

# CROSSROADS

The magazine for  
**St George's Tuffley and St Margaret's Whaddon**

**Worshipping, Caring, Pioneering**



## **ST GEORGE'S**

**Sunday**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday**  
**Tuesday**  
**Thursday**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday**

**Parish Communion at 10.30am**  
**(with prayers for healing)**  
**Parish Communion at 9.30am**  
**Morning Prayer at 8.15am**  
**Messy Church at 10.00am**

## **ST MARGARET'S**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday**  
  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday**  
**Thursday**

**Family Praise at 10.30am and**  
**Evensong at 5.00pm**  
**(with prayers for healing)**  
**Parish Communion at 9.00am**  
**Evensong at 5.00pm**  
**Parish Communion at 9.00am**  
**Parish Communion at 10.30am**

**WEBSITE**

**FACEBOOK:**

**REFRESH**

[www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk](http://www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk)

**St. George's, Tuffley and St Margaret's Whaddon**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 7.30pm (Venue varies)**

**FEBRUARY 2020**

**50p**

**ST GEORGE'S TUFFLEY  
WITH ST MARGARET'S WHADDON**

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## **OUR VICAR WRITES...**

Dear friends

### **The Rudder and the Tongue**

Powerful forces are at work today. Some we see, like the violent strike of a drone or a knife used as a weapon that unleashes untold repercussions. Other forces we don't see, but we do feel the impact, like the wind that pushes down a tree.

Maybe the most powerful force around is hidden in the human heart. Our thoughts drive all we do and all we say, both for good and ill. How shall we use our power for good? How to prevent our power spreading evil?

If we're honest, I reckon we'll recognise that we can't control our thoughts; though we can control what we do with them. How's that? With God's help.

For example, the New Testament letter of James likens our tongue to a ship's rudder. A massive ship is thrust by huge engines; but steered through a small rudder. And so, our lives are directed through our words, spoken or written or tweeted even...

As we invite God to take the helm of our lives this year, we can trust him to steer us through every challenge we face, and to bless and not curse others along the way, till we reach our glorious destination.

This is my New Year's resolution: to take my hands off the tiller and let God have his hands on.

I wonder – what's yours?

*Lord, help us to tame our tongues, so our words will bless and not curse, encourage and not deflate, lift up and not put down. Amen*

God bless us all.

**BRUCE**

## **FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS**

Our sympathies to the families and friends of:

Alan Halling RIP  
Ronald Muggleton RIP  
Eva Sparey RIP  
William Andrews RIP  
Patricia Weaver RIP  
Darren Beale RIP

## **ST GEORGE'S DAY CENTRE**

Every Thursday  
10.30am until 2.30pm



If you are lonely and would like to meet new friends  
then come along and join us!

A hot meal is available and transport can be  
arranged, subject to a waiting list

Contact Hans Rackham on 528939



## **FEBRUARY RIDDLE-ME-REE**

1 You can touch me, you can break me, you should win me if you want to be mine. What am I?

2 Always in you, sometimes on you; if I surround you, I can kill you. What am I?

## **MY FRIEND EVA**

A memory by Jill Ponter

I can remember as a very small child taking a message to my friend, Margaret Todd's mum, I must have been about 3 years old. My mum would write a message on a piece of paper, put it in a little purse, give it to me so that I could go down the road and deliver it. Mum would watch me go down the road and wait for one of Mrs Todd's girls to bring me back. It was usually Margaret that brought me back, but on my way down the road I would sometimes see Mrs Wally going across the road to the shops. All of us kids used to call Wally Sparey, Mr Wally as we couldn't remember Mr Sparey. Eva was for a long time Mrs Wally, she was always by Wally's side, but so busy in the garden. She wasn't good at housework as she told Margaret and I some years later, but to us children she was the best!

Wally had a sit up and beg bike, he had put a child's seat on the crossbar so children could have a ride when we saw him. Now being the kind of kid I was I would go down the road to Mrs Todd's, deliver the message, then go round to 121 Tuffley Lane; I would slap the door of the house and when Eva came to the door I would ask her if Mr Wally could come out to play. Of course if he could, perhaps I could have a bike ride. If I was lucky Eva would take me back to my home, mum always told her to send me home if I was a nuisance, but I kept going and knocking on the door to ask for Mr Wally.

Eva was always a big part of the lives of all the children who live in Lower Tuffley as well as Wally; but Wally's sudden death was a shock to the whole family. My brother, David, worked for British Rail and came home and told mum and dad, he said that he died of a heart attack.

My mum went down to Eva's that day and told her that if she needed anything at all she could always come to 14 Randwick Road; and if she needed anyone to talk to mum was a good listener.

Eva became another member of the Cohen's Café; it was always open house and as usual me and Margaret were the number one washeruppers. Eva very rarely came during the week but would come on Saturday afternoons, on the pretext that the Community Council needed someone to take notes. Our front room, for a while, was the Community Centre meeting room; that was the Centre in Tuffley Lane of which Wally and Eva were members. My mum was chief tea and coffee maker on those occasions.

As we grew up Eva became increasingly more independent and mum would often tell her to slow down. Eva said that she had lots to do and wanted to see as much of her family as she could, but mum said to her that she was always welcome at number 14.

After the death of my own father, mum and Eva became closer; they would often commiserate about life, but their friendship never waivered. They would get together and talk about their husbands, their pets and which of the two was easier to control; there was much laughter between the two of them.

