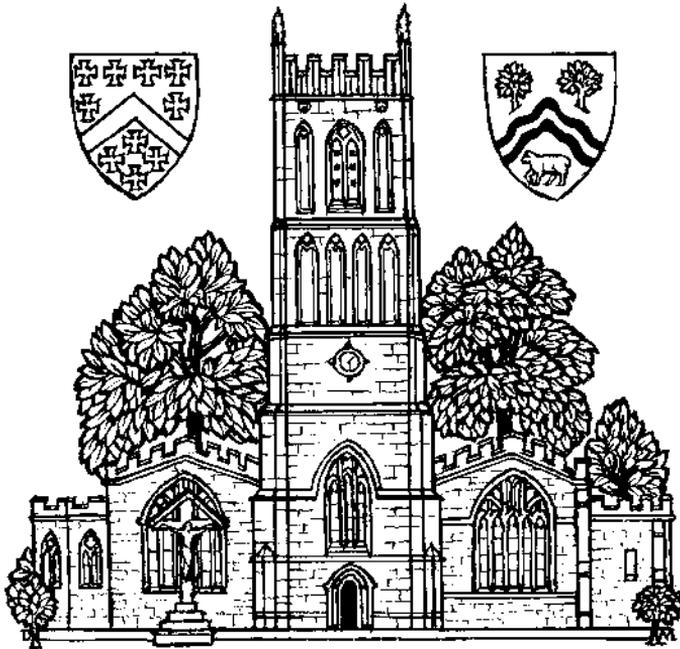


# THE PARISH MAGAZINE



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

70p per copy. £7 annually

JANUARY 2019

*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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**Associate Priests:** Rev'd Peter Marsh (01453 547 521 – **not after 6.00pm**)  
**Licensed Reader:** Sue Plant, 3 Old Town (01453-845 157)

**Clergy with permission to officiate:**

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Rev'd Canon Iain Marchant (01453-844 779)

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e-mail: [wotvicsec@btconnect.com](mailto:wotvicsec@btconnect.com)

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Jacqueline Excell, 94 Bearlands. (01453-845 178)

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**Alderley, including** Kay Pettifer (01453-843 838)  
**Tresham:** Susan Whitfield (01666-890 338)

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Clergy Days off:

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

# Letter from the Curate

Dear Friends

**I**N THE ANCIENT ROMAN RELIGION, there was a god called Janus, a god of beginnings and of endings. He was depicted as one who had two faces because he looked both to the past and to the future. The month January is named after him.

So here we are, at the ending of 2018 and the beginning of 2019. What happened in 2018 for which you would say thank you to God? In St. Mary's there have been times of celebration - for example, the Pancake Party, Viney Hill camping weekend and so many in church and community who worked on the poppies to put on the tower and inside the church, and we give thanks for all who took part in that work, and also in the Experience Remembrance days, and in the Remembrance Day Service where over 900 people from our town gathered.

And what about 2019? What are your hopes for this year for yourself, for your family and friends, for your country, for your church?

In the Benefice we hope to welcome a new vicar during the coming year. We have made a start on the process by writing a Benefice Profile to use in the advertising that we expect will lead to interviews and the appointment of the next vicar.

At St. Mary's Church, there is the more immediate prospect of seeing results from the start of the re-ordering process. What will our church look like as we go through the year? What difference will the work to be done make to our life and witness in the town as we seek to share the transforming love of Jesus in our community?

As we know from the Christmas and Easter stories, God is with us in all of life - past, present and future - so here is a quote for us to reflect on at the beginning of what looks to be a rather uncertain year in many areas of our corporate life:

“I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, ‘Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.’ And he replied, ‘Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.’ So I went forth and finding the hand of God, trod gladly into the night.” (*Minnie Louise Haskins*)

Happy New Year! May you know peace and joy in 2019.

Morag

## A Happy New Year

All of us involved in the production of our Parish Magazine wish all our readers a happy, peaceful and blessed new year.

