



# THE PARISH MAGAZINE



THE TYNDALE BENEFICE OF  
WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE WITH  
OZLEWORTH, NORTH NIBLEY AND  
ALDERLEY (INCLUDING TRESHAM)

70p per copy. £7 annually

JANUARY 2018

*The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Wotton-under-Edge; The Parish Church of St. Martin of Tours, North Nibley; The Church of St. Nicholas of Myra, Ozleworth; The Parish Church of St. Kenelm, Alderley; The Perry and Dawes Almshouses Chapel; The Chapel of Ease at Tresham. (North Nibley also publishes its own journal 'On the Edge')*

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**Copy deadline 14th of preceding month**

### **Clergy Days off:**

Rev'd Rob, Thursday

Rev'd Christine - usual days off Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays

Rev'd Morag - usual days off Mondays, Tuesdays and Saturdays

# Letter from the Vicar

My Dear Friends,

**“We three kings of orient are...  
... Following yonder star:”**

**I**T ALWAYS SEEMS STRANGE TO ME to be writing the January letter on a snowy day in December half way through Advent when we're still looking forward to the great celebration of Christmas. But life is like that with a mixture of things going on for us all of the time and Christmas doesn't finish on 25<sup>th</sup> December. We continue to celebrate on the feast of the Epiphany and indeed right through to Candlemas on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

Epiphany, 6<sup>th</sup> January, is the great celebration of the arrival of the wise men as they come to worship Jesus. At St Mary's we keep this with an evening Eucharist when gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh are placed at the crib as signs of our offering of ourselves. At the end of the service, following an ancient orthodox custom, we bless pieces of chalk and then bless the church and our homes marking the door or door posts in blessed chalk with signs of the wise men 20 + C + M + B + 18 (for more information on this see page 4 of the magazine).

“... Following yonder star” are the words of the hymn and of scripture but there is much more to their journey as they star gaze, set off, seek help and arrive at Bethlehem. As they journeyed they went first to Herod at Jerusalem, for surely that's where the king of the Jews was to be born. Herod consulted his chief priests and scribes who searched their scriptures and responded with the answer that the Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem. So off go the wise men again to continue their search and to present their gifts.

There are many people, including ourselves, who are dealing with the countless perplexities of life, with calls on time and energy and together we are looking, searching for signs, for stars, for meaning. Like the wise men of old we need to look in the unexpected places to find answers. Jesus wasn't in the Palace of the Ruler, not in the great city but in the humility of Bethlehem. The wise men took advice from those with understanding of the ways of God. Yes, the chief priests and scribes come in for a bad press in later dealings with Jesus but without them the magi, the Kings of the Orient, would have been completely lost.

When we begin to show the insight of the wise men and acknowledge that we, too, are searching. When we seek help on the journey and follow the guidance of others, then like the magi we will find Christ in the unexpected places, in the midst of our community.

In this New Year may we all look for Christ among us and may we be ready to help others who are looking and asking by being ready to offer them a word of encouragement on the journey.

I hope that you have enjoyed the celebration of Christmas and will continue to share the love of God among us as we enter this New Year.

With every blessing for 2018

Rob Axford

## Readings for January

### 7<sup>th</sup> Epiphany

Isaiah 60: 1-6; Ephesians 3: 1-12; Matthew 2: 1-12

### 14<sup>th</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> of Epiphany

1 Samuel 3: 1-10 [11-20]; Revelation 5: 1-10; John 1: 43-end

### 21<sup>st</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> of Epiphany

Genesis 14: 17-20; Revelation 19: 6-10; John 2: 1-11

### 28<sup>th</sup> Presentation of Christ in the Temple - Candlemas

Malachi 3: 1-5; Hebrews 2: 14-end; Luke 2: 22-40

## Saint Mary the Virgin Local Ministry Team (LMT)

**"A group of lay and ordained, chosen to lead, enable and encourage others in mission and ministry"**

Rev'd Canon Rob Axford, Rev'd Christine Axford,  
Rev'd Morag Langley, Adrian Davis, Joan Deveney,  
Martin Dove, Irene Perks, Sue Plant, Teresa Pottinger.

*Please contact any of the team if you have a query*

# **Save the Date**

## **VINEY HILL CAMPING AND SOCIAL WEEKEND** **IS FROM, 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

St. Mary's has booked the Viney Hill Christian Outward Bound Centre in the Forest of Dean, near Lydney for another summer weekend.

Get to know those at St. Mary's in this relaxed atmosphere, with plenty of time to chat, share a meal and join in activities if you choose.

We hold compline before bed and a service before lunch on Sunday.

The surroundings are ideal for a walk or bike ride and we enjoy an evening talent show and bonfire chat (weather permitting).

Saturday's organised activities include: archery, canoeing (we have reserved the lake this year!) low ropes and crate stacking, which are led by a qualified instructor (additional cost approximately from £6.25 to £14.50 each).

We also have free activities for the young ones and no need to pitch a tent (they are pre-erected) or stay in one of the Cabins.

Food is included in the price with inside facilities for preparing and serving meals and a lounge for relaxing.

Cost subject to confirmation: Weekend: adults/8+years £47 pp; school age—7 years £35 pp; under school age £20 pp; under 1 year free.

Saturday: £14 per adult/8+ years; £5 per 1-7 years.

Enquiries please contact Mrs. Teresa Pottinger, telephone 01453 843272 or [teresa.pottinger@talk21.com](mailto:teresa.pottinger@talk21.com)

**MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW...**

# The Feast of the Epiphany

## Blessing Your Home and Family

The custom of asking God's blessing upon home and family at Epiphany originated in central Europe. The tradition flows from the blessing that the Three Wise Men brought to the home of Jesus when they found him by the guidance of the Star. The marking of our houses in the name of the three wise men also symbolises our willingness to receive all who love or seek Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The traditional blessing uses a piece of blessed chalk, marking near the main doorway the following:

20 + C + M + B + 18. The "20" is the beginning two numbers of this year, the four "+" symbolise the cross which is a sign of blessing. The three letters "C, M, and B" stand for the Three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, but they can also stand for the three Latin words "Christus mansionem benedicat", which means "May Christ bless this home" and the "18" stands for the last two numbers of this current year.

