

# CROSSROADS

The magazine for  
St George's Tuffley  
and St Margaret's Whaddon

Worshipping, Caring, Pioneering



APRIL 2018

50p

ST GEORGE'S TUFFLEY  
WITH ST MARGARET'S WHADDON  
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## THE VICAR WRITES...

Dear friends

### Easter Rising

Jesus once observed (see Matthew 5:45) that God makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good.

Not long after, God made his Son rise, too. And this also was for the evil and the good. For He had died for the whole world: for you and for me, everyone, for all time. To set us free. What a glorious hope!

And yet are we deluded?

Paul observed (see 1 Corinthians 15:19) that if Christ has not been raised, our faith is futile and we are still in our sins. Indeed, if for this life only we have hoped in Christ, then we are of all people most to be pitied.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead! The testimony of our forebears has convinced us; our own hearts bear witness; and so much around us today shouts out that Jesus is alive – bringing light into dark places and love where there was none.

May the joy of Easter rise afresh in our hearts and overflow bringing ever-increasing life and light and hope throughout our beloved community. Amen

God bless you!  
BRUCE

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

CREMATORIUM FUNERAL  
Ronald Charles Jones RIP

COME AND EXPLORE EASTER PRAYER STATIONS  
Wednesday 28th March between 2.00pm and 4.00pm  
Grange Baptist Church, Grange Road, Tuffley

### Quotes of Sir Winston Churchill

(Some of which appear in the film 'The Darkest Hour – recommended viewing; others are dotted around this month's Crossroads)

*One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half.*

### ST GEORGE'S COFFEE POT

EVERY Tuesday morning from 9.00am until 12.00noon  
St George's Centre, Grange Road, Tuffley

Hot drinks and food available until 11.30am

People to meet and to chat to in a friendly environment

*The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; the inherent virtue of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries.*

*We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.*

*Never give in; never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy. (Commons, November 29, 1944)*

"*Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak, Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.*"

## THE GOLDEN THREAD

Churchgoers will have detected a new thread permeating sermons in recent weeks. A thread that remembers the sacrificial generosity of God's love shown us in Jesus, sent to die so we can live.

It's a thread that allows ourselves to weave our lives into God's, by our self-surrender to Him, to His love that's pure and perfect and true.

A thread that wraps our whole being in His.

A thread that traces through our minds, our souls, our bodies, and our pockets.

Yes, this is the tell-tale sign of how deep that golden thread of God's love has penetrated our lives: how it is causing us to open our wallets and purses generously to His purposes.

"All we have is from you and of your own do we give you".

How much are you giving back to God?

*Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time. Commons, May 13, 1940)*

## READERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU...

...to the 22 people who replied.

Results soon...

## PSALM FOR THE MONTH

*We continue our series this month with some verses from PSALM 22, reflecting David's path through great sorrow and pain, to great joy and celebration. Hundreds of years later, David's cry of despair was echoed by Jesus on the cross; fulfilled after three days through the resurrection. Truly He HAS done it!*

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my  
groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;  
and by night, but find no rest.

Yet you are holy,  
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

In you our ancestors trusted;  
they trusted, and you delivered them.

To you they cried, and were saved;  
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

But I am a worm, and not human;  
scorned by others, and despised by the people.

All who see me mock at me;  
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

"Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver  
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

...

You who fear the Lord, praise him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;  
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

For he did not despise or abhor  
the affliction of the afflicted;  
he did not hide his face from me,  
but heard when I cried to him.

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;  
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

...

future generations will be told about the Lord,  
and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,  
saying that he has done it.

## STILL LIMBERING UP?

Annual Parish Meetings are coming up this month. These are important occasions for us to celebrate together all that's been good over the last year, and to look forward to the year ahead. Also we'll be electing people to represent us all on the parish church councils (PCCs) through the year, including church wardens and representatives on the City Deanery. So now's the time to look around, consider who you'd like to nominate, and nobble them (prayerfully, of course!). For more details, contact Margaret Barber (St George's) and Jill Ponter (St Margaret's).

