

# St James Church Magazine



March - May 2018

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### Letter From Mike Gillingham

I am writing this letter just before Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent and you will be reading it during Lent. It is very fashionable to give things up for a time, witness Veganuary, Dry January or the men only Movember. For some people Lent is just that, a time to give something up, but only for a short time.

Lent recalls Jesus fasting in the wilderness. But, and it is an important but, Jesus' fasting was as an aid to defeat temptation by concentrating on God and a preparation

for a lifetime of service. Lent rightly looks forward to Good Friday and Easter because this was what Jesus was preparing for.

It could be far better if we used Lent as a time of preparation. Bishop Ruth last year asked people to take up something for Lent. She started to re-learn the clarinet. Perhaps we could find something to prepare us for our lifetime's service, and so use this time positively. For some of us who are older, a lifetime may not seem very long, but Jesus prepared for only three years or so.

We have a lot to prepare for. The coming of a new vicar will mean changes for all of us, perhaps big changes, perhaps small, at least somebody new to get to know and someone new to support. Change is hard to deal with, however small the change. I have recently given up sugar in my tea. This is a very small change (and made for my own selfish benefit – I hope to lose weight!), but it has taken some effort. I am sure that there will be changes we will all like and rejoice in, but there will be others which make us less happy.

Jesus used His forty days to face temptation. He faced the temptations head on and dealt with them. We could use these days to face our own temptations.

We are tempted to complain when things are not as we like them. The positive way to face this is to praise anything we can in what people are doing. I well remember Lesley Grimwade returning to this church of which he had been a member of for many years before being ordained. The church had changed and in some ways which did not suit him, but he was full of positive comments about the church. I do not recall a complaint from him. He is a good example for us. We could all find things to complain about, but we can use Lent to look for things to rejoice about. We can look for ways to encourage people.

Remember Paul's advice to the Phillipians "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things". We are far too prone to thinking about the opposite. I remember my mother's comment about my grandmother, that she would read a now defunct newspaper well known for sensationalism tut-tutting over its contents, but avidly reading more. We all have that temptation.

Another temptation is to look at them rather than us. "What are they thinking of?" "Why did they do that?" "Why don't they..?" We say at communion that "We are the Body of Christ" "let us then pursue all that leads to Peace and builds up our common life". Blaming "them" leads in the opposite direction!

Jesus faced down His tempter by using the Bible and gave us an example of prayer. These are good examples to follow. There are plenty of opportunities for both in the months ahead.

Lent is the preparation for Good Friday. It may be that we are conscious of failure, but Good Friday speaks of all our failures being dealt with once and for all. The most important message of Christianity is that we can be forgiven, have been forgiven and always will be forgiven and accepted by God our loving Father.

Lent is also the preparation for Easter. Jesus triumphed and we can share that triumph.

As we face this year of changes and uncertainties we are in the hands of a loving Shepherd who cares for us, and who will look after us despite what we do.

The Peace of the Lord be always with us.

Mike Gillingham.

passioneaster2018

# St James' Players

*(never knowingly over-rehearsed...)*

St James' Church  
Tuesday 27th March  
Wednesday 28th March

Explore the events of Holy Week through the eyes  
and thoughts of some who may have been there...

Jerusalem City gates open at  
7:30pm for 7:45 pm start

Entry by ticket £5 (students £3)  
(includes refreshments from the Jerusalem market stalls)

Available from:  
St James' Church Office - 01823 272931  
Jenny Wakefield or members of the cast

All proceeds to 'Open Door'



## Letter from the Right Reverend Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells For Parish Newsletters March 2018

### Making space

I remember my father once saying 'as you get older the seconds seem longer, but the years go by faster.' I think he was right. Perhaps that's your experience too? In March 2014 I officially became the Bishop of Bath and Wells and began to 'take up the reins' and it's two years since I was appointed the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding. The time has flown by. Even more amazing is that this year I shall have been ordained for 38 years and I thank God for all that he has enabled me to see and do through those years. In my study there's a picture of a much-younger me, taken at my ordination in 1980. Looking at it reminds me of the Lord's grace and goodness to me and to Jane through those years.

I will be taking some time some study leave in May and June this year. At one time these were called 'sabbaticals' and that word is from the same root as 'Sabbath', which means to take time to rest. I am particularly grateful to Bishop Ruth and the Bishop's Staff who have encouraged me to take this time, especially as it will mean they will have to 'keep an eye on the shop'.

This will give me an opportunity to spend time reading and reflecting on what God may be saying about the priorities and opportunities for the



diocese and the wider Church - and time to pray and think more about the challenges which lie ahead of us. During this time Jane and I have arranged to go to Israel. Neither of us has been there before and that in itself will be a wonderful experience.

In the midst of busy, noisy and often crowded lives it is hard at times to make space to read and to pray, to make time to listen to God and to build our relationship with him. I am sure that having this precious gift of time will mean that I return renewed and refreshed for all that lies ahead as together we seek to live and tell the story of Jesus.

Taking care of our spiritual lives is something we all need to do and Jesus took time to be apart with his Heavenly Father. I know not everyone can take study leave, but even a half day will often help to charge the 'spiritual batteries'. I look forward to sharing with you some of what I have learnt when I get back to the desk.