Whilst the doorway is marked the following Prayer of Blessing is said:

**20 + C + M + B + 18**

The three Wise Men

C Caspar

M Melchior

B and Balthasar - followed the star of God's Son who became man 2018 two thousand and eighteen years ago

++ May Christ bless our home

++ and remain with us throughout this New Year

Almighty God, your Son shared the life of his home and family at Nazareth: Father, protect in your love our neighbours, our families and this community of which we are a part. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We have an evening service on the Feast of the Epiphany at which chalk is blessed and the door of the church marked with the blessing, chalk is then available for others to take and to use the blessing on their own homes.

You are invited to join us for the service at 7.30 pm on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at St Mary's.

Rob Axford

# Update on Re-ordering

What to call the result of the Chancellor's decision - an early Christmas present or, more appropriately, God's enabling to fulfil the Vision of St. Mary's? The latter will be how many of us may view the following:-

After a long and patient wait, the Re-ordering Committee received the news last week that the go ahead has been given to proceed with Phase 1 of the re-ordering.

The long and careful report, from the Chancellor's office, which will be published in a more digestible form soon, revealed how much detail the Chancellor had gone into covering all aspects of the proposal, (previously submitted to the DAC).

Careful consideration seems to have been given to all the proposals, in particular how they would affect the present structures of the church, old and new, static and removable (e.g. the railings and the pews).

The life of the church, from now, and into the future, was weighed up by the Chancellor against the removal of long established additions to the interior over many years: and how others before us had also altered some of the church's interior, in their time. e.g. moving the organ. Her awareness of the many alterations over the years was apparent, and the life of the church was a significant motive for evolving the structure, yet again.

Various cultural bodies were brought in for their comments and the Chancellor has noted those, too.

All objections have been addressed with careful and full consideration; and decisions taken in their light. There are a number of conditions referred to in respect of how certain pieces of work are carried out. The committee and project group will need to give full compliance to these, when certain parts of the work are undertaken.

Now, it must be full steam ahead for the fund raising; and applications to various organizations in order to fulfil their earlier commitments to fund us on arrival of the 'go ahead.'

Hope this brings most of us into the New Year with new vigour and a sense of expectation of what God can do.

Shirley Wyse

## Is our church environmentally 'Green'?

Some months ago, I attended a churchwardens workshop run by the Gloucester Diocese. One of the items introduced at the workshop was a discussion on ECO CHURCH. This is an initiative run by an organisation called ROCHA UK and in conjunction with the Church of England.

From meditation to insulation, from location to invocation, loving God and his creation should impact everything in our church lives. Eco Church is an award scheme for churches that want to demonstrate that they care for God's earth. The scheme helps churches to go green in all areas of our church life, from worship to buildings. To the way we manage and run our church, to outreach in the community and to our own personal lifestyles.

This scheme was brought to the PCC suggesting that it may be worthwhile looking into the possibility of St. Mary's joining the scheme and working towards achieving an Eco Church award, which is part of the initiative. The award scheme has a bronze level, a silver level and a gold. The PCC agreed and a small group of volunteers from the PCC ( Hil Varlow, Anne Parry, Adrian Davis and myself) was set up to examine what was needed to gain the awards.

The church had firstly to complete a survey about how our church operates in different areas of its life and work . Questions (over 70 in total) were divided into five categories -worship, buildings, land, community and global and lifestyles.

Some examples of the questions asked related to: Are we a Fairtrade church? - Does caring for God's earth feature as a teaching theme to all age groups within our church? - Have we set sufficient targets for reducing our carbon footprint and are we committed to improvements in energy efficiency? – Do we correctly recycle? – Do we use wherever possible recycled materials (paper etc)? - Are our cleaning products environmentally friendly? - Does our church get involved in local conservation?

Points are awarded depending on the answers given. The number of points awarded determines if you qualify for any award. We are currently looking at trying to achieve a bronze award. To do this the church needs to undertake numerous simple tasks/actions to achieve the goals. One task already achieved was to raise sufficient money to twin our two parish room toilets as a

contribution to the ‘Tearfund Charity’ which supports the work of providing sanitation and clean water to third-world countries. Using the ‘Toilet Twinning Sunday’ in November, we successfully raised the £120 required.

During this year we shall be looking at what is possible for us to achieve (we believe that most initiatives are achievable), but do we want to achieve them?

To be successful we need all members of the church to be committed and to be involved in those initiatives with which they would like to make a personal contribution. Hope you will come on board?

Alan Bell

## Church Mission Society

As a community, we seek to encourage each other as we:

- **participate in mission together** From its birth in 1799, CMS has always been about action – globally, locally and in our everyday lives as disciples of Jesus.
- **learn from mission together** Our community has a great wealth of experience and understanding and has always been a powerful voice in the Church and the world for mission. We share stories that inspire and challenge others to take up the call.
- **pray for mission together** We pray for each other, we pray for the Church, we pray for the world. The CMS community is a great prayer movement in which everyone can take part and without which the world would be a very different place. Here's a link to the [CMS community daily prayer](#), which I hope you will find helpful.

As well as access to all of our mission discipleship and prayer resources, as a member you will receive a regular community email from me. There are also many other ways for members to keep in touch:

## Longfield – supporting local people, when they need it most

*Thanks to Iain for asking Dean Cowley, the Marketing Manager for Longfield in Minchinhampton, to write about this charity and thank you to Dean for doing this. If you feel you would like to tell us about your charity do speak to Rev'd Iain or give me a phone call (842300) or send me an e-mail (address at bottom of last page in the magazine).*

Longfield is a local charity supporting adults affected by life-limiting illness, whether as a patient or a family member. Historically, this normally meant those with a cancer diagnosis, but now includes people affected by organ failure, chest conditions like emphysema, and neurological diseases like MND and Parkinson's.