*The British nation is unique in this respect. They are the only people who like to be told how bad things are, who like to be told the worst.*

## AN INTRODUCTION TO LISTENING SKILLS

Would you like to be a better listener? Would you value learning alongside others with an opportunity to practise as you learn?

Listening Post, a registered charity providing counselling and counselling training in Gloucestershire, will be running a course in listening skills from May to July on Tuesday evenings in Churchdown.

It would suit those wanting to learn initial listening skills in order to help other people, whether in a voluntary, church or employed setting. The course costs £165. A poster with more details is available at the back of St George's.

*Feedback: "I found this course extremely beneficial. Learned far more than I thought I would. I would recommend this course to anyone. Fantastic tutors".*

*We are stripped bare by the curse of plenty.*

## EASTER

by Brian Grabham

Christian Festival commemorating  
The resurrection of Christ  
Which tends to be forgotten  
When commercialism sees the occasion  
For extensive sales and easy profit

Like many similar occasions  
It tends to be advantageous to  
The children with chocolate  
Easter eggs plus other benefits  
Not many realising the reason

APCMs  
APRIL 2018

If you normally write a report for St George's or St Margaret's APCMs 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 Benefice Annual Report and Accounts pack

Remember your report covers the period 1st January to 31st December 2017.

The deadline for ALL reports is Sunday 25th March your report will not appear in the report pack if it is received after this date.

FAMOUS 5's EARLY ST GEORGE'S DAY TEA  
Sunday 22 April at 4.30pm  
TICKETS are £6.00  
Numbers will be strictly limited  
so get your names on the list in St George's Church porch

## Are you going into hospital?

Do you know someone who is in hospital?



The chaplains offer:

**Spiritual support, prayer** and  
**a listening ear** as well as  
**Holy Communion** for those who require it

*but they can't help at all  
if they don't know you're there!*



Contact the Hospital Chaplains:

0300 422 4286 Cheltenham General Hospital

0300 422 6200 Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

[ghn-tr.spiritualcare@nhs.net](mailto:ghn-tr.spiritualcare@nhs.net)

*A love of tradition has never weakened a nation, indeed it has strengthened nations in their hour of peril; but the new view must come, the world must roll forward. (July 14, 1940)*

## CHIEF CRAWFOOT

The Canadian railroad trailblazers wanted to cut through Indian land. Indians said no. Until they offered Chief Crawfoot a train ticket for life, to be worn as a gold medal round his neck. The bribe worked, the railroad was built, and Chief Crawfoot proudly displayed his shiny medal.

But Chief Crawfoot never used his train ticket.

Fr Gerry told us this story at Refresh in February. Why?

Because he said we can be like Chief Crawfoot; we've received countless promises from God, yet we don't often use them!

We shared our most prized promises:

- I will send the Holy Spirit e.g. John 16:5-13
- If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends. Revelation 3:20
- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13
- Anyone who believes in me has eternal life John 6:47
- I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:20b
- I will never leave you nor forsake you Joshua 1:5 and Heb. 13:5
- Fear not for I have redeemed you. I have called you by your name; you are mine Isaiah 43:1
- there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus Romans 8:1
- I will teach you and show you the way to go Psalm 32:8
- Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3:5-6

I wonder, what's your favourite of God's promises?

And when did you last put it into practice?

## ELECTORAL ROLL

The Annual meeting of the Parochial Church Council (APCM) will be held on Sunday 22 April 2018 at 11.45 am. Anyone whose name does not appear on the Electoral Roll is not eligible to vote or be elected for the PCC. The Electoral Roll will be displayed on the notice board from Sunday 11 March 2018 until the 15 April 2018. If you wish your name to be added to the list, forms can be obtained from me or the table at the back of church. Completed forms to be handed to me, Glenda or a Churchwarden no later than Sunday, 15 April 2018.

