

CROSSROADS

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

Worshipping, Caring, Pioneering



MARCH 2018

50p

THE VICAR WRITES...

Dear friends

That was the week that was

Maybe two million Jews had come to the city for the Passover feast. They could have packed Kingsholm stadium 100 times over!

And they were in party mood. Even better, they'd heard Jesus might come this year.

And when he showed up, riding on a donkey, they swirled around him forming one gigantic carnival procession, shouting "Hosanna! Hosanna!"

They were waving palm branches and generally causing such a hullabaloo that the authorities started losing control.

The hype didn't last, of course.

Later in the week, the crowd had a very different shout: "Crucify! Crucify!"

And so very few folks followed Jesus to the cross.

Even his disciples had abandoned him.

As we approach Holy Week, it's good for every one of us consider this; when the going gets tough, what will it take for me to stay the course?

"Cast all your anxieties on God, for he cares for you (1 Peter 5:7)"

God bless you!
BRUCE

A SONG TO LIVE BY
by Kathryn Roberts and Sean Lakeman

Kathryn's heartfelt advice to her young daughters as they navigate the choppy waters of childhood.

Try and always be the one with
The brightest smile
Even when you feel like a cloudy day.
You might not have been the leader in a while
Never mind, friends will come your way.
Try and always be the one with the brightest smile
Even when it seems no-one will play your game.
It is the one thing that is never out of style
So wear it and
The world will learn your name.
Be a ray of suns, be a drop of rain.
Be the kindest one and show your smile again.
Try and always be the one with the brightest smile
Even if you're tired
And you're sitting on your own.
The warmth inside you burns as fiercely as a fire
Friends will gather round
You'll never be alone.
Be a gentle hand, be a lullaby.
Be a marching band and teach yourself to fly
and be a soaring bird through the open blue,
Be a loving word, do the best you can do.
So try and always be the one with the brightest smile
For whenever you feel down,
and when you feel like tears are falling from your eyes
Just remember...
I will always be around.

This was sent to us by Gloria Wiggall, Kathryn Roberts was singing at Brookthorpe Village Hall in early February. She wrote this song for her little girl who came home from school crying as she never got asked to give out books or pencils at school.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

St Margaret's

Callum William Stanley Pardey
Phoebe Rose Hyett

FUNERALS

St George's

Barbara Walford RIP
Sheila Agnes Eagles RIP

Crematorium

Victor Mervyn Major RIP
Eunice Gladys Leary RIP
Donald Underwood RIP
Joan Margaret Middlecote RIP

St Margaret's

John Frank Hyett RIP

MOTHERING SUNDAY

On March 11th we'll be celebrating motherhood and family life. We'll be taking time to thank God for our own mothers. There'll be posies for all the ladies. Helen will be speaking at St George's, while Jonathan with Susan will be leading a special Family Praise at St Margaret's. So bring your family. And if you have no family, bring yourself, so we can all unite in thanking God for that's wonderful and good in motherhood.

"To gain that which is worth having, it may be necessary to lose everything else" (Bernadette Devlin McAlisky, politician, 1969) – adapted from words of Jesus? (See Mark 8:36; Matthew 16:24)

LIMBERING UP

Annual Parish Meetings are coming up in April. 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 Hans Rackham (St Margaret's).

HOLY WEEK FOR ALL

As well as our usual Sunday and weekday services, during Holy Week this year there'll be special opportunities for us all:

- to visit the 'Explore Easter' exhibits at Grange Baptist;
- to join a special Maundy Thursday evening Holy Communion service at St George's;
- on Good Friday to take part in a procession round part of the parish, ending with a special 3pm service at English Martyrs, focusing on the cross;
- then on Easter Saturday to experience our very special First Light of Easter service at St Margaret's.

Do please come to any or all of these – and bring your friends.

More details coming soon.

NICKY GUMBEL...

...is the voice of the Alpha course

He's also the voice I listen to each morning.

Nicky does the commentary for the Bible in a Year app. It works like this: - the Bible is broken into daily chunks – a couple of chapters from the Old Testament, a few verses from either a Psalm or Proverb, and a couple of paragraphs from the New Testament. If you are looking for a new way to go through the Bible, I would highly recommend it. It's easy. You can either read it yourself or opt to have David Suchet read the Bible passages aloud for you and then listen to Nicky's comments on them.

Nicky brings a fresh understanding to the scriptures and talks about how relevant God's word is for the world we see around us today, commenting on items in the news or big topics in discussion nationally.

