

Woolstone with Gotherington & Oxenton

PARISH MAGAZINE



**St Martin de Tours,
Woolstone**



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, OXENTON

INSIDE THIS MONTH

The Vicar's Letter
Christingle
Carols and Crib
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Cartoons, humour, quotes and
graphics of the month



December 2015 &
January 2016



CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2015 AND JANUARY 2016

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

5.00 pm	Wednesday	Weekly Evening Prayer at the Vicarage (see page 5)
4.00 pm	29th November	Christingle Service Gotherington Church Centre
6.30 pm	29th November	Advent Candlelight Carol Service at St Michael's BC
11.15 am	6th December	Parish Communion Oxenton
11.15 am	13th	Parish Communion Woolstone
4.30 pm	13th	Christingle at St Michael's Bishops Cleeve
6.30 pm	13th	Candlelight Carol Service at St Michael's Bishops Cleeve
4.00 pm	20th	Carol Service Gotherington Village Hall
4.00 pm	24th	Crib Service Woolstone
11.30 pm	24th	Christmas Midnight Eucharist Oxenton
11.15 am	25th	Christmas Day Parish Communion Woolstone
11.15 am	27th	Parish Communion Woolstone
11.15 am	3rd January 2016	Parish Communion Oxenton
11.15 am	10th	Parish Communion Woolstone
8.00 am	17th	Said Communion Oxenton
11.15 am	17th	Village Praise Gotherington Church Centre
11.15 am	24th	Parish Communion Woolstone
11.15 am	31st	Village Communion Gotherington Church Centre



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
FEBRUARY 2016 MAGAZINE**

is 15th January 2016

Please e-mail to: mag@thecookes.me.uk

Dear Friends

When you're rushing around, trying to get a thousand and one things done, it is very easy to lose sight of the purpose of it all. There's no time to stop and think.

That's December, isn't it? The rush can so easily blot out the real meaning of Christmas. It's good to give presents to one another – but they should remind us of the first and most important Christmas present of all, when God gave us Jesus to be our Saviour. It's good to remember friends we haven't seen for a long time – because that reminds us that God never forgets us. And it's good to have parties and feasts – provided that amid all the festivities we don't forget those who are hungry and lonely and poor, because the Christmas-story tells us that they are specially dear to God.

But we have to stop and be still, if we are to find God amid all the bustle. "How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given", says the carol – and it's true. God comes into the stress and confusion of human society almost unseen, unheard. Jesus was born in obscurity and poverty, not in a palace, heralded by trumpeters. In Bethlehem God's message of love is whispered, and his caring hand is stretched out particularly to those who had been written off by everyone else. Today God is calling us to continue what Jesus began – to tell of his love and to demonstrate it day by day in our actions.

As I write this letter there has been some controversy over the showing of a visual version of the Lord's Prayer in cinemas, saying it may offend people. Well the whole Christmas story was offensive to those who first encountered it: just remember Herod's reaction when he heard that Jesus was born in Bethlehem! Jesus came to earth (Emmanuel means 'God with us') to offend the standards and ways of this world, to bring about God's kingdom on earth. Remember the words of the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven.' That is the true meaning of Christmas.

Have a truly joyful Christmas – and, I hope and pray, a peaceful and blessed one – and may God bless and guide you throughout the coming year.

With my very best wishes

Richard



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.stmichaelsbishopsclleeve.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-BishopsCleeve.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

THE CHARITIES FOR DECEMBER ARE

Children's Society (Christingle)
Acorn Trust (Carol Service)
Pied Piper & The Family Haven



OUR COMMUNITY

We remember with gratitude the lives of
Jean MARSHALL

Eileen ROGERS

Dennis HERBERT

Ivy LEWIS

SERVICE VENUE CHANGED

Over the winter months, those attending the 5pm Evening Prayer on Wednesdays will receive a warm welcome at the Vicarage, 67 Malleson Road, instead of in the Church Centre. As always, all are welcome to this short quiet service.

COFFEE MORNING AND RECYCLED CARDS

THANK YOU to all who supported the Coffee Morning on 21st November. It was good to meet in such a happy atmosphere. £271.10 was raised for church funds, and a staggering £160-worth of Fairtrade items were sold. Recycled cards still seem to be popular raising £114. Thanks to everyone who supported our card making team - we haven't quite made a profit of £1,000 this year but are not far off.

