

Woolstone with Gotherington & Oxenton

# PARISH MAGAZINE



St Martin de Tours,  
Woolstone

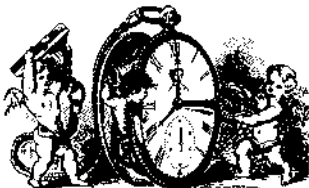


ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, OXENTON

## INSIDE THIS MONTH

The Vicar's Letter  
EASTER  
Nature Notes  
Service information

PLUS  
Cartoons, humour, quotes and  
graphics of the month



Clocks forward an hour on  
Easter Sunday 27th March

March



2016



## INFORMATION

### *Weddings, Funerals & Baptisms*

Our churches are beautiful buildings which were built to serve our communities. Over the years they have witnessed countless services, commemorating births, marriages and deaths.

Fees for marriages and funerals are governed by statute plus additional costs e.g. organist.

There is no charge for Baptism.

If you would like more information speak to our clergy or members of the Church Council.

Bookings for baptisms and weddings should be made with Bishops Cleeve Church Office on Tel. 673612. Open Monday to Friday 9-12 answer-phone available for messages. Funeral enquiries to Rev. Richard Reakes (see back page for contact details).

**St Michael's and Southam** church services are detailed on the website:

<http://www.stmichaelsbishopsleeve.co.uk>

#### Sunday Services

On Sunday mornings we usually have two or three services : a simple 'said' Communion at 08.00; a 'classic' sung Holy Communion at 09.30, and a less formal Morning Worship at 11.15. On the first Sunday of the month we sometimes have Evensong at 18.30, though this sometimes moves by a week or two for special events like Easter, All Souls or Advent and Cafe Church at 18.00 on the 2nd Sunday in the month.

The 11.15 services follow the pattern below:

1st Sunday: All-age worship - 2nd Sunday: Morning Prayer

3rd Sunday: Morning Prayer - 4th Sunday: Holy

Communion - 5th Sunday: Varied

Apart from on the 1st Sunday of the month, children usually have their own activities at the 11.15 service.



#### **Woodmancote Church** Regular services:

Church services are held on Sunday mornings, commencing at 10:30am.

Communion is held during the third Sunday morning service. A listing of future services is provided on the website: <http://http://www.woodmancotechurch.org.uk>

**The Methodist Church** has Morning Worship at 10.30 am plus other services.

See [www.Methodist-BishpsCleeve.co.uk](http://www.Methodist-BishpsCleeve.co.uk)

#### **Roman Catholic Church (in St Michael's)**

Saturdays      5.30 pm      Holy Mass

Tuesday, Thursday & Holy Days

9.30 am      Mass.

Saints Days as announced

Dear Friends

I don't know if you have seen the recent items on the TV news and in the press about the life of rural churches?

One particular item on the local news was showing a vicar in rural Gloucestershire rushing from place to place on a Sunday morning taking up to three services in various villages around his benefice (a collection of parishes). It's not only services on Sunday but also their responsibility, along with Parochial Church Councils, to maintain, look after, and care for its communities many historic church buildings.

It is often thought the Church of England is the state church and therefore its buildings are supported from government; this is not true and it is up to each congregation to find the money to maintain our beautiful Christian heritage found in our many medieval churches. We are grateful to the hard work of the Friends of Woolstone and Oxenton Churches who help with some of these costs. However what may escape many people is that as well as looking after these buildings on behalf of our communities each parish every year has to contribute to what is called the 'Parish Share' which is the contribution each church pays to the Diocese in order to maintain the day to day ministry within each parish. Currently for our part of the benefice (Woolstone, Gotherington and Oxenton) we have to raise in the region of £20,000 this year. This money goes towards the cost of having a vicar, as well as contributing towards the running costs of diocese. In addition we have our regular running costs which include maintenance, insurance and utilities,

The future of our village churches is uncertain but we will continue for as long as we can providing care for those who want to be baptised, married and buried, as well as the other parts of ministry we offer such as the Connexion, coffee mornings, Children's Church and fundraising events we hold.