People are often knocked sideways by receiving such a diagnosis, or by the impact of caring for somebody who has. Longfield tries to "Help you feel like you again", as their "Thrive – arts for health" groups describe it. They also offer one-to-one counselling, complementary therapies (massage, Reiki or reflexology) and bereavement support, plus specialist Wellbeing Workshops. Many people are unsure of whether such a place is right for them, but they can just turn up on a Thursday, between 9.30 and 12.30 and have a cup of tea and a chat with one of Longfield's friendly and expert staff.

The final important service provided is Hospice at Home, for those at the very end of life, but this support can only be requested by a healthcare professional and is partly funded by the NHS. All of the rest is paid for through fundraising. So if you want to donate goods, shop or volunteer at their local store, take part in one of their many events or just make a personal donation, you can be sure that your contribution will help people in your community, when they need it most.

For more information [www.longfield.org.uk](http://www.longfield.org.uk) .

# Greetings from the Desert of Saudi Arabia

When I was back in Wotton in early November, I was told off by someone for not writing in the Parish Magazine about my life after the Parish Office. Yes, I've definitely failed on that one, so I'll try to make some small amends.

By the time you get to read the January issue, Kevin and I will have celebrated our first Christmas in a very different environment. Despite the restrictions placed on what we can and what we cannot do to celebrate one of the most important Christian festivals, we have managed to attend the team's winter ball (just don't mention the word Christmas), we've joined in with Carol Singing around the compound – I found a very good recipe for non-alcoholic mulled, erm, grape juice to help things along, and I'm getting some good ideas on how to make our temporary home look festive. Oh, and we also attended a traditional Nine Lessons and Carols Service at the British Embassy. It was held in the garden of the Ambassador's residence and believe it or not, it was cold! The only not so traditional part was hearing the adzhan (call to prayer) almost drowning out the readings. Life beyond the walls goes on.

On the call to prayer, it's there, every day, five times a day. Since we switched the air-conditioning units off with the drop in temperature, those calls are more obvious. Some are more melodious than others, I can tell you. Having had the privilege of travelling in the Middle East before, I do not mind the sound and find it quite useful for a spiritual breather, just a moment of 'yes, I should bring my own shutters down for a moment and give thanks to God for the opportunities this posting is offering us.' Admittedly, it can be a bit of an inconvenience, these five times a day closures, because we certainly haven't seen much evidence of absolutely everyone bowing down on their carpets. I've learned very quickly that it is best to plan grocery shopping and other outings around prayer times, but doesn't always work out quite so. If you happen to be in a supermarket when prayer time comes, you can continue loading up your trolley, but you cannot get to the till to pay until prayer time is finished. In

shopping malls (and there are more than enough of those in Riyadh), shops just close and you can sit and wait outside. Similarly with restaurants, if you are already in your seat, you just have to wait till prayers are finished.

Despite the recent headlines about the new Crown Prince going around chasing corrupt officials out of office with a new broom and suggesting to his father that women should be allowed to drive, the country remains deeply conservative and set in its ways. There were certainly some very unhappy clerics over the idea of women driving and, whether that was even worse or not, allowing women into the national stadium to celebrate Saudi's National Day. The shame of it! Driving is not a good thing here. Traffic rules are there to be ignored most of the time, although I've been assured by our driver that the cameras at busy junctions with traffic lights really do work. When I am finally allowed to get behind the wheel, I'll probably restrict myself to the local supermarket run. We drive on the right here and the whole journey from the compound to this particular supermarket and back is all right turns. Our driver has even shown me the shortcuts.

Wearing an abaya (that long garment) is a way of life here and I was given the very useful advice of just considering it the same thing as putting on a coat before you go out. You know you're settled into Saudi life when you point and say, 'Oh that abaya looks nice.'

Kevin and I hope you are all keeping well. Modern technology is both a curse and a blessing. I can follow the Daily Prayer online and read news from and about St. Mary's and the Tyndale Benefice on the website and the Facebook page. I'll go with the blessing bit, and pray that God protects and comforts those who are on the receiving end of the curse of said modern technology.

May you all have a healthy and happy 2018. I hope to see you again some time soon.

Ima Earle

# Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

January 18th - 24th (except Sunday)

Still in January we join together for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, As in previous years we hope to be able to meet at each of the town's churches for about 30-45 minutes at 6pm, January 18th - 24th (except Sunday) then on January 25th all are welcome at the Eucharist for the Conversion of St. Paul, 7.30pm at St. Mary's—a good way to end the week. Full details of dates and venues will be publicised as soon as they are finalised.

## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**Children's Church:** there will be some activities left in the Catherine Chapel on Sundays 7th, 14th and 28th. Story sacks and books are available from the Children's Corner to be taken to the pews. For more details, contact Morag 01453 845147

**Little Church:** usually meet in the Church at 9.30 am

1st: NO Little Church

8th: Epiphany

15th: The Three Kings

22nd: TBA

29th: TBA

For more details, contact Zoe 07776 123565

**Messy Church:** Saturday 13th from 9.30 to 11.00

A service for all ages to eat together, discover more of the story of the paralysed man; then enjoy a time for celebration - telling the story, singing and praying.

For more details, contact Morag 01453 845147

**Family Service:**

21st: "Follow me!"

For more details, contact the parish office 01453 842175

**Prayer for January:**

**O God of surprises,  
lift our eyes heavenwards  
and open our hearts,  
so that we might receive your love  
and be transformed. Amen.**

January 10th

## William Laud

Archbishop of Canterbury, 1633

**William Laud was the son of a prominent clothier. After being educated at Reading Grammar School, he went to St. John's College, Oxford and, until he was nearly 50, combined the successful but unspectacular careers of academic and churchman.**

He became associated with a small clerical group which was opposed to Puritanism. They stressed the continuity of the visible church and the necessity, for true inward worship, of outward uniformity, order, and ceremony. In 1608 Laud entered the service of Richard Neile, Bishop of Rochester, with whose help he secured a succession of ecclesiastical appointments.

