

A word from the Rectory

December to the end of January seems to have passed so quickly! We have had such a warm and generous welcome - Thank you so much.

Since arriving in Cowley a few questions have repeatedly been asked. I am sure there is a much longer list but I thought I would start on a few of them. During the interview process I was struck by the vision statement of the parish:

Our Vision "To live out God's purposes for us, make Christ known in Cowley and to raise up a new generation to love and serve the Lord."

It sets the background for everything we are trying to do. First, Following Jesus. Second, talking about, and showing people, how following Jesus makes a difference to the lives we lead. Third helping people to be part of Jesus' family from the day they are born (or at any point after that) to the day they die. With 29 000 people living in Cowley it is a bold aim and I love it!

You might have noticed the children's area in the church. It aims to provide for young children so that they can worship with us on a Sunday morning. Our aim is to be a family that worships together. Yes there will be times when we need to be in groups for special activities, but we are called to be family. Families do things together. So we need to work at ways that we can do things together well. The simple songs we have introduced at the beginning and end of services allow us to worship together. The words might be simple by the truths about God and ourselves are so important. Each of us is special to God. Our God is so big that there is nothing He cannot do. Simple but true.

I've also been asked if I am going to introduce a new service book for Sunday

mornings at St James. I've thought long and hard over this. I've talked to people about visions of what we believe God is calling us towards. It has led me to believe we do not want the 'next Service booklet' but we want to explore what might be possible and what God is calling us towards. How are we going to do this? Over the Christmas period we tested out the use of a pair of digital projectors. This will allow us, on occasion, to be flexible and taste some of the treasure chest of words and songs that God has given us. It will be a journey of discovery and, yes I suspect there may be some hiccups on the way. Importantly as we look "to raise up a new generation to love and serve the Lord" I believe it will give us the space to follow God's lead.

Lastly I want to mention our mid-week groups. We are the family of God 24/7. Twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and three hundred and sixty five days a year. We have such a diversity of mid-week groups. They vary from lunch clubs to prayer groups; Bible studies to mother and toddler groups. And then we have the one off activities and projects. All are intended to be a blessing to group members, the community, and their leaders. If our vision is: "To live out God's purposes for us, make Christ known in Cowley and to raise up a new generation to love and serve the Lord." then each one of these groups will be shaped by this vision.

May God help each one of us grow fruit that is true to our roots in Him?



Benson Cottage

Chronicle

February
2016

Editor's Letter

Dear Readers

What a magazine we have for you this month! It is full of news, fun and faith just as we always plan it to be. I do hope you enjoy it.

I was sorting through some back issues of the Chronicle the other day and came across the Christmas issue for 1996. I could not believe it - just a single fold of A4 with very little in it. And then it was, I remembered, that Father Stephen asked me if I would write a regular monthly article for the parish magazine. Nearly nineteen and a half years ago! It is almost ten years ago that Howard persuaded me to take on the task of editing The Chronicle. Having agreed, it has been a great pleasure, especially when Carol was my right-hand lady for nearly four years, and then our wonderful Sally Hemsworth has been my co-editor and support ever since. Now both Sally and I have decided that we shall retire from the editorial team after the summer double issue this coming July. That will take me up to my tenth anniversary and I think you will, by then, have heard quite enough from me! So would anyone out there like to take up the reins? Do give it a thought and let Geoff know.

Many of you will remember Kim Hughes as a young school girl attending St James with her mum, Bev, and her two brothers. It is wonderful to learn from her letter that she is soon to be a bride. She has blossomed into a beautiful young lady who is doing great work up in Durham for God and the Church. I am sure you would want me to send our love and best wishes for the happiest of wedding days and a great future in her married life.

It is amazing what is tucked away in our local attics and recently a real treasure has come to light. Right out of the blue, late last year I was asked if anyone would be interested in the Cowley "Church and Home" Magazine for 1893-94. Interested?! I was thrilled. It is a real-life record of parish life during our legendary former

rector "Georgie" Moore's incumbency. Les Hemsworth has spent weeks recording it word for word, page by page, and we are intending to publish extracts each month for your delight. Soon it is going to be lodged at the History Centre at St Luke's with the Parish Archives because it a great treasure and is in pretty good condition too.

Have you any old records relating to the Parish which you would like preserved - please let us know as we would be very interested to see them.

By the time you get your Chronicle you may have read about the Oxford Mail's interest in our Old School Building. If you or anyone you know would like to get involved in our efforts to restore the dear old place and make it fit for our little two and three-year-olds to begin their education please let us know. It is a case of the more the merrier.

Barns Road, at the moment, is the "in" place in Cowley it would seem. The new Cowley community rooms are reaching completion and looking quite smart. I have been told that the opening ceremony is likely to be in March. I am quite keen to take a look at what facilities they will provide. Then immediately opposite we have a new fish and chip shop and a "café lounge" with padded chairs and tropical fish tank. Have you given them a try yet? I fully intend to do so soon!

Spring is always busy in our two churches with Snowdrop days, Valentine celebrations, all the special services and, of course, Lent. Then there is Easter on the horizon followed by our famous plant sale. Watch out for lots of dates for your diary in this month's magazine.

Wishing you a holy, special time in the weeks to come.

God bless

Rosanne

VESTRY AT ST JAMES

At last! After much planning and fund-raising the refurbishment of the vestry at St James Church is under way. The purpose-made wardrobe is now in place – a truly imposing item of furniture giving ample space for the proper storing of vestments.

The next phase will be the conversion of the long cupboard separating the vestry area from the body of the church. This will be clad in American Oak to match the wardrobe; new doors will be added, replacing the existing curtains and the interior will be fitted out to provide storage space for cleaning materials, sacristy supplies, crockery, and the music equipment belonging to the Anglican Asian

Living Church. Over this there will be additional storage space.

We can now get an impression of how the vestry will eventually look, transforming what is a dingy, cluttered space into something fitting for the 21st Century.

Our grateful thanks go to all who have contributed to this scheme either with donations or through fundraising. Thank you also to Sally Hemsworth for her work in obtaining a Faculty (planning permission) from the Diocese, and of course to Ed Ling whose expertise, craftsmanship and enthusiasm is carrying this project forward.

Margaret Martin

SNOWDROP WEEKENDS

Despite the mild winter through December and the first part of January it seems as though our lovely carpet of snowdrops and aconites will be at their best in the churchyard again this year. Our beautiful old churchyard is part of the primeval forest which graced this part of Cuffa's Lea when the Saxons settled here in the seventh century and the atmosphere beneath the lime trees with the spring flowers at your feet is quite powerful. So do, do bring along friends, family and neighbours to enjoy the experience. To add to that, of course, there will be a warm welcome in St James Church with tea or coffee and homemade cakes. This is a perfect way to open up the church and welcome visitors, as we do each year.

Talking of the hospitality side, if you have an hour or two free on either Saturdays, 6th or 13th of February between 10.30 am and 4 pm or Sundays, 7th or 14th between 2 pm and 4 pm perhaps you would like to help meet and greet visitors with a cuppa. Do let Margaret Martin know and get on the rota. Or maybe you could make a cake to make visitors' experience a really good one.

Lets keep it simple ...

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WINTER WONDERLAND

I am the fairy of the snow
And if I wave my wand
I'll take you many miles away
To Winter Wonderland

The snowflakes gently falling
And fluttering to the ground
They float down very softly
And never make a sound

Who's this so cold and prickly?
Mr Frosty is his name
He makes such pretty patterns
On all the window panes

Here are the gentle reindeer
They pulled dear Santa's sleigh
They are so big and strong
And they helped him on his way.

Look at that lovely snowman
Standing straight and bold
If you go and touch him
He'll make your hands feel cold

Wonderland is not complete
Without the winter trees
And when the snow rests on their boughs
They're a lovely sight to see

Maida Simmonds

THE VALENTINE TEA

There is an awful lot of love around in our parish – loving families, loving friendships, love between neighbours, love for our Little Stars and Seashells and, of course, romantic love between couples. And over all of that is as we know the love of God for each one of us. So isn't it a great idea to celebrate that with a super tea party.

On 13th of February in the Church Centre there will be a Valentine Tea party with lovely food and no end of activities for young and not so young alike.

If you and your romantic other half have plans for an evening à deux what could be better than to wear the children out in the afternoon? They will sleep like lambs leaving you, free to spend the evening uninterrupted! What a brilliant idea!!

Do join in the fun, wear your hearts on your sleeves and remember that a loving hug is guaranteed to lower blood pressure and make you feel good. See you there?

SIGNIFICANT DATES IN FEBRUARY

Significant to those who were young at the time was 3rd February 1959. On that day the rock 'n roll pioneer, Buddy Holly, was killed in a plane crash in America.

On 10th February 1912 a search party hoping to find the Antarctic explorer Captain Robert Scott and his team did indeed end their search. They found a tent with the bodies of Scott and two fellow explorers deep in the snow. They were only eleven miles away from safety.

The 109 acres of the Vatican in Rome was made an independent state on February 11th 1929.

British explorers John Speke and J A Grant announced the discovery of the source of the River Nile on 23rd February 1863.

24th February 1902 saw the opening of London's first telephone service.

On the same date thirty years later Malcolm Campbell beat his own land speed record of 253.96 mph in his racing car Bluebird.

