

# The Messenger

## May 2025

### The Parish Of Dursley



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**VE DAY**  
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8 MAY 2025

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**the parish of Uley with Owlpen and Nympsfield**

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**Mr Tony King RIP**

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## A Message from the Editors

# MAY 2025

Dear Readers

Welcome to our May edition.

We have VE80 celebrations, the second Organ Recital and on 1<sup>st</sup> June Open Garden, to look forward to. Memories of Readers who have led us here in Dursley, now and in the past.

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

From Valerie and Judith (editors)

**Front Cover:** theme for 2025

'In and around St James'

Memorial Gates

*Photo by Clare White*

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**DEADLINE FOR JUNE 2025 ISSUE  
IS SUNDAY 2025**

## Revd Ian writes and reflects...

---



Dear Friends

In 2019 I wrote to begin my May letter, *'This season of spring has been a wonderful time of year once again. It rarely disappoints. The blossom has been gorgeous and the scent of new growth in the air has been a joy to the eye and to the nose. The ears too have been serenaded by birdsong. In the little lane by our house as we walk the dog early in the morning, it can be like walking with the very best stereo surround sound clamped to your ears. Breathtaking and glorious assault on our senses!*

Nothing really has changed and these past weeks have been a joy to be alive and what I wrote then is true now. There has however been one change and that is we have a new dog and she is called Waffles. She is 8 years old and she is a bearded collie. She's very loving, a constant companion, responds very enthusiastically to 'Shall we go for a walk?' and is a real blessing in our lives.

We have loved our dogs and cats, who have been part of our lives over the years. Memories may fade, but committing to caring for someone, or a loved pet indeed changes our focus on what matters in life. Surely the act of loving in this sense, means living with another in mind and therefore not living only for ourselves?

One of the joys and privileges of being a priest is the chance to be with people at some significant moments of joy in their lives. In this month of May, I will have the pleasure of being with three couples, their family and friends, as they marry each other and commit to sharing their lives together. I will also have the joy of baptising a child into a church community, that will welcome her and her family, will pray for her life and for her future. Sharing lives together, caring for and living for someone else, will be important part of all these people's lives.

It is in a very real sense a new beginning, a change that is exciting to imagine, particularly if you imagine it together with someone who you love and who loves you. This is the Easter message. In the Risen Jesus we proclaim a light that dispels darkness, hope where there is despair and love for all humanity. Such an important message for this world at the moment!

The month of May may also be for you a time for rest and recuperation. It may be holiday time and if so, wherever you go and whatever you do, be at home or away, I wish and pray that it will be wonderful and restorative.

Yours in Christ,        *Ian*

## Revd Juliet writes...

---



Dear Friends and Church Family

Firstly, Happy Easter!

I had intended to write to you a letter reflecting on the transition time that we are in as we approach the APCMs. There have been many losses since I arrived here in the benefice 8 months ago, people who have lived and served faithfully and have been vital parts of ministry here for many years: Pauline Thomas, Chris Raffle, Paula Rix, Jane Wood and Tony King. This is a lot for us all to bear, even as we hold onto the Alleluias of Eastertide. On Maundy Thursday, these losses have been compounded for me by a very personal loss. Some of you will have met Andy, the rather larger than life Yorkshire man who has graced the pews with his presence when visiting from Norfolk. Andy is someone I have known for nearly 20 years as a friend, encourager and in more recent years, we have been in a relationship. He was due to move to Bristol in the next few weeks and some of the empty spaces at the Rectory were to be for his furniture. Sadly and shockingly he unexpectedly died in the night, fortunately his son was staying at the time and so he found him when he didn't appear for breakfast on Thursday morning. No one suspects anything untoward - he was of an age and state of health where these things happen. I am hugely grateful to Ian, Richard and David for their incredible support and service to us all and their care for me as I have navigated Holy Week and Easter and to Clare, Moya, Jan and Chris and to everyone who plays a part in enabling the life of the church in ministry and mission - this is an extraordinary benefice and I am very pleased to be here. I felt confident to preside on Easter Day, knowing that we share in the liturgy, so thank you to all who were there playing your part. So, that said, the letter I had been intending to write was to say that we are approaching a time when we vote for our Church Wardens and appoint our Church Officers (Treasurers, PCC Secretaries, Safeguarding Officers) in each parish. After what has been a challenging time with the vacancy and the arrival of a new incumbent, both Jan Vonberg and Moya Wallis are stepping down as Wardens. I am both immensely grateful for their service and fully supportive of their stepping down - they have done their bit. This leaves Chris Tyler as the only Church Warden in the Benefice - until others step up into this role. In addition both Sally and Prue have been Treasurers for a number of years and are ready to help others to learn the role so that they can step confidently step aside in the coming year/s. I am very clear that the Church Warden role is a legal and pastoral role with huge responsibilities

