

Believing , Belonging...but is there a third B?

For you, is being a Christian about believing or belonging? Believing in Christ, or Belonging to the church, the Christian community? For most Christians it's about both/and, not either/or. At baptism, one emphasis is about believing and having faith in Christ. But it is also made clear that you are not baptised into a solitary existence as a believer on your own, that you are also part of a bigger Christian family, the church. Belonging to that community is not an optional extra, but an essential part of your life as a believer!

So Believing and Belonging, which comes first? There are those who contend that belief comes first, that conversion of life is the starting point for inclusion in the community of faith. Others prefer to see belonging as the starting point, that if people are welcomed unconditionally into the church community, then they will feel safe enough to enquire about the precepts of faith and make their own faith journey as they feel accepted by others.

I think that the chicken and egg question of which comes first, believing or belonging, will differ between Christians. Both are inherent parts of our faith journey, but which comes first will vary, and does not really matter. Sometimes I meet Christians who first experienced believing and belonging 10. 20. 30 or more years ago. That leads me to ask a further question: what has happened since? They feel they "arrived" all those years ago and therefore there is nothing more they need to do, but sit back and enjoy the ride. But as well as believing and belonging, is there a third initial letter B that follows?

I would like to suggest another B to go with Believing and Belonging! I recently attended a Conference at Swanwick where one speaker was Barbara Glasson, a Methodist minister who has worked in both Liverpool and Bradford founding churches which are very different from the norm. They have been described as a 'bread church', as bread making together has been a key part of their coming together and worshipping God together. It included lesbian, gay and transgendered Christians, the disabled and those dealing with trauma, alcoholism and abuse – not your average Sunday church congregation! A very different way of being church. Barbara stressed that this wasn't necessarily right for every church – we don't all have to become bread makers, but we do have to be ready to become different. We are not called to be a preservation society to keep everything unchanged in our personal or church community life.

At the end of July, the annual patronal festival service took place in St James Church – many of you were there. I gather that some people said "it's not like it was 30 years ago" - perhaps with some nostalgia, wishing it was and could remain like that! As the service progressed, I could not help reflect how different it would have been 30 years ago. The Eucharist was now celebrated by our Team Vicar, Skye Denno – a woman priest and Richard Chand, pastor of the Anglican Asian Living Church, a church whose liturgy reflects a different culture, Punjabi speaking. Even the tea in the Church Centre after the service reflected that, with spicy Asian food side by side with very English scones, strawberry jam and cream. Some

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people stuck to what they saw as their own sort of food: others tucked into both!! Examples of a church becoming very different from 30 years ago.

For a church, as for individual believers, the process of becoming different is not always totally painless. We often prefer what we already know and are comfortable with. There is a tendency to cling to that.

We can become nostalgic for the past. I enjoy a bit of nostalgia about steam railways, and last month I made a trip to the Severn Valley Railway. I enjoyed travelling on steam trains as they were 50/60/70 years ago. But I wouldn't want to see all trains today from Oxford to London, which are now diesel, but soon to be electrified, go back to steam haulage! And I think that the church cannot remain rooted in the past – we aren't called to be a Preservation Society. We need to be open to becoming different. As a parish,

Cowley awaits the arrival of a new Team Rector later this year. I have no inside knowledge of what changes that may bring, but are we always open to becoming church in ways that may be different?

The church is not called to be a Preservation Society, but open to new ways of being church. Are we as individuals, as those who already Believe and Belong, also open to Becoming different? Not locked into old ways of doing things; not driven by nostalgia for the past; but open to the possibility of change and Becoming different? That is a challenge for us as individuals and as a church.

Tony

PS. I see there is another 3rd B, suggested in the Diocese of Oxford leaflet "Christianity A Simple Guide". Free copies available at the back of church! Do have a look.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Fall of Giants by Ken Follett

I love a good book and always welcome our regular contributions to our book review column. I deliberately have resisted offering my choice of book as readers hear enough from me month-by-month. However, I have been longing to recommend this book since I read it earlier this year so here is my "book of the month":

It is described as Book One of "The Century" trilogy. The second book has not yet been published but will cover the years deep into the twentieth century. Book One spans the years from 1911 to 1924 and is truly a novel of the amazing changes in British and world social history between those dates. It tracks the fortunes of five families brought together across the divide of social classes through the world-shaking events of the time. We are led through the Russian Revolution, the First World War, the struggle for women's votes and into the insecurities of the 1920s. The characters are well-rounded and really credible. The relationships are typical of their era and leave one wanting to learn more about them.

One small warning (please don't let this put you off) the book has 850 pages and even the paper-back version is heavy to hold. Despite this I think it is a book for everyone. Superbly written, through thorough research, and one not to be missed.

Rosanne Butler

Editor's Letter

Dear Readers

In my opinion our excellent gardening correspondent Joan Coleman writes her monthly article to such a high standard that I firmly believe that she could write for any "posh" gardening magazine you care to mention. What is so lovely is that she does not only write about horticultural issues but she puts them all into practice. All this preamble is so that I can congratulate her on her four first prizes in the Elder Stubbs vegetable show. Well done, Joan. By the way, by the sound of it she could win an award in the Oxford in Bloom competition for her back garden, don't you think?

Joan mentions bees in her article this month, and we have had lots amongst our flowers this year. David Lord has assured me that his bees can reach my garden from his hives which makes the pots of honey we bought from him all the nicer. However, I am referring now to the Bs that Tony has written about in his letter on the front page. I have been trying to work out whether I am a Bee-longer or a Bee-liever or even Bee-coming a different sort of Christian. I suspect a bit of each. I do know, though, that our churches will be buzzing with very "busy bees" getting on with all the things we have planned for the coming autumn.

When compiling your Chronicle each month Sally and I often regret that we do not have a cartoon to include. Have we got a talented cartoonist out there who would possibly give us a jolly little contribution from time-to-time?

I wonder if you will recognise the blackberry bounce recipe that we published a couple of years ago? I make no apologies for repeating it as it is really gorgeous and bottled up would keep until Christmas. Post-Christmas dinner or even

to accompany Christmas pud dessert I think you'd love it.

Talking of Christmas, and we are, the planning process for our Christmas Tree Festival is upon us. Those of us preparing for our pre-Christmas Market have already started. Doesn't the year fly by?

Several people have quizzed me about the huge earth-shifting activities which have been happening on the Church Cowley St James Primary School field. I am hoping the head teacher will give you all the details in the near future. What I can tell you, though, is that a beautiful artificial turf surface is being laid thus eliminating the problem of a muddy, flooded field. Throughout the worst winter weather the children are often confined indoors. Because they enjoy their fresh air, now play-time and PE lessons can go ahead throughout the year.

Many of us are also intrigued about the proposed new plans for the development of Templars Square. I found the sketchy plans with which we were presented recently confusing so I am hoping to persuade one of our local councillors to explain in lay-man terms what is happening. Watch this space!

Before the Chronicle reaches you next month our Queen will become the longest reigning monarch Britain has ever had. It is quite a privilege to mark this date in the history of the British Isles so I for one will be raising a glass to her – cheers!

I hope you have all had a restful and interesting summer and are up to the exciting times ahead of us in our Parish.

God bless.

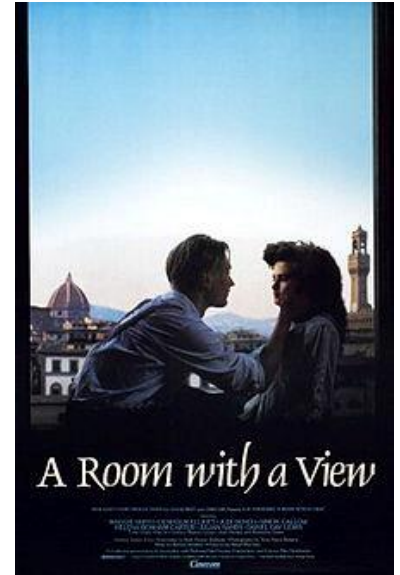
Rosanne

Film Club at the Centre

Although the August film was extraordinarily long and had a sad ending it was very well received by members (we are quite used to a sad ending!) As ever a substantial sum of generous donations added up to a £50 profit for parish funds even though our audience was a little depleted mainly due to summer holidays.

