

The Messenger

June 2025

The Parish Of Dursley



60p each or £6 annually

The Ewelme Benefice

**The parish of Dursley
and**

the parish of Uley with Owlpen and Nympsfield

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JUNE 2025

A Message from the Editors

Dear Readers

Welcome to our June edition.

The June roses, as you can see in various parts of the magazine are already in full flower. Open Garden, Count on Nature and Coffee, Cake and Music to look forward to and hopefully more sunshine.

If you have anything to say please let us know, we are always open to new ideas.

From Valerie and Judith (editors)

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Front Cover: theme for 2025

'In and around St James'

Photo by Judith Staddon

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**DEADLINE FOR JULY 2025 ISSUE
IS SUNDAY 15th JUNE 2025**

Revd Juliet writes...



Dear Friends

It's wonderful to be celebrating the love and joy of wedding season in the Ewelme Benefice as the sun continues to shine!

One bride has arrived on a tractor, flowers and joyous singing have filled the churches, and rose petal confetti catching the wind makes for wonderful photographs.

Most of the weddings I've taken so far this year have been for people with a family connection to the Benefice. Anyone who lives in the Benefice can be married, baptised, have their child christened or have a funeral in the church – these churches belong to the parishes and are here for all parishioners, whatever is going on in their lives.

At its best Christian worship shapes lives in a particular way, helping each of us to flourish and live life to the full. Week by week, year by year, we tell and re-tell the story of God's love for God's people and we look to Jesus to show us what God is like. Each of us will have our own way of believing, or not as the case may be, and anyone with a faith that is living will have questions and be seeking to work out what difference having faith makes to our day-to-day ordinary lives with its up and downs, joys and sorrows. We are all on a journey.

Wherever you are on the journey, whatever stage of life you or friends and family may be at, you are welcome – these churches are here for all who lives in the parishes: for tears of joy and pain, for prayer, for curious wondering, for tentative, wholehearted or, in the case of those who have come to a church wedding via the pub, 'rugby-terrace' singing.

I honestly believe that worship is good for us, even when it's not to our personal taste, or when we don't like the people we are gathering with, because all of this can help to take us beyond ourselves. And it is in this 'beyond ourselves' place that we have a hope of encountering the God who is both beyond and within us. In worship we are reminded of the truth that we are not the centre of our little world and that the realities that we grapple with personally, societally and globally do not have the final say. We come to know ourselves, extraordinary though this is, as utterly loved by God and called to grow in this love, to become more and more who we are made to be.

The worship we offer as we gather Sunday by Sunday is like a little rehearsal for life. We learn to look up, we learn to say sorry, we learn that we are forgiven and have the chance to start again, we learn that there are ancient ways that are true, we learn that there are things too great for us to fully understand, we learn that we can dare to name the realities of our lives in all their wonder and awfulness, we learn that we are not alone, we learn that God has done everything that is needed to bring us close again, we learn that there is enough for everyone, we learn that we can be sustained for the journey, whatever that might mean, we learn that we can return, again and again and again.

As we pray at the beginning of the wedding service, so I pray for this whole community today:

*God of wonder and joy:
grace comes from you,
and you alone are the source of life and love.
Without you, we cannot please you;
without your love, our deeds are worth nothing.
Send your Holy Spirit,
and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love,
that we may worship you now
with thankful hearts
and serve you always with willing minds;
through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen.*

I am grateful for your prayers
With love and my continued prayers for you
Juliet

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.

Stop Press:-

We announce that Lionel Jones has died peacefully on Friday 23rd May aged 100.

Notes from Dursley APCM 2025

At our annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday 18th May 2025 Jan Vonberg stepped down as churchwarden. Jan has completed three years in the post, three tricky years, much of it in vacancy and with the trials of the lack of heating. She has worked tirelessly and we are hugely grateful for her hard work and dedication.

Our church wouldn't run so smoothly if it was not for churchwardens past and present.

We are incredibly pleased to announce that we have two churchwardens this year; Chris Tyler is starting his second year in post and Danny Parker was elected to begin the first of his three years. We thank them both for taking on this hugely important roll.

The accounts were presented by Sally Pearson, our treasurer, we thank Sally for the amount of time she puts in to keeping the church accounting.

Clare White was re-elected as secretary to the PCC.

Donna Pinker, Heather Arnold, Joy Pepper and Autin Meares were all elected onto the PCC.

The PCC are-

Austin Meares; Heather Arnold, Donna Pinker, Joy Pepper, Clare White, Edwina Walton, Anne Shipton, Sheila Gardner, Chris Morgan.

Deanery Synod representatives are David Smith and Elizabeth Oakley.

We have 103 people on our new electoral roll.

The next meeting of the PCC will be 4th June at 7.30pm



Churchwardens 2025.

