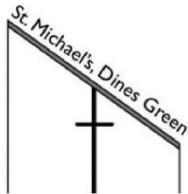




The Parish Magazine

St John-in-Bedwardine

St Michael's



June 2026

50p



Information

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

Phil Bradford (Team Rector) (01905 423794/phil.bradford@wcw.church)

Sarah Cottrill (Team Vicar) (01905 426257/sarah.cottrill@wcw.church)

Gilly Maxim (Assistant Curate) (gilly.maxim@wcw.church)

Day off: Phil Bradford Friday | Sarah Cottrill Saturday | Gilly Maxim Monday

TEAM OFFICE

The office is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-12noon.	
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, contact one of the Safeguarding Officers, Fiona Templeton, Elizabeth Forman in person or via safeguarding@wcw.church, 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 one of the clergy (as above or email clergy@wcw.church).	
Churchwardens: Mike Dowling (dowlingm28@sky.com / 424539) Val Mason (val.mason@yahoo.com / 428948). On Site Safeguarding Officer: Mike Dowling (details above).	St Michael's

Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council is a charity with the Registered Charity Number 1205354.

A word from the editors

Welcome to our June 2026 edition. Continuing our theme of exploring the topic of outreach and service, Phil has reflected upon the place and the mission of our church in our community.

As usual, in this edition we have reports of events which have happened and news of those to come. We also have the concluding part of Phil's account of his trip to the southern hemisphere and the first part of the reports from the Annual Church Meetings.

In June we have a major community event with the Community Fayre taking place in our church and churchyard on Sunday 21st June. The event will finish with a service at 3pm to be lead by our local church school, St Clement's. Please do come along to the Fayre and to that service!

We leave you with this brief prayer:

*Give grace to us, our families and friends,
and to all our neighbours,
that we may serve Christ in one another,
and love as he loves us.*

Graham and Sue Evans

Important information

Email address: parishmagazine@wcw.church

Next edition (July/August): Deadline is Sunday 14th June.

Distribution – magazines available by Sunday 28th June.

Subscription form: Page 50.

Cover picture: St John's Community Fayre 2025 (picture by Colin Nash).

Pictures in this magazine: Thanks to those who have provided pictures for this magazine, including Julie Berrow, Phil Bradford, Beth Broadway, Sarah Cottrill, Sue Fairman, Colin Nash, Amy Rees, Richard Udall and Worcester Diocese.

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 near the back of the magazine 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 Joint Council or The Church of England. Such material is offered as a source of debate or reflection.

To advertise

Please see page 12.

From Phil Bradford

What does it mean to be a Christian?

There could be numerous answers to that question, but if we look at the earliest days of Christianity, we have the most compelling. Last month, we celebrated Pentecost, and at the end of that story the Book of Acts says that the early believers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”, and that they “were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.” Christian life, in that very early church, was intended to be a communal life, where people ‘spent much time together in the temple, [...] broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and being the goodwill of all the people’. The essence of Christian life was that all had what they needed but no one had an excess, while prayer and worship united all equally. Though corrupted in later centuries, a similar ideal underpinned early monasticism. At the heart of Christianity is community, sharing together with those around you and seeking to support those in greater need.

Yet it is an ideal which, as a wider church, we seem to have lost today, something reflective of wider changes in society. Ours is an individualistic and transactional age, where many feel that their ‘right’ to do as they please is the overriding justification in their lives. Where, once upon a time, parish churches were in the very heart of their communities, that is no longer the case where a dwindling number of (more mobile) churchgoers ‘shop around’ for a church that suits their preferred style, while churches are under central pressure to justify themselves in numerical and financial terms. The result is that churches too often become intensely inward-looking, either because they are of a particular ‘flavour’ where everyone thinks alike and is never challenged by difference, or because so much effort is invested in numbers and raising money to pay bills that there is no energy left to look outwards. Being a core part of a community tends to be forgotten.

Yet the parish system in the Church of England is based upon churches which act as a Christian presence and witness in the heart of each community. Looking outwards is an essential part of being Christian in a parish church, and not simply to ask what tangible benefits it might bring those already inside. It is why, in our prayer diary (which we use at Morning Prayer in church each day), we pray for



every street in our parishes, recognising that praying for our neighbours and the community of which we are a part is central to our witness in this place.

It is why the parish breakfast at St John's, while only occurring a few times a year, is so important, as an opportunity to be open to all the community and provide free food and fellowship. Our relationship with Maggs is a reminder of the imperative to share our resources with those members of our wider community who are more in need. And this month, as is discussed in this magazine, we have our second Community Fayre, an opportunity for the church to be a hub in the local community and a gathering place for all.

In a world which is increasingly individualised, divided and fractious, parish churches have a key opportunity to stand for something else, to be places which bring communities together and minister to those communities simply out of love and the desire to live the gospel, not out of hope of numerical gain. And perhaps, in this month in which we celebrate the feast of St Barnabas, we could take the collect for his day as our guide.

*Bountiful God, giver of all gifts,
who poured your Spirit upon your servant Barnabas
and gave him grace to encourage others:
help us, by his example,
to be generous in our judgements and unselfish in our service;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.*

Phil

Our new curate

As you are hopefully aware, later this month we will be joined by a new curate, Julie Berrow. Julie will be ordained deacon in the cathedral at 10.30am on Sunday 28th June; everyone is welcome to attend that service if they wish to do so, although there will also be the normal services in St John's and St Michael's.

Unlike Gilly, who will also be staying with us for a while yet, Julie is a Self Supporting Minister (SSM) or Non-Stipendiary Minister (NSM), which means she isn't paid and is therefore part time. She will still be around most Sundays and for all significant things during the week, but expectations should obviously be different.

Julie has written a brief introduction to herself, which appears on page 17, so you can learn a bit about her before she joins us. Gilly and I will be very pleased to have Julie working alongside us, and I am sure you will make her very welcome when she arrives.

Phil Bradford

In Memoriam

Eva Stanton	1 June 1987
Theresa Dedicott	3 June 2008
Ronald Cantrill	5 June 2014
Doris Allen	9 June 1995
Andrew David Brunyee	11 June 1995
Kenneth Edward Cole	12 June 1988
Sophie Perry "Auntie"	13 June 1995
Pete Gleadall	19 June 1996
Arnold Colley	27 June 1991

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, April 2026

St John's

FUNERALS: *Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord*

d. 16th March 2026 Ann Hill

SERVICES: Communicants 240. Total attendance at all services 565.

St Michael's

SERVICES: Communicants 52. Total attendance at all services 59.

Sundays and Principal Feasts in June

Thursday 4th June: Day of thanksgiving for Holy Communion (Corpus Christi)

Sunday 7th June: The first Sunday after Trinity

Thursday 11th June: Barnabas the apostle (see below)

Sunday 14th June: The second Sunday after Trinity

Sunday 21st June: The third Sunday after Trinity

Wednesday 24th June: The birth of John the Baptist

Sunday 28th June: The fourth Sunday after Trinity

Monday 29th June: Peter and Paul, apostles

Barnabas the apostle

Unlike so many early saints, where we have little more than a name, Barnabas is well documented in the New Testament.

Key Biblical references include: Acts 4:36-37, Acts 9:26-28, Acts 11:19-26, Acts 13, 14 and 15, Galatians 2:1-13 and 1 Corinthians 9:6.

Dates for your diary

Location
key

(J) St John's Church

(M) St Michael's Church

(*) Please contact Sarah Cottrill for details (see inside front cover).

(J) Mondays in term time, 10am: Little Lambs, see pages 8 and 23.

--- 000 ---

(J) Wednesday 3rd June, 7.30pm: Final session of the Bible Course. Come from 7pm when tea and coffee will be available.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 6th June, 4pm: Messy Church, see pages 9 and 26.