The film to be shown on September 11th is sure to be popular as it features two of our favourite stars, Judi Dench and Maggie Smith. Alongside them are the delectable Helena Bonham-Carter and the dashing Daniel Day Lewis. "A Room with a View" is a British production set in Florence and the English countryside. Adapted from the E M Forster's classic novel the film is the winner of three Academy Awards.

The September club night will see the end of three full years of films at the Centre. Not that we intend to stop – not at all – in fact our October meeting will be our third birthday celebration. We have three vacancies in our potentially 50-strong membership so we would be pleased to welcome anyone who feels they would like to join us.



More news from Church Cowley St James C E Primary School

Following the success of last year's production, the children in Years 4 and 5 were faced with a huge challenge in this year's performance. Having been inspired by the touring production starring Lloyd Daniels, which they saw at High Wycombe, the pupils were motivated to transform into their characters from the musical 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat'. After three gruelling months of tireless rehearsals, learning lines and perfecting their acting skills, the children performed for an audience of over one hundred children and then two evening performances for over two hundred parents. The rehearsals and final performances took place at The Oxford Spires Academy, which was kindly lent to us. It was truly wonderful to see so many talented and confident children stepping outside of their comfort zone and embarking on a huge challenge.

We continue to look into the old school site as a possibility for the school to secure further teaching space and increase our provision. In the meantime we are using the old school site playground to grow fruit and vegetables for the children to eat. We have, along with the children, built, filled and planted over 50 raised beds and now year 3 are tending the site daily to produce wonderful organic produce.

Please contact us on office.3210@church-cowley-st-james.oxon.sch.uk for more details and I really look forward to inviting you over the threshold, into the delight and vibrant school of Church Cowley St James Church of England Primary School.

Steve Dew
Head teacher

News from the Bell Tower

There has been very little service ringing at Cowley over the summer as most of our ringers have been having a well-earned holiday. Those of us who have been around have been busy ringing though. We were approached by Marston to ask if we would consider changing our practice night to a Friday while their bells were being re hung, and consequently have had a good turn-out of ringers each Friday from Cowley, Marston, St Giles and Headington. It has also been the height of the wedding season, and ringers have all been helping each other out at different towers to make sure all weddings are covered. A visiting band rang at Cowley on Saturday 14th May, ringing a full peal, which took roughly three hours. When I turned up to lock up after they had finished I commented on how tired they must be, to be told they were a bit – but that was because they had also rung a full peal in the morning as well. I don't think I'd have the stamina or the concentration. A quarter peal, which lasts about 45 minutes is my limit.

There has been a full summer programme of outings and training for keen ringers. Last Saturday we rang at Islip and Kidlington, both eight bell towers, and with very contrasting bells, Islip bells are very light whereas Kidlington have the heaviest bells in the Oxford branch, with the tenor weighing about a tonne. Ten of us went on a trip to Essex, arranged by Adrian, a Wolvercote ringer, who had learned to ring there. It was a long day, but worth it for the variety of different bells, and the beautiful countryside and villages, not to mention a very good pub lunch. We also had a training session at Horspath. One of the ringers (aged 14), and

already more advanced than I am ever likely to be, decided to set his camera up to film the bells as we rang. We were lucky he did, as he noticed a crack in a stay and a missing bolt. Ringing went ahead, but with only the really experienced ringers on the affected bell. The stay is the piece of wood that acts as a block to the bell swinging around full circle if you over-pull your rope. If this happens the first the ringer knows is that there's often a loud crack, and the rope goes shooting up in the air. If the ringer doesn't let go in time, they can end up looking like one of the monks from the TV advert!

We hope to start ringing for services again from next Sunday, as most of our ringers will be back from their holidays by then. It will be good for us to get some service ringing practice in before it is time to welcome our new Rector in November. As ever, if you think you would like to come along and find out more, please give me a ring on 01865 777486, or come and say hello on a Sunday morning. Our practice night will be changing back to Thursday once Marston bells are back. At present it is usually Friday 7.30 – 9pm and we welcome visitors to come and see what we do and have a chat, but do check first as it's not every week.

Lindsay Powell

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DIARY DATES TO REMEMBER

Mothers' Union

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

St James Church Centre

Women's Institute

Usually the monthly Meeting 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)

Film Club

Friday, 11 September 2015 - "A Room with a View"
St James Church Centre,
commencing at 6.30pm with coffee and cake

Harvest Festival at St James

Service at 10 am on 20 September 2014, with lunch
at 12.30 pm at St James Church Centre

St James Café

Saturday, 26 September 2015 from 10 – 1 pm

St James Church Centre

In aid of Macmillan Cancer Support

Harvest Festival at St Francis

Service 10.30 am with shared parish lunch to follow
27 September 2015

Friends of St James Old School – Saturday, 5 September

Committee meeting: 10.00 am (Ranklin Room)

Open meeting: 11.00 am (main hall)

Cowley Festival of Christmas Trees 2015 - Plan- ning Meeting

Friday, 11 September 2015, 09.30 am in the Ranklin
Room, St James Church Centre

Open Doors/Ride 'n Stride

12th September 2015 – at St Francis and St James
Churches

Mothers' Union Wine, Cheese and Poetry Evening

Friday, 2 October 2015, from 7pm

St James Church Centre

St Francis Patronal Day

Sunday, 4 October 2015

Christmas Gift and Craft Fair

14 November 2015, 10 am to 2 pm

St James Church Centre

Installation of New Team Rector,

Rev Geoffrey Bayliss

Thursday, 26 November 2015, at 7.30 pm

St James Church

DO NOT FORGET – Tuesday Lunches at St James

Church Centre from 12.30 pm

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES OLD SCHOOL

Saturday, 5 September 2015

Open meeting: 11.00-11.30 for the former
Steering Group and anyone wishing to hear
about progress and discuss ideas.

Allotment garden visit: 11.30-1.00 for all who
would like to be amazed at its creation and
productivity – and encourage the school staff
and child gardeners.

Membership forms for the 'Friends' will be
available – annual subscription £10 single, £20
family. We hope to sign up many former
students and staff – and all interested local
residents.

FLOWER OF THE MONTH—SWEET PEA

If you grow these beautiful fragrant garden flowers you will know that the more you pick them the longer they will continue to bloom. So it is my guess that we could find sweet peas flowering in Cowley in September.

The plant is obviously of the pea family but there is one important difference between our flower and the edible vegetable in that the seeds in the pods of sweet peas are poisonous. The Greek botanical name for the pea genus is lathyrus – and the medical term to describe sweet pea poisoning is lathyrism. The consequences of this include convulsions, paralysis of the legs and unconsciousness. The sweet pea rejoices in the Greek name lathyrus odoratus or fragrant pea.

Compared with many of the flowers we have considered the sweet pea is a relative new comer to our gardens. A Sicilian monk, Father Franciscus Cupani described it in a book of horticulture which was published in 1697. Two years later he sent some seeds to a friend of his in England. This friend, Dr Robert Uvedale, was headmaster of Enfield Grammar School. He was, alongside his work in education, a “very methodical and curious” botanist. He was particularly keen on cultivating hot-house specimens and rare exotics. He was one of the earliest cultivators of these in Britain to the extent that he had seven hot-houses built in the grounds of his school! One of his treasures was a myrtle bush which he had cut into the shape of a chair. On receiving his sweet pea seeds he began to cultivate them under glass-house conditions but eventually discovered them to be perfectly happy in outside beds.

Those first specimens were rather small and predominantly purple though beautifully scented. The flowers soon reached horticulturists in Paris and it was there that the famous botanical artist, Redouté, illustrated them. Eventually seeds crossed the Atlantic and reached the flower beds of the President of America, Thomas Jefferson.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the flower growers of the world had begun to select bigger blooms, cross-breeding was in full swing

and frilly flowers with a variety of colours had been developed. At the famous Crystal Palace Exhibition in 1851 264 varieties were on show to delight visitors amongst which were Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. The Victorians had a romantic attachment to fragrant flowers and so sweet peas became fashionable from the gardens of cottages right up to the grounds of royal palaces.