Chris Tyler



Danny Parker

June Thoughts from The Benefice Office....

by Clare White



Flaming June! (We hope).

The midpoint to the year, the garden is looking good and my tomatoes have already started to ripen - so much earlier than 2024, when all it seemed to do was rain.



Our Churchyard hasn't been mown again this spring and the wildflowers are all thriving, including orchids; which are my favourite wild flowers.

Our church eco team are holding their Count on Nature event again on 14th June, it's a lovely morning for the people of Dursley to see just what wildlife we find in our small patch of God's creation.

Nature is one of the best places to feel alive, there's so much recent research about mindfulness that says we get our greatest amount of calm, energy and peace from being outside and communing with nature. There's no excuses in this area with our fine woods, hills and fields. Let alone our gardens, recreation grounds and playing fields.

Steve and I enjoy restful Friday evenings after a long week at work, we like to take our supper up one of the hills in our Benefice, sometimes we cook something on our camp stove or sometimes it's a cold picnic. These evenings are full of peace and calm and in June we can enjoy the abundance of wildflowers and birds, listening to birdsong, feeling the breeze and watching the sun set. We call it "Rock'n'Roll" Friday night - it's a long way from that, but it's our kind of "Rock'n'Roll".

Our very contact with nature has a deep restorative power; contemplation of its magnificence imparts peace and serenity.

A prayer for mindfulness

Loving God, may I be mindful of Your constant presence in my life, even in the midst of my daily challenges. Help me to be present in this moment, fully aware of my body, my breath, and the world around me. Grant me the wisdom to see Your grace and beauty in all things, and the patience to accept what I cannot change. Nurture my ability to be compassionate towards myself and others, and guide me to respond to life with kindness and understanding. I ask for your peace and guidance, Lord, as I strive to live more mindfully each day.
Amen



Cooking Supper
on Long Down

ST JAMES NATURE DAY

SUMMER 2025

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SATURDAY 14TH JUNE

9AM – 12PM



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- GLOUCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST STAND



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Ewelme Benefice

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

April 26th

May 31st

June 28th

July 26th

August 30th

September 27th

October 25th

Nigel Davies

Keith Hearnshaw

Martin Bell

Pavlos Triantaris

John Pennington

Nigel Davies

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



MUSIC LIST FOR JUNE

The third in this year's **Coffee, Cake and Music** organ recital series (Saturday 28th June) will be given by Martin Bell. Last time Martin was to play at St James' he had not arrived by 10.55 on the day of the recital, and I hastily pulled together a few pieces whilst Canon Michael was explaining the dilemma to the audience. Just like something from a TV sit-com, as Michael was speaking, Martin appeared! He literally ran up the organ loft stairs and gave us a thoroughly enjoyable recital, so I was able to put my hastily chosen pieces away. It seems the M4 was blocked for some hours due to an accident.

I understand Martin is in the process of moving from Llanelli to London, and, at the time of writing, I have yet to hear from him. I am a little concerned that he will, once again, be travelling on the M4; albeit from a different direction.....

On Sunday 29th June, we will be holding a **"Come and Sing Choral Evensong"** to which all are most welcome. Underpinned by members of St James' choir, it will feature the music of Herbert Sumsion, the distinguished former Director of Music at Gloucester Cathedral for nearly forty years.

The rehearsal will be from 4.30pm – 5.40pm followed by a break for tea and cake before singing for the service at 6.30pm.

Nigel Davies

Music for June

Sunday 1st	am	Vox Christi – Wilby	Mass of the Creator – Sanders
Sunday 8th	am	Lobet Gott in Seinen Reichen – J S Bach	
		Ireland in C	
(Pentecost)	pm	O Come ye Servants – Tye Bairstow in D/Ayleward responses	
		Give us the wings of Faith – Bullock	
Sunday 15th	am	Informal Service	
Sunday 22nd	am	Te Deum in F – Ireland	Bairstow in Eb
Sunday 29th	am	Just as I am – Chilcott	Jackson in G
(Come and Sing)			
	pm	We Love the Place – Sumsion	Sumsion Responses
		Sumsion in G	
		They that go down to the sea in Ships - Sumsion	

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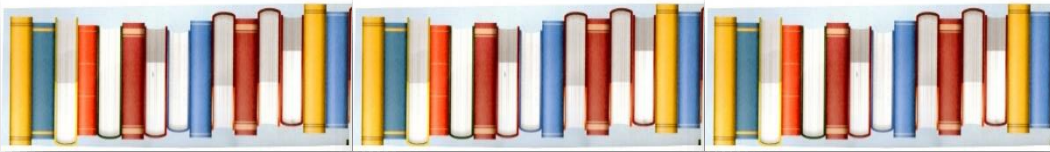
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ST JAMES FREE BOOK STALL



Clive says.....“Wow I never saw that coming.

