



Notes from the Riverbank

The newsletter for St Thomas of Canterbury Church in Goring,
St Mary's Church in Streatley and St Andrew's Church in South Stoke

April 2016 – 27th edition

- All enquiries 01491 875651 or stthomasmaryandrew@gmail.com



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● Welcome to the twenty-seventh edition of "Notes from the Riverbank."

All contributions should be sent to Toria, the editor, by the 17th of each month at the usual email address webcontent.thomandmary@gmail.com. The on-line versions of the calendars are maintained by Glenn Cooke using the same email address. Bookings for the church or Canterbury Room should be made by contacting the UB Parish Secretary Jenny Hall at jandjh2@btinternet.com. We aim to produce the on-line and printed versions of each issue by the 25th of each month.



Pastoral Letter: A whole fifty day season of Easter!

The great fifty days of Eastertide begin on Easter Day and make one big festival. The tone is of joy... a joy first found at the Easter Vigil on Easter Saturday evening as we learn that death has been overcome; Jesus resurrected by the all-powerful God; a tone which we are invited to sustain for seven weeks.

It has been observed that the mood of Lent fits the British temperament rather better than that of Easter. But now we emerge from the Lenten spring-cleaning of our living, trusting our heavenly Father to enable us to live more Christ-like lives, and relishing the eternal hope that is given to his followers by the resurrected Jesus. Early Christians referred to this fifty days of rejoicing as Pentecost. During this period, our services will have a more celebratory tone with a giant Easter candle, repeated "alleluias" and bright white and gold colours.

On the fortieth day of the festival, we recall the ascension of Jesus. We'll gather at South Stoke to celebrate together. Before he ascends to his Father, Jesus commissions his followers to continue his work, promises the gift of his Holy Spirit to empower them and then is no longer present in the flesh. This call to be missionaries is emphasized this year by our Archbishops calling us to pray that we might be more effective in making known our loving God's call to everyone, to trust him with the leadership of our lives.

God longs for everyone to be the very best he has made us capable of being; he tells us that the route to this is to graciously accept the constant help of his Holy Spirit, who came in power at Pentecost. Let us help each other to put aside the things that drag us down, especially grumbles and discord (even at APCM's!), and grow into the wonderful character of Jesus, as God calls us to, for the sake of all.



The Revd. Paul Boughton

From the Vicarage...

● Living through the whole of Easter

Have you ever lived through the whole of Easter? No, not just been alive through an Easter weekend, but put yourself through the emotional roller-coaster of the weekend? That is precisely the purpose of the daily services from Maundy Thursday to Easter Day.



On Maundy Thursday we recall the last supper: Jesus washes his disciples' feet as a sign of serving them and shares a last meal with them. Then, knowing that he has been betrayed to the hateful Jewish authorities, he waits in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying and asking his followers to pray with him. We live through this with Jesus in the 8pm service at South Stoke.



On Good Friday, Jesus is tried on false charges, condemned to death by a judge that allowed crowd pressure to overrule his judgement and then crucified: his death being hugely significant for each one of us. This we will remember on Good Friday, both at the service of Meditation at Goring at 2pm and also at a Family Service at the Lock at 3.15pm. We are left having heard of our Lord, Jesus having died for us.



Saturday is a rather empty day; Jesus has been crucified and once confirmed as dead, taken from the cross and buried. It seems that it's all over. But at 8pm we gather at Goring in anticipation of what we know happened on Easter Day... a service of vigil, into which bursts the light of the resurrection of Jesus.



Easter Day brings the wonderful news of the resurrection of Jesus to a new and eternal life; this is a new life that he invites you and me to share. No wonder that is the greatest celebration we know as Christians. A day when every Christian person is asked to celebrate the very heart of their faith by worshipping God together for his victory over death. In this benefice we will do this in each parish, with the Easter Family Service being held at 11am in Streatley.

If you have yet to "live through the whole of Easter" do seize the opportunity this year. I feel confident that it will affect your faith in God. And if you have "lived through the whole of Easter" before, you already know why we mark every day of the most important weekend in the history of humanity.