The best thing is that you can start any time during the year – just set the start date to when you sign up – and it's free! Look for the BiOY Red background with a white bookmark and a red capital B.

I would love to hear from anyone starting this up or already on board with it. Do get in touch.

Enjoy!
HELEN MCGEOCH

LENT PLASTIC CHALLENGE

Eight tonnes of plastic is dumped in the sea every minute.

Globally, plastics have reached every part of the world's oceans with the 'Great Pacific Garbage Patch' thought to be six times the size of the UK. We can take action through reducing our own use of plastic. One idea for each day of Lent can be found at this website: www.churchcare.co.uk. The list of ideas is also on St George's church porch noticeboard; do ask for a copy.

PSALM FOR THE MONTH

We continue our series this month with some verses from PSALM 71, reflecting on God's goodness over the years and calling on God to stay faithful through the frailties of old age.

In you, O LORD, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame.
In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me.
Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.
For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth.
Upon you I have leaned from my birth; it was you who took me from my mother's womb.
My praise is continually of you.

...Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength is spent.
...I will hope continually, and will praise you yet more and more.
My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all day long, though their number is past my knowledge.
I will come praising the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD, I will praise your righteousness, yours alone.

O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.
So even to old age and grey hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to all the generations to come.

Prayer: *Lord as I tell of Your goodness, and as body and mind grow weak, stay with me. Amen*

"Nothing, like something, happens everywhere" (Philip Larkin)

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.

"In the end, what gives life its meaning is not only how it is lived, but how it draws to a close"
(Baroness Jowell, who has an aggressive brain tumour)

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)

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Tuffley Coach Trip to Houses of Parliament on Monday 12 March 2018

Never been before? Then this may be your first and last chance to visit Parliament before the building closes for four years for refurbishment...

Coach leaves from Tuffley library 7.30am; Houses of Parliament tour is from 11.45am till 1.00pm; the afternoon is free; coach leaves House of Commons 6.00pm for return to Tuffley.

Total cost £25. All welcome. 50 places only.

Arranged by Grange Ward Conservatives. Details from our Mayor Cllr Steve Morgan (520534) or Cllr Nigel Hanman (303566).

GOOD FRIDAY

What a magnificent opportunity Good Friday brings for all God's people in Tuffley, both to join in proclaiming Christ crucified, and to come together at the foot of the cross in worship.

So this year our Good Friday procession will start at 1.30pm, and finish with worship at 3pm. Our walk will begin at Grange Baptist church, pass St George's and along local roads and paths, pausing to share in stations of the cross, and finish at English Martyrs for a joint service at 3pm, followed by tea and hot cross buns.

During the service we will read the story of the Passion of the Lord, unite in solemn intercessions, reflect on the Cross, and share in the distribution of Holy Communion.

Everyone who possibly can is encouraged to give this a real priority. For it is a first for us, to join with our Christian brothers and sisters in remembering together the supreme sacrifice which alone has brought us Life.

And together in thanksgiving to fulfil Jesus' heartfelt prayer, that all his people be one.

There is no greater privilege.

A BIG BIRTHDAY AT ST MARGARET'S

Our little organ at St Margaret's will be 250 years old in 2018. It came to us just over twenty years ago and has become a very special feature of the church.

It was built by John Snetzler of London in 1768 and is one of about twenty of his small chamber organs still in existence. Of these, many have been rebuilt; one might say 'mutilated', almost beyond recognition. Ours is pretty much original and we are extremely fortunate to have such a beautiful and historic instrument. It came to us when St Swithun's in Brookthorpe closed in 1997. It had been there since 1939 and before that it served at a mission church in Tilehurst for seven years. For over a hundred years it was owned by the Wilder family of Sulham Manor in Berkshire... and that is about all we know of its history.

So, how will we mark the big birthday? I hope we may be able to welcome a celebrity organist who can provide a special evening of popular and enjoyable music. I know that organ recitals may not be everyone's cup of tea; but this one will be different. It will be fun and an evening to remember. That at any rate is the idea, so watch for further announcements and don't miss this!



Unfortunately owing to bereavement our speaker was unable to come to our February meeting. As it was Shrove Tuesday Sylvia took the opportunity to talk about its meaning and customs associated with the day.

Shrove Tuesday is both a day of penitence and a day of celebration before Lent begins. Shrivings [from which Shrove Tuesday gets its name] is the act of confessing your sins and receiving absolution or forgiveness. It is very old. Over 1000 years ago a monk wrote in the Anglo-Saxon Ecclesiastical Institutes that 'in the week immediately

before Lent everyone shall go to his confessor and confess his deeds and the confessor shall so shrive him.’