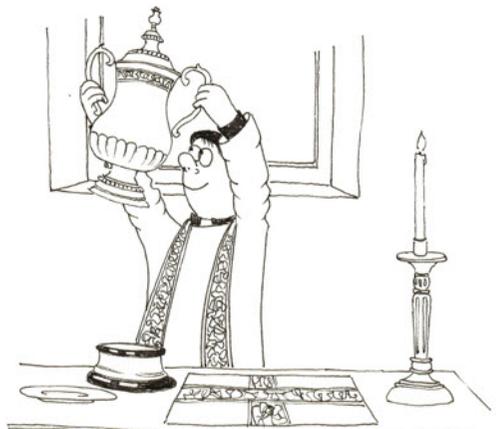
We will be pleased to receive Christmas cards for recycling in January and February and always want 'any occasion cards'

Thank you - Vera Goodhind, Marjorie Taylor, Claire Newsum, Christine Davies, Valerie Martin

ACTIVITIES AT THE CHURCH CENTRE

The next monthly lunch at Gotherington Church Centre will be on Thursday 21st January 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 2-4pm, Drop in and try it.

Correction: The following typo appeared in our last bulletin: 'Lunch will be gin at 12:15.' Please correct to read '12 noon.'



R*N

The special silverware only came out once a year

Nature notes

Further passages – of a seasonal nature – from ‘A Woodman’s Diary’ by J. D. U. Ward which was published by Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. in 1952.

Mistletoe seeds are usually ripe for planting in the chosen host between mid-February and mid-March (and then the host’s sap is likely to be moving), but not immediately after Twelfth Night – the time of most unconsidered sowings. A *Country Life* reader once reported having grown in seventeen years a bunch 17 ft. 3 in. in circumference and bearing 3,500 berries. But mistletoe is a slow starter and berried sprays must not be expected within three years. Also, few bunches can boast both male and female flowers: berries are produced from the female alone, and then only if they have been fertilized from male flowers. Therefore, if berried bunches of mistletoe are required, several plantings on adjacent hosts should be made.

The scarcity of holly berries seems to be general. People may carol the praises of holly but their practical appreciation ends with the buying (or stealing) of some sprigs. Very little holly has been planted, save for hedges, in the last hundred years: the birds have probably set far more than man. At the same time the demand has increased, and there is in consequence a kind of vicious spiral, the berried female trees being continually weakened by too heavy cutting. (The simple fact that many holly trees are males which may bear flowers but make no fruit of their own is not known to everyone)... *(It)* surely deserves a place in odd corners, if only to recall the meaning of such names as Holm Wood and Holm Acre.... I cannot help

recalling that the use of holly for a mid-winter decoration in this country is more than two thousand years old. I suppose the modern importation of the Christmas tree cult has dimmed the ancient glory of holly, and large sections of the populace now prefer decorations of frilled and coloured paper and tinsel. No matter for regret, since we are short of holly.

I gave a handful of hemlock cones to a lady who makes Christmas decorations. She was most grateful – said she had never seen such small and dainty cones. (They are probably the smallest and neatest of the truly cone-like cones.) They were picked from a *Tsuga canadensis*, the eastern hemlock....

Gloucester Historic Churches have sent a cheque for £280.50, the returned proportion of the money raised by the 2015 Ride and Stride adventure



‘The people keep a-coming – but the train has gone’

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God (John 1:11,12 KJV)

An old negro spiritual, stemming from the slave trade over 200 years ago, was derived from the days of the former American railroad. It uses the idea of a station-master looking sadly at crowds of people all desperately seeking to board a train - that had already come and gone!

Mary had a baby, Yes, Lord; Mary had a baby, Yes, O Lord.

Mary had a baby, Yes my Lord!

The people keep a-coming – but the train has gone!

There is an element of real wistfulness, that something special has been missed. The station-master in the song seems to be expressing the tragic poignancy of God’s dealings with the human race. At the first Christmas, here was the universe’s rightful Governor, coming to his own earth in order to reclaim the people He had created – who were now a collection of rebels. Some would ‘receive’ his Son, and so joyfully board *The Gospel Train*, bound for Salvation. In contrast to them, there have always been the careless or ungrateful who – despite the free tickets – never make it to the train.

Born in a stable, yes, Lord; born in a stable, yes O Lord,

Born in a stable, Yes my Lord!

The people keep a-coming - but the train has gone!

FOODBANK IN BISHOPS CLEEVE

The foodbank now operating in Bishops Cleeve would welcome donations of any of the following items. These should have a long shelf life still available. Items can be left in the collection box in St Michaels Church.

Milk (UHT or powdered)	Sugar 500 grams	Fruit Juice carton
Soup	Pasta Sauces	Sponge Pudding (tinned)
Tomatoes (tinned)	Cereal	Rice Pudding (tinned)
Tea Bags/Instant Coffee	Instant Mash Potato	Rice/Pasta
Tinned Meat/Fish	Tinned Vegetables	Tinned Fruit
Jam	Biscuits or Snack Bar	

This list can also be found at <http://northcotswold.foodbank.org.uk> under Donate Food

We would particularly welcome the following items for our Christmas food boxes.

