

The Parish Magazine

St John-in-Bedwardine

St Michael's



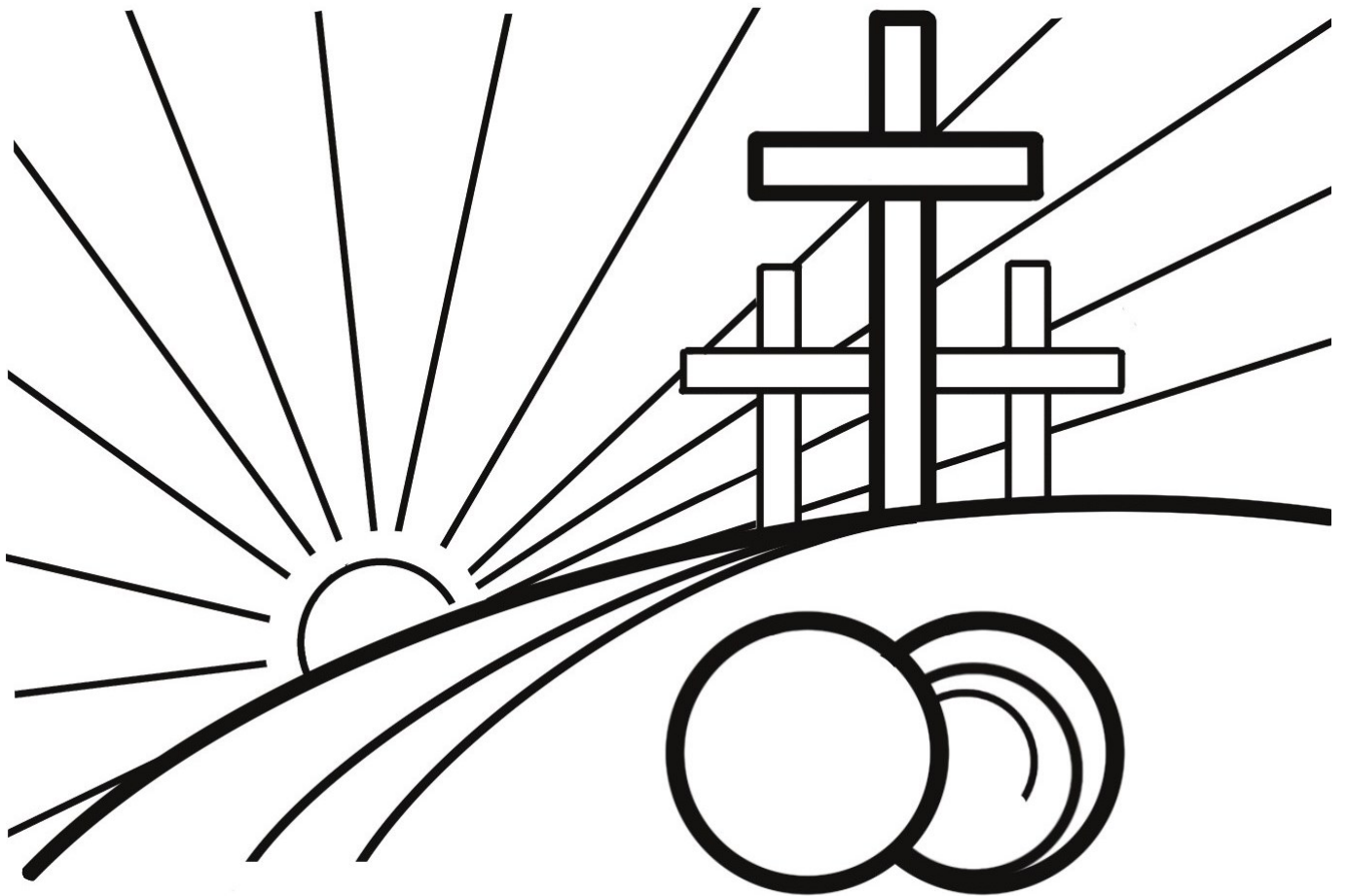
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



April 2023

50p

Alleluia! He is risen.



He is risen indeed.

Alleluia!

Information

WORCESTER CITY WEST TEAM CLERGY (clergy@wcw.church)

The Reverend PHIL BRADFORD (01905 423794)

Day off: Friday

The Reverend SARAH COTTRILL (01905 426257)

Saturday

Pastoral Minister: The Reverend STEPHEN BUCKLEY (07746 206905)

TEAM OFFICE

You can contact the office by email, post or telephone.		The office is open Wednesday and Friday 9am-12noon.
Postal address: 1a Bromyard Road St John's, WR2 5BS	Tel: (01905) 420490 e-mail: office@wcw.church	

ON THE WEB

St John's	Parish Website: www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk A church near you: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18634/ Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohninbedwardine
St Michael's	Parish Website and A church near you: } www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19689/ Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmichaelsdinesgreen/

SERVICES

Please check our websites and Facebook pages, or the notices published on the church noticeboards and printed in the magazine and weekly pew sheets.

SAFEGUARDING

If you have any concerns about possible abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, please contact the Joint Council Safeguarding Officer, Jane Askew (01905 424811) or any member of the clergy.

Churchwardens: stjohns.churchwardens@wcw.church Gordon Templeton (749025), Joy Job (423051).	St John's
Pastoral care: The church's Pastoral Care Group offers support if you are lonely, bereaved, or unable to attend church. Please contact Sylvia Render (telephone 422654/email sylviarender@talktalk.net) or Stephen Buckley (tel 07746 206905/email stephenbuckley554@gmail.com). The church of St John-in-Bedwardine is a registered charity, number 1152583.	
Churchwardens: Mike Dowling (dowlingm28@sky.com /424539), Val Mason (val.mason@yahoo.com /428948).	St Michael's
On Site Safeguarding Officer: Mike Dowling (details above).	

A word from the editors

Welcome to our April, Easter, edition. Our theme is “Alleluia” (“Praise God”), the joyous phrase which is absent in Lent and which returns at Easter. Sarah explains this in her letter.

Sarah also reminds us that we must experience the pain of Holy Week and Christ’s crucifixion before shouting our joy at his resurrection, because it is in his suffering that Jesus most eloquently expressed his love for us.

As food for your journey to Easter, we have an expressive poem on our centre spread, and a selection of seasonal collects on page 29. As usual we have news of events to come and reports from events that have happened. We hope you will see something you might like to attend - many of the events do involve cake! There’s a poster for a coach trip to Weston-super-Mare on page 31.

We pray that you will be refreshed by the journey to Easter and empowered as we all say again “Alleluia!”

*Risen Christ,
you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope:
strengthen us to proclaim your risen life
and fill us with your peace,
to the glory of God the Father.*

Graham and Sue Evans

Important information

Email address: parishmagazine@wcv.church

Next edition: Deadline is Sunday 9th April.

Distribution, towards the end of April.

Subscription form: Page 46.

Cover picture: Parish Pump graphic, words added.

Pictures in this magazine: Our thanks to those who provided pictures for this magazine, including Christopher Whitehead Language College, Sarah Cottrill, Colin Nash and Maureen Ovington.