In May we were presented with the Lesley D Gale award 2025 for “outstanding service to the community of Dursley” and the impact it has had on the town.

It shows the standing our book stall has in Dursley and as the citation says “... (the bookstall) welcomes visitors of all ages from far and wide” Well done everyone. Without your efforts it would never happen.

The weekly event continues to grow. We have welcomed back “The Klarinetts” clarinet ensemble, Kim Ward’s piano students and look forward to the Wotton Wind Band in the near future, all providing background music as we browse the books or relax over a cup of coffee.

If you haven’t experienced a Saturday morning in St James church why don’t you give it a try. It’s not only the books and the music but also a relaxing morning having a chat.”



We are there every Saturday



Jennifer Kendrick says.....Clive Orchard is a VERY SPECIAL member of Dursley’s Community. Kind and gentle, tough and uncompromising, leads from the front, supports from behind, speaks quietly to individual needs and shouts loudly to gain immediate and undivided attention from a crowd!

He modestly began the free books sessions at St. James Church on Saturday mornings as a fund-raising mission. It now has a devoted following of regular volunteers setting up and putting away and welcomes visitors of all ages from far and wide. There may be live background music and always cake and coffee whilst they browse books or just sit quietly in company. Such effective outreach, available to all, for no charge and with such positive benefits is hard to quantify! An unassuming gentle giant with boots toe-capped with steel that are lined with unlimited sharing and caring, Clive is a man for all seasons!

ST. JAMES' BOOKSALE

It's Saturday morning in Dursley.
There's a Booksale that's on at St James'
Where books there are free (or donation)
And authors with hundreds of names.
'Twas started one summer on St James' lawn
None but Clive Orchard to blame,
When his daughter had volumes all due for the tip,
And Clive thought, "Well, that's such a shame!"
And so, to make cash for our charities
He started the booksale outside
Which sparked int'rest in our shoppers in town
And soon word spread far and wide.
The event became so popular
That more helpers were needed in time
And volunteers flocked to prepare and pack up
In church (when wet) and outside when fine.
And the good this is doing is spreading
We've reg'lars from Bristol and Wales
And people bring children and dogs, too
Either reading, or wagging their tails!
Some people just come for the company,
To chat or to listen to song,
For some like to practise their music in church,
And others to just hum along.
SO... To all the Packers and Unpackers,
And Joy, who sells volumes online
To servers of tea and refreshments
And all those who give of their time
To Clive, who started the whole thing off
With his Gale award shiny and new
To EVERY Helper involved in Booksale
We say a big heartfelt THANK YOU!



Bellringing *by Isaac O'Shea*

"Ringing practices and Sunday service ringing continues to be strongly supported with a good turn out of ringers most of the time! Our ringing remains of a good standard with at least one touch of Surprise major for services on a good day. Our learners are making very good progress in their journey, and are just about settling in to rounds and contributing to service ringing.

Later this month, some minor works to the clappers will be carried out. This includes new crown staples and a new timber shanked clapper on the 7th bell. The aim of this - To make the whole ring strike more evenly as an instrument. Will it make a difference to our ringing? You will be the judges and let us know!

On May 31st, a full peal will be rung for one of our ringers Birthday. This will last for about 3 hours or so, and will undoubtedly be a high standard of ringing.

We also rang for the VE day celebrations. Our time slot was a little limited, but we rang well and hopefully contributed to the atmosphere in the town!"

Years Mind in June

1st Patricia Averiss 2017, Philip Hancock 2019, 2nd Terry Adams 2019, Winifred Pretty 2024, 5th Tom Arnold 2003, 6th Stuart Cornock 2001, Jane Gardner 2016, Brenda Gardner 2017, Eileen Boyles 2018, 7th Lionel Ayliffe 2013, 8th Jill Hill 2016, 9th Jack Edward Bryant 2006, 12th Roy Kelly 2016, 14th Elton Chappell, Alice Rose Clarke, 16th David Pagett 2008, 18th Janet Philp 2023, 19th Dorothy Warner 1999, Margaret Parry 2018, 20th Marcia Turner 2017, 21st William Greenwood 2022, 24th Mabel Owen 2005, Mary Haviland Minchin 2006, 25th Patricia Welton 2008, 26th Hilda Wills 2002, Iris Jones 2009, Barbara Greenwood 2023, 27th Gill Littleford 2018, 28th Bridget Waters 2008, Bob Wood 2020, 30th Wyndham Jones 2015

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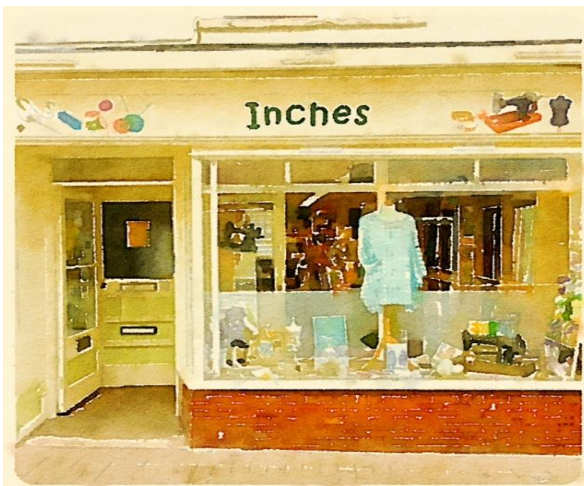
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As reported in January magazine.....