As Eva got older, mum told her not to keep gallivanting about to see the family as it was getting too much for her. Mum told her that her family would understand; and they did. So that Easter and Christmas we had Eva with us, we used to go down to her house when she was having a fundraiser for the Children's Society. She would ask Margaret to bake a cake or two, in order that she had something to offer those who came along. Guess who had the rubber gloves and pinafores on, yes me and my friend Dianne Baker. We always made sure that everything was put away properly, but we had a giggle because often we didn't know where things went, so we put things where we thought they should go. Eva would ring my mum to ask if she knew where we had put such and such; mum told me to go around to Eva's and show her where the things were put. I never got away without having a long chat and a coffee.

The best of all was having Eva to Sunday Lunch two of three times each month, she was always a very welcome guest as are Pauline Deeley and Dianne Baker. Eva would tell how she got to know the Cohen clan after moving to Tuffley Lane; and she remembered the Mrs Wally bit too. Eva would talk about Wally and their life together, about her sisters and their families. Eva's niece, Dianne, was one of her favourites and they kept in touch by phone; but as Eva became more and more fragile, we worried about her constantly and at the age of 101, Eva went into Chestnut Court. We visited her often and Eva was so glad to see us. We would take a packet of biscuits or some sweets, just as a little treat. After a while Eva was spending more and more time in bed asleep.

We told Dianne that we hadn't visited for a couple of weeks as she was sleeping most of the time. In the end it was a happy release for Eva when she died.

Eva was the kindest and most loving of friends and is sorely missed by everyone. So that my friends, is just a bit of my memories of Mrs Eva Sparey; Eva will, forever, be in my thoughts and prayers, so goodbye Eva and God bless.

## **SOUL SPACE**

A new worship opportunity has already started: -

- ✓ for all ages
- ✓ Second Sunday of each month
- ✓ Afternoon (3.30pm)
- ✓ Food too
- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Next Soul Space is at St George's on February 9

Just come along and enjoy!

(For more information, contact Helen)



## **LET US ENTERTAIN YOU THIS CHRISTMAS**

Many, many thanks to all who supported this variety show in December. We were entertained terrifically with song, monologues, poetry and humour. Everyone that I have spoken to enjoyed themselves and I have been asked to arrange another this year, when that will be; I'm not sure yet but I'll keep you informed. So please look out that song, poem or monologue that you would like to perform to a willing audience and let me know once I have decided when the next show will be. I was able to pay over to St George's Treasurer, David, £305 from the evening; so that result made everything so worthwhile. Thank you to Linda and Jayne for donating the supper, to Hans for being my sound engineer for the evening and Glenda for selling the show and raffle tickets. I couldn't have done it without you all.

**DARRELL**



We're delighted to be hosting 'Alpha' for Tuffley again. This is a great opportunity to listen, discuss if you want to, or just sit back and learn more about the Christian faith – with a nice meal – and it's all free!

This year it's WEEKLY (not monthly) on Monday evenings from 7.00pm at English Martyrs on Tuffley Lane, starting Monday 13 January until Monday 24 February. Further details from Helen our Pioneer.

### **ST GEORGE'S COFFEE POT**

EVERY Tuesday morning from 9.00am until 11.00am  
St George's Centre, Grange Road, Tuffley

Hot drinks and food available until 10.30am

If good company, conversation and refreshments are just the ticket for you, then come along and bring a friend!

We are desperate for help to lay up tables on a Monday and to put things away after Coffee Pot on a Tuesday if you can spare some time please speak to Mike Brammer or our Vicar ASAP



### **YOUR CHURCH LEADERSHIP NEEDS YOU!**

Our 'annual meetings' come up in April. This is the time we elect our Parish Church Councils and our Churchwardens. Please be on the look-out for people you may like to nominate for the privilege and responsibility of sharing the leadership of our churches in this way. And consider humbly and honestly whether you yourself might be willing to step up to the plate! And most of all, please keep the matter in your prayers.

Thank you



## **MESSAGE FROM GLORIA AND BRUSE WIGGALL**

For many years Bruce and I have visited Eileen. After leaving Tuffley we used to visit her at her son's home near Eastcombe. Then with aging she needed a little more care so Eileen is now at Scarlet House, Cainscross, near Stroud. We visit her when we can, she is very with it and always wants an update on the two churches and the folk. Eileen always wants to know about Jonathan M J and always likes to show us her pictures of the church. She sends her best wishes and love for 2020.

I also keep in touch with Roger who writes to me with a gift for St Margaret's. I am sure that all who remember him wish him a happy 2020 and would thank him for the gift.

Happy 2020 to you all, love Gloria Wiggall

## **CHURCH CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS**

Many readers will have noticed, we have bright new double-glazed windows and doors to cheer our spirits and warm our bodies! The replacement windows and doors have been fully funded and we are very grateful for the grants and donations that we have received so far.

Soon we'll see the grey walls outside painted too.

Then we move inside to address the toilets. We're looking to refurbish them as an attractive asset for you and all who use the centre for many years to come. This part of the refurbishment project will cost in the region of £20,000; we already have some funds for this and we're hoping to cover a significant part of the shortfall through present centre funds plus grants and generous gifts; but we're not there yet. Are you able to help? All contributions will be received most gratefully by our treasurer!

**ST MARGARET'S Annual Parish Church Meeting (APCM)  
4.00pm TUESDAY 31 MARCH 2020 in the vicarage**

**ST GEORGE'S Annual Parish Church Meeting  
12.00noon SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2020 in the church**

Everyone is welcome, to come hear about the past year and take part in discussion on directions for the next year.

If you're on the church's register of electors you can also vote for your representatives for the coming year.