With warm Christian greetings,

Rt Rev Peter Hancock

Bishop of Bath and Wells

## **Wardens Update**

Some of the information here you may be aware of as I write this in early February based on where we are now. This is just to give you a flavour from the Warden's point of view.

As Warden's we try to meet weekly if not every 10 days to support each other and bring any items to the attention of us all. Most importantly to pray as we realise that we are trying to keep St James functioning as smoothly as we can.

Our next Wardens Event is booked for Monday 19 February this is to highlight how you can get more involved, this will show areas where we need helpers as we have a few vacancies at the moment. It will also give the opportunity for you to ask questions and share light refreshments and time together. You are welcome to this just to enjoy refreshment and fellowship the purpose is not to force you into helping but it just gives people the opportunity to find out more if they wish, this will be at 6pm – 8pm.

The Parish Profile Team have been meeting regularly and working extremely hard to compile our Parish Profile, this is a very important document which is like our shop window and part of process in recruiting the next incumbent. The article will be presented to PCC on 12 February, once signed off this will go to Diocese to be approved. The position then goes to advert, our Parish Reps Ruth and Steve plus Simon Hill the Archdeacon and Roger Driver from Simeon's Trustees will be very busy (as if they aren't now) with the next stage of the task.

Back by popular demand on Saturday 10 March we are holding another Church Conference where as before the morning session will be open to all church members from 10.30am – 12.30pm. This will explain how things are going and give the opportunity for discussion and questions it will be followed by a bring and share lunch.

Our different prayer groups are crucial at this time to support everything going on at the moment and over the coming months. Do try and get to some of these as they are a real blessing, details can be found in the church bulletin.

Monday 16 April at 7.30pm is the Church AGCM to be held in the church, we ask you to seriously think about attending this to support your church, the church Wardens and PCC Vice Chair/Associate church Warden.

We appreciate things need to be discussed on a Sunday but as Wardens can we request that you give people the chance to worship and catch them at an appropriate time. This will hopefully give us all the time to listen and feed on God's word.

Blessing to you all

Joyce, Ruth and Steve



## **ST JAMES CHURCH VACANCY PRAYER**

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for blessing our church and town  
through the ministry of our previous vicars,  
thank you that we have grown as a church in so many ways,  
help us to stay close and true to your calling  
during this time of vacancy.

Lord Jesus,

We know that you have plans for us  
and that these plans are good.

We ask now that you will help us to share responsibility,  
grow in faith, love one another, care for those in need,  
reach out to others, and welcome newcomers.

Holy Spirit,

Please guide those who are seeking the right person for us,  
and those who are seeking the right place for their ministry,  
that together we may discover your way for the future  
and see your kingdom grow.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



# Surprise! Surprise!!

It wasn't anyone's birthday and it wasn't really a normal party setting. It was on the slopes of a mountain that Jesus handed over a box of surprises to his disciples. As they unwrapped the ribbon around the box and lifted the lid, they found a number of smaller parcels within the box. Each was separately wrapped with strict orders to only open them at the appropriate time.

Peter opened the first surprise parcel as Jesus talked to his disciples on that mountain slope. Jesus had reached a watershed in his work and was interested to know if the disciples really understood who he was. Peter was the first one with his response. 'You are the Messiah', he exclaimed, with all his preconceptions of the nature of Messiah. Surprise number one- Jesus accepted the title and then went on to tell them that Messiahship involved rejection and death. Until that moment, the two had been mutually exclusive. Peter could not have been more surprised than he was when he heard Jesus acknowledge his Messiahship and define it as a suffering Messiahship.

Another surprise parcel was opened during a heated conversation amongst the disciples. James and John were up to their self-advancement tricks again when they asked Jesus if they could be his numbers two and three in his kingdom. Jesus in a few words showed them that their understanding was limited. He turned their concept of greatness right on its head. True greatness is found in service, Jesus explained. And then he went onto show that his own greatness lay in service for God and mankind and that the whole purpose of his life was to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45). Again Peter must have been surprised. Most people have life taken from them. Jesus said he was willingly going to make a gift of his life and through his life, many would find freedom. Peter was surprised and perplexed just as he had when he had opened his first surprise parcel.

From that moment on life was full of surprises for Peter. Another surprise came when he was at his lowest, lying on the ground sobbing out loudly. Earlier he had proudly and publicly declared his loyalty for Jesus. The rest of the disciples might let Jesus down, he had said, but not Peter. He would support Jesus unto death.

And now he had realised to his surprise, the foolishness of his promise and the weakness of his spirit. Three times he had denied all knowledge of Jesus, even underlining his denials with swearing and oaths. He had considered himself to be strong, dependable and loyal to Jesus. Events had shown him he was weak, undependable and a failure. And that was a surprise.

The death of Jesus, just as he had predicted and then the empty tomb- the biggest surprise of all.

But perhaps the biggest life changing surprise was reserved for the meal on the beach with Jesus. Jesus was alive and here he was preparing a fire for a fish lunch. Peter must have been a bundle of emotions after his past failures. When they had finished eating Jesus directed his gaze towards Peter. Three times he asked his disciple if he really loved Jesus. Three times Peter's protestations of love were met with the words, 'Care for...feed my sheep.' Peter had not been abandoned because of his failure. He had a future ministry. There was forgiveness for his past and a task for the future. And that ministry was to be full of surprises and God used Peter in ways which at this moment must have seemed unimaginable.