for the mission and ministry of the church, particularly in times of vacancy. As is often the case, Church Wardens can find themselves feeling solely responsible for a whole lot of other things that makes the role a burden and means that people are reluctant to put themselves forward to serve in this way, wrongly thinking that they need to be there at every service and event, managing every detail of what goes on. We are working on an approach that will help us to work differently, to share leadership for the practical responsibilities more explicitly and to seek to enable as many people as possible to 'play their part' in whatever way they are able to. This will require people to be willing to be 'Assistant Wardens' for each church and for people to be willing to serve/continue to serve on Fabric Committees and Finance/HR Committees. Sharing responsibilities in this way, and many others as we do, is a sign of strength not weakness. Each of us has a part to play. We will be drawing up a volunteer role description for what it means to be an 'Assistant Warden' and to identify the skills and experience that are needed to fulfil this and other roles. As these volunteer role descriptions become available, please will you dare to ask God what part you are being called to for this season and pray for the grace to respond with faith. While I realise that this is a challenging time, we don't need to feel anxious. This is God's Church and in the topsy turvy ways of the Magnificat and the strange and surprising Easter faith we proclaim, we can be confident. Immediately after Easter I will be making my regular annual retreat at St Beuno's in North Wales and then taking some holiday. I return to the Benefice in time for the VE Day celebrations on the Memorial Field in Uley on Monday 5th May. I am grateful for your love and your prayers. Please be assured of mine for you.

Revd Juliet Jensen Rector

### **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.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR SUNSHINE**

# Open Garden & Cream Tea



**Sunday 1st June 2025**

**1.30–5pm**



**At 52 Woodmancote, Dursley GL11 4AQ**



All donations in aid  
of St James Church

**Parking is limited, please park in town and walk up if you are able.**



## Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 Dursley Market Place

Live Music

**6.30pm - 9.45pm**

Free entry

Enjoy Fish & Chips  
in the Market  
Place\*

6.30pm  to ring...  
followed by announcement of winner of  
VE Day 80 Shop Front Window Competition

6.45pm Live music from Rednock Swing Band & Choir

7.30pm Air Cadets & Army Cadets Drill Parade

8.00pm More live music from Rednock Swing Band & Choir

9.28pm 8 rockets to fire, one to mark each decade of the 80 years

9.30pm Singing the hymn "I Vow To Thee My Country" in the Market Place

\* VE Day 80 Special Fish & Chip can be purchased from Gravity and Kingshill Fish & Chip Shop for £5 by quoting "All Day VE 80 special Fish & Chips"



## May Thoughts from The Benefice Office....by Clare White

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"Then broke the spring.  
The hedges in a day burgeoned to green; the drawing of  
the trees,  
incomparably pencilled line by line,  
thickened to heaviness,  
and men forgot the intellectual austerity of winter,  
in the rich warm-blooded rush of growth..."  
*From The Land, by Vita Sackville West.*



What a wonderful time of year when the lanes are lined with cow parsley and the shoots of newly sown seeds poke through the soil. The year turns to our fifth month, we've managed the cold of winter and the rush of Lent into Easter. This month we now have to the challenges of the APCM meetings and finding new officers to take on roles within the PCC. For instance we need another Churchwarden to help Chris, now that Jan has completed her 3 years in office. We also need more members on the PCC, so if you would like to join and become a trustee of St James and help to make decisions on behalf of our congregation there are forms at the back of church. I have noticed in this job as Benefice Administrator, that the year slips around so quickly and I think it's because I am always working ahead into the next season of the church, (I'm currently finishing July/August/September rotas) we roll from Advent to Christmas; Epiphany to Lent; Easter and so on... Spring arrives with its better weather (fingers crossed that April's sunshine will remain) and we're trekking through the year. Maybe it's time to be still and look at the beauty of God's creation, slow down and stop rushing along from month to month, season to season or church festival to Church Festival and think of the day today, breathe in the May blossom and cherish our place in this world.

*Apple blossom in the orchard at Sissinghurst Castle, Kent. Home of Vita Sackville-West.*



## My memories of Tony King.....by Judith Staddon

Looking back over my pictures to find one of Tony to use when it was my turn to the Evening Prayer on Zoom, dedicating it to him just after his death, I realised how many pictures there were of him since he wrote his first letter for the magazine in November 2011, just after he and Anne moved here to Dursley, basically to be nearer to their daughter and granddaughter. Rarely at the front of the picture but supporting whoever was centre stage.



First and foremost he was a Reader and led many, many services in Dursley especially at St Mark's. Tony was always well prepared and organised and helpful. Any IT problems, he was there. He set up the Zoom for us during lockdown, so that we were able to keep in touch and he set up the live streaming service, after which he has kept it going and now includes St Giles as well. He was the leading light in 'Open the Book' bringing to life the Bible stories for the junior school children, he ran Lent groups and a House Group held at our house once a month and it became a tradition when we met in December to sing our way **ALL** through the Carol leaflet!!

My other abiding memory of Tony which makes me smile is his

appearance in 'Swoon Lake'. Along with Can Michael and Revd Ian he stepped out in a frilly tutu, way out of his comfort zone, to star in one of Barbie Davies's productions.



We will all miss him greatly but his legacy goes on.

Dear Tony Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

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## Jackie Strange...