I would encourage those who have not been to one of our church services recently to come along; you'll receive a very warm welcome. You might be pleasantly surprised at what church is like!

It would be a very sad day when rural churches start to close their doors and only become a reminder of our Christian past, when they could become vibrant centres of community where people meet and share and enjoy the beauty of these historic buildings and the glory of God.

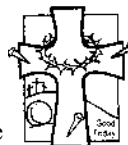
With my very best wishes

Richard

# CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2016

## St John the Baptist, Oxenton and St Martin de Tours, Woolstone

5.00 pm	Wednesday	Weekly Evening Prayer at the Vicarage
11.15 am	28th	Parish Communion Woolstone
11.15 am	6th March	Mothering Sunday Service Gotherington Church Centre
11.15 am	13th	Parish Communion Oxenton
10.30 am	20th	Palm Sunday Benefice Service St Michael's No service in this parish
7.30 pm	24th	Maundy Thursday St Michael's
10.30 am	25th	Good Friday Service Gotherington Church Centre
11.15 am	27th	Easter Day Communion Woolstone
11.15 am	3rd April	Parish Communion Oxenton



**Come and celebrate Easter  
with your local church**



### **TRANSPORT TO CHURCH SERVICES**

Lifts are available to all of our services. To put a regular understanding in place or arrange a one-off, call Vera Goodhind (672894) or Sarah Whitehead (674489).

### **Weekday Services**

Wednesdays	9:00 am	Ecumenical Communion at Methodist Church
Wednesdays	5:00 pm	Evening Prayer Gotherington Vicarage
Thursdays	10.45 am	Holy Communion (Common Worship Traditional Language) at St Michael's

**THE DEADLINE FOR ITEMS FOR THE  
APRIL 2016 MAGAZINE**

is 15th March 2016

Please e-mail to: [mag@thecookes.me.uk](mailto:mag@thecookes.me.uk)

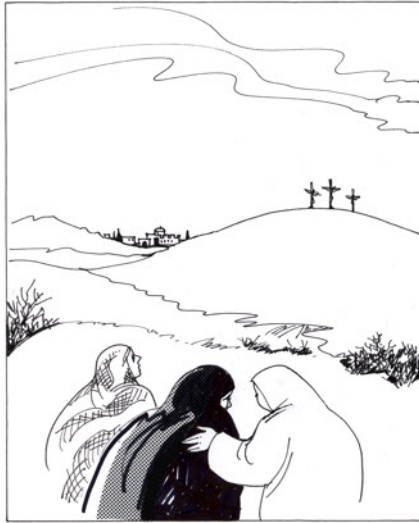
## OUR COMMUNITY

*On the occasion of their wedding,  
our congratulations to  
Greg RYAN and Jennifer  
YOUNG*

**Lent Course** 2 pm-3.30 pm.

Venue Claire Newsum's home,  
17 Malleson Road . Theme will  
be The Psalms.

Please do bring along a Bible.



## THE CHARITY FOR MARCH IS CHURCH HOUSING TRUST

The **APCM** will be held on Tuesday April 19th at 7.30pm in Oxenton Village Hall. This is an opportunity for parishioners to find out more about the work of the PCC.

### **Inca and Iguanas an Illustrated talk about Machu Picchu and the Galapagos**

7.30 pm on Friday April 1st in The Church Centre. Tea and coffee will be served. Retiring collection in aid of church funds. Sarah Whitehead

## ACTIVITIES AT THE CHURCH CENTRE

The next monthly lunch at Gotherington Church Centre will be on Thursday 17th March at 12.30pm. Please book your place with Sarah Whitehead 674489 or Ellen Cooke 673170. The Connexion provides a welcome afternoon of entertainment with good company on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays each month from 2-4 pm. Drop in and try it.