Doors open and drinks available from 3:30pm.

--- 000 ---

(J) Thursday 11th June, 1pm: The Good Old Days present Discover History, "St John's Heritage Trail", see page 8.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 13th June, 9am: Women's Breakfast, see page 8.

--- 000 ---

(M) Monday 15th June, 2.30pm: Mothers' Union. Strawberry tea.

--- 000 ---

(J) Wednesday 17th June, 2.45pm: Tea, Coffee & Cake, see page 8.

--- 000 ---

(M) Thursday 18th June, 2pm - 4pm: West Worcester Friendship Group (see page 15).

--- 000 ---

(J) Sunday 21st June, 12noon: Saint John's Fayre (see pages 13 and 20).

--- 000 ---

(*) Friday 26th June: Fourth Friday Friendship Group. Look out for sign-up sheets in church or contact Sarah Cottrill for details.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 27th June, 10.45am: Cafe@10.45, see page 9.

--- 000 ---

The evening Mothers' Union group (normally on the fourth Thursday of the month) will not meet in June.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 26th September: Coach trip to Bath, see page 9.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 10th October: Hops & Hymns - Celebrating harvest, join in with popular hymns while enjoying a beer or cider (soft drinks also available).

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 14th November: Family Quiz - The annual family quiz returns! Test your knowledge with questions tailored for young and old.

Events at St John's



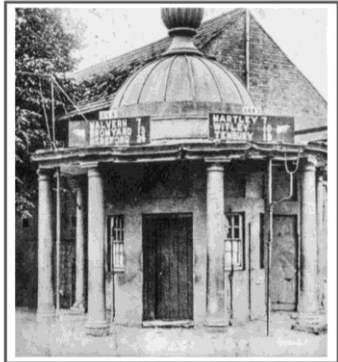
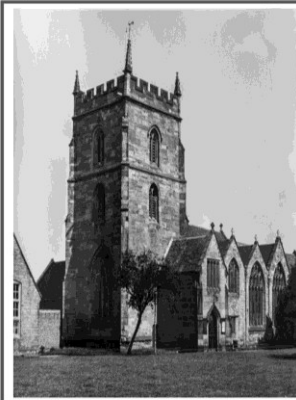
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**Women's Breakfast Meetings
for Friendship and
Christian Fellowship**

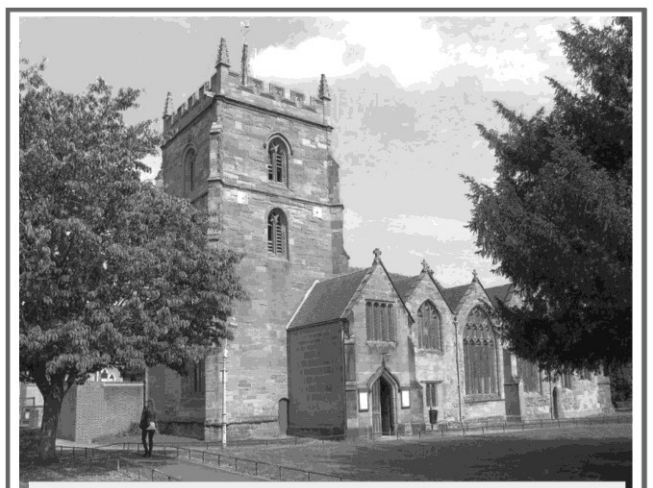
**Why not join us?
Everyone is welcome!**

**Our next meeting is on
Saturday 13th June
9.00am until 11.00am**

**St John-in-Bedwardine
in The Blakefield Room
Contact Margaret Rutter (425396)**



**ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE
Join us for Tea,
Coffee & Cake**



**Wednesday 17th June
2.45pm
Everyone Welcome!**

Suggested donation £2.00

Events at St John's

St John in Bedwardine



Join us for Fresh Coffee and Danish

'Friendship and Thoughts'

**At 10.45am on
Saturday 27th June**

**Guest Speaker Laura
Fairman**

ALL WELCOME



Saturday 6th June, 4pm.

**(doors open 3.30pm with
drinks and biscuits).**

**Join us the first Saturday
of each month!**

**Please do come along,
you'll be sure of a warm welcome!**

Forthcoming events at St John's Church include:

***Saturday 10th October:
Hops & Hymns - Celebrating
harvest, join in with popular
hymns while enjoying a beer or
cider (soft drinks also available)***

***Saturday 14th November:
Family Quiz - The annual family
quiz returns! Test your
knowledge with questions
tailored for young and old.***

Coach trips

**Saturday 13th June
Llangollen (full)**

**Tuesday 21st July
Weston-super-Mare (full)**

***Saturday 26th September
Bath***

***Saturday 21st November
National Memorial Arboretum***

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Evening Prayer with Bible Study

Evening Prayer with Bible Study will be taking a summer break for the months of June, July and August. It will resume in September.

Philip Evans

Weekday services

The following mid-week Eucharists and Daily Offices are scheduled in June:

Tuesday St John's 10am (Holy Communion - Book of Common Prayer)
Thursday St Michael's 10.30am (Eucharist - Common Worship) **

** On the second Thursday of each month (11th June) this is a Eucharist for Wholeness and Healing.

In addition to the above weekly services, on Thursday 4th June there will be a 7.30pm Eucharist for Corpus Christi at St John's.

Daily offices take place in St John's Church from Monday to Thursday.

Morning Prayer is at 8.30am. Evening Prayer is at 5pm during British Summer Time and at 4pm during GMT.

Occasionally other commitments will prevent a service happening; the schedule for each week will be published in the pew sheet.

St Clement's Café Church

Café Church at St Clement's is on the following dates (all Tuesdays), with the theme as shown:

- June 2nd: Corpus Christi
- July 7th: Peter, Paul and Thomas
- August 4th: victims of religion-based violence (the national day of remembrance is August 22nd).

All Café Church sessions start at 11am and include drinks and homemade cake.

Everyone is welcome.

Sarah Cottrill

Be the Power of All Things Within us

O God the Holy Ghost who art light unto thine elect, evermore enlighten us.

Thou who art fire of love, evermore enkindle us.

Thou who art lord and giver of life, evermore live in us.

Thou who bestowest sevenfold grace, evermore replenish us.

Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

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An advert can be full-page, half-page or quarter-page in size.

The booking can be from one month to one year.

The Parish Magazine is published A5 in size, in black and white.

There are eleven issues each year,
July and August being a combined issue.

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St David's News

On Sunday 26th April our service was taken by Chris Rees and we also had two visitors from Lima Peru, namely the Rev Juan Carlos and his wife Penny. Penny kindly gave us a talk about life in Lima which we all found very interesting.

Our Coffee morning in May was, as usual, very busy and our next one will be on the 3rd June at 10.30am until 12noon, to which you are very welcome.

We must say a big "Thank you" to Val Weston for always keeping our brass items so lovely and clean as she is no longer able to do this for us.

Two of us from St. David's joined St.Clement's for their "Marooned with Music" evening with Bishop Hugh Nelson. It was a most enjoyable evening as we heard about his time before and after becoming a minister within the Church and eventually becoming Bishop of Worcester.

Carole Stone
Deputy Church Warden

West Worcester Friendship Club.

Meeting on the third Thursday of the month in St Michael's Church, this group was originally intended for those living alone after a bereavement. As we approach our fourth anniversary, we have decided to extend membership to anybody who has suffered a bereavement regardless of how many people they might live with.