Many of you will not remember Jackie but from the latter part of the last century and into this one, she was a well-respected member of St James church and trained to become a Reader at the same time as Revd Ian Gardner back in 1999. She thought deeply about things, she ran Lent Groups and was part of the Local Ministry Team and took so many services, especially at St Mark's. Eventually she retired and then unfortunately her mental health declined and has been in a Nursing Home. We send our condolences to her husband Rick and their family.

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## MUSIC NOTES FOR MAY

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### **Piano Recital 4.00pm Sunday 25th May with Christopher Guild**

We are fortunate at St James' to have a splendid Blüthner piano on permanent loan, and it is really good that it is to be heard in its own right (and not just accompaniment instrument) in a recital by Christopher Guild, who is known locally as the rehearsal accompanist for the Tyndale Choral Society, but this is just one aspect of this gifted multi-faceted musician.

Christopher was born in Scotland in 1986, and studied piano and violin locally before entering St Mary's Music School, Edinburgh aged 13. He obtained a place at prestigious Royal College of Music in 2005 as a Foundation Scholar studying with Andrew Ball and was awarded a First Class BMus (Hons), the MMus and Artist Diploma with Distinction. He went on to be the Richard Carne Junior Fellowship in Performance at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance 2012-13.

His concert engagements have included St James's Piccadilly, the Wigmore Hall and St John's, Smith Square, as well as numerous recitals for music societies under the auspices of the Countess of Munster Musical Trust. He has recorded CDs for Champs Hill Records, Toccata Classics, Piano Classics and Divine Art Recordings. His pioneering recorded work of Scottish composers - notably Ronald Stevenson, Ronald Center and David Johnson - has been lauded by the international music press; and his double-disc of the complete works of Bernard van Dieren was a Gramophone Editor's Top 50 recordings of 2022 in December that year. The recital will be followed by tea and cake.

### **Coffee, Cake and Music 11.00am 31st May with Keith Hearnshaw**

Keith Hearnshaw was born in West Bromwich and studied at the Birmingham Conservatoire during which time he held the position of organ scholar at St Chad's R.C. Cathedral before becoming the organ scholar at Lincoln Cathedral, and later organ scholar at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral which houses the largest organ in the UK with five keyboards and nearly 200 stops!

As a recitalist, Keith has performed throughout this country and Europe, including Kleve-Germany, Liverpool Cathedral, Westminster

Abbey, Alexandra Palace, London, Doesburg-Holland, Bruges-Belgium, Rochdale Town Hall, Victoria Hall, Hanley, Hereford and Westminster Cathedrals and Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

Keith is much in demand as a Concert Organist playing an increasing number of solo concerts each year and his concert programmes are wide and varied. His aim is to promote the art of Organ playing and help establish it in its rightful place as 'The King of Instruments'. I am sure we will hear a most interesting programme. As usual, refreshments will be served from 10.15am.

### Music for May

Sunday 4th am	O How Glorious is the Kingdom – Harwood Darke in F
Sunday 11th am	Jubilate Deo – Davies      Mass of St James – Davies
pm	Open Thy Gates – Harrison      Noble in B minor Reading responses Evening Hymn – Balfour Gardiner
Sunday 18th am	Informal Service
Sunday 25th am	How Lovely are the Messengers (“St Paul”) – Mendelssohn Nicholson in F
pm	O Nata Lux – Tallis Stanford in C - Smith responses Jubilate (Collegium Regale) – Howells
Thursday 29th pm (Ascension Day)	O Clap your Hands – Vaughan Williams Sumsion in F

Ewelme Benefice

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

<p>April 26th</p> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold;">May 31<sup>st</sup></p> <p>June 28th</p> <p>July 26th</p> <p>August 30th</p> <p>September 27th</p> <p>October 25th</p>	<p>Claire Hobbs</p> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold;">Keith Hearnshaw</p> <p>Martin Bell</p> <p>Pavlos Triantaris</p> <p>John Pennington</p> <p>Nigel Davies</p> <p>Jonathan Hope</p>
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**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



## ST JAMES FREE BOOK STALL



This month we were able to have tables outside for the first time this year. We now have so many books that it is no longer possible to put them all out on a Saturday morning so we experimented with having some inside the church and the rest on the grass. It worked!! It was great to see so many people milling around and browsing the books. We have a couple who come from Chepstow every week and think they could move here. It was also lovely to see so many children, on the first Saturday of the school holidays, sitting with their mums and dads reading books and colouring the sheets in the children's corner. (We are now very low on children's books so if you know of anyone who can donate any please let them know.)

There is always coffee and homemade cake available throughout the morning so, if you wish to come and join us, you would be most welcome. You don't have to help with the books just come along and enjoy the chat.

As ever, books and/or help (Fridays 4.00pm, Saturdays 8.00am & 12.00pm) will be gratefully accepted.



