of the soldiers brave
Who died in France, Britain to save.
Anon

I have tried to trace the writer of this poem but to no avail so I have marked it 'Anon'. Thank you Beryl for this memory.

JACK CRAWFORD CHEVALIER, LEGION D'HONNEUR

Congratulations to Jack Crawford, who was recently honoured by the French government for his part in the D-Day landings. Like our much-missed friend Lionel Harrison, he was made a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur.

Jack's award was made at the Fire Station near Cole Avenue - appropriately as he was a fireman for many years, and his wife Edna also worked for the fire service, dealing with emergency calls. The occasion was featured on regional television and local press.

Although no longer able to get to St George's, Jack and Edna receive communion at home, and follow church news through Crossroads. We congratulate Jack on his honour and convey him and convey our best wishes to him and to Edna.

JONATHAN

A man walks into a shop and asks "Can I buy a wasp please?"
The shopkeeper replied "We don't sell wasps!"
"Well, you have one in the shop window!!!" was the man's retort.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

February sees the start of a new phase of music in our worship, music that's no longer co-ordinated by Brian Woodruff who has so ably and faithfully led us and played for us over many years. How will our music shape up?

The best way we can show our appreciation of Brian's legacy is to work hard to ensure the music continues to develop well in support of our worship week by week.

For the short term, a number of organists have kindly agreed to play for us at St George's to take us to Easter. This gives us some time to consider how God is leading us forward in the longer term. Please pray, and please share your ideas with Bruce.

PLEASE NOTE

There will be no increase in the cost of Crossroads for 2017 it will remain at 50p per issue or £4.00 for the year if you pay in full by the end of January. Remember that if you have access to the internet you can read Crossroads for free by visiting the Benefice website.

www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk



Following our usual Christmas social in December we started 2017 with our AGM. Opening with prayer and remembering members who had died with a minute's silence Sylvia then read the minutes of the last AGM. Mike Mumby gave the treasurer's report and as we are solvent at the moment there is no need to raise the amount of our monthly subscription. In her report Sylvia reminded us of all the speakers we had enjoyed during the past year. We closed with a welcome cup of tea and biscuits.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday February 14 at 2.30pm in the small hall when we will share our Valentine's Day memories. Everyone is very welcome to join us.

SARAH KINGSCOTE

A Doctor was writing out a prescription for his patient and explained that he should take the medicine on alternate days. He said "Take the medicine on Monday, skip Tuesday, take it on Wednesday, skip Thursday, take it Friday, skip Saturday and so on ..."

Two weeks later the Doctor rang the patient to see how he was getting on. The wife replied "He's in hospital Doctor. All that skipping gave him a heart attack".



St George's Coffee Pot



**St George's Centre
EVERY TUESDAY
from 9.00am until 12.00noon
Hot Drinks, Hot food
People to meet and to chat with
Warm welcome**

FOODBANK

Thanks to all who regularly donate: keep up the good work! You can find up to date lists of foods most needed, at their website:
<https://gloucester.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

Also the foodbank are now asking for small regular gifts of money by Standing Order towards their overheads. These can be gift-aided. Some forms are in the foodbank box at back of St George's church.



**MARCH magazine material should be
with the editors by
MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2017
at the very latest
Thank you for your help in this matter**

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER/JANUARY'S PETER'S POSERS

1. ALIEN
2. SWEET CHESTNUTS
3. TIGRIS and EUPHRATES
4. CRICKET (Australia)
5. SKEGNESS (1936)
6. PASS SLIPPED STITCH OVER
7. CRINKLEY BOTTOM
8. MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR
9. CALF
10. KENNY EVERETT

A Postman said after knocking on a door “Is this letter for you sir? The name's illegible”. The man answered “Can't be for me then, my name's Peterson.”

PETER'S POSERS

1. In the 1963 film The Great Escape, what names were given to the three tunnels?
2. What liqueur bearing the letters D.O.M. on the bottle label was developed at Fecamp, France, in the 16th century?
3. What is the third major Balearic Island with Majorca and Minorca?
4. Who won six consecutive Wimbledon singles titles in the 1980s?
5. In which country did the Mau Mau uprising (1952-60) occur?
6. What does a numismatist study or collect?
7. Who was Radio 1's first female DJ?
8. Who captained Jules Verne's submarine Nautilus?
9. The llama belongs to the family of animals commonly called what?
10. Which guitarist is known as Slowhand?