If you normally write a report for St George's APCM would you please prepare it NOW and send it to Glenda as soon as possible.

Emailed documents would be preferred; if your report has to be hand written please let Glenda have it immediately in order that she can process it for the Annual Report and Accounts pack

Remember your report covers the period 1 JANUARY TO 31 DECEMBER 2019 only.

The deadline for ALL reports is SUNDAY 8 MARCH; your report will not appear in the report pack if it is received after this date.

Many thanks  
DARRELL

*There are occasionally changes to the weekly timetable so please refer to our weekly newsletter for details of any changes. Crossroads and our weekly newsletter are now available for free on our website: -*

***[www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk](http://www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk)***



In order to have your  
**MARCH CROSSROADS**  
ready for publication on Sunday 23 February 2020

ARTICLES NEED TO BE IN THE EDITORS' HANDS  
OR IN OUR EMAIL INBOX BEFORE, BUT NO LATER THAN

**THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY**

The earlier you can get your articles to the Editors  
the greater chance of getting it published

Thank you for your help in this matter

**SATURDAY 29 FEBRUARY is our Tuffley Prayer Day!**

A day to celebrate God's love and grace on us.

And a day to bring the needs of all the community to God.

Whatever your experience or your tradition of prayer – including if you've never consciously prayed before - please come!

There'll be quiet spaces, inspirational spaces, and some led prayers: come and share as much or as little as you're able; but come!

We want this to be a community-wide coming to God in joyful prayer and thanksgiving and petition. Who knows what God will do among us next?

More details later on our website, Facebook page, and weekly news.

*"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which is far beyond all human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4)*

The logo features the text "The Gospel Truth QUIZ" in a stylized font. "The" is in a small serif font above "Gospel". "Gospel" is in a large, bold, sans-serif font. "Truth" is in a smaller, regular sans-serif font below "Gospel". "QUIZ" is in a large, bold, italicized sans-serif font to the right of "Truth". The entire text is set against a dark grey background with a torn paper edge effect.

Questions based on the Gospel readings for December

1 For as the days of N\_\_\_ were so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Whose name is missing from this scripture?

2 Then t\_\_ will be in the field, o\_\_ will be taken and o\_\_ will be left. What are the missing words?

3 "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven has come near." Who spoke these words?

4 "Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor." To whom were these words addressed?

5 "the b\_\_\_ receive their sight, the l\_\_\_ walk, the l\_\_\_ are cleansed, the d\_\_\_ hear, the d\_\_\_ are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them." Can you fill in the missing words?

6 "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater." Of whom is Jesus speaking?

7 Mary was found, "to be with child." Joseph was unwilling to expose Mary to public disgrace. What action was he contemplating?

8 Isaiah wrote; "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel" This scripture is found in Isaiah chapter \_\_\_ verse \_\_\_?

9 Now after the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord gave Joseph a message, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt.' How was this message conveyed to Joseph?

10 When Joseph returned from Egypt with the family he went straight to Nazareth rather than Judea. Whose son was Joseph seeking to avoid?

*The answers to this month's Bible Quiz  
can be found later in this issue of Crossroads*

## **FROM THE TWO LAST JOINT PCC MEETINGS...**

At their recent meetings on 16th September and 11th December the joint Parochial Church Councils of St George's and St Margaret's discussed and agreed the following:

For St George's church

A commemorative wall plaque by the Te Deum window in memory of Dinah Freke

To replace the solar panel inverter if required, the cost being added to the Diocese's existing loan.

To update the inventory, including Smartwater marking.

To hold a new Sunday afternoon worship session for all ages once a month from January. Helen to coordinate.

For the Church Centre

To replace the windows and doors (now complete!) and to paint the outside. To improve the toilets.

To improve access by making provision for swift exit for wheelchair users

To investigate the purchasing of a defibrillator. Contact has been made with the South West Ambulance Service.

To work around existing bookings should Messy Church choose to use the main hall

for St Margaret's

To continue to pursue costings for the possible underpinning of the porch  
Bishop Robert and a team of curates will be coming for a weekend in April as 'partners in mission'. Members were invited to join the planning group.

Care and Discipleship

The pastoral team are keen to hear of those who would value a visit, or from those who would like to join the team. Co-ordinator, Linda Medwell, has arranged for someone from Mind to come and talk about mental health on 6th February 2020. PCC members who have yet to attend safeguarding training were encouraged either to book onto a Diocesan course or to complete an on-line course which those without additional responsibility can choose to take.

Sub-committees

Bruce encouraged each sub-committee to identify one key priority and to choose achievable goals for the year ahead.

Finances and funding.

St George's: We thank God and all involved that regular giving has risen now covering 75% of the shortfall required to meet the outgoings. The proposed budget for 2020 was agreed.

St Margaret's: Finances look healthy, though the cost to underpin the porch is unknown. The proposed budget for 2020 was agreed.

Parish share: Members were unanimous in their support for the Treasurers to negotiate a change in this year's parish share rising to a maximum increase in line with inflation.

Benefice events: The two treasurers presented a draft template to help track income and expenditure. They proposed that all event organisers trial it, giving completed sheets and monies to the Treasurer. It was passed unanimously by both PCCs.

Both parishes are pleased to jointly contribute to a gift of £150 for Paula Rix's first year of training to be a Reader.

The Diocese is thinking differently and consulting on the way Deaneries operate.

Full draft minutes are available at the back of each church. They are subject to approval at the next meeting.