At Oxford, where Laud was chosen president of St. John's in 1611 and chancellor in 1629, new statutes, new endowments, and new buildings improved the university, both as a centre of learning and as a training ground for Laudian religion.

From 1611 he was a royal chaplain and came gradually to the notice of King James I. He had a life-long conflict with John Williams, who later became Bishop of Lincoln and Archbishop of York, when they both sought advancement through the patronage of Charles I's favourite, the Duke of Buckingham. While Buckingham had power, Laud was his chaplain and confidant, and he established a dominant voice in church policies and appointments. He became a privy councillor in 1627 and, a year later, Bishop of London. In his London diocese, Laud devoted himself to combating the Puritans and to enforcing a form of service in strict accordance with the Book of Common Prayer.

The wearing of surplices, the placing of the communion table--railed off from the congregation--at the east end of the chancel, and such ceremonies as bowing at the mention of the name of Jesus were imposed, though cautiously enough to avoid unmanageable opposition. Churches, from St. Paul's Cathedral down to neglected village chapels, were repaired, beautified, and consecrated. Religious radicals saw these reforms as moves toward popery.

On the death of George Abbott in 1633, Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury, but because of his ruthless energy in the royal prerogative courts of Star Chamber and High Commission, and by Anglican forms of worship in Scotland, provoked fierce resistance there. English forces were sent northward, and in 1639 the "Bishops' Wars" began.

In the Spring of 1640, Parliament met for the first time in 11 years and, with it, the clerical assembly, the Convocation, which laid down in a new set of canons the principles of the Laudian church. They explained the prescribed ceremonies as "fit and convenient" rather than essential. But they added to the popular hatred of Laud shown in mass demonstrations, petitions, and leaflets. In December, formally accused of high treason, he was taken to the Tower. His trial, managed enthusiastically by the Puritan propagandist Prynne, began only in 1644, in the midst of the Civil War. As with Wentworth, the Commons had to abandon legal proof and resort to an ordinance of attainder, accepted hesitantly by the lords. On January 10th, 1645, the Archbishop was beheaded.

Laud was never much liked, even by his allies. A humourless, dwarf-like figure, he could never establish a party of influential supporters. During the war and interregnum, both royalists and peacemakers generally preferred to ignore him. At the Restoration, in 1660, outward Laudian forms were accepted, but by a church less significant than ever to the community and the individual.

Over the years, some have tried to portray him as a martyr, recognising his abilities and integrity, while, in the 1840s, the Oxford Movement, a movement of High Anglican reform, tried to claim him as a religious leader. His repudiation of hypocrisy, compromise, and corruption in allies and enemies of whatever class were rare and commendable qualities, but the idealism of his social policy, "coloured over by the accepted varnish of an appropriate religious doctrine" was most definitely not in line with authoritarian politics.

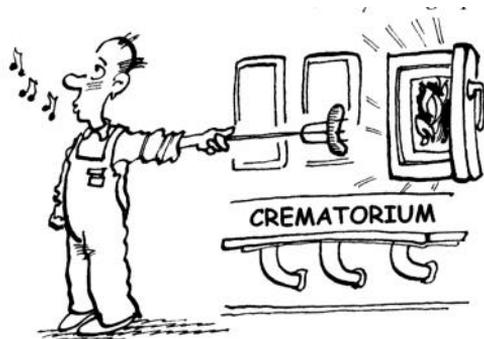
He is remembered in the Church calendar on January 10th.

Doug

**Hmm!!**

The Accrington Observer reported the retirement of Joe Burns, who had been superintendent at the local crematorium. "Joe, 60, was presented with a barbecue set."

*Daily Telegraph*



# Diary for January 2018

for the Tyndale Benefice serving St. Mary's, Wotton,  
St. Martin's, North Nibley, St. Kenelm's, Alderley  
and the Chapel of Ease at Tresham.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Monday - New Year's Day**  
10.00am Holy Communion at Perry and Dawes  
No Little Church or Games Group
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday**  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
2.15pm Mothers' Union AGM in the Parish Room  
3.00pm North Nibley PCC meeting at Blanchworth House.  
5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel
- 5<sup>th</sup> Friday**  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 6<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Epiphany**  
7.30pm Evening Eucharist with incense and the Blessing of  
Chalk at St. Mary's
- 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Epiphany:**  
8.00am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Martin's  
10.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's  
6.00pm Evensong at St. Mary's  
(There is no service at Tresham today)
- 8<sup>th</sup> Monday – Baptism of Christ**  
Experience Epiphany at St. Mary's  
9.30am Little Church at St. Mary's - activities and crafts for  
under-fives and carers beginning in Church then moving to  
the Parish Room – talking about Epiphany  
10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
2.00–4.00pm St. Mary's Together Games in the Parish Room  
7.30pm Churches Together Forum in the Ark
- 9<sup>th</sup> Tuesday**  
Experience Epiphany at St. Mary's
- 10<sup>th</sup> Wednesday**  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel  
7.30pm Wotton PCC meeting in the Parish Room.

- 12<sup>th</sup> Friday  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 13<sup>th</sup> Saturday  
9.30–11.00am Messy Church at St. Mary's – 'Stairway to Heaven' - breakfast, activities and worship for all ages
- 14<sup>th</sup> **Sunday – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany:**  
8.00am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
8.00am Holy Communion at St. Martin's  
9.30am Family Service at St. Martin's  
10.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's  
2.00pm Baptism of Erin Graham at St. Mary's  
6.00pm Evensong at St. Mary's
- 15<sup>th</sup> Monday  
9.30am Little Church at St. Mary's - activities and crafts for under-fives and carers beginning in Church then moving to the Parish Room – The Three Kings  
10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
2.00-4.00pm St. Mary's Together Games in the Parish Room  
5.00pm Nibley Churches Together meeting at the Chapel
- 17<sup>th</sup> Wednesday  
9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's (Mothers' Union Corporate Communion)  
5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel
- 18<sup>th</sup> **Thursday - Beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**
- 19<sup>th</sup> Friday  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 21<sup>st</sup> **Sunday – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany:**  
8.00am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Martin's  
10.15am Family Service at St. Mary's  
11.00am Family Communion at St. Kenelm's  
2.00pm Baptism of Alfred Costello at St. Mary's  
6.00pm Choral Evensong at St. Mary's
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Monday  
9.30am Little Church at St. Mary's - activities and crafts for under-fives and carers beginning in Church then moving to the Parish Room -  
10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
2.00–4.00pm St. Mary's Together Games in the Parish Room.