ST GEORGE'S DAY CENTRE
Every Thursday



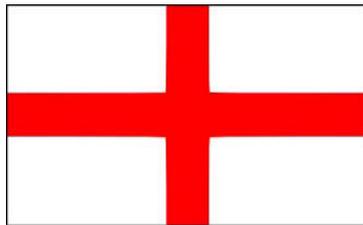
10.30am – 2.30pm



If you are lonely and would like to meet new friends then come and join us!
A hot meal is available, and transport can be arranged



Contact Hans Rackham on 01452 528939



ST GEORGE'S FUNDRAISING LUNCH – 23 APRIL 2017

The Famous Five are preparing lunch for you; Vegetable Soup, Roast Beef with all the trimmings, Fruit Crumble, Coffee and Mints, but please bring your own alcoholic drinks. The cost will be £13.50. If you would like to join us you can pay in instalments; Please give your name, with your £5.00 deposit to Glenda or Darrell; a second £5.00 will be due by the end of February; with the balance being payable by Sunday 26 March.

We, the Famous Five, see the lunches and teas that we put on as being our attempt to raise much needed funds for St George's. We do thank you most sincerely for your support over the years and hope that you will continue to support us and our ventures in the future.

FAMOUS FIVE

CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

1. David and Victoria Beckham
2. Candy cane (curved part is the warble, and the straight section is the strabe)
3. Nuremberg
4. France (also accept Belgium)
5. A Norway Spruce (the tree used as the main Christmas trees in many cities)
6. The Night Before Christmas
7. South Africa
8. Mrs Cratchit
9. Portugal
10. Cornwall

STREET PASTORS

Over seven years ago we launched Street Pastors in Gloucester. The secretary Robert Kingston writes: “We are grateful for our volunteers from Churches in the city (and those who have supported us in prayer) over the years who have enabled us to interact with and help many hundreds of people while providing a Christian presence & witness in the Night time economy (10pm to 4am Friday and Saturday nights, for the clubbers). More volunteers always welcome. Any interested may come out as an observer to see what being a Street pastor involves.

If you would like more information please get in touch with Robert Kingston, rjkingston@tiscali.co.uk 07913-481680.

A Vicar called in to visit an elderly couple in his Parish. The husband who was old and a little frail said “When I die I'm going to leave everything to my dear wife”. His wife replied “He already does that Vicar”.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU...

Getting to know all about you...

...SUSAN WILBER

Another in the series where members of the church family share with us some of their life's story.

Susan is a regular attender at Messy Church, with her daughter Sophie, and Sophie's friend, Kacie. She's also been a regular at Tuesday morning's Coffee Pot for the last five years. In this account, she talks about her early days, growing up in the south east, her school days and her working life in Reading, and her move to Gloucester six years ago.

Although Susan's father trained as a printer compositor, he left printing as the technology evolved and worked for Forbuoy's, managing newsagent shops. This involved frequent moves around the outskirts of London, as the company asked him to take on shop after shop in need of some attention. Susan recalls living in Dartford and in Borehamwood, near Elstree studios, where she has fond memories of trips to the cinema on Saturday mornings. Before she went her father allowed her to choose penny sweets to eat during the film from the selection neatly arranged under the sloping case in his shop. Word got out and Susan found she was a popular person at these film showings...

Frequent moves meant that Susan had to make new friends often. When she was eleven Susan, her parents, and her younger sister, Carol, and younger brother, Ian, moved to Reading. Susan was about to begin her secondary schooling. Her father drove her past a number of school buildings. Susan liked the look of a mixed school housed in old buildings, with sports facilities off-site (and outside toilets!). It proved a good choice as Susan thoroughly enjoyed her school days there. The last year of schooling saw her move to a modern new school, in a different part of Reading. It was somewhat disruptive to her learning, entailing a change of teachers in a number

of subjects. Nevertheless, she left school a year later with Grade 1 CSEs in her favourite subjects, English, Needlework and Home Economics. Maths was nowhere near that top list. In Susan's words, she is "not friends with numbers".

On leaving school Susan had hoped to be a hotel receptionist, but the college training course was already full. She was advised to consider learning to type, advice she didn't rate highly at the time, but took. She embarked on a two-year secretarial course. Shorthand was a challenge which almost caused her to quit. A switch to learning audio-typing saved the day. Susan passed her final exams with distinction, gaining 'O' levels in commerce and law and learning photography at the same time.