## PETER'S FEBRUARY POSERS

1. Which ancestor of Noah is also the name of an oversized Champagne bottle that holds six litres?
2. Which Apollo 11 astronaut did not set foot on the moon?
3. FC Liverpool's signature song 'You'll Never Walk Alone' stems from which musical?
4. Which cocktail, named after a city, was invented by the Raffles Hotel barkeeper Ngiam Tong Boon in 1915?
5. Spats Columbo is the bad guy in which popular black and white film?
6. Which James Bond theme song that starts with the words "Meeting you" was the only 007 theme song to reach number one in the US charts?
7. Which national team introduced 'Total Football' at the 1974 FIFA World Cup in Germany?
8. According to legend, which man rode horses named Llamrei, Hengroen and Passelande?
9. What is the Greek word for fire?
10. What are the five boroughs in New York City?

## **ANSWERS TO PETER'S CHRISTMAS POSERS**

1 Oh the weather outside is frightful: 2 O Come, All Ye Faithful: 3 Figgy pudding: 4 Ding Dong Merrily on High: 5 Six types of birds: Partridge, Turtle Doves, French Hens, Calling Birds, Geese, and Swans: 6 Newborn King: 7 The Christmas Song: 8 God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen: 9 O Little Town of Bethlehem: 10 Little Drummer Boy



Back in December we were privileged to a one man performance of 'Orienteering' by local poet and storyteller Charlie Markwick. This was a very poignant and moving personal telling of navigating the journey of Dementia as he cared for his wife Molly. And at the end of the month, Charlie returned as Santa to delight youngsters with his seasonal tales from the North Pole! How lucky we are to have such wonderful volunteers helping and supporting our library work and it shows just how versatile libraries are becoming in addressing some very important issues.

As we approach the coldest time of the year make sure you are well stocked up with a good supply of cosy reading or audio books as an alternative to TV evenings! If what you specifically want isn't on our shelves, we can order it in from another library in the county and this takes only about a week.

For those who do brave wintry weather, our library is always well heated and toasty warm! You could bring your own device and use our free Wi-Fi and stay all day if you wish! You will always be made welcome at any of the several groups who use the space. Our very own Library Club is a place to chat over a cuppa and make friends. It is very informal and welcoming, and you don't even have to be a reader, but you might become one! Our Life Changes group for those 55+ is a supportive environment for those experiencing change in their lives, perhaps through illness or bereavement.

Anyone new to the area would be very welcome at these groups as well as at our regular knitting and computer clubs for all levels and abilities. So, keep warm and we hope to see you all soon!

### MARGARET AND STEVE

Library Club: First Monday of the Month from 10.00am until 12.00noon

Life Changes: Every Thursday from 2.00pm until 3.30pm

Knit 'n Natter: Every Monday from 2.00pm until 3.30pm

Computer Club: Every Thursday from 11.00am until 1.00pm



### BOOKSHELF

Ash Wednesday is on 26 February so it's time to choose what you would like to read during Lent 2020. Here are details of some new books.

The Bible Reading Fellowship's Lent book for 2020 is "You Are Mine" by David Walker. David Walker explores different aspects of human belonging through the medium of scripture and story in order to help us recognise the different ways in which we are God's beloved. And as we recognise ourselves and our own lives in the narrative of God's engagement with humanity and his creation, he gently challenges us to engage for God's sake with God's world.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book is "Saying Yes to Life" by Ruth Valerio. This book lifts our focus from every day (and perfectly natural) concerns to issues that are impacting millions of lives around the world. As people made in the image of God, we are entrusted to look after what God has made - to share in the joy and creativity of God in making a difference for good. Ruth Valerio imaginatively draws on the Days of Creation (Genesis 1 - 2.2) in relating themes of light, water, land, the seasons, other creatures, humankind, Sabbath rest and resurrection hope to matters of environmental, ethical and social concern.

As a collection of 66 books spanning thousands of years, the Bible can be daunting in size and scope. In "The Heart of It All", the Canterbury Press



Lent book for 2020, Samuel Wells simplifies the Bible's complexity and presents the entire sweep of its narrative in eighteen key themes. Although its contents range from history to poetry, law, narrative, letters and even apocalyptic literature, at the Bible's heart are relationships between God, creation, Jesus, the Church, the Spirit and the Kingdom. Samuel Wells argues that this provides a lens through which the whole Bible can be understood.

Life often feels like a rough journey along a challenging road, especially in our own turbulent times. "Soul Journey" by Margaret Silf invites us to risk a spiritual journey, guided by wisdom derived from scripture, to help us find the way, encourage, warn and challenge us, and keep us focused on our destiny to become the person - and the people - God is dreaming us to be. "Soul Journey" covers forty days (plus six 'reflection' days for Sundays) along the road towards the best human beings we can become, guided by characters, incidents and interactions drawn from both the Old and New Testaments.

"The Grace-filled Wilderness" by Magdalen Smith connects contemporary encounters of wilderness with the traditional themes of Lent and Jesus' journey to the cross. It concentrates on 'double-edged' subjects, which bring us life as well as potentially drain life from us when we fall into them in the wrong way. How we deal with our appetites; what gives us identity; how to live with the freedom and power we hold; ways to overcome the underlying anxiety which is wrapped around so much of contemporary life and faith - all of these are explored.

There will also be a table with many more books which are particularly suitable for reading during Lent. Some of these are designed to be read a few pages daily.

SARAH KINGSCOTE

**RED RIDING HOOD**  
**Friday 21 February at 7.30pm**  
**Saturday 22 February at 2.30pm**  
**and at 7.30pm**



A St George's Entertainers' production  
This production will support James Hopkins Trust  
Bar and raffle as always...