Paul Boughton (the vicar)



Thy Kingdom Come

We say this phrase most weeks, maybe every day, but what do we really mean by it? Jesus talked a lot about the Kingdom of God and He calls every person to follow him. As Christians it is our duty and joy to share that invitation. That is why the Archbishops of Canterbury and York are inviting every church in England to join a week of prayer this Pentecost from the 8th to the 15th of May.

Let us pray for every Christian to receive new confidence and joy in sharing this life – transforming faith. We are God's Kingdom on earth. There will be "beacon" services in several cathedrals across the country and our churches are planning special events to help us with our prayer and encourage us to share our faith with our neighbours and friends. Have a look at the website <http://thykingdom.co.uk/> and join in!

If you have any suggestions as to how you think your church should take part, tell your churchwarden. More details next month.



Brenda Kerr Muir, Churchwarden



A floral tribute to the Queen on her 90th birthday

As all of you will know by now, it is the Queen's 90th birthday this year. Her Majesty's official birthday falls over the weekend of 11th/12th June and St Thomas' flower arrangers are planning floral displays to honour the occasion.

In order to finance this venture we have organised a fundraising event on Saturday 16th April at 7pm in the Canterbury Room. *Pate, plonk, puds and poetry* is the title and tickets will be £12 to include a free glass of wine. There will be poems with a royal flavour as well as some that reflect our monarch's special interests. You may well guess what some of those might be!

We have held a poetry evening on a previous occasion and some of you may remember what fun it was. We hope that old friends, and new, will join us on this occasion. Should you be unable to come and would like to make a donation then that would also be very welcome. Tickets are available from Jenny Boyd, and after the Sunday service.



Jenny Boyd, 872109



Cambodia 2016

By the time you read this, Terry and I will be in Cambodia from 20th March until 3rd April. We are going to be working in Tarsha's Legacy Centre (TLC), in the New Happy Village at Koh Kroby near Phnom Penh, where we will be living.

This is one of the villages built by Pastor Sara who heads up the Christian charity *Serve Cambodia*. After the turmoil, genocide, war and destruction that the country

has gone through over the last 40 years, his vision for re-building the country was to build village communities for the thousands of orphaned, displaced and traumatised people. Each village has homes, a church, a medical centre and a school. Terry will be based mostly with the construction team, and I will be leading the teaching/teacher training team. This is the first teaching team to have gone there; a medical team went out earlier in February.

Please pray for us; for good health, quick adaption to the local environment, people and their customs, good relationships between the team and with the local people, for insight, imagination and understanding, and for strength for all we will be doing, especially as it will be very hot (about 40° C). We praise God for this opportunity of service but also know from past experience that having prayer support at home is essential.

 Sue Hookway



Rolls, Reports and Elections

It's that time of year when each Church refreshes its management structure and every member has the opportunity to reflect on the year past and comment on the way the Church is run for the year ahead. First of all you need to be on the Electoral Roll so if you aren't and would like to be, complete a form for your Electoral Roll Officer. There will be a deadline for the form to be in to be eligible to vote so look out for the notice in church.

Each Church Council (PCC) produces a report of the activities in the last year as well as audited accounts. These will be on display in churches shortly. Then there are the Annual Church meetings – the first one is open to everyone who lives in the parish when churchwardens are elected and the second, which is open to Church members, is when the reports are discussed, questions answered and elections are held. The Vicar usually gives a reflection (not a sermon!) on the year past and what the future may hold.

There will be vacancies on the PCCs of all three Churches so why not think about standing for election? You would learn more about what goes on "behind the scenes" and have the opportunity to represent the "view from the pew" as well as acting as a trustee for the Church finances. Each PCC meets in the evening just four times a year. Talk to a current PCC member for more information and pick up a nomination form in church. This could be your opportunity to serve God and His Church in a new way.