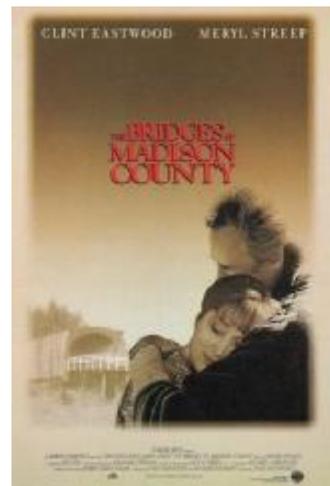
This year is a Leap year so Leap Year Day will be on 29th of the month.

Film Club at the Centre

Despite competing with pantomime productions, the rigours of winter coughs and colds and very dark, wet weather the attendance for our January film evening saw a good crowd of enthusiastic members. And how those members did enjoy the film, "The Lion in Winter" with some outstanding performances by Katherine Hepburn, Peter O'Toole and other supporting actors who have gone on to become major stars in their own right.

David Stanley, our regular projectionist, has dealt with the "gremlins" who invaded the last couple of showings. He has introduced a new system using the brilliant sound and viewing machine we have at the Centre and everything seems to be put right. Several members even remarked that the definition on the screen was better than ever.

This month's film, on Friday, 12 February, will be "The Bridges of Madison County" starring Meryl Streep and Clint Eastwood. For those who tend to regard Eastwood as a tough, gritty character in Hollywood westerns this portrayal might come as a surprise. He plays a world-travelling National Geographical photographer who meets Streep at a particularly vulnerable point in her life and the relationship which develops between them is quite gentle and moving. At least, I found it so. It is a lovely film set in a beautiful part of the United States.



MESSAGE FROM SKYE IN CROATIA, 16 JANUARY 2016

Thank you for the email – it was good to hear from you. I am having a wonderful time. The Croatians are very friendly and warm, with a great sense of humour.

I arrived on Tuesday and straight away Melody, my host, and I went to Zagreb where I did a presentation to a group of women gathered together for the first time. The following evening I led workshops in Art Therapy. This was very interesting as the turnout was larger than I was expecting. The rest of the time has been spent observing in meetings with government officials, and charities, about issues with the Roma people, and barriers that they face daily. For example education and legal help. While in Zagreb we stayed with an American family, who have set up a church plant six months ago, and have just started a women's evening. It was exciting to be part of a new adventure. The events that I helped at were successful and they have asked me to do some more workshops before I fly out. Friday evening we travelled to Osijek where Melody lives and where the Roma Community are. I know I will be doing more workshops here and lots of visits to meet people in their homes. I am preaching tomorrow at church, everybody here is very hospitable and I love the coffee. I am trying to learn Croatian but my skills in that department, or lack of, is frustrating at times.

I miss you all but hope to come back with lots of stories and a big smile. God is good. I think I will definitely do some workshops in Cowley when I return.

Send everyone in St Francis and St James my love.

Skye

DIARY DATES TO REMEMBER

Mothers' Union

Monthly Meeting on 3rd Monday of month
from 2.30pm.

St James Church Centre

February Meeting: Preparation for Women's World
Day of Prayer

Women's Institute

Monthly Meeting is on 3rd Wednesday of month from
2 – 4.30 pm St James Church Centre

Coffee, Cake and Communion

Monthly meeting on 3rd Tuesday of month
from 10.30 a.m.

With Rev Skye at the Vicarage, 27 Don Bosco Close
(Tel: 434160)

Snowdrop Weekend

6 February 2016, 10.30 – 4 pm

7 February 2016, 2 – 4 pm

St James Church

St Francis Church Committee

Sunday, 14 February 2016 at 12.30 pm

St Francis Church

Film Club

Friday, 12 February 2016 – "The Bridges of Madison
County"

St James Church Centre, commencing at 6.30 pm
with coffee and cake

Snowdrop Weekend

13 February 2016, 10.30 – 4 pm

14 February 2016, 2 – 4 pm

St James Church

Valentine Tea

Saturday, 13 February 2016, 3 – 5 pm

St James Church Centre

Cowley Local History Society

Tuesday, 16 February 2016 at 8 pm

"Pirates, press gangs and smugglers—the dark side of
the London Docks"

An illustrated talk by Colin Oakes

Quiz and Puddings Evening (arranged by the
Mother's Union)

Friday, 19 February 2016 at 7 pm

St James Church Centre

Parochial Church Council Meeting

Sunday, 21 February 2016, 12 noon

St Francis Church

Parish Sunday Lunch

Sunday, 28 February 2016 at 12.30 pm

St James Church Centre

Parochial Church Council Meeting

Sunday, 13 March 2016, 12 noon

St James Church Centre

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday, 17 April 2016, at 12.15 pm

St James Church Centre

St Francis Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, 24 April 2016, at 12.15 pm

St Francis Church

St James Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, 8 May 2016, at 12.15 pm

Plant Sale

Saturday, 14 May 2016, 12 noon – 3 pm

St James Church Centre

Christian Aid Week 15 – 21 May 2016

Cowley Festival of Christmas Trees 2016

Planning Meeting, Friday, 20 May 2016 at 9.30 am

St James Church Centre

History of Cowley – Series of 4 talks:

6 April, 11 May, 8 June and 6 July 2016

6.45 pm for 7 – 8.30 pm

St James Church Centre

£5.00 an evening

In aid of St James Old School

**DO NOT FORGET – Tuesday Lunches at St James
Church Centre from 12.30 pm**

PLANT OF THE MONTH—HAZEL CATKINS

You may notice that I have named the hazel catkin as the plant of the month rather than the flower of the month. This is because the hazel is such an interesting shrub with lots to tell. It is usually at the end of January or beginning of February that we find the pretty yellow “lamb’s tails” catkins blowing in the wind. They are laden with pollen and are, in fact, the male flowers of the shrub. The female flowers which eventually provide us with the nuts in autumn are much less easy to spot. They are like tiny buds from which shoot bright red bristles. These are waiting for the pollen shaken from the catkins to alight on them thus pollinating them. Since there are few insects about at this time of the year the hazel is wholly dependent on the spring breezes.

The hazel bush was one of the first bushes to establish itself after the last Ice Age over 6,000 years ago. Because of the flexibility of the wands which are achieved by coppicing, man has used them for at least 4,000 years for hurdles, wattle woven panels in building and twisted pegs for

thatching, a use still favoured by thatches today. Most gardeners will tell you that the wands make excellent pea and bean sticks.



The other fine product of the hazel is its seeds, the nuts. They became the staple diet of early hunter-gatherers. In Celtic legend they are always an emblem of concentrated wisdom. There are many legends from all over the country concerning the hazel including its use for tally sticks. A notch would be cut in a wand as evidence of money owed (a bit like a credit card) and even as late as the 1980s the custom was maintained by one pub in the Chilterns instead of the usual “slate” system.

One thing is certain, though. As soon as we find the long yellow catkins on our local hazel bushes we can be sure spring is on its way.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting is planned for Sunday, 17 April 2016, at 12.15 pm at St James Church Centre when it is hoped that church members will attend.

The meeting will be advertised before the meeting so details will be available in both churches and the Church Centre to remind you of this date.

At this time, Church Wardens and PCC members are appointed. Church Wardens are elected for one year, but at the last APCM the decision was taken that PCC members should stand down after a period of 3 years, and that a rolling system should be set up to allow this. So some members will step down this year but may stand for re-election, along with any new nominees. More details will be available at the time the meeting is advertised.

What happens when things go wrong?

What happens when things go wrong? We muddle through and try and do so with good spirit. The Church is a community and what it means to be a member of a community is to be supportive. Sometimes we get the wrong music on the CD player for the hymns that were chosen for the service, sometimes we get the correct music for the hymns, but the wrong version, one that doesn't scan with the words in "The Source" hymn book. We usually find a way and no-one complains. Nor do we need to as we are all there truly for the same purpose, to worship God and to allow the Spirit to work in us to help us live better lives bit by bit.

On the subject of getting things wrong I am also guilty of making a few errors here and there. There have been times when I was asked to do the intercessions and as I had written them with a great deal of zeal under the influence of a bit too much coffee, I couldn't read my own handwriting and had to improvise on the spot. Strangely enough, during the peace, congregation members thanked me for the prayers and said how good they were. It's amazing how these things happen.

On another occasion, I had written up my intercessions, neatly and tidily this time, but had neglected to get an early night on the Saturday due to some social gathering I had been to. I was overtired and just as the previously mentioned error was caused by too much coffee, the error on this particular case was caused by too little, as I was rather sleepy and tripped up over my words. But once again, during the peace I got a few congratulations from the congregation about how good things were. Skye told me once that the most important thing about our Church was just turning up, and that seems to be the case

as, so long as we are there and we at least put in some effort, things somehow manage to go swimmingly.

On another occasion the person who was rostered to do the intercessions hadn't turned up and Norah approached me and asked whether I could do them. A piece of paper and a pen suddenly materialised out of thin air and I got busy scanning Google on my mobile phone for relevant Anglican prayers for the day. I also checked my Bible application on my phone for any Psalms that could be useful. In between the fluster of standing up, singing and sitting down at the various stages of the service I worked hard to create the best intercessions I could in the time. Then Ta Da! My time came and I went up to the lectern with my newly written intercessions in my hand.

Remembering my training in Toastmasters I remained as calm as I could and proceeded to deliver the prayers pausing in a calm manner. "Your intercessions were great, does it get easier with time?" I was asked over tea after the service.

All you have to do is turn up and do the best you can and then, by some miracle, things seem to go according to plan.