Meetings run from 2pm until 4pm, usually on the third Thursday of the month, offering a varied programme, but always featuring tea/coffee, cake, chat and laughter. Our programme for the next few months is:

- June 18th: We celebrate our fourth anniversary
- July 16th: Councillor Matt Lamb tells us about the work of a local councillor and reflects on his term of office as Mayor
- August 20th: Afternoon Tea at Great Witley Church Tea Rooms

For more details, please contact me or come along to a meeting - you will be made very welcome.

Sarah Cottrill

Quiet prayers

A little boy was saying his bed-time prayers in a very low voice.

"I can't hear you," his mother whispered.

"I wasn't talking to you," said the small one firmly.

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Our new curate, Julie Berrow, introduces herself

I was brought up in the South-East of England and baptised in a church dedicated to St Hilda, which might explain my interest in Celtic liturgy! My early training was at the Royal Academy of Music. I arrived in the Midlands at 20 years old to join the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra as a violinist, which involved concerts, touring to some fabulous places, recordings and television programmes, which is where I met my husband, a TV producer.



I completed a degree at Birmingham University, followed by a Master's in Pastoral Theology, which is when I seriously began to consider ministry, but not knowing what that might be. I worked in Primary Education, where as a head teacher I had a wider role in training, stabilising and supporting leadership teams in a range of schools.

We were becoming increasingly more involved in church. I also served on the Diocesan Board of Education, and as chair of the parents' committee of Birmingham Cathedral Choir, where our son became head chorister.

After many happy years in Birmingham we moved to Worcester in 2016, living just across the river (near Waitrose!). I completed an MBA at the University of Worcester and was a trustee of Severn Arts. After training as an LLM (Reader) at Queen's Theological Foundation, I was licensed to St Barnabas', Rainbow Hill in 2022, where I developed a funeral ministry, ran grief-work courses and a Bereavement Café, led services and preached.

I have just spent two wonderful years of ordination training at Ripon College Cuddesdon. It will be hard to leave there, but I am very excited to be continuing my ministry journey as a curate with you. I will be a non-stipendiary (unpaid) minister and part-time but still expect that we will see a lot of one another!

My husband attends St Martin in the Cornmarket, where I sometimes sing. He published a book on the organ builder John Nicholson and writes on organs, history and architecture. Our son lives and works in Bristol, where we enjoy watching him play cricket, have a shared interest in concerts and theatre, and also attend the odd rugby match.

Julie Berrow

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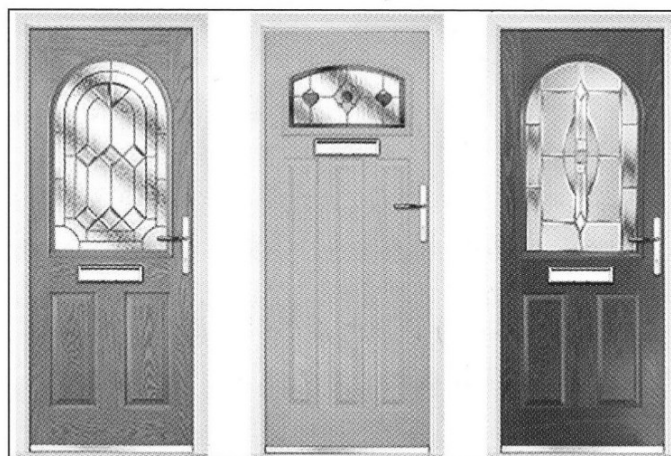
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Thanks to the generosity of many people, we were able to make up over twenty bags of emergency toiletries which are given to people unexpectedly finding themselves in hospital overnight. I handed these to the area coordinator at Spring Council, and she expressed her immense gratitude for the packs.

Over the next few months, we are turning our attention to another Mothers' Union project: KIT - Keeping In Touch. This initiative helps parents in prison - particularly fathers - to remain in contact with their children. The project aims to improve levels of literacy but also runs craft sessions and we will be collecting craft materials in support of this work. A collection box and details of items needed will be in St Clement's Church from the end of May.

One of the questions put to Bishop Hugh concerned the Mothers' Union RISE UP campaign (supporting victims of domestic abuse) and the bishop expressed his support of a move to make Worcester Diocese a holder of the diocesan award under this initiative.

I will be working with our President and Bishop Hugh to take this forward and will report again once we know what needs to be done. My understanding is that at least 50% of churches must hold at least the bronze award. St Clement's already

has this and is working towards silver. It would be lovely if the other churches of Worcester City West could also achieve this level and lead the way for the diocese!

Meanwhile, we are looking forward to hosting a family picnic as part of the celebrations for 150 years of the Mothers' Union. Details to follow later.

The evening group meets on the fourth Thursday of the month. Forthcoming dates:

- May 28th: final sorting for hospital packs; begin on KIT packs
- June: No meeting
- July 23rd: Outing and meal
- August 9th: Mary Sumner Day - family picnic

Mothers' Union welcomes all baptised Christians. For more details, please contact me, using the details given on the inside front cover of the magazine.

*The letters of
RISE UP stand
for Respond,
Inform, Support,
Empower, Unite
and Pray.*

Sarah Cottrill

It's a day for all the family

Once again, we will be celebrating St John's Day, on Sunday 21st June at St John's Church, to celebrate our Saints Day and all things St John's. Last year over three thousand people attended and we are looking forward to doing it all again. We will be based on three sites, St John's Church, King Charles Arcade and The Bull Baiters Inn.



At the church, we will welcome residents with a peel of the church bells from 11:30am and will have tours of the bell tower throughout the afternoon. We have also organised a zip wire from the church tower - but only for teddy bears! We have a community BBQ provided by Narraway Butchers and delicious ice cream from Ericka's Ice Cream, plus a live concert with music provided by Snoezelen, Christopher Whitehead students and Worcester Rock School. Circus Skills will be available alongside fun cricket from Worcestershire County Cricket Club. Many local traders will also have stalls. Children's rides and a bouncy castle will be available alongside the opportunity to make magic wands and potions. It will end with a short church service at 3pm, led by children from St Clement's CofE School.

More stalls will be in King Charles Arcade and the Bull Baiters Inn will host singing from west end shows, Morris Dancing and re-enactors from the civil war. They will also be providing delicious cream teas.

The day will also include an exciting announcement about St John's Library.

The official opening will be at 12 noon and the event will end with the church service at 3pm.

It's a day designed to bring the entire St John's community together, so we can celebrate all that's good about our community, have fun and enjoy a wonderful summer afternoon in St John's. Admission is free - it's a day for all the family.

Richard Udall

Children's Church – June 2026

This month we have been sharing some of the stories about Jesus' life.

In our Scramblers group the youngest children enjoyed learning about Jesus helping the disciples catch fish in the sea of Galilee. The pre-school children are starting to enjoy simple craft activities and were excited to share their sparkly fishes with the congregation.

The older children have been thinking about the ways in which Jesus is still central to our lives. They spent some time thinking about the importance of church as a place to worship and used Lego to design their own churches, thinking about the key things to include.



Children's Church is currently led by Fiona and Amy, however we always welcome new volunteers who would be interested in helping at or leading sessions. If you would like to get involved, please come and speak to us on a Sunday morning.

Children's Church continues to run on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays of each month at St John's Church. We have two groups, Scramblers for pre-school children and Explorers for primary school aged children. Everyone is welcome.

Fiona Templeton and Amy Rees

Marooned with Music

It was lovely to see people from all four of our churches in St Clement's Church for our “Marooned with Music” event.

Bishop Hugh first met members of “Men’s Shed” and the Community Shed - which includes ladies - and was greatly impressed with the facilities and the work which goes on there. Members presented the bishop with a shepherd’s crook they had made for him - a gesture which greatly touched Bishop Hugh.