The magazine

We publish a Parish Magazine each month, except August.

Articles on all aspects of Christian and parish life, letters, jokes and anecdotes are welcome - do contribute if you can. If you have a story to tell, please make contact. Do include your name as anonymous contributions will not be considered. If you can, please use e-mail (address below left). The editors will always acknowledge items sent by email; please try again if you do not receive a response. Please send all written correspondence for the magazine to the Parish Office.

The magazine costs 50p to purchase and can be obtained from the back of church. Subscriptions are available at the discounted price of £5 per year; by subscribing you make things easier for our printing team as we know more closely how many copies to print.

You can subscribe by filling in the form on page 46 or by taking a subscription form from the rack (where the magazines are) at the back of the church. Please return the form and your payment to the parish office.

Opinions!

Opinions expressed in this magazine are personal opinions of the authors concerned and may not represent the views of the editors, our PCCs or The Church of England. Such material is offered as a source of debate or reflection.

To advertise

Please see page 16.

From Sarah Cottrill

Lent is nearly over! We will soon be celebrating the most joyful day in the Christian calendar. Before we get there, I encourage you to take a moment to look back on the last thirty or so days and ask yourself: What have I missed most during the season now coming to a close? Perhaps it's indulging in your favourite tippie in the evening; the cake, puddings or crisps missing from your meal times; or maybe it's the time you no longer spend playing video games or looking on social media. Perhaps you've been missing the flowers in church?



On the long and varied lists you might, between you all, produce, of things you've missed during Lent, I wonder where "Alleluia!" might come? Maybe you haven't even noticed its absence but, throughout the solemn season of Lent, this word has been missing. We have avoided hymns that use it and, where it begins a psalm, the first word will be omitted. Why is this?

To begin to understand this, we need to know what the word means and a glance at a dictionary tells us that it is an exclamation, meaning God be praised. In the sombre season of Lent, when we concentrate on fasting, study and prayer as we commemorate the time Jesus spent in the wilderness and the temptations he faced there, an exuberant shout of praise, such as "Alleluia!" seems inappropriate.

And yet, we could argue, this is the time when we most rightly should be shouting our praise. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness but did not succumb. He walked the dreadful path to Calvary and was not beaten. Of course, we will celebrate his ultimate victory at Easter and then our Alleluias will ring out, loud and clear but in the meantime, we keep our praise muted out of respect for the depth of suffering undergone by Jesus, not just on Good Friday, but at each new rejection, each sneer, each refusal to accept the love, forgiveness and peace he came to bring.

One of my favourite Christian poems is Studdert Kennedy's "Indifference" in which he compares the pain and grief suffered by Christ at Golgotha, to the pain and grief we cause him today through our cold indifference. Our negligence of God and of each other makes Christ, in Studdert Kennedy's words, crouch in the rain of modern-day Birmingham and weep for Calvary. It is a powerful image and one which, to my mind at least, banishes any wish to shout, or even whisper "Alleluia!"

And yet, that love, that compassion and mercy which took Jesus to death on the cross, paved the way to the empty tomb and the joy of Easter Day. We often remind ourselves that life is a cycle of good and bad, happy and sad times; that we cannot have one without the other. We know that Jesus could not have won his final victory over death, that there would be no glorious Easter Day, without the terror and awfulness of the days that went before. That is why I suggest that, although we cannot speak it aloud, our hearts should still be saying "Alleluia" even in the darkest days of the Lent and Passiontide seasons because it is then, in his suffering, that Jesus most eloquently expressed his love for us.

When Easter Day arrives, we will fill our churches with light and music, and beautifully arranged flowers will make a most welcome return. Alleluias will ring out as we celebrate this triumphant festival and it is right and good that they do so. But Christian praise of our God is not – or should not be – a "fair weather friend." In their hymn paraphrasing Psalm 34, Tate and Braddy wrote:

*"Through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still my heart and tongue employ!"¹*

Sometimes, hard though it is to see, it is the dark times that ultimately bring the greatest joy and benefit. This is certainly the message of Easter; that out of the depths of darkness and despair, God brought the ultimate, perfect, joy and cause for everlasting rejoicing.

Alleluia! Christ has died.

Alleluia! Christ has risen!

Alleluia! Praise God, come what may. For ever and ever. Amen.

Sarah Cottrill

¹ in public domain.

In Memoriam

Florence A Lewis	4 April 1994
Patricia Rosalie Surman	7 April 1986
Rev'd James William Newton	10 April 1988
William Henry Fox	18 April 1984
Doris Drinkwater	18 April 1989

Additions to In Memoriam are not automatic but must be specifically requested via the clergy.

Inclusion only needs to be requested once; entries are then included until the fortieth anniversary.

An extension may be requested by family or friends of those named.

From the Registers, February 2022

St John's

FUNERALS: *Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord*

- d. 4th January 2023 Jeremy Richardson
- d. 7th January 2023 Gerald Drew
- d. 13th January 2023 June Manton
- d. 19th January 2023 John Ricketts

SERVICES: Communicants 201. Total attendance at all services 521 including 248 at four funerals.

St Michael's

SERVICES: Communicants 57. Total attendance at all services 66.

Sundays and Principal Feasts in April

Sunday 2nd: Palm Sunday.

Monday 3rd: Holy Week begins.

Thursday 6th: Maundy Thursday.

Friday 7th: Good Friday.

Saturday 8th: Holy Saturday.

Sunday 9th: Easter Day.

Monday 10th: Easter Week begins.

Sunday 16th: Second Sunday of Easter

Sunday 23rd: Third Sunday of Easter.

Monday 24th: George, Martyr, Patron of England (from 23rd).

Tuesday 25th: Mark the Evangelist.

Sunday 30th: Fourth Sunday of Easter.

Dates for your diary

<i>Location key</i>	(J) St John's Church	(M) St Michael's Church
	(V) The Vicarage, 7 Manor Road	

NB No 'Little Blessings' or 'Women's Breakfast' in April.

--- 000 ---

(J) Thursday 13th April, 1pm: Good Old Days talk, 'Coronation stories', see page 9.

--- 000 ---

(J) Monday 17th April, 10am: Little Lambs, see page 9.

--- 000 ---

(M) Monday 17th April, 2.30pm: Mothers' Union; speaker, Margaret Mandrell, talking about her visit to Peru.

--- 000 ---

(J) Wednesday 19th April, 2.45pm: Tea/Coffee & Cake, see page 9.

--- 000 ---

(M) Thursday 20th April, 2pm - 4pm: West Worcester Friendship Group.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 22nd April, 10.15am: Café@10:15, see page 9.

--- 000 ---

(J) Monday 24th April, 10am: Little Lambs, see page 9.

--- 000 ---

(V) Friday 28th April: Fourth Friday Friendship Group. Look out for sign-up sheets in church or contact Sarah Cottrill for details.

Easter flowers at St John's Church

Easter Sunday falls on 9th April this year and so the flower team will be decorating the church on Saturday 8th April from 9am until 1.00pm. You are welcome to come and help if you wish. Refreshments will be available from about 11am. Gifts of greenery will be most useful.