God is a God of surprises. He is too big to be wrapped up in our own plans, expectations and understandings. It may be that God has another box of surprises for us as a church during the coming year. Later as we look back upon the way in which he has led us, we may well exclaim, 'What a surprise. I could never have written the script.' God can and God does.

# Who's, Who?

Its not always easy to know who does what in a church our size, and during the Vacancy the obvious person is not there to guide and sign post us , so this is a photo guide to help us know who some of the main “go to” people are. Of course, there are many more people are who are responsible for different areas of church life, and the board at the entrance to church aims to identify different people and their roles.

## The Wardens Team



The Wardens, Ruth Stevens and Joyce Kirk together with Steve Bradford, Associate Warden and Chair of the PCC, have the responsibility of managing all aspects of Church life, especially during the Vacancy. Please pray for them as they have a vast range of tasks. They usually know who is the best person to approach to deal with any queries and are always ready to help.

## The PCC (Parish Church Council)

is the strategic body for the church's function, planning and vision. With the Vicar and the Wardens, it is responsible for the decision making in the church

(the PCC members are not pictured here, as there will be new members in April following the AGM, but you can find them all on the board at the entrance to church)

## The Ministry Team

The current Ministry Team is made up of retired clergy, and licenced Readers. They are responsible with the support of the Worship Coordinator, Richard Lucas and Musical Director, Ray Crooks, for the worship in the church, officiating at services, planning worship, and various aspects of pastoral ministry e.g. baptism visits, funerals and some visiting.



Reverends Ken Jamieson, Geoff Treasure and John Dykes



Our Licensed Readers Nic Tall, Kate Taylor, Kevin Brewer, Kathryn Clarke and Mike Gillingham.

In addition, we have several people who are involved in leading worship and these include Nicki Bradford, Jamie Fox, James Haddell, Julie Kimber and Ed Hosken.

## The Coordinators

Coordinators, have been appointed for various aspects of church life, Worship, Pastoral matters, Discipleship, Outreach, Administration, and Facilities. They aim to keep things running and free the Vicar and Wardens from getting bogged down in too much detail.



Kate Taylor  
Children & Families



Richard Lucas  
Worship



Martin Wakefield  
Premises & Technical



Annie Reid  
Pastoral



Jenny Wakefield  
Outreach & Mission



Roger Fenton  
Discipleship and  
Home groups



Alex Dickinson is our **Administrator** and is responsible for a multitude of things connected with the smooth running of the church and hall, managing the bookings and bulletin, ordering equipment, dealing with plumbers and electricians ... the list is endless.



## Caretaker



Ian White our **Caretaker** is responsible for keeping the church and halls clean and tidy, so you will often find him hoovering, dusting or making the kitchen gleam.

Alex and Ian are often our frontline for people who contact the church, so have a very important role.

## The Treasurer's team

Richard Sainsbury is our **Church Treasurer**, dealing with all things to do with accounts, payments, expenses and money. In this he is assisted by Chris Rickard (payroll), Tina Andrews (Banking), Alex Dickinson (invoicing).



Richard Taylor is our **Planned Giving Officer** and deals with our gift aid scheme and is able to advise on matters of covenanted giving and legacies.



**The Parish Safeguarding Officers**, Jenny Wakefield and Becky Fox, are responsible for ensuring that we keep within the safeguarding requirements of both the National Church and current legislation. They also have a responsibility for ensuring volunteers access safeguarding training.



## THE MAN ON THE CLAPHAM OMNIBUS

The bus hissed as it stopped opposite the grey walls of HMP Brixton. The man in seat 26 felt tired after a hard day's work, but his senses sharpened when two bright images came into view. The first was an illuminated sign on the bus shelter which pictured a model with a flawless complexion and the caption 'Age is just a number. L'Oreal' The second image was of a real person, anxiously waiting at the bus stop wearing a vivid blue and green polyester shell suit.

The jaded passengers on the bus were intrigued by seeing a fashion relic from two decades ago step on board. The new passenger was 1066, formerly of D Wing. The driver, nearing the end of his shift, instantly forget his customer care training and became irritable because the new arrival didn't have an Oyster card. Yes, he would take cash on this occasion but only the right money. After the shell suit, this was 1066's next embarrassment since leaving . He'd been given his £35.85 discharge grant mostly in notes. He was £1 short for the fare. "Hang on love," said an old woman in the front seat wearing a charity shop coat. She fished into her purse for the coin. "Here you are. My husband, God rest his soul, never used to carry money around either."

At this stop, the bus driver expected such pantomimes. The widow understood why they happened too.

Daylight was fading as they crept through the rush hour traffic. 1066 was pleased by the slow pace because the journey's end would mean facing reality in the outside world. The High Street seemed more threatening than he remembered 17 years and 3 months ago. Advertisements promoted various brands- Exceptional Value! Best Value! That word value seemed to mock him. When he'd been inside, he had felt a non-person with no value, his self worth ground down by the system. He was known either by his number or by his inevitable nickname, 'Hastings.'