Nick Dewey

At a dinner party an elderly lady waited for a lull in the conversation and then asked "Have I told you about my delightful grandchildren?" The young man opposite her replied "No, you haven't, and we are truly grateful".

Put Saturday 14th May in your diaries!

Our annual Plant Sale is happening again in 2016. This year the timing is different, starting at 12 noon and finishing at 3pm. Because the Film Club is taking place on Friday 13th, we shall not be able to set up on the previous evening so we will have to come in early on the Saturday to get ready for 12 noon start. I am hoping that we shall have all the usual attractions, apart from plants, such as a raffle and preserves, homemade cakes, refreshments and bric-a-brac on sale. All items are very welcome and needed to add to the stalls. Have you any other ideas to add? We are fund-raising for parish funds. I am also hoping that we shall have lots of helpers to staff

all the attractions. Your breakfast bacon butties are on me if you are here early!

The main point of the sale is, of course, plants. Can you pot on any plants from a crowded patch or do extra pots of seedlings? I know that by the week before the sale, I am aiming for my greenhouse, shed and garden to be full of stuff that I will be growing on.

Please tell your family, friends and neighbours about the Plant Sale and encourage them to come along and get some bargains. Now, where did I put that banner.....?

Joan Coleman

OXFORD YOUTH WORKS

One of the missions which Cowley Parish supports in its annual Mission Giving is Oxford Youth Works. Founded 27 years ago, OYW works among young people in Oxford helping them to reach their full potential as children of God. Its small team of part time staff work in many secondary schools in Oxford, including Oxford Spires Academy, St Gregory's and Cheney Schools. The JOY community is a regular gathering of young people, which currently meets in Cowley. OYW has an Annual Celebration, open to everyone interested in their work, and an opportunity to meet their staff, eat pancakes, and find out more about what OYW does. This year it will be at Richard Benson Hall at St Mary and St John, Cowley Road from 6pm to 8 pm on Shrove Tuesday 9 February. You are warmly invited to be there!! There are some leaflets about this and the work of OYW at the back of the church. For more info see www.oxfordyouthworks.co.uk

Tony Beetham

Prayers from the Ark

By Carmen Bernos de Gasztold
Translated from the French and with a
Foreword and Epilogue by Rumer Godden

THE PRAYER OF THE OWL

Dust and ashes!

Lord,

I am nothing but dust and ashes,
except for these two riding lights
that blink gently in the night,
colour of moons,
and hung on the hook of my beak.
It is not, Lord, that I hate Your light.
I wail because I cannot understand it,
enemy of the creatures of darkness
who pillage Your crops.

My hoo-hoo-hooooo
startles a depth of tears in every heart.

Dear God,

one day,
will it wake Your pity?

AMEN

News from Durham

To my wonderful church family back in Cowley!
Greetings from the wintry North! Even though I am not there I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new team rector, I will continue to pray for you as you settle in in Cowley.

I continue to work for the NHS 3 days per week for the Durham Community Team for people with learning disabilities. This job is such a blessing and gives me resources and time to be able to spend time working for Kings Church Durham as part of the Anchor Community (A community of Christians seeking to live intentionally to love each other and our neighbours, tell people about the gospel and facilitate the growth of Christian community on Sherburn Road in Durham). We have been very blessed to be offered two further properties from the local housing association at reasonable rent for a further six male volunteers to live and volunteer on our estate. This has greatly increased our capacity to reach out to people on our estate, and has provided the well needed volunteers for the youth group and outreach events that happen.

It has been a busy few months with new volunteers joining in with our community. It is such a privilege to share life with people on our estate however, we all too often encounter the really tough stuff of life on our doorstep; domestic violence, drug addiction, crime, unemployment, isolation and loneliness, battles with mental health and poor physical health. We long to see God's Kingdom come into the lives of our friends and neighbours whom we get to share a community with. There is so much opportunity and potential and it often feels like there are not enough hours in the day. I have been challenged recently that if we are serious about evangelism, serious and seeing God's Kingdom come it has to start in the ordinary, mundane tasks of life and sharing our everyday with those around us. I have been reading 1 Thessalonians 2: 7 - 8 which says "Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well." This has spurred us on recently to be intentional, to share our joys and struggles and let others see how Jesus is working in us, even when that means being vulnerable or letting others see where we are weak so that God would be glorified.

Last week I was worried that I had not spent enough time "planning outreach events" or sending emails, that day I resolved to just pray that God would use my trip to Tesco to build his kingdom. I took a walking route I would not usually take and God lead me to encounter a number of people who I got to chat to, hear about their lives and offer to pray. This was humbling for me, and made me remember that it is about the ordinary and mundane, keeping our eyes open, making space amongst the demands of life to listen to the Holy Spirit (something I really need practice in!).

We have had some wonderful stories coming from our youth group of kids (who don't have a church background) asking about Jesus and who he is. Some young people have started coming to church. We have set up a women's bible study in our home, this has been really slow and difficult to get going but amazingly we now have a steady trickle of women coming along and we are reading Johns gospel together. Two ladies are coming off heroin and it is wonderful to be able to come alongside them and pray.

Prayer Points: If you are able we would greatly value your prayers in the following areas:

- For the Tuesday Youth Group that is developing, for energy and commitment to the young people, for opportunities to share our faith in Jesus.
- For the women's bible study in our home that God would use this as a space for discipleship and transformation (for all of us!) and that more women would come along.
- For the young unemployed lads on our estate. At present we are struggling to engage them, please pray that we would be able to share Gods love with them.
- For the elderly and isolated - we are in the process of setting up a community lunch club, please pray for the funding required for this and that it would be a place where people encounter Gods love.

Finally Dan and I are getting married on 30th April in Durham so if anyone is in or around Durham on that date please do come and join us for the ceremony at 1pm, Elvet Methodist Church!

Much love and blessings
Kim

EARTHQUAKE BUILDS BRIDGE

No you did not misread the title to this article! Earthquakes very often destroy vital bridges and cut off communities from one another. This was especially true in Nepal when a massive earthquake hit the country last April. So many roads and bridges were destroyed that much of the relief supplies had to travel by helicopter. But this earthquake also built a very special bridge.

Immediately after the earthquake struck on 25 April 2015 the Faith2Share offices in Cowley were contacted by our partner organisations in Nepal. Our first concern was to discover whether the leaders we knew there, who have become good friends, were safe (which they were) but their first concern was to work out how they could reach those most in need - to bring medical supplies, food, shelter and encouragement. On motorcycles, in rented trucks, and often by walking for several days people like Tek Prasad (far right of picture) have spent the past ten months reaching out to those most in need. Our newspapers and TV soon forgot that there had been an earthquake in Nepal but the lives of individuals and communities there will take years to repair and Faith2Share partners are working for the long term.

But what about this special bridge? I refer to the strong bridge that has been built between Christians and Muslims. As they travelled the country

distributing relief supplies, Tek's team came across a minority Muslim community who had suffered a lot in the earthquake. (Muslims are a very small and neglected minority in this majority Hindu country.) Bringing supplies from churches in more affluent parts of the country this team of Christian workers decided to adopt the local Muslim school and help them rebuild their community. The picture here shows Tek and one of his colleagues greeting two of the Muslim school teachers.

So out of a dreadful situation, an earthquake that killed 8,000 and injured 21,000 people, has come a new bridge connecting Christians and Muslims so they can rebuild their country together. Even out of tragedy God brings new life and possibilities!

Mark Oxbrow (Faith2Share)



SAINSBURYS ACTIVE KIDS

As in past years we will be collecting vouchers for 'Seashells' and 'Little Stars'. Boxes for their collection will be in both churches (or you can give them straight to me MM). Start date is 27th January 2016 and the closing date will be 3rd May 2016 - every one counts.

Many thanks.

May Morgan

HYMN OF THE MONTH

My Song is Love Unknown by Samuel Crossman (1624 – 83)

My song is love unknown
My saviour's love to me.
Love to the loveless shown
That they might lovely be.
O, who am I
That for my sake
My Lord should take
Frail flesh and die?

The rediscovery in the twentieth century of verses by seventeenth century writers has produced a rich harvest of hymns. These moving words by Samuel Crossman do not sound old fashioned as they have a personal touch to them which is very appealing. The whole hymn runs to seven quite long verses which can be found in most hymn books. It is an ideal hymn for Lent or Easter and it has a fascinating history.

Samuel Crossman was an Anglican clergyman who spent most of his life attached to Bristol Cathedral where he eventually became Dean just a few months before his death. Born in Suffolk and educated at Cambridge University, he had a good pedigree. The verses of this hymn first appeared in a small pamphlet entitled "The Young Man's Meditation" in 1644. 'My Song is Love Unknown' does not appear in any hymn collections in the eighteenth or the first half of the 19th Century. It was not until Crossman's words were married with the tune 'Love Unknown' by John Ireland that the hymn achieved widespread popularity. The music edition of the new 'Songs of Praise' asked John if he could supply a tune to Crossman's words. The story goes that tune and melody was composed in a quarter of an hour written on a scrap of paper, and what a brilliant tune it is. Keep singing it.

John Shreeve

COWLEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Tuesday 16 February 2016 at 8.00pm

TALK

Pirates, Pressgangs and Smugglers—
the Dark Side of the London Docks

An illustrated talk by Colin Oakes

At United Reformed Church, Temple Road, Cowley
Annual Membership fee £18 (OAP £16)
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RECIPES

There is nothing like a quick and easy dessert to round off a nice meal on a winter's day so we have found a couple using the microwave to entice you this month.



