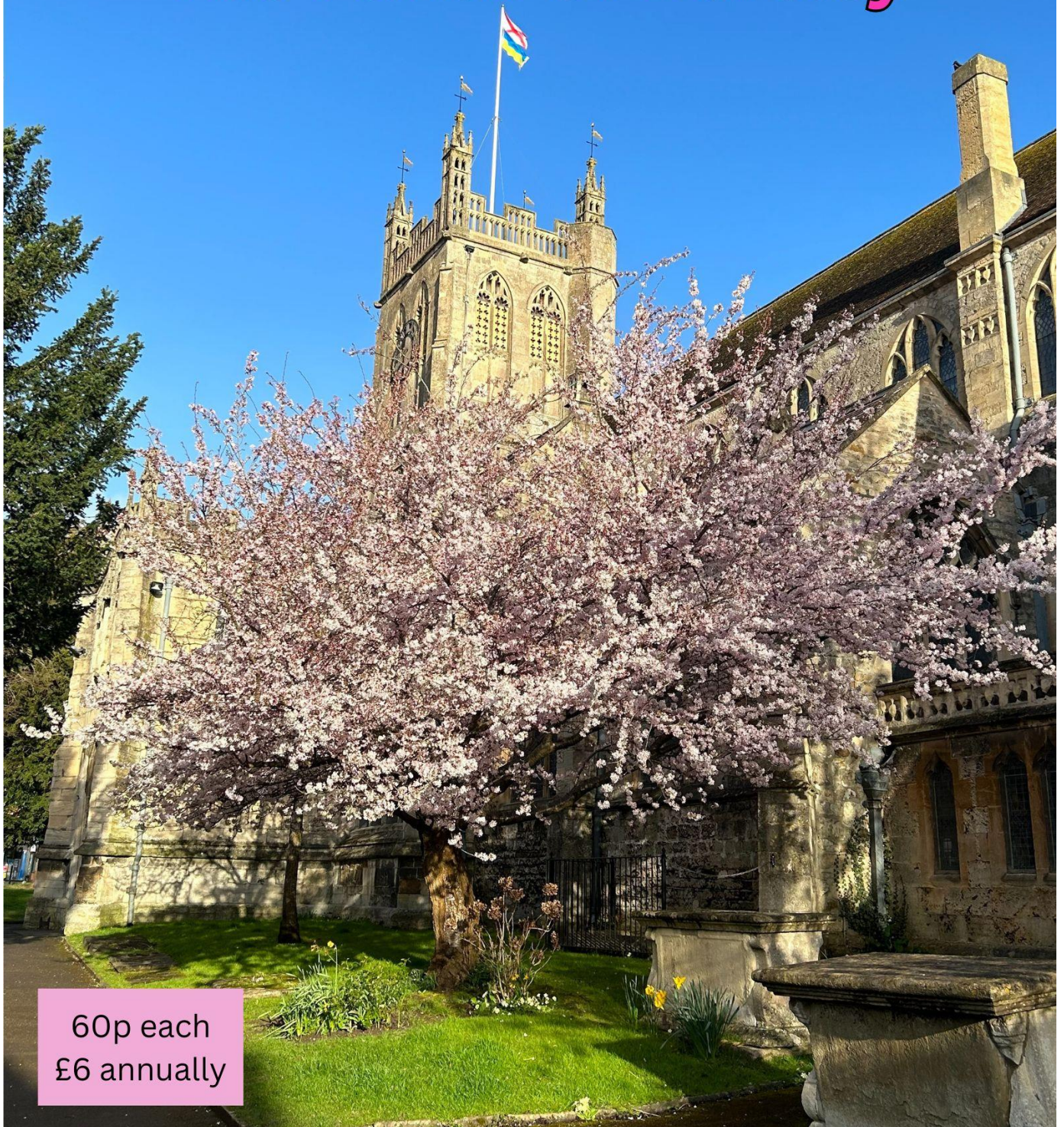


The Messenger

April 2025

The Parish Of Dursley



60p each
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The Ewelme Benefice

**The parish of Dursley
and**

the parish of Uley with Owlpen and Nympsfield

Web Site – www.ewelmebenefice.co.uk

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APRIL 2025

A Message from the Editors

Dear Readers

Welcome to our April edition.

As we put this together spring has sprung at last!! We look forward to Easter and even warmer days to come, especially with heat in the church.

And if you have anything to contribute to the May magazine, we will be eternally grateful!!

From Valerie and Judith (editors)

Front Cover: theme for 2025

'In and around St James'

Photo by Clare White

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**DEADLINE FOR MAY 2025 ISSUE
IS SUNDAY 13th APRIL 2025**

Revd Juliet writes.....



Dear Friends

A New Season is upon us!

Daffodils trumpet their arrival as the blossoms bestow their delicate beauty and busy birds brighten our days.

I've lived in cities for most of my adult life and keep pinching myself to believe that I've landed in such a beautiful part of God's world. It's wonderful to walk out of the rectory and climb a hill, to be taking in the valleys and the gentle rolling hills or to be utterly astounded by a glorious sunset firing the sweeping vale.

When out visiting I'm often invited by people to enjoy their view.

Living surrounded by such beauty, revealing itself in the spring sunshine in all sorts of wonderful ways, we may find ourselves becoming more aware of God's presence in the world. A presence that may not be immediately apparent to us when we take in the news or contemplate the plight of millions throughout the world struggling for justice and peace or simply struggling to make ends meet.

I wonder what things look like from where you are?

I realise that this is all rather parochial, but someone a lot older and wiser once said to me: pray as you can and not as you can't.

On the strength of that, please feel free to help yourself to a booklet that you will find in the churches. It is a calendar to help us to remember our community each day, bringing before God our neighbourhood and all that goes on. God understands this place, its needs and how it will flourish, we simply need to bring before God these places and our prayerful intention. Notice how God is working in you as you pray regularly for our parishes. Seeing what God is up to outside of the church

If you struggle to know where to begin with prayer you may like to sit and breathe without changing the pattern of your breathing; just notice each breath; and with each breath out, breathe out your worries and anxieties, and with each breath in, breathe in love and peace, and perhaps gently, turn it into a very simple time with God and a time to centre yourself.

Whatever is going on in life and in God's world (however difficult), whatever the season, we are all invited to encounter God. At their best, religious traditions help us to make sense of these experiences and provide a community of support and care; challenge and growth, but this isn't always the case.