People are like tea bags - you have to put them in hot water before you know how strong they are. *Anon*

## Country Diary

Have you heard of Plantlife? This organisation aims to preserve our native flora and fauna. In 2003 Stan Coles wrote a piece about Plantlife which was holding a poll to try and establish Briton's favourite wild flower. Naturalist societies in Gloucestershire favoured the Badgeworth Buttercup, a flower found in only two places in the UK, both being close to the County boundary. The daffodil grows in various parts of our islands; but Badgeworth was the only place you could guarantee to see this buttercup in flower. Pale lemon in colour and quite small, it is known as Adder's tongue Spearwort, Latin name *Ranunculus ophioglossi fillius*. A damp boggy area of undisturbed grassland where it blooms in sheets of flower in June and July is now a Nature Reserve.



You can obtain more information about Plantlife on the internet. They have lots of interesting information including a campaign to preserve wild and plant life on our verges. Safety must come first on our roads but with the size of most road verges there should be no conflict between this and conservation. For many verges a regular annual late summer cut and removal of mowings will keep the verge open, safe and thriving with interesting wildlife. They also agree that certain verges must be cut regularly to maintain clear lines of visibility – this is particularly crucial at junctions where a ‘visibility splay’ has to be maintained at all times. On some busy roads this also applies to the first metre from the edge of the carriageway.

Another initiative is the creation of wild flower meadows of which there are many dotted around the country.

## Easter dates - historical perspective

The Pope joked that Christians could say to one another: “When did Christ rise from the dead? My Christ rose today, and yours next week,” adding that this disunity is a scandal. The Orthodox churches normally celebrate Easter a week after the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. Some Orthodox leaders have also reflected on the dating of the Christian holy day. In May, Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros II wrote to the papal nuncio in Egypt suggesting a common date for Easter and there are discussions between the churches on this issue.

In the 6th Century the Pope gave Dennis the Small - a mathematician and astronomer - the job of finding the correct date for Easter. Unfortunately the Bible doesn't provide a date for this or, indeed, a date for Jesus' birth. Today there are better dating methods and it is suggested that Jesus' birth date is somewhere between 7 BC and 1 BC but not the time of year. King Herod, who was alive when Jesus was born, died in 4 BC.

There seems no good reason for our Easter celebrations to vary by several weeks year after year.

## **FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 29 FEBRUARY – 13 MARCH**

As Martin Luther King famously said, ‘Before you finish eating breakfast in the morning, you’ve depended on more than half the world’. Despite our dependence on farmers and workers for the foods, drinks and products that we love, about 795 million people are undernourished globally.



When people are paid a fairer price, they can have more control over their lives when times are hard, and worry less about how they will feed their families. Whether it’s the extra cash in their pockets or being able to expand their farms to grow more food to eat, Fairtrade means many farmers and workers are able to fulfil a basic human need – to put enough food on the table for the people they care about, all year round.

Please consider the purchase of food and goods which carry the Fairtrade symbol in supermarkets or online. The church office in Bishops Cleeve is open every morning between 9-12noon and always carries a good stock of popular items.



### **Family pride**

“Yes,” boasted the woman to the visiting American priest, “my family can trace its ancestry back to William the Conqueror.”

“I suppose,” said the American, “You’ll be telling me next that your ancestors were in the Ark with Noah.”

“Certainly not. My people had a boat of their own.”



## **Women’s World Day of Prayer Friday 4 March 2016**



The Women’s World Day of Prayer Service this year is at the Gotherington Church Centre at 2pm on Friday 4 March.

On that day an estimated 3 million people in over 170 countries and islands will gather to observe the day of prayer, using an order of service written by Christian women in Cuba and translated into over 60 languages and 1000 dialects. In the British Isles alone over 6,000 services will be held. The day begins as the sun rises over the island of Samoa and continues until it sets off the coast of American Samoa, some 35 hours later.