Again these should have at least 3 months shelf life.

Various sizes of Christmas puddings/cakes

White sauce/brandy sauce/custard cartons or tins

Apple or cranberry sauce

Box of trifle mix/Special biscuits/chocolates/nibbles

Stuffing mix/gravy mix

Small boxes of crackers/Christmas serviettes

W.I. Report

We had a very entertaining meeting in October when Shaun McCormack told us about the history of the Yeomen of the Guard, or 'Beefeaters' as they are often called, as they were originally paid in beef and beer. Founded in 1485 by Henry VII, having fought with him against Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth, they are no longer an army, though members do have to have spent 22 years in the armed forces. There are now 82 yeomen and officers who are paid £100 a year to perform up to eighteen ceremonial duties on State occasions such as Investitures or State visits. Sean passed around his uniform and explained the significance of the beautiful gold thread embroidery. The full uniform weighs 320 lb and must be very hot to wear in the summer. At least beards are no longer compulsory as they were up until 1936.



On a wet November day 15 members and friends gathered in Oxenton Village Hall for a very enjoyable workshop with Karen Van Hoff. Karen had previously given us a talk on her knitted silver jewellery and this was our chance to make some ourselves. It wasn't easy to start with but Karen was an encouraging teacher and we all proudly took home some delightful work, including bracelets, earrings, necklaces and decorations.

Our A.G.M. is on November 25th followed by William Reddaway telling us about his ride around England on his horse, Strider and our members' Christmas Party will be held on December 9th. We are also looking forward to the G.F.W.I. Christmas Concert in the Town Hall and a meal out at Dumbleton Hall.

Our New Year starts on January 27th with a talk on 'Ascension Island' by Mike Valentine. Why not join us in 2016 for another interesting year of talks, workshops and outings, friendship and fun.

JP

TRANS-SIBERIA-MONGOLIA

LONDON – BEIJING – LONDON BY TRAIN

Friday 4th December 2015 at The Church Centre 7pm

I will be showing some non-professional photos and giving our insight on our recent 'holiday'. The good, the bad and the ugly! Not forgetting the beautiful. You are welcome to join us. It would help me to know numbers so I can make sure you all get a cup of tea and biscuits, so an email to candegodsell@tiscali.co.uk or telephone 672821 would be appreciated. I look forward to seeing you all. Christine Godsell

How to get more presents....

Joe: Did you get many Christmas presents?

Jack: I sure did. A lot more than my four brothers.

Joe: Why was that?

Jack: On Christmas morning I got up two hours before them.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR VILLAGE AGENT

I am writing to confirm what some of you may have heard on the grapevine and that is that I left my post as Village & Community Agent for the Tewkesbury Area with effect from Friday, 23rd October.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside you all in the Tewkesbury area over the past two years and I know I will miss it and those of you I have worked with but it is time to move on to pastures new.

GRCC will be replacing me in the coming weeks but if you would like to speak to a Village & Community Agent in the meantime please contact the GRCC office on 01452 528491 and they will arrange for one of my colleagues to contact you.

I won't be a million miles away as I am going to Gloucestershire County Council where part of my role will involve working with the Adult Helpdesk so you may yet hear my dulcet tones!

Best wishes to all. Regards,

David Cooper www.villageagents.org.uk www.grcc.org.uk

BUS ROUTES SURVEY

Glos. County Council is consulting with the public on bus routes which are currently subsidised by council funds. This includes the 527 and the 43, both Gotherington routes. They are also looking at the D service on Sundays and evenings, but not our part of the route.

The survey gives two options to choose from, and also the opportunity to make comments. It can be done online at Gloucestershire.gov.uk by finding the Funded Public Transport Survey in the Consultations menu. Alternatively paper copies are available in Bishops Cleeve Library, which can supply the whole pack or else just the routes requested. The consultation runs until 5th January 2016.

GOWNS 07752 152485

GOWNS volunteers wish you all a Happy Christmas and look forward to meeting everyone in the New Year.



Windows

A wife texted her husband on a cold winter morning: "Windows frozen."

Her husband texted back: "Pour some lukewarm water over it."

The wife texted back five minutes later: "Computer's completely not working now."



TEWKESBURY CHORAL SOCIETY

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GOTHERINGTON VILLAGE FETE – 12TH JUNE 2016

The village celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday will take place at our Summer Fete on Freeman Field on Sunday 12th June, coinciding with a myriad of similar celebrations up and down the country.