The early gardener of the (then) Earl Spencer, a former relative of Princess Diana, bred the first sweet peas with frilled petals. His name was Silas Cole and he named his new hybrid Countess Spencer. As the flowers grew larger and more varied in colour they became less fragrant. However when famous authors like Dickens wrote, as he did in “Oliver Twist” that young Oliver’s return to health was thanks to the sweetly scented flowers of a cottage garden, horticulturists realised that such flowers including sweet peas should smell sweet. In modern times breeders have succeeded in producing large frilled varieties with colours from pure white, through yellow, all the shades of pink, red and mauve to the original deep purple of the early specimens, without sacrificing the delicate perfume so much admired back in the seventeenth century.

Sweet peas are easy to grow. Best started off in pots in a warm, light, early spring environment they can then be planted out into the garden when they are about 9-12 inches tall. They need something to support them and look particularly good growing up a wigwam of sticks or an obelisk. If you keep picking the lovely blooms they will oblige you with a long flowering season.



I must put a trip to the Cathedral in my diary

We have been enjoying our new garden border this summer. It is full of colour and of insect visitors, especially bees. I have planted perennials but have filled the gaps with annuals trying to make sure I have simple open flowers for bees to find nectar. At the time of writing, we have lots of cosmos, scabious, sweet peas, morning glories, pansies, asters and cerinthe or honey wort, which the bees love. There are also sunflowers. These are a rusty colour with many heads to a stem and are covered in foraging insects.

I do love dahlias and have three which have flowers the size of dinner plates, sadly lacking nectar for bees, but they are covered in lots of other insects. The roses I bought in June have taken and are putting on new growth with a second flush of flowers coming.

So my wish for lots of colour has certainly come to fruition but is still a "work in progress". What is interesting is that lots of seedlings have appeared, obviously from seeds already in the soil, and also from my home-made compost that was dug in. There is the ubiquitous bind-weed (!) but also the very pretty fumitory, which being a wild plant may also be called a weed but I like it. We also have lots of tomatoes springing up as well as aquilegias, evening primroses, tobacco plants, verbenas, poppies, foxgloves and a single sunflower which is right at the front of the border and already 5 feet high!

Another plant that is everywhere in the garden is the Greater Celandine. It is no relation to the Lesser Celandine, that sparky yellow flower that comes in the spring in damp places and in the buttercup family. The Greater Celandine is in the poppy family and has orange sap. Some sources say that it is a native plant and others say that it was introduced for its medicinal properties. Here is where the cathedral comes in as, apparently, carvings on St. Frideswide's shrine include leaves of the plant. It was, wrongly, associated with curing eye diseases and curing blindness, among other miracles, led to Frideswide's sanctification and so to the inclusion on the tomb. However, the orange sap is still said to get rid of warts. Will

try it!

On the allotment we are having a great year for runner beans. I put up the supporting canes crossing just over half way up to create a X shape. This has worked very well making less congestion at the tops and the beans are hanging down straight.

Predation by slugs meant we only had 4 courgette plants this year but they still are giving us far more courgettes than we can eat. We shall be harvesting our sweet corn soon. (I am writing in the 3rd week of August.)

Last Saturday was the Elder Stubbs Festival. I entered a few classes in the Veg show and got 4 firsts, so not so bad. We were disappointed that not as many entries were made this year. I don't mind not getting any prizes if the room is groaning with produce that will make a good show for people to see.

Joan Coleman



Another Traveller's tale from Canada and USA

In the last edition of Chronicle, Mark told you about his visit to Canmore and Banff and some details of the churches and church life there. I was delighted to be the second Cowley parishioner to visit Howard and Carol for a wonderful week of:

Hikes – two gorges with waterfalls and one mountain with wildflower meadows and a lake in the alpine corrie.



Music - Canmore's three day outdoor folk festival and a piano recital in St George's church given by amazing, young master-class students from the Banff Centre,



Church – a Howard Sunday sermon at St George's-in-the-pines, Banff and a study group at St Michael's using a book called 'Our great exchange – your life, his gifts, our purpose', with the opportunity to participate on line, which I hope to do.

Along with a free street pancake breakfast for Heritage Day, Banff's heritage centre and several art galleries.

There is quite a long list of the local sights and challenges (e.g. cycling Canmore to Banff, which Howard does) which we didn't fit in.



As Mark commented, the mountains are breathtaking – both beautiful and physically

challenging! There are billions of trees and wildflowers everywhere. The only wildlife I saw were cute chipmunks and a distant deer but we hiked equipped with bear spray and this week, the police knocked on the Thornton's door to warn them to stay indoors as a bear had been reported in the area – half an hour later it wandered through their town garden! But no one had a camera to hand.

It was very special to be with Howard, Carol and David in their new setting. They send their greetings and love to all and will offer hospitality to any Cowley folk who can make it – even suggesting I organise a coach trip! With Katy still in London for her final College year, they may well appear occasionally!



I travelled on from Calgary to friends in Buffalo – that included cherished time with my American goddaughter and two great godchildren and yet another (my tenth, I think) visit to Niagara Falls, as stunningly awesome as ever, and a Frank Lloyd Wright trail in the city.

On to Boston and friends in Westford, a little New England town just outside, plus a weekend in their cabin/camp in a forest in Vermont. Billions more trees.

20 days away and so much seen and learned – valued friendships renewed - very blessed! And then, just to cheer my return, concluded with the flight coming in over the London Thames with clear views of Greenwich, the Shard, the Tower, Westminster and the Royal Parks, Kew Gardens – just wonderful!

Lesley Williams



RECIPES

It's blackberrying time again so here are a couple of recipes to use with your fruit – one strictly for grown-ups and one the children will love because of its pretty colour.



Blackberry Bounce

2 pints of strained cooked blackberry juice
8 ozs sugar
10 fluid ozs brandy

Pour the juice into a large saucepan and add the sugar

Stirring with a wooden spoon heat the juice until the sugar has dissolved

Bring to the boil and continue stirring while the juice boils for about 5 minutes

Skim off any scum which might rise to the top

Allow to cool for at least 10 minutes then add the brandy.

Can be served warm or cold.

Blackberry Fool

1 lb blackberries
2 fluid ozs water
4 ozs sugar
10 fluid ozs chilled double cream

Put the berries, water and sugar in a medium sized saucepan. Cover the pan and stew the blackberries for at least 30 minutes.

Rub the mixture through a strainer into a mixing bowl with the back of a wooden spoon

Leave the pulp to cool

Whip the double cream until it just forms peaks

Fold the cream and pulp together, then put into individual serving dishes (large wine glasses look pretty)

Chill in the fridge for at least an hour before serving

FOOTIE IN THE PARK

Hello, I'm off now with my football
I'm going to the park
I mustn't stay too long though
Cos it will soon be dark

You know what mums and dads are
They worry all the time
My mum, she's just warned me,
To be home by half past nine

I wonder if you remember
When you were just a child?
I 'spect that you've forgotten
The time that you went wild

I sometimes hear my parents talk
About things they've done and said
They prob'ly think I'm fast asleep
And tucked up in my bed

But when I do what they do
(Just for a bit of fun)
My dad he goes and catches me
And spansks me on my bum.

Well, now I've stopped to tell you
All my sad tales of woe
I can't go and kick my football
'cause it's got too dark to go.

Maida Simmonds

The vicar and the doctor stood on either side of a very elderly man thought to be almost at the end of life. His wife was standing at the foot of the bed. Everything went very still. "I'm afraid he's gone" said the priest. "Yes, he has" said the doctor. "No, I ain't" murmured the old man feebly sitting up. "Lie down, dear" said his wife, "The doctor and the vicar know best

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

PCC SECRETARY

The Practical Church Management book gives the following definition of the PCC Secretary:

“A PCC secretary has a vital role in helping both the parish priest and the PCC”

“The PCC has a PCC secretary, who deals with the paperwork for all meetings of the PCC. He or she sends out notices, makes sure everyone has the necessary papers, takes notes of the meetings, chases up action afterwards, and generally makes sure that records are properly kept and filed.”