Rain rolled down the bus windows. A sign on a recruitment agency read 'Building a Better Future'. What sort of future did he have? He remembered the discharge officer warning that when you get out, three obstacles can create a vicious circle: Accommodation; Job; Bank Account. Without one you can't get the other. Now he was out, he was more focussed...just how vicious would it be? He saw

commuters, heads down against the weather, scuttling towards the Underground, oblivious to the blanketed squatting figure in the HMV doorway. Small beads of sweat formed on his brow.

He noticed that the man in seat 26 next to him was studying his reflection in the bus window. The man then turned away and closed his eyes, perhaps in thought. Just after the stop for the central library, the man startled him by asking: "Where're you bound?"

1066 replied with contrived casualness: "Er...end of the line...I'll go on from there I guess."

"I'm a regular on this route," said the man, "Reckon I'll do the same as you this time. I'm one for following my nose, if you see what I mean."

"I see", said 1066, quite understandably not seeing at all.

"Look at that." At the traffic lights the man pointed to a banner attached to railings of a church. It read 'I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.'

"I could do with some of that actually," said 1066 quietly. "My name's John, by the way."

"Good to meet you John. I'm Pete. Do you mind if I say something?"

"Why stop now?"

"Well, I've just had this thought. You might find it useful. It kind of follows on from that banner we saw. My thought was that none of us is just a number, we are all loved and valued by God, no exceptions."

"Umm" came John's reply. He called to mind an Alpha course the chaplain had put on a couple of years back. He remembered being told that God loved him. It had made an impression at the time.

"Tell you what," said Pete, "When we get to Clapham, and only if you can spare the time, I know a greasy spoon which does a great bacon sandwich and cuppa. The fact is, I was a lost soul once. I was like a ship adrift without a rudder, but now God's steered me back. Maybe I can tell you about it. Does that sound like a good offer?"

Andy Hall

## *Easter at St James*

During Easter our normal pattern of worship will change a little. These are the details of the main Easter Services.

### **MOTHERING SUNDAY**

**Sunday 11th March 10.30am**

All Age Worship

**Sunday 18th March 10.30am**

Holy Communion

### **PALM SUNDAY**

**Sunday 25th March 10.30am**

Morning Worship with the St James Players

### **PASSIONEASTER 2018**

**Tuesday 27th & Wednesday 28th March 7.30pm**

An Easter play produced by the St James Players

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**Thursday 29th March 7.00pm**

Last Supper meal with communion

**GOOD FRIDAY**

**Friday 30th March 10.30am**

Hot Cross Buns & coffee from 10am

Combined service followed by Walk of Witness

**AN HOUR AT THE CROSS**

**Friday 30th March 2.00pm**

A contemplative service

**EASTER SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS**

**Sunday 1st April 10.30am**

Family Communion

**BANK HOLIDAY RAMBLE**

**Monday 2nd April 10.15am**

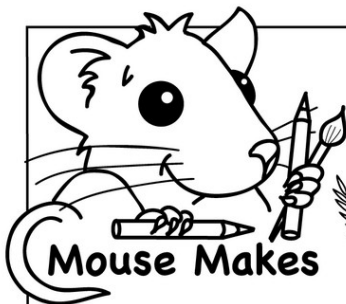
Meet in the Church Car Park

**PENTECOST SUNDAY**

**Sunday 20th May 10.30am**

Holy Communion

*Come and Join us this Easter time at St James*



## Journey to the Cross

Read the Bible - find the answers



**READ Matthew 21:1-11**

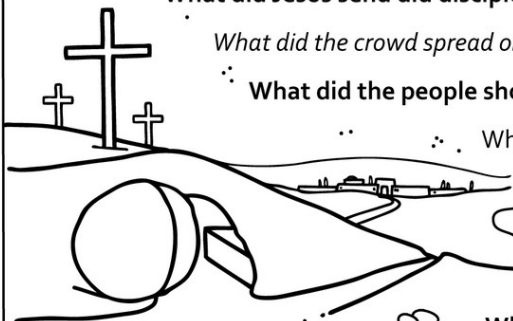
Where did Jesus stop on his journey? vs 1

What did Jesus send his disciples to get? vs 2

What did the crowd spread on the road in front of Jesus? vs 8

What did the people shout? vs 9

What city was Jesus going to? vs 10



**READ Matthew 26:17-75**

What festival did the disciples celebrate? vs 17

Which disciple denied Jesus? vs 34

Which disciple betrayed Jesus? vs 47

**READ Matthew 27**

When Jesus was taken to be crucified, what did the soldiers put on him? vs 28-29

What time did Jesus die? vs 45

Whose tomb was Jesus buried in? vs 57

**READ Matthew 28**

On the third day who rolled away the stone covering the tomb? vs 2

What had happened to Jesus? vs 6,7



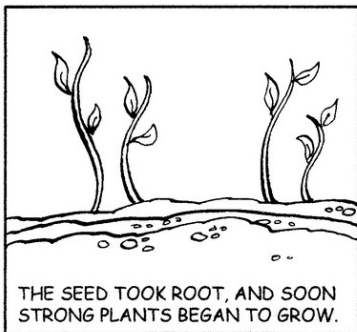


# The tale of the Wheat and the Weeds

JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

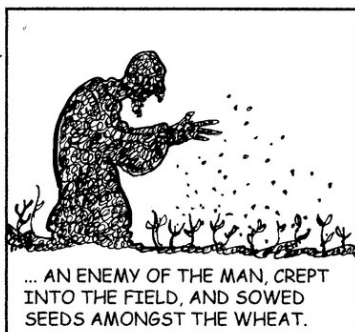


ONE WAS ABOUT A MAN WHO SOWED SEED IN HIS FIELD.