We then went into the church where, through conversation and music, we got to know about the bishop's life; from very early days in Uganda, to ordination via life in a community caring for people with learning disabilities. We were also told about the (terrifying) process of selection for a bishop!

This was followed by a question and answer session before time to socialise over cheese and wine.

A very interesting and enjoyable evening for everyone there.

Sarah Cottrill

Little Lambs Enjoy Planting Seeds

Our children and families really enjoyed planting sunflower seeds on 20th April. Thank you to our lovely volunteer, Sandra, for donating the seeds and compost.



The children noticed the shapes of the seeds and decorated their pots first with wildlife stickers. Then they filled their pots with compost and planted two or three seeds each. This was a very popular activity and there was a queue for a space.

At our meeting on 27th April, we planted cress seeds on cotton wool in yoghurt pots and that was popular too.

I asked some of our older children about how they were looking after their sunflower seeds. Louie told me that she put her pot in a sunny warm place, she looks at her pot every day and has been watering it. Soon after this I saw that my seeds had germinated so we are hoping to grow giant sunflowers. We hope that some can come to the church garden in time.



We look forward to seeing how our sunflower seeds grow and to eating sandwiches containing our own cress.

Blessings to everyone from us all at Little Lambs.

Sue Fairman

PS Our last date this term is 13th July.



Music from the Screens.... and events to come

Thank you to everyone who came along to the TfO Choir concert 'Music from the Screens.' It was a wonderful performance and we hope that you enjoyed it - we had some great feedback.

Alongside a range of music - from fun, jolly numbers to reflective, emotional pieces - we learnt fascinating facts about the songs and their screen origins. Did you know that 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow' was nearly cut from 'The Wizard of Oz'?



The choir brought us songs such as 'Circle of Life', 'Pure Imagination', 'The Lord Is My Shepherd' (think 'Vicar of Dibley'), and a fun medley of 'Red Dwarf', 'Mr Bean' and 'Blackadder'.



We were also treated to a beautiful violin line from violinist Marie Roberts-Watkins in a piece from 'Mary Poppins Returns', a lovely piano, cello and voice arrangement of 'Beauty and the Beast' and a fabulous solo performance from Kate Staiger with a song from 'Anastasia'.



Onto the next, and some dates for your diaries. Once again the Events Team will be selling refreshments and running activities in the church at the St John's Fayre on 21st June. They will also be running an 'adopt a bear' stall, where you will be able to adopt a cuddly toy (complete with adoption certificate) and send it down the zip wire! It's wonderful to be a part of this community event.

Also coming up:

Saturday 10th October: Hops & Hymns - Celebrating harvest, join in with popular hymns while enjoying a beer or cider (soft drinks also available).

Saturday 14th November: Family Quiz - The annual family quiz returns! Test your knowledge with questions tailored for young and old.

Organ recitals - Full details of these are to be confirmed, but these will be a chance to hear the organ in all its glory with wonderful pieces of music.

Christmas....we know, too early. However, we're mentioning this super early for schools, charities, community groups and businesses to have it in your minds. We're planning a Christmas Tree festival! We're resting scarecrows this year, but following its success are planning a similar opportunity, this time with Christmas trees. It'll be in the first weekend of December and similarly to the scarecrows, groups can bring in Christmas trees for the community to come in and see.

More details on all of the above will be released throughout the year. Keep an eye out in the Parish Magazine, St John's Church notice board, or on Facebook for more information.

Beth Broadway



Who is the Holy Spirit?

Following on from Good Friday Messy Church in April, this month's Messy Church explored the Holy Spirit.

Upon arrival, the congregation drew pictures of themselves for the Messy Church board. These are a reminder of the fruits of the Holy Spirit which we have and should share with others. The 'others' started with our congregation and should spread from there.



Continuing the topic of the fruits of the spirit we also played 'fruitile drive', a game in the style of beetle drive, the traditional game. The congregation had to piece together a person, which had body parts labelled with the fruits of the spirit, showing that they are a part of us. Other fruits-based activities included making a fruity flower by cutting flower shapes out of apples and making a fruity mobile – cutting out fruits from coloured card and then writing the Holy Spirit fruits onto them and hanging them together to create a mobile.

Remembering that the Holy Spirit gave the first disciples the ability to speak different languages, we made signs saying 'Praise the Lord' in a foreign language of our choosing (a helpful sheet of suggestions was provided!) and then we decorated them.



Ticking the 'messy' part of Messy Church this month, we made firework paintings. These were created by flicking paint off paintbrushes onto black card. With fire often seen as a representation of the Holy Spirit, this activity showed us that while fire can seem scary, it can also be fun and exciting like fireworks.



Other activities included decorating cup cakes, reflecting on how for some, Pentecost is seen as the birthday of the church, because this is when the Holy Spirit came to the first disciples. We also made paper windmills, reminding us of the noise the first disciples heard when the Holy Spirit came, being described as like a roaring wind.

Our worship explored the fruits of the Holy Spirit and how, like the first disciples with the ability to speak many languages, we should share these with others.

The next Messy Church is on Saturday 6th June and our theme will be Baptism. Doors open 3.30pm to start at 4pm. Everyone is welcome, and we look forward to seeing you there.

Beth Broadway

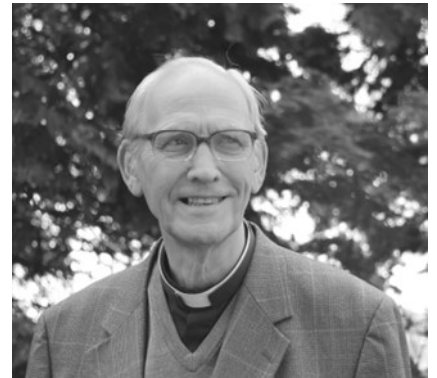
You never know!

Like Sue Evans, I too remember singing Stainer's Crucifixion in 1981, though for rather different reasons. Our recording was a disappointment as we had left our machine in the charge of a member of the audience who decided that he could 'improve' things by sliding down the volume control whenever the choir, in his opinion, was singing too loudly. However, the bonus of the performance was that our then organist, David Lindop, had invited a sixth former from RGS, with a fabulous voice, to be a soloist.

He later became the world-renowned tenor, John Mark Ainsley, OBE.

Ruth Reeves

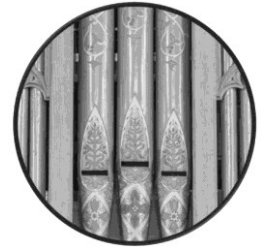
In remembrance



On 10th March, Mike Bentley planted a Crab Apple tree, 'John Downie' in the churchyard in remembrance of his father Rev Frank Bentley.

Colin Nash

Organ Update



Towards the end of April, the total received for the organ appeal was about £26,000. The current figure will now be a little higher as there have been some further individual donations (thank you!), and there is some gift aid tax refund still to come in.

The total cost of the project (including VAT) was £33,546 so you can see that there is still a gap. **Please...**

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Sudoku Puzzle

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*The solution
is on the
inside back
cover.*

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

History of April Fool's Day

Over 80 people attended this month's talk on the History of April Fool's Day by Paul Harding from Discover History. The origin of April Fool's Day goes back many hundreds of years. Our ancestors liked jokes and pranks, but we would not understand many of them. The oldest recorded joke comes from 1900BC:



*'Something which has never occurred since time immemorial; a young woman did not f**t (pass wind) in her husband's lap'*

But today this makes no sense, let alone being funny!