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Following the Songs of Praise at St. Mary's at 4pm on 13th January, there will be a time of prayer, 6.30 - 7pm, at the following venues:

Friday 18th January.	Oliver Memorial Chapel.
Saturday 19th	St. Mary's.
Monday 21st	Baptist Church.
Tuesday 22nd	Quakers (Chipping Club Room).
Wednesday 23rd	Holy Cross (above War Memorial).
Thursday 23th	United Church, Bradley Street.

***If you think we should be doing things together  
(Jesus did), do come and join us.***

### From the Church Bulletin

Our rubber stamp has gone missing. It has these words on it:

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, GODMANCHESTER  
NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

**Monarch Books**

Why are there six churches in Wotton ?

Why aren't they working together ?

**THEY ARE !!**

at a

**UNITED SONGS OF PRAISE**

**in St. Mary's Parish Church**

**on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January at 4pm.**

Cup of tea from 3.30pm

***JOIN US FOR A GREAT OCCASION***

***I will!***

For many of us these words will remind us of our wedding day, when we made a serious promise before God which we were determined to keep.

I thought these words, which I expect will be familiar to most people, would be appropriate to have in mind when New Year's Resolutions are being made:

*"I shall pass through this world but once.*

*Any good thing therefore that I can do,*

*Or any kindness I can show,*

*Let me do it now.*

*Let me not defer it or neglect it,*

*For I shall not pass this way again."*

# Thank You

We wish to express our gratitude and thanks to one and all on the occasion of our stepping down from our collating, folding and proof-reading commitment to the Parish Magazine, and other church duties over the years. It was a wonderful gathering in the Parish Room on Thursday 29th November when a number of our parishioners gathered - many of whom are connected with magazine activities themselves —to mark this time (this number included someone over from Saudi Arabia who came to join us).

We were overwhelmed to be presented with such acceptable gifts as a token of your love and fellowship, and we wish to take this opportunity to thank most sincerely all those who were involved for making what was for us such a memorable morning.

The book of Ecclesiastes has a lot for us to ponder over in Chapter 3, Verse 1: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the sun."

Rita and John Ballantyne

## Making contact with us at St. Mary's

During the period of the interregnum when we shall be without a vicar, if anyone wishes to speak to someone to help with their enquiries, please make contact with Kate in the Parish office, who will deal with the request, or be pleased to arrange for the appropriate person to assist.

If you need to speak to someone as an emergency outside the parish office hours, please call a churchwarden for assistance –

St. Mary's, Alan 01453 521388 or Jackie 01453 845178

St. Martin's, Wynne 01453 542091

St. Kenelm's, Kay 01453 843838

Tresham, Susan 01666 890338

Parish office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday  
9.00am – 1.00pm. Friday 9.00am to 12 pm

## Re-Ordering Phase 1 Starting Soon

The New Year brings new things and new resolutions. Part of this will be the beginning of the re-ordering construction. The contract has been awarded to DPT in Arlingham. They will carry out the work on the construction of the toilets, servery and flower cupboard - as authorized by the Faculty almost a year ago.

Before this work starts, we will need to create working space for the contractor. We will use our team of volunteers to move the contents of the flower cupboard to the Berkeley chapel, help remove pews from the Berkeley chapel, and remove wall hangings in the working area for re-hanging elsewhere.

We need to retain other pews until after Christmas while the church is very busy. Between Christmas and New Year we will remove pews to the West of the cross aisle. Most of these have been sold so, hopefully, the majority will be taken by their owners.

We also need to empty the choir vestry, whose contents will be temporarily lodged in the Berkeley chapel, until work is completed.

This work is contracted to finish by Easter. So, pray for good weather, smooth completion of tasks, and patience by us all while the church is under some disruption.

Anne Parry and Geoff Hill can answer questions you may have.

Happy New Year, it will be something to look forward to,  
From the Re ordering Team

### Punch Line

The highlight of the Nativity play was to show the radiance of Jesus, so an electric light bulb was hidden in the manger. All the lights were to be turned off with the exception of the one light in the manger. At the appropriate moment all the lights went out including the manger light. The silence was broken when one of the young shepherds whispered loudly: "Hey, you've turned off Jesus."

