

St James Church Magazine



March - May Edition

Contents

Letter from our Vicar Tim	Page 3 & 4
The Church Weekend	Page 5
Introducing Joyce Vernon	Page 6 & 7
Easter Experience Update	Page 8
Northfield Gardens by Ken Cleeves	Page 9
Arch Bishop Cranmer School	Page 10
Report from David Ager	Page 11
We have a Kitchen at Last!	Page 12 & 13
Food Hygiene Training Report	Page 14
Sunday Lunch in the Hall	Page 15
PCC Round up	Page 16 & 17
Newsletter Contact List	Page 18 & 19
Watercolour / Art group	Page 20

‘God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear’

We read this in 1 Corinthians 10. But why does God allow us to be tempted at all? Or to suffer? Why not just allow us to avoid it?

I'd like to share a thought that God has been sowing in my mind in response to several people's experiences over the past few weeks.

It is simply this: that it is in engaging with temptation and evil and fighting it that battles are won for God and lost for the enemy, not in avoiding the conflict. When we are spared the temptation suffering or conflict, that is great for us, but we have not then contributed to the battle in the heavenly places which will ultimately be won by God but is not yet finished.

I wonder if we are able to see our temptations and suffering in this way, and if we do, whether it can help us understand that big question, ‘Why’, a little better?

If we are presented with a temptation, sometimes we will fall for it – we are human, and when we do, we can come back to God in repentance again and again and he will forgive again and again. However, if we are able to resist a hard temptation, we triumph over it with God urging us on. This is one in the eye for Satan - like saying, ‘Get behind me’, as Jesus himself did in a major way at the start of his public ministry.

I don't pretend to understand the reason for a lot of suffering; but the Bible seems to indicate that somehow we are again engaging in battle; the battle whose outcome is guaranteed by Jesus' suffering and death, but in which his church is still called to be 'militant'. For example, Peter writes, 'Dear friends, do not be surprised by the ordeals that come on you... but rejoice inasmuch as you are participating in Christ's sufferings' (1 Peter 4). It was through his suffering and death that Jesus was able to shout on Good Friday, 'It is finished!' (accomplished).

Maybe - just maybe - that little triumph when you overcome a temptation or undergo suffering while retaining your faith and avoiding bitterness, advances God's cause and makes the devil retreat, one step more. Go on! You can do it: God's promise at the start of this is as true today as it was when Paul wrote to the church in Corinth.

May God bless us in whatever comes our way and remind us that for him, resurrection was only possible through crucifixion, not in avoiding it.

Tim



St. James Church Weekend Away

at
**Brunel Manor
Torquay
Devon**

Friday 5th – Sunday 7th October

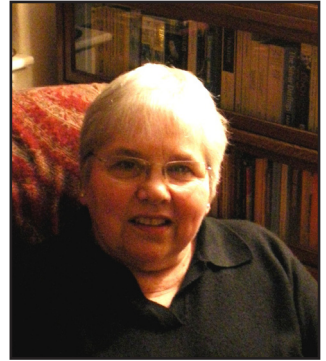
Booking forms are now available for our
church weekend which will be led by

Geoff Treasure.

Brunel Manor is a wonderful venue just outside
Torquay with excellent facilities for a relaxing
weekend for all ages.

Hope to see you there

For more details see the brochure or talk to Tim, Jones, Mike
Gillingham, Mark Stevens or Jenny Wakefield



INTRODUCING...

It was a great privilege to sit in Joyce Vernon's cosy sitting room as she talked in her lilting Edinburgh brogue about her faith and her life in Taunton. Joyce had agreed to be the first interviewee in a series for the magazine. For many Joyce will need no introducing. This smiling, quiet-mannered, self-effacing member of our congregation has been at St. James since 1981. Her shining enthusiasm has been a quiet but real encouragement to many. One of the main themes as we talked was how she felt God had led her from adventure to adventure in her life, and how she was very conscious of God's blessing which seemed to grow at each stage of her life's journey.

Joyce was born in Edinburgh, but moved to London in her early twenties to be a house mother in a number of residential homes, before going on to train as a nurse. Although she is the only member of her family to have a Christian faith, she has been very conscious of becoming a member of a wider church family. While at her church in Shepherds Bush, the connection with Taunton began: she met Andy, a young ex-pat member of St. James, who was working in a local remand centre. It was through Andy and his wife Liz that their church prayed for a Taunton family who were experiencing illness and subsequently bereavement. Little did Joyce know that she was to become an answer to that prayer.