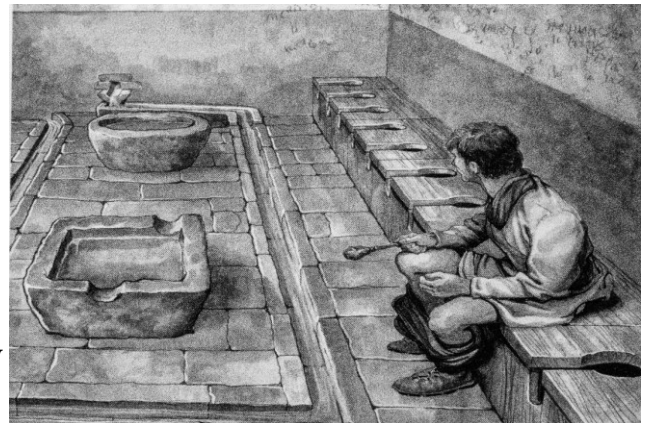
The oldest recorded English joke is from the 10th Century:

*'What hangs at a man's thigh and wants to poke the hole that it's poked before?
A Key'*

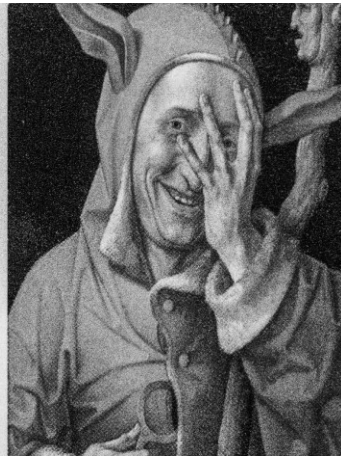
The end of March/early April is a period of change in the weather, and the Romans created the festival of Hilaria, who is the Mother of Nature, Magna Mater. Nature is the best form of comedy at this time of the year, one day could be warm and sunny and the next cold and frosty, much the same as today. This is where we get the word hilarious from.



During the festival of Hilaria, the Romans would eat and drink and play jokes on each other. They would wear masks so they would not be recognised as to who was playing the jokes. The ultimate joke is the one that was played out in the Roman toilets, which were communal. After the action they used a sponge on a stick that was wet with water and vinegar to wash themselves. At night they would take their light to



see, but sometimes they would not and the children would turn the stick upside down so when they grabbed the sponge, they got the 'wrong end of the stick'.



In medieval days royal courts had jesters who entertained the people. The jesters had a 'uniform' which included a hat with 2 ears on it.

The ears were meant to represent asses (donkeys) as these were seen to be amusing animals that would only do what they wanted to do.

The last royal jester was Dicky Pearce in the 18th Century and he died during his last performance, when he jumped off a stage, which was higher than he thought and he broke his neck, at Berkeley Castle. His grave can still be seen at the castle.



In the 18th century the jester evolved into the harlequin and his outfit included a white stick, which was 2 flat pieces of wood hinged at one end. This was called the slapstick and this is where the term slapstick comedy came from.

Originally the new year started on 1st April, and this was moved to 1st January in 1752. However, financial years continued to begin in April.

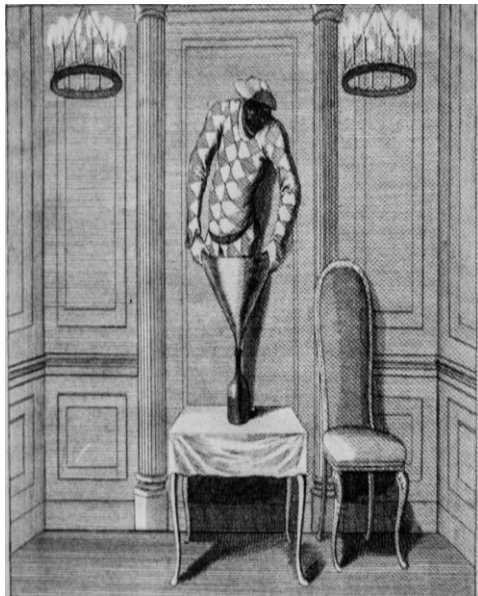
There was chaos when this change was implemented and people were up in arms because they had lost weeks from their lives. April Fool's Day came about because of this change.

The French introduced the foolish fish as the symbol of this day. People would try to pin a paper fish on the back of someone. This did not come across to the UK. Here people would write something on the back of someone else. This evolved over the years to putting a note on the back of someone, such as 'Kick Me'.

Another evolution is the game 'pin the tail on the donkey' where someone is blindfolded and must try to pin the tail in the right place on the donkey.

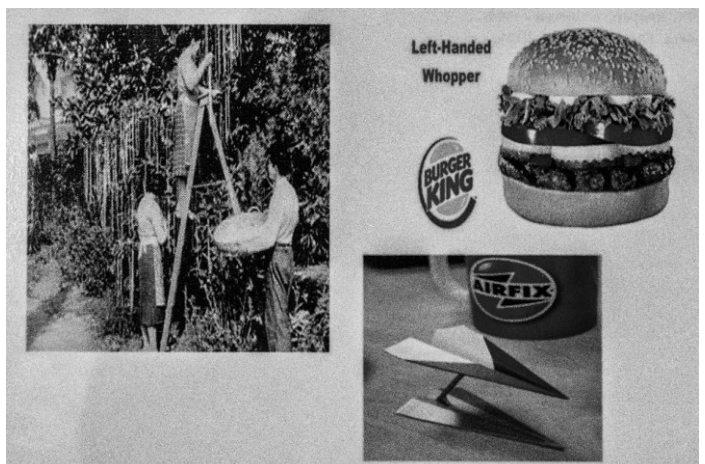
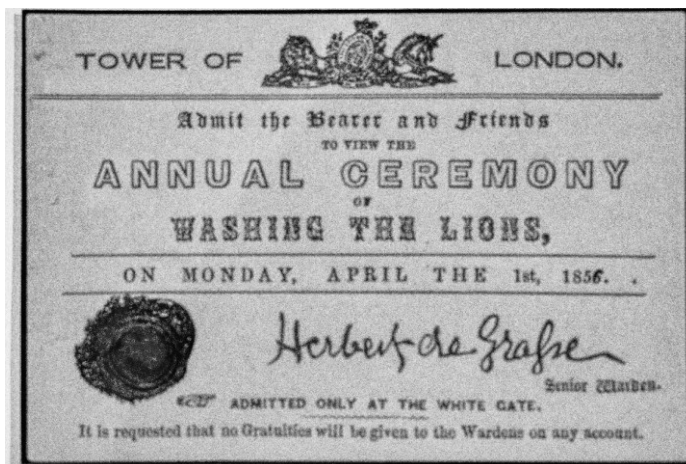


The Scots had a joke where they would send someone to find a cuckoo on the 1st April, which is about 3 or 4 weeks before they appear. This was the start of sending people on 'Fool's Errands', such as sending an apprentice for a jar of elbow grease or a left-handed screwdriver!



In 1748 there was a national advert in Great Britain, and it spread like wildfire. It was advertising that a grown man would climb into a bottle and do tricks. The man said that he would slide into the bottle by using a funnel. Thousands of people turned up to find a bottle with a funnel but no man.

There was also another famous one in 1856 when the Tower of London sold tickets for the public to come to the Tower and watch the keepers wash the lions, without getting bitten. Again, many people turned up and paid their entry fee to see ... nothing!



In 1957 there were photographs of the spaghetti harvest in all the papers and it featured on the BBC Panorama programme, so it had to be true as the BBC did not broadcast 'Fake News'. In 1998 Burger King advertised a left-handed Whopper that would allow left-handed people to also fully enjoy the Whopper! And in 2024 Airfix brought out a paper aeroplane kit, which was a sheet of paper. As usual a wonderful range of delicious cakes were provided for the audience to enjoy during their refreshment break. Our thanks go to everyone who regularly makes these stunning cakes for both the monthly History Talks and the monthly Tea and Cakes events, they are greatly appreciated.