The world of work beckoned and Susan was offered a post in the clerk/typist bureau in the head office of Milwards, a shoe company with 52 shops nationwide. Although it was a good first job, with lots of opportunity for learning, it wasn't long before she applied for a post with Russell Office Services as a receptionist/telephonist/typist. As an office/secretarial bureau, with a range of clients offering payroll management, PO Boxes, and independent testing of blood samples by the Public Analyst service the new job offered more variety.

An enjoyable role with Coopers and Lybrand (now Price Waterhouse Coopers) was next, audio-typing in the employee tax department. The job entailed working in West Uxbridge, a journey by bus and train. This proved the incentive for Susan to learn to drive, passing her test at the fourth attempt. It was a job "she loved to bits" and she stayed four years.

One of the biggest employers in Reading was Jacobs (makers of, among other things, Club biscuits, cream crackers and twiglets). Susan became secretary to the Finance Director/Company Secretary. She learned how to take Board minutes and loved the role. In her eight years there, four different Directors came and went, each approaching the role in a different way. Sadly, Jacobs decided to close the Reading Office and Susan found herself made redundant, though offered help from Coutts and Co. to find a new job. She found a job with Hogg Robinson Group and saw it as an opportunity

to move into facilities management, working as PA to the company secretary in Financial Services, with responsibility for managing the property lease for each branch.

Whilst managing these new roles Susan's home life had its ups and downs. After a failed marriage, she met someone on the rebound. She found herself pregnant with her son Ryan. She took maternity leave. Her mother offered to look after Ryan until he was two, after which time her partner, childminders and a nursery all played a part in child care.

Meanwhile there was the chance to move into a job within the company in facilities management. It didn't work out quite as expected and entailed a long journey to Farnborough each day. The company revised the role and Susan found herself redundant for the second time.

It was then that Susan headed for the NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency, an executive agency of the Department of Health (DH) based in Reading where she was successful in getting a post as facilities manager. She was there ten years with responsibility for the receptionists, for health and safety, and for sorting out problems with the building. On her watch the Agency received the top environmental targets for electricity, waste management and water usage for the building, gained ISO accreditation, and became a show office for the DH. During her time at the Agency Sophie was born.

While Sophie was still quite small, Susan began to be troubled by numb fingertips, shaking and lack of energy. She was referred to a neurologist, who following a number of tests, diagnosed primary progressive multiple sclerosis in January 2007. Whilst Susan was pleased to find there was a physical reason for her symptoms, she also learned that there was no treatment currently available. She cried her eyes out on the way home from the hospital. Her colleagues at work were supportive and she was provided with an electric scooter for use at work through the Access to Work scheme.

Meanwhile Ryan went to live with his father in Gloucester. Roughly three years later in 2010 Susan was again made redundant and, in the light of her health, was advised to take early retirement and avail

herself of her Civil Service pension. Susan asked Ryan to look out for a bungalow she could buy with a flat garden and flat access. He found her present home which she bought with the help of a Housing Association. The three of them, Susan, Sophie and Ryan moved in April 2011. It turned out “wonderfully well”, proving very suitable for her needs.

Susan has learned to be strong and resilient. She feels she has been let down by her husband and by her partner and she has been made redundant three times. She has had to cope and find her own way through. Whilst she admits that it doesn't seem fair that she has had to cope with so much, she remains cheerful, not bitter. This is in the face of setbacks, like the loss of her car last year, which has made it much more difficult to get out and about. She remains outward-looking, serving on the MS Society committee. Sophie spends time caring for her Mum and has become a good cook. She links with Gloucester Young Carers.

Whilst her parents decided to have her christened the only time Susan attended church was with the Guides. She recognises God's hand in the birth of both children when the right people were with her in times of specific medical need. She also recognises responding to an inner prompting to offer to teach English and to offer to help run a Guide company (a venture which led to her being District Commissioner and Division Commissioner). Sophie attends One Church in Matson some Fridays and has been away with them on holiday twice. She told her Mum that God had spoken to her during a time of worship.

Susan is very grateful for her Mum and Dad and their 57 years of marriage. Recognising the potential harm of unkind or untruthful words, Susan would advise anyone to “think before you speak”, “to be honest” and “not to send an email in anger”. She enjoys her weekly visits to Coffee Pot, where she is able to relax, talk freely with friends and enjoy a cup of tea. When times are difficult, Susan encourages herself by re-reading a treasured letter from Sophie written at Christmas 2015, when she (Susan) had just returned home after spending two months in hospital following a fall. In it Sophie expresses her thanks for all her mum has done for her and for Ryan, whilst being a single mum living with MS. Special words indeed.