On Ash Wednesday, Bishop Rachel encouraged us to put away our pointing fingers and to stop blaming others. She reminded us that Lent is a good time to take a long and honest look at ourselves, in faith that God knows us better than we know ourselves, loves us completely, and is more willing to forgive and heal than we are to admit our need.

The Holy Communion prayer during Lent is for us to be formed in the likeness of Christ, to return to God's generous heart, to open our eyes to God's presence in the world, to free our hands to welcome others, to grow in grace, and to learn to be God's people once again. That's quite a prayer! I wonder how God is answering this prayer here in Dursley?

With my prayers as we prepare to celebrate Holy Week and Easter and look out for what God is up to in this place.

As Kingfishers Catch Fire

By Gerald Manley Hopkins

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves — goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,
Crying What I do is me: for that I came.
I say more: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —
Christ — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

PASTORAL CARE

Please let Revd Dr Juliet Jensen

Tel: 01453 350810 or 07776 910890 know of those who need to be contacted or are in hospital and she will get in touch.

Ewelme Benefice EASTER SERVICES 2025



Sunday 13th April Palm Sunday

St Giles, Uley

10am Parish Holy Communion

St James, Dursley

8am Said Holy Communion

10am Parish Holy Communion

6.30pm Music for Passiontide



Monday 14th April

St James, Dursley

7pm Stations of the Cross

Thursday 17th April - Maundy Thursday

11am Chrism Service at Gloucester Cathedral

7.30pm Agapé service at St James

Friday 18th April - Good Friday

9.30am Procession of Witness to Cam Peak

St James, Dursley

2pm Tenebrae Service

St Bartholomew's, Nympsfield

3pm Good Friday Service

Saturday 19th April - Holy Saturday

St James, Dursley

8pm Easter Vigil at St James

Sunday 20th April - Easter Day

8am Said Holy Communion at St James

10am Parish Holy Communion at St James

6.30pm Choral Evensong at St James

St Giles, Uley

10am Parish Holy Communion

All are welcome



April Thoughts from The Benefice Office....

by Clare White



And I am actually writing this from the office, it is still chilly in here though. Maybe April will mean that I can wear less layers of clothes to work!

The start of April brings change to our family with our younger daughter off to Australia to live and work for a few years. It is an amazing opportunity for her and her partner, but we will miss her so much. Thankfully we have technology to keep us in contact, much easier than it was in days gone by.

Family changes can be difficult to come to terms with and I have been struggling with Kathryn's move, but life opportunities should be grasped and tried, we shouldn't have regrets because we are not brave enough or we have to please others.

My belief is that God gives us the support to be brave and we ought to trust in Him. We should use our faith to sustain us when the going gets tough or just a bit scary.

God's promise found in Hebrews 4:16 offers powerful reassurance: "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." This verse is a comforting assurance that God's grace is always available to us when we ask.

We read in [John's Gospel Chapter 14:27](#), when Jesus is comforting and supporting his disciples-

"Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

As we prepare for Easter we are taught through Jesus's assurances that if we have faith we are comforted and supported in our times of need.



Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice dying on the cross and he would have needed bravery in bucket loads to trust in Our Lord and Father, in his time of extreme need.

I CAN be brave, I WILL trust in God.

We as a family will send Kathryn & Euan off to Sydney with the love and strength to enjoy a new country and all that life has to offer them. It is wonderful to know that they are fulfilling their dreams.

Hopefully we will visit later in the year.

Report on Ewelme Benefice Away Day **22nd February 2025.....from Rev Juliet**

The PCCs and ministry leaders of the Ewelme Benefice had an away day on Saturday 22nd February. We enjoyed being together from 10am – 3pm at North Nibley Village Hall. We worked jolly hard and enjoyed a delicious lunch together. We began the time with prayer and listened for God’s word to us from Psalm 23. We then some took time to reflect on what gathering around the Lord’s Table means, using an approach called Godly Play. If you want to know more about Godly Play, check out the website: www.godlyplay.uk

We worked together as a benefice on what it means to say that we are an inclusive church, which was how the benefice was described in the advertisement for a new Rector. Some people preferred to say - we are a welcoming church! We identified that there are ways in which this is true and also things that could be done to become more welcoming and help everyone to feel included. The PCCs have work to do and part of this will be to discuss and record their decisions about the use of the Church of England prayers of blessing of same-sex relationships.

Each parish spent a good deal of time considered the phrase from the Parish Profile (produced as part of the appointment process for the new rector: *A new day has dawned, God has given us another opportunity...'*

We used the following questions to help us

- For what? (What don’t we want to do?)
- Who are we called to be? (Who don’t we want to be?)
- What needs to happen?

Here are important things from the Dursley conversations:

We believe that God has given us another opportunity to be open and welcoming and to share our faith through worship, conversations and actions and to show God’s love to all.

We acknowledged that while we connect with children at Dursley Academy through Open the Book, Experience Easter and Saturday Books, we don’t have any children as part of the worshipping community.

We believe that it is important for us to:

- Stay true to our musical tradition *and* welcome people of all ages and backgrounds
- Find the right balance between old and new, young and old, formality and spontaneity/informality
- Have a range of services on offer to suit different people
- Communicate better who we are
- Become more confident in our gifts and sharing them
- Become more confident in talking about our faith with people in and outside of church and invite them to worship
- Make the most of the opportunities we have to show people what difference having faith makes in our lives
- We need opportunities to deepen faith
- Be Open: Saturday books & Freegle, Carvery, Concerts and Christmas Market are all important
- Care for God's creation - doing our bit to address the climate crisis
- Work with the other churches in the town

We had lots of bright ideas, including how we might improve our communications, particularly with people who are unfamiliar with church. There were other things that we identified as challenges.

Benefice-wide

There were some common themes across the Ewelme Benefice

How do we see ourselves and how are we seen by others?

We have a choice as to whether we are seen as an odd club or open to everyone

We want to be inclusive, but know that people don't have to 'come to us' in order to be blessed by God through us.

We want to explore what openness looks like, where it will take us and what will this look like. Asking the questions:

- Who is around the table?
- What is moving us on, what is holding us back?
- How do we hold together past and future?

We recognised that the pace will be different in the two parishes. Understanding what this movement looks like in Dursley is more complex, greater understanding is needed of what it means to make changes while being true to the traditions of the church.

Better communication was a common theme as was being more confident about faith, our lives and community and the joy of

coming together. Each parish wants to celebrate and care for its special buildings and recognises that the health of the church is more than what can be measured by numbers of people who come and sit on the pews for services.

The journey will start with prayer and openness to the communities we serve, one another and to God.