*Monarch Books*



**Seraphim was born in 1759 at Kursk in Russia. He joined the Monastery of our Lady at Sarov near Moscow when he was aged 20. He lived there as a Solitary for over thirty years, but his gifts as a staretz, or spiritual guide, became more widely known until he found himself sharing his gift of healing spirit, soul and body with the thousands who made the pilgrimage to his monastery.**

At the heart of his own devotional life was the 'Jesus Prayer', and he stressed the need for all Christians to have an unceasing communion with the person of Jesus.

The Jesus prayer is a very short, very simple, prayer yet it can be a key to unlocking a spiritual doorway that leads us to pray from the heart, rather than from the mind:

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,  
have mercy on me, a sinner*

“The words of the Jesus prayer fall into two halves. The first half expresses the core truth of our faith in Jesus Christ, that he is the incarnate Son of the Creator God, and that we ascribe to Him Lordship of ourselves. The second half sums up the wonder of God's love, that though we are sinners, yet He has mercy upon us and forgives us. The twelve words the prayer leads us into a balanced expression of both praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, yet also into penitence and confession, seeking his forgiveness and mercy”.

**Pointers for Prayer :**

As you pray the prayer, simply recite it over and over again, and you will discover three levels of prayer, first described by the 19th century Russian spiritual teacher, Theophan. The prayer begins as words then, as we recite it further, we move on to pray the prayer as our own, owning the thoughts and expression of the prayer. Finally, our hearts take over the prayer, where the prayer is no longer a series of words and concepts, but gives way to a touching of our Spirit with God's Spirit.

Archbishop Seraphim urged people to write prayer letters. In the Orthodox tradition, the writing of prayer letters exists as a specific kind of prayer towards one of the saints, which he saw as a symbol of hope that the message would reach the saint and that God would hear their prayers presented, as it were, by one of the righteous and would perform a miracle. In the Orthodox tradition, the writing of prayer letters exists as a specific kind of prayer towards some saints. This practice has been known in Russia in relation to the newly canonised venerable Father Seraphim of Viritsa, as well as with the saint Matrona of Moscow. In Bulgaria it is mostly related to St. John of Rila.

Today, in our rushed lives, there seems to be little time or space for miracles to happen and yet, in the city of Sofia, for fifty years and more, there has been an unceasing flow of people, who stop at the crypt of the Russian church and leave their prayer letters to the “old Vladika”, as they affectionately call the Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), who is resting there. Some call these letters “just wishes”, nevertheless, our “old Vladika” has brought many people into the Church,

Before his death, Vladika Seraphim ordered his parish members to write him letters, which he would answer, if he found boldness before the Lord (“If I find boldness before the Lord, I will not leave you”, were his words). Those answers are the miracles of God, which do not cease to happen today, very often even to people who are not church followers or even to non-believers.

For many years the miracles, which happened because of “old Vladika’s” praying intercession, have been recorded. One of these relates to a doctor’s wife who became ill with cancer of the stomach. As a doctor, her husband made sure that all necessary tests were done and, after cancer was diagnosed, he sent his wife to have an operation in the capital city. When she arrived in Sofia, he first went to visit the grave of Vladika Seraphim, whom his wife greatly honoured. After that she was taken into hospital and, before the operation, she had another number of tests done. This time all the analyses showed she had no cancer!

He died on January 2nd, 1833 and is revered in the Russian Orthodox Church as ‘an icon of Orthodox Spirituality’.

Doug

# Open Doors

*Iain has asked Chris to tell us about Open Doors, a charity in which he is very involved. To tell us what is happening in a favourite charity of yours, 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).*

Many of us are aware of Open Doors ministry to the persecuted church around the world. Fewer of us will be aware that in Autumn 2016, Open Doors launched a 7 year campaign called Hope For The Middle East, to encourage us to stand with our suffering family in Syria and Iraq, at a time when these countries were being ravaged by civil wars and the violence associated with the ambitions of I.S.I.S., with Christians often being targeted because of their faith, many having to flee to refugee camps, either inside their own country or in a neighbouring country.