It also lists what the Secretary does – this is what the Practical Church Management book says:

The Secretary:

- ◆ Cares about proper procedure
- ◆ Sends out notices of meetings in good time
- ◆ Makes sure reports are prepared on time
- ◆ Prepares the agenda for the meeting
- ◆ Deals with letters
- ◆ Prepares minutes of the meeting
- ◆ Keeps a check on the parish diary
- ◆ Knows what is going on
- ◆ Acts quietly and efficiently.

He or she should be

- ◆ A good organiser
- ◆ Tidy and methodical
- ◆ Calm and clear-headed
- ◆ Tactful and friendly

I try!

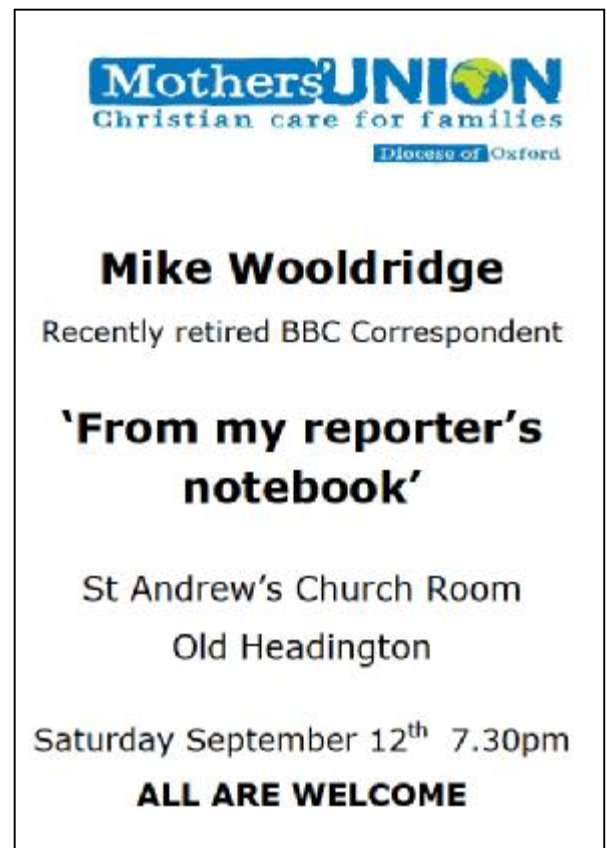
Sally Hemsworth

PARISH OFFICE:

A group of volunteers help with the following duties (these are to assist the Rector, the Team Vicar the Church Wardens, and, indeed, anyone else who need assistance):

May Morgan - May is the Office Manager/Administrator.

- ◆ Buying all office supplies, and ensuring there is always a plentiful supply of stationery and equipment
- ◆ Dealing with post, telephone messages and emails (in the absence of Peter Dewey) ensuring when possible messages are directed to the correct people
- ◆ Producing the weekly prayer list at St James
- ◆ Printing service booklets for St James and St Francis
- ◆ Takes responsibility for keeping the electronic diary up to date
- ◆ Takes responsibility for Church and Centre keys, and undertakes an annual check on all key holders



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Oxford

Mike Wooldridge
Recently retired BBC Correspondent

'From my reporter's notebook'

St Andrew's Church Room
Old Headington

Saturday September 12th 7.30pm
ALL ARE WELCOME

- ◆ Purchases Church supplies e.g. wine, wafers, candles and any other needs for St James Church
- ◆ Coordinates Baptisms in liaison with the Rector
- ◆ Coordinates arrangements for the Christmas Party for the volunteers in the Parish
- ◆ Coordinator for the pastoral care network at St James and is responsible for keeping the records up to date
- ◆ Assists with the monthly Sunday lunch club and is happy to help with any events taking place either at St James or St Francis

Erma Clark:

- ◆ Clergy returns
- ◆ Choir liaison – in the absence of the Rector she has been sorting out the hymns for St James Church
- ◆ Assists with CCLI Music returns for St James Church and St Francis Church
- ◆ Is our expert on the “Churchyard Survey”, and ensures that the records for the St James Churchyard are kept up-to-date

Peter Dewey:

- ◆ Deals with Emails
- ◆ Assists with the Preparation of the Duty Schedules for the Ministry Team
- ◆ Is our expert on Lay Rectors
- ◆ Assists with Archives

Sally Hemsworth:

- ◆ Keeps Filing in order - has set up a paper filing system which corresponds to the way records are kept on the computer.
- ◆ Preparation of distribution lists within Parish
- ◆ Assists with preparation of the agenda for the Church Committees, and takes the Minutes for the St Francis Church Committee
- ◆ Ensures Minute Books are kept for all Committees
- ◆ Assists with Archives
- ◆ Is collecting Job Descriptions from volunteers
- ◆ Assists with the preparation and update of inventories for the two churches and St James Church Centre
- ◆ Assists with the long-term bookings at St Francis Church
- ◆ Assists with the preparation of Faculty documents
- ◆ Parish Statistics Administrator
- ◆ Assists with advertising events

Les Hemsworth:

- ◆ Photographer - Assists with preparation and update of inventories for the two churches and St James Church Centre, and takes photographs of any events when requested.

Nicki Stevens:

- ◆ Coordinates Weddings and Banns in liaison with the Rector and Team Vicar

Lesley Williams:

- ◆ Takes the Minutes for the St James Church Committee
- ◆ Prepares The Link for St James Church and St Francis Church
- ◆ Advertising events

Lesley has other responsibilities which will be reported separately.

THE COWLEY CHRONICLE

In addition a group of us help with the production of The Cowley Chronicle:

Rosanne Butler, Editor – oversees content, prepares articles and checks final content

Sally Hemsworth, Sub-Editor - requests and chases for reports and does a lot of basic typing

Nicki Steven – sets up the document on Publisher

May Morgan – organises the printing and distribution on a monthly basis, and is responsible for collecting annual subscriptions.

Annual Christmas Gift and Craft Fair 14th November 2015—in aid of Refurbishment of the Vestry

To make this a resounding success as in previous years we need your help please. When you are de-cluttering / tidying your treasures bear us in mind for the following:

Gift stall, Tombola, books, puzzles and gardening items

Small items can be brought to the Church Centre, for larger items ring Margaret Weller on 775150 or Chris Woodman on 778078 for collection.

Visiting Quest 2015

Four 3rd Cowley Brownies went on a visit to Quest camp. Quest was an international Guide camp held near Faringdon at the end of July. When we got there we got these little slips and we had to collect 8 stamps to get a ice cream. Some of the activities we did were splat a rat, hook a duck, make a rocket, peg competition, ladder throw and lots more. We met some Mexican Guides. While we were there we did a tent inspection, had dinner with the Guides from City 1 sub camp and made our own trifles for pudding. We went to a concert in a big marquee. I met two of my friends Amelia and Alice who were camping there. There were about seven hundred Guides camping there.

Janine Higham

1st Blackbird Leys Guides

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Rosanne interviews Sheila Collett

Her nickname is "Squeaker", given to her by her husband of thirty-six years. Back in the early 1970s, at the beginning of their marriage, they were living in a flat in Jericho when much to Sheila's horror she discovered a mouse. To Bob's amusement he learnt that she was terrified and nicknamed her "Squeaker" and continued to call her, affectionately, thus for the rest of their life together. However, there is a long story and a lot of "water under the bridge" to find out about before we reach this point.

Sheila was born in Pontypridd in South Wales. Her father was a miner and when she was still only two and, with a tiny baby sister, the terrible news came to her mother that he had been killed in the mine. Her grandmother lived in Camberwell in London and, forced to leave her miner's cottage, Sheila's mother returned home, taking her two small daughters with her. Granny was a lovely person, much loved by the two little girls. Sheila remembered her enjoying her regular pint of Guinness and making a secure home for them. This lasted until four years later, her mother remarried and she found herself, at six years old, not welcome in the new home. She was put into foster care with a couple who lived in Faringdon. They were devoted Methodists and took her to chapel twice every Sunday with Sunday-school in the afternoon in between. She

loved it and it was then that Sheila found her Christian faith. It has never left her. She remained with these foster parents until she was eleven by which time her mother, step-father and younger sister had moved to Abingdon. She returned to live with them.