Congratulations to Dr Roger Ransome a Tireless bat conservationist celebrated in the King's New Years Honours.

Roger shares pictures of the presentation of the award.

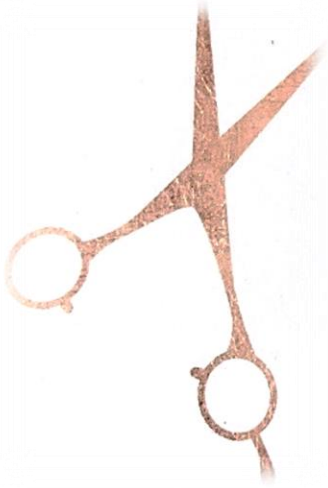


The group shot contains all of the recipients.

One involved motor-cycle road safety; one women's British Legion and the couple were amazing foster parents.

The Lord Lieutenant and Jo Moore (his deputy) start and end the row.





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June Diary 2025

(Joining Zoom details on Ewelme Benefice website)



Sunday 1st June – 7th Sunday of Easter

10am Parish Holy Communion at St James

1.30pm **Open Garden & cream tea
at 52 Woodmancote**

Wednesday 4th June

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

7.30pm Dursley PCC at St James

Thursday 5th June

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 7th June

5.30pm Kim Ward's pupils' Concert at St James

Sunday 8th June – Pentecost Sunday

10am Holy Communion at St James

6.30pm Choral Evensong service at St James

Wednesday 11th June

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 12th June

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 14th June

9am-12pm Count on Nature event at St James

7.30pm Tyndale Choral Society Concert at St James

Sunday 15th June – Trinity Sunday

- 8am Said Holy Communion at St James
- 10am Reflective Worship
- 4pm Piano Recital

Wednesday 18th June

- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom
- 2pm Bizarre Bible production at St James

Thursday 19th June

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

22nd June – 1st Sunday of Trinity

- 10am Benefice Holy Communion at St Giles, Uley
- 6.30pm Choral Evensong at St James

Wednesday 25th June

- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 26th June

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

Saturday 28th June

10.30am Coffee, Cake and Music (Martin Bell) at St James

Sunday 29th June – 2nd Sunday of Trinity

- 10am Holy Communion at St James.



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CULTURE AND ME *by David Vonberg.....*

Joy Pepper has been thinking about the things which both bring back memories and also inspire her.



Do you have a favourite author or book?

No I don't. I read anything and everything apart from Sci-Fi which just doesn't appeal to me. I read everything from autobiographies, murder mysteries and historical books.

What are you reading at present?

I have just started a book by Ann Granger called "An Unfinished Murder". I have just finished reading "The Steel Girls", by Michelle Rawlins set in Sheffield and is about the girls who working in the steel industry. The main characters are three women of very different ages, plus their friends. The three women worked as crane drivers. They also set up a fund to help people who were in poverty through no fault of their own. Arranged a swap shop in the factory for clothes, a bit like our "Bring and Take". People didn't always have to bring items but could take away anything. They also got people to knit basically for families first, jumpers, socks, scarfs, hats, and gloves. After a while after sending out gloves, scarfs, and hats to one of the women's sons who were away fighting in France. These were so well received that they were now knitting for all the armed forces. In the last book I read, the bombing has started in England and Sheffield was being hit badly. There are five books in the series and the next one comes out in November – I can't wait!

Is there a book which you have often wanted to read or would like to read next?

I have got loads of books which have not been unpacked yet, with lots of books on my shelves here. My sister gave me "Far Pavilions" by M. M Kaye. I have put off starting it because it is quite a thick volume, but I would like to read that.

Is there a song or piece of music you turn to, to cheer you up?

I like Abba, all their music. You can dance to their music which is cheerful and uplifting.

Do you have a favourite piece of music?

The one piece of music that I play often is "You Raise me up". When I went to Lee Abbey they played it which was very special. It gets to me whenever I listen to it

Do you play a musical instrument. If not what would you like to have learnt? I learnt to play the piano when I was young, and I was really quite good at it. I have tried later in life to pick it up but I just can't do it and so I regret giving up. With my tutor I could pick up a tune and he encouraged my parents to let me continue playing, but it was not to be. I think I took after my father who played lots of instruments, organ, piano, accordion and others and could pick up a tune very quickly, often by ear.