Prayers

Thank you for your prayers.

People were invited to write down who/what in the Parishes to pray a blessing for and these are included in the new prayer monthly prayer diary.

The day finished just before 3pm with this blessing:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you and those you love and pray for today and always. **Amen.**

Next Small Steps

- Encourage use of the monthly prayer diary
- Work on communications
- Take small steps being open to the opportunities that God provides.

The PCC are not looking to come up with a grand plan, but rather to allow things to unfold as we sense God is leading. If you have any comments or questions, please get in touch with Juliet Jensen, the Rector, Chris Tyler or Jan Vonburg Church Wardens or Clare White PCC Secretary.

STOP PRESS.

At Light Lent Lunches on Friday 21st March Revd Ian Gardner told us that Jackie Strange had died that morning. For people who don't remember her she was a licensed Reader for many years at St James. She has been in a Nursing Home for quite a while.

Our thoughts are with Rick her husband, her children and grandchildren.

Rest in Peace Jackie and rise in Glory.

Notes from the PCC meeting on 19th March 2025.

- PCC needs to approve and review safeguarding documents.
- A review of church culture is necessary.
- Volunteer Role Descriptions for safer recruiting are being written.
- Donations towards the new boiler in church, from the congregation were £16,000. The rest will be paid for from the Omega Trust.
- The Parish share was met in full in 2024.
- The work on the tower has been completed, rain is no longer coming into the ringing chamber.
- A new motor has been fitted to the clock.
- Boiler installation should be completed in w/c 24th March.
- Advice will be sought from the diocesan buildings team for redecoration of the walls in St James.
- It is proposed to refurbish the Parish Centre, a team of people will be put together to oversee this work. Hopefully from the wider community.
- Ideally the PCC would like a caretaker for the church and Parish centre to oversee general jobs.
- Friends of St James will hold an annual meeting in July, possibly a garden party in the rectory garden.
- Eco Church are switching on the swift callers for birds to nest in the boxes installed on the tower.
- Count on Nature will be held in the churchyard on 14th June.
- There will be a Living in Love & Faith questionnaire to enable the Parish to discuss what is needed in Dursley to make the Parish all inclusive, creating space to feel comfortable.
- Revd Juliet is making good contact with Dursley Academy having attended school 6 times so far this term.
- The head of Dursley Academy has invited the church to use the school facilities for any children and young people work we would like to do.
- We need a new Churchwarden this May as Jan Vonberg is standing down. There was a discussion about making an assistant warden role so that the churchwarden doesn't need to be at every service.
- The away Day was discussed, a report from the day is in this Messenger.

**Open Garden
&
Cream Tea**
Sunday 1st June 2025
1.30–5pm



At 52 Woodmancote, Dursley GL11 4AQ



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of St James Church

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A date for your diary....
and prayers for fine
weather!!



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Data Collection & Electoral Roll
Hold your phone's camera over the QR code
and click on the prompt to the online form

Electoral Roll Renewal

2025 is a renewal year for all church electoral rolls. (see March magazine and pew leaflets) The new roll application will be open until 13th April, there will be paper forms and you will also be able to electronically enter your details.

On the form there are also questions for permission to contact you for Ewelme Benefice communications, details of your next of kin (for use in emergencies) and gift aid details.

If you can we would appreciate you adding your details electronically using the QR code above or online link

<https://ewelmebenefice.myknowchurch.co.uk/form/load/eUg3WnUyQU1aRE1aQjN5R2hqdHIxelpNelZOR3hxNTIRaFBWb2NINGtoRIptaTB2dXVZZWFqWU1ZbmY2>

For further help please contact Clare in the office or email: ewelmebenefice@gmail.com for phone: 07778842060

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MUSIC MATTERS

Coffee, Cake and Music 2025

The twenty-first series of Coffee, Cake and Music begins with a recital from a very distinguished musician; Claire Hobbs, who is currently President of the Bristol and District Organists' Association.

Claire was the organ scholar at St John's College, Oxford before postgraduate study at the Royal Northern College of Music and Geneva Conservatoire, where she won the Prix Otto Barblan for performance. After positions as Organist of Holy Trinity Geneva, Assistant Organist at Bristol Cathedral and Organist at Clifton Cathedral, she retrained as a music therapist at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, subsequently working in the NHS and education. With extensive experience in teaching both the piano and the organ, Claire is an Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examiner.

We look forward to Claire's programme and hope that the organ "behaves itself" after being part of the damp atmosphere of the church for so long. After the interminable (but avoidable!) delay in replacing the boiler it's ever likely that the organ will need some attention so, even without the benefit of a crystal ball, it looks as though we will be fund-raising yet again in the not too far distant future! *Nigel Davies*

Music for April

Sunday 6th	am	Cantique de Jean Racine – Fauré	Darke in E
Sunday 13th	am	O Saviour of the World – Goss	Missa Brevis - Lotti
	pm	Music for Passiontide	
Saturday 19th			
	pm	Exultet – Shephard	Mass of St Mary
		Gloria	
Sunday 20th	am	Hallelujah ("Messiah") - Handel	Schubert in G
(Easter Day)			
	pm	This Joyful Eastertide - arr Wood	Dyson in D
		Rose Responses	Achieved is the Glorious Work
			("Creation") – Haydn
Sunday 27th	am	The Strife is O'er – Ley	Woodard Service –
			Shephard

Ewelme Benefice

St James the Great, Dursley Coffee, Cake and Music 2025

April 26th

Claire Hobbs

May 31st

Keith Hearnshaw

June 28th

Martin Bell

July 26th

Pavlos Triantaris

August 30th

John Pennington

September 27th

Nigel Davies

October 25th

Jonathan Hope

**Coffee and homemade cake will be served from 10.30am.
The music begins at 11am and last for 30-40 minutes**



**There is no charge,
but a retiring
collection will be taken,
the proceeds of
which go
to the work of
St James' Church**

Bellringing

by Philip Pope



On Saturday March 1st we took part in the annual striking competition for the Wotton branch of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of bellringers which took place at St Martin of Tours church at North Nibley. These are a very pleasant, easy to ring set of bells which had been rehung in 1999.

Striking competitions are always a nervous occasion for those taking part. We had to ring 120 changes (which takes around 5 minutes) and we would be judged for every flaw in the rhythm of the bells. We were drawn third and allowed 5 minutes to practise (and get any mistakes out of the way!) before signaling to the judge that we were ready to go. The secret is usually to try and get over the nervousness and relax into the ringing but its still an immense relief when the performance is completed and we can finally stand the bells.