There will be something for everyone to make it a day to remember with games and sports and side stalls. Also planned is a cycle ride starting and finishing in the village, a walk round the village boundary and a treasure hunt. There will be a bar with food, and teas served by Mike and Maddie from Gotherington Stores.

The Summer Fete is in the planning stage so if you would like to help organise or contribute to any aspects of the Fete please offer your support by contacting Howard Samuels on 672492, email hsamuels@btinternet.com or Bev Osborne on 07974101659, email Bev.osborne@hotmail.com

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.

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION

This issue is the joint December/January copy. The annual subscription (a mere £3 for 10 copies of Church and local news) should be given to your friendly distributor during this period if possible. Why not encourage your neighbours to have their own copy? Your distributor can arrange this for them.

OUR ADVERTISERS

A number of our regular advertisers have told us that they are pleased to have been contacted by customers as a direct consequence of this magazine. We hope that this is providing a useful service.

Jigsaw

I bought my son a jigsaw last Christmas but my wife went mad.

She said he could've cut his arm off.

In place of cabbage

A woman confided in her minister that when she sent her husband to buy a cabbage for lunch, he had fallen and broken his leg. "That's terrible!" said the minister. "What did you do?"

"I opened a can of peas", she replied.



"I'm sorry Michael – even if you HAVE changed your ring-tone to 'Away In-A-Manger', it's still ALL mobiles OFF!"

25th January – time for haggis and bagpipes!

He died ‘lang syne’ – long ago, back in 1796, but the Scottish poet Robert Burns is still remembered each January, over many a ‘Burns Night’ supper of cockaleekie soup, haggis, neeps and tatties - and whisky. Scots and other Burns lovers throughout the world, from Canada to the USA to Russia, still celebrate the poems this most beloved of Scots poets wrote so long ago.

Burns wrote about ordinary things – food, love, death, friendship, and disappointment. We still quote him: ‘the best laid schemes o’ Mice an’ Men’. And at the end of our lives, we can use his ‘Prayer, in Prospect of Death’: ‘Thou art good; and Goodness still/Delighteth to forgive’. Indeed the Bible promises that if we put our trust in God, he will forgive us and give us new life in him. A good thought at the beginning of a new year!

New Year? Best time to visit the charity shops!

Christmas gifts are not all bad: that scarf that your neighbour was given may make *him* shudder, but that doesn’t mean it won’t do wonders for you! So get down to your charity shop this month for the annual national swapping of Christmas gifts. Beauty really is in the eye of the beholder when it comes to presents, and you may pick up some wonderful brand new stuff – if only to use as presents for your own friends NEXT Christmas! At the very least, you will be highly entertained – if not astonished – to see what some people give other people for presents...

Epiphany

Epiphany, 6 January, is also known as ‘Twelfth Night’, or the last night of the Christmas festival. According to the song, it is also the day when that over-enthusiastic ‘true love’ of yours dumps no less than 78 presents on your doorstep, among them a dozen leaping lords of the realm and a final partridge – to go with the 11 you have already been given.

In many parts of the world 6 January is celebrated as Christmas Day. As we Western Christians are packing away our tree, the Greek Orthodox world and Catholic Spain are giving presents and celebrating the wise men, or magi. For what better time to give presents to each other than on the day the wise men presented gold, frankincense and myrrh to the infant Jesus?

The New Year blessing

God bless to me the new year that is here.
With all that is designed ahead for me;
Above all, I bless thy countenance so dear
And thank thee for this time, O God, thou givest me to see.

O God, give me a heart of cleanliness,
Nor hide from me thy watching eye of care;
And unto me my wife and children bless
And unto us we pray, your care upon our stock and livelihood.

Adapted from an ancient Celtic prayer



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
Church Office	(Office Hours)	01242 673612
Woolstone with Gotherington & Oxenton		
Churchwardens	Michael Bower	01242 672900
	Sarah Whitehead	01242 674489
PCC Secretary	Sarah Whitehead	01242 674489
PCC Treasurer	John Bishton	01242 677290
Gotherington Church Centre bookings	Ellen Cooke	01242 673170
Bells	Pauline Bower	01242 672900
Junior Church	Claire Newsum	01242 673651
Organist	Paul Maisey	01242 673686
Church Flowers: Woolstone	Joan Hocken	01242 674453
Church Flowers: Oxenton	Valerie Martin	01242 673233
Magazine Representative	Gill Lofts	01242 674129
Weekly Sheets	Adrian Cooke	01242 673170
Intercession Rota	Pat Pearson	01242 675708
Deanery Synod Representative	Michael Bower	01242 672900
Deanery Synod Representative	Vera Goodhind	01242 672894
Safeguarding representative for children and adults at risk	Pauline Bower	01242 672900
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