MARGARET BARBER  
(Electoral Roll Officer)

## FLEEING SYRIA...

### ...ARRIVING IN ENGLAND: ONE FAMILY'S STORY

*Bashir Hasan, a civil engineer, and Valentina, an Arabic teacher, met while studying in Aleppo, Syria. After marrying they set up home in Bashir's home town, Al-Hasakah, in the Kurdish area of NE Syria. They have three children Aya, Suleiman and Maya. Arriving in 2015, three years after their first attempt to flee, the first Syrian asylum seekers from the current conflict to arrive in Gloucester, they now live in Tuffley. They have come as a family to one or two church events. Suleiman appeared in the drama in last Christmas's Carol Service at St George's.*

Home and war

Al-Hasakah is one of the ten largest cities in Syria, larger than Gloucester, very near the border with Turkey and Iraq. Although over 500 miles from Damascus it came under attack from Al-Quaeda in 2012. Concerned for the safety of his family Bashir suggested they flee to Turkey. But life was difficult; without being able to speak the language it was hard to find work and there was no school for the children. In 2014, on hearing from friends back in Al-Hasakah that things were better, the family decided to return.

### Trying to escape

They were not back for long. The following year Daesh/ISIS attacked the town. Valentina and the children left Al-Hasakah to live in Kamlishli, fifty miles away, the town where she had grown up, and where her family still lived. Bashir went again to Turkey, not to stay this time, but to find a way to get to Europe. In Istanbul, in the world of the people smugglers, he met those who were offering a route to freedom, at a price and with no guarantee of success. He tried many times, via different ways to leave – sometimes by sea, by boat, sometimes by plane. Each time he was intercepted by the police and sent back. One attempt led to Sudan, but, after twenty days there and no sign of a route out, he returned to Turkey.

A further attempt saw Bashir and others in a small boat. They hadn't long left the shore when the engine cut out and Bashir became concerned that the boat was not seaworthy. When the engine cut out a second time he decided to jump and swim to safety. The captain threatened to shoot him. Bashir retaliated that on reaching the shore he would report the captain to the authorities. Bashir took his chance and jumped, making the shore safely. He hid in the mountains until hearing the captain had indeed turned back bringing his passengers back safely.

### To give up?

Despairing of success and concerned to be with his family who were living in a country where schools and hospitals were being bombed, where cars were loaded with explosives to become weapons of destruction, Bashir was tempted to give up. Torn between being with them and making another bid for freedom, he was persuaded to try one more time. His brothers gave him money to fund a costly flight; his bank balance had been drained by previous unsuccessful attempts.

### A last attempt

And which route to take? He was offered a flight to Egypt, where after four hours he would board another plane to South Africa; a third plane would take him to the UK. He was told he would have an 80% chance of success. He took up the offer. He made it to South Africa, and after two days boarded a plane for the last leg of his journey. On arrival in

the UK he made an application for asylum. He had achieved the first step on the road to a new life.

#### Beginning a new life with support

Bashir was directed to Gloucester, where he made contact with the charity, Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS). The agency supports those seeking asylum in the county, welcoming them as they arrive, acting as their advocate when needed, and helping them adjust to their long-term future if they are recognised as refugees. Bashir found a room to live in a house in Barton Street and began to learn English. After five months he heard from the Home Office, granting him permission to stay as a refugee for five years.

#### Reunion

Bashir could now apply to the Home Office for his family to join him. Approval was given, their flights from Syria being funded by the Red Cross. Valentina and the children cried when they heard the news. They had a month to prepare and say their "Goodbyes". Valentina, Aya, Suleiman and Maya left Damascus on 28 November 2015, to arrive a few hours later at London Heathrow. They had not seen Bashir for eighteen months. A grand reunion, with great relief at all being together and safe at last.

#### Starting over...

Relief, yes, but also the harsh reality of adapting to life here, the five of them living in one room and having to eke out an existence on £73 a week, Bashir's weekly benefit allowance. They got through with loans from GARAS and the Council, which they are slowly paying back week by week.