Initial campaign actions involved raising awareness of the need through prayer, advocacy, giving and the signing of a global petition (I'm sure some of us remember signing it), which was presented to the United Nations and the EU in December 2017.

Well, I.S.I.S have to a great extent been driven out from the region (but violence still occurs); the world media have largely lost interest and moved on to other disasters, and we in the West are no longer as concerned as we were before. But the legacy of the violence of recent years remains and Christians have only recently, slowly, tentatively started to rebuild their shattered lives.

As a vital although less headline grabbing part of the campaign, Open Doors partners on the ground are still there, seeking to enable families to return to their former communities, by rebuilding homes, setting up income generating projects for local believers, providing trauma counselling, giving spiritual help, repairing church buildings where necessary and so encouraging believers to stay in Iraq and Syria wherever possible and be shining lights, bringing hope in the midst of darkness. In particular believers now need help in keeping warm, healthy and fed throughout the extremely cold winter months.

The above all needs finance to make it happen and as such an offering will be taken at the United Songs of Praise service on 13<sup>th</sup> January. If you wish to support your family in Syria and Iraq at this time, but can't make the service, Iain Marchant will be delighted to accept your gift!!

Chris Lowther

# Choir Notes

May I, on behalf of myself and the choir, wish you all a wonderful and blessed 2019 and thank you all for your support over the past year?

During November we had a Sing and Social at which we learnt some new Advent and Christmas music as well as refreshing some already known. This proved to be a popular event so it is planned to hold another three during this year. It would be good to have more suggestions for the future events.

Hopefully, you all enjoyed the various Christmas events, including the Christingles and Carol Service, and perhaps heard carols new to you. I thank all those who sang in these events and look forward to working with them throughout the coming year. If you feel you would like to join them in their music making in the future then please contact me either in church or on 07789777008. Remember, age is no barrier (young or more mature) and there is no audition. So come and enjoy both the singing and social aspect of the choir.

Looking to the future, it is planned to sing Stainer's "Crucifixion", instead of evensong, on Passion Sunday so please come and support this event either as a singer or member of the congregation. There are several congregational hymns in this work.

If you wish to speak to me regarding any aspect of the church music please see me on a Sunday or ring me on 07789777008.

Eddie Garrard

## Readings for January

### **6th Epiphany Sunday**

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

### **13th 1st Sunday after Epiphany**

Isaiah 43, 1-7; Acts 8, 14-17; Luke 3, 15-17, 21-22

### **20th 2nd Sunday after Epiphany**

TBA

### **27th 3rd Sunday after Epiphany**

Nehemiah 8, 1-3, 5-6, 8-10; 1 Corinthians 12,12-31a;  
Luke 4, 14-21



## Keeping faith

**Read:** There was a man called Simeon in Jerusalem who was upright and devout, eagerly awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was with him. The Spirit had disclosed to him that he would not taste death before he had

seen the Lord's Messiah. Led by the Spirit, Simeon entered the temple; and when Jesus' parents brought in their child to honour the customs of the Law, Simeon cradled him in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Master, now let your servant go in peace, according to your promise. With my own eyes I have seen the salvation you have prepared before all the world - a light that will reveal you to the Gentiles and bring glory to your people Israel.' The child's parents were stunned at these words concerning him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is ordained to be a sign that many will reject; one through whom the inner thoughts of many will be revealed and even your own soul will be pierced. Many in Israel will stand or fall because of him.'

*Luke 2:25-35*

**Ponder:** It is not just our faith in ourselves that can take a knock as the years go by; it is our faith in God as well. As another natural catastrophe strikes, another country is plunged into violent conflict, another friend dies of cancer, or another person is raped, mugged or murdered, it is hard to reconcile the harsh realities of life with the picture of a loving and merciful Father. The fact that society as a whole generally dismisses any talk of God makes it all the harder to keep on believing, harder to withstand the drip-drip effect of scorn and scepticism or sheer disinterest.