What is your favourite film? I found this quite hard! There is "Love Story", with Ryan O'Neill; "Pollyanna" which I remember going to see with my friend and sobbed my heart out, which ruined my makeup! Then there is "Lawrence of Arabia". I went to the opening night in Birmingham at the Gaumont Cinema. You went upstairs. All the way up either side of the staircase there were all the military uniforms, contemporary to his period. I can't separate these three films.

What about a favourite television series?

"Vera" and I am gutted that the series has finished! Brenda Blethyn is perfect for the part. She reminds me of "Columbo". The other favourite is "Downton Abbey". I have seen everything they have done.

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

The "Mona Lisa", which I have seen in the Louvre at the age of 12, on a school trip to Paris. What surprised me was how tiny it is. No matter where you go her eyes do follow you. It is mesmerising.

Do you have a special building which means a lot to you and if so why? I love the church I got married in – St Nicholas' church in Solihull, as it was. I went back and it had been changed and the altar moved. It was a beautiful church in which I was confirmed as well by the Bishop who was a saintly man. It took three buses to get there but it was worth it.

Is there a place where you have felt happiest?

I think it would be when I was living in Dursley. It's a hard choice between living in Solihull and Dursley. I have got more church friends here. Living on the main road, we only really knew the neighbours either side of us. The only other people we knew lived two doors away, but they moved after a few years and we never got to know the new people, whereas in Solihull we were living in a lovely community. Both of these are important aspects.

You are having a fantasy dinner party for five – who would you invite?

My two grandfathers, whom I never met, and I would love to learn more about my family history on my mum's side including the links

with Lloyd's Bank. Maggie Smith, the actress, for her wit, charm and acting ability. Then Elvis Presley because he was my teenage youth – rick 'n roll. The last one is Mother Teresa. The bits I have read about her are really interesting. She decided to go into religion when she was 12. Did she have a calling from God? She went to India and came back, before leaving the convent to go back to spend her life mainly in Calcutta. When she went out to India after leaving the convent, she was herself begging on the streets which made her compassionate towards poor.

Thank you Joy for a fascinating journey.

Acrostic Poem....by Sally Hayward



June is known as 'Flaming June'
Usually high temperatures
Noting a few years ago we had
Everlasting sunny weather right up to October

As Sally has not been well, this is one she prepared earlier.





By the time you read this, some of the grassy areas on the north side of St James will have grown considerably longer as part of our "No Mow Summer" regime (now in its 4th year) to support wildlife in the churchyard. Both the old and new Memorial Gardens, as well as the lawned areas on the south side of the church, will continue to be mown short for ease of access and recreation. The shorter areas are also beneficial to wildlife, such as blackbirds searching for worms, or mining bees making nests in the ground, so a mixture of different lengths of grass is ideal. A big 'thank you' to those who mow in the churchyard for adapting to this system.

On 7th May, the Brownies who meet in our Parish Centre spent some time in the churchyard throwing wildflower seed balls, which they had made themselves two weeks previously, into the areas which are going to be left unmown. We hope this will increase the number and variety of wildflowers that grow there, and, consequently, of the insects and other creatures they provide food and shelter for.



We may see some of the results of this activity on 13th and 14th June during our Count on Nature/ Churchyard Nature Day events, which have a slightly different format this year, being split over two days. Count on Nature, the observation and recording of all the different plants and animals we can find in the churchyard, will take place on Friday 13th from 2 - 4 pm. Anyone is welcome to join in with this, no special expertise needed, as there will be knowledgeable people and useful apps on hand to help. On Saturday 14th, from 9 am to 12 noon, alongside the bookstall, there will be a Churchyard Nature Day, with 'moth reveals' of live moths humanely trapped the night before in Dursley by Peter Cranswick (you will be amazed to see the beautiful moths that frequent our gardens after dark!), and wildlife-themed craft and

I-spy activities for children, as well as a Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust information stall. Entrance to the event and the activities are free, so do come along, and bring your friends and families. Refreshments will be available.

You may have heard our recording of swifts' calls playing from the church tower since late May. We are hoping to attract yearling swifts looking for nesting sites to the swift boxes we installed in the belfry just over a year ago. Fingers crossed that some of them set up home there (they won't be able to get into the belfry itself), as suitable nesting sites are few and far between nowadays, and swift numbers are declining.

We hope many of you will have the opportunity to enjoy walking or sitting in the churchyard this summer.





WHOSE LIFE IS IT, ANYWAY?

....by Canon Richard Morgan

The assisted suicide bill has raised the question to whom our lives belong. In a wildly individualistic society, it seems obvious to many that each person's own life belongs to them – to say, 'Own life' suggests that. But it's not so simple.

