



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 2015 – 17th edition

- All enquiries 01491 875651 or stthomasmaryandrew@gmail.com



Price per printed copy

● Welcome to the seventeenth 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: Some thoughts on Pastoral Caring and joining the team



Pastoral care is the responsibility of all Christians and something most Christians do automatically without giving it a name. It is born out of God's love for us that we should love and care for each other. 'I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.' John 13—34-35.

Traditionally Pastoral Care has been seen as the responsibility of the clergy, the shepherd overseeing all aspects of his/her flock. We find reference to shepherds and pastors tending to the needs of their 'flocks' throughout the OT and NT, from Psalm 23 to 1 Peter ch. 5 v 2, 'I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it.' In John ch. 10 Jesus describes himself as the Good Shepherd, he is our model for pastoral caring. He taught us to love and care for one another and that our love should be real and practical.

As we gently move forward, beginning to experience changes and do new things, I believe we will see positive evidence of the strengthening of our church communities and a greater ability to reach out into the community. However we do need to find ways to improving pastoral care. Three churches and only one full-time member of the Ministry Team means it's impossible to follow traditional lines. I am aware that St. Mary's has a Good Neighbours Scheme which has worked well, that the choirs have their own excellent caring network and that in St Andrew's and St Thomas' there are individuals who constantly keep an eye open for anyone in need. We already have some 'caring shepherds.'

The next step towards strengthen our Benefice both pastorally and spiritually is to begin the process of gathering together a more formal Benefice Pastoral Caring Team – perhaps "BPCT" for short! We need two or three members from each congregation who have an interest in the ministry of pastoral caring to come forward. Individuals who feel they would like to and be prepared to undergo some training and to see if it's for them. The Benefice is very fortunate that having Wendy Middleton training for Ordained Ministry, interested members of our congregations are able to join her on training sessions.

The Summer Term is fast approaching, the topic of which is Pastoral Care. I quote from the Introduction to Pastoral Care which can be found on the Diocesan website. All Christians care for others, but some develop a particular ministry in this area, formal or informal. This course is for anyone who would like to learn more about this important aspect of caring. It will look at practical skills in pastoral care, issues of good practice, and what it means to care as a Christian. The course runs over a number of Tuesday evenings from 14th April to 23rd June at Diocesan Church House in Oxford. There is no homework, unless you choose to do any and there is no essay to write at the end... unless you feel you would like to!

It is important that members of any team we hope to form undergo some formal training, partly for your own protection as well as safeguarding issues. If and when a team is set up, team members would be expected to meet regularly with me for prayer and to support each other, but we are all answerable to the vicar, Revd Paul Boughton. I will be attending the course with Wendy and we both hope that a number of you will want to join us – ladies and gentleman. By attending and supporting Wendy there should be no cost. It is an opportunity to come and meet others who have a similar interest, to listen, to learn and to see if God is calling you to support this important ministry in our United Benefice.

Please contact me, Liz Dowding 873140, Wendy Middleton 875435 or Revd Paul Boughton 875651 if you would like more information.



Liz Dowding

● Church Membership of St Thomas' Church, Goring



Now is the time to consider becoming a member by having your name entered on the Electoral Roll thereby indicating your commitment and giving you a chance to say how things should be run. Membership is FREE! Forms are available at the back of Church by the door, or by request from me.

To be eligible to vote at this year's annual Church meeting on Monday April 27th you must return your application form by Friday April 10th. Existing members do not need to complete a form, but it would be helpful if those who have moved house or changed telephone number could let me know.



Judith Aguda, Electoral Roll Officer; judith.aguda@gmail.com or phone 871493

● Goring Primary School needs you!



Are you passionate about the value of children receiving a Christian-centred education? Would you like to be an active member of the Goring Primary Community and help to ensure that the distinctive Christian ethos of the school remains strong?

The church is responsible for appointing a total of nine Foundation Governors at Goring Primary School. In order to protect the Christian ethos, in a Voluntary Aided School C of E school like ours, the number of Foundation Governors must always exceed the total number of governors in other categories by at least two. There are currently two vacancies to be filled. If you would like to find out more about this rewarding voluntary role, please do contact me as soon as possible for an informal discussion.



The Revd Paul Boughton

● An invitation to the whole of Easter

 I shall never forget the first time that I celebrated the whole of Easter. We began with a memorial of the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday evening; capturing something of the atmosphere of the last meal that Jesus would share with his closest friends. The meal was followed by listening to an account of Jesus going into the Garden of Gethsemane after the meal with his disciples to pray. We sensed something of the struggle of Christ as he faced the reality of facing death. And then his arrest.