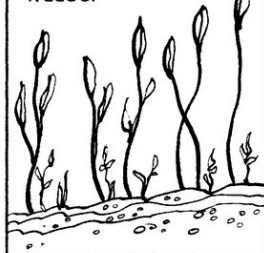
THE SEED TOOK ROOT, AND SOON STRONG PLANTS BEGAN TO GROW.

BUT ONE NIGHT, WHEN EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP...



... AN ENEMY OF THE MAN, CREPT INTO THE FIELD, AND SOWED SEEDS AMONGST THE WHEAT.

AS THE WHEAT BEGAN TO GROW, SO DID THE WEEDS.



WHEN THE SERVANTS SAW THE WEEDS THEY SUGGESTED RIPPING THEM OUT.

NO, LET'S LEAVE THEM UNTIL HARVEST TIME!



IF YOU PULL THEM UP NOW, YOU MIGHT KILL THE WHEAT TOO. WE'LL SORT THEM OUT AT HARVEST.



WHEN THE WHEAT WAS READY, IT WAS HARVESTED INTO HUGE BUNDLES.

BUT THE WEEDS WERE BURNED IN A LARGE FIRE.



THE PARABLE TELLS US THAT ALTHOUGH WE LIVE ALONGSIDE BADNESS, WE CAN KEEP SEPARATE FROM IT.

# Word Search

c	p	q	w	i	n	d	s	n	v	j	w
j	l	h	q	c	i	x	a	r	y	e	i
f	e	o	a	c	l	a	m	b	t	x	i
r	d	g	u	r	e	o	j	k	e	a	s
o	o	s	y	d	a	y	c	r	w	d	w
g	o	m	o	p	l	o	e	u	l	e	a
s	r	o	l	i	t	w	h	i	s	a	r
a	l	s	m	s	o	i	a	o	m	t	m
b	v	a	e	p	r	h	a	t	u	h	s
t	f	v	v	d	a	r	k	n	e	s	s
j	i	j	h	e	b	r	e	w	s	r	e
l	g	n	a	t	s	l	w	f	w	u	a

Nile

locusts

army

slaves

gnats

sea

family

darkness

door

lamb

wind

water

swarms

Hebrews

frogs

livestock

house

power

Egyptians

Pharaoh

hail

blood

cloud

death



In January this year Debra Green OBE was invited to Taunton by a group of churches, to speak about the work of ROC, the organisation she founded in Manchester in 2004. Debra also spoke at the B1 service at North Street and has agreed to provide the planning and organisation of a ROC event in Taunton in September.

Redeeming Our Communities has developed from churches coming together firstly in Manchester, and now has over 150 projects, throughout the UK, with many more at the enquiry and planning stage, run by newly recruited volunteers. The charity's main aim is to bring about **community transformation** by creating strategic partnerships which open up opportunities for crime and disorder reduction and improved community cohesion. This partnership approach has seen crime and anti-social behaviour fall and fresh hope brought to some of the most deprived and challenging areas of the UK, urban and rural alike.

ROC brings together community groups, churches, the police, the fire service, local authorities and voluntary agencies to encourage them to work together in **positive partnerships for practical 'on the ground' change**. As a result, statutory agencies have improved access to the support of community/church groups, and volunteers are enabled to better serve the needs of their community.

The aims and vision of ROC are very much in line with our own calling and mission as summarised in the parish profile. The PCC has decided to accept the invitation to join with five other "B1" churches in the town, Vineyard, North Street Congregational, Living Light, Riverside and Canon Street, to have a ROC conversation event in Taunton in September – date to be finalised.

There is much good already that is going on in the area, and a ROC event seeks to celebrate that, to bring together the knowledge and expertise of people at all levels and then to explore where the gaps are and encourage further working together, so that our community can experience transformation. Most importantly Prayer is a vital part of this, and answers to prayer have been seen in abundance.

For more information talk to Jenny Wakefield, Outreach Coordinator.

# Christmas memories

It seems strange talking about Christmas as we approach Easter, but it's a good opportunity to share some memories of our Christmas celebrations and remember how God's amazing gift to the world can be profoundly important to people of all ages.



The younger children enjoyed dressing up to tell the familiar story of the Nativity, repeated again on Christmas eve when the church was full of families coming to hear what Christmas is all about before going home to hang up their stockings and prepare for family festivities.



The Christingle, a visual aid explaining the message of Jesus' as the light of the world, and his sacrifice which enables us to be brought back into a relationship with God.



# Christmas Fun



The Monday Toddler group and Santa Claus, with presents, face painting and party food. Sheila is looking very festive as chief Elf!

Santa also visited Praise and Play later in the week, but wasn't allowed to go on the bouncy castle as he was toooo tall and big.



## News from the St James School



At Christmas we were delighted to have the children from Nursery and Reception celebrating their Christingle Service in the Church and KS2 with their Carol service just before the end of term. As ever both were joyous occasions with a mix of songs celebrating the different aspects of Christmas.