If you wish to remember friends or relatives you can do so by making a donation towards Easter lilies and flowers. Please give your donation, in an envelope with the names of those to be remembered, to the church wardens, members of the flower team or Sue Hussell. Names of those remembered will be included in a memorial list which will be placed on the 'Welcome' table.

The flower team wish you and your families a blessed and joyful Easter, and thank you for your support.

Sue Hussell

Mid-week services

Holy week:

Monday to Wednesday, 3rd to 5th April: Morning and Evening Prayer at St John's, 8.00am and 5.00pm

Maundy Thursday, 6th April: services at St Michael's 10.30am; and St John's at 7.30pm

Good Friday, 7th April: At St John's, Stations of the Cross, 12 noon and Liturgy of Good Friday at 1.30pm

Holy Saturday, 8th April: Easter Vigil at St John's at 9.00pm

Easter Week (11th/13th April): No mid-week services

Rest of April (18th, 20th, 25th, 27th April):

Tuesday St John's 10am. (Eucharist - Book of Common Prayer)

Thursday St Michael's 10.30am. (Eucharist - Common Worship)

Healing Service

Once a month there is a healing service in St John's. It lasts for about one hour and is a time for reflection and prayer.

The three hymns that are sung are gentle and appropriate for the service. There is a quiet meditative time to pray for people we know and recently prayers have been focused on the war in Ukraine.

It would be lovely to see more people at the service where we can join together in the power of prayer and healing.

The service is at 5pm on the fourth Sunday of each month; reminders are on the pew sheets and in the magazine.

For more info about the service please contact me.

Sylvia Render

Coach trip

Details of the next coach trip, and how to book, can be found on page 31.



Events at St John's

St Johns Church
Presents
Discover History
Talk with Refreshments £4

Thursday 13th April
1pm

Coronation Stories



ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE

Open for Tea/Coffee
and Cakes
£2.00



Wednesday 19th April
at 2.45pm in the Church

ALL WELCOME

St John in Bedwardine



Join us for Fresh Coffee and Danish
'Friendship and Thoughts'

At 10.15am on

Saturday
22nd April

Thought for the day by
Revd Phil Bradford

ALL WELCOME

Little Lambs



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Walking Church

Visits to friends and other commitments meant a sadly reduced number of walkers met outside St Clement's church for our March meeting. However, we did have one very welcome new member as George Evans joined us for the first time!

The Gospel reading that morning was Matthew's very detailed account of the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman and it gave us plenty to think about. As we walked from St Clement's church to Sabrina bridge, we considered what social taboos we are aware of and what prejudices we have to acknowledge within ourselves. Having crossed the bridge, we walked across Pitchcroft, discussing how her encounter with Jesus changed the Samaritan woman's life, thought about how others had influenced our Christian journey and how, perhaps, we have encouraged others in theirs.

Our walk then took us over Worcester bridge and along the riverside as we considered our final point; how brave are we in our personal witness and what hinders us?

Brains and legs thoroughly exercised, we retreated to the vicarage for a well-earned cup of tea and a biscuit!

Walking Church returns on May 14th when, as the clocks will have changed, we start at the later time of 2.30pm. Meeting place to be confirmed, but all welcome.

Sarah Cottrill

Meetings of the Worcester and District Branch of the Royal Air Force Association (RAFA)

The Committee of the local branch of the Royal Air Force Association has been working hard to produce a varied and interesting programme for the coming months. As a change from our previous practice of always meeting at the Methodist church on Bromyard Road, many of our meetings will now be taking place out and about. The proposed programme includes walks, meals out, craft and flower arranging sessions, a visit to Birmingham for the Christmas Fair and mince pie tasting!

Our meetings are always held on the second Wednesday of the month, starting at 2pm. In April we will be at Bromyard Road Methodist Church. Local artist John Mason will be bringing a few of his paintings to show us and talk about.

If you are interested in coming along to any of our meetings and would like more details, please have a word with me.

Sarah Cottrill

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Prayer for Ukraine



Oh Lord, hear our prayers, come and listen.

Lord Jesus, we light our candles today as we pray and remember the people of Ukraine.

Lord Jesus, as the people of Ukraine live amidst the clamour and noise of war - bombs falling destroying landscapes and life, sirens wailing, electricity and water failing, shortages of food, and being surrounded by such terrible devastation amongst the scorched earth of war - we pray that all may find a sacred space to lay the trauma of war at the foot of the cross.

We pray Lord, for people trying to come to terms with the change that war has brought into their lives; that you will relieve the grief and pain of all those suffering such a loss of life, loved ones who have been killed and those maimed by war. As you gave your life Lord to be the saviour of our world, may all who suffer feel your presence and find a sacred space in which to grieve and be healed by your spirit.


Lord, we pray today for all conscripts of war, people made in your image who are used and abused by their masters; for their families grieving their loss and bewildered by what is happening to their children. Lord hear our prayers on behalf of all soldiers in Ukraine and in Russia. We ask Lord that this war and the persecution of all people may cease.

Lord, hear our prayer and let our prayers rise before you as incense, to restore Ukraine and its people to peace and democracy; where families who are separated may be together again, where young people may dream and have choices about their lives and how they live; for children to live without the noise of war and free from fear. May all live in peace and harmony once more.

Lord Jesus, you gave yourself in extravagant love dying for our sins on the cross. For all people of different nationalities and all creeds, be our saviour. Help us to find love in our sacred space.

We ask this on behalf of all Ukrainian people and all those involved in this continuing war.

Lord, hear our prayer, come and listen.

Amen 

Jenny English

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Celebrating St Clements Church: 200 years on site

On March 12th 1823, by proclamation of King George IV, the church of St Clement, on its present site, was consecrated. There had been a church dedicated to St Clement since the tenth century, but it had been on the East side of the river where it suffered badly from flooding. So, with amazing resourcefulness – and at a cost of £3,700 (around £563,471 in today's money!) – the church was moved to the site familiar to us all.

Two hundred years later, the anniversary of the consecration of the church on the West side of the river, fell on a Sunday and so we were able to celebrate on the exact date, and we were delighted to do so with friends from all the churches in our team.



After a service which in sermon and prayers reflected the occasion, we shared refreshments and fellowship.

My thanks to all who contributed to the service and the refreshments and to Phil and John who worked hard in the months leading up to the day, to ensure its success.

Sarah Cottrill





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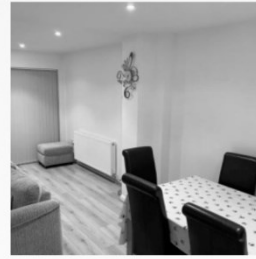
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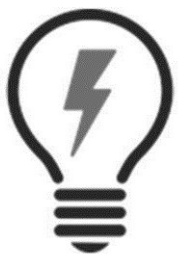
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Don't mention the inflatable flamingo!