- 24<sup>th</sup> Wednesday  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
 5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel
- 25<sup>th</sup> **Thursday – The Conversion of Paul**  
 7.30pm Evening Eucharist at St. Mary's
- 26<sup>th</sup> Friday  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 28<sup>th</sup> **Sunday – Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)**  
 8.00am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Family Communion for Candlemas at St. Martin's  
 10.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's  
 6.00pm Service of Healing and Wholeness at St. Mary's
- 29<sup>th</sup> Monday  
 9.30am Little Church at St. Mary's - activities and crafts for under-fives and carers beginning in Church then moving to the Parish Room  
 10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
 2.00–4.00pm St. Mary's Together Games in the Parish Room.
- 30<sup>th</sup> Tuesday  
 2.30pm Co-workers of Mother Teresa in the Parish Room
- 31<sup>st</sup> Wednesday  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
 5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel

## Early Dates for February

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday  
 6.00pm Bell Peal at St. Mary's
- 4<sup>th</sup> **Sunday – 2<sup>nd</sup> before Lent**  
 8.00am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Parish Eucharist at St. Martin's  
 10.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's  
 11.00am Holy Communion at Chapel of Ease, Tresham  
 6.00pm Evensong at St. Mary's
- 5<sup>th</sup> Monday  
 9.30am Little Church at St. Mary's - activities and crafts for under-fives and carers beginning in Church then moving to the Parish Room  
 10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
 2.00–4.00pm St. Mary's Together Games in the Parish Room.

- 6<sup>th</sup> Tuesday  
7.45pm Alderley and Tresham PCC meeting
- 7<sup>th</sup> Wednesday  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's

## From the Registers

*The following services have been taken by the  
Anglican Clergy of these Parishes*

### FUNERALS AND THANKSGIVING SERVICES

*"Behold! I make all things new"*

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 24 <sup>th</sup> November | Marina Pirt (83) (Westerleigh/St. Mary's) |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> December  | Eileen "Joan" Jellings (St. Mary's)       |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> December | Lionel Thompson (St. Mary's)              |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> December | Danny Pagett (St. Mary's)                 |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> December | John White (64) Westerleigh/St. Mary's    |

## Clifton Suspension Bridge Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March

Next year's Guest Speaker evening will be held at the Cotswold Edge Golf Club on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March when Gordon Young, a volunteer tour-guide at the Clifton Suspension Bridge, will present an illustrated talk about this iconic world symbol of Bristol. The talk will embrace the early history, troubled financial matters resulting in construction being abandoned, eventual completion, and celebratory opening, plus lively little-known anecdotes of its subsequent history. Along the way, Gordon will show 'props' relating to the bridge and demonstrate (with audience participation), how the chains support the bridge.

Tickets (£10 each) for this event will be on sale from mid-January.

John Barnett

**Note the title of this day: NOT St. Paul's Day - a day to remember the saint and the great things he did, but the CONVERSION of St. Paul - a mighty act which our Lord did, and for which he is to be praised.**

Paul was born in Tarsus, in Asia Minor, and given the birth-name Saul. Although his family was abroad from Israel, he was given a strict Jewish upbringing, even to the point of being a Pharisee - religiously a kind of "super-Jew". He was very accomplished academically and studied at university level in Jerusalem under an outstanding scholar of the time, Gamaliel.

He was evidently "in" with the authorities and was present at the trial of Stephen, whose defence of his Christian faith was also an attack on the "mis-faith" of the Jews, which brought about his death by stoning. That death sparked off a fierce persecution of Christians, in which Saul played a leading part, "laying waste the Church...and committing men and women to prison" (Acts 8). When he heard that some had escaped to Damascus, he got authority to go and bring them back to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem to Damascus is a long way - nearly 140 miles - and would have taken more than a week to cover on foot. So Saul had plenty of time for thought, particularly about this new body of people called Christians, what Stephen had said about his people the Jews, and how he had died like his Master - with words of forgiveness for his murderers. All this conflicted with Saul's knowledge, upbringing and convictions, which were now so deep-rooted that only a spiritual implosion could uproot them.

That is just what happened. As Saul neared the end of his journey "a great light from heaven" suddenly shone about him and he fell to the ground. Then a voice said, "Saul, why are you persecuting me?" and when Saul asked "Who are you, Lord?" the answer came, "I am Jesus of Nazareth—you are persecuting me". "What shall I do, Lord?" asked Saul and was commanded "Go into Damascus and you will be told".

The conversion was complete: the upstanding, proud, officious Saul was on the ground; he who had been giving orders, and was about to give more, found himself asking what to do; and the man who had expected to stride into Damascus like a despot was led by the hand like a child. It would not be very long, for the man who had been persecuting Jesus was publicly proclaiming him as Lord and Saviour. And he changed

his name to Paul - to signify his change of life. He was converted by Jesus, and every conversion of a person is by act of God. We who want to see more people believing in Jesus and living in his way can - must -prepare the ground and sow the seed by speaking about him and by living in his way ourselves, but it is God—Father, Son, Holy Spirit—who produces the fruit.