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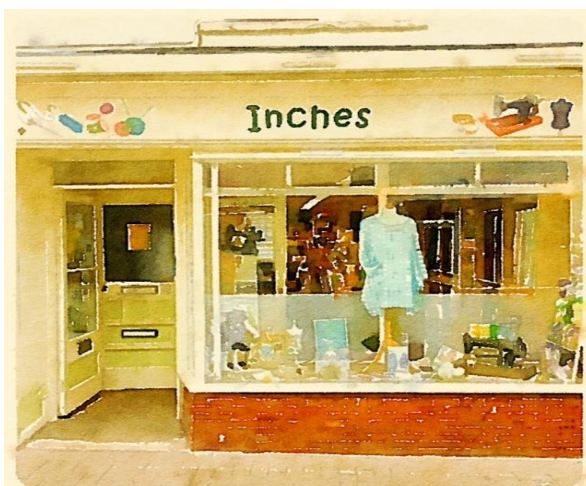
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# Bellringing

by Philip Pope



We finished up the April article by telling you that, having won the local bellringing striking competition for the Wotton-under-Edge branch, we would be representing the branch in the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association competition. Doubtless, you've been waiting for the results with bated breath.

The six bell competition took place on Saturday 5th April at Churchdown, an interesting church perched on top of Chosen Hill between Gloucester and Cheltenham. It was a lovely sunny day but with a cold edge to the breeze and the hill is very exposed so coats were retrieved from the car. We arrived in good time for the 10 o'clock draw, in fact, we were the only complete team to arrive on time so we claimed the first ring of that draw.

The bells were very pleasant to ring. Some of us had rung at the church many years before but we soon realized that these were very different. Five of the six bells were newly cast in 2014 so it was like ringing on a completely different ring. We were all fairly happy with how we rang and one member of the Stroud branch who was listening commented that he thought we were 'superb'. So we were cautiously optimistic.

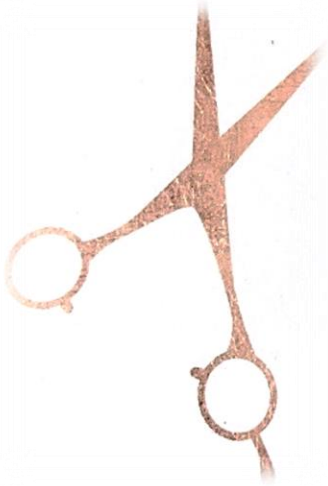
The team was the same as the one that won the local branch competition with the exception of Liz Byrne, who had taken Frank away to Devon on holiday that weekend. Andrew Ward, who is actually in charge at North Nibley but acts as our steeple keeper and regularly rings with us, took her place.

The results weren't announced until the AGM which took place later that afternoon. We were given second place out of eight teams (There are 12 branches in the association but only eight had submitted teams on this occasion) with Tewkesbury abbey stealing the show. Oddly it seemed the team that came third actually had less faults than us and it seems that the judges had exercised an 'artistic impression' marking.

So, not a bad result, our best for quite a number of years, though we have won it several times in the distant past!

**Liz Byrne asks** "Would anyone like a slide projector and screen? Contact Liz Byrne 07788800849."





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# May 2025

(Joining Zoom details on Ewelme Benefice website)

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## **Thursday 1st May**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

## **Sunday 4th May – Easter 3**

10am Parish Holy Communion at St James, Dursley

## **Wednesday 7th May**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

## **Thursday 8th May**

10am Holy Communion at St James

6.30pm VE Day Commemorations in Dursley at the Market Place

## **Saturday 10th May**

9am Bring and Take event at St James

## **Sunday 11th May – Easter 4**

10am Parish Holy Communion Service at St James

6.30pm Choral Evensong at St James

## **Office closed 12th-16th May**

## **Wednesday 14th May**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

## **Thursday 15th May**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

## **Saturday 17th May**

7.30pm Dursley Male Voice Choir concert at St James

## **Sunday 18th May – Easter 5**

8am Said Holy Communion at St James

10am Reflective Worship at St James

11.15am APCM at St James

## **Wednesday 21st May**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

## **Thursday 22nd May**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

## **Sunday 25th May- Easter 6**

- 10am Benefice Holy Communion at St James  
4pm Piano recital by Chris Guild at St James  
6.30pm Choral Evensong at St James

## **Wednesday 28th May**

- 6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

## **Thursday 29th May – Ascension Day**

- 9am Morning Prayer in St James  
10am Holy Communion at St James  
7.30pm Benefice Holy Communion at St James

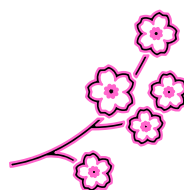
## **Saturday 31st May**

- 9.30am Plant and Produce stall on St James Church lawn  
10.30am Coffee, Cake & Music with Keith Hernshaw at St James

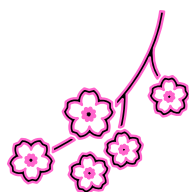
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### **May Acrostic** *from Sally Hayward*

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**A**nniversaries of  
**Y**ears gone by are many



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This month we welcome Julia Clarke, who has kindly shared her thoughts with us.



**Do you have a favourite author or book?**

No one particular favourite, but I have always rather enjoyed murder mysteries!. When I was young I was a great fan of Agatha Christie. Today there are many good authors. It must be good old fashioned British murder. Oddly a lot of the modern British writers in this field are women.

**What are you reading at present?**

I have just finished a book which was "good ghastly". It is called "Yellow Face" by Rebecca F Kuang. It's about publishing and about stealing other people's manuscripts. It also about social media and how one can be brought down whether innocent or guilty. It was shocking. The best book I have read recently is called "Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus. It is about a woman scientist, who never got the recognition she should have done because she was a woman.