Fun for all the family

Tickets are £5.00 for adults and £3.00 for children  
Tickets available from Glenda and Darrell

Ring the Church Office on 01452 307456 to book your tickets now

**GOSPEL TRUTH BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS**

1 Noah: 2 two, one, one: 3 John the Baptist: 4 The Pharisees & Sadducees:  
5 blind, lame, lepers, deaf, dead: 6 John the Baptist: 7 dismiss her quietly:  
8 Isaiah 7:14: 9 In a dream: 10 Herod's son (Archelaus):



**Get involved with a Lent Group this year  
See Bruce or sign up at the back of church**

# Getting *to Know You*

## **STUART AND STELLA MITCHELL**



*Stuart and Stella Mitchell began married life in Nigeria living there during the Biafran civil war. Stuart's work brought them to Tuffley in 1976. Worshipping at St George's, they are part of the Singing Group, Messy Church and Pastoral care teams. Stella is also seen serving coffee on a Sunday morning, while Stuart serves on the PCC.*

### **Early years**

Born in Maids Moreton, a village just outside Buckingham, into a close-knit family, Stella's early years were settled and secure. Her father who worked in an electrical shop was well-known in the town and very skilled at repairing electrical equipment. Her brother was five years younger than her. She was baptised and confirmed and attended St Edmund's church, a building which is very much like St Margaret's, here in Whaddon. Stella's school was only a short cycle ride away in Buckingham. In school holidays Stella would often stay with her grandmother, a seamstress, who taught her how to sew, a skill which Stella has put to good use over the years. Good with her hands, quiet by nature, Stella enjoyed English and art; maths and

science were more of a challenge. She'd always had in mind to be a teacher - but was thwarted when she failed Maths 'O' level and decided to leave school to take a secretarial course.

Meanwhile Stuart was growing up in Plymouth where his father was a shipwright in the Dockyard. Born to older parents he grew up as an only child as his stepsister was much older and had left home. Stuart describes his childhood as "uneventful". Stuart learned to read from an early age and devoured books, getting special permission from his school for the library to lend him extra books. His first choice at four years old was Kipling's "the Jungle Book".

He attended the school just down the road, run by Roman Catholic nuns. It was a good place to learn and Stuart did well, winning a scholarship to Plymouth College at eleven. The school was very academic, keen on sport, with tough discipline and brutal corporal punishment. Good at science, Stuart gained three A levels despite doing little work, finding the teaching very formal and no fun.

Whilst there, his parents' health failed, his mother died when he was thirteen, his father becoming disabled though pernicious anaemia and was forced to give up work. As a consequence; there was little money in the household so although Stuart would have liked to have become a doctor, that was out of the question.

### **London beckons**

Stuart's family circumstances resulted in his becoming self-reliant from an early age, taking himself off to fish, and to explore Dartmoor and the nearby coast by bike. Any plans for the future came to a sudden halt when just after leaving school he was badly injured in an accident on his motor bike, requiring him to be on crutches for many months unable to make job applications.

With his damaged knee healed, Stuart successfully applied for a role as a student pathology technician in London. Finding digs in north London he began a journey that would eventually take him to travel the world - and move to Tuffley. He loved the work, studying at night however the pay at £6 per week made life difficult and Stuart thought he could do better. And so, he could...

Glaxo Laboratories offered him a post as a laboratory scientist in Greenford at more than double the pay. He joined a team which was developing vaccines against measles, mumps and influenza. He was one of a group of five, responsible for developing the first measles vaccine sold in the UK, a huge achievement. It was a stimulating environment, with good colleagues and enabling Stuart to gain qualifications in Medical Virology and Bacteriology. Meanwhile he had found a better place to live and a caring landlady who looked after him as her own son. One day however when warming his room, she placed an oil heater too close to the bedclothes. Stuart came home to find his room on fire. He lost everything – clothes, papers including his birth certificate.

Stella had found work as a secretary in her hometown but after a year or two decided to widen her horizons by finding a post in London. Initially staying with relatives before lodging at the YWCA, where she met and made friends with girls from other countries and cultures and eventually shared a flat. Stella and Stuart met through friends and it wasn't long before Stella would be watching Stuart play hockey for his company team on Saturday afternoons. Engagement followed and thoughts turned to finding somewhere they might live...

### **Marriage and a move abroad**

Meanwhile, back with Glaxo Stuart learned of the firm's intention to move the plant and the workforce to Speke in Cheshire. He was not inclined to join them and began the hunt for another job, applying to the Ministry of Overseas Development interested in a fixed term post in Iran. At interview he was surprised to be asked whether he was prepared to work in a war zone. All became clear when he was offered, not the post in Iran, but one in Nigeria, at that time torn by the Biafran civil war. His job was to be re-establishing veterinary vaccine production required in the country and in West Africa which had been disrupted by the war.

Stuart and Stella were therefore looking at a move to a rural unsettled country, a new job and a wedding to organise in six weeks. Not for the faint-hearted...

*(To be continued: Read about Stuart and Stella's spell in Nigeria and their move to Tuffley in March's Crossroads)*

## **RIDDLE-ME-REE ANSWERS**

1 A heart: 2 Water:

### **PLEASE NOTE**

That there will not be an increase in the cost of Crossroads for 2020 it will remain at 50p per issue or £4.00 for the year if you pay in full by the end of January. Remember that if you have access to the internet you can read Crossroads for free by visiting the St George's and St Margaret's website.