Everyone seemed to be reasonably happy with what we'd done and the comments we received from the crowd in the church below were very favourable.

Refreshments were taken and the judge (Tony Bulteel from St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol) announced the results. We had retained the Beaney Trophy (named after Jack Beaney who was very influential in the branch in the early seventies and died in 1974. He also taught me to ring!)

Our band rang 120 changes of Cambridge Surprise Minor and stood as follows:

- 1 Liz Byrne
- 2 Anne Pope
- 3 Jane Bull
- 4 Philip Pope
- 5 Andrew Bull
- 6 Isaac O'Shea

Chipping Sodbury came second with a very creditable performance. The home band, North Nibley came third and Coaley fourth.

The winner of this competition goes on to represent the branch in the Association 6 bell competition which this year is being hosted by the Gloucester branch on April 5th. Watch this space for how we performed in this one.

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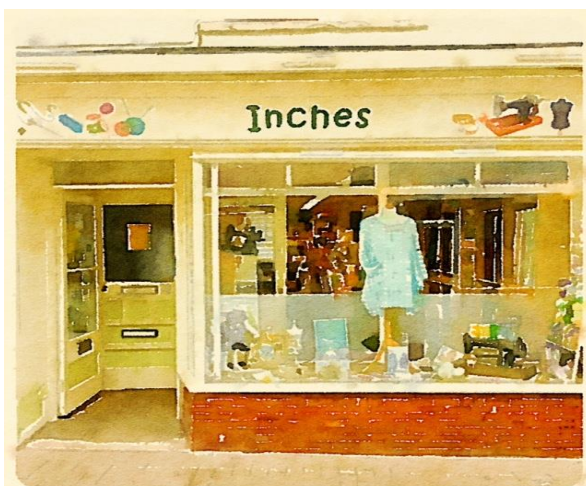
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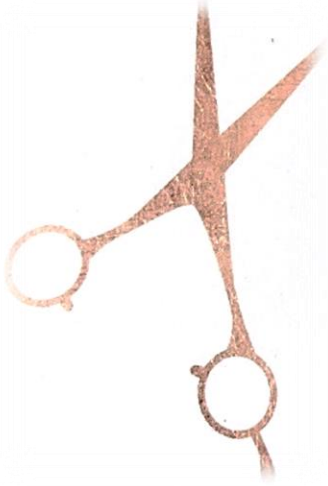
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Revd Juliet seen in action taking part in the Pancake races in Dursley....also joining her is Caroline Marrow



Also pictured with Bishop Rachel after the Ash Wednesday service in St James.....





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April 2025

(Joining Zoom details on Ewelme Benefice website)



Tuesday 1st April

- Experience Easter at St James
- 10.30am Methodist Prayer Course
- 7.30pm Methodist House Group for Lent

Wednesday 2nd April

- Experience Easter at St James
- 2pm Ageing Gracefully Course at St George's, Upper Cam
- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 3rd April

- Experience Easter at St James
- 9am Morning Prayer in St James
- 10am Holy Communion at St James
- 7.30pm "Difference" Lent course via Zoom

Friday 4th April

- Experience Easter at St James
- 12noon Light Lent Lunches at St James Parish Centre

Sunday 6th April – 5th Sunday of Lent

- 10am Parish Holy Communion at St James, Dursley
- 4pm Churches Together Lent service at St Bartholomew's, Lower Cam

Tuesday 8th April

- 10am Staff meeting, The Parish Centre
- 10.30am Methodist Prayer Course
- 7.30pm Methodist House Group for Lent

Wednesday 9th April

- 2pm Ageing Gracefully Course at St George's, Upper Cam
- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 10th April

- 9am Dursley Academy Easter Service at St James
- 10.30am Holy Communion at St James
- 7.30pm "Difference" Lent course via Zoom

Friday 11th April

- 12noon Light Lent Lunches at St James Parish Centre

Saturday 12th April

- 2.15pm Oxford Diocesan Guild of Ringers at St James

Sunday 13th April – Palm Sunday

- 8am Said Holy Communion at St James
10am Parish Holy Communion Service at St James
6.30pm Music for Passiontide at St James

Monday 14th April

- 7pm Stations of the Cross at St James

Tuesday 15th April

- 10.30am Methodist Prayer Course
7.30pm Methodist House Group for Lent

Wednesday 16th April

- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 17th April – Maundy Thursday

- 9am Morning Prayer in St James
11am Chrism Service at Gloucester Cathedral
7.30pm Agapé service at St James

Friday 18th April – Good Friday

OFFICE CLOSED

- 9.30am Procession of Witness to Cam Peak, meet at Sainsbury's,
Dursley
2pm Tenebrae Service at St James

Saturday 19th April – Holy Saturday

- 8pm Easter Vigil at St James

Sunday 20th April – Easter Day

- 8am Said Holy Communion at St James
10am Parish Holy Communion at St James
6.30pm Choral Evensong at St James

Monday 21st April

OFFICE CLOSED

Wednesday 23rd April

- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 24th April

- 9am Morning Prayer in St James
10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 26th April

- 10.30am Coffee, Cake & Music with Clair Hobbs at St James

Sunday 27th April – 2nd Sunday of Easter

NO MORNING SERVICE AT JAMES

- 10am Benefice Holy Communion at St Giles, Uley

Wednesday 30th April

- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

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CULTURE AND ME by David Vonberg.....

This month, Sheila Gardner shares some of her thoughts with us.

Do you have a favourite author or book?

Growing up I liked H G Wells, Jules Verne and Nevil Shute. Later on, I turned to Dickens and Jane Austen, now I read a variety of authors both modern like Lee Child and I go back to the older ones too.



What are you reading at present?

I am reading Nick Petrie. Like Jane Austen he is making social comment. He started it because servicemen were coming back from Afghanistan with PTSD and had no help. So he wrote a story about a man coming back; it's a thriller. The hero is not a whole person for he has his problems. The first book was so popular that Petrie has written more stories

Do you have a favourite piece of music?

Yes! "Morning", Grieg's Peer Gynt suite. It's so uplifting. I could sing it going through the woods with the birds and butterflies flying up. It is also the first piece I ever bought as an LP. On the back was the Karelia suite, which is also a favourite

Do you play a musical instrument. If not what would you like to have learnt?

I started off at school playing the recorder, then I played the clarinet, which the school provided. I stopped playing when I left school, which is a shame. It would be lovely to have a little recorder group in church, and probably a lot of people would like to go back to the recorder, if we could find someone to teach us. I do have a "bathtub flute" from Ireland, which I was given. It was repaired, but the repairer said, "Don't play it as it's an antique!"