The Conversion of St. Paul is the supreme example of this: it was the work of Christ following the witness of Stephen and other Christians; and knowing, as we do, what God has given us through the life and writings of St. Paul, we should be sure to remember this day with our deepest and warmest praise and thanksgiving. It is a happy coincidence that it comes at the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: the Conversion of St. Paul is something that all Christians can unite in celebrating.

T.N

## A Good Start in 2018

God's divine power has given us everything we need to live a truly religious life ....

*For this very reason:*

**Do your best to add goodness to your faith;  
to your goodness add knowledge;  
to your knowledge add self-control;  
to your self-control add endurance;  
to your endurance add godliness;  
to your godliness add brotherly affection;  
and to your brotherly affection add love.**

These are the qualities you need, and if you have them in abundance, they will make you active and effective in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1)



## Whose Christmas?

Are you any good at anagrams? Try re-arranging the letters of the following three words to see if you can find the two words you think I am looking for: IT'S ONLY ME. The answer is revealed below.\*

How did you get on? A further anagram of

the answer is IT'S MY NOEL.

Both anagrams are about me. There's a danger that my life can revolve around Tony Miles, too. Take It's my Noel, for example: If I plan Christmas around what I want, then I will be, inevitably and selfishly, at the centre of everything. Obviously, looking after self is important, especially spiritually, physically and emotionally. Yet, the words 'sin' and 'pride' both have 'I' at the centre of them. Someone once said, 'It's when one puts Jesus first, others next, then yourself last, that JOY is found'. This follows the Maker's instructions in the Great Commandments, which can be summarised as 'love God and love others as you love yourself'.

MAYBE TODAY is a day for remembering that it's not my Christmas at all, but Jesus'. He's the One who said, 'Freely you have received, freely give' (Matt. 10:8). If you seek to be graciously selfless and radically generous, you will know true joy and blessing this Christmas.

### PRAYER

Self-giving God, remind me today that there's more blessing in giving than receiving. In Jesus' name. Amen.

BIBLE READING The Greatest Commandment Mark 12:28-34

It is more blessed to give than to receive Acts 20:13-38

FURTHER REFLECTION Almighty God, from Your throne in glory, You humbled Yourself and came alongside us.

You graciously kissed the earth of this fallen world.

You shone Your light into the dark places through the precious gift of Jesus, Your Son, our Saviour.

Illumine our hearts, we pray, that softened by Your love, we may, in humility, come alongside those in need.

Help us to reach out with compassion and generosity, as channels of Your healing, peace, and hope.

May this be our gift to You, this Christmas, for the sake of Your kingdom. Amen.

TM

*Anagram answer: Tony Miles*

*'Maybe Today', Tony Miles — CWR*

# Word Search

## Let's Cook



Bake    Barbecue    Blend    Boil    Broil    Chip  
Clean    Fillet    Grate    Heat    Knead    Measure  
Microwave    Mince    Mix    Peel    Puree    Roast  
Season    Slice    Steam    Taste    Toast    Warm  
Weigh    Whip

## ***The Messenger***

**A**T THE START OF THIS NEW YEAR we celebrate the season of Epiphany. Our gospel readings point us to events and encounters of realisation as people recognise something more of who Jesus is. It is a time of inner spark and revelation. Unlikely foreigners searching for a king fall down and worship the baby Christ, the light of the world. At a wedding feast Jesus the man transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary and reveals his glory. But, before this, comes the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan - Heaven is opened and Jesus is revealed as Son of God.

‘Investing in our engagement with baptism families’ is one of the LIFE priorities we have discerned together, and Epiphany is a very good season to be thinking about ‘sparking an amazing adventure with Jesus Christ’, the one who came that we may have life and have it to the full.

I celebrate the fact that parents and carers continue to request christenings, and for those who have little understanding of what it is truly about, there is a wonderful opportunity for the church to offer a welcoming space for sudden or emerging realisation of who God is and what that means for them and their child.

The service of baptism includes the giving of a lit candle. Whatever lies ahead in the life of the newly-baptised child, we pray that they will go on discovering the light and life of Christ as stronger than darkness and death. But the tiny flame is also an invitation for our own seeing to be illuminated by the light of Christ that we might see differently.

This month every PCC will be receiving a letter from Bishop Robert inviting us to take a fresh look at baptism in our worshipping communities. I pray there will be many stories of epiphany moments as we look, with imagination, at the God-given possibilities around families and baptism. May new paths to faith be opened.

### **Daughters' baptisms brought dad to confirmation.**

#### ***Tidenham Parish with St. Briavels and Hewelsfield***

Dad of four, Nick, was confirmed following a baptism preparation course for his younger two daughters.

Nick and Emma have four daughters, and the eldest two were already baptised. When their fourth was a baby they decided to have her and her older sister baptised together. At this time, Emma

and the girls came to Sunday school to help about once a month. Nick did not attend.

As part of their daughters' baptism preparation, the whole family participated in a short course called *Through the Waters*, led by pioneer minister, Janice Hamilton and Jane Penny, Children and Families' Minister. Jane said: "During these times together we explored the symbols of baptism and the faith story, through discussion, reflection and the Bible, and we prayed together."

When the course was over, Emma decided that she wanted to be in church more and Nick decided that he wanted to do something to recommit himself to God. He has since been confirmed by Bishop Rachel.

Jane added: "All of the family have grown in their faith since the course. Nick and Emma are regular church attendees, Emma co-hosts a Life Group for babies, toddlers and their parents. Their daughter, Freya contributes to our young people's group. They all continue to develop their relationship with God, and it is a privilege to walk alongside them."

### **Messy Baptism preparation**

#### **By Diocesan Children and Families Officer, the Rev'd Jo Wetherall**

Building relationship is often what lies at the heart of our preparation for families who ask to have their child christened; it's the reason that for nine out of 10 families the preparation they receive is a visit from their vicar. But what can you do if you want to extend that relationship, to initiate a community for those who otherwise see baptism as an individual, family event?

This was the question posed by a multi-parish benefice near Gloucester. They had a healthy number of families requesting Christenings and recognised an opportunity to establish links between the families and members of the church.