Yet the example of Simeon, and of the prophetess Anna whose story follows his, urges us to keep trusting, confident that God is at work and that, in the fullness of time, his will shall be done. Both Simeon and Anna had the courage to stay true to their faith despite outward appearances. Have we?

**Ask yourself:** Does your faith in God's purpose burn as brightly as it once did? Have you lost sight of his ability to change the world?

**Pray:** Loving God, it is hard sometimes to continue believing when so much denies my convictions. It is harder still when those around me ridicule my faith and deride me for following you, and it is hardest of all when hopes are dashed and you seem far from me, my prayers for help seemingly unanswered.

Give me strength, despite adversity or disappointment, to stay true to you, trusting in your purpose, in the assurance that your way will finally prevail. Amen.

**Remember:** We rejoice in our present sufferings, because we know that suffering creates endurance, and endurance creates fortitude, and fortitude creates hope, and hope does not let us down, because God's love is poured into our innermost being through the Holy Spirit he has put within us. *Romans 5 :3-5*

**Close:** Sovereign God, renew my faith, revive my hope, restore my trust, rekindle my vision, and so may I serve you in quiet confidence, this day and always. Through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

*'Daily Prayer' Nick Fawcett - Kevin Mayhew*

## **Wotton Library Club**

**Ludgate Hill, Wotton-under-Edge GL12 7JJ**

**Second Friday of the month**

**10.00am -12.00 noon**

We meet monthly to choose books, recommend ones we have read, and chat over a cup of tea and biscuits. It is a lovely, informal group and everyone is welcome. Just turn up!

Transport can be provided both ways for those who need it, and there is also a wheelchair facility. Please telephone the library (Tel. 01453 842115) so that it can be arranged.

### **Shop early for Christmas**

It was Christmas and the judge was in festive mood as he asked the accused, "What are you charged with?"

"Doing my Christmas shopping early," came the reply.

"That's not an offence," said the judge.

"How early were you doing the shopping?" said the judge.

"Before the store opened," the man replied.

-----

Grand-dad was babysitting when he heard his little grand-daughter muttering the alphabet over in hushed tones. "What are you doing?" he asked her. "I'm praying," she replied. "I can't think of the right words so I just say all the letters. God will put them together for me 'cos He knows what I'm thinking.

**Monarch Books**

# Diary for January

**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> Tuesday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
3.00pm North Nibley PCC meeting at Blanchworth House.  
5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 4<sup>th</sup> Friday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 5<sup>th</sup> Saturday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday 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)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Monday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel 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 Holy Communion at Perry and Dawes  
2.00–4.00pm St. Mary's Games in the Parish Room
- 8<sup>th</sup> Tuesday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 9<sup>th</sup> Wednesday 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at  
St. Mary's  
2.15pm Mothers' Union AGM in Parish Room

- 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.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Thursday 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 11<sup>th</sup> Friday 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 12<sup>th</sup> Saturday 9.30–11.00am Messy Church at St. Mary's – breakfast, activities and worship for all ages
- 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Baptism of Christ - 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  
 4.00pm CTiW Songs of Praise at St. Mary's – 3pm Refreshments available
- 14<sup>th</sup> Monday  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel 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 – The Three Kings  
 10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
 2.00-4.00pm St. Mary's Games in the Parish Room
- 15<sup>th</sup> Tuesday  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 16<sup>th</sup> Wednesday  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's (Mothers' Union Corporate Communion)  
 5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel
- 17<sup>th</sup> Thursday - Beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 18<sup>th</sup> Friday**  
**Start of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's

- 20<sup>th</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  
 6.00pm Choral Evensong at St. Mary's
- 21<sup>st</sup> Monday**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel 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  
 10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
 2.00–4.00pm St. Mary's Games in the Parish Room.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
 5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel
- 24<sup>th</sup> Thursday**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's
- 25<sup>th</sup> Friday – The Conversion of Paul**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
- 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Epiphany**  
 8.00am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Family Communion at St. Martin's  
 10.15am Parish Eucharist at St. Mary's  
 6.00pm Service of Healing and Wholeness at St. Mary's
- 28<sup>th</sup> Monday** 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel 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  
 10.00am Morning Prayer at Perry and Dawes  
 2.00–4.00pm St. Mary's Games in the Parish Room.
- 30<sup>th</sup> Wednesday**  
 9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
 9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's  
 5.00pm Prayer Space in the Catherine Chapel