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

Very rarely am I not cheerful. If there are times, I would never think of putting on music, but I would put on a meditation app.

**Do you have a favourite piece of music?**

So many favourite pieces of music, in fact the whole range of classical: Sacred music like Faure's Requiem. I once went to see Karl Jenkins live in St David's Cathedral. I thought I had died and gone to heaven! It was just amazing.

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

I nearly did music as a career. Initially the piano was my main instrument, but I was encouraged to take up a second instrument and I was steered towards the viola, and I loved playing in several orchestras. Sadly I cannot play anymore, which is very frustrating.

### **Do you have a favourite play?**

The only play I can remember really enjoying was "The Importance of being Earnest" by Oscar Wilde. Recently I watched again "An Inspector Calls" by J B Priestley. What a powerful play that is!

### **What about a favourite television series?**

Preferably murder! British, Scandinavian or French. There is a brilliant French Murder series called "Astrid". The main character is on the autistic spectrum, and she is brilliant. Astrid is employed in the police archives dept, and she becomes a key member of the crime solving team.

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

I wouldn't want to own it – too big a responsibility; but the Ghent altarpiece, and particularly the central section in St Beauvais cathedral. It has had so many adventures. I saw it in the 70's or 80's. The lighting was on the lamb in the centre. It just knocked me out.

### **Do you have special building which means a lot to you and if so why?**

How can I single out one building? I loved St Mark's cathedral in Venice. But what I have always loved is humble farmyard buildings - barns, stables. When you walk in, you can see the dust and dirt of the ages. You look up and see the old beams. It is to do with man's toil on the land.

### **Is there a place where you have felt happiest?**

I had a wonderful summer on a very remote island in Finland, staying with cousins. There was no electricity or drains. We stayed in a wooden house with no mod cons. The Baltic Sea was lapping at the shoreline where we went swimming every morning in total privacy. There was just silence and trees, which was so amazing.

### **You are having a fantasy tea party for five – who would you invite?**

I would so like to invite my mother, who was a total enigma to me, and my sister – seven years older than me whom I did not know well and who died at 40. Also, my three daughters. So that we could get to know each other.

## **Meditations from the Boiler Room or Boiler Room Blues....**

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St James now has radiators and pipework which anybody would be proud of. And a beautiful new boiler in the basement Boiler Room with smart red casing and silver wrapped piping which is the pride and joy of the Fabric Committee.

At the time of writing this the new pipe connection under the Churchyard has been completed to the satisfaction of the consultant archaeologist and all we now await is the gas meter and the last few feet of pipe connection. If we tried to start the new system today nothing would happen. We need to be connected.

The parallel with our own spiritual lives is obvious. Without the power we can do nothing. With it all things are possible.

I hope that by the time you read these musings the 'Connection' will have been put in. This will enable the system to be tested and hopefully made ready for winter/autumn operation.

It's taken the Fabric Committee more than a year to get this whole project off the ground and towards completion. There have been a few hiccups along the way and lessons have been learnt, about how to treat the various 'Powers that Be'.

Now look forward to the experience of stepping out on a frosty day and entering a warm Church!

So, I guess dear readers that you thought that this was written for the magazine today, well in actual fact it was written for the magazine by John Theaker in September 2002.!! But this could well have been written now as we also await the 'Connection' for our new boilers to get to work warming the building and drying it out.

**Nothing changes!!**

**THERE IS ALWAYS A WARM WELCOME EVEN IF THE CHURCH IS  
COLD INSIDE AND UNTIL IT'S FIXED JUST MAKE SURE YOU  
WEAR ENOUGH CLOTHES.**



## **Into the Sunlight ....***by Canon Richard Morgan*

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After the ten o'clock service on Mothering Sunday, as we were having coffee and Simnel Cake at the back of the church, someone noticed a butterfly on the wooden panelling. Happily, no one had accidentally crushed it. To avoid that danger and get the butterfly safely outside, I tried to catch it in my hands, but it evaded me and, in doing so, fell on the floor of the old baptistry. It evaded all efforts to get hold of it without hurting. It fluttered its wings but could not take off, but it walked or fluttered along the floor to the glass doors, which were opened to it, and then through the porch, still fluttering, still unable to take off, until it reached the front of the porch and came into the sunlight. In a minute, it was able to take off and flew away with our good wishes!

Malachi 4.2 promises that 'The Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in its wings.' The spring sunshine arises, gets stronger, than in the winter, and it certainly healed the butterfly. Malachi's prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus, who is the Sun and Son of Righteousness, Son of God, coming to us to give us life with God. His resurrection shows his power, God's power in him and for him, and for us too, for Jesus' rising raises us too, lifts us from sin and a mere mortal life to share God's holy love, God's everlasting life, somewhat as the butterfly was enabled to rise from an apparently crippled inability to fly to soar away.