On Good Friday we heard how the trial was over-ruled by popular opinion and how Jesus died. Against such a backdrop of injustice and hopelessness, celebrating The Resurrection on Easter Day is such a remarkable contrast, as Jesus leads the way into a new life that he invites us to share.

This Easter I invite you to share in the whole celebration, beginning on Maundy Thursday and sensing the wonder of The Resurrection on Easter Day. I do hope you will find this Easter a faith deepening experience as you progress in your journey of faith.

 The Rev'd Paul Boughton

● Services for Holy Week and Easter 2015

Palm Sunday March 29th	8.00am	St Thomas', Goring	Holy Communion  UB Communion beginning at St Thomas' and processing with Palms to Streatley
	10.30am	St Mary's, Streatley	
Wednesday 1st April	10.30am	St Thomas', Goring	 Holy Communion followed by coffee
Maundy Thursday 2nd April	8.00pm	St Andrew's, South Stoke	Holy Communion and readings for Maundy Thursday
Good Friday 3rd April	2.00pm	St Thomas', Goring	Meditation for Good Friday  Short service for all the family with Hot Cross Buns! Compline
	3.00pm	Goring Lock	
	6.30pm	St Andrew's, South Stoke	
Easter Eve Saturday 4th April	8.00pm	St Mary's, Streatley	 Easter Vigil begins at dusk and follows the story into the darkness
Easter Day Sunday 5th April Celebrating the Risen Christ	6.30am	Lardon Chase	Daybreak Service with Tilehurst Methodist Church Holy Communion  Family Service followed by an Easter Egg hunt and then a short Communion Service Easter Communion Easter Communion Choral Evensong
	8.00am	St Thomas', Goring	
	9.30am	St Thomas', Goring	
	11.15am	St Mary's, Streatley	
	4.00pm	St Thomas', Goring	
	11.15am	St Andrew's, South Stoke	

● **Easter flowers at St. Thomas'**

 A lily donated in memory of a relative or friend is a tangible and lovely way of expressing your affection. Our lovely church filled with scent and the beauty of flowers will bring pleasure to us all at this joyful time. If you would like to donate a lily, please get in touch.

 Jenny Boyd 872109

● **Friends of St Mary's Streatley: Notice of AGM**

 The FoSM AGM will be held on Sunday 26th April at 10.30 am in the Morrell Room. Proceedings will last half an hour and be complete before start of the Morning Service in St Mary's. The main purpose of the Friends is to raise funds for repair and maintenance of the Church building. The agenda will include the Chairman's annual report and financial status, the church repair projects which are in hand, the application for full charitable status, and the fundraising events planned. We believe it is important that St Mary's is preserved as an integral part of the village heritage not only for this but for future generations. Non-members are welcome. Please come and give us your support!

 Graham Harvey

● **Annual Parochial Church Meeting dates**

- St Thomas of Canterbury, Goring: Monday 27th April 2015, 7pm for 7.30pm. Cheese and wine will be served at 7pm.
- St Mary's, Streatley: Sunday 19th April 2015 after the Sunday Service.
- St Andrew's, South Stoke: Sunday 26th April 2015 after the Sunday Service.

● **Stewardship Renewal**

On 1st March 2015 we launched a Benefice-wide Stewardship Renewal as we reflected on God's enormous generosity to us. We considered how we might respond in the use of our time and abilities and in the way we use our wealth and income. We are very grateful to those who have already responded. By 15th March the treasurers were aware of the following increases and, of course, there may be further gifts of which they are not yet aware:

Church	Regular giving increases p.a. since March 2015	Single gifts since March 2015
Goring	£3,666	£965
South Stoke	£720	£5,350
Streatley	Awaiting amounts	Awaiting amounts

If you intend to, but have not yet responded to the letter that I and the Church Wardens sent you, it would be very helpful if, having reflected prayerfully you would reply by Easter. Thank you so much!

 The Rev'd Paul Boughton

● **Reading Food Bank**

 Thank you to everyone who has been donating food for ReadiFood, the Reading Food Bank. Please continue to donate non-perishable food items; there is a box for them in the porch at St Thomas'. At the moment the food bank is particularly short of tinned vegetables, tinned puddings, rice pudding and jam. Your donations are much appreciated. Thank you.

 Wendy Middleton