And then there is the long process of learning a new alphabet and language, understanding British culture and systems, adapting to a different climate. It is all so different from life as they knew it in Syria. They miss their family, their community, where people know and support one another. Despite being here two years, they feel they don't yet know their neighbours. They have made the conscious

decision to get out and about, to learn the language, get a job. It is all too easy to dwell on the past...

Being amongst the earliest Syrian refugees to arrive in the country they were not sponsored by the United Nations and had limited access to language classes. They are now delighted that the Government has made provision and they can study five days a week at college. They have made great progress.

GARAS helped them find school places for the three children. All three are now at St Peter's secondary school. They are happy here, doing well at school. They are safe, have all they want. After six months the family were offered a council house to rent in Tuffley, furnished by gifts through GARAS and local churches.

Some refugees arrive with significant health problems. Others work long hours to make ends meet, causing their health to suffer. Bashir now works for GARAS as a support worker, helping Syrian families acclimatise, using his experience so that others find it easier to settle. Valentina has begun to teach Arabic and would love to have more students.

And how can we help the Hasans and other refugees?

Bashir feels that having a good knowledge of English is key to survival here. They welcome opportunities to talk, to practise their language skills with English speakers, to learn and understand our culture.

And what has kept them going when faced with fear, separation, poverty, loneliness, the loss of their home, their country and their family?

Bashir and Valentina say it is to give their children a hope and a future. They wouldn't stay if it wasn't for them. They are keen that their children make the most of their schooling, make it to university and gain good jobs. They value the freedom they have here.

And how can we pray?

Bashir invites us to pray for Syria, its people, in the midst of continuing atrocities and division.

## VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY

Could you give your time to support stroke survivors who have a communication disability? Our small group of adults meet at St George's Centre most Mondays from 10.30am – 1.00pm.

Help would be needed mainly from 10.30am – 12.00noon

For more info visit <http://www.aphasianow.org/volunteer/>

If interested please email Wilfried or Jenny Dautlich

Email [mail@aphasianow.org](mailto:mail@aphasianow.org) or Telephone 01453 768811



### WINTER NOTES FROM THE BIRD SANCTUARY

It's been a while since my last report from our bird feeding station. An update may be of interest, given the recent spell of harsh weather.

The most noticeable absentees this winter have been the great spotted woodpeckers. We have only seen one near the feeders, where in previous years they were very regular visitors, attracted by the pink suet roll from Pound Farm. Nothing else seemed to take their fancy. I did however see and hear a courtship display by couple of woodpeckers in our oak tree, in late February.

The mistle thrushes have been much in evidence: a neighbour has a mass of mistletoe in his tree, and as their name suggests, this is one of their favourite foods. Years ago, living in the city centre, I often thought I had seen a mistle thrush, but I'm sure now that these were just good-sized song thrushes. The mistle thrush is not only bigger, but has a more upright stance, and the spots on the breast are much more pronounced.

The spell of hard weather in early March gave us some good sightings of the redwing - another of the five types of thrush we have in England. There was a flock of these near us and one or two found their way to our feeding station. One had a good drink from our water feature, which I left running continuously during the snow, to give the birds a chance. What a thrill to have a clear view through the binoculars, at close range. The deep rusty red marking under the wing gives the bird its name, but they also have a distinctive golden eyebrow. Apparently the redwing will fly huge distances: individual birds have been ringed in England one year, only to turn up in Italy, Israel or even Russia in the following winter.

The snow also brought a coal tit to our feeding station. These are quite shy little birds, and tend to be harassed by blue tits and great tits. They have a distinctive white flash on the back of the head. Another rather shy little bird is the wren, though there is nothing shy about their powerful song. One has been in evidence among the low lying plants around our front window. I only hope he or she survived the snow. They are quite common, according to the RSPB, more common than the hedge sparrow, and certain much more common than the house sparrow which has suffered a sharp decline. We get plenty of hedge sparrows, but few if any house sparrows.