The strengthening sun and light of course enables the leaves to come out, enables the whole of spring, as Jesus enables all our coming to and growing in new life with God. But the sun alone does not enable the new growth and fruitfulness of spring. That requires rain too. Most of us don't enjoy dark and rainy weather as much as bright and sunny weather. But we need both. So Jesus' resurrection is a joy; but we rely both on it and on Jesus' death on the cross for our new life and growth with God. Jesus' sharing our life, in all its facets, his teaching and example to us, his bearing our sins to condemn and forgive them, his humble and self-giving love in all this, are revelation and imparting to us of God's life of love and the foundation of our new life. Jesus' resurrection is that life bursting out in power, and enabling us to rise too.

This May continues the season of Easter, Jesus' resurrection, and of spring. May we trust in God through Jesus, and rise with Jesus to share God's life.



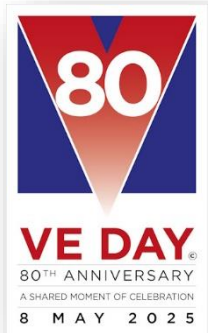
## PRAYER

We thank you, God,  
for the strengthening sunlight and the new life of spring that it brings,  
and also for the rain that is also needed  
to make the new growth and life possible.

And we thank you too for our new life given by Jesus,  
whose life, death and resurrection shared our life so that we can  
share yours.

Thank you  
for Jesus' sharing our life, in all its facets,  
for his teaching and example to us,  
for his bearing our sins to condemn and forgive them,  
for his humble and self-giving love in all this,  
and thank you for his resurrection that raises us too.

May we trust you in him,  
And, with him and through him, grow and soar, by your Spirit,  
in your life and joy. Alleluia! Amen.



### Wartime and after. Some memories.....by David Smith

A group of us were playing in a sandpit at a disused brickworks. A man came up. The war is over he told us. It was VE Day We carried on playing. A few days later there was a street party. It was a rare treat.



My earliest memory of the war was going down the primary school air-raid shelter when the siren sounded. We took it seriously. Earlier in the war a boy had been killed by a bomb dropped on a field next to the school.

I lived in the small town of Leiston in Suffolk. It was 2 miles from the coast. We couldn't go on the beach as it was shut off with barbed wire. There were concrete blocks on the sand dunes and blocking the road from the beach. This was to slow down an expected invasion from the sea. Some years later there were rumours that there had been an attempted invasion further down the coast at Shingle Street but it had been repelled.

My father was in the Home Guard (Dad's Army). He had served in France in the Queens Own regiment in the 1st World War. He didn't talk about it. His brother Ernie served in the Suffolk Regiment. He was killed by a sniper in January 1917. About 20 years ago we visited his grave at Bethune on the French/Belgian border.

I was in a class of 53 at primary school. It was a class of all abilities. Later 4 of us went to the Grammar School and 2 to the secondary modern school. Of a class of 30 at grammar school about 4 went on to university. I joined ICI Paints Division as a laboratory assistant at Stowmarket in Suffolk.

There were 8 in our family; my parents, four boys and two girls. Until 1945 we were all living in a private rented house with an outside toilet and no bathroom. We moved to a 3 bedroom council house with inside toilet and a bathroom. Hot water for a bath had to be carried upstairs in pails. We had an electric boiler downstairs which also supplied water for the weekly wash. There was no washing machine. No central heating. We had a coal fire in the living room. The bedrooms were unheated except when one of us was ill. We didn't have a fridge. Food was kept in a safe which had a metal grill to keep out flies. We had a radio (wireless) and listened to the BBC Home Service for news and the Light Programme for music. We also had a gramophone.

Most things were rationed. A treat was going to the shops and using our ration book coupons to buy sweets.

There's a lot more I could write about family life. It must have been hard for our parents.

Was this life exceptional? Were we deprived? I don't think so. That's how things were for many people.

'The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there'  
*L.P. Hartley 'The Go-between'*

## **Memorial**

Names and dates..  
and forever at rest, or always  
in our hearts.

But here a little life story in a  
couple of calligraphed lines:  
*Lost at sea aged 23 on returning  
home from the pacific ocean...*

We can hear the gulls calling,  
calling..the sail wavering..  
falling...and honoured in the  
calling.. *man overboard*..  
Or scurvy or mutiny.  
The scroll does not say.

**Elizabeth Oakley**  
**A Dursley Poet**



This month I have been thinking about the churchyard again! What has got me doing this, is that the Eco Church group members are planning this year's Count on Nature event being held in St James churchyard, to be held in mid-June.

There will be craft and painting activities for all ages, as well as Eye-Spy, demonstrations of how to identify plants and animals using a smart phone, and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust will be attending. There is great excitement too, as 'The Moth Man', Peter Cranswick is coming once more to give us up close sight of some of the truly amazing moths that live in our gardens and nearby woods.

This will be the fifth year of Count on Nature being held in St James churchyard. A separate biodiversity count is being planned for a different day. We are excited as we are hoping to have guests from a local environmental interest group to help us with this task. The aim is to make a further record of some of the plants and animals that live in our amazing churchyard. It may help us to understand how the projects such as the Bug Hotel are thriving or not. Everyone is welcome to join in with both events. Please just let Jan Vonberg or me know if you are interested.