**ST GEORGE'S APCM
APRIL 2017**

If you normally write a report for St George's APCM would you please prepare it **NOW** and send it to Glenda as soon as possible.

Emailed documents would be preferred; if your report has to be hand written please let Glenda have it immediately in order that she can prepare it for the Annual Report and Accounts pack

Remember your report covers the period 1st January to 31st December 2016.

The deadline for ALL reports is Sunday 5th March your report will not appear in the report pack if it is received after this date.



THROUGH THE WINDOW

Dear friends,

Here we are again; it doesn't seem that long ago when I last wrote. Doesn't time fly when you're having fun? The other day when my Mum and Auntie Jill were out I used that machine to talk with Misty. What she was telling me about her Mum, well it beggars belief really. She said that her Mum shuts her out all day and tootles off with my Mum and they're gone for hours. Well I told her if you won't go into the house when she calls you then that's your hard luck. My Mum does the same with me; mind you, sometimes I ignore her when she

calls me. I like to play hide and seek. Often I'll walk passed her with my head held up high and my nose in the air; she still tells me off and then has the cheek to close the door.

When I eventually go inside she tells me off again because I forget to wipe my paws or that they are cold. What does she expect when there's some cold white stuff on the ground; I think that it's called frost, so I can't win either way.

I have two cousins but they live in the village of Arlingham, my Mum and Auntie Jill have seen them; they're called Treacle and Smudge. They are very friendly but not always with each other still that's families for you, don't see eye to eye all the time.

We've had something called Christmas recently; I don't know what it's all about though as I'm only a cat. There were some lovely smells in the kitchen; needless to say I didn't get any of it. I was told it wasn't good for me but I could have given it a go though, couldn't I. I was told that I would be poorly and that the doctors would be closed. I hate going to that place as they stick sharp pins in you and stuff pills down your throat. They also have the cheek to try and cut my toes off.

I've heard my Mum and Auntie Jill talking about a visit for Misty and little me. Help! Help! I don't know when it's going to happen but as soon as I see that box coming out, I'm off; then I won't be able to go. Knowing my luck I won't be allowed out. I know; I'll hide under the bed so they can't get me there.

I haven't seen Auntie Jayne recently so I haven't heard anything about Arnold. I usually jump on to the table so that I can have a fuss made of me. Besides, I'm pleased to see her; I have to be nosy to see what they're doing and make sure that they're doing it right.

I will have to close now as my paws are getting tired and I running out of think!!

Bye for now; until the next time

JOJO WHITTLE

Jill's jottings

FROM ST MARGARET'S

Well my friends, it's me again that person who keeps turning up at St Margaret's with her mate Kath to do some cleaning. Kath and I did our cleaning knowing that Christmas was very fast approaching again. Kath was on the sweeping and polishing and I was on cleaning the brass. It looked super when we had finished but with all the wind, rain and leaves falling it has been quite a job keeping things up together.

It was decided that we would have to get the Christmas tree a week before Christmas. Jonathan had arranged to collect the trees from Pound Farm, courtesy of Gerald and Jenny Hyett but when? That is the question; but we need not have worried the tree was collected on Monday 19 December. So Kath and I duly turned up at about 9.00am; Jonathan was already there and said that he would get the trees; one for inside the church and one for the tower of the church. So Kath and I went to the shed only to find that the tent sides filled half the space we had. To say we had difficulty trying to get the baubles down from their hiding place is putting it lightly, but we managed it.

We put the lights on the tree before we put the baubles on, as we needed to check that the lights actually worked. As we were doing this Jonathan and John Scothern were rehearsing for our Carols by Candlelight. It was lovely to hear and Kath and I gave them a round of applause in appreciation. It helped to get us in the mood, so to speak. So with tree in place we started on the baubles, by the time the tree was decorated we had spent three hours at St Margaret's and dressed the window ledges and pulpit we also put the greenery around the pedestal ready for the flowers for Christmas Day.