Shrove Tuesday is the last day to feast and use up foods such as meat, fish, fats, eggs and milk which were not allowed in Lent. So in this country we eat pancakes. The most flips anyone has ever done with a single pancake is 349 in two minutes. The Guinness world record for the most pancakes served in eight hours is 34,818 and the highest pancake toss is 3.29m.

Pancake races are also popular, the most famous of which is held at Olney in Buckinghamshire. It is said to have started in 1445 when a woman heard the shriving bell while making pancakes and ran to the church in her apron still clutching her frying pan. In Scarborough everyone assembles on the promenade to skip. Long ropes are stretched across the road and there may be ten or more people skipping on one rope. Many towns in England used to hold mob football games dating back as far as the 12th century but the custom largely died out with the passing of the 1835 Highways Act which banned the playing of football on public highways. However a few towns have maintained the tradition to the present day.

Our next meeting on Tuesday March 13th will be a Lent talk by Fr. Gerry from English Martyrs church.

SARAH KINGSCOTE

ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS

A representative from Alzheimer's Society will be joining us at St George's on Saturday 24 March from 10 till 11.30am, to speak about dementia and answer questions.

The aim is to help us grow in understanding of this far-too-prevalent condition.

This is for those who want to be able better to recognise symptoms among folks close to us and those we look out for (and indeed ourselves perhaps), and better to see how we might respond and provide support.

Everyone is most welcome to join us. Put it in your diary. And bring a friend.

Getting to Know You

...Dawn Dolphin

Dawn, a regular attender at Messy Church and Coffee Pot, lives locally with her two sons, Isaac and Oakley. She is Chair of Gloucestershire Bundles, a local charity which supplies essential equipment and clothing for new-born babies and for primary age school children.

Growing up

Towards the end of 1976 Churchdown welcomed the Saunders family, a new posting to RAF Innsworth for Terry and his wife, Wendy. They had three daughters, the youngest was Dawn. It was to be the last major move for the family, Terry choosing to be a weekly commuter to Chester when his next posting came along. The girls quickly settled into Parton Manor Infant and Junior schools, making friends and beginning to get to know the area. Once a month Dawn went to St John's Sunday school, held in what Dawn remembers as a not very well appointed "shack".

Dawn did not like being the youngest in the family. She clashed with her middle sister, feeling too often she got the blame for any disagreement. Holidays were mostly spent at home. A rare trip to Butlin's in North Wales was somewhat spoiled by chicken-pox.

At eleven Dawn went to Churchdown Secondary school enjoying Maths and, in her words, "doing the bare minimum needed to get by". Out of school she could be found hanging out with friends, listening to music, or trying to put a jigsaw together. She recalls enjoying walking a neighbour's dog – and walking everywhere. The family had a car, but they rarely went

anywhere in it. In her teens she had a weekend job at Hurrans' Garden Centre.

Work and marriage

Dawn didn't have a clear idea what she wanted to do when she left school; her mother thought she might become a social worker. In the event she found herself with a Youth Training Scheme (YTS) placement at Ecclesiastical Insurance, going to college one day a week for a Certificate in Business and Finance. As part of the YTS placement, she spent (and really enjoyed) a week on an Outward Bound course at St David's in Pembrokeshire, experiencing for the first time canoeing, rock climbing and team obstacle races. After three months her role at Ecclesiastical was made permanent, in time changing from post room duties to typing and then underwriting. Dawn enjoyed the work; her first taste of full-time working life had gone well.

A break from work and a holiday in Spain led to romance, when Dawn met Steve, who worked for British Airways and whose family came from Coventry. They married in 1993. Dawn had already transferred to the Birmingham office of Ecclesiastical, commuting daily from Coventry and adapting to work in a large city centre. After a while Dawn found work more locally in a shop in Coventry selling sweaters. She would spend time with Steve's parents when he was working a late shift, taking time to visit her family back in Gloucester every three weeks or so.

Returning to Gloucester

After a while Dawn and Steve found themselves drifting apart, and, recognising their marriage was over, Dawn came back to Gloucester to live with her parents. She found a job at Gloucester College, providing administrative support for exams and in a few months was able to move into a flat of her own in Churchdown. College staff were expected to take advantage of the education the college offered. Dawn took a GCSE course in

Law and NVQ qualifications in English and Maths to level 3. She was encouraged to consider becoming a course tutor. She was adamant that teaching was not for her.