By now she not only had a younger sister but a baby brother had been born. Sheila found herself expected to do a lot of chores in the home. One which she found particularly gruelling was being made to go out at 6 am on a Saturday pushing an old pram to the coal merchants. She then had to push a whole hundredweight of coal home through the streets to provide fuel for the family. Good hidings were often the order of the day. All this, she told me, made her a very independent person, mainly because it soon became apparent that she was really not wanted.

I asked her how she made life bearable. She told me about school days at Larkmead School, which she loved, coming top of the class in maths, English and geography. In the school holidays she spent as much time as she could out of the house. She spent hours in the library (she still counts reading as a favourite pastime). On sunny days, all through the year, she would spend time on the river bank. In the long summer holidays she would go fruit picking at Harwell and best of all she made friends with a gypsy

family named Buckland. They, of course, always brought their rides and side-shows to local fairs. Sheila bumped into Joyce Buckland quite recently and had many memories to share.

Her ambition was a career in nursing. However her hopes were dashed when her mother insisted that she left school at fifteen and found a job. On her fifteenth birthday she was taken to the Esso petroleum establishment at Milton Hill to find work and was told, in no uncertain terms, that she had to leave home. The manager at Esso, a Mr Jenkins, found her a job as a waitress in the directors' dining-room and she moved into a lodging house with several other girls who worked at the establishment. She earned what she described as a pittance but was expected to take her wages home to her mother where she would be allowed ten shillings pocket money. This would be enough to, maybe, go to Delamonts in Abingdon on a Sunday evening for a cola and a packet of crisps, the occasional lipstick or even a dance at the Town Hall if she saved up. Her job at Esso lasted for two years.

She then applied for and got a job working in the Officers' mess at RAF Abingdon. She had the option to live in, with parental permission. Her mother refused. At seventeen and reacting to her mother's attitude this independent young lady began looking for a job far from home. In the library she found an advertisement in a magazine

for a nanny for a little boy with a family in Northumberland. She got the job and was very happy for a while even though she was still expected to send her wages home. She came home for a visit and, wanting to be in her mum's good books, was told to leave her post and return to RAF Abingdon.

Now we come to a fateful period in Sheila's life because, at seventeen, she met the first person who ever told her he loved her. She was in seventh heaven with her first real boyfriend and in less than a year she had married him. Describing herself as naive she had no idea that this man had already been in trouble with the police, was a womaniser and alcoholic. In a very short time she found herself pregnant. All through the pregnancy her husband was in prison. She tried to return home but her mother threw her out. Just before the baby was due her husband was released from prison. He found a small, tatty room in Swindon. She moved in and at that point he ran off to Scotland leaving her with no money. She contacted social services who tried to persuade her mother to shelter her eighteen-year-old pregnant abandoned daughter. Nothing doing. Sheila got a temporary job in Woolworths to feed herself and pay her rent. A girl-friend told her to see a doctor which she did. He was very kind and even had to explain to her how a baby was born.

Sandra, her little girl, was born in January 1961. Her husband arrived to see his new daughter with his new girl-friend in tow.

Social services came to her aid, providing baby clothes and a second-hand pram. Her husband came back, took her to her mother, having left the tiny room she had been living in. After a blazing row the couple and new baby were turned out onto the street where they were picked up by the police who found them a room.

Shortly afterwards Sheila was pregnant again. Social services came to her aid again and found them a caravan on a site just outside Abingdon. The winter of 1962 was particularly severe and keeping her little girl, let alone herself, warm and fed was terrible. Her husband was continuing in his life of crime, mainly stealing from churches, and was back in prison. A local greengrocer heard about her plight and gave her food for Christmas. By now her second baby, a boy had been born.

On Boxing Day the man who owned the caravan site decided to set fire to an old barn next to where Sheila's home was situated. Disastrously the flames spread to her caravan. She got her babies and herself out safely but watched as her home and everything in it was destroyed. They were taken away to emergency housing. This turned out to be an empty cottage in Abingdon where they were provided with a bed, a table, a chair and one small heater. Her story hit the local press. Within a week she had been moved to a three-bedroom house and the WVS gave them furniture, a cooker, a boiler to use for laundry and clothes. Her husband

returned and stayed for a while.

Sheila gave birth to her third baby, another little boy, and then all the trauma of the last few years took their toll. She had a severe nervous breakdown. Her children were taken into care and, after a court hearing, she gave her consent for them to be fostered. She was treated at Littlemore Hospital. After three months she found herself lonely and isolated. One day the nursing staff were stretched due to an outbreak of a stomach disorder. She offered to help change beds and care for the elderly patients. She was on the road to recovery.

She divorced her husband and after leaving mental care got a job in the housekeeping department at the old Radcliffe Infirmary. She lived in a staff hostel in Woodstock Road and loved every minute of her "new" life. She soon was offered a supervisory post and took on the role of housekeeping manager. Next, after a period at the Park Hospital she applied and got a job doing the same work at the Horton Hospital in Banbury. Despite her lack of formal education she kept the Horton, and several local cottage hospitals, running domestically for over thirteen years.

In between all this, between shifts at the Radcliffe, she was taking an afternoon cuppa in the Cadena restaurant when a young man came over to "chat her up". She rose to the bait, made a date for the cinema and realised very soon that this man was the right one for her. She told me Bob was a lovely man. They were married

in 1972 and went to live in a flat in Walton Street. It was there that, because of the mouse, she got her strange nickname. Unable to settle after the mouse (they did discover that the mouse had a family!) they applied for a council flat. Bob had just left the navy and was working as a painter and decorator, later to drive for the Oxford Bus Company. They decided to save up and buy their own home and Sheila still lives in the one they chose. She and Bob shared 36 years of happy marriage before he died of cancer. I asked Sheila how she had coped with it all and she declared that she has always had God beside her. There is one more episode of her life to record.

Travelling out to Banbury each day to work began to be a strain especially as she needed to frequently change her car in order to remain mobile. She decided to get a job nearer to home. She was appointed catering and housekeeping manager at Magdalen College and was told that along with her excellent CV with the NHS it was her lovely smile that "swung" the interview (at least that is what she was told). Now she has been a retired lady for nine years although she is still a busy person. She is involved with the hospital League of Friends, she also goes over to Kidlington to Thames Valley Police Headquarters to meet and greet their volunteers and invigilate in the sergeants' exams.

She is still in touch with her (now grown-up) children and proud of

what they do. Her daughter, Sandra, is a nursing sister, her first son, Gordon, is a director of education in Dubai. Her youngest son, Robert, was badly affected by the upheaval in his early years and has found life difficult.

It was through attending the funeral of a friend's husband that Sheila found St Francis Church. After the service she was chatting to Skye and was attracted to her warm personality. When she heard that the Little Stars Toddler Group needed helpers she knew she wanted to volunteer. Her association with St Francis has become an important part of her life. Her eyes light up when she speaks of the fellowship there and if anyone deserves warmth and friendship in my opinion it is this brave lady.

How would you describe yourself as a young child?

Independent, resourceful, I accepted things as they were without resentment.

Do you have any childhood memories to share?

I was quite young when I was scrumping apples at Tyndale House in the Marcham Road. I managed to get up on a six foot wall. I got caught by the person who owned the apple trees. I fell off the wall and landed in a patch of stinging nettles. When I was only fifteen and working at RAF Abingdon I got hold of an old bike. I did not know that it

had no brakes. I was riding home down Ock Street, came to the junction and could not stop. I went right across the junction and fell off against a brick wall.

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

My husband, Bob, and my first headmistress. They both believed in me.

Has your faith been with you since childhood?

Oh yes, I was brought up to believe in God by my foster parents. I believe that God has always been there for me.

Do you have a special possession you would not like to lose?

Yes, it is a large model of a ram. My sister and her husband gave it to me about twenty years ago.

What is your opinion of modern society?

I think politicians do not tell the truth. I think young people have lost their way. They have lost the difference between right and wrong and they have lost sight of God.

If you could change something in a big way what would you do?