Well...I have just put down my metaphorical pen having finished writing my next assignment, made a cup of coffee and here I am writing the magazine piece for April! On the one hand I can't believe how quickly these come around, on the other hand I can't believe that I'm only half way through my first year...I feel like I've done so much already. It's starting to become second nature, when I read a bible passage, to think about what the author's motivation was, who their audience was, what particular problem might they have been trying to resolve? At first I thought that this more objective, dispassionate approach would mean I lost something from the bible, but far from it, I'm seeing ever deeper layers and connections and that's bringing it to life in a way that I'd never seen before.

But sadly, the biblical study module is now complete and we have just started a new one all about ministry and worship. We had our first seminar last week (feel free to ask me if we are a prawn or plaice church next time you see me 😊) and this week's is entitled "what is preaching". I am both excited and nervous at the same time for that one, as I'm sure I will cringe at the many faux pas I have made over the past six years or so (the inflatable flamingo springs to mind!)

And then there is the other module that is still in progress which is all about understanding churches and congregations. That's the one where people kindly filled in the five words for a word cloud for me. I must confess that that assignment is taking me much longer than I thought so I have asked for a two week extension on that one, but it's coming together and now the other biblical study assignment is complete I can give it my full attention - thanks to everyone so far who has helped.

Part of my research has involved interviewing people about their recollections of St Johns and it has been such a pleasure to take time in an unhurried way just to chat. As I was being assessed to see if I was suitable for reader training one of the questions I was asked was about doing vs being. I've always been a doer trying to keep busy and getting a sense of purpose from a list of tasks completed, but in these chats I could just be; just to listen and learn and I am starting to see the importance of that. Sure there will always be lessons to be read, tables to be put out and sausages to cook but, like the song says, there should also be time just to "Be still for the presence of the Lord."

So with that I shall put my pen down once more and take a moment just to breath and appreciate this sunny day.

Rob Little

Cooking on gas!

Rose Margaret Haynes (known to most people as “Marg”) and Irene Haynes were sisters who lived in St John’s all their lives and were always to be seen in church on Sundays sitting in the front pew by the lady chapel.

When they died they left a legacy for the church and some of the money has been used to purchase a new dishwasher, a new cooker and an extractor fan for the church kitchen.

They have all now been fitted and for those of us using the kitchen we are getting used to learning how to use the new equipment.

It has been a lovely gift and we will all benefit as we share fellowship together and remember the sisters, Marg and Irene.

Jenny English

Positive reality at Christopher Whitehead

7th March 2023

Willie Nelson – songwriter, “Once you replace negative thoughts with positive ones, you’ll start having positive results.”

This week I achieved my fifteen minutes of Andy Warhol fame as the school achieved national notoriety and I achieved infamy on such educational shows as ‘Good Morning Britain,’ ‘Loose Women’ and a no-news story spiralled from the Worcester News to the Guardian, Telegraph and Cornish Times!

Christopher Whitehead is a very good, caring school that serves your community. Local estate agents advertise the positive nature of the school – worth an estimated increase in value of £10,000 per house and saves many £20,000 a year, the cost of private education. To deliberately knock the school does no one any good. This story was based on information Worcester News lifted from Facebook. It was inaccurate and inflammatory, with clickbait headlines that are sensationalist, backed by anonymous very personal hurtful comments. I believe Worcester News has a duty of care to monitor their stories – check their accuracy and to protect the ‘wellbeing’ of those represented in the story.

My frustration is that we now live in a world of 24/7 newsreels where we seem to focus on the negative, often that which is superficial. This is after all in a week where the Ukraine war continues to bewilder and cause mass human destruction, where our troubled waterways are vessels for sewage dumping and where a cost of living crisis continues to challenge so many. Yet, Christopher Whitehead and

Matt Hancock seemed to supersede these events; an unchecked story taken from Facebook.

Therefore, with so much negativity and crisis, why not intersperse our news with some positivity, there is much to be proud of in our schools. In a week when the focus was on toilet mirrors, the Worcester News could have chosen to focus on



our trip where 150 students adventured on the ski slopes of Nassfeld, Austria or our trip to the Battlefields of Belgium, a sombre journey.



Furthermore, there is the first school show for three years, 'We Will Rock You', a student led show that combines all that is good in the school, with committed rehearsals, terrific teamwork, time and selfless staff support!

These stories are the reality and might not get as many clicks and comments but they are uplifting, give hope and are good for the soul.

Neil S Morris
Headteacher – Christopher Whitehead Language College & Sixth Form

Alleluia - Musical reflections.

As some of you will know, Margaret and I bought our house in France in 1990, were heartily welcomed by our neighbours, quickly integrated into the village, and became involved with the Lacapelle-Merlival choir; at the time, a vibrant mix of French, Dutch & British singers, ably directed by a local primary school teacher.

The choir performed a number of concerts in the area and as it grew in size (to some 65 singers by 2005), I proposed that we mounted a choral festival, with other local choirs, with an orchestral/choral concert in Figeac at the final weekend. So the “Choralises” festival was born to be repeated every 3 years.

For the festival in 2008 it was suggested that an English repertoire choir should be formed from the “British contingent” to which several of us responded and ‘Sceptre Singers’ was formed - open to anyone who was proficient in the English language, of course.

For rehearsals we looked firstly at some simple rounds and well-known songs from childhood to explore the balance of voices - later exploring more adventurous work. This led us to try this ‘Canone - Alleluia’ by William Boyce.

3 voci pari maschili o femminili

I
Al - le - lu - ia,

II
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al -

III
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al -

al - le - lu - ia.

- le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

- le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

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In 2014 one of the good soprano soloists sang the Mozart version of the Alleluia from K165 (Exsultate, jubilate) and later with the assembled choirs the Miserere - testing moments for any soprano!

For our choir at St Johns we all know “Alleluia, sing to Jesus” (Dix) sung to the Welsh tune “Hyfrydol”. Then another Welsh tune “Llanfair” is used for the Easter/Ascension day hymn “All the toil and sorrow done” which has Alleluias at the end of each line!

Easter hymns, songs and texts are filled with Alleluias - indeed my book of “Prières et chants” which we use in France has 11 items which begin with Alleluia!

Johann Sebastian Bach also has works which include alleluias in both chorales (hymns) and in the larger works too.

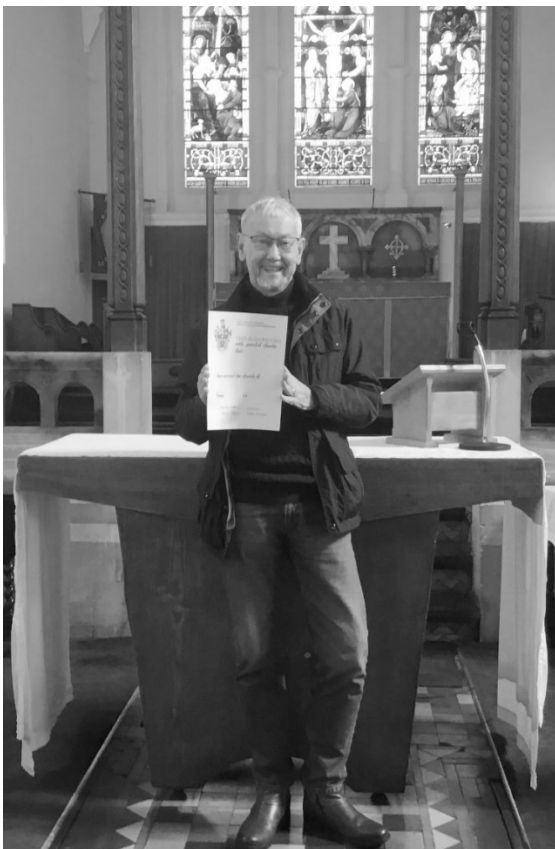
A number of contemporary writers have both songs and hymns which celebrate the Easter season. It is well documented how much of a struggle it was for Leonard Cohen to arrive at a version of Hallelujah which pleased him, and could be sung in church!