**[www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk](http://www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk)**

### **CURATES ARE COMING TO TUFFLEY!**

That's not just one, but six - and Bishop Robert's coming too! For a whole weekend, 24 – 26 April; so, put this in your diary...

... because there'll be opportunities for lots of fun in helping us share with our neighbours and friends the joy of our faith and the difference it makes to be part of our church community.

We've plenty of ideas already, we've started to plan, and we'd like everyone to take part.

So, look out for more details, and do please start thinking, talking and asking God about how we all can make the most of this wonderful opportunity. For more info please ask Bruce or Helen.

### **MYTH OR TRUTH: FAUNS? MAN? GOD?**

Did you ever read or see "The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe"? In the story, the faun 'Mr Tumnus' has a library of books which include 'The Myth of Man'...



## **THROUGH THE WINDOW**

Hello everyone,

It's your feline friend here. Oh boy what I've been through just lately! Do you know when I want to go out my mum doesn't always understand what I want. I ask her to let me go out; so, she opens the door but then I have to have a little look before I go outside. My mum grumbles at me because I take my time. She says "Go on Jo Jo it's flipping cold stood here". Then she gently taps my rear end with her foot so that I do go out. Mind you I don't stay out too long because I don't like the cold. Mind you if it's raining, I don't bother, I don't like getting wet. My mum had to go out, I was outside and it started raining very hard, I was really wet and my mum had to call me in. My fur was very spikey and do you know what, my mum told me to wash myself dry! I mean that's not nice is it? Mind you I wouldn't have like it if she had a towel and tried to rub me with it. It was the lesser of two evils.

A little while ago my mum and Auntie Jill had two other people in the house, they said it was to celebrate someone's birthday (whatever that is) and they sang a little song, what a racket. I didn't get any of the food though! I thought I might have done but not even a sniff and the door was shut so I couldn't get in. Mean is what I call it, still, you win some and you lose some.

I have had chats with Maya and Trixie, they are two busy puss-cats. We don't chat for very long because they have things to do and places to go. They do love their creature comforts just like I do.

A little while ago there I was minding my own business when suddenly in came my mum's son with that rotten dog. As you can imagine I shot off upstairs and someone had to come along and close my mum's bedroom door so it couldn't get in and get me. My heart was racing I can tell you. I was let out when they had gone and I could have my tea in peace. I often get shut upstairs when that dog comes around. You should see my mum

and Auntie Jill with it, daft they are over it. I can't see what the attraction is myself, still it's each to their own, I suppose. You should see them when they are looking at pictures of baby animals, it is pathetic really to see them.

Well, I'm off to my bed now but will write again soon, until then 'bye for now.

JO JO WHITTLE

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

...Christians use the forty days of Lent to consider what they squash into their lives and what gets squeezed out. They use this time to make sure there is room for God in their lives by praying, reading the Bible, sitting still and listening. Mary Wesley, the mother of a famous church leader, found a great way of finding peace to pray; she would sit in the middle of her busy kitchen with her apron over her head, so everyone knew not to disturb her. Shrove Tuesday is traditionally the day Christians would have prepared to make life more simple during Lent. They would use up all the fancy food in the house by making it into pancakes. Ingredients like eggs would then not be used until after Easter.

*A number of St George's and St Margaret's people will remember Ian Maddock, Ernie's son'. Recently he sent Glenda and I a copy of his Parish Magazine from St Mary's, Alveley and St Andrew's, Quatt in Shropshire which Ian edits and we thought that you may wish to chuckle over his Christmas editor's piece from that magazine...*

### **THE BACK PAGE**

The Head Gardener (*Ian's wife, Alwyn*) and I recently enjoyed a river cruise on the Douro in Portugal. One evening she nearly fainted - I asked her to dance! She was even more amazed on the evening that flamenco dancers performed on board. They put a large hat on my head and invited me to join in their dance. I did just that and had a thoroughly good time - the wine and port had been flowing! Fortunately for me the Head Gardener didn't have a camera or phone with her to capture the moment. I believe I would have given Ann Widdecombe a run for her money on 'Strictly Come



Dancing' - but maybe not. Apologies for the horrific image this might conjure up while having breakfast. I will quickly change the subject.

Although Christmas is still some weeks away as I write, my mind turns inevitably to our great Christian festival, remembering events in a humble stable two thousand years ago. Regular readers will know that I have been privileged to visit Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity several times, standing in the place believed to have been the site of that stable, reading out loud the Christmas story and singing carols. It still feels awesome when I think about it and our Christmas crib, bought just down the road from that church, brings back so many memories.

In the twenty-two years I spent as head teacher of a secondary school I was invited to countless nativity plays by our feeder primary schools. It was always an enjoyable experience and I was usually left wondering if there were any tea-towels left for the washing up! Children had excited (or worried) faces, proud parents and grandparents were waiting for their child's appearance or, better still, speech. There were some wonderful lines. One I particularly remember was 'Hail Mary, for thou art highly flavoured.' There is also the story of the boy who forgot his lines and his mum tried mouthing the words to him. That didn't work, so she crept up and whispered 'I am the Angel Gabriel.' The lad grinned, turned to the audience and said loudly: 'My mummy is the Angel Gabriel.' Many of us will think back to Christmases past, spent perhaps with loved ones no longer with us. May your Christmas memories be happy ones.

### **AN OLD TESTAMENT STORY FOR TODAY?**

In the Book of Malachi, the Lord promises his people that if they give faithfully, they will receive abundantly:

*"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!" (Malachi 3:10)*

May we 'sit lightly' to our possessions and bank accounts, give freely as God directs, and watch for God's blessings... Who knows, maybe so many people will come join the throng of worship, that we have to expand our walls! What joy that would be!