Colin Nash

A birthday with hundreds of thousands of?

Last month we heard about Phil's trip to the far south of our planet, up to the end of the Antarctic segment.

After leaving Antarctica, two days' sailing across the Scotia Sea brought us to South Georgia. Isolated in the South Atlantic, the southwestern shore of this remote British overseas territory is battered by the very worst of the weather, so when whaling stations were built there in the early twentieth century, they were all on the sheltered northeastern side. Biosecurity is very strict, and there was a mandatory video (narrated by David Attenborough) and inspection before we could go ashore. Given the challenging winds, it was reckoned that five out of eight planned landings would be excellent going; our luck held and over the next four days we managed seven.

Day 1 saw us at Cooper Bay in the morning, where we first encountered strikingly beautiful King penguins and Macaroni penguins (on the right), the only species we encountered to be shy of humans, with their funny yellow eyebrows. In the afternoon, we landed at Gold Harbour for our first walk among curious King penguins. It was also our first encounter with fur seals, which pretend

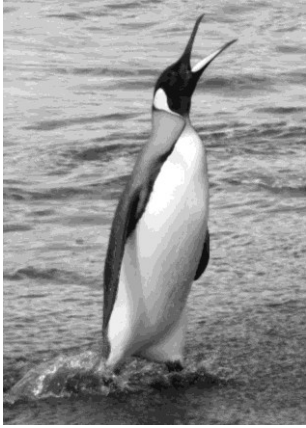


to look small and cute but are in fact vicious monsters which charge at you the second you turn your back and to which I took an immediate and irrational dislike. The enormous and intimidating-looking elephant seals, by contrast, found moving far too much effort outside mating season and totally ignored us.



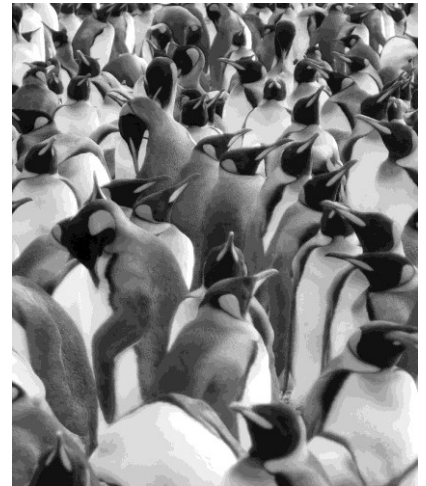
Day 2 took us to Grytviken, originally a Norwegian whaling station and now home to the only settlement on the island, a research station and government office (both staffed all year) and a seasonal post office and museum. After drinking a tot of whisky at Shackleton's grave (for reasons which escaped me, but it seemed impolite to refuse), we explored the rusting ruins of the old whaling station, the only one to have been made safe to visit, as well as visiting the museum and sending postcards from the post office. Whaling was only stopped in the 1960s when it became commercially

unviable, and a sobering memorial records just how many whales were slaughtered and processed by the South Georgia stations; most species are only now starting to recover their numbers and some (notably the blue whale) remain critically endangered. The afternoon saw our only failed expedition, the winds at St Andrews Bay making it too dangerous to leave the main ship, so we enjoyed the view and the rainbow.



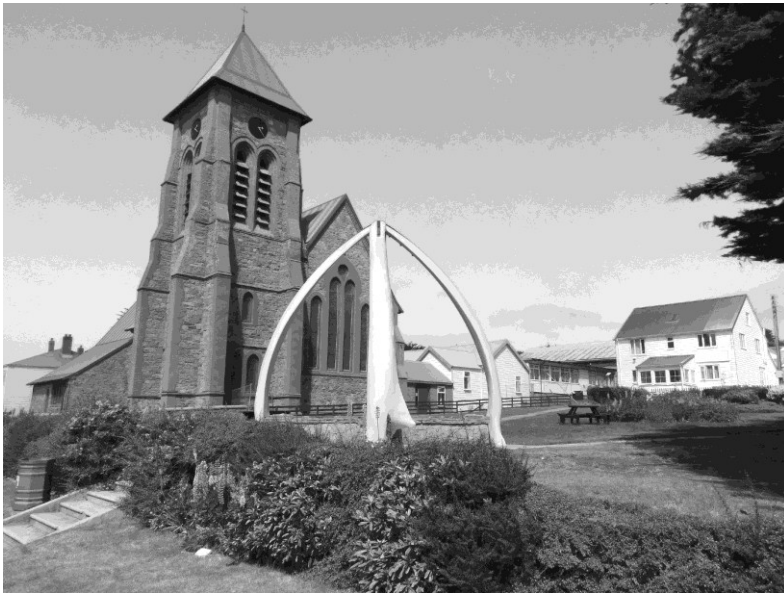
Day 3 took us to Stromness, another old whaling station (out of bounds for safety reasons), from where we walked through the King penguins and evaded the evil fur seals to reach Shackleton Falls. It was from here that Shackleton had descended in 1916, having heard the whistle of the whaling station, to launch the rescue mission for those left on Elephant Island. There was the option of walking the last 6km of the route, but by the time we'd been told we could

take no food, couldn't have any toilet breaks and might have to turn back if there were too many seals blocking the way, I decided this sounded more like an army exercise than fun. The afternoon took us to Salisbury Plain and the indescribable sight of a colony of 120,000 breeding pairs of king penguins (so some 250-300,000 birds including chicks). This was Mum's birthday and, as she asked, how could you ever beat a birthday spent with hundreds of thousands of penguins?



Our final day here took us to Rosita Harbour. Dodging the baby fur seals who thought stopping us landing was a great game, and their cantankerous mothers who wanted to tear us to pieces, we scrambled up a rocky slope, to a summit where we were promised outstanding views. I have to admit that the fog at the top did not seem that special, but just as we were about to descend it cleared and the panorama was indeed

amazing. The afternoon took us to Elsehul, somewhere where only one of the crew had ever landed successfully, but fortune continued to smile on us and we spent our time happily among Gentoo, Macaroni, Chinstrap and King penguins, plus fur and elephant seals.



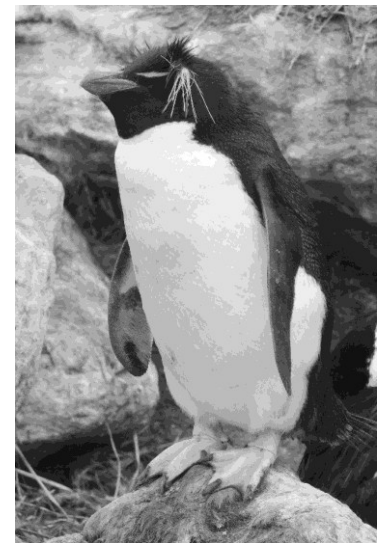
Anglican Cathedral, Stanley

Two more days at sea then took us to the Falkland Islands. After a fortnight of anchoring the ship and landing on beaches in Zodiacs, docking at a real harbour in Stanley and walking off the ship was a shock. Stanley itself, barely more than a village, suddenly looked like a metropolis, with its roads and pavements and shops. There was a full day to explore the town and some of the walks into the surrounding countryside.

Lunch was naturally a pint and fish and chips in a pub, and I was overwhelmed by how friendly and hospitable the people were. (As the itinerary of each ship is announced on the daily news, the locals had more idea of our onward plans than we did!) In some ways, the shadow of the war still hangs over the islands (one might have raised an eyebrow in the UK at the bust of Margaret Thatcher standing on Thatcher Drive, next to Government House, but she is a hero in the islands) and although it was a beautiful, sunny day, I imagined how bleak it must have been during that winter of 1982.