So, we should all sing our Alleluias with energy and joyfulness!

Happy Easter!

Arthur Miller

Still singing sweetly, seventy years on!



As well as celebrating our 200th year on our present site, St Clements church also celebrated a very special chorister!

John Chidlow has been a faithful member of the church choir for over seventy years and we marked this achievement by presenting him with a certificate at our celebration service on March 12th.

We thanked John for his years of service – and thanked God for John. We pray that God will continue to bless John in his singing and in his daily life.

Sarah Cottrill

Notes from the choir

Sometimes it is the small moments that bring us closer to God. A fleeting glimpse of a lone daffodil by the side of a busy road reveals the beauty and glory of God's creation, and shared laughter at a supermarket checkout reminds us of the connection God has with each of us on earth.

Music though can take us even deeper into the presence of the Divine and, for me, the journey of Christ's passion, death and resurrection is made more moving and meaningful through the singing that accompanies the four main church services across Easter week. As the church is stripped bare at the end of the Maundy Thursday service, the choir sings the powerful words of Psalm 88 to unaccompanied Plainsong chant. With no organ and the voices singing just a single line, the mood of solitude and sadness reflects the start of Christ's journey to the cross. The liturgy of Good Friday deepens the agony as the singing once again is in unaccompanied plainsong with no backing to support the voices. There is no organ voluntary at the end of the service and the sense of loss in the silence is palpable.

In the service on Easter Saturday the mood starts to change as the darkness begins to lighten. A lone unaccompanied voice sings the Exultet but this is now a call of hope as: 'This is the night when Christ broke the prison-bars of death and rose victorious from the underworld'. And of course on Easter day the choir burst into the anthem 'The strife is o'er', the organ once again thunders out and everyone joins in the celebratory hymns that mark Christ's triumph over death.

Yet whilst all the music takes us closer to the Divine, it also reminds us that Christ was human, suffering the real pain of betrayal and an agonising death. Perhaps that power of music and in particular singing to remind us of our shared humanity, is summed up in the words taken from a wonderful novel that I have just finished reading called: *A Terrible Kindness* by Jo Browning Wroe. One of the main characters has set up a 'midnight' choir, a group that welcomes the homeless and disposed to come together to sing once a week. He is questioned whether it is painful for these people to sing about 'love and how wonderful the world is'. The reply comes: 'Just because they've lost everything, doesn't mean they've stopped being human. I'm guessing most of them have probably been in love. Most of them have probably thought at some point, the world was a good place. The way I see it, singing about it keeps them in touch with who they were, are, could be. I don't know, but when they really connect with the song, with the lyrics and the music, it feels like it's doing good, not harm. I'm not going to look for songs that aren't about love and life and loss and pain and joy. This is being human.'

So as singing connects us to the Divine through the journey of Easter, its power connects us to each other, reminding us that God was, and is, both Divine and human. May the inspiration of music that is for everyone, continue to offer God's hope and love to the world.

Luise Horrocks

Psalm 88 (King James Version)

O lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee:

Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength:

Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.

Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.

Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.

Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.

Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee?

Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?

Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?

I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.

Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.

They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together.

Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

NAILS

The birds were singing in full voice
such a pure clear sweet sound.
For my Lord on His day of torture and pain.
They knew, as did the trees and leaves,
the rabbits and mice
but man was panicked and afraid.

The crowd were laughing and jostling,
crying and wailing.
Some stood silent, watching, waiting.
My Lord staggered and fell,
under the heavy cross he carried.
The crowd moved onwards, onwards

The crowd gathered round on the hill,
the birds and the trees stood silent and still.
My Lord was laid on the cross,
then the terrible pain coupled with jeering,
rent the air.
As they split and splintered His feet and hands,
the nails hammered home.

The silence grew as the crowd waited.
When all was ready they lifted my Lord,
high on the cross.
The pain was unimaginable,
a tearing from limb to limb
as His body was broken,
for the crowds and their sin.

My Lord, all alone in the darkness,
man's sins paraded within Him.
The agony of mind and body,
each breath and movement torture.
My Lord, died in love for those,
who crucified Him.

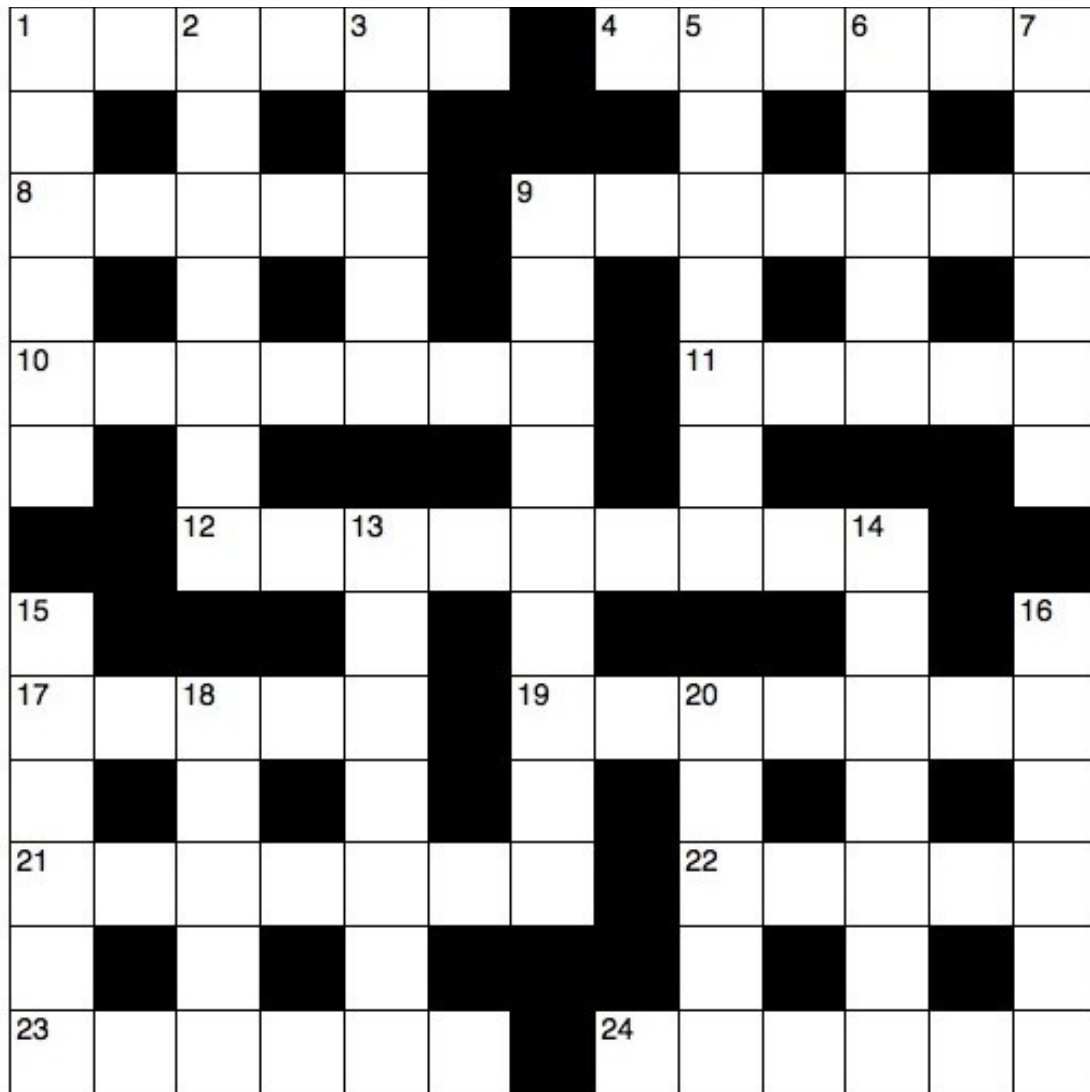
The bird song returns, at the end of the day.
They knew, they understood.
The crowds dispersed.
My Lord at peace, His Father's will complete.
They wrapped Him in clean linen,
and laid His broken, bleeding body to rest.
His friends retreated tearful and afraid.
Not comprehending the tortures of the day.