31<sup>st</sup> Thursday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's

## Dates for Early February

1<sup>st</sup> Friday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's  
9.30am Holy Communion at St. Mary's

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday  
9.00am Morning Prayer in Catherine Chapel at St. Mary's

3<sup>rd</sup> **Sunday**  
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 The Chapel of Ease, Tresham  
6.00pm Evensong 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"*

30<sup>th</sup> November Marjorie Purling (St. Mary's)

3<sup>rd</sup> December Jen Hardwick (St. Mary's)

-----  
**Hmm!**

Two spiders met in church. The first spider said, "I can't find anywhere quiet to live in this church. It's too noisy in the organ loft, it's not very peaceful in the choir stalls and if I settle in a nice dark corner under a pew it isn't long before someone comes along with a broom and sweeps me out."

The second spider said, "You had better come and join me in the offertory box. I haven't been disturbed for months."

**Monarch Books**

January 13th

## Mary Slessor "Mother of All the Peoples"

**Mary Slessor was born on December 2nd 1848 in Gilcomston, a suburb of Aberdeen, the second of seven children, only four of whom survived childhood. Her father was a shoemaker, and her mother was a deeply religious woman who had a keen interest in missionary work in the Calabar region of Nigeria.**

In 1859, the family moved to Dundee in search of work, but her father was unable to continue his shoemaking work. He became an alcoholic, but finally took a job as a mill labourer. When Mary was just aged eleven, besides attending church she began work as a "half timer" in the Baxter Brothers' Mill — half her time was spent working in the mill and the other half in a school provided by the mill owners.

"The story is told of how she stood her ground against a local gang, who swung a metal weight on a string closer and closer to her face. This stalwart young woman defied the gang by obtaining their agreement that, should she not flinch, then all her tormentors would join the Sunday School class. Mary triumphed, and gained experience which she would later exploit in her contacts with even more threatening tribes in a distant land."

Fortunately, Mary benefited significantly from her rudimentary education and, more importantly, she developed an intense interest in religion so that when a mission was instituted in the area, Mary volunteered to become a teacher. Thus began a formative period in Mary's life during which she learned to cope with both physical and mental hardship. She became interested in reading about work in Nigeria and applied to the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church, effectively offering her life to the people of the Calabar region. After a brief period of training in Edinburgh, she arrived at her destination in West Africa in September 1876, just 28 years old. She found a country which was in great turmoil. The anti-slavery reforms and abolition of slave trading were taking effect. Also, Britain had seized Lagos in 1861 --- the first step towards establishing the Nigerian Protectorate in 1914.

It was still a primitive society where witchcraft and superstition were still very prevalent, and human sacrifice routinely followed the death of a village dignitary. She was appalled at the ritual murder of twins, and worked hard successfully to get the people to overcome this superstition.

Women were treated as lower than cattle, and Mary was so successful in raising their standing in society that she could well be considered as one of the pioneers of women's rights in Africa.

Unlike most missionaries, she lived in native style and became thoroughly conversant with the language, the culture and customs, and the day-to-day lives of those she served so well, and became fluent in the Efik language, in order to use humour and sarcasm to reinforce her arguments.

It was not until 1902 that the dangers posed by mosquitoes were really exposed. By this time Mary Slessor, in common with other missionaries and their helpers, had been infected. The area where they were working provided ideal conditions for the mosquito population to breed and they acted as host to a variety of diseases, including malaria. Once infected, the average life expectancy was only a few years and those who survived and returned home often endured recurring fevers and ill-health for the rest of their lives. Mary made light of her experiences, and we can hardly begin to try to understand the horrors of forty years of suffering.