Becoming a Mum

There were other benefits in being on the staff. Dawn met, and got together with, colleague Dave, whose family lived in Tuffley. Married in 2002, Dawn gave birth to Isaac the next year after a 38-hour labour. A difficult birth was followed by the baby blues; postnatal depression being diagnosed when Isaac was two. Weighed down by guilt, not wanting to admit how low she felt, not being able to go out led her to think “there must be more to life”. Her health visitor proved a godsend, recognising the depth of her need, spending three hours with her on her first visit, and assuring Dawn that she could call her whenever she needed to. Together they began to set goals. As a first step, Dawn was to take Isaac to his nursery. Slowly she got better with support and with medication, though not before she had self-harmed, finding relief when her mental anguish was dwarfed by searing physical pain. It was a difficult time, and Dawn and Dave parted in 2007. Dawn and Isaac were able to move to their current home with the help of shared ownership housing association scheme.

Isaac was always on-the-go. Having grown up in a family of girls, Dawn assumed that all boys might behave in a similar way. It wasn't until Isaac started school that she realised that he had some unusually strong preferences – like having to be first or last in a queue. Isaac was referred to a paediatrician. Dawn, who had kept working at the college on a part-time basis (and who needed her work as a single parent), found herself facing disciplinary action (despite being signed off with stress) due to frequent absence from work due to Isaac being unwell and having to attend hospital appointments.

Struggling to manage a staged return to work, Dawn went to a counsellor who suggested she consider resigning from her post. And leave she did, beginning to trade on eBay to make some money. A new opportunity was about to open up...

Gloucestershire Bundles

In 2008 in Stoke the National Childbirth Trust started supplying toiletries to mothers who were finding it hard to make ends meet. A small beginning, described at a conference, got Dawn thinking. Could something like this also work in Gloucester? She with a few others thought it could. One day, when passing a Big Yellow Group warehouse, Dawn enquired whether they offered preferential rates to charities. The company were willing to let a unit for storage without charge, as long as the fee for insurance was covered. The new charity was underway, receiving their first request for help in March 2009 from a mother with new born twin girls.

Gloucestershire Bundles, as it is now known, has grown from those small beginnings, separating from the NCT in 2013 to stand alone. Dawn, Chair and trustee of the charity, has been key in growing it from those early days, seeing it established in premises in Podsmead, before overseeing relocation in 2017 to a building in Quedgeley with 1400 square feet of storage. They celebrated their fifth birthday last month.

Bundles looks to provide clothing, toiletries, nappies, cots and pretty much anything that a family needs should they find themselves in difficult circumstances. All clients are referred by a professional. Dawn says there is no pattern – some are in need after leaving an abusive relationship, others have lost items through fire. Some are teenage mums others are holding down one or two jobs but not making ends meet. The charity caters for children up to the age of eleven; it welcomes second-hand clothes and equipment, and donations for the rent of their storage facilities and for purchases where donations fall short.

Dawn works with a “fantastic” team, who find great purpose in their volunteering. It demonstrates what a dedicated group can achieve...

And for Dawn all this has been achieved in the midst of recovery from post-natal depression, a new live-in partner, and the birth of a second son, Oakley. The new relationship was not to last. As it faltered, Dawn knew that, for her family’s future welfare, she needed to fight for limited supervised contact for her boys. With legal help, she achieved it. Gill, a friend from NCT days, has been a great support, as have her sisters-in-law, and her friend, Rachel. All have children with additional needs.

The place of faith; looking ahead...

And where might God be in all this? Dawn believes in “Something”, she doesn’t exactly know what. She would call herself a Christian, believing it is how you live your life which is important. Questions remain for her. “Why do good people suffer?” Why are the innocent killed?”

There have been good times in the middle of the hard times. Trips with the family to Disneyland and other theme parks stand out. The next five years? She hopes Isaac and Oakley will continue to be happy and healthy, becoming responsible, happy people. She wants to see Bundles continue to thrive, and able to meet the cost of its increased rent.

And a day of her choice? To spend time with the family, on the beach, with friends, just being together. And further ahead, to make a trip to Florida and Disneyworld in 2020.