Some while back we had a problem with the arrival of our much-loved cat Kimble. He soon learned how to climb the wooden post from which are hung the various feeders. The solution was to wrap the post in thick clear polystyrene sheet, fixed with a staple gun. This has also defeated the squirrels, so the birds have the food to themselves and can peck in safety.

JONATHAN

*I am prepared to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter.*

*I would say to the House, as I said to those who have joined this Government: 'I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat.'  
(Commons, June 10, 1941)*

## BIRDS FLY, FISH SWIM, HUMANS...

...pray. So St Ephraim said.

This is what makes us human. We are made for God. So we pray. But prayer is difficult, isn't it? So surely we should leave it to the professionals?

No, there are no professionals; prayer is for us all.

And it's not complicated.

It's a conversation. Most of us can do that. A conversation where we talk, we listen, and we're simply still. Like the famous man explained, "I sits wi' 'im and 'e sits wi' me".

Try it; every morning, every night, every day. And so discover a new way of being truly human.



The final date for MAY's CROSSROADS  
ARTICLES TO BE WITH THE EDITORS IS

FRIDAY 13 APRIL

It would help the preparation and production of  
May's Crossroads if articles could be with the Editors earlier than the  
above date as printing will have to take place on Wednesday 25 April

Thank you for your help in this matter

## PETER'S POSERS FOR APRIL

- 1 What is the name of the pub in Ambridge that is a focal point in Radio 4's *The Archers*?
- 2 In which sport may you perform an Eskimo Roll?
- 3 To which geometric figure does Pythagoras's Theorem apply?
- 4 Meadowhall shopping centre lies on the outskirts of which city?
- 5 At which battle did Nelson allegedly put a telescope to his blind eye and say "I see no ships"?
- 6 Which children's TV series featured the woodpecker Professor Yaffle?
- 7 Which English football team play their home matches at Anfield?
- 8 Released in January 2011, what was the title of Adele's second studio album?
- 9 What type of acid is found in the human stomach?
- 10 Who wrote "Mr Tambourine Man", a 1965 hit for The Byrds?

Answers next month



Can you sing? Dance? Play an instrument? Tell jokes? Read a poem or monologue? Or do something more exotic? Then this is the opportunity for you...

I would like to put on a variety show at St George's later this year, I don't know when, just yet, as it really depends on how many people come forward and the availability of St George's Centre.

But a start will be to find out just what you are prepared to do; it doesn't matter if you are inexperienced or experienced as long as you

are happy to be on stage. Speak to me by the end of February and let me know what you can do then; I'll take it from there...

This will be a fundraising opportunity for St George's so your family and friends can buy a ticket and come along and support you.

Talk to me if you're unsure or if you would like to suggest someone who might, with a little push, join in the fun.

If it helps I have pinned up a list for you to add your name to or that of someone you would like me to talk with.

DARRELL

*Here is the answer which I will give to President Roosevelt... We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools and we will finish the job. (Radio speech, 1939)*

*Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning. (March 1946)*



FROM ST MARGARET'S

Well hello everyone, it is me, that wonderful person who does the cleaning with her best mate Kath at St Margaret's. Well the scaffolding is still up around the church, the roof looks totally superb and we are all very pleased that it is now completed. Those gentlemen who were up on that roof are real heroes; it was not the best of weather to be up on the roof. There is still work to do in the church but we have to apply for a faculty for that, we have already done that so we must wait for it to be approved, that will cover the tower roof as well.

Kath and I have been doing our cleaning on a Thursday morning as we are the first to arrive; I do the altar making sure it is ready for either Bruce or Jonathan while Kath goes round with the sweeping brush; you wouldn't believe the amount of dirt that collects in just a few days. We both dust the window sills as there is always a draught somewhere, I don't know where it comes from but I sure know where it goes! I'm very glad that we have our new heating as at this moment in time it is a Godsend as the weather is very cold.