My Lord's body broken for you,
broken for me.
Reveals new light, new life.
His Father's glory given with love,
is revealed to us.
My Lord is the mediator,
between darkness and light.
And the birds they knew, they understood.

Jenny English
3.3.89

Crossword puzzle

The solution is on the inside back cover.



Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
- 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
- 8 ‘Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it’ (John 20:25) (2,3)
- 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah’s message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
- 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America’s Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
- 11 ‘Look, here is — . Why shouldn’t I be baptized?’ (Acts 8:36) (5)
- 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
- 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3–4) (5)
- 19 ‘Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord’ (Exodus 34:29) (7)

- 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me'
 (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
 6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
 7 He reps (anag.) (6)
 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury
 (Acts 8:27) (7)
 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine'
 (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
 15 The human mind or soul (6)
 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their
 bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
 20 Bared (anag.) (5)

Voter ID requirement

Starting with the local elections on 4th May 2023, voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections.

This will apply to: Local elections, Police and Crime Commissioner elections, UK parliamentary by-elections, Recall petitions. From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections.

If you don't have accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

Go to the electoral commission website or ring them on 0333 103 1928 for more information about this.

How Can a Christian be a Scientist?

I used to ask this question as a student. I wondered, who could make it in the world of science and still hold onto their faith? Soon enough I met a good number of successful scientists who were sincere Christians, some of whom were at my own university. So, what do people like this make of the opportunities and challenges that a life in science holds for a Christian?

Science is an exercise in observing and measuring things in the world, and coming up with general principles about the way things are. Exploring the world is a great thing to do to express our gratitude to the Creator. There is a sense of awe and wonder that comes when we expand our minds and our horizons by discovering things about the universe that can feed into our worship.

Of course, there may be things in science that some Christians don't want to get involved in because of what they believe. But there should also be ethical issues that make them want to get stuck into new research that will help people, protect creation, or tackle injustices. I am glad to see that many senior scientists do their best to find appropriate ways to make their own faith visible, so that people like my younger self can find role models and mentors.

Another helpful thing about science is that although our beliefs may at times affect what we notice about the world and how we interpret our data, they shouldn't affect the outcome of experiments themselves. This means that a scientist can be respected by her colleagues for doing good work, regardless of what she believes and what her colleagues think of that worldview.

In my work at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, and my involvement with Christians in Science, I have the privilege of meeting a great number of scientists who are also Christians. One of the most famous living biologists is Francis Collins, who was Director of the project to decode the whole of human DNA. He wrote that it is “possible for the scientist-believer to be intellectually fulfilled and spiritually alive, both worshipping God and using the tools of science to uncover some of the awesome mysteries of His creation.”¹

Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz

The author is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge.

¹ *Francis Collins, The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief (Simon and Schuster, 2007)*

Easter Collects

The Church of England provides two collects for special days and for each Sunday. The collects we hear in church each week are usually the first option provided. Below we have included some collects for the time around Easter, but we have chosen the second option each time.

The Editors

Palm Sunday:

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you and love you,
that we may be found beside you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory.

Maundy Thursday:

God our Father,
your Son Jesus Christ was obedient to the end
and drank the cup prepared for him:
may we who share his table
watch with him through the night of suffering
and be faithful.

Good Friday:

Eternal God,
in the cross of Jesus we see the cost of sin
and the depth of your love:
in humble hope and fear
may we place at his feet
all that we have and all that we are,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Easter Day:

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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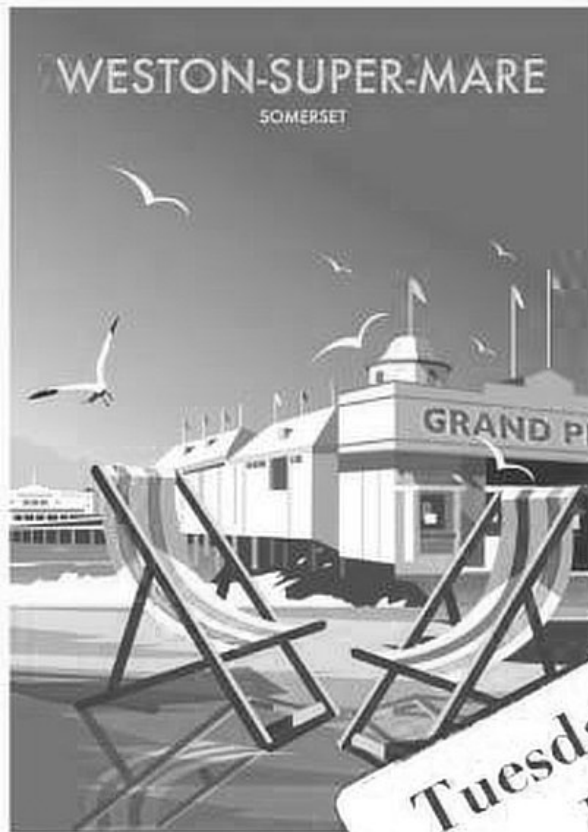
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Daffodils were distributed

The St David's Patronal service, led by Sarah, was held on 5th March. Thanks to Phil Prince who came to play for us, Carole and Wendy who arranged the flowers and to those who brought food to share after the service.