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Mary provided vaccination against the dreaded smallpox, and set up mission hospitals for treating illnesses and injuries suffered by the native peoples. Her dedicated work and almost total integration with the native population prompted the Governor to make an official request for her to combine her missionary activities with an administrative position as a Member of the Itu Court.

She constantly appealed to the Foreign Mission Board and the trading markets for more financial support and, with their support, she was able to extend her work further into the heartland of the country but, by 1915, her physical health had declined so much that whereas she used to think nothing of all-night treks through the rain forest, her travelling necessitated being pulled in a hand-cart by one of her assistants, and it was after an excruciating and prolonged bout of fever that Mary Slessor died on January 13<sup>th</sup> 1915.

She was accorded a state funeral and her grave in the heart of the country is marked by a cross of Scottish granite. In 1953 the new head of the Commonwealth, Elizabeth II, made her own pilgrimage to the graveside.

The finest tribute was from those of her own who knew her best. To them she was "Mother of All The Peoples" or, more simply, "Ma". She is remembered in the Church calendar on January 13<sup>th</sup>.

Doug

# Word Search

## The Old West



Ambush    Boot    Bounty    Coach    Corral    Cowboy  
Deputy    Draw    Drifter    Fast    Fort    Gunfighter  
Hideout    Hill    Horse    Outlaw    Posse    Ranch  
Ranger    Redeye    Rope    Saddle    Saloon    Settler  
Sheriff    Spurs    Trail    Wagon

## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**Children's Church:** there will be some activities left in the Catherine Chapel on Sundays 6th, 13th and 27th. Story sacks and books are available from the Children's Corner to be taken to the pews.

We hope to continue to have a leader for Children's Church as often as possible, and will let you know via Facebook when that will happen.

For more details, contact Morag 01453 845147

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

7th: Epiphany

14th: We Three Kings

21st: TBA

28th: TBA

For more details, contact [kirstybeasley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kirstybeasley@hotmail.co.uk)

**Messy Church:** Saturday 12th 'Where I belong' - looking at the story of Jesus as a child in the Temple

For more details, contact Morag 01453 845147

**Family Services:** Sunday 20th

For more details, contact the parish office 01453 842175

**Family Time:**

**Talk:** Have you ever felt God speak to you?

**Do:** Go for a walk this week and notice how God is speaking to you through nature.

**Pray:**

Father God,  
please help us to notice when  
you are speaking to us,

Amen

## *The Messenger*

### **Faith: Time for a fresh start?**

**T**HE CHAMPAGNE BOTTLES are out with the recycling, the fireworks are a dim and distant memory, and another New Year's Eve has been and gone. New Year is time when lots of us are thinking about building a better version of ourselves. Diets, diaries, dancing classes—finding the motivation to make real change in your life is tough. But this year could be different...

Early in 2019, groups of like-minded people around the Diocese of Gloucester will be getting together to support each other as we work to make life-long positive changes in our lives. In the Ugly Duckling Company's four-week course, *Resolve*, ([theuglyducklingcompany.com](http://theuglyducklingcompany.com)) you can explore how to look after your body, strengthen your mind, inspire your soul and deepen your relationships.

One person who went last year said, "This course particularly has been really good at making us realise that we are all in the same boat. I think it's easy sometimes to come to church and listen to a sermon and think "I'll never be that good, I'll never be up to it, I'll never make it. It's a very human course." Another said, "It brings this hope and it raises awareness of changes that you need to make in your life." Find the video on the Diocese of Gloucester's YouTube channel.

### **How can I join in?**

Contact [kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk) with your name and postcode to be put in touch with your nearest *Resolve* group. If you can't get to a group meeting, you might want to try some of these suggestions from the course for making resolutions stick.

"If you are looking to make a major change in your life, just do one thing at a time. Stick with it for a good few months before you consider doing something else. What you are trying to do is get to the point where it becomes effortless, where it becomes a habit. Choose one thing and do it in a way that you believe is accomplishable."—*Dr Roger Bretherton, psychologist.*

"The whole area of communication is of paramount importance. Open, honest communication—it's a two-way thing."—*Dr Alyson VanDenBroek, GP.*

## Take it further

In the time after pancake day (Shrove Tuesday) until Easter, the Diocese of Gloucester is also running a new course called Shapes for Living which helps people to meet together in small groups to find new 'Shapes for Living'. Aimed at those who already have a Christian faith, it looks at five areas of life: relating, praying, working, playing and growing, and will help people to restore balance in all areas of life.