2016	St Mary's	Sunday 17 th April after the morning service and coffee
meeting	St Thomas'	Monday 18 th April, 7.30pm for 8 (drinks and nibbles first)
dates	St Andrew's	Sunday 24 th April after the morning service and coffee

 Brenda Kerr Muir, Churchwarden

- We are so grateful to those who have already replied to the Stewardship renewal letter; thank you!
The Revd. Paul Boughton



Christian Aid Week 15th to 21st May

From supporting the fight against famine in Africa, to the helping with the humanitarian efforts taking place for refugees in Greece and Serbia, the charity Christian Aid is working to bring an end to poverty around the world.

This year, Natalie has taken over from Wendy to organise the house-to-house collections across Goring and Streatley. Last year these collections raised over £3000. For this to be successful however she needs volunteers to deliver and collect envelopes from households around the village. You can volunteer to do just a street or two! Every house will help. Contact Natalie at nmalettras@yahoo.co.uk to give her – and Christian Aid – our support this year.



Brenda Kerr Muir, Churchwarden



St Thomas' Church Loop System

After a suggestion that the loop system did not work properly, a check was done over the whole area of the seating and the choir area (although none of the choir are very hard of hearing). The system was measured to be working properly, but for it to be useful, it is necessary to know how to get the best effect.

As the name implies, the system is a simple loop of wire around the whole Church, and the sound system puts a signal into the loop which is picked up by a small aerial in one's hearing aid. For it to work properly, the aerial needs to be lined up with signal, and hearing aids are designed so this happens when the head is upright. If bowed in prayer, contemplation or other reasons, the signal can almost completely disappear. So when the Vicar says "Let us bow our heads in prayer" and you are using the loop system, you can choose whether to follow his instruction, or hear what he is saying.



Peter Purdie



St. Mary's Choir visit to Oxford

One of the advantages of living in Goring and Streatley is that first class music is always accessible in nearby Oxford, and in search of excellence members of St. Mary's Choir travelled there on St. David's Day, 1st March, to hear Evensong sung by New College Choir.

We arrived in time for a leisurely stroll through the grounds to appreciate the historic and rather rarefied atmosphere of the college before taking our places in the candlelit chapel for the service. Under their Director of Music Robert Quinney the choir, which is particularly famed for the tonal quality of its trebles, excelled itself in Herbert Howells' St. John's College Service with Thomas Morley's responses, and an outstanding rendition of the anthem *Almighty God the Fountain of All Wisdom* by Thomas Tomkins. In addition to enjoying the wonderful experience of such a memorable service, we were able to learn much from the choir's diction and

musicality, a little of which we might aspire to bring back with us to St. Mary's! After the service we had a most enjoyable meal together at Cote in George Street.

The choir's next outing is a planned visit on 12th November to Merton College for an organ recital by Olivier Latry, organist at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. Michael, our Musical Director, tells us that the new organ at Merton College is one of the best you can hear, so we are looking forward to an equally memorable experience.

 Mary Scriven



Church Housing Trust

The Church Housing Trust provides funding and support for many projects across the country designed to get homeless people off the streets, initially by providing a hot meal, companionship, and shelter, then arranging accommodation in hostels and care centres. Welcome packs of toiletries and, in some cases, clothes are often given to those experiencing their first moves away from living on the streets.

Launched in 2013, *Street Buddies* is another project funded by the Church Housing Trust. A team of volunteers, all having past experience of homelessness, approach rough sleepers to gain their confidence to accept the advice and support they need to transform their lives.

Please help this vital work to continue by contributing to the special collection on 10th April. Thank you.

 Norma Bryant



Friends of Music at Goring



The first lunchtime recital in our 2016 series will be on Wednesday 13th April at 1pm in St. Thomas' Church, and will be given by Sarah Bennett (flute) and Daniel King Smith (piano).

Sarah studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music where she recently completed a master's degree in performance. She has played as Principal Flute with many leading orchestras. Sarah will be playing sonatas by Bach and Cesar Franck and other works.

Tickets £12 at the door, or £10 in advance from Inspirations in The Arcade, Goring, or by contacting Nigel Fountain.

 Joan and Nigel Fountain, 873341



A happy, healthy and peaceful Easter to all Riverbank readers!