Some of our Xplore leaders and Kate Taylor were able to enjoy a lovely Christmas lunch with the children, by special invitation. We hope that they behaved properly and that we get invited back next year. The school choir aided by Rob Rawle, sang at several community venue's including Pegasus Court, helping to bring some very special Christmas cheer



to their audiences



The school has had a number of changes this year, including the building of a new classroom. There are now 14 classrooms at the school

accommodating over three hundred children and this does not include those in the nursery.

Pictured right we see Sue Lucas, now Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust Early Years Advisor with the Head Teacher, Jason





Eveleigh, Chair of Governors Derek Smart and John Millard, site manager cutting the ribbon to open the new block. The school gym has also been refurbished inside, providing a lovely activity and performance space and where KS1 performed their Nativity play this year. Its been a busy time for Mr. Eveleigh and all the school staff.

It's always a pleasure to go into the school, and those who go in regularly, like the Xplore leaders, Rob Rawle and now Nicki Bradford are always sure of a smile and a welcome. The church/school prayer meeting which has been in abeyance for a while, is now restarting on the first Friday of each term and half term. Do come along to pray for the school and find out what else is happening there. For example Annie Reid has recently been recruiting volunteers to help with reading in the school, if you are interested do have a word with her.



**Lee Abbey, Devon**  
**A Date for your Diary**  
**15-17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019**

We have been fortunate in being able to book 70 places at Lee Abbey which is a wonderful venue where St. James have enjoyed previous weekends away. Amazingly the price is the same as 2015...£99 per person (£125 ensuite) with special rates and programme for children. Booking forms will soon be available so keep a look out .



Taunton Team Chaplaincy is one of the local Christian Organisations that we are privileged to support at St. James. Chaplains are drawn from local churches and linked with a workplace or area to visit (usually) weekly with the purpose of offering friendly and supportive care to all. A chaplain's main aim is to listen and take an interest in the people they meet and give comfort and compassion where needed. Over a period the chaplain will get to know and to be known and will be accepted as a caring friend.

The list of organisation and retailers who have invited chaplains to offer support to staff has increased over the years and includes among others, Somerset County Council, The UK Hydrographic Office, Boots, Debenhams, Asda, Sainsbury's and the Taunton Town Centre generally.

There are also chaplains visiting Care homes, and the marginalised community. More recently the Transport Police have invited the chaplaincy to form a team of Rail Responders at Taunton Railway Station to support passengers and staff in times of crisis.

There is an increasing awareness of the contributions that chaplains make to the wellbeing of staff and their organisations as a whole. In 2017, chaplains had encounters with 14,500 people, of which 3,800 were significant encounters. 30% of those encounters related to faith.

We have four members of St. James involved in different aspects of Chaplaincy work: Andy Hall, Les Andrews, Kate Taylor and Ann Cross. Do pray for them, and the whole chaplaincy team. If you want to know more do ask them about what they do and the challenges and joys of their role.

TTC are based in the Market House, in the centre of town. The lead Chaplain is Adrian Prior-Sankey. They have a good website where you can find out more: [www.tauntonteamchaplaincy.org](http://www.tauntonteamchaplaincy.org).

Also on that website you can find out what is happening in churches around the area through their monthly 'Tell the Church' bulletin. Each Wednesday at 10am there is a prayer meeting for people chaplains meet, the chaplaincy's work and the town. You are very welcome to join in if you are in town.



## CHOOSING A GOOD MINISTER.

Dear Abby,

One of the toughest tasks a church faces is choosing a good minister. A member of an official board undergoing this painful process finally lost patience. He'd just witnessed the pastoral relations committee reject applicant after applicant for some minor fault - real or imagined. It was time for a bit of soul searching on the part of the committee. So he stood up and read this letter purported to be from an applicant -

*Gentlemen;*

*Understanding your pulpit is vacant, I should like to apply for the position. I have many qualifications. I've been a preacher with much success and also have had some successes as a writer. Some say I'm a good organizer. I've been a leader most places I've been.*

*I'm over 50 years of age and have never preached in one place for more than 3 years. In some places, I have left town after my work caused riots and disturbances. I must admit I have been in jail three or four times, but not because of any real wrongdoing.*

*My health is not too good, though I still accomplish a great deal. The churches I have preached in have been small, though located in several large cities.*

*I've not gotten along well with religious leaders in the towns where I have preached. In fact, some have threatened me, and even attacked me physically. I am not too good at keeping records. I have been known to forget whom I have baptized.*

*However, if you can use me, I promise to do my best for you.*

The board member turned to the committee and said, "Well, what do you think? Shall we call him?"

The good church folks were appalled! Consider a sickly, troublemaking, absent-minded ex-jailbird? Was the board member crazy? Who signed the application? Who had such colossal nerve?

The board member eyed them all keenly before he replied-

"It's signed, The Apostle Paul"

Thanks be unto God  
for His gifts.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15



## ***The PCC has been discussing...***

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

### **Vacancy Matters**

Much of the PCC's time has been taken up with vacancy matters. The Parish Profile has been completed, and thanks were expressed to the writing team for an excellent job, and to Bethan Baigent who has set out the text in a lively and attractive manner. The Parish Profile will be presented to church members at a morning conference on Saturday 10 March – details are in the bulletin.