In May, we remembered Victory in Europe, the end of the Second World war with Germany. People were encouraged to sing, 'I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above ... the love that asks no question, ... that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.' The world was brought conscription. People had no choice but to fight and die. Their lives were their country's, not their own. I'm deeply uneasy with that hymn's first verse – the love that asks no question seems generally wrong. We must question our country. 'My country, right or wrong,' sounds more like Hitler's view than a liberal or Christian view. But for those in the trenches or the tanks, in the midst of battle, the hymn expressed and expresses how it has to be. In general, however, we need to question our country, our ideologies, even God – for God's sake! And I don't think our country is necessarily the greatest earthly thing: family, friendship, care for the environment and for humankind in general may all the what should come first at various times and for various people. And maybe indeed ourself may sometimes be the most important earthly thing.

It is not good that people may be at all times at the disposal of the state, of their family, or whatever. But, if we are called to love, if love is the most important thing, then neither is oneself and advantages to ourself the be all and end all.

The hymn, however, has a second verse, about 'another country, I've heard of long ago. This is God's kingdom, described in the gospel. 'Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering. ... Her ways are ways gentleness, and all her paths are peace.' If God is put first, the God of Jesus, of love, then each earthly good can be checked and corrected, and the various chief goods may all have their place and time for different people. Of course, our ideas of God must be measured by God's revelation in Christ as love – religion itself can put secondary things first and be tyrannical.

And this is relevant to the issues of assisted dying. It is an agonising issue. Some people do not need assistance. Suicide used to be a crime, but there are old people who can just will themselves to depart

without laying a hand on themselves. I recall a very elderly retired clergyman who lived that the top of Woodmancote, who was taken ill and told he would have to go into a home. 'I won't,' he said, turned his face to the wall and died in hours. Others say they want to die but can't let go.

Our bill gives very limited permission to get assistance to die, when one is probably dying anyway – but there are cases of people told they have only three months to live, who are fit and well ten or twenty years later. Will the small permission be the beginning of a slippery slope to wider acceptance of suicide? Families and doctors may be hurt by such departures. And we just aren't as separate individuals as we often think. We may have a duty to our families and others to live as long as we are given. But some feel they owe it to their families to die. Neither we nor family are necessarily the most important owners of us. Certainly, a situation that enables families to pressure people to suicide would be disastrous. And if suicide gets common, then some people will turn to it who would not do so in a society where suicide was not accepted. Will acceptance of suicide undermine the respect for human life that has been so powerful in a society that has rejected the death penalty? Will it reduce the priority given to improving pain management and palliative care? Doctors have long accepted that, in certain cases, they can put reducing pain first, not aiming to kill, but accepting that they may not maximise length of life. Will this be lost? There are so many issues here. But we need to look to God, the God of love, as the true owner of our lives. Self, family, country, whatever, are all important, but to make them the final court of appeal and all important is liable to bring unexpected damage in the long run.

Here's an alternative to the hymn discussed, more suitable I think, at most times.

1. I vow to God eternal, all earthly things above,
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love,
That seeks through humble questions to know and trust God's will,
And in true obedience God's purpose to fulfil.
O grant me, Lord, to serve you, through Christ who paid the price,
Who laid upon the altar the final sacrifice.
2. And as I give myself to you, Lord, may I learn to love
The good things of creation in the true light from above,
With love both strong and chastened, from idol worship free,
For land, friends and family and all humanity.
God, help us in this broken world your goodness to increase,
And to walk the ways of gentleness, and find the paths of peace.

RANDOM THOUGHTS FROM OVER THE DRY STONE WALL SPRING 2025.....by Jennifer Kendrick



As I near my 88th birthday, an informal chat about the future has had my old brain cells chattering excitedly like sparrows in the hedgerow. I am proud to have been involved with Fordhall Community Land Initiative Farm, in Shropshire, since 2006 when there was a mountain to climb and I tentatively bought one share and made a cash donation for the purchase of a few sheep in memory of my beloved brother! He had been a shepherd in the High Pyrenees. How great oaks from little acorns grow! See the web site now! In Fordhall we have the very essence of all that is well and inspirational in our world!

Everybody involved has an important role, regardless of age, ability, mobility, time or resources! Volunteer weekends are always popular and can be life changing! The friendship and art of possibility, sharing and caring has spread round the world and we are all benefactors. The future is full of promise and adventures, but we must all tread carefully to ensure we do not dilute or change the ethos, be beguiled by big business promises and mighty profits or dismissed as determined and delusional.

My very personal interest is in young people, leaving school with little idea of anything worth getting up for! They are a large part of a lost generation who need strong leadership and purpose. A springboard. The chance to have a go, outward bound with risks attached, rewards for effort and commitment, the understanding that every action has a relative reaction and that sensible rules are essential for the guidance of wise men and obedience of others! Money is an essential means, but not an end in itself.