Another successful Bring & Take/Freegle event happened in March with plenty of people bringing and taking items including clothes and toys. Earlier this week, some of us had a grand sort out of what was left. Some of these things will find a new home, with clothing going to the Gloucester City Mission and Bristol Women's Refuge. Some of the toys have found a new home in the Chantry Centre Garden, and others at 'Kid Stuff', the toy charity in Stroud. Many thanks to the volunteers who turn up and help.

The Bring and Take/Freegle events in St James started not only in response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis, but also to

encourage us to recycle and reuse things, including clothes. According to the BBC reporter Esme Stallard, producing clothes uses a lot of natural resources and creates greenhouse gas emissions which are responsible for climate change. She also says the fashion industry is responsible for 8-10% of global emissions - and astonishingly, British shoppers buy more clothes than any others in Europe!

Recycling and wearing pre-worn clothing is one way we can help. As well as this, repairing and revamping outfits is important too. Interestingly, "slow fashion" companies are appearing. These firms produce clothing which have a lower environmental impact, often offering fewer items a year. In other words, the fashion lasts for longer.

The next Bring & Take/Freegle event at St James is planned for Saturday 10th May 9-12.

Best Wishes from Gill

(St James Eco Church Group member)

Reference <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment>



If you would like to join and support  
St James Eco Church group, please email  
[Gill.mather@btinternet.com](mailto:Gill.mather@btinternet.com)  
Everyone Welcome 😊

## ON REFLECTION AND FUTURE PROOFING.

*by Jennifer Kendrick*



Along with countless others of my generation (born in 1937), I am acutely aware of the bounteous blessings I have had. For example, the war was an exciting inconvenience to a child like me, with caring parents, living in our own home in a neighbourhood with shops and schools, playgrounds and parks within walking distance and on a regular bus route for the 15 minute ride to the sea-side which was free and fun!

Doctors and hospitals did not figure in our lives: the former expensive and out of range, and the latter reserved for major events and deadly diseases! Dying was part of life and dealt with accordingly, usually end of life at home, families supported by neighbours suitably experienced but rarely qualified! Dads went to work. Mums stayed at home.

We children effortlessly amused ourselves with little more than home-made toys, rope-swings, balls and bits of wood for bats! Trees were for climbing and wet days meant wellingtons and waterproofs for puddle jumping or making mud pies!

I was immensely proud of my beloved father who joined up and served in the RAF during the war. I had no idea he was in danger, but sure he was where he was needed most !

A gentle, kind, funny but firm favourite with everybody, he was my hero, absent in body, but always on my mind, just like Jesus who, thanks to my devoted maternal granny (the one with twinkling eyes, wobbly bosoms, elastic arms and whiskery chin that tickled and made me giggle!) was a constant companion and comfort. I remember, as a 6-year-old, ironing large white handkerchieves and posting them to him at a BFPO (British Forces Post Office) somewhere far away in Europe, to ensure he never had a runny nose!

My Godmother was a mighty presence of patience and understanding, who encouraged my love of Jesus and care of all things animal, vegetable and mineral and because of these three wise people, my faith has never wavered!

One night, I prayed for a little bomb to drop nearby, with just a bit of damage to make the war real, but not enough to cause chaos or upheaval! So it happened: a big hole in the garden, roof tiles ripped off and windows broken! I knew then there was a higher power!

In 1953 I embarked on a longed-for and lifetime career in nursing, something cruelly denied to my mother, whose parents, in the 1920s, thought it "an unseemly occupation".

In the absence of jets or comfortable journeys, I travelled on slow boats and steam trains, married, had a family and realised all my dreams!

Over the years, thanks to the NHS and advanced medicine, clever surgeons have restored my battered body from major injury and invasive disease, whilst physios did miracles and I worked hard with them to regain mobility. We made a great team and time flew by into the 21st Century! So much the same, but so much rapid change!

I am struggling to process ageing where there is no precedent or obvious path to follow!

Now 87 years old, I find my fiercely defended independence in jeopardy! My house is well-equipped, easy to run, safe and secure. I have people who happily help with domestic chores and gardening, and my technical skills are sufficient to survive so far, thankful that with perseverance I can still use a land line and speak to a person!

My four-wheeled chariot Boudicca, enables me to walk daily and shopping is easy.

I am extremely fortunate to have access to my local medical centre who understand I want to live but not at the cost of any time in hospital or nursing home! I, personally, find relief in old-fashioned recipes for first aid and health care and strongly advocate proper hand-washing as being most important in the global battle against epidemics!

I am increasingly drawn to exploring and calmly assessing euthanasia, without fear, favour or misunderstanding. It is a rocky road which not all of us would want, or need to travel, but we have a choice, and the choice is ours!

I wonder what Jesus would do?



During WWII....

My daddy, brother and me: the sticky tape on the windows to avoid flying glass if we were bombed! One pane left blank for me to keep look-out!