*Lord let us bring you tithes and offerings worthy of your love and grace.  
Amen*



### **OVER THE GARDEN FENCE**

Maya, Maya are you there? Yes Trix, I'm here, what on earth's the matter now? Well Maya, I've just seen Harry, do you know why we haven't seen him around for a while? No Trixie, but I'm sure you're going to tell me. Well yes, Maya, Harry's been on holiday, he went to stay with his Gran because his Mum, Dad and children went on a long holiday. Well, what do you know, Trix, how come you know that information? Well, you know Duke, that cat our Mum feeds in the mornings. Yes I do, but how did he find out? He lives next door Maya and is quite friendly with his Mum and Dad, well you know Duke, always ready for some extra food he goes to see him and the family all the time. But because they have been away he couldn't get his extra rations so to speak. That's why he's been coming around to our house. He's full of stories, that one, Maya. I know Trix and full of our food too.

Have you seen anything of Yasmin lately, Trix? No I haven't, maybe she's gone on holiday as well. Trix, you there, It's just that our Mum's gone out again and I'm starving hungry, she goes to that St Margaret's place again and just forgets about us! I know, Maya, but she will come back soon, I hope. She's gone with her mates Kath and Marilyn to put up a tree. What on earth do they want to put a tree up in that place for? I don't know Trix, it's just one of our Mum's little idiosyncrasies. Where did you get that word from, Maya? Trix, I don't know, it just came to me, you know how it is. Maya, you and your big words flummox me! Not to worry Trix, it doesn't happen very often. I'm still starving, I wonder how much longer our Mum is going to be. Oh Trix, here she is, time for lunch, I think. I know Maya, last one to the nose bowl is a stinky cat. Speak for yourself, Trix, speak for yourself. It's still a bit cold out there, Trix. I'm going to have a lie down on our bed, just to make sure it's nice and warm. Ok, Maya, I'm with you there.

Trix, our Mum's gone out again! She never seems to be at home now. I know Maya, she said she was going over to see Auntie Lynne, you know she has two dogs and a pussy cat, I smelled them when she comes home. She's taken a parcel to her. It must be her birthday or something. She goes with Auntie Marg, I wonder if Auntie Marg has taken her a present too. I don't know Trix, but this I do know; we haven't got any parcels. Mum says that it will be Christmas soon. Maya, what's Christmas? I haven't a clue Trixie, but it's something our Mum has been baking for, for weeks. There's been cakes in our bedroom, I smelled them, but then all of a sudden, they was gone. Maybe that's something to do with Christmas!

Our Mum's going out again and at night, Trix and it's late at night too. I'm glad we are in our house nice and warm. Don't care about Christmas Trix, it's too complicated. I just hope our Mum hasn't forgotten to get our breakfast. Maya, our Mum would never forget to get our breakfast. I know Trix, but I'm just saying. Now I think it's about time we said tata for the time being that is until the next time. Oh well tata folks all the best...

#### MAYA & TRIXIE



Well here I am again that person who does at St Margaret's with her mate Kath. It's coming up for Christmas, so we are making extra efforts in or cleaning. We want our church to be perfect!

On December 1 we had a special service, 'The Promise of His Coming' it was called. It had been devised by Jonathan and it was lovely. We gathered together at the east end of St Margaret's by the Sanctuary; the lights went right down low and the service began. Our Vicar, Bruce, lit the first of the Advent candles. It was a service of Hymns, Carols and readings for Advent. It was something different and everyone enjoyed it. The service lasted about an hour and we were all home by 6.30pm.

On December 16 we put up the Christmas Tree in church. After having to

move a lot of rubbish; Kath, Marilyn and I got all the decorations out from the shed early in the morning, but we managed. Jonathan came and gave us a hand, which we needed, so by 10.00am the decorations were in the church and we could make a start. It took a lot of sorting to get the cover off the tree, it sort of grew and grew and was caught up the branches, very frustrating, but we managed. We have a proper stand for the tree but with a nudge here and a shove there we made it stand upright. We had new lights last year which we put on and with the baubles it looked magnificent. Even if we said so ourselves. St Margaret's had a bit of a scrub up before we left so everything was ready for our 'Carols by Candlelight' service.

On 20 December we were ready for everyone to enjoy that service; the fire watchers were on duty to make sure there were no accidents. Our Family Praise people were in the Sanctuary watching the congregation arrive. This year we attempted to ensure that St Margaret's was not overfilled. My role was to meet and greet and to try and get people sat by who they wanted to. Bruce and Jonathan worked hard to make it an enjoyable experience for all who were in church.

On Christmas Day we had a joint service with all those who worship at St Margaret's. Lorraine Best spelt out C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S giving alternative meanings that were special to her and to all of us. We all had an opportunity to give our own interpretation too. The whole congregation went home full of the joys of Christmas and were at peace.

Our final service of the year was really enjoyable; another collaboration of Bruce and Jonathan. So those who were able to come to St Margaret's during this time I hope you went away looking forward to the New Year and all it brings to you, your family and friends in 2020.

Well my friends that's it for another year...