Interestingly, Stanley today is a multicultural town, its population sustained by incomers. Most recent are the Zimbabweans who provided their expertise in clearing landmines, a project only finally completed last year, and who opted to stay in the South Atlantic.

Our second day in the Falklands took us to New Island, a



nature reserve off the west coast. Here, we headed to very blustery clifftops to see an incredible colony where the nests of Rockhopper penguins (above), black-browed albatrosses (left) and imperial cormorants all intermingled.



On a different part of the island, we dodged curious striated caracaras and saw Magellanic penguins in their burrows (top of page 37), before setting sail back to Argentina.

Continued on page 37



Peter

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3,872 miles and nineteen nights after leaving there, we arrived back in Ushuaia, when we had a few hours before the agonising flight (somehow with even less legroom) back to Buenos Aires. It was glorious weather, the temperature into the thirties. We had a couple of nights there, and I used the opportunity to go to the Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada (ESMA). A notorious detention and torture venture during the dictatorship of the 1970s and 1980s, this was one of the places about which I talked during Stations of the Cross in 2025, so I really wanted to see it in person. It was sobering but excellent, pulling no punches about the crimes of the regime in disappearances, torture and murder, nor avoiding the question of the church's complicity. For light relief, there was also time to visit the museum beneath the presidential palace (the Casa Rosada, for Evita fans), plus the Estadio Monumental, home to River Plate and Argentina's national football matches.

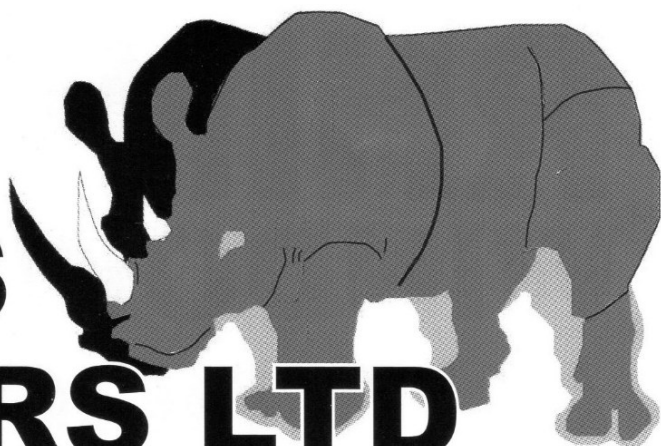
Penguins were always going to be the highlight, and seeing 7 species in their thousands and hundreds of thousands, in their breeding colonies with chicks, was truly magical. But the wildlife in general was spectacular: 123 bird species, 6 whale and 2 dolphin species, and the seals making an impressive list at the end of the world.



However, the landscapes were also breathtakingly beautiful and varied, from the snow and ice of Antarctica to the rugged terrain of the Falklands. The history and culture were fascinating. I have not had chance to do justice to it here, but it was truly the trip of a lifetime, and once I have found time to edit down the 7,000 photos, I will do a talk about it...

Phil Bradford

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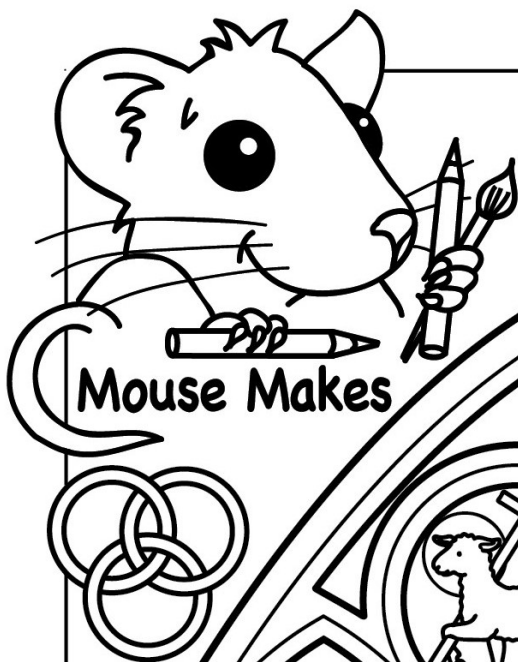
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2026 Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs)

St John's APCM was held on Sunday 3rd May, with St Michael's on 17th May. To avoid overwhelming the magazine with APCM reports, we're spreading out the reports over more than one edition. For the same reason, most reports (but not the one below) will be trimmed or summarised by the editors.

The Editors

Team Rector's Report to APCMs (St J & St M)

2025 was, in many respects, a positive year. We placed particular emphasis on our worship and our community involvement and it has been pleasing to see signs of growth and development.

Central to any church should be prayer and worship, and we placed considerable focus on this during the year. At St Michael's, the introduction of a monthly Eucharist for Wholeness and Healing has been well received, and provides a ministry that we have tended to overlook here in recent years. At St John's, we have looked to provide more Sunday evening services, launching Evening Prayer with Bible Study and Evening Prayer for Peace and Justice.

We have also made more use of the worship space, with the high altar now used at principal feasts and the area around the font used as a chapel for smaller services. A full year of 'All Age' Eucharists has now been completed, alongside Children's Church and Messy Church. It was especially good to be able to admit children to communion at Easter.

As part of our commitment to adult education, I delivered a course on liturgy. In particular, the Christmas services went very well, helped by a well-organised publicity effort. These should all be things to celebrate.

That is not to say that we do not have areas for concern and development. Although the 'All Age' Eucharist at St John's has generally been a success, it is almost impossible to provide worship which genuinely and fully engages people of all ages. On the one hand, therefore, we need to pay serious attention to meaningful discipleship for the children and young people of different ages and how we nurture them. But we also need to remember the spiritual development and nurture of the adult congregation. I have laid out my intention to investigate membership of both Single Friendly Church and Inclusive Church, and to ensure that St John's is a place where people of any background are welcomed and included. At St John's, despite growing Sunday morning numbers, people are still reluctant to come forward as servers

Continued on page 43

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Continued from page 41 and intercessors, which places a strain on a small pool of people. At St Michael's, our numbers on Sundays are now small, and while the congregation is very faithful, we need to think about how we can best minister on Dines Green as we move forwards, especially with the new housing developments on the edge of the parish.

Our community breakfasts continued to be great successes thanks to a committed team. Although we have been supporting Maggs for many years, during 2025 we were able to strengthen our ties and create more personal connections.

Representatives from Maggs visited St John's to speak at a Sunday service in September, and we were able to provide a significant contribution towards the cost of a new freezer they needed. The 80th anniversaries of VE and VJ Day, in addition to the annual Remembrance Sunday service, showed our good connections with the local branch of the Royal British Legion. We welcomed the school into St John's for a leavers' service in July and a service before Christmas. Much was achieved thanks to the hard work of the Events Team, not least a successful scarecrow festival around Harvest. In collaboration with our local councillors and others, I was also very pleased with the success of the St John's Fayre in June.

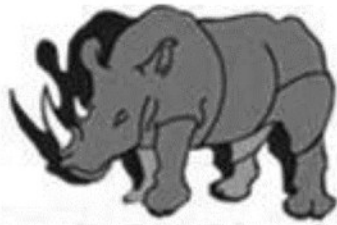
As I wrote last year, our primary concerns are finances and volunteer capacity.

We are paying our full ministry share, but with the organ repairs and other building work, we have had to make use of legacies and some reserves. The finance team do an excellent job, but without a formal treasurer in post, we also lack someone to do strategic financial analysis.

Our volunteers are generous with their time and achieve a huge amount, but it does tend to be the same people doing most of the jobs. That limits our capacity to develop new things and grow, even though we are constantly reflecting on what we might perhaps need to stop doing. The problem is especially acute at St Michael's, where we will need to give serious consideration during 2026 to our future direction. Indeed, during 2026 our main priority will be to determine our vision for mission and ministry in West Worcester, as we seek to discern what God may be calling us to do in this time and place.