Cherry Cheesecake

(serves 4, setting high on your microwave)

Use a basic crumb case suitable for the microwave.
NOT METAL of course.

Ingredients:

1lb cream cheese
2 eggs
4 ozs caster sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
½ pt sour cream
½ teaspoon vanilla essence
Large can cherry pie filling
5 fl ozs double cream (whipped)

For crumb case base:

3 ozs butter
8 ozs digestive biscuits (crushed to crumbs)
1 ½ ozs brown sugar
1 oz chopped nuts (optional)

Melt the butter for 40-45 seconds in crumb case
Add crumbs, sugar and nuts. Mix well
Press mixture against the base and sides of crumb case with back of a spoon.
Stand dish on an inverted plate and cook for 30 seconds. Turn the dish and cook for another 45 seconds.
Allow to cool.

Beat the cheese till it is smooth
Whisk the eggs and 3 ozs of the sugar until they thicken. Add to the cheese with the lemon juice.

Pour the mixture into the cold crumb case and cook for 6 minutes.

Mix together the sour cream, vanilla essence and the rest of the sugar and pour over the cheese mixture. Cook for a further 6 minutes (after 3 minutes spread the mixture across to ensure it cooks properly).

Cool and place in the fridge. Top the cake with the cherry pie mix and decorate with the whipped cream.

Poached Brandied Peaches

(Serves 4 – setting on microwave – High)

4 fresh peaches
4 tablespoons brandy
2 tablespoons orange juice
1 tablespoon caster sugar
3 teaspoons mincemeat
Brandy butter or whipped cream for serving.

Place the peaches in a bowl of boiling water for a few minutes to loosen their skins – then peel them. Cut them in halves and remove the stones. Take a tiny slice off the rounded half to stop them wobbling about.

Put the peaches hollow side down in a shallow dish. The ones on the outside need to be moved to the middle half-way through the cooking time

Mix together the brandy, orange juice and sugar and pour over the peaches. Cover and cook on high power for 3 minutes.

Remove from oven, turn them over to hollow side up. Fill the hollow (where the stone was) with a little mincemeat.

Return to the oven for another 1 ½ minutes. Serve individually with the juice spooned over and with whipped cream or brandy butter – yum!

Rosanne interviews Kathy Newman

By contrast with the last person we featured in the Chronicle who has lived in Cowley for simply a few months, our February interviewee has been resident here for almost sixty-two years. Kathy and her husband, Maurice, moved into their house on the Cowley airfield estate in 1954 with their three small children even before the road had been surfaced. Those readers who have not heard the expression "airfield estate" will need to know that it is that area at the bottom end of Bartholomew Road where it connects with Barns Road just before it crosses the bridge into Blackbird Leys. The housing development sprang up after the Second World War once the airfield for damaged aircraft repair had closed down.

However, back to Kathy and her long and eventful life. Now it is my guess that many of you will say, "Kathy who?" and not recollect ever having met her. Have you ever been to a parish party either at the Church Centre or at St Francis? Have you ever enjoyed a slice of Simnel cake at church on Mothering Sunday? Have you ever stood at the hatch at after-church coffee time and noticed some gorgeous fruit cake? Yes? Well you may not have met Kathy but you have certainly enjoyed some of the wonderful cakes she bakes for our pleasure. She is what I have nicknamed an "Eight-o'clocker". You see she worships at St James every Sunday, come rain or shine, at the early service. Many of the St James' congregation will

recognise the name Albie Logan who is regularly on our prayer list. Albie is one of Kathy's much cherished great grandchildren, especially so as he and his parents have struggled with the little boy's disability since his birth.

Kathy was born in Farmoor, near Eynsham. She told me about the hard life her mother had in her early days as her father died quite young and she was left to bring up an older half-daughter and her own three daughters. She worked as a cleaner and also as a cook at Hill End Camp. Their home was one of a row of disused army huts which had been erected during World War Two. Kathy described their small home which was kept scrupulously clean, neat and cosy in the winter. Every Sunday the little family attended the small tin church a walk away from home, and the children went to Sunday School in the afternoon. The three sisters would in the evening have their weekly bath in a tin tub and then came their Sunday treat. Their mother would sit them down, all warm and clean, and read Charles Dickens' stories to them. Kathy remembers them all, the sad parts (tears) and the jolly parts (laughter) with much affection.

At the age of five our little girl was off to primary school in Cumnor village on the school bus. She told me she was "a bit of a mischief" but made lots of friends. She was told that her handwriting was particularly neat so she took pride in this and

won an award (copper plate with a dip-in-pen of course).

After primary school it was off to Botley to a bigger secondary. Kathy liked the headmaster at the school who she describes as a nice man. He made the rest of her school days very pleasurable. She enjoyed life as she became a little older because she liked to "mother" the little ones.

Leaving school at fourteen it was time to find a job. In Farmoor village she got to know the man who was Head Postmaster at the Central Post Office in St Aldates. He offered her a post as a girl probationer. She and her young colleagues were required to collect telegrams as they arrived at headquarters and dispatch them via the telegram boys on their bikes. This she did until she was sixteen when she was put forward to train as a telephonist. Unfortunately she failed the test as she had hearing problems.

The Co-op bakery in Henry Road in Botley was where she took her next job. Her first task as an apprentice was to roll out the pastry for the Eccles cakes. She had only been there a few weeks when she met a young man, newly demobilised from the navy after the war. Maurice was a Co-op milkman. If not quite love at first sight it did not take long for twenty-two year old Maurice to fix a date with seventeen year old Kathy. That date like so many others was a trip to the Super cinema in Magdalen Street, Oxford. Just before her 18th birthday she married her handsome ex-sailor

in Cumnor Church and they began their married life living in another of those ex-army prefabs in Farmoor. There they stayed until after their three children were born, David, Barbara and Barry.

Kathy remembers her in-laws with affection especially her father-in-law, a salvation army man, who would take her to the Whitehouse Ground to support Oxford City Football Club. The council offered them a council house in Cowley and so they jumped at the chance especially as it gave Kathy the chance to return to work for BT at the Post Office. Always a regular churchgoer she began attending St Luke's Church and David, her eldest son, joined the choir there. Her daughter, Barbara, whilst still a child fell a victim to polio and it was while she was being treated at the Slade Hospital that one of the health visitors persuaded Kathy to worship, with her, at St Ebbes. However, she gravitated back to her parish church and she and Maurice renewed their marriage vows at St James on their 25th anniversary with Father Edward Walker and on their Golden Wedding with Father Stephen Hartley. Now as I mentioned at the beginning she is a regular member of St James' congregation. She told me, "If I don't go to church it's not my Sunday".

Although always careful that her children were properly looked after, Kathy has worked all her life mainly in the domestic domain and did not retire until she was seventy-four after sixteen years at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre. She is a proud mother, grandmother and

great grandmother of a large family and is ready and willing to support them all in any way she can. Maurice, her much loved husband is now ninety-one, still full of life (he was tackling a big cross-word puzzle when I arrived to talk to Kathy) and makes a very good cuppa! They managed to buy their council house and have done all sorts of things to make it a larger and cosy home. They have a large allotment at the rear of their garden and Maurice still grows many of their own vegetables. They are a lovely couple and the perfect people to write about in this romantic month of February. Let's thank Kathy for her lovely cakes and wish her and Maurice a very happy Valentine's Day

How would you describe yourself as a child?

Sometimes rebellious. I was the oldest of three so I had to be responsible for the younger ones. I used to say, "I'm not taking them with me all the time!"

Have you any special childhood memories you would like to share?

I liked to visit my grandmother, Sarah, who lived at the bottom of our garden. She would always listen to me and she was always kind.

Has there been anyone in your life who has had a strong influence on you?

If anyone it would be my headmaster at Botley school because he would talk to me.

Has your faith been with you from an early age?

My mum instilled faith in me. When things go wrong and hurt you an awful lot you lose your faith but when you realise that those things had to happen anyway your faith comes back.

Do you have a treasured possession?

I would be lost without my wedding ring.

What is your opinion of today's world?

Understanding the world as it is today and coping with what is expected of us is not always possible. We cannot always accept all the things happening in the world.

Which period of your adult life gave you the most satisfaction?

I think when Mum tried to make life as easy as possible for me and teach me how to cope with things when I was young.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

I like to watch wildlife TV programmes and I enjoy "Father Dowling". The best stories have to have happy endings. I like to knit but my hands prevent me at the moment. I love swimming and shopping because I like to buy nice clothes.

What plans do you have for the future?

Just trying to be a nice kind lady and help others.

At the end of our interview Kathy asked me to add that at St James she was welcomed warmly and treated kindly and she would like to pay tribute to the nice friendly people in the church.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Britty, Britty, Bang, Bang by Hugh Dennis published by Headline Publishing Group in paperback in 2014

This book is described as “One man’s attempt to understand his country” and is very funny. It is a perfect antidote to cold, grey February days when a cosy armchair in a warm room with a chuckle or two is just what is needed.

Hugh Dennis is a regular comedian on various television programmes but do not be misled, he is a very intelligent person and this book is full of fascinating facts and figures about Britain past and present. He was inspired to write his book buoyed up by the amazing success of Britain in the 2012 Olympics. He says that he has always thought it was very difficult to know how to feel about being British.

He examines what it is to be an island nation, our fascination with gardens, the weather, animals and sport (our successes and failures). He also writes very interestingly on our democracy and also the hundreds of inventions and discoveries we have given to the world. All this is done with wit and affection and I have no hesitation in recommending this book as a jolly good read.