On the 18 February we had a joyful celebration of the christening of Miss Phoebe Hyett, we wish the family all the very best, Miss Phoebe is a lovely little girl and we wish her joy.

It is Thursday the 1st of March, the first day of spring and we have arrived at St Margaret's and it is snowing, there are only five of us at the service as we have been told that the weather will worsen. Jonathan did a short service for us so for the moment it is goodbye from me so keep safe and warm.

JILL PONTER



THROUGH THE WINDOW

Hi folks,

Here we are again; it doesn't seem that long ago that I last wrote. Not a lot has happened except that we have that white stuff again and boy is it cold. My poor little paws get quite cold and I have to wash them to warm up.

My mum did let me go outside but it didn't take me long to come back in to the warm. When my mum goes out I can get on that machine and have a chat to my cuz Misty. She's not happy about this cold snow either but she still wants to go out and makes Auntie Jill go looking for her. I must confess my mum does worry about me too; she feeds me well and takes me to that horrible place where they stick pins in me, shove horse pills down my throat and try cutting my toes off! I know I've told you all this before but I get so miffed about it all that I have to let off steam. A little while ago I was shut up in the bedroom because my mums' son came to see her and brought that dog with him. I hate being shut up in there but my mum tells me it is for my own good, I don't like d-d-d-dogs. When I was let out I was able to go out and explore my domain and get a bit of fresh air into the bargain, I do get to chat to my cuz on that machine, she tells me about all the things the gang get up to when they meet up.

Harry keeps losing his glasses and his pen. He worries Mist sometimes; maybe he's losing his marbles! I have been outside this morning and boy is it cold; not fit for man or beast. I went to come back into the house and I slipped over, it was really very slippery. There was a little patch on the patio free of snow (you know that cold white stuff) and I laid there and my belly got cold. My mum saw me and opened the door for me and that was where I slipped. I couldn't wait to get warm again. I had some comfort food and then decided to go and have a lie down.

I haven't heard much about Arnold recently but he is mentioned in dispatches. My mum tells me he is very comfortable where he lives and gets lots of love and hugs from Auntie Jayne. Sometimes he gets a bit fed up with it all so he hides somewhere until it is time for food then he loves everybody. Well, don't we all!

My mum tells me a lot about her sons' cat whose name is Guinness. He is very vocal because my mum can hear when she's talking to her son Rob. He has a very loud voice. The only time he is quiet is when he is eating or sleeping. He doesn't like this white stuff but the dog, Holly, revels in it. She would because she's daft.

This is all I can think of for now so,

'Bye for now, your friend  
JO JO WHITTLE (MISS)

### QUOTABLE QUOTES

*(These are from Helen Keller (1880-1968), who was deaf and blind from age 19 months; as an adult she became a lecturer and world-famous author)*

Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure; life is either a daring adventure or nothing

The most beautiful things in life cannot be seen or even touched; they must be felt with the heart

What is very difficult at first, if we keep on trying, gradually becomes easier

### ANSWERS TO PETER'S MARCH POSERS

1 The Three Musketeers; 2 Cool Runnings; 3 Richard III;  
4 Englebert Humperdinck; 5 Percy Bysshe Shelley; 6 Rebecca;  
7 Narnia; 8 The Winter Soldier; 9 Robin Cousins; 10 Sylvia Plath;

*I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma: but perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest. (Radio broadcast, 21 March 1943)*



## OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

Hi Harry, how are you doing? Well Mist, I'm not too bad but my it's getting pretty cold. I know Harry, my mum lets me go out for a while but it doesn't take me long to get back indoors. I know just what you mean Mist, my human has been leaving the kitchen window open a tad so that I can go out during the day but she makes sure the window is shut at night. I know what you mean Harry; my mum always makes sure that I'm in at night, safe and sound so she says.