I think I would change people's attitude towards the elderly, or anyone in trouble. I want people to respect animals and also one another.

Which period of your adult life has given you the most satisfaction?

I would say when I started my

job in 1972 and my happy marriage until I lost Bob.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

I am a great reader. I love my newspapers and my books. I like books by Stephen King, and

other novels especially about social history. I love dancing (I am going to resume dancing soon), any kind of dancing. I like walking my two dogs and I enjoy walking holidays. I love travelling.

What plans do you have for the future?

I am planning to visit my son in Dubai. I shall carry on volunteering at St Francis, and I want to keep well and see what comes.

BOOK OF THE MONTH – 2

Miracle on the River Kwai

By Ernest Gordon (Fount/Collins)

The sub-title of this states that it is the true story behind the film “The Bridge on the River Kwai”. Bearing in mind the recent national celebrations of the end of the war with Japan, I feel strongly that this is the right book at the right time for us in our churches. In spite of its subject matter more than 200,000 copies were sold, and the publishers felt so strongly about it that they volunteered to give 50 per cent of the proceeds of the book to Christian Aid. Ernest Gordon, the writer, experienced at first hand the full horrors of life as a prisoner of the Japanese. He writes simply, without affectation, and some of his writing makes for harrowing reading, but it is also very uplifting in parts.

He was twenty four, and a strong and fit young soldier, when he was captured escaping from Sumatra after the fall of Singapore. With other British prisoners he was marched into the jungle to build the infamous Bridge over the River Kwai and work on the terrible Burma Railway.

In his own words he says “waking from a dream, I suddenly realized when I was in the Death House – in a prison camp by the River Kwai. I was a Company Commander in the 93rd Highlanders, but now I was a prisoner of war, lying among the dead, waiting for the dead to be carried away so that I might have more room”.

Amid the degradation of inhuman treatment, unrelenting labour, inadequate food, and ever present disease, a miracle began in the death camp: a miracle of Christ like love that made men forgive their enemies, and share whatever they had with fellow prisoners. Ernest tentatively reached out and grew to be a man of faith. The Birmingham Post said – “Gordon witnessed atrocities worse than any shown on films – but out of despair – a new Christian hope and witness was born”.

I commend this to you.

John Shreeve

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NEWS FROM ST FRANCIS

As I write this we are already into August, traditionally a quieter time in our churches, with many people on holiday and organisations closing down for a month. Yet we still have to keep our churches open and ticking over, and we are grateful to those who make that possible.

In St Francis we have been taking a quiet look at future plans for the autumn. In particular our thoughts regarding Harvest Festival, and our Patronal Festival and another Fun Day is coming up. Also we have thoughts about a very unusual service, which might appeal to the general public. More about that when the details are finalised.

Along with our friends at St James we are very much looking forward to the arrival of our newly

appointed Team Rector, Geoff Bayliss. We are hoping that he will be with us by Advent, but no date has been fixed yet.

We need to keep him and his wife in our prayers, and make things as smooth and easy as we can when he finally arrives.

We still need more commitment on the part of some of our congregation. Many things are still down to the faithful few, who seem to get fewer as the years pass.

John Shreeve



FRIENDS OF LYE VALLEY

At the recent AGM the activities of the Friends of Lye Valley to preserve this beautiful area were reported in detail – not only do they preserve the landscape by physical hard work, they also “fight” planning applications in the surrounding area which threaten the very existence of this unique landscape. For more information on their activities go to their website on www.headington.org.uk/lyevalley/

At the AGM, following the appointment of the Chairman and Committee, Dr Judith Webb, the Chairman, spoke on how to make gardens pollinator-friendly. She circulated lists of plants which would attract the bees, and had examples of herbs and wild flowers suitable for this purpose. What surprised most people at the meeting was that the usual flowers put in hanging baskets do not attract bees, and her suggestion of a hanging basket full of herbs sounded wonderful – imagine the beautiful smells the plants would give out. Dr Webb’s enthusiasm is infectious and much more information can be found on her website, which can be found through the Friends of Lye Valley website.

Next year’s AGM will be held in August 2016 – details will be put in The Chronicle. Please come along and support this small group which is doing such vital work.

The Colours of the Church

As we are now well into the long stretch of Sundays after Trinity the colour of the hangings in our churches remains green.

The ‘eagle-eyed’ among the congregation at St James will have noticed that we changed to gold/red on July 26th when we celebrated our Patronal Festival.

At St Francis, the Patronal Festival on October 4th will mean a change to either white or the Franciscan set.

Margaret Martin

COWLEY FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS

TREES 2015 - 4 - 13 December 2015

'The twelve days of Christmas'

Friday 11 September 2015, 09.30, Ranklin Room
- Planning meeting

The small group of volunteers which has brought you the first four festivals would love to welcome new members – if you cannot make the weekday, daytime monthly meetings over the next three months, we can shift the meeting time or just assign you an organisational task: advertising/ media relations is important and is one aspect the coordinator would really appreciate assigning to someone who relishes it.

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

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 BEE

Lord

I am not one to despise Your gifts.

May You be blessed

Who spread the riches of Your sweetness
for my zeal

Let my small span of ardent life
melt into our great communal task;

to lift up to Your glory
this temple of sweetness,

a citadel of incense,
a holy candle, myriad-celled,
moulded of Your graces
and of my hidden work.

AMEN

OPEN DOORS

Last year our "open door" day was not particularly warm or sunny. However we, at St James, were very pleased to welcome quite a few visitors who had seen our two lovely churches published in the Open Doors brochure. These brochures are freely available all over Oxfordshire listing a huge number of fascinating venues open to the public. It was, therefore, very pleasing to meet people who had chosen to visit us.

Not only were the visitors pleased to have access to a printed guide to the church plus the William Morris trail, which we were asked to compile in 2013, but also to be greeted with a cup of tea or coffee and (what was obviously) home-made cake. Knowing our two churches we would think to ourselves "Of Course".

12th September is this year's date for Open Doors and we are hoping that even more visitors will track us down and receive our traditional warm welcome, whatever the weather. We need people to greet them, people to boil the kettle for tea or coffee and especially those who would be willing to make cakes (large or small) so that this year as before we can wave our visitors off with the thought that coming to Cowley was well worthwhile. Please help if you can, it will be much appreciated.

MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

Along with almost the rest of the parish our Mothers' Union Branch considers August as a month when issues are put on hold. However the committee has been busy planning the new programme which begins this month.

The branch meeting on Monday, 21st September will have as its speaker Mark Oxbrow. He is a real favourite with members as he always has fascinating stories to tell about the many places where his missionary work has taken him and also about the amazing Christians he has met around the world. Members are reminded that they can invite friends so we look forward to a full meeting.

It is becoming something of a tradition that we hold our popular Wine, Cheese and Poetry Evening each year early in the autumn. This year it is scheduled for Friday 2nd October. The starting time is 7 pm and the price as usual will be £4 for wine and supper if you bring a poem and £5 if you turn up to be entertained. The profits from these evenings go to the Mothers' Union's work abroad where projects support families in the impoverished areas of Africa. Absolutely anyone who enjoys a wide selection of poetry, a good supper and a nice glass or two of wine is more than welcome to join us in the Church Centre on that evening.

NEW TEAM RECTOR

The Rev Geoffrey Bayliss will be installed as Cowley Team Rector on Thursday, 26 November, at 7.30 pm in St James Church.

Put it in your diary now, and let's give our new Team Rector and his wife, Mary, a good welcome.

He will introduce himself in the October or November edition of the Chronicle.



CHRONICLE

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

Deadline for the next edition:

Wednesday 23 September 2015

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

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SAINT OF THE MONTH—ST MICHAEL (Archangel)

Since we celebrate the feast of St Michael and All Angels on September 28th each year it is high time that we choose him as our saint of the month. Because he is an archangel there is no date for his birth. Angels do not die so there is no date for that either. He is, though, a fascinating and much revered character. One of the most iconic images of St Michael is the one sculpted by Epstein which graces the entrance to Coventry Cathedral. It depicts the saint slaying the dragon (Satan) with his lance. The huge stained-glass window in our own Christ Church Cathedral shows a similar image and is often mistaken for St George. Once it is pointed out that all around the edges of the window appears a host of angels it is then, obviously, a depiction of St Michael.