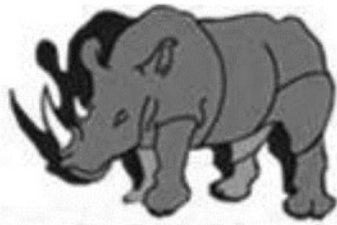


Sarah handed out daffodils to those present and we also remembered friends who were unable to be with us because of illness.



Although it was Lent, we were allowed flowers just for the service.

Maureen Ovington



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Not a second choice!

From April, when I return from sabbatical, I will be taking up a new diocesan role as co-warden of readers. This is an additional (voluntary) position in addition to my role as Team Rector here - you don't get rid of me that easily!

I have been interested in vocation and ministry for some time; as a curate, I was the diocesan 'young vocations champion.' The very positive experience we have had of four lay readers (or licensed lay ministers, LLMs, as they are now officially called), who were attached to us as part of their training, along with one of our ALMs going forward for reader training, encouraged me to think about how I might become usefully involved in lay ministry and training.

With declining clergy numbers, lay ministry has become ever more important, yet there is still a tendency to see it as the 'second choice' option, a necessity to cover clergy gaps. The truth is that lay ministry is an important and valuable vocation in its own right, as it has been since the very beginning of the church. Readers have to undergo a two-year training programme, which involves considerable engagement with academic theology. Part of what attracts me to this role is the opportunity to nurture those called to this particular ministry, and to champion its importance across the wider diocese.

Until very recently, there was a single warden of readers, but it was not a full-time position and was felt to be too much for one person alongside other responsibilities. The job is now split between two people, which has worked out well in that I am ordained whilst my new colleague, Kath, is herself a reader, and she is based in the north of the diocese with me in the south. Kath has been doing the job for a while, so will have much to teach me, and in the early months we will be discerning the best way of dividing our labours to play to our various strengths.

Like many things within the church, the time required will be unequal, with some parts of the year busier than others. The responsibilities are broad and difficult to summarise concisely, but include oversight of the selection, training, wellbeing and ministry of readers, as well as matters pertaining to safeguarding and development. While the training is delivered by Queen's in Birmingham, there is also some involvement there and links to the diocese.

Exactly how things will work out will be a question for the coming months. For now, I am pleased and excited to have been offered this role and look forward to engaging with it on my return.

Phil Bradford



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Summary of Joint Council meeting

The St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council (JC) held its second meeting on Tuesday 28th February 2023 at St Michael's church. The meeting was chaired by Sarah Cottrill who led the opening prayer. 11 members were present.

Matters arising: It was noted that: the kitchen equipment at St John's has been replaced; Brian Askew has had a meeting with MECO about the plaque; each PCC will keep their own Electoral Roll Officer (Graham Evans for St John's, Jenny Claydon for St Michael's). Phil Bradford was appointed as the GDPR Officer for the JC.

Safeguarding: Jane Askew is reviewing DBS checks.

Health and Safety: The JC agreed the following motion:

The "Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council" calls on the Deanery Synod to consider:

- 1) Organising training session(s) this year for First Aid Awareness so that costs can be shared by participating churches and;
- 2) Escalating this for consideration by the Diocesan Synod for diocesan-wide First Aid training courses (of various levels) to be organised in the future to avoid the duplication from multiple churches having to do this separately and make the most of the potential opportunity for cost-saving for the Church in the Diocese as a whole.

Brian Askew is currently the Health and Safety Officer (HSO) for St John's as part of his job description. There is no delegated HSO at St Michael's. The Standing Committee to consider what they want from the role, if there should be one HSO for the Joint Council, and to consider asking someone from the congregation to take on all or part of this role.

The Standing Committee to consider fire extinguisher training for the Joint Council as a whole.

Finance: Reports had been circulated in advance showing incomings and outgoings for St Michael's in January 2023 compared to 2022, and also a page showing how the Joint Council's money is held and how much it had when the Joint Council came into being. End of year figures are not yet ready for St John's so the amount in individual funds is not shown.

The St Michael's energy contract is fixed until 30th September. St John's have an energy price fix until the end of 2023.

Continued on page 39.

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Continued from page 37

Philip Evans and Chris Rees are transitioning to joint working. To this end any finance related correspondence is to be sent to the joint email:

finance@wcw.church

The Standing Committee was asked to review the multiple bank accounts that are currently held with a view to rationalising them. Small, restricted funds will also be reviewed.

Before the Joint Council can claim gift-aid it needs to be registered with HMRC and before it can be registered with HMRC it needs to be registered with the Charity Commission. Each church and building keep their own “Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme” allowance.

The first payment from Irene Haynes’ legacy has been received. *[See page 18 - the editors]*

Budget: The Standing Committee will discuss a draft budget to present to the JC, including the amount to pay to ministry share and the split between the three parishes. The total ministry share for 2023 is £120,726. The standing committee will also look at specific budgets to be held by responsible persons i.e. Brian Askew to have a budget for small maintenance jobs and the Charity Sub-committee to have a budget.

Treasurer workload: Philip Evans said that the workload for the St John’s treasurer was too much for one person, and he doesn’t have any more time to help. The JC need to consider a job description. Philip will list items that could be done by someone else. John English already looks after gift-aid. It was agreed that Liz Edwards, as parish administrator, will open any financial post and direct it where appropriate.

People will be asked to move across to the Parish Giving Scheme (rather than standing orders) which will save a lot of time. This to be advertised in the magazine/newsletter at an appropriate time. Liz to help with the administration of expenses, inputting to the new expense claim system which Chris Rees has set up.

Jenny Claydon and Sarah thanked Philip for the outstanding job done on the accounts. Sarah will contact Chris Rees to request figures for St John’s. The JC were keen that the St John’s accounts be presented in the same format as St Michael’s as they find that easier to understand.

It was agreed that the Joint Council would have a Charity Sub-Committee. The JC asked Luise and the current St John’s Charity Committee to draft terms of reference for the JC Charity Sub-Committee. The JC agreed to continue to support Juan Carlos and Penny Marces.

Continued on page 41



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Continued from page 39

The JC were happy for St John's to start to plan for a King's Coronation Community Breakfast/Brunch for Monday 8th May. Jenny English has agreed to this in principle but will need help.

It was reported that, at St John's, plate collections are to re-start and return of choir processions may be discussed between the clergy and the choir.

It was agreed that the following be added as standard agenda items for future meetings: Churchwardens' reports; Deanery Synod report; Mission and Evangelism, reports from any sub-committees. There are also items to be included at specific times of the year (Budget, Annual account approval, Asset Management Plan, Policies - Annual reviews).

The date, time and location of the next meeting will be set by email correspondence for mid-April once Phil Bradford is back from sabbatical.

The annual meetings (APCMs - Annual Parochial Church Meetings) will be:

- St John's, Sunday 21st May;
- St Michael's, Sunday 28th May.

The meeting closed with The Grace.

Minutes by Liz Edwards; summarised by Graham Evans.