Harry, do you know how the rest of the gang are doing? I don't seem to have seen them for ages. Well Mist, I saw Luna the other day and she said that she wouldn't be going out much as she didn't like the cold. I told her I didn't blame her either, it must be below freezing these days. What about the Gingers? Well Mist, I saw them yesterday, they were fine. Look who's coming over the fence Mist, it is big Ginger. What's up Ging, where's little 'un this morning? Harry, he's ok but he's been grounded. What for Ging? What did he do this time? Well Harry, I'm not quite sure but I went to call for him but he couldn't get out, he told me that he only found a ball of wool and was playing with it when his mum saw him, she picked him up and smacked his bottom, the wool was all over the floor, he was only playing so I'm afraid it is only me today. So what have you been up to Ging, apart from trying to keep a check on little Ging? Well Harry, I have been out and about looking for any new felines that turn up in out patch but I did see Yasmin the other day. She was sat in the front room window preening herself like she always does. I know Ging, isn't she something? I've only seen her a couple of times since this cold weather started, she doesn't come out when it's too cold, her mum won't let her you know.

What you up to of late Mist? Well Ging, not very much as you can see, I'm waiting for the rest of the gang to turn up. I haven't seen Tiger for ages, she comes when she can but when that puppy dog of theirs start showing off she sort of tends to high tale it out of the way.

Oh wait a minute that machine is going off, I bet that's our Jo Jo, hang on Jo, got it. Hello Jo that you? Well you never know it might have been your mum and you know that your mum forgets that you are there when she gets on that machine. Oh no, she what Jo? Well I never and what did the ladies say then Jo? Oh not much, it was Pauline, Di and Eva there as well. I bet you had lots of cuddles from Di and Eva. I bet you are so lucky Jo Jo. I get scared when people come into my house but Auntie Jayne came on Monday night and I was in my igloo, I stayed nice and warm. I was so glad that I was hidden but I do go up to my mums bedroom and cuddle up to her, mind you, she doesn't half fidget and she snores you know. She says she has the most horrendous cold but she's just playing at having a cold, she looks o.k. to me. What Jo, your mum has got the sneezes? That's news to me Jo, I know she was poorly a little while ago but she's been fine ever since, and, have you heard how the rest of our friend's felines are? O.k., mind you Harnold is playing his mum up a bit, but she loves him to death. O.k. Jo speak to you soon. Yes Jo I'll tell him you asked after him. 'Bye Jo bye, Harry JoJo said hello and asked if you still have your bag still intact. I said yes, so that's the message from Jo Jo. Anyway chaps, let's get to the den; I'm starving, so Harry tat ta for now. Oh yes, tat ta everyone and it's goodbye from me Misty and the gang until the next time.

MISTY PONTER (Miss) &  
THE GANG

**AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT...**

Our Social Committee have arranged an **Afternoon Tea and Social** for Saturday 7 April from 3.00pm onwards. There will be an opportunity for dancing or just watching others dancing too.

So come along and chat, dance, listen, eat and of course drink tea!

**Tickets are £2.50 and under 5's will not be charged**  
**Get your tickets from Sylvia and Dot**

# dates to Remember

## MARCH

Sun 25			PALM SUNDAY White Box day / Summer time begins
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	10.30am	*	United Palm Sunday Praise
	6.00pm		Youth Alpha at English Martyrs
Mon 26			Holy Week Explore Easter at Grange School with Grange Baptist
	9.15am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans / Roger / Sue
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up
Tue 27			Holy Week Explore Easter at Grange School with Grange Baptist
	9.00am		Coffee Pot- Jill's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
Wed 28			Holy Week
	2.00pm	M	Easter Prayer Stations at Grange Baptist
	7.00pm		St George's Singing Group practice in church until 7.30pm
Thu 29			MAUNDY THURSDAY
	8.30am		Morning Prayer at the Vicarage
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
	11.00am		Blessing of Oils in the Cathedral
	7.00pm		Parish Communion and Vigil at St George's
Fri 30			GOOD FRIDAY
	1.00pm		Tuffley Churches Procession of Witness followed at 3.00pm with a Communion Service at English Martyrs
	5.00pm		Set up for Messy Easter