MARCH

by Brian Grabham

Beware the Ides of March, so Shakespeare wrote
Also many other useful words of note
When the March wind blows we shall have snow
An old fashioned saying in the third month of the Gregorian calendar
listing
Daffodils come into their own following on from snowdrops
Crocus and dwarf Iris it's always a delight to see them grown
Many buds are appearing promising lots of other plants
And shrubs, not forgetting Roses which are my favourite flowers
Come June they will produce; one of the suppliers beings Cants

TO ALL MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTORS

It would be helpful to the editors if articles for Crossroads followed the following set up format: -

Font: Times Roman Font size: 11 Line spacing: 1

Page 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

I would also like to recommend that where possible articles do not exceed 500 words this would help to keep the number of pages down as well as production costs. It would be most helpful if articles are emailed through to me or to Glenda as we both seem to have less time now to process handwritten articles.



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

**TUESDAY 6 MARCH
NOTE EARLIER DATE**

**It would help the preparation and production of
April's Crossroads if articles could be with the Editors earlier
than the above date as printing will have to take place on
Wednesday 14 March.**

Thank you for your help in this matter

PETER'S POSERS FOR MARCH

- 1 Milady de Winter features as a character in which novel by Alexander Dumas?
- 2 Which movie features the story of the Jamaican Bobsleigh team at the 1988 Winter Olympics?
- 3 In which of Shakespeare's plays does the line "Now is the winter of our discontent" appear?
- 4 Who had a UK top ten hit in 1969 with "Winter World of Love"?
- 5 Which poet wrote "Ode to the West Wind" which ends with the line "If Winter comes can Spring be far behind"?
- 6 Mrs De Winter the first wife of Max De Winter is the title character of which novel?
- 7 In which land is it "Always winter but never Christmas"?

8 The second movie in the Captain America franchise has what subtitle?

9 Which British skater won the gold medal in figure skating at the 1980 Winter Olympics?

10 Written in the last months of her life and published subsequently by her husband Ted Hughes, whose posthumous collection of poetry was entitled "Winter Trees"?

Answers next month

ANSWERS TO PETER'S FEBRUARY POSERS

1 "The Sword in the Stone"; 2 His heart was two sizes too small;
3 Prince Albert; 4 Balthasar, Melchior and Caspar; 5 Mistletoe;
6 "The World is Not Enough" played by Denise Richards;
7 The Christmas Card; 8 Santa's Little Helper; 9 The Goons;
10 The Gospel of Saint Matthew (Matthew 2:1-12).

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church normally takes place at 10.00am once a month on a Saturday morning. Please check the church diary for details of this month meeting. 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 ADMINISTRATOR'S 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 mornings either in person or by telephone on 01452 307456.

ST GEORGE'S



In December this year we celebrate the 21st anniversary of St George's 100 Club Draw. Unfortunately we have continued to lose a number of Club members last year and this year.

So an opportunity arises for: -

- existing members to consider increasing their chances to win.
- others to consider joining the club to have a chance to win.

Members have to be over 16 years of age
Each share in the 100 Club will cost £1.00 per month
Payments must be up to date on or before
the first Sunday of each month
Maximum holding per member is 5 shares
Draws will be made on the 2nd Sunday
in March, June, September and December

These are just a few of the rules appertaining to our 100 Club a full set of rules is available upon request.

Please talk to the promoter Darrell

EDDIE ASKEW

Eddie Askew was the former director of the Leprosy Mission (TLM) who dedicated his life to the relief of leprosy all over the world. He worked alongside the children of patients in India, then the patients themselves, seeing the devastating effects of the illness and its close relatives poverty and isolation at first hand. His first placement with the TLM was as a school principal for children of leprosy patients in Perulia, West Bengal where he taught for two years before taking over the supervision of the 600 bed home and hospital there.

During the 50s and 60s, a time when leprosy was still highly stigmatised and the number of people suffering was still on the increase, Eddie paid close attention to some of the dramatic changes in treatment in other parts of India such as physiotherapy and tendon transfer surgery. Eddie ensured that the TLM hospital was the first to provide these services. He was a strong believer in helping people to help themselves; he did not want just to give handouts though many charities at the time operated a paternalistic policy. He appointed a former sufferer as his assistant, one of the first such appointments in its history.

He was born in Nottingham, an only child of parents who were committed members of the Salvation Army. After his national service in the navy he trained as a teacher at St. John's College, York combining art, a subject at which he excelled, with English and Theology.