Steve Bradford and Ruth Stevens were appointed as our parish representatives on the selection panel. We should all be keeping them in the forefront of our prayers as they undertake this most important role.

The PCC unanimously passed the following motion: That the PCC welcomes both male and female candidates for the post of vicar of St James, Taunton.

### **Safeguarding ... and Safe Working**

The number of people who volunteer in any capacity and thus should do the 'C0' awareness course is gradually increasing. 'C1' training is also being rolled out to those who need it.

The Safe Working Reminders were updated and have been issued with the bulletin. Anyone who volunteers in any capacity and has not seen them should collect a copy from the back of church.

### **Financial**

Richard Sainsbury presented a financial forecast for 2018, which is effectively our 'budget'. This is based on the trends in income and expenditure noted during the year. As usual, the big unknown is the need for repairs that reveal themselves during the year.

The PCC carried out its annual review of grants to our mission partners. Most grants continue as before, but we made a one-off donation to Open Door towards their expenses during the winter and also decided to increase the regular grant.

Richard also presented an initial report on how the finances had worked out in 2017. Income has increased, and we expect a small operating surplus when the accounts are finalised.

The PCC noted with thanks a report by Richard Taylor, Planned Giving Officer, on stewardship giving in 2017. The total income from regular giving was £90,941, and the Gift Aid refund will be £21,583.

## **Community Involvement**

The PCC has been looking at three initiatives for engaging with our local community:

A group led by Geoff Treasure is looking at a scheme called Transforming Lives for Good, which seeks to mentor primary age children who are having behavioural difficulties.

We are keeping a watching brief on the development of a Taunton branch of the campaigning organisation, Citizens UK. Bishop Ruth Worsley is chairing the Sponsoring Committee. It is unclear as yet whether CofE involvement will be at the parish or deanery level.

The PCC has decided to join a group of five 'B1' churches in running a project with the organisation Redeeming Our Communities. This will start with a meeting in September with various local bodies and may lead to partnership projects to tackle issues that are identified.

## **Miscellaneous Matters**

The church website has been overhauled to freshen the look and feel. The next stage will be to move the website to a modern platform, so we can develop it further.

The 2017 October count showed that there are 197 people attending on a regular basis. This is slightly down on last year.

Plans are in hand for a Mission Sunday, to enable church members to find out more about our local and wider mission partners.

Planning has started for a Church Houseparty at Lee Abbey in February 2019.

*The latest full PCC minutes are displayed near the coffee area.*

MW

## ***What the Facilities Team got up to last year***

Roof leaking? No. Lights OK? Yes. Weeds in the flower beds? No. Toilets working? Yes. Heating working? Yes, most of the time. Gremlins in the sound system? Not really, just the usual crop of broken cables. Most of the time the team keeping things in order is beavering away out of sight when the church is quiet, and most of us are unaware of what is happening. So here are some highlights from 2017, and a look ahead to this year's excitement.

**Those drains again.** The year began with the car park being dug up again. After several weeks in 2016 clearing a blocked drain under our property, Wessex Water took over for the section under the road. If only we'd been able to get them to lay a new drain in the first place! It would have saved us many, many hours of work.

**What a hero!** Hats off to Brian Pretty who took on another massive job. He rubbed down and repainted all of the railings along St James Street. We'd had some repairs done already – after a steel bar came loose just as your Facilities Coordinator was walking under it!

**Refurbishment continues.** At long last we got around to replacing the floor covering in the corridor and toilets. That was a big improvement! Thanks to our Premises Manager, Stan Wojcik, for organising that (amongst numerous other tasks during the year).

Work is underway on refurbishing the Church Lounge. We first had to repair damage where someone had tried to break the door down several years ago; Andrew Hull (our regular handyman) had to rebuild part of the wall as well as refix the doorframe. He found that the original build had been done poorly. So another unexpected cost – we get lots of these in the course of a year. Sue Doyle and her team are now decorating the room, so it should be back in use soon.

**Not a weed to be seen!** Many thanks to Sue Carpenter, who has taken on the undending job of keeping the flower beds in order. They are looking good now. It's just a pity that some passers-by steal plants from time to time. There are lots of other areas that could do with attention, so do chat to Sue if gardening is something you could help with.

**Reach for the sky!** Or rather, the pinnacles. Contractor Geoff Gale and his team spent a happy week hanging off ropes repointing the decorative work around the top of the tower. They will need to spend



another week this year. And in due course we will need to replace some of the pinnacles.

**Quiet, isn't it?** Just to note that work on the organ is due to start after Easter. We put in a lot of effort in 2017 specifying the work and obtaining a faculty. We are very grateful to everyone who has donated money to enable us to bring the organ back into use.

**Meanwhile, deep inside a computer ...** Beccy Fox is doing a sterling job bringing our office IT systems up to date. She has replaced all the all out-of-support software, rewritten the invoicing system, and is now completing work on the main membership database (including extending it for our safeguarding records).

**And in the ether ...** Jo Gentile spent several weeks cleaning up the church website. In 2018 we will be moving the website to a modern platform and then planning a programme of content improvement.