Rosanne Butler

NEWS FROM ST FRANCIS

At a recent Worship Committee meeting we took a good look back at our Christmas programme, and came to the conclusion that things had gone well and according to plan. Our Christmas Carol Service had the best attendance over several past years. Our Christingle Service had benefitted from being part of our mainstream Sunday morning services. Our open house Christmas morning breakfast had attracted several new faces, which was a good thing. The Christmas Service itself was a warm and happy family occasion enjoyed by all present.

We are now looking at the New Year of 2016 and starting to think ahead.

By contrast we have not done so well with our observance of Epiphany. Our church seems to be undecided as to how to best celebrate this time, and in the end did nothing special. We are not alone in this, more’s the pity.

The refurbishment of our church kitchen is now very close. It commences in early February. It

will be good to see this completed after our long wait.



We have been pleased to welcome our new Team Rector, Geoff, on a couple of occasions now, and have been charmed by his warm and friendly character and musical ability.

Our Team Vicar, Skye, is spending three weeks in Croatia at present, as part of her ministry training. She is on a special mission to the Roma community with a particular commitment to the women there. We miss her and wish her every success and a safe return.

Lent will be early this year, and we look forward to a joint Lent Course across the parish. Social events for the New Year are still in the planning stage.

John Shreeve

GARDENING HELP NEEDED AT ST JAMES CHURCH/CHURCH CENTRE



A NEW YEAR PRESENT FOR THE PARISH

Would you like to buy (or help to buy) a most needed New Year gift for the Parish? You see her old lawn mower has finally gone to God's garden in heaven and she will seriously need a replacement in the spring. At the moment she has not budgeted for a new one and she is going to look a bit untidy and neglected if her grass grows long and straggly especially round her Church Centre. As we do not want people to say that she is going to seed we wondered if any of our kind readers might like to come to her rescue.

Dave Stanley is the person to speak to if you can help. He is one of the Church Wardens in the Parish and cares deeply about keeping things neat and tidy.

St Francis CE Primary Update

We have had a positive start to the spring term and things here are as busy as ever. We have continued to develop the way we are using the space we have, particularly the shared spaces. Our prayer space is now firmly embedded in the school environment and we welcome Rev Skye's input each term to develop an interesting prayer theme. The current theme is peace and thinking about people suffering in countries currently experiencing conflict.

Our new assessment system is a big feature of our school improvement work this year and teachers and support staff are working hard to implement this across the school. The focus is on the on-going teacher assessment of reading, writing and maths with greater involvement from the pupils themselves to monitor the progress they are making and identify next steps.

In terms of the curriculum we are continuing to develop year two of our story-telling cycle. Next week we will be celebrating Safer Internet Day with a focus on staying safe online and making the internet a

better place. We will also be running an information stand for parents before and after school.

Our Y5 Kingfishers class have been involved in an exciting drama project this year which culminated in two performances at Pegasus theatre last week. Here is the perspective of one Y5 child:

On the 28th of January Kingfishers class (Year 5) performed Tale Trail at Pegasus theatre with 5 other schools. In November, tutors from Pegasus theatre Allan and Euton came to St Francis Primary School and taught pupils the play The Water of Life. We learnt how to perform freeze frames and other things such as new dances. Personally I think it was amazing. Allan and Euton spent lots of time with us and did a fantastic job working with us. It was thoroughly enjoyable and as we walked off the stage the audience's applause was deafening. All of the parents were very proud.

Alexa Bell aged 9. St Francis School, Kingfishers Class

A new season awaits!

After a couple of months of our garden being open to all and sundry, the fence at the bottom has finally been erected. We now have a clear border about six feet deep which the laurel hedge had been hiding. I know that it will be full of roots and bindweed as well as some bramble and a hop so some digging out will be needed.

[Other Half's job] No doubt I may have to resort to weed killer too to get rid of it all once growth appears.

We need to make sense of the edge which was made with large stones. They need tidying up and some extra ones added. Luckily we have a pile of rocks that we found when making our side border.

Within the next month, before spring growth happens, I want to plant some fruit trees. The end fence is in full sun facing south so I do want to have a go at growing an espalier nectarine. I have got enough room for two apples, an eater and a cooker and I also want to plant a Victoria plum and a damson tree. Underneath the fruit I want to have wildflowers and other flowers for nectar and seed to attract bees, butterflies and birds. Of course, there will be spring bulbs aplenty, to be planted in the autumn.

Unfortunately, as the fence is close-boarded, we could only have one opening at one end for any hedgehogs, though I have not seen one for a long time. One of my Christmas presents is a hedgehog home. This will be installed near the opening and covered with logs as a retreat. I was also given an insect hotel. Once I get my borrowed drill back, I intend to make some more to stick all around the garden.

So I have got a lot of jobs to do in the garden and I have made a list of others that need to be done in the next few weeks. The list includes cutting

down the Buddleia to encourage new growth and flowers to attract bees and butterflies. There's a lot of cutting! This includes pruning the wisteria to a couple of buds for flower growth and, on the allotment plot, cutting the autumn raspberries down to the ground. The raspberries also need some sulphate of potash sprinkled and mulch to cover around the roots. The summer fruiting types need last year's canes removed but not new growth made last year as they will bear the raspberries for this summer.

The ground is too wet to dig at the moment. It's the time to go shopping for shallot and onion sets and seed potatoes. Spuds will be chitting in trays near the window in the loft and I will again start my onions and shallots off in modules in the green house, but not quite yet. My seed packets are in a shoe box waiting but I have started sowing using my little electric propagator.

I am looking forward to the new season and getting ready for this year's Plant Sale. Are you? The date now is definite and is Saturday May 14th and starting at 12 noon to finish at 3pm. Please note the later time.

Joan Coleman

Do you think that if the three wise men had been three wise women they would have used a sat-nav, arrived much earlier, given the stable a good clean through, made a nice cuppa for Mary and Joseph and brought some more practical gifts? So do I!!

SAINT OF THE MONTH—Gilbert of Sempringham

The saint this month is not only remarkable for all the innovative projects which he undertook but mainly because he is reputed to have lived for 106 years. Since he lived in eleventh and twelfth century England at a time of religious turmoil that has to be something special. It would be very special even today.

Gilbert was the son of a Norman knight so was born into quite a privileged family. Interestingly his mother was Anglo-Saxon which, again was fairly unusual. He was born with a slight physical deformity (though The Oxford Dictionary of Saints does not specify what this was) and so was unable to follow his father into the chivalry of knighthood. Instead he was sent to France to study to become a cleric. He excelled at his studies. He returned to the family home and started a school for both boys and girls in Sempringham. His father's demesne was there and also at West Torrington in Lincolnshire. Although Gilbert was not yet ordained his father gave him charge over the churches in these two villages. He appointed a vicar to conduct services although he, himself, set up residence in Sempringham vicarage and lived a devout life in poverty. He devoted his time to teaching in his school and working in his two parishes.

He came to the attention of the Bishop of Lincoln, Robert Bloet, who offered him the position of his household clerk. When Robert died a year later Gilbert (who was probably doing an efficient job) was invited to stay at his post. He lived a life of devotion to the church and of poverty and diverted all his salary to support the poor of West Torrington. Alexander, the new bishop of Lincoln, ordained Gilbert and offered him a rich living as an archdeacon. He refused and returned to West Torrington as their priest. By this time his father had died so Gilbert became priest and squire of the two villages.

Amongst his parishioners at the time were seven devout young women who expressed the desire to become nuns so Gilbert built them a house next to the church and set up their convent in the spirit of St Benedict. The emphasis was on devotion and

seclusion within the cloisters. To help the sisters in their new lives, on the advice of the first abbot of Rievaulx, Gilbert added some lay sisters to their community. The Order spread becoming so successful that the sisters needed help to run the convent so Gilbert sent a group of lay brothers to work in their gardens, grounds and kitchens. It was obvious that some kind of government was needed and after a few set-backs The Institutes of the Order of Sempringham was established and the Pope made Gilbert its Master.

Not a person to be set in his ways Gilbert travelled throughout Lincolnshire and Yorkshire ministering mainly to the poor but also took to helping with building projects, making furniture and in his spare time copying books! His order became known as the Gilbertines.

Because in 1164 he and his brothers helped Thomas of Canterbury to escape to the continent away from the displeasure of Henry II, Gilbert incurred the anger of the King. Thomas escaped from Henry's officers by dressing as one of Gilbert's lay brothers and hid in one of their houses in the Lincolnshire fens before turning back in his tracks to Kent. Gilbert did not hide from the fact that he supported Thomas à Becket and was summoned into the King's presence. Having put his case he and his brothers obtained a pardon and all went smoothly until Gilbert had almost reached his ninetieth year.

Two skilled craftsmen amongst the order started a rebellion on the grounds that they were expected to work too hard and allocated too little food. These men went to Rome with their grievances. However, Gilbert was supported by the Pope though it was suggested that a more generous food allowance and more comfortable clothes might help. It did.

In his very old age Gilbert lost his sight but, having handed over charge of the order to his successor, he remained cheerful in spirit and devoted to his faith until the end. He died on 4th February 1189 and was buried in the village of Sempringham which he had considered his home all his life. His feast day is marked on 4th February.