The theme ‘Receive children. Receive me’ reflects St Mark’s Gospel, chapter 10 verses 13-16, which is the focus of the service and a reminder that everyone is a child of God and equally worthy of our love and respect.

This is not a day of prayer just for women - everyone is welcome to attend the service and for further information and resources, together with details of the services in your area, please see the WWDP website: [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk).

## W.I. Report

We had a very local speaker at our January meeting when Mike Valentine from Gotherington gave us an interesting and informative talk on Ascension Island, illustrated by some lovely slides. The island, lying between South America and South Africa, was discovered in 1501 by the Portuguese and taken over by the British in 1815. Being on a volcanic ridge it was an inhospitable place except up in the hills where there was water and vegetation. It has now been developed to include an R.A.F. base, an American airfield plus various listening bases. It is home to some beautiful flowers, many imported but grown successfully and various animals including feral donkeys and giant turtles.



In February we shall hear about the History of Punch and Judy from Philip Collins And in March Simon Trapnell will talk about Nature in Art at Twigworth. We meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month in Gotherington Village Hall - do join us. JP

## GOTHERINGTON FETE 12TH JUNE

This promises to be a spectacular event for all ages. Plans are progressing well and as always there is room for lots of helpers. Contact Bev Osborne or Howard Samuels to see how you could be involved.

Keep up to date with progress on the Gotherington Summer Fete through the website, Topics, notices at the Village Hall coffee mornings as well as via Twitter and Facebook.

The church will be running a tombola stall and would welcome prizes nearer to June.



### TEWKESBURY CHORAL SOCIETY

[www.tewkesburychoral.org.uk](http://www.tewkesburychoral.org.uk)  
Registered Charity  
260811

Performing for Tewkesbury and District since 1844



### Monthly Draw for January 2016

Total of Prizes £80.00  
Monthly Payment to Church Funds £100.00

If you are not yet a member and would like to join please contact Dawn Maisey on 01242 673686, or [maisey254@fsmail.net](mailto:maisey254@fsmail.net)

Woolstone with Gotherington & Oxenton PCC			
1st	£50	5	Mr B Cosgrove
2nd	£20	85	Mrs P Peak
3rd	£10	116	Mrs P Jones
	£80		



## **A letter from Bishop Rachel**

As we look to the start of Lent, I send this letter as a call to prayer for each one of us. I want to encourage the whole Diocese – churches, chaplaincies, Fresh Expressions, schools – to renew our commitment to prayer and to link this to the vision discernment process, which will unfold across the Diocese later this year.

During the seasons of Lent and Easter we make a common journey – a journey to the pain of the cross, and then beyond it, to the joyous hope of Easter Day.

As a Diocese we are continuing our ‘journeying together’ and during this coming year will discern the specific priorities for the next stage of our life together, whilst building on what has gone before.

From Ascension to Pentecost there will be an emphasis on praying for our Diocese and listening to what God is saying to us. This will begin with a day of prayer in the Cathedral on 5 May. This prayerful discernment will lead into a period of conversation, which will be developed through the summer, and followed by an Advent launch of the next stage of our journey. Therefore this Lent is about laying the foundation for that.

In the story of the Israelites’ battle with the Amalekites in Exodus 17, we are told that when Moses held his hands up the Israelites prevailed, but when he let his hands down, the Amalekites prevailed. One understanding of this is that Moses as leader was reminding the people to look upwards to God as they undertook their task. Good advice for us too. As followers of Jesus Christ we want to learn more of what it means to look upwards, to pray, and in doing so to see God, ourselves and our world differently.

Last May (Ascension Day to Pentecost) there was a focus on the Try Praying initiative to encourage many people to do just this. Some of the feedback and stories have been very encouraging including prayer spaces in schools and the university, where hundreds of booklets were given to young people. Are there ways this Lent that you can connect with those around you and encourage people to look upwards and Try Praying?