When Andy and Liz moved back to Taunton, Joyce came to visit them, and was welcomed at St. James's by the recently widowed Alan Vernon. Some of our readers will remember Alan, who was always ready at the door with a gentle smile, handing out the bulletin, and graciously welcoming visitors to the church. To cut a long and delightful story short, Joyce and Alan were married in 1981 and enjoyed 16 very happy years together. A new and unexpected adventure had begun and Joyce found herself part of a family that has become very precious to her.

On coming to Taunton, Joyce left behind a career in Health Visiting. As she adjusted to life in the South West, she engaged in a number of voluntary activities, until in 1988 she was invited to become a bank nurse at the recently opened St. Margaret's Hospice. Joyce went on to work there in a nursing capacity, which she found immensely fulfilling until her retirement in 2009.

With retirement approaching, Joyce was somewhat anxious as to what the future might hold. But again God has proved faithful and provided her with a role that is even more exciting and fulfilling. Joyce is now part of the chaplaincy at the Hospice; she regards this as a huge privilege enabling her to be involved actively in the ongoing care of patients, their families and staff at the hospice. The hospice operates a holistic approach to care, and the spiritual dimension is an integral part of what they do. This is not about 'religion', but about allowing people to explore the questions of faith and belief at their own pace. Joyce feels that it is an immense privilege to be able to talk with and more important to listen to, the people she works with, being beside them as they share their hopes and fears, and when appropriate sharing her experience of a loving God, with arms open wide.

Joyce also has a role with the Abbeyfield committee, where again she is able to visit and meet with the residents in Pollards Way, which she feels is a huge gift to her. She also assists Ken Cleves with the services at nearby Northfield Gardens.

The word that recurs when talking with Joyce is that of Blessing; she has a confidence built on experience of how God has led her from one adventure to another and each has proved a new and special blessing from what has gone before.

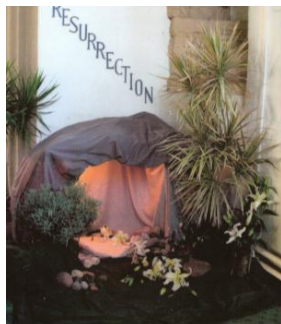
Joyce has a strong experience in serving God where she is and in the community. For her church provides and import source of fellowship and support, but living the Christian faith is an outward thing and she actively seeks to fulfil that commitment by being a servant of Christ in the situation God has placed her.

Please pray for Joyce, for the patients, carers and staff at St. Margaret's, for the communities at Abbeyfield and Northfield gardens and for all those involved in the chaplaincy role.

(Interview by Jenny Wakefield)



Easter Experience Update



There was a real buzz in church recently when the Easter Experience team came together to hear who was doing what, when and how during the Easter Experience

This involves the creation of a series of tableaux around the church explaining the Easter story, each manned or womanned by characters who will be telling part of the story and encouraging children from our church school to think about what it means in today's world. It is also hope that the displays will be used in church on Palm Sunday for the whole church.



Centurion Nicholas Procerus, is already trying out his armour and gave everyone their instructions, fortunately in English, not Latin. There will be quite a number of props that will be needed for the event, so if you have any pottery plates, enamel jugs, earthen ware jugs, material, and other items that you could loan please watch out for a list that will appear on the bulletin.

There is a lot of work involved and many people have offered their time to make costumes, create the scenes, help with refreshments as well as those acting as characters. This is a really exciting project which we hope will really engage both children and adults.

Thank you to everyone who is playing their part in helping make the event a very special one this Easter.

Some of the team be briefed by Nic



NORTHFIELD GARDENS

If you read your Church Bulletin every Sunday, you may be puzzled by frequent references to Northfield Gardens, and wonder where it is. It is a Sheltered Housing complex, located at the far end of Wood Street (off Bridge Street). There are about 50 flats, each in houses containing two flats, and situated around a lovely grassy area with trees adding to its attraction. And there is a very attractive Meeting Room at the centre of it all.

In 2000, one of the residents, Sue Condick, approached Peter Bannister who was then our vicar, to ask if St. James' could hold services in their Meeting Room, for the benefit of residents who were unable to go to any of the churches in town, as it lay within the Parish. Peter readily agreed, and ever since then services have been held on the first Sunday of each month at 3.30 and a Communion Service on the third Thursday at 10.30. A number of St. James' people share in preaching, reading lessons and leading the prayers there. Sadly, but inevitably, we lose people as they get older, either through their deaths or because they move on to Care Homes, and although new people have arrived, they don't seem as eager to come to the services.

Joyce Vernon and I have been responsible for organising these services, and if anyone would like to learn more about them, please ask us. It does seem to be a very useful way of extending the ministry of the church, and it is a delight being associated with such a pleasant group of elderly people whom we would otherwise not get to know.