Mothers Union

The January branch meeting was our Annual General Meeting and was very well attended. The annual report was read and approved and is now ready to be forwarded to the Diocese. Likewise, the balance sheet for the year was examined and approved. The committee was reappointed as follows:

May Morgan, Administration

Rosanne Butler, Treasurer

Betty Canterbury

John Shreeve

Marlene Shreeve

A welcome was extended to Geoff, our new Rector, and his wife Mary who are both now Cowley

branch members. Also we were pleased to welcome three visitors who are considering the possibility of joining the membership next year.

Members were reminded that annual subscriptions are now due. They have increased to £25 for a single member and £42 for a joint membership.

As usual a fund-raising bring and buy stall was held which resulted in nearly £25 towards branch funds.

The February meeting will, as usual, be an afternoon of preparation for the Women's World Day of Prayer.

Cowley Team Ministry Lent Course

'The Nail' by Bishop Stephen Cottrell

One course lots of opportunities

Venues:

Mondays 8 pm.
The Rectory, Beauchamp Lane
Contact Geoff (01865) 778596

Tuesdays at 2.30pm.
The Ranklin Room, St. James Church
Centre Contact (01865) 778377

Wednesdays at 7.30pm.
Annesley Rd. Contact
markoxbrow@aol.com (01865) 461953

Thursdays at 10.00am
The Ranklin Room, St. James Church
Centre Contact (01865) 453257

Fridays at 10.00am
The Ranklin Room, St. James Church
Centre Contact (01865) 770923

- A reading from the Bible
- A reflection on Easter through the eyes of one of the people in the Easter story
- A short prayer

10 February to 24 March 2016

Lent is a brilliant time to learn a bit more about Jesus & the Christian faith. It is also a wonderful time to get to know people and grow in friendship.

Lent 2016 *More details on our*

www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Installation of Solar Panels

Some of you may have noticed we have installed an array of solar panels via I.Q. Energy on the St James Church Centre roof. In fact there are 39 panels and it has taken 2 years in the planning before coming to fruition. We just managed to get it in at the end of 2015 when the Government were due to halve the feed in tariffs!

So now we can make use of the sun's energy to generate electricity and over time perhaps 7 years we should have paid off our investment and receive an income. We benefit from a feed in tariff, an export tariff, an offset in electricity used at a given time while it is generating and also the hot water tank can be heated from any excess! The system cost £14,000 but this has come from a capital account that could only be used on the Church Centre which is separate from our scarce Church funds. So far over a month of dull grey weather we have generated 180kw but we expect this to increase a lot over the spring and summer.

We will keep you informed from time to time to let you know how it is doing.

Dave Stanley
Churchwarden



Sleeping Beauty at Florence Park Community Centre

Another triumph for the Florence Park players with their second pantomime, a very enthusiastic performance with an equal enthusiasm from the audience. The cast played their parts with talent, from the very expressive wicked fairy played by Jenny Yeong, and her talking cat, Steve Barry, the Dame played by Jon Flint and the King, Rob Earl to Sleeping Beauty herself played by Kara Young and her dashing prince Stella Bell. The whole cast thoroughly enjoyed themselves and it was a delight to watch. The musicians rounded off the performance with very appropriate music. If you didn't see it you missed a good show.

Sheila Tree

CHRONICLE

Editorial Team- Rosanne Butler, Sally Hemsworth, May Morgan, Nicki Stevens

Deadline for the next edition:

Wednesday 24 February 2016

If possible, please send entries by email to Sally at chronicle@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

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ELECTORAL ROLL

It is that time of year when we review the Parish electoral roll, confirming current membership, removing names of any folk who have moved or sadly passed away and adding active new members. It is also the opportunity to check that all the contact details you have given us, which are held securely, are still current: mobile numbers and e-mail addresses particularly have a habit of changing!

The formal notice (form SG2) about the revision of the roll will be posted in both churches and St James Church Centre on Sunday 14 February, which is two months before the annual Parish meeting on Sunday 17 April.

The roll should represent those who attend either of our churches on a regular basis and/or contribute financially or with their time or talents to the life of the Parish; it is a 'membership' list of those who truly love and actively support Cowley Parish, St James and/or St Francis church, in whatever ways they can.

If you have newly arrived with us during the past twelve months and wish to make this statement of belonging, or have been here for a while but never until now committed, please take an electoral roll form from the table behind the main door (St James), in the lobby (St Francis) or contact Lesley Williams, Electoral Roll Officer.

Return the form to the labelled box or direct to Lesley Williams at St James church or posted to 9 Wykeham Crescent, OX4 3SD by Sunday 20 March (Palm Sunday).

The revised roll will be displayed for checking from Sunday 27 March (Easter Day) and corrections may be made up to the time of the APCM but no new names may be added until the end of the meeting.

Questions about the process should be addressed to Lesley, Sally Hemsworth, Geoff or Skye.

Here is the official bit which we have to announce: under the Church Representation Rules you are entitled to have your name entered on the roll if you: (1) are baptised and are aged 16 or over and (2) have signed a form of application for enrolment. Anyone who will turn 16 during the year March 2016 - February 2017 may complete a form now and be added to the roll after their birthday.

Additionally you must be (1) either a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with the Church of England and (2) be resident in the parish or, if living outside the parish, have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to the application for enrolment.

Lesley Williams
Parish of Cowley -
Electoral Roll Officer

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Last month you may remember that I showed the Vicar's Letter from January 1893, and now that the work to copy all 1893/1894 Cowley Magazines has been completed, I thought I would begin a series of the Vicar's Letters and other items from that period. I am sure that many people will find these interesting. Most of these articles were written by George "Georgie" Moore who was the vicar at that time, but I will begin this month with the Bishop's Letter which appeared in February 1893.

Les Hemsworth

COWLEY CHURCH & HOME MAGAZINE

February 1893

PASTORAL LETTER FOR 1893

The Palace, Cuddesdon, Oxford, January 1893

My Dear Friend,

This year I have, for the second time, to ask the contributions of your parish for the *Diocesan Church Building Society*. Whilst we congratulate ourselves on the amount of work which has been done in this direction during the last three years, and are thankful for the large improvements which have been made by individual benefactors, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that, in more retired villages of the Diocese, a very considerable number of Churches for which much money will be required before they can be rescued from risk of dilapidation, and be made more fit for divine worship than they are at present.

I must repeat that new Churches are already necessary in some of the parishes, in which, owing to the development in business, population is increasing. What, however, is of the most importance to me to urge at this moment, is that the reserve or invested funds of the Society are so nearly exhausted that I must ask not only for increased offertories but that you will make a direct application to your richer neighbours for special contributions.

It is now many years since the last great effort was made for this object, and I feel strongly that the time has come for the Society to be once more in a position to meet the accruing demands without the painful necessity of having to reduce its rate of grant.

I am, yours faithfully,
W. OXON.

A small boy thanked his uncle very much for the harmonica he gave him for Christmas declaring it the best present he'd ever had. When asked how he was getting on in learning to play it his uncle was told that he got 50p a day from his mum for not playing it in the daytime and £5 a week from his Dad for putting it in a drawer every evening.

COWLEY FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS TREES 2015

The twelve days of Christmas

Thanks again to everyone who was involved in another highly successful festival with some special highlights: we loved *all* the music but the young people excelled. The Blackbird Leys string band opened the festival for us on the first Saturday morning; Oxybaroxy and the Witney Youth Choir were superb in the Saturday evening concert.... and then we had the bonus of a 'pop up join in and sing' event on the second Saturday afternoon when Emily Marshall skilfully persuaded all sorts of people who thought they were only there to watch/listen that they were all members of the choir! She leads several groups around Oxford and will be back again at St James!

Because of a double booking, we had to move the Fun Day into the church – and realised that 'Fun in the pews' is an exciting concept which we will develop.

Templars Square management were very supportive with PR, media coverage and the provision of 6 real trees – and they want to sustain the relationship. 7 new groups contributed trees. The '12 days' interpretations were variously beautiful, inspiring and wacky. 'The twelve days of Cowley Christmas' by the Cowley Church Community was especially witty:

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me:

Twelve	Minis driving
Eleven	Silver Band-ers piping
Ten	Lord Nuffields leaping
Nine	Condors cycling
Eight	punters drinking
Seven	Original Swans a-swimming
Six	pool sharks playing
Five	number five bus from Blackbird Leys
Four	discount stores
Three	Florence Park playgrounds
Two	Jolly Postboys
And	a partridge in the Ark T!

We hope you enjoy some comments reported by our Santa Claus, George Hedges of ROSY

For those who like data:

Results - facts and figures:

Trees: 2014: 39 2015: 52

Visitors 2014: 794 2015: 800

Money (*figures rounded*):

Income: 2014: £1,892 2015: £2,528
included £800 sponsorship

Expenditure (*not covered by the Parish and personal donations*):

2014: £320 2015: £176

Donations to SeeSaw & ROSY each	2012:	£ 350
	2013:	£ 500
	2014:	£ 750
	2015:	£1,000

Additional donation to the Children's Society for the closing Christingle service: £100

COWLEY FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS 2016 will be Friday 9 – Saturday 17 December on the theme of pantomime/

Targets for 2016: £1,100 for each charity - 60 trees – 1,000 visitors

The first full planning meeting is on Friday 20 May, 9.30 - join the team!

Lesley Williams 07982 429 828 ctf@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

From George Hedges *alias Santa Claus*

Comments made to Father Christmas at the craft fair and the fun day.

Child 1: "I left you some money last year - what did you do with it?"