Sudoku Puzzle

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*The solution
is on the
inside back
cover.*

			1		4			
7								
		9			3	1	2	
8				9	1			3
	2	5				7	1	
4			2	7				8
	3	6	8			9		
								2
			5		6			

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- Tuesday: 9am - 6pm
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- Thursday: 9am - 5pm
- Friday: 9am - 5pm
- Saturday: 9am - 4pm

'Friends of St John's Library'

'Friends of St John's Library' is the newly renamed local community group, which was previously called 'St John's Library Coffee Pot Club.'

Our focus is on St John's Library and what the library can do and offer for St John's and the local community.

We have re-opened the café on a Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings, between 10:00am – 12:30pm and offer beverages and biscuits at very reasonable prices.

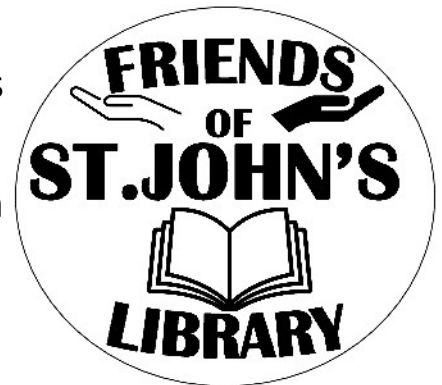
Scrabble takes place in the library on a Tuesday afternoon at 2:00pm, or why not join us for chess (also every Tuesday at 2:00pm). Both activities cost just 50 pence and both are supported by our group.

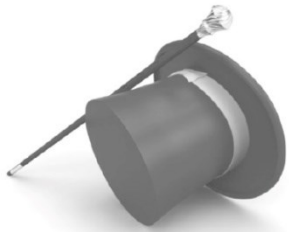
We are funding the 'St John's Library Film Club' for the next twelve months and would encourage as many people as possible to join us, fortnightly on Thursday afternoons at 2:00pm. Come and watch a classic movie from our collection.

We are always looking at ideas and possibilities of what we can do to encourage people to use the library. Our first goal is to try and open our café five days a week, so we are looking for more volunteers to help during the week.

St John's Library is an excellent community resource which offers so much to the area and our group is happy to support and promote its aims.

If you are able to support us by volunteering, or if you just want some more information about the group, please contact us by e-mail at friendsofstjohnslibrary@outlook.com or leave your details at St John's Library.

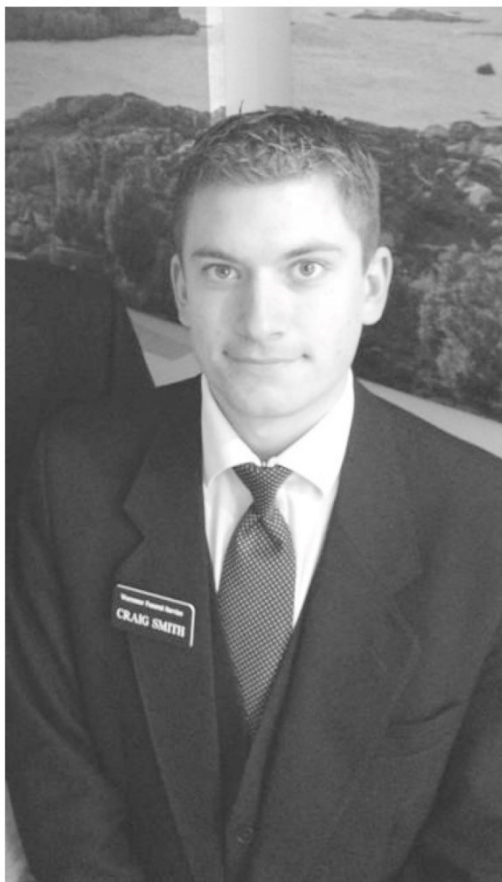




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THE REVEREND EDWARD PETER ROWLAND

Assistant Curate of St. John's, 1902-1908

AT the recent meeting of the Diocesan Board of Finance I sat next to Mr. Turner, a layman, of Kidderminster. At the conclusion of the meeting he told me that he would be sending me some interesting information. Hence—the letter printed below. I imagine there are many in St. John's who remember Mr. Rowland. If so, you may wish to write to him. You will see his address at the foot of this letter.

22nd March, 1952.

Dear Vicar,

Confirming our brief chat at the meeting of the D.B.O.F. in the Old Palace yesterday, here are a few details disclosed in his letter to me a month ago.

The Reverend Edward Peter Rowland, an Assistant Curate at St. John's-in-Bedwardine, Worcester, from 1902-1908, when he next became Vicar of Wolverley for nine years, passed on to Dunchurch and subsequently to be Rector of Wartrow with the Vicariate of Cloorx, Somerset, until his retirement in 1945, should be remembered by some in Worcester where for some years he was Assistant Diocesan Inspector of Schools. He was Curate at Leigh with Bransford before moving to St. John's, Worcester. He has spent 55 years in Holy Orders and now is spending a well-earned retirement at Penarth where he served his first curacy after ordination in Llandaff Cathedral. He is 83, and his unmarried sister is one year younger and still his housekeeper. One of their nieces is now Matron in the largest House at Malvern College. The other, after many years' service as Nursing Sister at Birmingham, married a doctor holding appointment under the Gloucester C.C. as Mass Radiography Officer.

Mr. Rowland writes: "I have found the seven years just completed of my retirement have been happier and more contented than I anticipated, because I have never failed to recall the happy years at Wolverley, and the many kind, helpful, patient friends I had there. Please give my kind regards to any others who may remember there was long ago a parson who at least tried to do his best—a fellow called Rowland!"

He manages to take occasional services, give talks, etc.; and to have regular physical exercise in long walks and some gardening. His present address is 43 Redlands Road, Penarth, Glamorgan.

Trusting these details are of some interest.

Yours sincerely,

A. TURNER.

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Puzzle solutions

3	5	2	1	6	4	8	7	9
7	8	1	9	5	2	4	3	6
6	4	9	7	8	3	1	2	5
8	6	7	4	9	1	2	5	3
9	2	5	6	3	8	7	1	4
4	1	3	2	7	5	6	9	8
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And finally....



*“Police? This is St Mary’s
Ladies’ Knitting and
Vigilante Circle.
We’ve detained two gents
trying to nick the church
silver.”*



Sunday Services in the Worcester City West Team – April 2023

	St. John's	St. Clement's	St. David's	St Michael's
2nd April Palm Sunday	9.45am Liturgy of Palms at St John's with procession down to St Clement's		10am Team Eucharist (St Clement's)	
9th April Easter Sunday	10.30am Eucharist	9.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist	10.30am Eucharist
16th April	10am Team Eucharist (St John's)			
23rd April	10.30am Eucharist 5pm Healing Service	9.30am Eucharist	4pm Evening Prayer	10.30am Morning Prayer
30th April	10.30am All Age Worship	9.30am Morning Prayer	4pm Eucharist	10.30am Eucharist
7th May	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evensong	10am Morning Prayer		10.30am Eucharist
The information above is correct at the time of going to press but please watch the weekly church newsletters and website for the latest information.				