An exhibition on leprosy he saw in a church left a deep impression on him; it was then that he decided to apply to the Leprosy Mission for overseas service. Inspired by his travels and his Christian faith Eddie found an outlet for his creativity in painting and poetry, the sale of his books and paintings raised millions for the work of the TLM. What a wonderful practical expression of love for those in need. Clearly a remarkable man. Eddie's books appeal to me; I particularly enjoy his very loose style watercolours which I find very restful calm and quiet with a chance to use one's own imagination.

They are mainly short bible readings and quotes with attached meditations and prayers and I particularly like his ability to always bring us back to present realities. I came across one of his prayers a few weeks ago whilst feeling rather anxious and concerned and it was exactly what I needed at that moment.

Lord, all I can do is ask once more for your help. Not just to solve immediate problems but to let them go, to find the grace to put my life and being firmly in your care, open my hand, loosen my grip as I wait for you.

Of course I recognise that this is not at all easy for us to do and that we are all individuals and respond very differently to prayer but it was really helpful to me at that moment in time.

LINDA MEDWELL

Eddie's books are published by TLM Trading Limited for the Leprosy Mission.

WHY DOES EASTER MOVE?

How annoying many of us find the changing date of Easter. Why don't we just make it the same Sunday each year?

Jesus was crucified at the time of the Jewish Passover. So we try to celebrate his resurrection on the first Sunday after Passover.

The Passover date depends on the cycle of the moon.

So at first, Christians celebrated Easter on the Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox. Then in 325 AD, the church's Council of Nicea wanted to reduce the variation, so they decided to celebrate Easter on the first full moon after March 20th (the date of the equinox that year).

Clear as mud so far? It gets murkier. In 1583AD, astronomers derived a table to work out the date for Easter every year. We have followed that table ever since.

Only one slight problem: the actual full moon can be one or two days different from the date predicted in the astronomers' table. To distinguish, we call the astronomers' date the 'Pascal Full Moon'.

Result? Easter Sunday spans anything from 22 March to 25 April – five weeks.

But the story is set to continue. I hear that the Pope is open to discussing the idea of a fixed date in future. Stand by for the next chapter...



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



FROM ST MARGARET'S

Well my friends, here I am once again, looking at our little church all smart and looking all spic and span, well from the outside but I am afraid the inside really does need a good scrub but we haven't been able to do any deep cleaning for months but I can really see a light at the end of the tunnel. The roof has now been completely finished but

it's the porch roof that has to be completed. Our churchyard is looking a lot better as a lot of the building material that was needed has been removed; our builders are very considerate and clear up after themselves all the time. The sheeting that was placed around the scaffolding has now been removed and it won't be long before the scaffolding can be removed all together.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of John Hyett of Pound farm. He was not a St Margaret's church goer but he encouraged his children and grandchildren to attend. Eileen and Jenny come to St Margaret's as often as they can and jenny now brings her grandchildren to our Family praise services. We know that John will be so sadly missed by family and friends alike and our love and condolences go to all of them. John was cremated in the Forest of dean Crematorium and had his memorial service at St Margaret's on 8 February, a very sad day for the family.

The church had been cleared of all the Christmas decorations and I decided that we had to have a large box to put our stable and the nativity characters; we put the box away in the vestry on top of a cupboard where it's out of the way but within easy reach for us when we will need it. The rest of the decorations are in the shed.

Kath and I will be so glad when we can eventually get to grips with our cleaning, right now I have gone down with the lurgy and am not feeling too great but I won't let that stop me as I will carry on regardless, runny nose and all! So that's all for now, hoping all is well with you all.

JILL PONTER

St George's Entertainers wish to thank everyone who supported this year's pantomime, Aladdin. As well as entertaining an audience and having fun ourselves, we were raising funds for the James Hopkins Trust again this year and will be able to make a donation to their good work from your support in the very near future.

READERS' QUESTIONNAIRE: FINAL REMINDER!

Will you help us improve our magazine? We'd like to know what you read, what you think about it, and what ideas you may have for improving the way that Crossroads connects with our communities locally. Please spend a few minutes completing the short form enclosed with February magazine, and return it to Glenda at the office by Monday 5 March. We will enter you in to a special competition with a special Tuffley Prize! We will also publish results and what action we intend to take. Thank you in advance.

Only about 6 questionnaires have been returned so far; it's your magazine so tell us what you think. Your chance is slipping by...