Ken Cleves



Love God, Love Others
Love Ourselves

Change at Archbishop Cranmer School

At the end of the Autumn Term our Church School, Archbishop Cranmer said goodbye to Shirley McBride on her retirement. Mrs. McBride had been at the school for 5 years.



During that time there has been lots of changes, including the refurbishment of the school hall and external classrooms. Interviewed by one of her pupils before she left she was asked "Are there any special memories you will take away with you?" She replied: ***The care and commitment of all my members of staff in valuing every child is a memory that will stay with me for always. Also the joy on the faces of children engaged in their learning day by day.*** For Shirley the ethos of the school summarised by the school motto – ***Love God, Love Others Love Ourselves*** – was very important to her.



Shirley has been succeeded by **Bernie Dennis**, as locum head teacher. Bernie has been a teacher for 30 years. She lives near Bridgwater with her husband Viv and an ancient cat called Buster; she is a keen golfer when she gets the time. Most recently she was Deputy Head at Berrow Church of England School, followed by three years as locum head at Norton Fitzwarren Church of England

School. It's already been a busy term for Bernie; 300 plus children to get to know, a big staff group to lead and an Ofsted Inspection looming as we go to press. Asked what her first impressions were Bernie replied ***"It's a school that is full of happy, polite children with a talented and dedicated staff and governors. Everyone has made me feel so welcome that its hard to believe I've only been here six weeks!"***

Please pray

- for the school as they face the challenges ahead,
- for Bernie as she gets to know the school and leads the staff
- for the children that they will enjoy their time at school
- for the Governors as they seek to recruit a permanent head for the school from the Autumn

REPORT FROM DAVID AGER

Now that I have completed six months in my secondment to the Blackdown Benefice, it seemed an appropriate moment to offer you a short report. As I am still technically licensed to St James's, and went off with your blessing, I feel that you have a right to some kind of "account of my stewardship".

The ministry team consists of the rector, Sue Green, and a band of six Readers. Following the departure of the associate priest, the existing pattern of services and level of pastoral care throughout the benefice could not be maintained by Sue alone – even with the invaluable help of the Readers and loyal churchwardens.

I have been made enormously welcome, and it has been remarkably easy to feel very much at home in the benefice. It has been a real privilege to get alongside the people in each parish and share in their lives, as well as lead them in worship. Among the exciting things I have experienced are a scarecrow service, endless village teas and Sunday café once a month – though we have yet to find quite the best time for this, because at present it is not regularly attracting those people for whom it is designed. Rural it may be, but not locked in the past. From the start, there has been no shortage of things to do, and the resultant mix of regular pastoral involvement (including one baptism, one funeral and a wedding next year) and preparing and leading worship has been challenging, stimulating and deeply satisfying.

My secondment was initially forecast to be about seven or eight months. It is now likely to be at least two months longer than that, possibly three. The Rector and Churchwardens of each of the five parishes have discussed the need to appoint a new house for duty priest to succeed the last, and have decided that the optimum time for seeking to do that is during the Spring of 2012. This means that the need for my involvement will continue for the time being, so probably to April or May. I cannot at the moment say whether I would be one of the applicants when the post is advertised. Please pray that I may have the courage and wisdom to discover and to do what God wants, which is all, I believe, he asks of any of us.

HABEMUS CULINAM! – We have a Kitchen (at last)

Well, one thing I learned from the kitchen project is not to try a Latin joke on the congregation. When I saw the white smoke from the gas man's final test, it reminded me of the long agonising wait while a new pope is chosen, until eventually white smoke appears from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel and the declaration *Habemus Papam* is made. But when I tried *Habemus Culinam* on the congregation, what did I get? Not a titter madam, not a titter, as Frankie Howerd might have said in *Up Pompeii!*

I hope the wait has been worth it. We first started thinking about revamping the kitchen at the end of 2006, when the church received a legacy for that purpose from my mother, Joy. Our first stab at setting down our requirements was in 2008, and then there was a wait while a new church architect was appointed. By September 2009, Jo Hibbert, our new architect, had produced the first proper drawings of the rearrangement of the building; Bruce Nottrodt, our local kitchen supplier, had specified the equipment we needed; and Peter the kitchen designer had come up with the first drawings of the layout. We then had another delay due to a series of illnesses suffered by Jo. The PCC gave the go-ahead in December 2010, and the main work took place between May and July 2011. And then we hit a series of snags due to mistakes made in the layout design and the actual installation by Peter's team; the least said about that the better, but eventually just before Christmas the gas man was happy to make the final connection and give us a certificate.