## **Highlights expected in 2018**

We've already noted some jobs for this year. Here are some other things we are expecting to do:

- Church office: knock the two offices into one and redecorate.
- Church library: install new bookcases in the corridor and provide a new display rack in church.
- Churchyard wall: this needs repointing and rebuilding in places.
- Churchyard path: The large tree we took down a few years ago wrecked the adjacent path. We need to remove the large stump and relay the path.
- Coal Orchard: we have been liaising with TDBC on the issues we will encounter when the car park is reduced in size. We have identified a way of providing alternative parking and will encourage TDBC to put that work into their programme.
- Sound and projector systems: Richard Carpenter, Norman Bambridge and I will be continuing our programme of improvements, as resources permit.

## **Can you help?**

If you have practical skills, or can take on the management of projects, and would like to help, please speak to one of the team. We have jobs of all sorts and sizes, and every little bit of help will be much appreciated.

*Martin Wakefied, Facilities Coordinator*

# NEWSLETTER CONTACTS LIST

## Contacts for Pastoral Matters

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Churchwardens - Joyce Kirk 01823 971431 / Ruth Stevens 01823 972838

## HOME GROUPS

### Tuesday

10:30 am The Nomads (Contact Joyce Lander 278387)

### Wednesday

2:30 pm 15 Barrington Close Fortnightly (Contact Ken Jamieson 289367)

7:30 pm 13 Gyffarde Street

(Contact Mark Stevens 972838; hosts Bethan and Tim Baigent 271655)

7:30 pm 28 Comeytrowe Lane

(Contact Steve Bradford 337690; hosts Wakefields 277318)

7:30 pm Killams Group Fortnightly (Contact Les Andrews 254344)

7:45 pm Ashley Road (Contact Richard Sainsbury 284688)

8:00 pm Hesperia The Avenue (Contact Richard Carpenter 277916)

8:00 pm North Taunton Fortnightly (Contact The Church Office 272931)

### Thursday

2:30 pm 27 Priorswood Road (Contact Kay Seed 251077; host Sue Collard 271858)

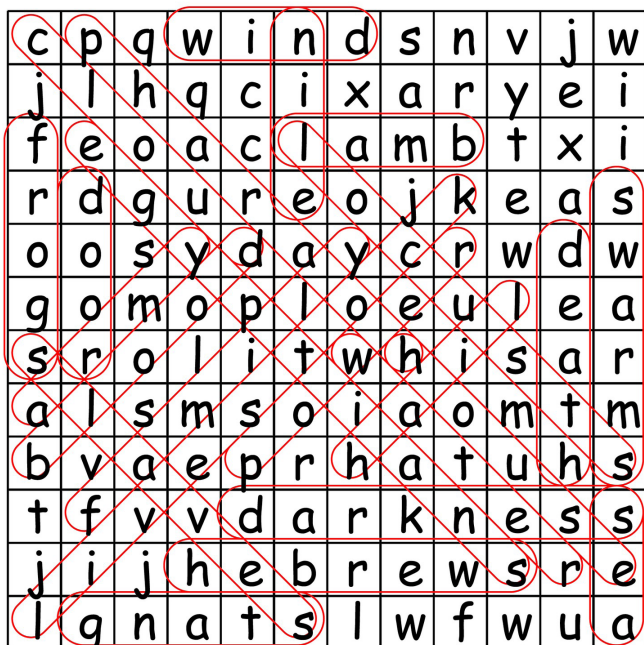
7:30 pm 69 Richmond Road Womens' Group (Contact Margaret Jones 333194)

7:30 pm 21 Ryesland Way (Contact Geoff Treasure 490458)

8:00 pm 12 The Avenue (Contact Sue Doyle 271223; host Annie Reid 07812 130619)

## OTHER GROUPS

- Mondays** Parent and Toddlers Group 10am-11.30am in the Church Hall  
Contact Sheila Marlow 01823 254367
- Tuesdays** Bell ringing (alternate weeks) Contact Marian Gentile (275278)
- Wednesdays** Art Group in the Church Hall Contact Church Office (272931)
- Praise and Play in the Church 9.30am - 11am - for pre-school children and their parents/ carers every Wednesday.  
Contact Kate Taylor (619739)
- Thursdays** Thursday Fellowship (first Thursday of the month)  
in the Church Hall Contact Vicky Dykes (282507)



## **Anne Frank's Famous Chestnut Tree In Full Bloom. (Painting by Cindy Lass)**

Some years ago this tree, which was a symbol of freedom and hope to brave Anne, had to be taken down, and Amsterdam lost a familiar landmark. Before the tree was destroyed shoots were taken from it and planted in locations throughout the world, therefore carrying on her legacy. One shoot was planted in Amsterdam Park and another was planted at Ramat Naftali close for the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

A quote from Anne reads: "And the sun was shining as it's never shone before in 1944. Our chestnut tree is in full bloom. It's covered with leaves and is even more beautiful than last Year". Later Anne and her family were discovered by the Nazis and taken to their deaths.

It is tragic that Anne was never given the opportunity to blossom and fulfil her potential. Anne left behind her diary to remind the world of the horrors of war, the cruelty and acts of man's inhumanity. We pray for peace and justice throughout the world.



### **JUNE NEWSLETTER DEADLINES**

The Next Newsletter is due out on 3rd June. All entries for this Newsletter must be submitted by end of April. All entries are at the discretion of the Editorial team and the space available.