Father Christmas: "I purchased some food for my reindeer"

Child: "That's OK then."

Child 2: "Why are Father Christmases so fat?"

Child 3:

Father Christmas: "Do you have a list of presents you would like"

Child: "Yes"

Father Christmas: "How many presents do you have on the list?"

Child: "9, but mummy said I would be lucky to get past 2"

Child 4: "Mummy said I have to be good if I want anything from Father Christmas"

Father Christmas "And are you being good?"

Child: "I don't know, I will have to ask mummy"

DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICES

Aspire Oxford operates the Dial-a-Ride services in Oxford City on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council.

The elderly people who use Dial-a-Ride have asked that we tell our readers about the fact that the service needs new regular passengers. It really is a case of use it or lose it. If they can recruit more people to use the service regularly there is a distinct possibility that another vehicle could be put into the service thus giving more flexibility and scope for the journeys.

Being a Film Extra—Continuity and Comfort

The “downside” of being a film extra is the word “continuity”. It happens that a scene filmed in the summer, wearing a chiffon scarf for warmth doesn’t quite have the same impact when filming the follow-on scene in the midst of winter, again being kept warm with a chiffon scarf. Thinking of one’s own comfort when accepting a job are the words, the weather – inside/outside – sitting down! In other words, sitting down e.g. in a theatre in the warm is preferred to “walking up and down in a force 9 gale”.

Weddings are the favourite. I was considered to be a friend of the family in Downton Abbey and was, consequently, costumed as an eccentric aunt to attend Lady Mary’s wedding. I was given a lovely mustard period coat and an ancient fur stole which insisted on



moulting whenever I moved. You could see the hairs rising in the light of the sun shining through the windows every time I moved. The gentleman next to me wasn’t at all pleased, every few minutes the costume man had to “sticky tape” the offending hairs off his jacket.

The Kings Speech was an outside scene. We were supposed to meet at a prestigious building off Oxford Street but the caretaker forgot to set his alarm. One of our security men found a window open, climbed in, and opened the doors. As we all filed in the alarm went off and within minutes we were surrounded by flashing blue lights and sirens. No-one could turn the alarm off so the decision was made to walk round the corner to the film set building where Colin Firth comes out to go to the Palace to be informed he will be the next King. Upon arrival, an embarrassed A.D. (Assistant Director) directed us to a hastily set-up holding area in the basement. Embarrassed be-

cause it turned out that it was a private lap-dancing club with poles and a jacuzzi, but we ladies thought it was hilarious. After getting into costume we walked out into a dreadful storm of wind and rain. The young girl playing a nanny, like me, drew the short straw and ended up pushing a pram and was nearly blown out into the road but we had to stand there pretending



it was a lovely summer day as CF came out and climbed into the royal limo. If you still pause the scene, you can see me peering nosily into the car.

Adverts are another favourite, they’re usually short days. Filming a certain crisp advert, with an ex-footballer (who shall be nameless!) I was amused to see the props man opening multiple packets onto a table and picking out identical sized crisps for “continuity” (that word again) filming. Another time I had to take a computer for a walk in the park. I held a near invisible-to-the-camera fishing line, threw a ball and ran pulling the computer behind me while an off-set crew members barked. You soon get used to funny looks by members of the public!

Finally, with the weather theme, was the TV production of “Churchill, the Gathering Storm”. I played one of Churchill’s secretaries. Whilst sitting down at breakfast, in walked Ronnie Barker who was playing the butler. RB was a local boy who lived in Church Cowley Road and went to Donnington School. When I explained I was helping to compile a book on Florence Park, he sat down to have breakfast at our table and he kept us in absolute stitches with his jokes, some of which we had heard before but it’s the telling that counts. A true gentleman and comedian.

Sue Hallett

REAL EASTER EGGS from the Meaningful Chocolate Company

The production of the Real Easter Egg has moved to Banbury: it is now a truly Oxfordshire egg!

The Real Easter Egg is still the only Fairtrade egg with a copy of the Easter story in each box: this year it is a fold out in the shape of a cross. There is also a charitable donation for every 150g egg sold. Nearly £200,000 has now been donated from sales. Buying any of the eggs supports farmers and producers in the developing world by using Fairtrade chocolate.

In Cowley, we will again be supplying the eggs to order: it is still only £3.99 for the Real Easter egg (125g) featuring a redesigned box which shows the 3 crosses, the Easter story booklet and a 'Yummy bar' (25g) with a 10p donation to Traidcraft Exchange.

Also available are a dark chocolate Real Easter Egg (165g) for £5.50, with dark chocolate squares (15g) and the Easter story; and a £9.99 special edition egg (200g) with an olive wood holding cross key-ring made in Bethlehem, the Easter story, and an orange milk chocolate bar (80g).

Plus there is a Super Sharing Box containing 30 x 20g Midi eggs and 30 of the Easter story costing £30. The foil reads 'Christ is Risen'.

We will also have the eggs available at £1 per egg.

An order form is available in both churches and St James Centre – deadline Sunday 21 February.

The egg that shares the Easter story

Dark (RRP £5.50)
An egg made from premium dark Fairtrade chocolate (165g) with dark chocolate squares (15g) and a cross shaped Easter story.

Original (RRP £3.99)
A fresh new redesign. Includes the Easter story in the shape of a cross, a high quality milk chocolate egg (125g) and Yummy Bar (25g). Charity donation to Traidcraft Exchange from every egg sold.

Special Edition (RRP £9.99)
Contains a high quality milk chocolate egg (200g), an olive wood holding cross keyring from Bethlehem, a pull out Easter story and an orange milk chocolate bar (80g). This egg is not available in Tesco this year.

Out of the 80 million chocolate Easter Eggs sold each year, The Real Easter Egg is the only Fairtrade one with the Easter story in the box.

Buy a Real Easter Egg now
www.realeasteregg.co.uk

Easter story in the shape of a cross illustrated by Helen Cann and included in Original, Dark and Special Edition eggs.

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Some provisional dates and times for Easter Events:

Do please check times and details on our web site and notice sheets as we get closer to Easter

20 March Palm Sunday

St James 4 pm (TBC) Churches together Palm Sunday Procession

24 March Maundy Thursday

St James Centre 7 pm Maundy Thursday meal and reflections

25 March Good Friday

St James Centre 10 am till 11 am Good Friday Family Reflection and Crafts

St James 12 noon till 2 pm Prayers at the Cross

St Francis 4.00pm

26 March Easter Saturday Easter Eve - Sunset is at 6.27pm

St James 7 pm Lighting of the Easter candle, and redressing the Altar. With soup, song and Hot dogs

St Francis 8 pm Service of light

27 March SUNDAY EASTER DAY

St James 8 am Traditional Language

St James 10 am FAMILY EUCHARIST

St Francis 10.30 am FAMILY EUCHARIST

St James 1.45 pm Asian Anglican Living Church: Followed by a time of fellowship in the Church Centre



You are invited to a
Good Friday Family Reflection and Crafts
On Good Friday, 3rd April 2015
At 10am
at the St James Centre, Beauchamp Lane

Everyone is welcome to join us- but we ask that all children are accompanied by an adult
For further information please contact Revd Geoff Bayliss on 01865 778596 or
rector@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

TALKING SPACE

Help with anxiety and depression

Free NHS talking therapies for people in Oxfordshire

Most of us have times when we find life difficult: we may struggle to cope with daily routines, become easily upset, have trouble sleeping, feel alone, get panicky, stop enjoying things or feel low. TalkingSpace offers you the chance to help yourself to cope with life's ups and downs, feel better and learn your own strategies for keeping well.

For more information:

Telephone: 01865 901222

Email: (general enquiries) talkingspace@nhs.net

Web: www.talkingspaceoxfordshire.org

Leaflets are available in the churches and the Church Centre

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES OLD SCHOOL

Membership of the Friends is rising slowly: we hope there will be a surge following two features in the Memory Lane section of the Oxford Mail on Mondays February 1 and 8. The group is planning fundraising activities – the first is sponsorship of a square foot (or more) of the horribly ugly exposed end wall of the building – we are going to improve it by stripping away the loose material and covering it over with masonry paint – possibly later to add a picture of the school. There are 3 sections of wall, each approximately 80 square feet. Sponsor forms are available for you to make a donation to 'own' one or more of them! You may also offer to come and help us do the work in half term - Monday 15 February, 9.00 – weather permitting.

Then Rosanne Butler will be repeating her fascinating series of 4 talks on the history of Cowley, once a month later in the spring, with refreshments and hopefully a display of artefacts from the Oxfordshire History Centre. Book the dates now – Wednesdays, April 6, May 11, June 8, July 6. 6.45pm for 7.00-8.30 pm £5 per evening. *More details next month*

We are also following up the William Morris/Lord Nuffield connection, researching grants and making contact with New River Retail, the company planning to develop Templars Square, to talk about their community involvement.

£3,200 + VAT is needed for urgent stonework repairs and £30,000 to repair the roof. The hope remains for the development of the 2 and 3 year old Nursery provision for Church Cowley St James School but maddeningly the government capital funding for 2 year old provision, on which we are depending, has been frozen.