So what have we achieved? Well, the new kitchen is there for all to see, but we also took the opportunity to do quite a lot else at the same time: we altered the entrance to the kitchen so we didn't have to go through the Large Hall to get to it; we created a new inner storeroom for Annabel's equipment and storage for Sunday Club material; and we created a loft space above the kitchen for all those things that we only use occasionally. Also, we have seen the last of some very old electrical wiring, the old open drains, that big cupboard with the awkward sliding doors, the tiny serving "hatchlet", and the old tiled floor that would have been the first thing to fail any environmental inspection.



Happy faces on “Moving Back” day.



The kitchen in use during Advent Antix.

Thanks are due to a lot of people who have been involved in the project in one way or another. The key players were the members of the group which drew up the plans and then supported us as we worked through the various problems: Ruth Crooks, Ivy Jackson and Margaret Cottrell. These ladies and the rest of the Kitchen Management Team have also done sterling work bringing the facility into use. Thanks too to the people who helped in moving out and moving back; to Tim Jones for taking on the restoration of the hall floor after we covered it in abrasive dust; to the PCC for being patient (most of the time!) and to Karen and the churchwardens who had a fair bit of running around as people came and went. And not forgetting Annabel, who as well as running around after people and fighting the dust had a real ministry in keeping everyone supplied with tea and coffee. We will be showing our appreciation to Jo, Bruce, and Andy and the team from Woodlands (the builders) in due course; they have all been 100% committed to doing the job well.

And now it's YOUR turn! There's nothing stopping us now from fulfilling that part of our mission statement that says (paraphrased) “... *and making Christ better known, through food.*” There are bound to be some things we could start now, and others that we should be thinking about while we plan the refurbishment of the Large Hall. Perhaps each Home Group might like to champion a new ministry?

Let us give thanks to God for his provision to us, and pray about how we might make best use of our new kitchen.

Martin Wakefield



FOOD HYGIENE TRAINING

Recently, over two Monday evenings, nine members of St James' took part in a food hygiene course which was specially arranged to help those who are, or may be, involved in making use of the new kitchen's facilities for church and outreach activities involving food.

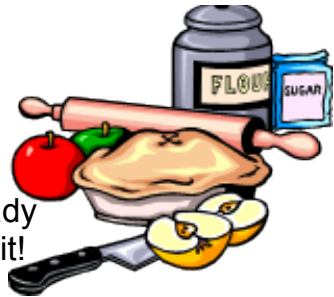
The course included information about bacteria and food poisoning, how to keep food safe and prevent contamination. The importance of correct temperatures for cooking, storing and handling food was also covered.

All who attended the course found it very informative and helpful. Everyone passed the test and gained a certificate in Food Hygiene.

There will be another opportunity in the future for those who would like the training – men would be most welcome. Please let Ruth Crooks know if you are interested.

Sunday Lunch In the Hall

Now that the Kitchen is ready
How about making use of it!



A small team are proposing to cook
a Sunday lunch available at a
modest cost.

on
Sunday 25th March
as a trial run

A sign up list will be at the back of
church on the two Sundays before
hand so that numbers can be
known.

See **Vicky Dykes** or **Jenny Wakefield**
for further details

PCC ROUNDUP

Here's a summary of the main things the Parochial Church Council looked at in December 2011, January and February 2012.

Strategy and Vision

The main item on the PCC's agenda has been the strategy to enable the church to grow beyond its present size of around 150 active members.

Tim Jones prepared two papers: Church Structures summarised the material presented at the November Church Away Day. The main need identified is to appoint overseers and leaders to drive various key aspects of church life, rather than for everything to be dependent to a greater or lesser extent on the direct involvement of the vicar (and thus limited by one person's time).

The second paper, Oversight and the PCC, explained in more detail how the oversight roles are envisaged to work in practice. Put simply, authority needs to be delegated from the vicar and PCC to the overseers, as has happened to some extent already in establishing the role of Pastoral Coordinator, and before then by appointing an Administrator and youth and families workers. What is now proposed is to extend this model.

The priority roles are for overseers for Children & Young People, Worship, Teaching and Premises, together with increased office hours for administration, which is required to underpin many of the other activities. Some roles will require paid staff, but others could be filled by volunteers.

The PCC would continue to move from a management role to a strategic one, which has been happening gradually for many years. It would seek to fulfil its legal responsibilities by deciding priorities and monitoring outcomes, rather than being directly involved in every detail of spending. It is more important for the PCC to provide oversight and hear where God is leading.

The PCC approved the following motion: that the vicar should proceed to present the general direction of the strategy to the church membership; that prayer should be requested from home groups and other groups within the church; and that the vicar should ask church members to begin thinking about names of people to fill the various identified roles.