His name means "Who is like unto God?" and he appears early in the Bible, in the Book of Daniel, as a chief of the heavenly host and as the special protector of Israel. He features too in the Book of Revelation where he is the principal fighter in the heavenly battle against the devil. In a second century Christian writing "Shepherd of Hermas" he is depicted as a majestic angel who has authority over the people, judging who has the right to enter heaven and who should perish. His power was said to be so great that his intercessions could even rescue souls from Hell. In early Roman Liturgy his name was mentioned

at funerals that he might lead the deceased "into the holy light".

Michael was also invoked as a curer of the sick. The first Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine, built a church to his name near Constantinople.

Many accounts of visions of the archangel appear in early times and the cult to honour him soon spread west to take a stronghold in France and then the British Isles. Several churches were dedicated to him and his image makes for spectacular stained glass windows such as the one, formerly mentioned, in our cathedral. There is a 14th century example in Swalcliffe in Oxfordshire and a 15th century one in South Leigh near Witney.

St Michael's Mount in Cornwall is believed to have been set up to commemorate an eighth century vision of him. However his most famous shrine in Western Europe is Mont-Saint-Michel off the coast of Normandy. A Benedictine abbey was founded there in the tenth century on the site of an earlier vision. After the Norman Conquest abbots and monks crossed the Channel bringing with them even more devotion to Michael.

Of course we know that angels do not die so who knows when, or where, someone may yet experience a vision of the great archangel?

A real-life episode at our Seashells Teddy Bears picnic in July:

Rosanne to small two-year-old boy: Hello! Have you brought your teddy to our picnic?

Small Boy: No, but I've brought my dinosaur

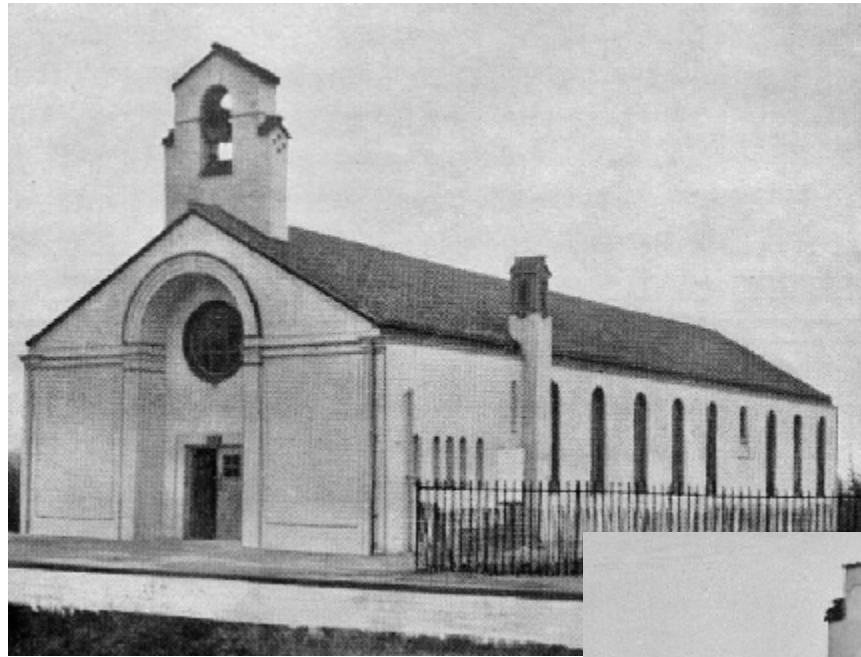
Rosanne: Oh, does he like Teddy bears' food?

Small Boy: Well, he's a herbivore

Rosanne: There are carrot sticks and cucumber. Would that be alright?

Small boy (thoughtfully): Oh, I 'spect so.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR CHURCHES



St. Francis

In the March 2015 edition of the Chronicle the subject for this article was the chimney at St. Francis. Since then I have heard that a few people thought the picture was of the bell tower. That was not so, and therefore I thought that this month I will show two pictures taken during

the 1940's – 50's which show the bell tower in various stages before it was finally taken down because of unsound construction. You will see the chimney is visible in both pictures.



CHRISTMAS BOXES

What a wonderful woman Joyce Titchell is to continue to pack and send off her annual consignment of Christmas boxes to boys and girls in the Third World who would never receive a gift without them. Joyce is now fairly immobile so shopping for the small items to pack in the boxes is pretty-well impossible for her these days. That is why she relies on us. Please help if you can.

She needs small gifts like colouring pens, pencils, little toys, packs of cards toilet items such as small tablets of soap, face flannels and so on. The boxes are wrapped in pretty paper so Christmas gift wrap is also welcome. And, of course, she needs shoe boxes. Have you any to spare?

Finally, to post her boxes off she has to pay postage so a gift of cash would also be a great help. These gift boxes are acts of love in a bleak world so please, please help Joyce and her friend Mary, to keep them going again this year.

SIGNIFICANT DATES IN SEPTEMBER

.On 2nd September 1939 Britain's population went on to a war footing. The National Service Bill came into force making men between the ages of nineteen and forty-one eligible to be called up into the armed forces.

The first train travelled through the newly-completed Severn Tunnel on 5th September 1885. The tunnel, just under four and a half miles long, which ran under the River Severn, was at that time the longest and deepest in Britain.

The James Bond film "Goldfinger" was premiered in London's Leicester Square on 22nd September 1964.

The biggest ship in the world at that time, The Queen Mary, was launched by Queen Mary herself on Clydeside on 26th September 1934.

On 30th September 1938 the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich with a signed peace agreement with Adolph Hitler. He told the crowds that he had achieved "peace in our time". The front page of the Daily Express declared that "Britain will not be involved in a European war this year, or next year either". Eleven months later World War II began.

COWLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The sun shone brightly for the July meeting of Cowley WI, and in the Church Centre there was a sea of colour as Trine Lucy described what she called her "Crafty Life" and showed a selection of the lovely quilts she had made. She also talked about being a WI Judge for all types of craft, and explained some of the tactful phrases used when judging competition entries so as not to discourage unsuccessful entrants.

We were delighted to welcome some visitors to our meeting, one of whom brought a lovely quilt she had made.

We cannot guarantee there will always be sunshine for our meetings, but you can be assured of a warm welcome.

After the summer break during August we shall meet again on Wednesday, 16 September, at 2 pm, when members of the Thames Valley Police will give advice on Crime Prevention and Personal Safety, and there will be a Harvest Bring and Buy Sale. We hope to see you then.

Ann Withers
President, Cowley WI

RIDE AND STRIDE

Are you in training for this year's out and about day? And, if not, will you sponsor our ride and striders.

Everyone can be involved – volunteers are needed, please, as stewards/welcomers/tea servers// cake makers to cover both churches, all day.

Sponsor forms and steward rota lists are available in both churches.

June Smith

Home Groups

Two thousand years ago the infant Christian Church comprised, in various parts of the Middle East, of small groups of people who wanted to support each other and affirm their devotion to faith in Our Lord Jesus. They also used the early scriptures to deepen their understanding of God. There were, of course, larger communions of believers but the small groups met, often in secret, in each other's homes to share their faith, declare their fellowship and unite in prayer. Our home groups are a continuation of these foundations of the Church.

The current Home Groups and Leaders are:

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 Co-op) Enquiries to Mark at 01865 461953
Rosanne Butler	Alternate Thursday mornings at 10.00am St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Josh & Claire Hordern	Thursdays at 8.00pm at 35 Glanville Rd joshuahordern@hotmail.com
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 leaders of the groups have offered to explain a little more about how they function.

Connie Uren writes: The Tuesday group continues to meet fortnightly, studying a book about Christianity. Different books bring different ways of learning about our faith and we enjoy that, becoming closer to Jesus and each other. There are 7 people in our group and we are always glad if anyone wants to join us.

Friends of St Francis: John Shreeve leads the Friends of St Francis, and writes: Recently we have been using Edie Askew's brilliant dissertations on various bible themes, which have been very popular. However, when we restart in September after the August break we will probably concentrate on St John's Gospel based on Bishop Tom Wright's excellent study.