On Friday 23 December we had our Carols by Candlelight service. We let it be known around and about when it was so we didn't know how many people would turn up. I got to St Margaret's just after

6.00pm to welcome people and to show them to their seats. By 6.45pm the church was about three quarters full and people continued to arrive after 7.00pm but they had to stand in the doorway of our Vestry. Even more people arrived so Malcolm and I went further back and had to share a service sheet and carol book. It was a wonderful start to Christmas, Mike Mumby reckoned that there were around 120 in the congregation plus we had the additional joy of five babies, 6 small children and 6 older children there. It was so lovely to see so many families sharing such a special service.

On Christmas Day we had a joint Christmas Day service and Family Praise. It was really good with children entering into the spirit of the Christmas story. There were lots of people in the congregation who had moved away but came back for both our Carol and Christmas Day services. Jenny Hyett came with her her grandson, Luke, who is very much like his Dad. I hope that the family enjoyed catching up with other St Margaret's families.

I hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas and am looking forward to 2017, I know that I am so many new experiences to enjoy and do. If you have made New Year resolutions I hope that they are not too difficult to accomplish. I don't make any so I don't have any to break!!

I hope that our Epiphany Evensong on 8 January at St Margaret's when we will be joined by the Gloucester Gallery Quire will be well attended. We will be able to join in with their singing; the delightful John Scothern will be their soloist. This was our special service for January made even more special by the Gloucester Gallery Quire. I do hope that I noticed extra people in the congregation for these wonderful people are a joy to listen to.

So my friends this has been a marathon for me so all I can say is Happy New Year and all the best from me to you.

Happy 2017
JILL PONTER



OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

Oh, hello Harry, where on earth have you been? You look as though you have been pulled through a hedge backwards! I know, Mist, but I have had to climb down from that tree over there. I had to make good my escape after that dog found me in his garden. Blimey, Mist I didn't half have to move myself or I would have been dinner for a very large dog; but not to worry all is well now. Have you heard all those big bangs going off Harry? Nearly scared me to death, my Mum told me not to worry as it was only Christmas fireworks. What are fireworks, Harry? I don't know Mist, I only know that my family keep me indoors every night and we hear the bangs. I hide under the chair myself, Mist. How about you? Well Harry my Mum lets me sleep on the bed in the little bedroom and I cuddle up to a teddy bear that's on the bed as well. So I don't really hear any of the noise that's going on outside.

Oh, Harry, look who's coming up the fence. Oh, Mist isn't she just something else, I'm sure she fancies me, don't you think? Harry, not in a million years pal but I'm sure she likes you as a mate. Yasmin, how you doin' my friend. Oh just fine, Mist, just fine, how about you? Well not too bad, it's been a bit of a rollercoaster over these past few weeks Yas, my Mum has been in for a while and then out for absolutely ages; she goes out with my Auntie Marg and then nearly forgets to come home, I tell you Yas things will have to change. Well Mist, how are you going to do that? I don't know Yas, but I will. Mist, what has your Mum done? Well Harry look at last week, I was got up at some unearthly hour in the morning just because my Mum had to meet Auntie Marg. But Mist you always get up early. Do you meet up with Princess and Star when you get up? Yes Yas, they get fed before me you know and that ain't fair either. I mean me having to wait after them!

I mean Misty, has anything else been happening? Blimey Harry she really has the hump today! I know Yas and she always takes it out on

me! I just don't know what to say, how you sort out a cat with the hump. Come on Yas; let's see if any of the gang are about today.

Ginge, how are you? What you been up to since I last saw you? Harry I've not been doing much of anything, as you know Little Ginge has been in the wars again. He's had a bad leg for a couple of weeks and his Mum keeps taking him to that place, she says it's just to have his bandage changed and to have a pin in his neck, what do you think of that? Ginge, how's he doing, does he look ill, I mean that last time he went to that place he very nearly didn't come back. It was only because you went with him that he did. I know Harry, it was a close thing but I managed to get him back in the cat carriage with me. He was shaking like a leaf. But his Mum gave him lots of cuddles and kisses and he was fine, I think he only does these things so that it can frighten me to death but he's my mate so I don't mind really.

Tiger! How are you and your humans doing? Mist they are all fine. I keep getting under the bed and there are loads and loads of stuff under it. I don't know what's in these packages but I keep getting told to leave the packages alone, the dog keeps running around like a raving lunatic he gets his toys and shakes the living daylights out of them, then the children and their parents put up what they called Christmas decorations. There were lights on a Christmas tree; I had a little play with some of the tree decorations but I got well and truly told off so under the bed I went and played with some of the packages. Hiya Mist, how are you doing? I haven't seen you in an age, where's Luna? Is she around today? I haven't seen her for ages she doesn't come out these days as it's so cold; you know how it is. What did your humans do to you when they found you under the bed again Tiger?