But as we look back on 2025, I would like to recognise all that has been achieved and thank all those who have worked so hard during the course of the year to make so much happen.

Phil Bradford



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Report on the proceedings of the Joint Council

The Council met in January, March, May June, September and November 2025. Each meeting opened with a prayer and finished with the Grace. A summary of the minutes of each meeting is placed on the main church noticeboard and published in the magazine.

Prior to the APCMs in 2025, the Joint Council had 18 members with 1 vacancy (at St Michael's). Following the APCMs, there were 16 members, leaving 3 vacancies (2 at St John's and 1 at St Michael's). The Reader was an Ex Officio member from his licensing in September 2024 until he moved out of the diocese in June 2025.

According to the allocation for the 2023 elections, St John's was eligible for 3 Deanery Synod representatives, and St Michael's for 2 (based on electoral roll numbers). 1 member was elected for each church in 2023, leaving 2 vacancies at St John's and 1 vacancy at St Michael's, which were not filled at the 2024 or 2025 APCMs.

During 2025 there were 2 weddings and 5 baptisms at St John's and none at St Michael's. At St John's, there were 10 funerals in church and 6 held for the parish at the crematorium.

When planning our activities, the Joint Council is aware of and considers the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and particularly the specific guidance to charities concerned with the advancement of religion. The specific activities are reported throughout the booklets issued for the 2026 APCM.

The Joint Council has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' policy and practice guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). Safeguarding information is clearly visible on the front page of the website. The Joint Council has adopted Promoting a Safer Church.

Phil Bradford

Standing Committee Annual Report

The Joint Council (JC) has a Standing Committee with the power to act for the JC between JC meetings (as laid down in the JC scheme). The JC has explicitly delegated to the Standing Committee to carry out the employment and landlord responsibilities of the Joint Council. A report of Standing Committee decisions and actions is provided to each JC meeting.

Graham Evans

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ST JOHN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL FLOWER SERVICE

ONE of the most beautiful services at St. John's Church for many years has been the one dedicated to the children of our Sunday Schools. It has always been known as the "Children's Flower Service", and held each year on the last Sunday afternoon in June. To see the throng of happy little faces quietly walking up the aisle to the altar steps, each proudly carrying their own particular gift to God of flowers, fruit or jam, presented to Him through the hand of the Vicar is a joy remembered and treasured by many. How lovely then it will be to see once again at 3 p.m. on the afternoon of June 26th our new Vicar receiving and blessing the children's gifts.

People are saying St. John's Church is always full now-a-days! Do come along and join with the children and teachers in praise and thanksgiving to God for all His goodness to us. If you have a little boy or girl who would also like to bring their own little gift to God they are most welcome. After the service all the gifts are taken and given to the old people living at Hillsborough. Only those who have seen the joy and pleasure on these old people's faces can realise how deeply the children's gifts are appreciated. Wonderful it is to give with no thought of gain. "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for such are the Kingdom of Heaven."

HEDLEY T. COOMBS.

MR. CLIFFORD CARVER

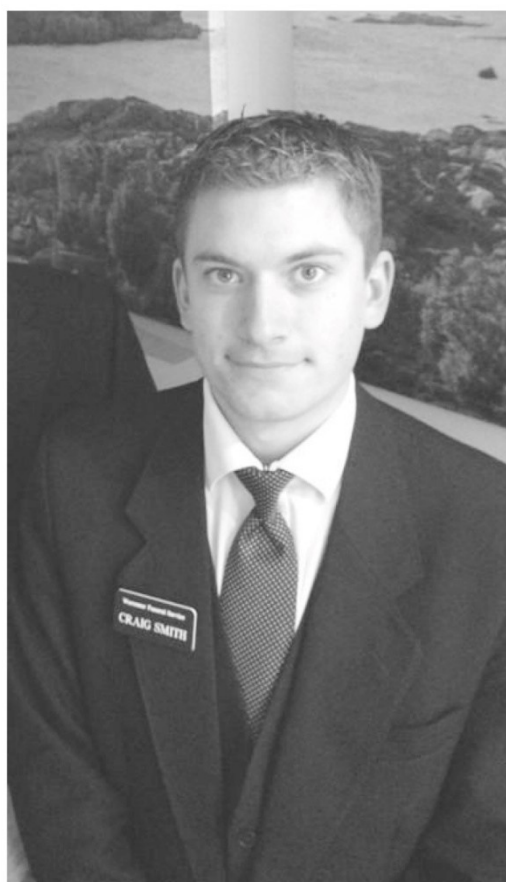
MR. CLIFFORD CARVER will be ordained Deacon at the Cathedral on Trinity Sunday, June 12th at 10.30 a.m., to serve as Assistant Curate of St. John's. I feel sure you will give him that same warm welcome which you gave me, and above all, that you will remember him in your prayers.



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ST JOHN'S LIBRARY

Usual opening hours

Libraries Unlocked

Monday - Saturday: 8am - 8 pm

Core (staffed) opening times:

- Monday: 2pm - 5pm
- Tuesday: 10am - 5pm
- Wednesday: 10am - 1pm
- Thursday: 2pm - 5pm
- Friday: 10am - 5pm
- Saturday: 10am - 1pm

Events at St John's Library

Weekly events:

- Creative Tales, weekly every Monday, 3:30pm to 4:15pm
- Chess Club, weekly every Tuesday, 2:00pm to 4:00pm.

Cost 50p which can be paid on arrival.

- Crochet and Chat, weekly every Wednesday, 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Storytime and Song, weekly every Friday, 11:00am to 11:30am.

Join us to share a fun story, a little colouring and some of your favourite songs and rhymes. For children aged 0 to 4 years. Free, no booking required.

Other regular events:

- Classic Film Club, alternate Thursdays, 11 & 25 June, 2:00pm to 3:30pm.
Enjoy watching classic films, meeting new people and chatting about your favourite films? Join our friendly group of individuals fortnightly in the library.
- Crime Readers' Group: First Friday of each month (5 June),
12:00pm to 1:00pm.

Join this local Crime Reader's Group to share your thoughts on the chosen crime book of the month. Meet in your local library with friendly, regular group members.

- Photography Group: Third Friday of each month (19 June),
2:00pm to 3:00pm.

Free, but booking essential (01905 822722).

The information above is from the County Council website on 16th May.

- Councillors' Surgeries: First Saturday of each month (6 June),
10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Meet your local policing team: Tuesday 16 June, 10:30am.

The Parish Magazine - SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Please tick one of the boxes below and fill in your details:

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☐

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Send your payment in an envelope, or as a cheque made payable to St. Johns Parish Church, with this completed form to The Parish Office, 1A Bromyard Road, Worcester WR2 5BS. **Or, to pay by bank transfer**, please email parishmagazine@wcw.church to give your name and address details, and you will be given a reference number. Then make a bank transfer to the following account:

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1. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income or capital gains equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, you can cancel your declaration.
2. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.
3. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask the charity.
4. Please notify the charity if you change your name or address.



Puzzle solution

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

And finally....



*The plug was
stolen in 1548.*

Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council is a charity with the Registered Charity Number 1205354.

Sunday Services – June 2026

	St John's	St Michael's	St David's
7th June	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evensong	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist
14th June	10.30am All Age Eucharist	10.30am Morning Worship	4pm Evening Prayer
21st June	3pm Songs of Praise	10.30am Eucharist	
28th June	10.30am Eucharist	10.30am Morning Worship	4pm Evening Prayer
5th July	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evensong	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist
In case there are any changes to the above, please watch the weekly church newsletters and websites for the latest information.			