If you are interested in getting involved, you could get in touch with your local church through [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) and find out how to join people in your local area.

If you would rather follow the material alone, there will be weekly videos from the Bishop of Gloucester, Bishop Rachel: ideas that you could use alone, or with your family, and questions to help you think around the subject. Visit [gloucester.anglican.org/your-ministry/shapes-for-living/](http://gloucester.anglican.org/your-ministry/shapes-for-living/) from 6 March.

## Events

***Enjoyed Christmas celebrations in one of our churches?  
Why not come along again?***

### **The Xmas Factor, free Christmas trail**

#### **15 December to 6 January at Gloucester Cathedral**

Do you have the Xmas factor? Take part in the free Christmas trail. Journey around the Cathedral, meet the stars of the first Christmas and find out what gave them the X-Factor. After the trail, visit the shop and collect a free star to take home to decorate your own tree. [www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk](http://www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk)

### **Epiphany Carol Service,**

#### **Sunday 6 January, 6pm to 8.15pm at Tewkesbury Abbey**

**(Lots of other venues too, see [AChurchNearYou.com](http://AChurchNearYou.com) for details)**

A special service to celebrate the day that the three wise men arrived at the stable in Bethlehem. It's the 12th day of Christmas and marks the end of the official Christmas season for Christians.

## Have your say

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

***The Messenger***

## Some words written on the wall of Mother Teresa's room in Calcutta

“People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centred;

*Forgive them anyway.*

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;      *Be kind anyway.*

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;

*Be successful anyway.*

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;

*Be honest and frank anyway.*

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;

*Build anyway.*

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;

*Be happy anyway.*

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;

*Do good anyway.*

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;

*Give the world your best anyway.*

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;

*It never was between you and them, anyway.”*

## 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 and Friday 9.00 to 12 noon.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Comfort and Joy**

At a Theological College in Canada the students often went to take services at mission churches in the neighbouring countryside. One student, whose surname was Joy, overstayed his absence. When he received a telegram from the College Warden expressing his disapproval, the student sent a reply telegram:

“Please see psalm 30, verse 4”

which reads: “Sorrow may endure for a night, but Joy cometh in the morning!”

G.K.C.

## **Change of Address**

The parish magazine reported:

“We are pleased to note that there has been a change of mind by the Housing Department regarding a name for the new housing complex for the elderly. ‘St. Peter’s Close’ did seem inappropriate.”

When I was in the forces, the canon in the Sheffield church used to like not only to attend all the parish groups, but also to identify himself with them by belonging to them, so that he could address them as ‘We Rover Scouts’ or ‘We Catholic teachers’. One day he went too far and began ‘We Catholic Mothers.’

**Monarch Books**

**Deadline for the February Magazine by January 14th, noon, please.  
My e-mail address is douglas.hobbs@homecall.co.uk**

## *Regular Groups and Events at St. Mary's*

**The Ark** Coffee Shop, 43 Long Street, Children's play area, Traidcraft (01453-521 838)

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

**Flower Guild:** Contact the Parish Office (Tuesday-Thursday 9am-1.00, Friday 9.am-12.00)

**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-Thursday 9am -1.00, Friday 9am-12.00)

**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 Kirsty Beasley (07811 187899).

**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 01453-542565

OLIVER MEMORIAL CHAPEL, in Synwell, Ruth Gibson (Exell) 01453-454593, Lois Etherington 01823 462955

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), June Hawkins 01453 547793 or wendybarber5@yahoo.co.uk

# 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

## **Home Care/Home Help**

Brenda's Home Care.....07899 080309 or b.alway@btopenworld.com

## **Piano Tuning and Repairs**

Eddie Garrard .....07789777008

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

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