What is your favourite film?

It would have to be "Pride and Prejudice" with Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle. We watch it two or three times every year. The film is so faithful to the book.

Do you have a favourite play?

"An Inspector calls", by J B Priestley. I saw it in Cheltenham and I loved the fact that the set never moved. Right to the very end it kept me enthralled.

What about a favourite television series?

It would have to be "Vera" and "Silent Witness". Both series are well made and beautifully acted.

If there was one painting you could own, what would it be and what is special for you about it?

That's very difficult. There was an artist, sculptor and friend called Denis Curry. He painted my picture when I had Daniel in my arms. But in fact anything of his I like. He painted a picture of an eagle over Bristol. I would love to own it, but far too big and too costly. But I do have a bronze sculpture of a horse, by him. He died two years ago at the age of 104.

Do you have special building which means a lot to you and if so why? My home, then my Church, and then St Philips, the Cathedral in Birmingham. It was not built as a cathedral but simply as a parish church, a smallish building with stained glass windows by Burne-Jones. I bought my home by auction, when it was all boarded up, walls both outside and inside were running with water and the roof leaked like a sieve. It is now a home I love.

Is there a place where you have felt happiest?

It's got to be here in Gloucestershire. Twenty years ago I would have said Pembrokeshire where I used to farm. It took me quite a time to settle here. However I love the woods and the Cotswold way.

You are having a fantasy dinner party for five – who would you invite? My great aunt Alice, born in the 19th Century and lived through two world wars. Her son, Charles died on the day of his baptism. Because she died when I was in my mid-twenties, I never got a chance to talk to her about her long life. She was widowed in her sixties and lived as a widow for thirty years. The second person would be Charles Dickens, who made a lot of social comment. Many thought they were just stories but actually, he was saying "This is not how we should live." My third would be Queen Elizabeth II, who never wanted to be Queen, but at the age of 11 she was thrust into the limelight; the fact that she did her bit for the war effort. So I would love to know a little bit more about her. My fourth would be Baden-Powell. I joined Girl Guides when I was thirteen and never looked back. It was good to go on Guide camps. I have been a scouting leader for many years. I would love to be able to talk to him about what it was like to be a soldier in Africa, and then to come back and to develop something for the boys to get involved with. Scouting teaches you teamwork and leadership. There has not been an American President since the early 1900s, until quite recently who was not a scout. My late mother-in-law, Joan Edom. She was a sailor, a birdwatcher and a friend She took me in, looked after me. She never put you down, but always encouraged you. A very different class person to me, but she was lovely to me all the through. She was like a second mum to me. She treated me as an equal.

This might be useful information for the Messenger readers

from David Smith .

A few months ago I bought a smartphone in Gloucester. The shop staff were helpful and showed me how to do the basics on the phone. Within a few days I found that I needed further help to find some of the functions.



Where is help available without going back to Gloucester?

Help is at hand locally. Every Thursday morning a computer Whiz Kid provides free help in Dursley Library. He

was able to help me find everything I needed on the phone. He is very patient. If you want any kind of help to use a computer or phone I would recommend him.

To book a slot on Thursdays ask the Library Staff.

A Chorister's Plea *from Joyce Lombarde last month.....*

To save us from the shiv'ring shakes
A small donation do I make.
In choir we sit, 'neath organ loft,
Which blesseth us with music soft
AND LOUD, (windy draught as well
As Nigel presses button "SWELL")
Please help us in our hour of need
??

There were three replies to my plea for a finishing line, so thank you for the prompt replies from Maureen Wood, Jennifer Kendrick and Julia Clarke.

- a) To stop our shivering, shaking knees. (MW)
- b) And bring the heating up to SPEED! (JK)
- c) For a working boiler I do plead. (JC)

In the end I found it hard to choose, and didn't want to be accused of favouritism, so they each have a small prize awaiting them.

Dursley Church House and Torchacre Trust *by* Charlotte Marwood

The origins of the Trust go back to 1495 according to the Dursley Charities Board. Church House was a burbage or tenement with gardens to the south of the church and Torchacre was a plot of land at the top of Boulton Lane. In 1581 these were given by two local gentlemen to establish the Trust.

The Trust's prime purpose was to support the maintenance and repair of St James church using income generated from the properties. Some of the buildings were pulled down in 1960s as part of the road widening scheme which also created the open space to the west of the church. Development of the remaining properties continued piecemeal and flats for rent were created above the two remaining shops on Silver Street. Contributions to St James over the years have included support for the tower development, external lights, clock tower and boundary wall repairs, restoration of wall monuments and most recently £25,000 to support the heating repair bills.

The Trust's current objectives are:

- Maintenance of the property portfolio.
- Maintain rental income through management of the property assets.
- Maintain the fabric of the church through investment from the Trust.

The property portfolio today consists of:

- Two shops that are combined into what is currently Delta Bikes
- Flat 1 accessed from the church steps above the back of the shop
- Flat 2 accessed from church steps above the front of the shop
- No 27 Silver Street a maisonette with courtyard accessed to the right of the shop

The residential properties are managed by Bennett Jones Partnership on behalf of the Trust and the commercial shop unit managed by the Clerk and charity trustees. The current trustees are Christine Morgan (Chairperson), Philip Pope, Chris Tyler, Roland Halford.

In the past the Board of Trustees tended to consist of the church warden and other local community ambassadors. More recently they have been local people with a connection to St James's offering professional expertise that could aid the development of the properties and smooth running of the Charity. Meetings are held twice a year in the Parish Centre with any other business conducted via email and phone. Matters arising include reviewing property, financial management, discussing maintenance on the properties and transfer

of funds to St James Fabric Fund. If you would like to know more about becoming a trustee, please get in touch.

The Clerk to the Trustees:

Charlotte Marwood

charlie@marwood.me

This article is written with thanks to previous trustees, clerks and interested parties for their research into the background of the Trust.



Namayingo update *from David Vonberg*

"As You may remember, during the year 2022-23 when I was Convenor of Churches Together in Cam, Dursley and District, my charity of the year was "Feed the Minds" raising money for the Namayingo Project.

Recently I have heard from the organisers that our support for the project has enabled 110 women with disabilities to learn ICT skills. One of those Makoha who is 35 and has lived with physical disability all her life. She had no chance of education and faced discrimination in her community. signing up to the project she has learnt to read and write and can now use Microsoft Word. She can now look for work with confidence using the skills which she thought were unobtainable.