Well Mist my little human got a mouse on a string and I just couldn't resist it, we played for ages and ages and then I smelt my food being put out, well I had to have that didn't I Mist, before the dog got to it. He keeps on nicking my dinner you know, but I'm here now ready to get all the goss. How's JoJo doing? Ok I hope. Yes Tiger she's fine, keeps her Mum on her toes she does, goes out and won't come back in when she is called. I try the same but my Mum tricks me into coming in and then she won't let me back out. I only managed to

sneak out today because she wanted to take some stuff down to the compost bin. Where's that then Mist? It's that bin down the bottom of the garden, Tiger. Oh yes so it is, so when are we going to the den Mist? Right now Tiger, come on Harry, Yas let's get in where it's a bit warmer. Come on there must be food in there say tata Harry, say tata everyone and see you next time, so it's tata from me, Misty and the gang until the next time...

...MISTY PONTER

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTORS

It would be helpful to the editors if articles for Crossroads were emailed where possible using the following format, it is slightly different to that requested some years ago but would help enormously.

Font: Times Roman Font size: 11 Line spacing: 1
Margins: Top and bottom 1.5cm Sides 2.0cms
Paper size A5
Heading: **UPPERCASE in bold** Name: UPPERCASE
Both Heading and Name should be centred

Two men were appearing in Court and the Judge asks the first, "Where do you live?" "No fixed abode!" was the man's reply. He then asks the other man "And you, where do you live?" "In the flat above him!" was his response.

What kind of man was Boaz before he married? He was ruthless!

ST GEORGE'S ENTERTAINERS

Are currently rehearsing an adaptation of the fairy tale...

A tale of **SNOW WHITE**

Snow White is much prettier than her stepmother, so the magic mirror tells her, so a plan is set to rid the wicked stepmother of Snow White forever. A handsome Prince aided by five (*yes five!*) vertically challenged dwarfs attempt to thwart the evil stepmother and to save Snow White so she can live happily ever after with her Prince.

**This and more will be revealed on
Friday 17th February at 7.30pm
and Saturday 18th February 2017
at 2.30pm and at 7.30pm**

PUT THE DATES IN YOUR DIARY NOW!

**Tickets are available NOW
£5.00 for adults and £3.00 for concessions**

*Please see Glenda on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday morning in
the Benefice Office
or Darrell or Glenda
at Coffee Pot on a Tuesday Morning*

We will be supporting James Hopkins Trust this year

Dates for your diary

Don't miss out

JANUARY

Sun 29	10.30am		PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE / White Box Sunday BRIAN WOODRUFF's last Sunday as Organist and Director of Music Communion followed by coffee
	4.00pm	*	Evensong
Tue 31	9.00am		Coffee Pot – all welcome – Jill's team
	9.30am		Communion
	7.30pm		St George's Centre Management Committee meet in the Softley Lounge

FEBRUARY

Thu 2	10.30am	*	Communion
Sun 5			4th Sunday before LENT
	10.30am	*	Family Praise
	10.30am		Communion followed by coffee and prize draw
	2.00pm		Pantomime Rehearsal
	4.00pm	*	Evensong
Tue 7	9.00am		Coffee Pot – all welcome – Mike's team
	9.30am		Communion
Wed 8	7.00pm		St George's Singing Group practice in church
Thu 9	9.00am		Open the Book at Harewood School
	10.30am	*	Communion
Fri 10	pm		Stage set up for Pantomime
Sun 12			3rd Sunday before LENT
	9.00am	*	Communion
	10.30am		Communion with St George's Singing Group followed by coffee
	2.00pm		Pantomime Rehearsal
Mon 13			MARCH CROSSROADS DEADLINE
	7.30pm		Pantomime dress rehearsal
Tue 14	9.00am		Coffee Pot – all welcome – Mike's team
	9.30am		Communion
	2.30pm		Mothers' Union – SH
Wed 15	7.00pm		Gardening Club Committee – SL
	7.30pm		Benefice Standing Committee meet at the Vicarage