## Anne's faith journey at The Door

**Anne Townsend is Operations Manager at The Door, a Christian charity that provides opportunities and services like mentoring, youth centres, and support to young people and their families. She tells us about her vocation to her role at The Door.**



Anne's journey began with a desire to gain experience and find a meaningful way to contribute to her community. After finishing her A-levels, she spent a year volunteering at The Door. "I really enjoyed my time volunteering. Everyone was kind and welcoming and the cause felt important. The Door doesn't just offer second chances; we offer third, fourth, fifth chances. Forgiveness is key in our work, and it's at the core of how we operate," Anne said. Anne started looking for paid work, around the same time that The Door was looking for some administrative support. I didn't see it at first, but being at The Door has definitely been part of my faith journey, and part of God's plan for me.

"I was born into a Christian family, and I attended church throughout my life. I think, for a lot of young people that are born into that space, you accept it as just being normal, and then you start to ask questions as you get older.

I guess around the age of 16 or 17, I was like, yeah, cool, I'm in. This is me. Jesus is part of my life. But I never saw The Door as being part of my calling or my faith journey at that time.

"Since working here though, I've become more aware of God. I've learnt to listen to Him. Now, I see my role as using the gifts God has given me to serve others."

Anne's work is an inspiring expression of her faith. She is deeply involved in making sure that staff have the tools and support they need to make a difference in the lives of young people.

Due to working at The Door, Anne has found other opportunities to serve, working as Secretary for Churches Together, and volunteering at Christian youth camps and with The Door's Christian Outreach Arm, engaging directly with young people.

"It's incredibly rewarding to hear their stories, share my own faith journey, and walk alongside them as they explore their own."

Through these conversations and experiences, Anne sees the bigger picture of ministry; service to others doesn't always have to follow a traditional path.

If you would like to look deeper into your calling and reflect on God's plans for your life, you might find it helpful to connect with your local priest or reach out to the Revd Canon Ann Sargent and her team of vocations advisors at <https://gloucester.anglican.org/discover-your-vocation/>

## **Welcome to our new Archdeacon of Cheltenham**

**The Ven Katrina Scott was officially collated, installed and welcomed as Archdeacon of Cheltenham at the end of March.**

She said, "The service was incredibly special. There were people from all parts of my life there – it felt like a real gathering of love and support."



Katrina has served in the Diocese of Gloucester since 2015, most recently as Area Dean of North Cotswold and Rector of a cluster of Cotswold parishes. As Archdeacon of Cheltenham, Katrina now supports churches and clergy across Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Cirencester and the Cotswolds.

The role of an archdeacon involves both spiritual and practical leadership. At the service, the collation welcomes an archdeacon into the spiritual side of the role, while the installation focuses on the legal responsibilities.

"My first priorities are lots of induction meetings and getting to know people – building relationships is the most important part."

**Have your say** - Visit Facebook **f/Diocese.of.Gloucester**, email Katherine at **kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk**, follow us on Twitter **@glosdioc**, view videos on YouTube **Diocese of Gloucester** or visit our website **Gloucester.anglican.org**



## **Years Mind in May**

1st Andrew Parsons 2007; Betty Evans 2020; Joan Smith 2023

2nd Philip Bazeley 2016; Margaret Atkinson 2022

3rd James Houghton 1999

6th Marjorie Selman 2016; Dave Fittall 2021

7th Gwen Thomas 2020

8th Kathleen Woodward 2003

9th Florence Tavender 1999; Cicely Weaving 2022

10th Emily Houghton 2001; Bryan Auger 2011; Kathleen Foster 2021

13th Aaron Woollam 1981

14th Joyce Staddon 2006; Marian Harrold 2010; Doreen Beardsley 2017

15th Ojars Zamkevics 2008

16th James Exell 1999

17th Kathleen Miles 2017

20th Eric Averiss 2021

21st Mary Joseph 2005; Gillian Davis 2022

22nd Eric Hinder 2000; Terry Hodge 2014; Ursula Woodward 2000

23rd Sydney Walker 2003; Pixie McVicar 2020

24th Tom Ryan 2003

25th Arthur Skinner 1998

26th Barbara Halford 2019

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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.**

Richard Baker on 8th April at St James  
Ben Johnson on 26th March at Glos crem

### FLOWER ROTA

Cynthia Martin has now taken over the flower rota from Ann Orchard who has done it for many, many years. Many thanks to you both.

#### 4th & 11th May

**High Altar:** Cynthia Martin

**Tanner Chapel:** Anthea Fittall

**Lady Chapel:** Kim Pugh.

#### 18th & 25th May & 1st June

**High Altar:** Kate Sant

**Tanner Chapel:** Valerie Meares

**Lady Chapel:** Glenys Muir.



### 100 club draw for April as follows:-

1st - 151 - Sian Graham

2nd - 129 - David Hatch

3rd - 147 - Peter Prodger

Many thanks Sarah

**DURSLEY C<sub>of</sub>E  
PRIMARY ACADEMY** 

Mrs Gregory – Principal

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**Useful Telephone Numbers**

**TO BOOK THE PARISH CENTRE.**

Clare White    Tel: 549280

E-mail: [ewelmebenefice@gmail.com](mailto:ewelmebenefice@gmail.com)

**BELLRINGERS**

Elizabeth Byrne    Tel: 07788 800849

**100 CLUB**

Sarah Hodge    Tel: 545155

**CHOIR**

Anne Shipton    Tel: 545419

David Wood    Tel: 545073



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