Thank you for your support during my year of office!!"

with blessings for the rest of Lent and the coming Easter.

We Celebrate this monthby Canon Richard Morgan



This month we celebrate Jesus' Death and Resurrection on Good Friday and Easter. The two go together. Jesus died that he might rise, and, rising, raise us too. His resurrection is God's verdict on his passion and death, declaring and making them the way of our forgiveness and salvation, and declaring Jesus as indeed God the Son and creation's true king and saviour. Jesus' passion, suffering, means the opposite of what his enemies thought as they killed him.

So Jesus' passion is filled with irony, often a double irony. His tormentors do and say things and mean their opposite, in an irony of parody. Yet their words are actually true, though they do not know it – they are the butts of a second irony. They mock Jesus with signs of royalty and power in order to humiliate him. They greet Jesus as a glorious king, though they consider him no such thing. But the irony is double. Jesus **is** King of the Jews and Son of God. His shame is the glory of love. His apparent defeat is God's decisive victory over evil. His powerlessness is omnipotent.

So the purple or glorious robe, the sign of magnificence, greatness and splendour, is given to Jesus to mock him. He is stripped, and the robe, pulled on and off, does not cover his humiliating nakedness. To his torturers, he is put to shame. In fact, this is the way to glory of God's humble, self-giving love. Jesus will reveal the glory of this world's values, pride, wealth, magnificent possessions, as a sham. The glories of materialism, consumerism and power politics are but a cloak for spiritual poverty, insecurity, and emptiness. Jesus allows all earthly wealth and status, all worldly glory, even life itself, to be stripped from him. What is left is his mere humanity, in obedience and trust in God, uncovered, undisguised, open to God in all weakness. Jesus is open to other people too, with the terrifying vulnerability of a love that offers to help but is no cloak for domination or the selfish pursuit of our own virtue. The truth of humanity, openness, trust and love, are our true glory, for they unite us with the God of love.

Jesus' rising confirms this. The risen Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth, as he says in Matthew 28, but he still keeps that humility, that service, that care for ordinary life. In Luke 24, he appears to two followers as a fellow traveller on foot; in John 21, he cooks breakfast for his friends. Mary Magdalene took him for a gardener, and she was not wrong, for he is gardener of our lives, the one who preserves and gives growth and fruitfulness. And the risen Jesus still claims his followers as his brothers and sisters.

Do we live by pride's cover ups, or are we open to God and to humble love? Humility, shown in extreme in Jesus' humiliation, comes from the same Latin word as the Latin for earth [humus]. It, not worldliness, is the true realism, even the true earthiness. It puts us in the real world. It is the true glory. God stoops to conquer - we do not find God by climbing in pride, but in the lowliness of love and trust. Will we let God strip away our falsity to give us our true selves and his true glory? Jesus said, 'If any would follow me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their lives will lose them, and those who lose their lives for my sake and God's good news will save them. What will it benefit a person to gain the whole world and lose their soul, their life? [Mark 8.34-37]

Prayers

Lord Jesus, stripped and mocked for our sakes with a glorious robe, you teach us the way to true glory.

Guide and strengthen us on that way,
the way of humble trust and love, the way of honesty and openness.
We ask for your love's sake. Amen.

Jesus, you gave your life that we might live.

Help us to be ready to lose our lives for the sake of God's love,
for so we receive them eternally,

our true selves as God's children through you,

in the love and unity of the Holy Spirit, to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Risen Lord Jesus, you rose as our Brother, Friend and Saviour.

You reign with God the Father, but still you serve us with your love.

May we live by your Spirit of humble love and service to you and
others, and so share your glory as sons and daughters of the good of
love. Amen.



ST JAMES FREE BOOK STALL

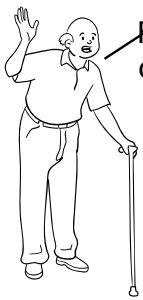


Clive says.....Thanks everyone for a lovely week with "The Books"

More new faces again and coming for the first time and plenty of books taken. I purposely did not tell you, last week, how much we had raised because I don't want to fall into the trap of judging the success of a morning by how much money we get given. There is not that much money around these days but there are still plenty of smiling faces and happy people of all ages, so the mornings are very successful. It is great to know the money bit, though, so total for the year so far £1,568 and £30,895 since we started. It was a lovely party on Sat 22nd March and good to see so many of you. Let's hope the weather is kind in October and we can have it in the garden.



Recently, I listened to a radio 4 programme called 'Rare Earth' (not the mineral kind!). There was a discussion about the hole in the ozone layer, and how this has improved since a global initiative (the Montreal Protocol, 1987). This was a world-wide adoption to phase out substances which caused ozone depletion. These included CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons) which were chemicals used in fridges and freezers, as well as many other things. Everyone changed their deodorant, and fridges were changed to a CFC free version. I can recall being a young person at that time (👁️) and being anxious about all this. I must admit, before listening to the recent radio article this subject is something I've not thought about for a while.



Fridges and freezers that contained CFCs were not only Greenhouse gases that would contribute to global warming, but were also harmful to the ozone layer. Safe disposal of old appliances was crucial.

(Credit: Getty Images)



Being a bit of a Geek, I investigated the discovery of this strange thing called the Ozone Layer, and the hole in it a little further. The Antarctic explorers in the very beginning of the 20th century, had observed unusual cloud formations. As the years went by, these clouds became more significant to scientists and in 1957, measurement of the ozone layer began. As this continued, they observed that the ozone layer was in trouble. In 1985, scientists Farman, Gardiner, and Shanklin published their paper about their startling discovery about the thinning of the ozone layer over the Antarctic. This became known as the 'Ozone Hole'.

Since the Montreal agreement, the world has acted together and the ozone hole over the Antarctic is slowly mending. Scientific projects indicate that the ozone layer will return to 1980 levels between 2040 and 2066. The levels over the Antarctic will take a longer time compared to the rest of the world. A bit of positive environmental news.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the discovery of the Ozone Hole.

One of the guests on the BBC Sounds programme, Jonathan Shanklin

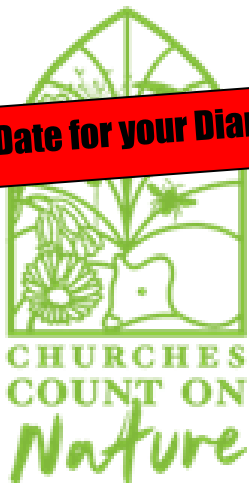
(one of the scientists who help discover the Ozone Hole) and Prof Matthew Rigby (he helps monitor how countries stick to their promise to protect the ozone layer) were both asked by the show presenter “why can’t we come up with a similar, swift solution for manmade climate change?”