We are a friendly and welcoming little group and newcomers are always invited. After the usual talk and discussion open to all, we have a social time with tea and biscuits or cake. If you are looking for something different to take you out of the home environment and make new friends, this could be the very thing for you.

Mark Oxbrow writes: We are a friendly group of church members. We have a wide range of ages and experience of living as a Christian and that adds to the interesting discussions we have. We use the 4W style of meeting. What's that? We Welcome each other over refreshments, sharing our latest news and struggles in life, we study the Word - the Bible or a Christian topic, we Worship together with songs and prayer, and then we leave to try to Witness to our faith in the days ahead.

On 9 September we start our new 'term' when we will be using the Pilgrim Course on The Beatitudes which comes complete with video and audio talks each time. We would be very pleased to have you join us. Enquiries to Mark at 01865 461953.

Rosanne Butler explains: Our group gathers at about 10 am and start our study session at 10.30 am after coffee and biscuits. Our next session begins on September 10th. Before he left the Parish, Howard recommended a book, Sacred, written by a friend of his, Rev Philip Moon, for us to use as a guide. We have found it excellent. In the autumn we shall be using this text plus, of course, our Bibles to study the book of Genesis. Anyone who would like to join the group will be most welcome.

Josh and Claire Hordern write: We are a small group who have grown in number and friendship over the last couple of years. We meet weekly on Thursday evenings in a home to catch up on the week, study together, pray together and share in common vision for the life of the church and what we can do beyond it. We have studied different material over the year usually either a book of the bible (with or without notes) or a book of Christian teaching. From the autumn we are going to be looking at the Pilgrim course on The Beatitudes. Although we currently make up a group of younger members of the congregation we would love to welcome new members of all ages who'd like to share in our Lord's fellowship together on a Thursday evening.

Joel Denno writes: Our home group is made up of members from both St Francis and St James churches. We meet monthly and use books for our Bible study. We are about to start a series on the Prodigal Son, so it would be a good time for new members to join the group. We use the Bible passages as a way into our everyday concerns, so we talk about issues that are troubling us or exciting us in our lives. We also eat plenty of crisps and cake and occasionally share a glass of homemade wine.

Helen Beetham writes: At the moment we are looking at Gospel stories that are very familiar to us all – putting us into the shoes of those who knew Jesus best and through Bible reading, reflection and prayer encouraging us to explore what Jesus means to us now, today!! All are welcome to join us.

5th Cowley Guides

At the beginning of August 5th Cowley Guides and 1st Blackbird Leys Guides went on camp together to Jubilee House. 14 Guides went with 4 leaders. The theme for the week was Pirates and the activities were based on this theme. This included tie dyeing bandanas, making rafts, making flags, treasure hunts and playing wide games.

Here is a report from one Guide:

I have just left Brownies and joined Guides and have been on my first Guide camp. We had loads of fun like tie-dyeing bandanas. We also had loads of fun patrol cooking on wood fires. We also did wide games like "Capture the Flag". We sang songs around the campfire and had hot chocolate. We went to Rectory Farm to pick strawberries and raspberries. We had a nice, refreshing and fun water fight using water balloons and cups. We did 6 badges - they were Pirate Challenge, Underground Challenge, Outdoor Action, Camper and two Go for Its Camp Out and Take your Toothbrush. This was the best camp ever.

Janine Higham, age 10
1st Blackbird Leys Guides

BEING A FILM EXTRA

I have worked as a Film Extra, also known as Supporting Artiste/Background once with an American Company "Deadwood". It's not such a glamorous profession as it seems. You have to be prepared to rise on average at 4.00 a.m., travel 100 miles, do a 12 hour day, then travel back, fall into bed and start again the next day. You will see "Film Stars" but they are surrounded in a force field that you just do not enter. On one occasion we were told "on no account look at the big Hollywood Star or you will be sent home". So we didn't, not that we were interested anyway, but it was amusing to note that the Star didn't like being ignored and kept edging into our sight.

You do meet some wonderful people among the Professional Supporting Artistes, such a wealth of information, stories and friendship. You should also be prepared for "Luvvy Hugs" and Mwah cheek kisses as British conservatism is out the window and so is being prudish. You never know what you have to do until you get there, plus S.A.'s don't get the luxury of a script breakdown or adequate changing facilities.

But again there are gems. Everyone has a story. I've spent hours on the holding bus wreathed in tears of laughter. I've selected one story of my experience, which was also a warning for me to check my role thoroughly if the agent is overconfident with the job on offer!

Firstly, I had a call from my local agent who wanted to know if I could swim. "Yes" I replied "but I don't like getting my hair wet and I keep my chin way above the waterline". "No problem" was the reply "it's a programme called Heaven and Earth and you just have to swim across a small swimming pool while a young man is being rescued by his Guardian Angel 'nee Grandmother". So I agreed.

My instructions were to go to the Wolvercote Lodge Hotel. When I arrived I booked in with the Film Production and made a bee-line to a young man who I knew very well from the Agency. "Hi Ian, what role are you playing today?" "I'm being

saved from drowning by my Guardian Angel/ Grandmother" he replied. "Good for you" I replied "who else is coming?" "Just us two" he casually said. Alarm bells began to ring and I shot over to the A.D. in charge. Just to clarify, I was told I would just be swimming across the swimming pool. Relieved, I went and changed into my costume and appeared next to the small but lovely and warm swimming pool. (I don't do cold, even sea paddling is done in socks) and was immediately pounced upon by costume who wrapped me in a large white sheet. I was told to enter the water and swim to the other side, UNDERWATER and SMILING AT THE CAMERA! I was the Guardian Angel!! What could I do, the last time I went underwater was brick-diving at school, which was a total failure.

There was no-one else to take my place, so being brave I took a deep breath and plunged in. I could only go as far as my breath could take me and, as for smiling at the camera, I couldn't even see it, and the sheet was floating on the top and dragging me up! Costume then decided to cut away as much as possible without spoiling the effect and I was given two bricks to hold to keep me under while I angelically smiled into my "Grandson's" face. It was alright for Ian, apparently he had certificates for underwater diving and was quite capable of making a cup of tea down there and watching it brew! Anyway, by the end of filming I was quite pleased with myself and made a mental note to do more underwater swimming (which I never followed up).

The outcome was, my sister rolls up in laughter every time this starring role is mentioned. When the scene was shown on TV, I could have put my head in a bucket for all you saw of me. But that is the life of a Supporting Artiste, most of our starring roles end up on the cutting room floor!

Sue Hallett

FROM THE ARCHIVES

EXTRACT FROM THE COWLEY CHRONICLE, MARCH 1955

BEAUCHAMP LANE

Congratulations to Father Beauchamp on having Church Street, Cowley, renamed after him!

It is a fitting and well-deserved honour to one who in the last 26 years has done so much for the Church and social life of Cowley.

When the renaming was first mooted I was asked if I had any suggestion to make, and I am glad that the Highways Committee approved of it. I was rather hoping it might have been a surprise to Father Beauchamp, but I found that I had to have his approval before it could go to the City Council. By the way, in view of what was said at the City Council on February 7th, I should mention that the name is pronounced not in French fashion, but in the same way as a famous brand of pills!

The late Mr. H. S. Rogers, the architect of St. Luke's Church, is to be commemorated in a road at Summertown, as well as by the tablet soon to be put up in the porch of St. Luke's.

Father A. G. Whye



Father Maurice Beauchamp (left) and Canon Alec Whye (right)



Editor's Note:

You may know that Father Beauchamp's ashes are buried within St James Church, and the memorial stone is on the Chancel Plinth, under a carpet tile.

To keep your marriage
brimming
With love in the loving
cup,
If ever you're wrong,
admit it,
If ever you're right, shut
up
(Ogden Nash)



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SUNDAY SERVICES

ST JAMES CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 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
Josh & Claire Hordern	Thursdays at 8.00pm, often at 35 Glanville Rd joshuahordern@hotmail.com
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:

Vacancy

Team Vicar:

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

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