Sat 31			EASTER EVE
	10.00am		Messy Easter
	8.30pm	*	First Light of Easter

#### APRIL

Sun 1			EASTER DAY
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am	*	Easter Family Praise
	10.30am		Parish Communion with St George's Singing Group followed by coffee
	12.30pm		St George's Baptism of Matthew James Noel Taylor
	1.00pm		Private let of Centre
Mon 2			EASTER MONDAY
			Coffee Pot set up
Tue 3	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Jill's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
	7.30pm		Centre Management Committee – SL
Wed 4	7.30pm		Safeguarding meeting for ALL PCC members at St Catharine's Church
Thu 5	8.30am		Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
	7.30pm		Railway Society – 12 Ryelands
Sat 7	3.00pm	M	Social Committee Tea and Social
Sun 8			EASTER 2
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
Mon 9	10.00am		Speakability – SH
			Coffee Pot set up
Tue 10	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Mike's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
	2.30pm		Mothers' Union – SH
Wed 11	7.00pm		Gardening Club Committee – SL
Thu 12	8.30am		Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Fri 13		M	MAY CROSSROADS DEADLINE
Sun 15			EASTER 3
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	12.30pm	*	Baptism (t.b.c.)

	5.00pm	*	Evensong
Mon 16	9.15am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans / Jenny – <i>The Remembering Meal</i>
	7.30pm		Social Committee – SL (Change of date)
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up
Tue 17	9.00am		Coffee Pot –Mike’s team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
	7.30pm	M	St Margaret’s A.P.C.M. – V (Annual Parochial Church Meeting)
Thu 19	8.30am		Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Fri 20	7.30pm		Gardening Club – MH
Sun 22			EASTER 4
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	12 noon	M	St George’s A.P.C.M. (Annual Parochial Church Meeting)
	4.30pm	M	Famous Five early St George’s Day Tea
Mon 23			ST GEORGE’ S DAY
	9.15am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans / Roger – <i>Good Bye at Last</i>
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up
Tue 24	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Jill’s team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
Wed 25	9.00am		May Crossroads print off
Thu 26	8.30am		Morning Prayer
	9.15am		Open the Book at Harewood with Sylvia / Susan / Roger / Dot <i>In the Beginning / A Sad Day</i>
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
	7.15pm		Deanery Synod at St Hilda’s Matson
Sun 29			EASTER 5 / White Box day
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	5.00pm	*	Evensong
	6.00pm		Youth Alpha Group at English Martyrs Church
Mon 30	9.15am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans / Mike / Laura – <i>The Helper Arrives</i>
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up

MAY

Tue 1	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Jill's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
Wed 2	4.00pm		Benefice Standing Committee – V Please note change in meeting's start time
Thu 3	8.30am		Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
	7.30pm		Railway Society – 12 Ryelands
Sat 5	10.00am		Messy church Pentecost/Party time
Sun 6			EASTER 6
	10.30am	*	Family Praise
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	11.45am		Messy Church planning meeting
	5.00pm	*	Evensong

(M) Read more information 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

**SERVICES**

St George's	Sunday	Parish Communion at 10.30am
	Tuesday	Parish Communion at 9.30am
	Thursday	Morning Prayer at the Vicarage at 9.30am
St Margaret's	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	Family Praise at 10.30am and Evensong at 5.00pm
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	Parish Communion at 9.00am
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	Evensong at 5.00pm
	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Parish Communion at 9.00am
	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Special service at 5.00pm
	Thursday	Parish Communion at 10.30am

There are occasionally changes to the weekly timetable so please refer to Signpost, the weekly newsletter for details of any changes. Crossroads and Signpost are now available for free on our website; [www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk](http://www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk)

**SO CHECK IT OUT!**

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

(Numbers 6:24)