Both felt that, as always, long-term environmental monitoring and good environmental science is important. In this way we can understand how every aspect of our lives is contributing to carbon emissions. There needs to be action across whole economies this time, and not just focusing on one aspect of industry.

Personally speaking, climate change can be overwhelming at times, and in some ways, I feel like I’m that 19-year-old again ... a bit anxious. However, I take heart after listening to these amazing scientists and knowing that they devote their lives to helping the world. I’m sure they would agree too, that we all need to try and do our bit to reduce our own carbon footprint.



Date for your Diary!



St James Count on Nature 2025 event is planned for Saturday 14th June, in the morning.

We are excited to announce that ‘The Moth Man’ will be attending again! Lots of interesting and enjoyable things for everyone including: – nature identification, GWT stand, craft and nature tables for everyone, drawing demonstrations. We would value any offers to help on the day (please speak to Jan Vonberg or Gill Mather)

If you would like to join and support St James Eco Church group, please email

Gill.mather@btinternet.com

Next Meeting
8th April, 2pm

There's a cuppa & cake when we meet



References

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/future/article/20220321-what-happened-to-the-worlds-ozone-hole>

https://ozonewatch.gsfc.nasa.gov/facts/history_SH.html

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/> “The Hole That Changed the World”

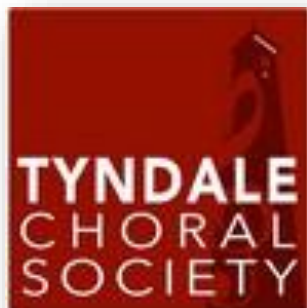
Jonathan Shanklin - Emeritus Fellow, British Antarctic Survey

Matthew Rigby - Professor of Atmospheric Chemistry, University of Bristol (both interviewees on the programmes)

A New choral piece marks the 300th anniversary of a great work.....by Anne Shipton



Tyndale Choral Society has commissioned a choral re-imagining of Vivaldi's hugely popular violin concerto, *The Four Seasons*, to mark the 300th anniversary of the composer's most famous work. It will be performed at St James's in June.



The choir began rehearsals last month for the first performance of *A Season to Sing* by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange, who also composed an anthem to mark the coronation of King Charles III. The composer is a friend of Tyndale's Music Director, Ben Sawyer.

The composer herself says: "Having loved this music since I was a young girl, I'd often thought that melodies as good as these deserve to be sung. With 2025 marking the work's 300th anniversary, it seemed the perfect time to put pencil to manuscript paper and give it a go."

Joanna Forbes L'Estrange's career as a choral composer began with seven years as music director of the Swingle Singers. Her mission to create a body of tuneful, singable music which every choir can enjoy was described by BBC Music Magazine as "an integrity of purpose that infuses every musical phrase that she writes." Tyndale Chairman Magnus Carter said: "This work enhances Vivaldi's extraordinary portrayal of the seasons of the year by weaving into the well-loved melodies texts from poetry and the Bible on the subject of spring, summer, autumn and winter.

"It's going to be hugely enjoyable to sing, and we know our audiences will love it.

We are delighted to have joined choirs from the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and Vietnam in commissioning this piece.

"In addition to normal rehearsals, we have arranged a Workshop with Joanna in mid-May. We are very excited to meet her and get her own personal 'take' on the work."

The concert at St James's is on Saturday 14th June at 7.30pm. More details at www.tyndale-choral-society.org.uk.

Bishop Rachel writes in the weekly Bulletin from the Diocese.....



On Friday 17th March I was in the House of Lords participating in a Private Members' bill requiring the Government to recognise Palestine as a sovereign and independent state.

As I was about to enter the Chamber I met one of the Jewish peers with whom I have had considerable discussion in recent months regarding our different perspectives on the war in Gaza. We remain in good relationship with one another.

On this occasion he reminded me that it was the Jewish festival of Purim, celebrating the wonderful saving of the Jews from annihilation (approximately 500 BC) due to the significant intervention by the Jewish Queen Esther. I'm sure that many of us are familiar with those often-quoted words of Mordecai to Esther, his cousin, who he had adopted as his daughter: 'For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for *just such a time as this.*' (Esther 4:14).

As a child I used to love reading the 10 chapters of the book from beginning to end much as I would any other adventure story full of intrigue and rescue. I read it as a story and didn't really reflect on the horror of human deception, vengeance and the brutal hanging of the power-hungry Haman.

Over the years I have been inspired by Esther's inner journey from anxiety to courage, and by Mordecai's robust exchange with Esther which goes beyond 'niceness' and rather demonstrates loving and courageous challenge even in a place of anxiety,

We live in an anxious world, and that was certainly reflected in the House of Lords debate amid vehement disagreement but mainly from a place of a commitment to staying in relationship with one another. The international landscape, the political landscape in the UK, and that of the Church of England is undoubtedly giving rise to much anxiety, among different people and in different ways, and creation is most certainly groaning (Romans 8:22).

Each year in Lent I find myself commenting on those words from the preface to the Eucharistic prayer about us as Christians learning to be God's people once again through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline. And particularly this year I have been reflecting on the place of courage within this:

'For in these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance

that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline we may grow in grace and learn to be your people once again. Through fasting, prayer and acts of service you bring us back to your generous heart.

Through study of your holy word you open our eyes to your presence in the world and free our hands to welcome others into the radiant splendour of your love.'

Esther fasted and prayed before daring to stand in the inner court opposite the King's Hall, hoping to be granted a conversation with the king rather than the death penalty. I have been wondering what might be the equivalent for me and for you of praying and fasting to stand in whatever is the equivalent for us of the inner court – a place where there is inner anxiety yet from which we long to speak out, act differently, and bring challenge, filled with a God-given courage in a place where there is inequality of power.

People often refer to 'speaking truth to power', and sometimes that power may not reside in the typical places of someone's role or title. Many people of different ages and backgrounds wield power of different sorts in our lives and communities, sometimes conveyed through social media. Their power can be a source of anxiety for individuals, communities and peoples. There is a diminishing of love and a conscious or unconscious desire to quench Jesus' offering of life in all its fullness.

