



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

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• Welcome to the second issue of "Notes from the Riverbank."

All contributions should be sent to the editors, Toria and Robin, 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 Sue Melsher at suemelsher@parkway.co.uk. We aim to produce the on-line and printed versions of each issue by the 25th of each month.

• Pastoral letter



As the summer draws to a close we have a lot to be thankful for this year: three months of real summer weather and, for many, bumper crops of fruit and vegetables, not to mention the field crops all safely gathered in. We can sing the harvest hymns wholeheartedly this October, without the reservations we may have had in previous years.

September has also been a time for sowing seed in our community, figuratively speaking. The events which took place during 'Operation SatNav' and the speakers we heard gave many people a chance to think afresh about important spiritual issues from a Christian viewpoint. Our task over the next few months is to encourage those 'seeds' of understanding to germinate and grow, by listening to people's reactions to what they saw and heard. We can do this more easily now because we have heard the same talks and so we can start up conversations about these common experiences. Let us work on that over the coming months and prepare for a different kind of harvest.

'Dear brothers, don't ever forget that it is best to listen much, speak little and not become angry.' James 1:19 The Living Bible



Judith Aguda

● Teas and books at St Mary's church



Over two Mediterranean-like days of the August Bank Holiday weekend, a very successful combination of book sales and afternoon teas took place at St. Mary's.



Photograph from Clive McCann

Despite there being many other events taking place at the same time, most of them also serving teas, a total of over £300 was raised for Church funds. Additionally, and with far greater value, members of the local community and weekend visitors were welcomed into the church both to admire its beauty, and to discover what really goes on within its walls in the course of a week.

Thanks are particularly due to Sue and Mike Brodie for actually selling the books (they always appreciate more donations!), and Alison McCann for co-ordinating the tea rota. Without the usual St. Mary's response of "quality, quantity, quickly" in cake and biscuit production, the weekend would not have been the huge success that it was.



John Rogers

● Altar Frontals at St Thomas' church – help needed



The frontal is an appendage which covers the entire front of the altar, from the lower part of the table (*mensa*) to the upper (*predella*), and from the left-hand (*gospel*) side to the right (*epistle*). Its origins may be traced to the curtains or veils of silk which hung over the open space under the altar, to preserve the shrines of the saints usually deposited there. The colours of the fabric are changed according to the liturgical year or to highlight a special occasion. On Sunday 3rd November we celebrate All Saints with a red frontal for one day, before returning to green until Advent when it changes to purple.

Unfortunately the current altar frontal team is retiring soon. Is anybody interested in continuing this important and colourful task from Sunday 1st December onwards? A chart can be provided!



Catherine Dowden

● St Mary's church servery and piano planning meeting



An open meeting of St Mary's congregation will be held at 7:30pm on Monday 7th October to discuss plans for the proposed new server and grand piano installation in church. The architect will be present at this meeting to answer any queries you may have. Copies of the plans will be available to view in the church soon; please contact Derrick Lello on 873601 if you need any further information.



Alison Gray (Churchwarden/PCC Secretary)

● Flower festival at St Andrew's church

The talented St Andrew's flower arrangers were not deterred by the fact that the builders moved into the church during the preceding week. Their displays on the theme of 'church flowers' were as inspiring as ever.



At least one visitor was clearly so focused on the flowers that they didn't even notice the new wooden partition to screen off the building works! A big thank you to everyone involved. The festival was part of a special weekend in South Stoke which included the annual open gardens event which was enjoyed by many visitors in the lovely late August sunshine.



Revd Luci Heyn

● Door keys found



A set of door keys labelled 'M&D' have been left at St Thomas'. If they are yours please contact Brian or Brenda.

● Come on board! for Scrabble



The dates and times for "Come on board!" have been altered to the fourth Friday of every month at the later time of 3-5pm. The next couple of meetings are now on the 25th October and 22nd November.

● Operation SatNav at St Thomas' church

Launch day (1st September): Operation Satnav lifted off with a bang! Splendid rockets and space suits were on display at the front of the church and were later taken away to be painted by the children, after they had helped Brian in his talk about making choices. At least one child chose cabbage rather than sweets and many returned from their activities covered in paint, so a good time was had by all.

Lucy Heyn took over the service seamlessly from Brian and there was a thought-provoking sermon from Peter Downham on the theme of 'Which Way? Select Your Destination'. The wonderful all-age orchestra performed brilliantly; the choir led the singing with verve and sang the theme tune from 'The Vicar of Dibley' (also known as 'The Lord is My Shepherd' by Howard Goodall). The Sat-Nav theme tune, with its arrangement by Michael Howell, our organist and choir leader, was a great success.

Service of Praise with Noel Treddinick and the All Souls Orchestra (8th September): The range of music was amazing, with wonderful singing by the choir, the orchestra and the congregation, of new hymns and old favourites, from the poignant 'God so loved the world' by Stainer, to the roof-raising 'How great Thou art'.

There was a passionate and inspirational sermon from Rico Tice on the relevance of the Christian Faith (if you missed it, look on YouTube). More amazing music was given to us by the two soloists, Tracey Campbell and John Langley, who sang secular and sacred songs, including the Lord's Prayer (put to music by David Fanshawe in his African Sanctus). The orchestra, led sensitively by Noel, played brilliantly and with enthusiasm and accompanied the choir and congregation with great skill. Their finale was the inspirational 'When the saints go marching in' and it was impossible not to sing along.





Altogether it was an incredibly uplifting service and we were very lucky to have Noel and his team visit us.



Messy church (7th September): Organized chaos... noise, laughter, glue, glitter... children scampering from one craft project to another - deep in concentration as they added their paint footprints to a cross of wallpaper, or the final trim to their wearable cardboard-box car.

After an hour of industrious activity, children and adults joined in a short act of worship led by Sue Price before finishing the afternoon with a 'proper' afternoon tea. Thank you to every-one who planned the event and helped on the day. A fun-filled afternoon which hopefully will leave a lasting impression on the families, especially the children who took part and then drove home!



Paint footprints, something delightfully messy, and one youngster takes a test drive in his new motor!

Bishop John (15th September): On Sunday 15th September we were privileged to hear the Bishop of Oxford, John Pritchard, preach to us at St Thomas's about speeding, U-turns, penguins and God.



Many people commented afterwards how much they had appreciated his sermon which will shortly be available on the website, both as a transcript and as a recording. Bishop John has also written a great many books and they too come highly recommended. Some which particularly come to mind are 'How to Explain your Faith', 'Living Jesus' and published this year 'Living Faithfully'.



SatNav reports from Marilyn, Elizabeth and others