Mission to Firepool

The first residents are shortly due to move into the Firepool Lock development, which is in our parish. In February, the PCC received a presentation from the developer, Nigel Timmis, and heard about how the churches in Yeovil are reaching out to similar developments in their town from Rev David Keen. Watch out for details of prayer walks and the distribution of welcome packs.

Financial matters

This time of year sees the treasurers doing a lot of work. First, Tina Andrews presented the forecast for 2012, which shows the total anticipated income is £110,000 and the expenditure £112,265 - an operating deficit of £2,265. This means that the church is now reliant on the whole of the projected income from hall hire, and needs further income in order to support the present pattern of ministry.

Tina's interim Treasurer's Report for 2011 showed that there may be a small operating loss once all the figures are in. This is primarily due to an exceptionally heavy year for repairs. 2012 will also see exceptional expenditure in that the extension of the Children and Families Worker Project will not be part-funded by a diocesan grant, as has been the case for the original three years. A grant was given to St Peter's Lyngford to refurbish their crèche.

Premises matters

Work is now in hand on converting the SW Porch into a small room which can be used as an extension to the crèche. The ancient carpet in the Ringing Chamber has been lifted and the thick and solid oak floor is in need of a little attention.

The PCC agreed to purchase a CCTV system to allow anyone in the office to monitor the corridor, as an aid to staff security. TDBC has decided to discontinue funding floodlighting of public buildings, and proposes to give the equipment to building owners. In view of the running costs, the PCC decided to inform the council that the church would not be taking over the floodlighting.

The latest PCC minutes and agenda are displayed on a board near the coffee area, and previous minutes can be inspected in the office. The "Contact Points" leaflet is available near the photograph board; this tells you who to talk to about the many and varied things we do as a church.

Martin Wakefield

NEWSLETTER CONTACTS LIST

Contacts for Pastoral Matters
Vicar: Rev. Tim Jones 01823 333194
e-mail: timjones@tesco.net

Pastoral Care Coordinator: Jane Melton 01823 412370

Church office: 01823 272931
e-mail: info@stjamestaunton.co.uk

Children and Family Worker
Alison Buckman 07783 883053

Magazine Editor
Andrew Slade 01823 259440
e-mail: 3waypersonalprint@gmail.com

Churchwardens
Jacky Gillingham 01823 270044
Mandy Slade 01823 259440

Associate Churchwarden
Stan Wojcik

HOME GROUPS

Tuesday	10.30am	56 Manor Orchard (278387) Joyce
	11.30am	3 Addison Grove (353316) Anita 'Tea and Teddies'
	8.00pm	25 Whitmore Road (283691) Kathryn
Wednesday	2.30pm	15 Barrington Close (272597) John
	7.30pm	27 Priorswood Road (251077) Kay
	7.30pm	13 Gyffarde Street (365714) Mark
	7.30pm	28 Killams Crescent (254344) Les
	7.30pm	28 Cometrowe Lane (337690) Steve
	7.45pm	42 Ashley Road (284688) Richard
	8.00pm	Hesperia, The Avenue (277916) Richard
	8.00pm	The Gamma Group (272931) Contact Church Office
Thursday	7.30pm	69 Richmond Road (333194) Margaret
	8.00pm	12 The Avenue (271223) Sue

OTHER GROUPS

Mondays	Parent and Toddlers Group 10am-11.30am in the Church Hall Contact Alison Buckman (07783 883053)
Tuesdays	Jungle Club 4.30pm – 5.45pm for children aged 6-11 in the Church Hall Contact Tim Jones (333194)
Tuesdays	11+ Club 7pm – 8.30pm for young people aged over 11 years in the Church Hall. Contact Nicky Bradford (337690)
Tuesdays	Bell ringing (alternate weeks) Contact Marian Gentile (275278)
Wednesdays	Art Group in the Church Hall Contact Church Office (272507)
Thursdays	Thursday Fellowship (first Thursday of the month) in the Church Hall Contact Vicky Dykes (282507)
Friday	The Ark Support Group for parents/carers of children with special needs. Meets once a fortnight. Contact Alison Buckman (07783 883053)



This is latest exercise at the water colour art group that meets in St James Church Hall Taunton on Wednesday 10-12 noon.

It is now completed and up in the hall. A Picture was enlarged and cut into twenty five squares. Each person did two or more squares. We drew a grid on our paper as we had to enlarge the square as well as match the colours. It proved frustrating as we did not know what we were painting, tiles, flower stems or I did the tail of the duck! Yet the result is impressive as I am sure you will agree.