As I journey through Lent I am praying that I might be ever more aware of my own power and how I use it; and I am praying for all of us – children, young people and adults – that we might intentionally identify places where anxiety stems from the power exhibited by other people, and identify the places where we need to stand with courage. As we pray, we lift our eyes and hearts to God, that through the power of the Holy Spirit we might speak and act for Jesus Christ, desiring fresh encounters of hope and peace, and new signs of life in all its fullness.



April Acrostic Poem....by Sally Hayward

All birds are
Preparing their nests with moss and twigs;
watching them
Return, they are busy and very
Interested in the worms that are led
Led on top of the vegetable patch that has been
freshly dug.

Nora Powell RIP.....



On February 26th we gathered in St James Church to remember Nora Millicent Powell, aged 104, a beloved Auntie and friend.

Her nephew Robert, her nieces Rosamund and Christine remember Auntie who was born on 12th September 1920 to Ethel and Frederick Preater. Her father and his cousin from Wales had been pacing up and down outside the window of Fort Cottage when they saw the doctor arrive and the cousin remarked, 'Something's afoot Fred'. In a short while they heard a baby's cry and Nora had been born. The bells of St James church were ringing at the time.

This was the year when Agatha Christie's first novel was published featuring Hercule Poirot and Nora later enjoyed reading these books. Her sister Dorothy was born in 1926 and her sister Jennie in 1931. Nora went to Dursley Church School whose motto was: 'I am, I can, I ought, I will'. She had fond memories of taking part in May Day parades, dressed in white and dancing through Dursley to the recreation ground, then Maypole dancing. She also remembered seeing Queen Mary when she came to visit whilst staying at Badminton.

As a young girl Nora had scarlet fever, and she was looked after by her Grannie Pepworth. Nora used to help look after her sisters and loved thinking up outfits for fancy dress that they could wear. She once dressed Jennie as a doll in a cardboard box, with instructions to stand still and hold her little hand out in front of her when the judges came. She was so proud when a 3rd place was awarded!

Family meant everything to Nora, with many relatives and cousins living nearby they enjoyed playing in the garden, walks through the woods and picnics on the hills. Nora knew many songs and poems and she would also make some words up of her own to jolly things along in difficult times. 'Somewhere over the rainbow, pigs might fly' was taught to Jennie, who thought for many years that those lyrics were correct!

Nora had a Saturday job at the International store in Dursley before she left school aged 14. She then went to help her mother in her shop, then at 17, she began to work at Wintles, in Long Street.

She met her husband Harold who was in the RAF soon after the second World war broke out. They were engaged and Nora could have stayed at home, but after a deep discussion with her father, joined the WAAFs to "do her bit" and worked in the stores section using all



the skills she had learned. They married at St James' church on 25th November 1943.

After the war Nora and Harold settled down in the cottage at the Fortress, working part-time at Wintles. Harold had spent time in a sanatorium with a lung condition but improved and in 1950 they both moved to a cottage in Berry Hill in the Forest of Dean to help Harold's parents.

Harold again needed surgery to remove a lung at Frenchay Hospital, Bristol. Once he recovered, he applied to take over the local Post Office job as Sub-Postmaster and was successful.

Later, the opportunity came up to buy bigger premises with a house attached, over the road from the old post office. There they built up a successful business together, Nora running a toys, gifts, cards and ice-cream section which thrived due to holiday makers coming to the area. Nora helped Harold with beekeeping and honey production for many years. They enjoyed going to fairs and entering competitions with some success. Nora became allergic to bee stings so had to stop helping at the hives, so she helped with the harvesting of honey – a very sticky business! She always had some honey to eat every day, usually on bread and butter, but in later years on her porridge for breakfast.

Nora and Harold celebrated their Silver, Ruby, Gold and Diamond wedding anniversaries.

Nora's Christian faith was an important part of her life. After Harold's death in 2005 Nora moved back to Dursley to be near Jennie who lived in Fort Lane. She had an apartment in Vizard Close and attended St Mark's and St James. In 2012 Nora moved to The Hollies. She always appreciated the communion and other services held there and loved her visits from Philip, Ian and other church members, plus the monthly church magazine.

In 2020 Nora celebrated her 100th birthday and despite lockdown restrictions she was able to celebrate wearing her birthday tiara. All the staff at the Hollies took exceptionally great care of Nora and as a family we are very grateful to them. They have always made us very welcome too.

Nora always made the best of situations, was very resilient and liked to be independent. She didn't like a lot of fuss. On becoming frail and needing more support she would sing songs or recite poems and rhymes to offset the situation. She had quite a repertoire! In the last few months, she has expressed her weariness. She did not want to be 105 but then she didn't want to be 100 either and would be mockingly irritable when reminded of the next birthday's age saying, "O shut up!" A very long life well filled Nora, Rest in peace and rise in glory.

Years mind in April

1st Eileen Tait 2001; Bevis James 2012

2nd Ted Wakely; Pete Norris 2016

3rd Mauris Francis 2001; Pearl Stanley 2008; Philip Rose 2015

4th Don Trapp 2008; Ron Powell 2018

5th Edgar Norman Martin 2007

6th Edna Nelmes 2004; Peter Dunstan Horsfall Packer 2007;
Vincent Vizard 2015

7th Eileen Benjamin 2017; Robert Weldon 2019; David Avery 2020

8th Colin Dolbear 2016

9th Roland Newman 2021

10th Kathleen Hill 2021

12th Ian Morgan 1978; Douglas West 2020

15th Stuart Miles 1997; Hector Hayes 2003

17th Bill Moon 2015

18th David Wilson 2001

19th Marlene Powell 2022

21st William Grant 2024

23rd John Underwood; Joyce Sirrett 2009; Peggy Trott 2016

24th Margaret Hughes 2020

25th Kenneth A Cook 1994; Kenneth Chandler 2004

26th Peter Boyles

27th Jacquelin Hill 2024

29th Steve Walton 2006

30th Joan Edmunds 2009

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FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS.



FUNERALS:

We share our thoughts and prayers with the families of those who mourn the loss of those they love.

20th March Carol Thomas's funeral at Westerleigh
21st March Valerie Ford's funeral at St James

FLOWER ROTA

Easter 20th and 27th April.

High Altar Cynthia Martin
Tanner Chapel Margaret Lloyd
Lady Chapel Stephanie Say
Pulpit Anne Shipton
Font Kate Sant
Nave Pillar Ann Orchard
Hymn Book Chest Marion Paisey
Porch Sheila Gardner.



100 club draw for March as follows:-

1st - 125 - Sue Gibson
2nd - 169 - Lynn James
3rd - 198 - Rachel Brown
Many thanks Sarah

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