Maybe there is an opportunity to develop a residential apprentice scheme, starting with taster courses on the farm, for 16-18 year old boys to cover all aspects of independent living and self-sufficiency from cooking, cleaning, laundry, driving machinery, animal care, home maintenance, budgeting, resilience when things get tough?

I am reminded of the fairy tale where crumbs were scattered on a trail when there was an end in site with lots of options en route! Its so easy to get distracted and disappointed when the path is littered with hurdles and high jumps, but that's life and I believe it's a challenge well worth pursuing! I would give anything to be up and running but slow, small steps are OK!



Me on the farm having fun.

An unexpected calling, from ministry to chaplaincy to ordination

"My journey to ordination came to life because of this job. Before I started here, I wouldn't have thought I'd be on this path, but being in this school has made it clear."

Matt Round has been working as a chaplain at All Saints' Academy, Cheltenham for over three years. For Matt, becoming a chaplain wasn't the path that he was expecting to follow – but it has had a significant impact on his sense of calling.



"Before I started at All Saints' Academy, I was working in full-time ministry at a non-denominational church in Manchester. I knew I wanted to have a job change, and that God was calling me into something else.

"Someone mentioned school chaplaincy. As I looked into it more, it just felt right. It allowed me to jump back into the world, and serve outside of the church setting. God made it quite clear that this is where he wanted me to be."

Three years on, in September, Matt will begin training for ordination, while continuing part-time at the academy.

"This role sparked my journey to ordination. It opened the door. I'm going to do my training whilst continuing here as a chaplain. I know that this is where I'm meant to be for the next chapter. I'm happy in this role, and I've become more open to where God might call me next," he said.

As a chaplain, Matt's role goes beyond leading worship and teaching about Christianity; he serves the entire school community, from students and staff to parents, volunteers and local neighbours.

"No day is the same. I've got my weekly rhythms, like collective worship and running the Alpha course, but I try to leave my schedule open. I might have a list of things to do, but then ten more things crop up that I wasn't expecting. It's a very people-focused role, so I try to

be out and about, present during break times, lunch times, and around the school."

Although Matt doesn't always see the immediate impact of chaplaincy, he knows that his role is important to the wellbeing of the school community.

"In church ministry, I often saw the fruit of what I was doing. In school chaplaincy, you don't always get that. You say something and hope it lands, but you might never know. Sometimes I'm reading a Bible story in front of 400 students. Other times, I'm having a one-to-one chat where faith might not be the first thing we talk about. You have to sense what's helpful in that moment.

"Whether someone has faith or not, I'm here to support them. It's about presence, understanding, and care."

If you feel you might have a calling into this ministry or something new, find out more about next steps on our vocations page here: <https://gloucester.anglican.org/living-faith/discover-your-vocation/>

Thy Kingdom Come 2025 – Light up the world in Prayer

From 29 May to 8 June 2025, Christians across the world are invited to unite in prayer as part of Thy Kingdom Come.

Spanning the eleven days between Ascension Day and Pentecost, this global wave of prayer is about deepening our own relationship with God, while praying for others to experience that same transformation. Thy Kingdom Come asks people to pray, daily, for five people they know to come to know Jesus Christ, and to encourage others to pray all over the world.

We have a wide range of free resources available on our webpage to help guide you through → <https://gloucester.anglican.org/2025/thy-kingdom-come-2025-light-up-the-world-in-prayer/>.

Bishop Robert said: "In what is an increasingly fragile world, Thy Kingdom Come takes us back the heart of prayer and Jesus' promise to be with us always and everywhere.

"As I pray for people, some I know personally, others I know only of, I seek simply to hold them in God's love; that they may know how precious and unique they are, and the fullness of life that God invites them to share.

"I find that praying in this way does, as Jesus promises, casts anxiety aside, strengthening and renewing my own faith, as I look to the needs and to the welfare of others."

Whether you're new to prayer or have taken part before, this year is another opportunity to join millions in asking God to reveal Himself in new ways.

Then and Now celebrating VE Day 80n years ago.

A snapshot of the people who lived in Woodmancote after VE Day 1945. Photo supplied by Margaret Owen with names supplied by Diana nee Deane.



Pictured are Farmer Wilcox, Lionel Brown, Andrew Morgan and his wife, Mrs Parslow with her mother in a wheelchair, Mrs Oakley, Mrs Holt, Flossie Padgett, Hilda Wilcox. Eileen Deane, Ozzie Atkins, Sam Green, Joyce Newman (Brown) and Lester, Harold Wilcox, Mr Vines, Mrs Brown, Peter Lan, Mr Hoskins, Dick Jackson, Joyce Bird, John Wise (sailor) Greta Chappel, Gladys Jackson, Mr Sawyer.