THROUGH THE WINDOW

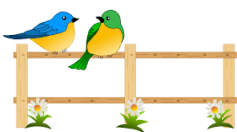
Hello everyone,

It's your feline friend again, doesn't time fly! I'm sure it's not that long since I put pen to paper. The weather has been awful, rain, rain and more rain and I don't like it and it's been very windy and cold. My mum is horrible to me because she makes me go out in horrible weather. A couple of weeks ago my mum bundled me in a box and took me to the animal doctor again. I didn't even know I was going 'til it was too late. I was carried out unceremoniously and put into the car with Misty (and she wasn't happy either) and we complained all the way there and once we got inside. It didn't make any difference though even though my mum was talking nicely to me, I just wanted to go home. I'll be ok for a little while (I hope). Poor Misty, I spoke to here on that machine and she was telling me that she has another

cat that chases her and frightens her even though she tells it to go away and leave her alone. He mum has to do it for her! I don't get the other animals round my door any more. MY mum keeps the door shut so they can't get in. Nothing is safe where other felines are concerned. I had a stranger one day, I knew him because he usually brings that Holly dog and I am shut in my mum's bedroom but this time she wasn't with him. Boy was I relieved! I could come and go as I wanted. Don't get me wrong because my mum looks after me very well but she goes swanning off, heaven knows where leaving me to my own devices. I don't mind really, it gives me a bit of peace and she's always there to feed me.

Poor Misty, I feel so sorry for her as she's frightened of everything she doesn't understand. Auntie Jill had people in her house to mend things and there were very loud noises that frightened her so she had to get out of the house quickly. Then the young man next door started creating loud noises so again she was scared stiff. There was nowhere she could hide. A timid little thing she is, scared of her own shadow. Maybe she needs a few lessons in self-defence! Maybe Arnold could teach her a thing or two because he's had to fend for himself in the past. Oh well, that's life I suppose. I had better have a rest now so,

'Bye for now
Your friend
Jo Jo Whittle (Miss)



OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

Harry, are you there? Yes Mist, I'm here, what's up my friend? Well Harry, she did it again. Who did what Mist? Harry, my mum did it, she took me to that place again. There I was just minding my own business when I was chased all around the house. My mum shut all the doors so that I couldn't get out. Oh Harry, I was so scared, then my mum put me in that box thing and then I had to go in that vehicle,

then my mum went inside and I had to wait until she came out, we then went up to auntie Marg's because our Jo Jo had to come too.

And then what happened Mist? Well Harry we got there and our Jo Jo never shut up once all the way to that place. When we were in that place and so help me when we came out of that place, and do you know Harry, we didn't have to have a pin or a pill but we did have to have our toe nails cut. I got felt all over by the doctor and his hands weren't half cold but I soon got into the box again then it was our Jo Jo's turn. She already got out of the box on her own but needed a bit of help from the doctor then she didn't have anything done just her toe nails cut same as me, then it was a swift return to her box, we weren't gone long but it felt like forever. My mum let me out in the house but I needed to go out, I was dying to do what a girl needs to go out for!

So what has been happening in your neck of the wood Harry? Well Mist, I had to go to the doctors because I had a loose tooth. It didn't half hurt, my human was going to pull it out herself but decided that it wasn't loose enough, so off we went. I got a pin stuck in me and I don't remember anything else. I woke up with a very sore mouth but when I had a drink the loose tooth wasn't there so like you Mist I had to go to the doctor but you just have to put up with it. I know Harry but that don't make it all right. I wonder when my mum will have to get me to that place again.

Oh hello Jo Jo, how are you now? Ok I hope. You what? Oh Jo what did she do that for? I know Jo my mum does that all the time, one minute she's here, the next she's gone. Jo I don't know where she is either, first of all she meets up with her mates at this Coffee Pot place then it's off to read with the children at a school somewhere around here and then it's off to that place called St Margaret's. I mean Jo Jo she's never here and I know on Friday she's in and then out, then in and then out. I can tell you Jo she's gone for ages and ages and I'm left out in the cold. I can tell you I've been frozen to the marrow and I meet her at the door and she lets me in. I then have to have a bite to eat and go up to bed/. What did you say Jo? Harnold, he's done what? He didn't? Well his mum must have shut the door on him Jo. I expect Auntie Jayne will have to let him in. Well you know Jo Jo that Kathy woman has Dusty and Auntie Di has three felines, Tammy,

Billy and Lulu Belle and they all have to share all the time, mind you Jo, I'm glad I'm on my own, it's bad enough when that tabby and that black cat are out the back, they chase me all over the place and my mum has to chase them away when they get too close but she still feeds the black cat in the mornings but she won't feed that tabby cat. There is another black cat that comes to our house but he's a bit scabby around the edges, but my mum told me she has known him for years, so she just gives him his breakfast in the mornings and when he's eaten he goes on his way. What Jo? You will have to ask your mum what Harnold did won't you? Oh Jo I'll have to go, my mum has just come in. Come on Harry, say tat ta for now. Oh, tat ta everyone until the next time, its goodbye from me Mist and the gang.