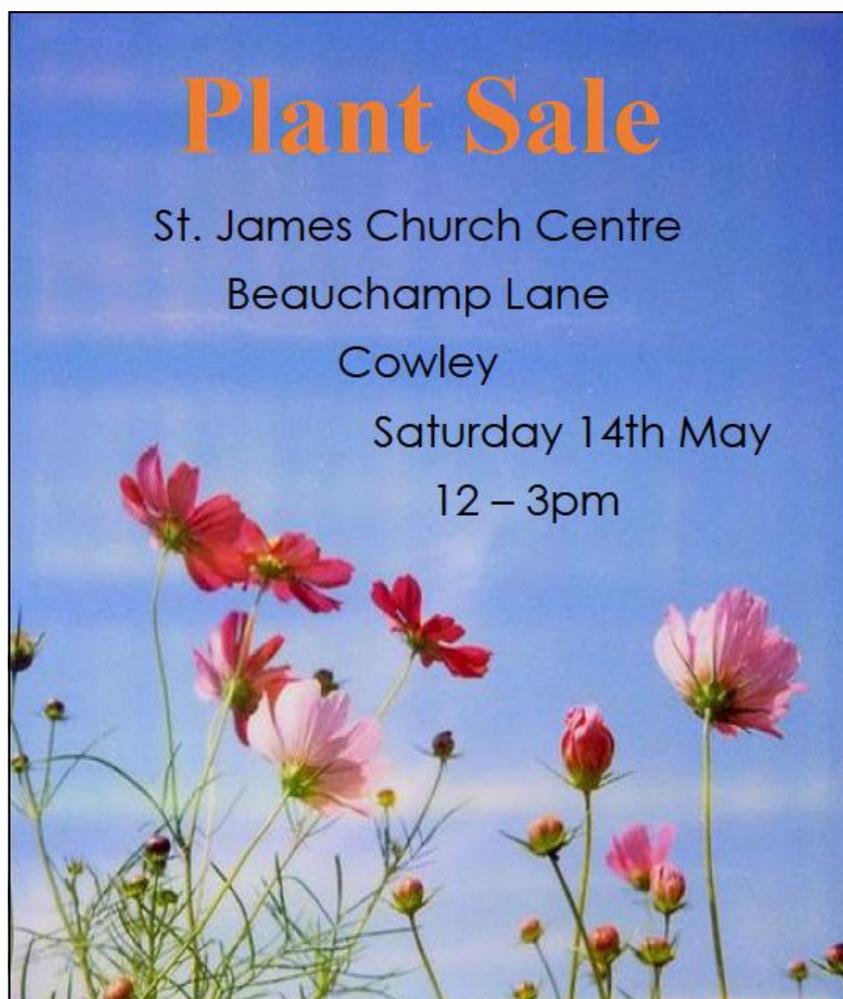
Please: Pick up a leaflet and registration form in St James Church or Centre

See and like us on facebook – it is a public group page
www.facebook.com/Friends of St James Old School, Cowley

E-mail us :

oldschoolcowley@gmail.com

Lesley Williams



LOCAL CHURCHES

St. Thomas the Martyr (C. of E.), Becket Street, Oxford

A Christian Church has stood on this site for over 1000 years, and this church is dedicated to St. Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1170 as a Christian Martyr.

The parish clergy also serve in the Parish of St. Barnabas, Jericho.



CHRISTIAN AID: OVER THE EDGE, SUPER SOUP LUNCH, CHRISTIAN AID WEEK, QUIZ AID

This is the annual alert to the possibilities of getting involved in our Christian Aid fundraising in 2016, with our usual £2,000 target.

1. Those who like physical challenges could again go 'over the edge' and abseil from the tower of St Mary Magdalen Church, Magdalen Street, Oxford, OX1 3AE on Saturday 12 March.

Abseils run all day with participants assigned their own time slot. It costs £15 to register and you are asked to raise a minimum sponsorship of £100. You have to be 11 years old to take part but there's no upper age limit! Lesley Williams will just have to enjoy her annual abseil 'fix' but would love to do it this year as part of a Parish team - who will join her?

She/we will be seeking sponsorship

Register on line at christianaid.org.uk/abseil or call 01865 246 818 or email oxford@christian-aid.org

Incidentally, a photo of Lesley's 'look, no hands!' photo from last year features on the Christian Aid Facebook posting about the event

2. There will as usual be a Super Soup lunch immediately prior to the APCM on Sunday 17 April.
3. And then there is Christian Aid Week, May 15-21, when we are likely to be collecting door to door as usual but there may also be something new: a Big Brekkie! when we invite all and sundry to come and enjoy a full strength breakfast. Please mark the week in your diary
4. Finally we hope to fit in a Quiz Aid evening in June/July – if there's time.

Extracts from the Cowley Neighbourhood Newsletter, Thames Valley Police, January 2016

Local Priorities

The priorities for the area change regularly depending on emerging crime patterns. Currently the priorities for the area are as follows:

- ◆ Vehicle Crime (vandalism and theft)
- ◆ Shoplifting

Have your say

We conduct Police Surgeries as and when they are required. So far there are none scheduled for this month. We also are happy to respond to questions posed by the community and will answer if we are able.

Lye Valley Burglaries

In December we saw an increase in Burglaries in the Lye Valley area of Oxford. It was a problem experienced by our colleagues in Wood Farm as well. The local CID office took up the investigation leaving us to focus on crime prevention and attempts to catch the perpetrators in the act by patrolling the area.

In November and December we saw burglary figures nearly double in this area. There is always an anticipated increase in Burglary around this

time of year although it can never be predicted where. Crime figures have resumed now to what they were pre-November.

Thames Valley Police charged three people with burglaries in Cowley between November and January. In comparison in the whole of Oxford twenty-two people were charged with burglary during the same period.

Crime Prevention

We completed a crime prevention event at the end of December at Templar's Shopping Centre. Templar's kindly allowed us the use of a table in the centre and over five hundred crime prevention packs were handed out.

We will be holding another bike marking event for all the bikes that have been purchased over the Christmas period. The event will be held outside Halfords on the Templar's Retail Park on Saturday, 05 March 2016 from 10am to 2pm. If you are unable to attend you can register your bike for free at www.immobilise.com, all you need is your frame number of your bike which you can usually locate between the pedals of your bike.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year the format for the Women's World Day of Prayer Service has been compiled by the women of Cuba. The theme is "Receive Children, Receive Me".

In our area the hosts for 2016 are the women of the Blessed Dominic Barberi in Littlemore. The service will be held in their lovely church on 4th March at 2.30 pm. Members from our churches will be taking part in the service. As in former years the service is not simply FOR women, men are very welcome, but it is ABOUT the women of the world and the issues politically, socially and spiritually which affect them.

The service will be followed by a tea party to which everyone is invited. We have been asked to point out that the church has plenty of parking space. There is also a bus-stop for the Minchery Farm bus immediately outside the church.

Watch out for posters in both St James and St Francis churches to remind you of the date and time.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ST JAMES CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Eucharist
1.45pm Anglican Asian Living Church
Sunday Lunch – the date varies so watch for notices

ST FRANCIS CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30am Parish Eucharist
2nd Sunday All Age bring n/share lunch

MID-WEEK SERVICES & MEETINGS

Monday	10.00-11.30am	Little Stars Playgroup— St Francis
	2.30pm	Parish Mothers' Union— St James (3rd Monday)
Tuesday	10.00am	Seashells Toddler Group— St James
	12.00pm	Eucharist—St James
	12.30pm	Tuesday Lunch Club— St James
Thursday	2-4pm	Prayer Space—St Francis
	7.00pm	Cowley Parish Healing Service St Francis (1st Thursday)
Friday	2.00pm	Bingo—St James

HOME GROUPS

Leader	Time/Venue
Connie Uren	Alternate Tuesday afternoons at 2.30pm St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Friends of St Francis (John Shreeve)	2nd & 4th Tuesday afternoons at 2.30pm St Francis Church
Mark Oxbrow	Alternate Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm Mark's home, 13 Annesley Road (just behind the Rose Hill Coop). Enquiries to Mark at 01865 461953
Rosanne Butler	Alternate Thursday mornings at 10.00am St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Catherine / William Hartley	Thursdays at 8.00pm, Catherine Hartley 07792 104448 William Hartley 07751 939092
Joel Denno	Thursday at 7.45pm at The Vicarage, Don Bosco Close
Helen Beetham	Alternate Friday mornings at 10am St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room

The Parish Office in St James Church
Centre is open:

Tuesday, 2—5pm
Wednesday, 10—1pm
Friday, 9—2pm

The Parish Office is currently staffed by
volunteers and members of the ministry
team.

Contact details: Tel: 01865 747680
Email: office@cowleyteamministry.co.uk
Out of hours tel: 07501 908378
Website: www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Team Rector:

The Revd Canon Geoffrey Bayliss
Tel: 01865 747680 (o) 01865 778596 (h)
Email: rector@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Team Vicar:

Revd Skye Denno
Tel: 01865 434160 Mobile: 07720 768684
Email: skye@cowleyteamministry.co.uk
Skye has Wednesday as her day off.

Self-supporting Ministers

Revd Richard Chand
01865 701948
Email: richard@richardwchand@outlook.com

Revd Canon Mark Oxbrow
01865 461953
Email: markoxbrow@aol.com

Revd Tony Beetham
Tel: 01865 770923
Email: tonybeetham1@supanet.com

Churchwardens:

David Stanley Tel: 776602
Norah Shallow Tel: 765199

Deputy Wardens

Margaret Martin Tel: 718532
John Shreeve Tel: 717987

St James Church Centre Manager:

Chris Woodman Tel: 778078

Hall Bookings:

Church Centre: Pat Sansom Tel: 778516
St Francis Church/St James Church:
through Parish Office

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