Hilda Kerr, Tony Deane, Mrs Atkins, Mrs Smith (Greta's Mum), Mrs Perkins, Mr Perkins, Marion. Gertie Robbins, Mr Webb, Mrs Deane, Mrs Webb, Mrs Workman, Bert Price, Mrs Price, Kathy Miles, Jim Brown, Laura and Frank Tolerfield, Sally Stonebridge, Les Hall, Graeme Deane, Ron Powell, Mr Perkins, Mr Grimes, Sylvia Neale, Tom Sherman, Jim Grimes, Peter Prosser, Viv Atkins, Greta Brown, (died in a car accident aged 16), Jean Ball, Sheila Whittard, Billy Kerr, June Robbins, Brenda Smith, Miss Harrold, Tony Padgett, Margaret Ledson, Ivor Jackson, Roy Brown, David Holt, Marion Jackson, David Kerr. Roy Stoneman, Beryl Neale, Audrey Price, Diana Deane, Audrey Holt, Doug Stonebridge, Daphne Jackson, Victor Ball, Derek Hall, Alan Blick.

Some memories from a childhood in the 1940s and 50s,

by David Smith.



Early during the war an aerodrome (airfield) was constructed about a mile from Leiston on the Suffolk coast where our family lived. American airmen moved in to the base. One of my earliest memories was from Christmas 1941. All Leiston children, including me and my sister Dulcie, were invited to a Christmas party on the base it was a great treat. Lots of food and presents.

My mother cared for all of us and the house. She didn't have a vacuum cleaner, fridge or a washing machine. Heating was from a coal fire. We didn't have a phone or a car. Mother had been in service before she married. Father worked at the engineering works in the centre of town. He had a week of annual holiday. Each day of the holiday we would go to Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Norwich, Ipswich or Felixstowe by train. We had a few books in the house and a daily paper- the Daily Herald which was a Labour supporting paper. We didn't have a Sunday paper. Sunday was special.

On Sundays we attended a Methodist chapel for the morning service and Sunday school. The highlights of the year for the children were the Sunday School Anniversary and the Sunday School Outing. The chapel gave me a grounding for my faith.

Suffolk Punch horses were used to pull the bread cart and the dustcart. In contrast the milk float was powered by batteries. We visited our granny Smith every week. She was a lovely old lady. She lived in an old house that still had gas lighting. On winter afternoons granny used a taper to light the gas mantle which emitted a strong white light.

We stayed at school for dinner. School dinners included overcooked cabbage. Tapioca (frogs spawn) was often on the menu. Sunday lunch at home was the highlight of the week: roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, potatoes and peas. Any meat left over was used up on Monday. During the week the children's tea was often bread with golden syrup, jam or potted meat. Rabbit from the butchers was a treat. In the autumn I would go blackberrying. Mum would use the berries to make my favourite dessert; blackberry and apple pie. In 1948 my brother Harold, who is 10 years older than me, took me on a day trip to London. Buckingham Palace. Paintings by John Constable the Suffolk painter in the National Gallery. St Pauls Cathedral and climbing up to the Whispering Gallery. At that time the land next to the cathedral was a bomb site with few undamaged buildings.

Recently Harold reminded me that families in Leiston and many other towns celebrated VE Day quietly. Many young men were still in the Far East fighting or in Prisoner of War Camps. Any celebrations would have to wait for VJ Day in August.



Scenes from the celebrations in Dursley, on May 8th with Fish and Chips for £5 and Beer for 7p per pint.

The Bells rang at 6.30pm, then there was Live music from Rednock Swing Band and Choir, Air and Army cadets drill parade, eight rockets were fired, one for each decade, and rounded off with the singing the hymn 'I vow to thee my country'.



FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS.



FUNERALS & MEMORIAL SERVICES AT ST JAMES:

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

Jacqueline Strange 23rd April

Tony King 25th April

Betty Clarke 7th May

Burial of ashes

John Baldwin 30th April at Kingshill Cemetery

Banns read at St James in May

Sarah Moon and Ross Allen

Helen Tavner and Timothy Ayres

FLOWER ROTA

1st June

High Altar: Kate Sant

Tanner Chapel: Valerie Meares

Lady Chapel: Glenys Muir.

8th June PENTECOST

And 15th June

High Altar: Sarah Hodge

Tanner Chapel: Sandra Longstreth

Lady Chapel: Jennie Leighton

Pulpit: Clare White

Font: Steph Say

Nave Pillar: Kim Pugh

Hymnbk Chest: Anthea Fittall

Porch: Sheila Gardner

22nd & 29th June

High Altar: Kate Sant

Tanner Chapel: Marion Paisey

Lady Chapel: Margaret Lloyd.



100 club draw for May as follows:-

1st - 203 - Cynthia Martin, 2nd - 128 - Hugh Whittaker,

3rd - 156 - Paul Noble

Also P.S. Note of apology to Paul Prodger - 3rd place for April (not Peter) -
my typo! Many thanks Sarah

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