Some of you will already be familiar with the Church of England JustPray initiative. If you haven’t looked at the website yet, I encourage you to do so. I hope you will find it a source of encouragement and inspiration: [www.justpray.uk](http://www.justpray.uk)

As well as encouraging those we encounter to try praying, there is also the challenge to encourage those who are already part of a Christian worshipping community to look upwards, to infuse the whole of their lives with prayer and so gain a new vision, not just for church but for Christian discipleship among the people and places of their week. Perhaps you might produce a prayer card which people carry with them each day and use in the different places where they spend their time. Perhaps you could find ways of encouraging those you already worship with to support each other with personal, meaningful prayer relevant to their own circumstances and situations. I would love to hear of your creative ideas about encouraging prayer. In all of this I commend to you the Lent prayer resources, Streams in the Desert, produced by the diocesan Worship, Prayer and Spirituality Group visit -

[www.gloucester.anglican.org/church-outreach/worship-events-and-resources/](http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/church-outreach/worship-events-and-resources/)

May each of us live Lent with expectant hearts as we look upwards and encourage others to do so too. May we see where God is already at work and may we discern how best to join in.

+ Rachel

## Adam and Eve's true nationality

A Brit, a Frenchman and a Russian were viewing a painting of Adam and Eve frolicking in the Garden of Eden. "Look at that garden they are maintaining so well," mused the Brit. "They must be British."

"Nonsense," the Frenchman disagreed. "They're naked, and so beautiful. Clearly, they are French."

"Ah, but no clothes, no shoes, no shelter," the Russian pointed out, "they have only an apple to eat, and they're being told this is paradise. They are Russian."

### Oh dear

The middle-aged man shuffled along, bent over at the waist, as his wife helped him into the doctor's waiting room. He groaned at every step, and the receptionist eyed the scene with sympathy. "Arthritis in the back with complications?" she finally ventured.

The wife shook her head briskly. "Do-it-yourself in the garden," she replied, "with concrete blocks."



Richard has commented about the number of enquiries for weddings in the near future - Do we need a drive-thru facility?

**GOWNS** 07752 152485

Here to help!

## **PARISH COUNCIL**

In an update to the Coffin Path closure the developer has as expected applied to extend the footpath closure for a further 6 months from the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016. However, by late April the developer will be putting in a permissive path that will allow walkers to gain access between Longfurlong Park in Gotherington and Sunrise Avenue in Bishops Cleeve.

A volunteer training day for anybody wishing to become a Parish Rights Of Way volunteer will be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March in Northleach. If anybody from the parish wishes to attend please let Ellen know.

Parish councillors have requested that Highways impose a weight limit on Gotherington Lane/Cleeve Road, to prevent heavy lorries using it unnecessarily and sometimes damaging the war memorial, which is now listed. This is a lengthy process, with some costs involved, and one of the considerations is whether it would have the support of residents. Please tell councillors your views.

## **CLEANING UP**

It was noteworthy that following the wet conditions over this winter, making it difficult to clean up around the village, the first bi-monthly community litterpick of 2016 was well supported in spite of very cold drizzle during the morning. A worthwhile exercise as many bags were filled and Tewkesbury Borough Council asked to collect further large items.

With 10 registered volunteers keeping the village tidy throughout the year and a faithful band of additional helpers who support the group events, we must be one of the boroughs most pro-active village communities.

Any resident who spots items that have been fly-tipped can tell the borough council or let the parish council clerk know and the information will be passed on. On a smaller scale, clearance on Cleeve Road near the village boundary recently resulted in the discovery of not one but three broken wing mirrors.

And finally – in order to celebrate the Queens 90<sup>th</sup>, groups taking part in the “Clean for the Queen” litter picks will have special purple bags for the occasion!



...rumours that we would be giving out Easter eggs are unfounded - er, there aren't any left!

WHO'S WHO

BC Team Rector	Malc. Allen (day off Friday)	01242 677851
BC Team Vicar	Richard Reakes (day off Monday) richard.vicarage@gmail.com	01242 675559

