



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

September 2015 – 21st edition

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● Welcome to the twenty-first 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: It's hotting up – no time to lose!

"Today, the human family faces one of its greatest moral challenges – climate change." Desmond Tutu

Recently I was surprised to receive an email from The Most Reverend Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town. It came via an organisation called Change.org - some of you may have heard of it - and I got it not because I'm well-connected, but because I'm on their mailing list! Change.org is an international organisation which enables individuals to start up online petitions about anything which they feel is important, and in July this year Desmond Tutu started a petition to send to David Cameron and Ban Ki-moon about climate change. The petition urges them to set a renewable energy target of 100% by 2050. That means phasing out the use of all fossil fuels over the next 35 years. You can read the whole letter and more about Desmond Tutu's campaign by typing "Desmond Tutu's climate change petition" into Google.

For many years now, experts have been warning us that there will come a time when we will not be able to control the effects of carbon emissions. That point is getting ever closer. Already thousands of people are living in refugee camps or migrating to other parts of the world because of either droughts or flooding. The climate talks which will take place in Paris in December may well be the last chance world leaders will have to agree on effective targets.

As Christians, we believe that God expects us to take care of all he has created. Many of us already do what we can as individuals by recycling and using resources responsibly, but now we have the Internet which is a powerful tool with which we can add our voices to those of thousands of others to make change happen. Let's use it for good. I urge you to start today by joining me in signing Desmond Tutu's petition.

National Prayer Weekend

"The earnest prayer of the righteous person has great power and wonderful results."

James 5:16

I would like to draw your attention to the National Prayer Weekend, details of which you will find below. Please do get involved. If you are looking at the quotation above and wondering if you qualify as "righteous," the answer is to be found in Romans 3: 21-24: "If you believe and trust in Jesus Christ and his saving power then you are righteous in God's sight." Join us in praying for our neighbours and our community, and let's see what happens!



Judith Aguda, Licensed Lay Minister



National Prayer Weekend 25th – 27th September 2015

Thousands are taking part in the National Prayer Weekend. So far, over 800 churches, groups and individuals will be praying for their local communities. This exciting initiative aims for prayer to be at the heart of every community, helping people encounter God as their Father through the power of prayer. The main focus of this weekend is to engage with and pray for the people around us.

Prayer request cards to give to friends and neighbours will be available in all the churches in Goring, Streatley and South Stoke from 1st September. The completed cards will be collected at each of the churches and the requests brought to God in prayer throughout the weekend of 26th/27th September. Look out for the posters giving the programme of special events. Why not set yourself a target of giving out, say, five cards to people you know? They may have something which is bothering them and would appreciate our prayers.



Brenda Kerr Muir



Learning about the Old Testament – Don't miss it!

At the United Service on 30th August 2015 at 10.30am in Streatley, we will begin a series of sermons exploring the big picture of the Old Testament. The series will be followed in all three churches of the benefice every Sunday until 15th November 2015.

Sometimes we forget how important the Old Testament is to a better understanding of the New Testament. As a child I was taught: "the New is in the Old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed." There will also be notes available for House Groups to follow up the sermons. Whilst each sermon will cover a different topic, it will be well worth hearing as much of the series as you can to get a bigger picture of God.



The Rev Paul Boughton



Mid-week Communion

Do come to join a quiet Communion Service at 10.30am on Wednesday mornings at St. Thomas', Goring. On the first Wednesday of each month we have coffee together afterwards. You might find this a good place to invite a friend.



The Rev Paul Boughton



Stillness

Stillness, the service held in St Mary's on the second Sunday of the month at 5.30 pm, lasts for only 30 minutes. In that short time however it offers the opportunity for spiritual refreshment in the presence of God at the start of another busy week. Please do come and hear for yourselves the Bible readings, prayers, beautiful music and poetry woven around themes chosen by our faithful, small group of lay leaders:

Sunday 13 th September	Theme TBC
Sunday 11 th October	<i>Time of change</i>
Sunday 8 th November	<i>Altruism</i>
Sunday 13 th December	<i>Advent</i>

The service also allows for quiet personal reflection, something that many of us find difficult to fit into our hectic lives so please do come and sample this special service for yourselves. The autumn programme begins on Sunday 13th September when Wendy Middleton will be our leader; you will be assured of a very warm welcome.



Alison Gray (873181)



Baptisms

During September we are delighted that two youngsters will be brought by their parents to join the Church Family in baptism. Will you please pray for Barry and Jennifer as they bring Harrison, and also for Chris and Annabel as they bring Beatrice, promising before God to bring up their children as Christians within the Church Family.



The Revd Paul Boughton



Starlight Children's Foundation

The greatest wishes of many children all over the country suffering from serious, life-threatening illnesses have been granted by the Starlight Foundation. The children's wishes have varied from meeting a favourite celebrity, visiting Alton Towers, being a fireman or policeman for a day, to an 8-year-old cancer sufferer being taken on a tour of the Williams Formula-One factory. Starlight also works to provide toys, video games and equipment in play areas of hospitals where sick children have the opportunity to meet other young patients.

Starlight receives no funding from Government or other sources, but relies entirely on donations from the general public, so please give generously to the special collection on 13th September.



Norma Bryant



Thank you

A huge thank you to the organisers and participants in this morning's Sixth Birthday Celebration of St. Andrew's coffee mornings, for their spontaneous, kind and very generous donation to two special charities.

I quote: "Twice a year, on the occasion of Coffee Morning's Birthday and also at Christmas we do not ask for any donations towards the coffee and cake. However, today (Wednesday 21st August) we felt it would be a lovely gesture to offer the opportunity to anyone who would like to do so to make a donation to share between *St George's First Touch* and *Bliss*, two national neonatal charities."

Some of you will know that our twin grandsons Fred and Zach were born prematurely just before Christmas last year. By way of trying to give something in gratitude for the amazing dedicated care the twins received, our sons, Alex, the twins' father and his brother Dan participated in the recent Ride London event, a 100 mile cycle ride over the Olympic course.

So far more than £5,000 has been pledged, to which another £125 can now be added. I was totally unaware of and quite overwhelmed by your kind thought and amazing generosity. Alex and Dan have asked me to make sure that I thank you on their behalf too, they were really moved. Thank you again.



Liz Dowding



Saturday 12th September 2015 10am-6pm

Last year, Ride+Stride raised nearly £137,000, well up on 2013 – a remarkable achievement to which we contributed £530.

It would be good if we had some volunteers this year to Ride or Stride on the day so please ask me for a sponsorship form and think about setting up a JustGiving page. We like to give a welcome and offer refreshment to those taking part and you can be sponsored as a Welcomer. I have those forms too! Sponsored or otherwise I'd be grateful for offers of help so that the whole day is covered. Please add your name to the Welcomers' list in church.

Half the money we raise always comes to our own Church funds, and OHCT has promised us a grant towards the repairs to the Tower.



Brenda Kerr Muir; see also <http://www.ohct.org.uk/>



Piano recital by Paul Page

Paul Page, concert pianist, will be giving a piano recital in St Mary's on Sunday 27th September at 7:30pm. The program will include Beethoven's *Pathetique* Sonata, and include works by Chopin, Debussy and Schubert.

Tickets will be £10 full and £8 concessions; you can buy these from Inspirations in Goring or on the door. For advance bookings and enquiries email StMarysConcerts@hotmail.co.uk or text 0776 233 9853.



Stella