

The Benefice of Gloucester St George with Whaddon

# St Margaret of Scotland, Whaddon

*Worshipping, Caring, Pioneering ...*

## Newsletter for Lent and Easter 2019



Dear Friends

### Underpinning the porch



**Jonathan points out one of the cracks on the porch**

Our major repair works are not quite finished (are they ever?!). The porch outer wall has been on the move for some years, and large cracks have developed up the junctions with the side walls. Our structural engineer, Sinclair Johnston, visited before Christmas, and said without hesitation that underpinning is essential, and urgent. Sinclair's preference is always for minimum intervention, so his judgment in this case cannot be ignored. Waiting and watching is not the answer this time.

The first job is a detailed investigation of foundations and soil conditions using trial pits to be dug archaeologically. The exact extent of the underpinning can then be agreed. Once this work is done, we can attend to the repair and re-limewashing of the plaster in the porch.

### A Churchyard Service

How many people visit the churchyard each year? The comings and goings are frequent and there is usually someone tending a grave, or perhaps just sitting quietly in the peace of God's Acre. We are planning a special Churchyard Service later this summer or early autumn, for our churchyard users. It will be outdoors if the weather is kind, and the style will be informal. More details soon.

### Readings and Intercessions Rota

That sounds rather grand for a small congregation like ours, but we now have a group of people to share the work - or rather, the privilege - of reading the lessons and leading prayers at St Margaret's. Pete and Lorraine Best, Rosie Clifford, Derek England and Jenny Watts have all joined Jilly Ponter, Mike Mumby and Jonathan MacKechnie-Jarvis, who for some years have covered these duties. So yes, we now have a rota, and bearing in mind that in years past the Vicar would have done all this, perhaps this is the first time we have needed one at St Margaret's. Long may it continue, and of course, new names are always welcome.

## **Candlelit Carol service 2018 and onwards**

Once again we had a capacity congregation for our candlelit carol service. Our thanks go to all who made it possible: our readers, Paula Rix and the St George's singers, Dave Trigg our fire-watcher, those who decorated the church, lit the candles, welcomed the people and cleared up afterwards. And perhaps most of all to the people who took the trouble to come, to welcome Jesus once again and to sing the lovely carols.

As in previous years, it was a real squash at the back of the church and we are wondering about a few changes this Christmas. It might be possible to have a family seating area in the chancel, perhaps with the priest's door unlocked in case people need to get out for the loo.

We also plan to have a new carol booklet in use for next Christmas as there are now not enough to go round. This will give the opportunity to drop some carols which are never used and add a few new ones.

## **Easter services**

From Christmas to Easter .... we will have an all-age service at 10am on Palm Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April. On Easter Eve is our Service of Light at 8.30pm, and on Easter morning Holy Communion at 9 and Family Praise at 10.30. Full details of all services in the benefice are on the website – see below.

## **New Housing**

Work started last December on the 300 or so new houses on the south side of Grange Road. This is the first large-scale development in the present (very small) ecclesiastical parish of Whaddon, and will hugely increase the number of people who actually live in the parish. We are planning ways of reaching out to the families who will be moving in. Whatever one thinks about the effect of the housing on the landscape and on existing infrastructure, this is a pastoral opportunity which we cannot ignore.



**Groundworks for new housing to south of Grange Road, March 2019**

## **Union of parishes**

St Margaret's and St George's parishes have been formally linked as a united benefice since 1983. The PCCs have for the last year been meeting on a united basis, and this arrangement has worked well. We have recently considered moving forward to a full amalgamation as a united parish, but on a vote, it was found that there was not a unanimous view, and the decision has been taken not to pursue this at the moment.

This does leave us with a problem, however, as we have barely enough people prepared to serve as PCC members, and to fill the various essential parish officer positions. We thank God for the arrival of several new members in our congregation at St Margaret's but our future viability depends on successors to the present office holders and/or possibly a successful scheme of union of the parishes.

**Stop Press – see next page ...**

## Stop Press...Welcome!

At our Annual Parochial Church Meeting, on 9<sup>th</sup> April, Mike Smith was elected to the PCC: our first completely new member for some years. Mike's involvement with St Margaret's and indeed St George's goes back many years. More recently, Mike and Nuala were married at St Margaret's in February, and are regular worshippers.

Also Pete and Lorraine Best have agreed to join the PCC. They have been worshipping regularly at St Margaret's for two and a half years, and are much involved in the life of both our parishes. Last but not least, Hans Rackham has been elected as a churchwarden alongside Jonathan. **Thank you** to all of you for agreeing to serve.

## St Margaret's Festival – October 2018

Our Festival was a great success, thanks to the many who helped and indeed to those who supported the various events. One legacy of the Festival was the research done on Whaddon's history, especially the development of Lower Tuffley (once part of our parish) and the temporary churches at St George's. We will have a display of old pictures at the Tuffley Festival on 6<sup>th</sup> July, at the Tuffley Rovers ground.



This picture from 1942 shows the dedication of the former Whaddon Mission Room (originally opposite the junction of Grange Road and Stroud Road) in its new guise as the first and temporary St George's church and hall. Bishop Headlam is wearing a pectoral cross and at the back on the left is Evelyn Chaloner, (see detail) wearing a black pillbox hat and looking austere, as she so often did! We owe her a great deal – without



**Yes, that is definitely Evelyn at the back on the left! Can anyone identify the other girls?**

her legacy to use as a capital base, our reroofing probably wouldn't have happened.



**The Wynstones Michaelmas Dragon enters the churchyard  
1<sup>st</sup> October 2018**

One feature of the Festival which will, we hope, become an annual event. Wynstones School had a Michaelmas procession into the churchyard, with much music and symbolism. The smaller children formed a long 'dragon' snaking its way round the church, and one of the older students stood on the tower top as St Michael, quelling the forces of darkness below. Our picture shows the arrival of the dragon, and incidentally the tent, which proved its worth during the Festival week.

## How you can help us sustain the life and work of St Margaret's

Please remember St Margaret's in your prayers, asking God for his blessing on all that we do in His name. Please pray especially for Helen McGeoch, our Pioneer Minister, who is doing great work in the schools and in the wider community of Tuffley. We are always hoping and praying for new members. We need to know what forms and times of worship people find most helpful. If our services are not right for you, please say what you would prefer.

We always need help with the cost of maintaining the building, the churchyard and our ministry. The best way is by standing order, which helps us to budget and makes tax reclaim easier. But any type of giving is welcome. You may wish to consider a legacy – please ask if you need advice about how to do this.

## Thank you for your help and support.

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**Website for St George's and St Margaret's:** <http://www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk>

**NB:** you can download our monthly magazine Crossroads on the website

## Normal Service Times

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	10.30 am	Family Praise
	5.00 pm	Evensong
2 <sup>nd</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	9.00 am	Sung communion
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	5.00 pm	Evensong
Thursdays	10.30 am	Holy Communion