MISTY PONTER (Miss) &
THE GANG



FEBRUARY

Sun 25			LENT 2 – White boxes
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by prayers for healing / coffee
Mon 26	9.15am		Open the Book at School with Hans / Roger / David
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up
Tue 27	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Jill's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
Wed 28	7.30pm		Finance Committee

MARCH

	8.30am		Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
	11.30am		Authorised Leaders Away Day at Rudford
	7.30pm		Railway Society – 12 Ryelands
Fri 2			Women's World Day of Prayer

Sat 3	10.00am		Messy church – Second Chances
Sun 4			LENT 3
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	5.00pm	*	Evensong
Mon 5	9.15am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans / Jenny / Sue
	7.00pm		Lent Group at 12 St George's Close
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up – MH
Tue 6			APRIL CROSSROADS DEADLINE Please note earlier date
	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Mike's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
	12 noon		Connections meeting at the Vicarage
Wed 7	3.00pm		Lent Group at the Vicarage
	7.00pm		St George's Singing Group in church
Thu 8	8.30am		Morning Prayer at the Vicarage
	9.15am		Open the Book at Harewood with Sylvia / Dot / Jill / Rose
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Sat 10	1.00pm		Private let of Centre until 4.00pm
Sun 11			MOTHERING SUNDAY / LENT 4
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am	*	Family Praise
	10.30am		Parish Communion with St George's Singing Group followed by coffee, Prize Draw and 100 Club Draw
Mon 12			Houses of Parliament Trip
	9.15am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans / Mike / Laura
	7.00pm		Lent Group at 12 St George's Close
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up – MH
Tue 13	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Mike's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
	2.30pm		Mothers' Union
	7.30pm		St Margaret's PCC meeting – V
Wed 14			APRIL CROSSROADS PRINT OFF

	3.00pm		Lent Group at the Vicarage
	7.00pm		Gardening Club meeting – SL
	7.30pm		St George's PCC meeting
Thu 15			CROSSROADS COLLATING
	8.30am		Morning Prayer at the Vicarage
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Sun 18			LENT 5
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	5.00pm	*	Evensong
Mon 19			Explore Easter at Grange School with Grange Baptist
	9.15am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans / Dianne / David
	7.00pm		Lent Group at 12 St George's Close
	9.00pm		Coffee Pot set up – MH
Tue 20			Explore Easter at Grange School with Grange Baptist
	9.00am		Coffee Pot – Jill's team
	9.30am		Parish Communion
Wed 21			Explore Easter at Grange School with Grange Baptist
	3.00pm		Lent Group at the Vicarage
	7.30pm		'Refresh' at English Martyrs – t.b.c.
Thu 22	8.30am		Morning Prayer at the Vicarage
	9.15am		Open the Book at Harewood with Sylvia / Jenny / Dianne / Susan
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Fri 23	7.30pm		Gardening Club
Sat 24			ST GEORGE'S & ST MARGARET'S APCM REPORT DEADLINE
	10.00am		Dementia meeting – SH & SL

Sun 25			PALM SUNDAY White Box day / Summer time begins
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	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
	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 – t.b.c.
Fri 30			GOOD FRIDAY
	10.30am		Liturgy – t.b.c.
	1.00pm		Tuffley Churches Procession of Witness followed at 3.00pm with a Communion Service at English Martyrs
Sat 31			EASTER EVE
	10.00am		Messy Easter
	8.30pm		First Light of Easter – t.b.c.

APRIL

Sun 1			EASTER DAY
	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
	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

SUNDAY SERVICES

ST GEORGE'S:	Parish Communion	10.30am
ST MARGARET'S:	Parish Communion	9.00am
	(2 nd , 4 th Sundays)	
	Family Praise	10.30am
	(1 st Sunday)	
	Evensong	5.00pm
	(1 st , 3 rd Sunday)	
	Special Service	5.00pm
	(5 th Sunday)	

WEEKDAY SERVICES

ST GEORGE'S:	Tuesday Parish Communion	9.30am
	Thursday Morning Prayer	8.30am
ST MARGARET'S:	Thursday Parish Communion	10.30am

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

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