The group decided to adopt a Messy Church style session, including a focus on baptism symbols, activities which relate to baptism, a play space for babies and toddlers, an opportunity to visit the church and walk through the service, plus time for the vicar to talk with the families.

Parents who recognised each other from school pick-up were introduced, so, too, the children who would be starting school together.

One family said: "We were totally overwhelmed at the introductory afternoon, such a wonderful atmosphere, activities and explanation for the children to take part in so that both

our children were fully prepared for the service. The day itself totally surpassed our expectations; you have blessed us with such wonderful memories of such a special day.”

**Contact Jo Wetherall on [jwetherall@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:jwetherall@glosdioc.org.uk) 01452 835552 for support and to share ideas.**

## **Events and Training**

### **Worship Leader Training**

**Tuesday 2 January, 7pm**

Formal training for lay people to lead services of the Word, usually where they worship on a regular basis. They may also lead all-age worship. This is the first of five sessions. For more information contact [nkent@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:nkent@glosdioc.org.uk)

### **Leading a Whole-Life Disciple-making Church with LICC**

**Saturday 20 January, 10am to 4pm, Christchurch, Abbeydale, Heron Way, GL4 5EQ**

Lay and ordained people with influence in their local church will be introduced to different aspects of making connections between people’s Monday to Saturday lives and our Sunday worship. £10 (includes refreshments and lunch). To book email [nkent@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:nkent@glosdioc.org.uk)

### **Welcoming people to new housing developments—training and networking events**

**Thursday 18 January, 2.45pm to 4.30pm, St. Lawrence, Bourton on the Water and 7.15pm to 9pm at St. George’s Church, Church Road, Upper Cam, Glos GL11 5PQ**

For groups from parishes which have new housing developments of up to 300 houses. We will discuss welcome and find out how to use a new Welcome Pack, produced by the priority group, to be adapted locally. Email [cdigby@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:cdigby@glosdioc.org.uk) by 12 January with the names of those who would like to come.

### **Children and Families Forum**

**Saturday 27 January, 10am to 12pm, St. Matthew’s Hall, Church Road, Cainscross, Stroud, GL5 4JE**

Liz Mitchell, a deacon in this diocese, will help us discover the joy and the ministry which can come from making and breaking bread together. Led by Children and Families Officer, Jo Wetherall, the

forum is for everyone involved in any aspect of Children and Families Ministry, including parents. To book, email [nkent@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:nkent@glosdioc.org.uk)

## Have your say

Visit Facebook **Diocese.of.Gloucester**, email Katherine at [kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk), follow us on Twitter **@glosdioc**, view videos on YouTube **Diocese of Gloucester** or visit our website [gloucester.anglican.org](http://gloucester.anglican.org)

January 31st

## Saint John Bosco

**Saint John Bosco is remembered as a man who dedicated his life to the service of abandoned young people. Over 150 years ago he challenged the way young people were treated in the desperate poverty that existed at that time in the city of Turin, Italy.**

Don Bosco was born in a village called ‘Becchi’ in 1815. When he was only two years of age he lost his father and was brought up by his mother, Margaret. Through a series of events in his youth, not least a very powerful dream he had as a young boy, in which he was told that he had the traits and skills to conquer the unruliness of these children, and make them his friends. He learned to become a leader for the young people he grew up with, many of whom were very badly behaved. In order to relate to them he needed to develop certain skills. He learned that by combining entertainment with teaching and praying he could achieve positive results. Entertained by his magical balancing act, the young people would gladly listen to a lesson or pray with John Bosco.

This powerful dream continued to be a guiding force throughout his adolescence, and it inspired him to become a priest, which involved six years of intense studying. In 1841, just short of his 26th birthday, he was ordained a priest. In Italy, priests are called Don, followed by their family name, so John Bosco became Don Bosco as we refer to him today.

Don Bosco realised how he needed to live out his vocation. The Industrial Revolution was spreading into Northern Italy, and with it came a great deal of poverty, desolation, turmoil and revolution

on the streets of the city. Young people had been abandoned and lived in hopelessness. He was shocked at the conditions they endured and the things they did to enable them to eat, and to survive — the cost of this progress in human terms was unbearable. Don Bosco became completely focused on his vocation when he entered the prisons. He wrote: “To see so many children, from 12 to 18 years of age, all healthy, strong, intelligent, lacking spiritual and material food, was something that horrified me.”

In the face of such a situation he decided: “I must, by any available means, prevent children ending up here.” Don Bosco now saw how his dream and the guidance it gave were needed. He knew a new approach was required. He needed to show there were better ways for these healthy intelligent young people to lead their lives.

Several people supported him in his work and, as numbers grew, they became known as the Salesians. With Don Bosco’s determination, numbers grew rapidly and the Salesians are to be found working throughout the world. Today the Salesians continue this great work operating on the principles of Don Bosco: the principles of Reason, Religion and Kindness.

Don Bosco was more than just a dreamer. He knew that education was the key to helping these young people. He faced an uphill struggle to teach them, as many were not interested and others could only learn after their day’s work. He tried to get fairer treatment for them with their employers and also to help other young people who still slept under bridges and on the streets. Even when they stole from him, as some did, he never gave up hope. He never lost his confidence in youth. Don Bosco started technical schools to educate the young people in skilled jobs like printing, bookbinding and mechanics. In those days, these were the skills that would guarantee better conditions and a better future for them. He started the Salesian Missions in South America. He published numerous works. And he continued his work on his system of education, a style which was immediately recognised as an ideal way to improve educational standards and to get the best from the young.

When others talked to him of his fantastic achievements, he would always interrupt and say “I have done nothing by myself. It is Our Lady who has done everything.”

After a life of achieving so much for young people, Don Bosco died on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1888 aged 73, This is the day we remember him in the Church calendar.