Thu 16	10.30am	*	Communion
Fri 17	7.30pm		Pantomime; "A tale of Snow White"
Sat 18	10.00am		Messy Church
	2.30pm		Pantomime; "A tale of Snow White"
	7.30pm		Pantomime; "A tale of Snow White"
Sun 19			2nd Sunday before LENT
	10.30am		Communion followed by coffee
			Stage down
	4.00pm	*	Evensong
Tue 21	9.00am		Coffee Pot – all welcome – Jill's team
	9.30am		Communion
	2.30pm		Parish Giving Scheme Relaunch Workshop in the Main Hall at St George's Centre
	7.30pm		Benefice Communications Team meet in the Softley Lounge
Wed 22	9.00am		March Crossroads print off
	7.15pm		Deanery Synod
	7.30pm		REFRESH Venue to be confirmed
Thu 23	9.00am		March Crossroads collating – MH
	10.30am	*	Communion
Fri 24	2.30pm		Quiet Prayer Group meet at English Martyrs
	7.30pm		Gardening Club – MH
Sat 25	9.30am		Marriage Preparation Day at Lysons Hall, Hempsted
Sun 26			Sunday before LENT / White Box Sunday
	9.00am	*	Communion
	10.30am		Communion followed by Healing and by coffee
	4.30pm		Winter Tea
Tue 28			SHROVE TUESDAY
	9.00am		Coffee Pot – all welcome – Jill's team
	9.30am		Communion

MARCH

Wed 1			ASH WEDNESDAY
Thu 2	9.00am	*	Open the Book at Harewood School
	10.30am	*	Communion
Sun 5			LENT I
	10.30am	*	Family Praise
	10.30am		Communion followed by coffee and cake sale

**FOR DETAILS OF SERVICES THROUGH LENT
AND DURING EASTERTIDE PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT
YOU GET YOUR COPY OF OUR MARCH CROSSROADS ON
SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2017**

(M) See article in magazine

(*) Service or event at St Margaret's Church

MH = Main Hall, SH = Small Hall, SL = Softley Lounge,

MR = Meeting Room, V = Vicarage, O = Office

REGULAR LETS OF ST GEORGE'S CENTRE

Every Mon except Bank Holiday and 1 st Monday of every month except when Speakability meet every other month from 10.30am – 1.00pm	10.00am	Aphasia-Now	SH & SL
Every Monday of term time	5.15pm	Brownies	MH
	6.10pm	Rainbows	SH
	7.15pm	Guides	MH
Every Tues of term time	6.30pm	Cubs	MH
2 nd Tues of month	2.30pm	Mothers' Union	SH
Every Weds	3.30pm	Slimming World	MH
	5.30pm	Slimming World	MH
	7.30pm	Slimming World	MH
Every 4 th Weds	7.00pm	GAGS Committee	SL
Every Thurs except August	10.30am	Day Centre	SH & SL
Every Thurs of term time	6.00pm	Beavers	MH
	7.15pm	Scouts	MH
Every Thurs except August	7.30pm	Charter Band	SH & SL
Every Friday except August	7.30pm	Entertainers	MH
Every 4 th Friday	7.30pm	GAGS Club	MH

An old shepherd lost his favourite Bible while he was out looking for a wayward lamb. Three weeks later, a sheep walked up to him carrying the Bible in its mouth. The shepherd couldn't believe his eyes. He took the precious book out of the sheep's mouth, raised his eyes heavenward and exclaimed, "It's a miracle!" "Not really your name is written inside the cover." said the sheep.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ST GEORGE'S:	Communion	10.30am
ST MARGARET'S:	Communion (2 nd , 4 th Sundays)	9.00am
	Family Praise (1 st Sunday)	10.30am
	Evensong (1 st , 3 rd Sunday) (6.00pm in summertime)	4.00pm
	Special Service (5 th Sunday)	4.00pm

WEEKDAY SERVICES

ST GEORGE'S:	Communion (Tuesday)	9.30am
	Morning Prayer (Wednesday)	9.15am
ST MARGARET'S:	Communion (Thursday)	10.30am

There are occasionally additions to the weekly timetable please refer to the Signpost, the weekly leaflet for details of any changes.

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church, normally takes place at 10.00am on last Saturday of the month but not always so please check the benefice diary inside for this month's information. Messy Church is particularly geared for families with children and offers crafts, activities and worship based on the topic for the day. There is a cafe with drinks and toast too.

THE PARISH OFFICE

St George's Centre enquiries and bookings can be made between the hours of 9.00am and 12.00noon on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday morning either in person or by telephone on 01452 307456.