

The Benefice of Gloucester St George with Whaddon

St Margaret of Scotland, Whaddon

Worshipping, Caring, Pioneering ...

Newsletter for Autumn 2022

We're having quite a busy period at St Margaret's, with lots to report...

Open days September 9th and 10th

The church will be open on Friday and Saturday, 9th and 10th September, which ties in both with the national Heritage Open Days, and with the Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust Ride+Stride day. Thanks to the initiative of Georgina Wood, our PCC secretary, there will be a range of special attractions and activities, and we hope we will welcome first time visitors, for example from Yew Tree Gardens, the new housing development off Grange Road, a short way west of the church.



Teddy Bears Picnic



On 4th August, we hosted a teddy bears picnic, complete with zip wire from the tower top. Scores of intrepid teds rose to the challenge, and a good time was had by all. We made a big effort on the PR side, and were rewarded with a very encouraging turnout. You will find a full account in the September Crossroads.

The very first ted to make the zip-wire descent at a pre-TBP trial session

Wynstones School

Sadly, efforts to reopen the School have come to nothing, and the site is to be sold for housing. Nearly 50 homes could be built on the nine acre site. From our point of view it is rather worrying, because for many years we have been able to use the school car park for large services such as weddings, funerals and the Candlelit Carols. We will work with the planners and the developers to see if something can be arranged for community parking.

Whaddon Fields

Still on the theme of housing, the massive development proposed for Whaddon Fields has not gone away. There is nothing decisive to report, but we are following the process closely, as there will obviously be massive implications for the local environment and for the future work of our church.

Family Praise

In September, Family Praise will have a new start, moving to 4.00pm on the second Sunday of the month. We believe this will help families, many of whom are involved with sport activities on a Sunday morning. It will also mean that our parish priest will be able to take part. The 10.30 Sunday morning slot, which has operated since 1996, has always clashed with the main service at St George's.

Christmas

An advance note that our Carol services will take place on Thursday 15th December and Tuesday 20th December at 7.00pm. We have decided to keep going with two successive events: this started for Covid reasons, but seems to make quite a lot of sense, avoiding a crush at the back of the church, and making it easier to talk to people before and after the service.

There will be no need to book. We cannot predict how many will come but probably the service on Thursday 15th will have more elbow room. Parking will be at the Wynstones car park as in previous years, but see the note above - who can say what will happen in future years?

Thursdays at 1030

The Thursday service has continued to flourish in its own special way. As mentioned in our last newsletter, the congregation usually equals or exceeds our Sunday attendance. Rachel, her husband Paul, and Jonathan and Lorraine each take it in turns to offer a short reflection on the readings. It's a very special atmosphere and much appreciated by those who come.

Churchyard news

This year we have embarked on a new style of maintenance for the churchyard.

Partly this was forced on us because it was clear that our mowing costs were going to increase sharply following the retirement of our previous contractor. However, we are also keen to find ways of encouraging wildlife within the churchyard. This first season has been very much a time of experiment and, predictably, quite a few people have been unhappy about the change. Others have welcomed the remarkable show of wildflowers and insect life.



A pyramidal orchid in the churchyard, Spring 2022

We have been encouraged by the support of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, and of the Gloucester diocese. Following their advice, we will in future be concentrating our efforts on the bottom end of the churchyard, where the flowers and wildlife have been at their best, and where there are few tended graves. This land is a rare bit of "unimproved pasture", having been acquired as a churchyard extension about 1920. The representatives of the Wildlife Trust were very pleasantly surprised at the wealth of flora appearing in just one season without regular mowing – so watch this space!



Wildflowers and a Meadow Brown in the churchyard, Spring 2022

A general view of the Teddy Bears Picnic on 4th August



And just a few of the remarkably diverse teds who braved the wire ...



St Margaret's is proud to be part of ...



Thank you for your help and support and your prayers, which mean a great deal to us.

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

NB: you can see our monthly magazine Crossroads on the website, and full details of services and other activities,

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