Doug

## Pastoral Care

There is a team at St. Mary's who visit those who are sick, lonely or bereaved. The role of co-ordinator is currently vacant, but we try to meet your needs as follows:

If you know of anyone who would appreciate a visit at home or in hospital or for information about general pastoral matters, please contact the Parish Office on 01453 842175 during opening hours, Tuesday—Thursday 9.0am – 1.0pm

For bereavement visiting, please contact Joan Deveney on 01453 844 370

We will do our best to help with lifts to hospital or clinic, but, unfortunately, a charge will have to be made for this:

Gloucester or Cheltenham £13; Stroud or Dursley £7;

Wotton £3

Lifts to a church service can also be provided.

If you require a lift, please contact Anne Parry on 01453 843 144

## Regular Week-day Services in the Benefice

Morning Prayer at St. Mary's: 9 am Monday – Saturday

Holy Communion at St. Mary's: 9.30 am Wednesday and Friday

Morning Service at Perry and Dawes: 10 am Monday (first Monday in the month Holy Communion)

Prayer Space at St. Mary's: 5.00 – 6.00pm Wednesday in the Catherine Chapel

Evening Prayer at St. Mary's: 5 pm Monday - Saturday subject to clergy availability

Evening Prayer at St. Kenelm's, Alderley: 5 pm on Tuesday

Evening Prayer at St. Martin's, North Nibley: 5 pm on Wednesday

**Please check with the Diary for Sunday and special services**

# House Groups

*Please contact the group leader if you are interested in joining a particular group.*

## MONDAYS

The Monday Group. Please ring Jean Fryer (842625) for information. Kate Tutty (844371) and Shirley Wyse (844222) 68 Shepherds Leaze, just after 9 am every other Monday during school term-time.

## THURSDAYS

John Forster (842557), The Old House, Under-the-Hill, Adey's Lane, 7.30 pm monthly, 3rd Thursday.  
Roger and Shirley Wyse (844222), 112 Bearlands, weekly, 7.30 pm.

## Ahem !

An elderly rector idolized children, and during baptism was wont to put his face close to them and smile at them. One Sunday, however, the infant was older (and sharper) than usual. Making good its opportunity, it plunged its fist into the rector's mouth and withdrew it with a triumphant handful of teeth.

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Our minister says, "Happiness is like jam: you can't spread even a little without getting some on yourself."

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The rector said to a young woman parishioner, "You know, I pray for you every night."

She replied: "I'm afraid it's too late, rector, I'm engaged to be married."

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During a holiday at the seaside our small son discovered the slot machines in a nearby amusement arcade. Shortly after returning home we visited a neighbouring church for the flower festival. When we passed the slots in the wall for magazine monies etc., he said in a loud voice, "What do you get out of those money slots, Daddy?"

**Monarch Books**

<p><b>Deadline for the February Magazine by January 14th, noon, please. My e-mail address is <a href="mailto:douglas.hobbs@homecall.co.uk">douglas.hobbs@homecall.co.uk</a></b></p>
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## *Regular Groups and Events at St. Mary's*

**The Ark** Coffee Shop, 43 Long Street, Children's play area, Traidcraft  
(01453- 521838)

**Bible Study and Housegroups:** *full listing in magazine*

**Flower Guild:** Contact the Parish Office (Tuesday-Thursday 9am-1.0pm)

**Mothers' Union -** Group Leader: Sue Plant (01453-845157)

**Music:** Organist: Eddie Garrard (01453-454 849)

Assistant Director of Music: Hilary Varlow (07795 515 219)

**Bellringers:** Tuesday 7.30pm, Adrian Davis (01453-844393) Handbell  
ringing Thursday 7.30pm

**Pastoral Care:** Enquiries through the Parish Office (Tuesday. Wednesday,  
Thursday, 9am –1.0pm)

**Communication:** Vacant

**For Young People:** Little Church. Mondays 9.30 – 11.30am (term-time.  
Holiday start time 10am in Parish Room). For pre-schoolers and their  
carers. Story in church followed by arts and crafts and a healthy snack  
in the Parish Room. Contact Stefi Merrett (07967 255377)

**Messy Church** - usually 2nd Saturday of the month, 9.30 - 11.00am

Breakfast, activities and worship for all ages. (Please look out for  
notices)

**For Young People for Wotton Churches:** Monday Youth Group 8-10pm  
(ages 14-18) at the Baptist Church Hall - Rev'd Tom Wharin (07795  
681861)

**Family Service** on Third Sunday in the month. A service for all ages.

## *Other Churches in Wotton-under-Edge*

HOLY CROSS CHURCH, Old Town (Roman Catholic) Fr. George Malecki,  
served from Thornbury. Office: Tel. 01454-412223

THE BAPTIST CHURCH, in the Rope Walk. Rev'd Tom Wharin.  
(01453-844726). Secretary: David King, e-mail address:  
djs.king@virgin.net.

THE UNITED CHURCH, in Bradley Street, Rev'd Phil Summers

OLIVER MEMORIAL CHAPEL, in Synwell, Norman Exell (01453-844384)

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Mrs Frances Neale 01453 543888  
jfn.dursley@gmail.com

# LOCAL TRADES DIRECTORY

*01453 code unless otherwise stated. We hope that you will support those who advertise in this Directory, although the appearance of an advertisement in no way signifies the endorsement of any goods or services offered.*

## **Builders, etc.**

J. B. Young & Sons Ltd., The Grange, Ragnall..... 842103

## **Cinema**

Electric Picture House .....844401

## **DIY:**

Wotton DIY, 40 Long Street.....842229

## **Electricians**

Abbey Electrics .....Mobile 07989 595077)

Toase Electrical .....(Mobile 07980 917894), 843877

## **Florists:**

Robinsons, Long Street .....843168

## **Garage (Sales, Service, Parts and MOT):**

Bear Street Garage ..... 843687

## **Piano Tuning and Repairs**

Eddie Garrard ..... 07789777008

## **Portable Appliance Testing and Electric Appliance Repairs.**

Wright Connections, .....(Mobile 07942893993)