JILL PONTER

**GOD'S BLESSING  
THROUGH FEBRUARY**



# DATES TO REMEMBER

## JANUARY

Sun 26			<b>EPIPHANY 3 / White Box day</b>
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by prayers for healing & coffee
Mon 27	9.30am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans, Jenny & David: <i>The Unforgiving Servant</i>
	7.00pm	EM	Alpha to include food
Tue 28	9.00am	MH	Coffee Pot until 11.30am – all welcome
	9.30am		Parish Communion
Thu 30	8.15am	V	Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Fri 31	9.30am	SL	Friday Group
	2.30pm		Quiet Prayer Group at Christchurch, Abbeydale

## FEBRUARY

Sat 1	10.00am	SL	Councillor Steve Morgan's Surgery
	10.00am		Messy church
Sun 2			<b>PRESENTATION OF CHRIST /CANDLEMAS</b>
	10.30am	*	Family Praise
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	5.00pm	*	Evensong with prayers for healing
Mon 3	9.30am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans, Sue & Dianne: <i>Everyone gets the same</i>
	10.00am	SL	Speakability
	7.00pm	EM	Alpha to include food
Tue 4	9.00am	MH	Coffee Pot until 11.30am – all welcome
	9.30am		Parish Communion
Wed 5	7.00pm		St George's Singing Group practice
Thu 6	8.15am	V	Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion

	11.15am		Open the Book at Harewood with Lorraine, Dianne, Helen & Jenny: <i>A Long Journey</i>
Fri 7	9.30am	SL	Friday Group
			Diocese set up for Saturday meeting
Sat 8	10.00am		Liturgy, Creativity & Inclusion lead by the Diocese at St George's
Sun 9			<b>3 before LENT</b>
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am		Parish Communion with St George's Singing Group followed by coffee
	3.30pm		Soul & Space at St George's
Mon 10	9.30am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans, Mike & Laura: <i>The Widow's Coins</i>
	10.00am	SH/SL	Aphasia-Now
	7.00pm	EM	Alpha Course to include food
Tue 11	9.00am	MH	Coffee Pot until 11.30am – all welcome
	9.30pm		Parish Communion
	2.30pm	SH	Mothers' Union
	7.30pm	SH	Yoga
Thu 13			<b>Deadline for March Crossroads articles</b>
	8.15am	V	Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Fri 14	9.30am	SL	Friday Group
	7.30pm	MH	Gardening Club
Sun 16			<b>2 before LENT</b>
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	5.00pm	*	Evensong
			<b>Half Term Week</b>
Mon 17	10.00am	SH/SL	Aphasia-Now
	7.00pm	EM	Alpha Course to include food
Tue 18	9.00am	MH	Coffee Pot until 11.30am – all welcome
	9.30am		Parish Communion
			No Yoga
Thu 20	8.15am	V	Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
Fri 21	9.30am	SL	Friday Group
	7.30pm		Pantomime – Red Riding Hood

Sat 22	2.30pm		Pantomime – Red Riding Hood
	7.30pm		Pantomime – Red Riding Hood
Sun 23			<b>SUNDAY before LENT / White Box day</b>
	9.00am	*	Parish Communion
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by prayers for healing & coffee
	4.00pm	SL	Private let
Mon 24	9.30am		Open the Book at Grange with Hans, David & Roger: <i>A Tale of Two Houses</i>
	10.00am	SH/SL	Aphasia-Now
	7.00pm	EM	Alpha Course to include food
Tue 25	9.00am	MH	Coffee Pot until 11.30am – all welcome
	9.30am		Parish Communion
			No Yoga
Wed 26			<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>
	7.00pm		Service at St George's
Thu 27	8.15am	V	Morning Prayer
	10.30am	*	Parish Communion
	11.15am		Open the Book at Harewood with Lorraine, Roger, Sylvia & Dianne: <i>The Walls Fall Down</i>
Fri 28	9.30am	SL	Friday Group
	2.30pm		Quiet Prayer Group meet here at St George's
Sat 29	10.00am	MH	Bundles Sale
			Tuffley Prayer Day

## MARCH

Sun 1			<b>LENT 1</b>
	10.30am	*	Family Praise
	10.30am		Parish Communion followed by coffee
	5.00pm	*	Evensong with prayers for healing

M = Read more information in magazine  
 \* = Service or event at St Margaret's Church  
 MH = Main Hall, SH = Small Hall, SL = Softley Lounge  
 V = Vicarage, O = Office

The Benefice diary is updated on our website at least once every week so please check there for up to date information and new events.

### **A LITTLE BIT OF HUMOUR TO FINISH WITH...**

Patient: I've been feeling a little off colour lately. Doctor: Tell me what you have been eating recently. Patient: I only eat snooker balls. Doctor: Snooker balls? Patient: Yes, Snooker balls; I have a blue one for breakfast, a pink and a yellow snooker ball for lunch, red ones as snacks, and then a black one for dinner. Doctor: Aha, I see what the problem is - you're not getting enough greens.

I went into my local bookshop yesterday and asked the lady behind the counter: "Do you keep stationery here?" "No," she said. "Sometimes I move about a bit."

I work in a library, and today this guy came up to me and said, "Do you have a bookmark?" I said, "Yes, we have loads of them... but my name is John."

Dave: Did you hear that Fred has got a job at the bowling alley? Joe: What tenpin? Dave: No it's a permanent job.

Last night I got into a taxi and said to the driver, 'Robin Hood's Close'. He said 'Don't worry, I'm sure that I can lose him at the next set of traffic lights'.

**Why was the dog unable to talk? Because the cat had got his tongue.**

What do you call the people who are made of rubber and stand at the entrance to a nightclub? Bouncers of course!

Fred goes into a hotel and says to the receptionist 'I'd like a room please' Receptionist: 'Single, Sir?' Fred: 'Yes, but I am engaged'.

**A gang of thieves broke into a blood bank last night and stole a hundred pints of blood. Police are still hunting for the clots.**