



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 2017 – 37th edition

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● Welcome to the thirty-seventh 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.



Not one... not two... but three Pancake Parties at St Thomas' Church!



Just before Lent, there was a busy day at St Thomas' when there were three Pancake Parties. We were so pleased to welcome Years 5 and 6 from both Goring and Streatley Primary Schools, and the trebles from St Thomas' church choir.

Pancake Parties are a wonderful way to have lots of fun while we think about how to use Lent well. We reflected on what spring cleaning we do in our homes and what spring cleaning we might do in our lives to prepare for a good Lent. After all the wonderful games, it may be the church hall is ready for some spring cleaning too!

After an exhausting pancake race, we also explored what "Shrove" means; do you know?

We then thought about what each of us might do during Lent to draw closer to God; ideas included thanking God for our food at mealtimes, singing the "Superman grace" and particularly good habits that we might try to establish in relation to our families and friends and to God.



Do come and see the wonderful pancake party display which will remain in St Thomas' church until Good Friday, and thank you everyone who helped make the parties such a success.

 Paul Boughton



Pastoral Letter: Spring has Sprung

Looking through the window there can be no greater confirmation that spring is on the way than "the host of golden daffodils" blooming in the garden. All around the yellow gold of daffodils and perhaps forsythia too announce that the cold earth of winter is warming and waking. The shape of the bright daffodil flower is trumpet-like, proclaiming to the world God's recreation of the natural world – a visible sign of his promise of new life and new hope, the joy of things to come.

Writing now we are well into the season of Lent, which may be seen by some as a darker, more somber period in the Christian calendar. A time to look inward; to search our inner selves; to dig out that which is unhelpful to our Christian lives and to nurturer that which will bring us closer to Christ. Forty days fasting in the dry arid desert must have been extremely unpleasant for Jesus. Anyone who has attempted to fast for a long period of time will know just how uncomfortable it is physically as the body adjust to the lack of food. Jesus was fully man and would have experienced these same discomforts. Anyone who has tried fasting for short periods however will know that it can sharpen the mind, help one to think more clearly and pray more deeply. But it was Jesus' prolonged fasting and prayer that enabled him to overcome the temptations of the devil and prepare him for the work his father in Heaven had planned that he should undertake. I wonder if you might contemplate a short fast before the end of lent, or perhaps a couple of days a month as part of your ongoing drawing closer to Christ?

Mothering Sunday does give us a day when we can relax a little and give thanks to God for his mothering of us. To give thanks also to the Mother Church and all the church does to "mother" and nurture the Christian faith. As with earthly mothers and all who have mothering or nurturing roles God knows our weaknesses and that a little encouragement is works wonders. The giving of flowers to those who have cared for us and those whom we love and care for has long been a delightful custom. What

better flowers than the golden yellow daffodils heralding spring, new life and the coming of Easter.

But back to the remaining weeks of Lent as we continue to observe this period of time in our own personal way; remembering, if you haven't been able to do so already, that it is not too late to start now marking Lent in some way.

Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter Day will be upon us before we know where we are. Dare I say it, a week that for me holds a so much deeper sense of the Christian faith than I can find in the modern celebrations of Christmas. A time when we can journey with Jesus on his triumphal journey into Jerusalem, share in the last supper with his disciples, experience the sense of betrayal when he is brought before the court for a mock trial and finally led out to face the most evil of executions, that of death by crucifixion. Where are the waving palm leaves or the beauty of the yellow gold of daffodils? We too die with Christ as he is laid in a tomb in the cold dark earth.

All must have seemed lost for those who stood by watching and who were completely unaware of the glory of Easter morning to come. Just as a daffodil bulb appears dead, it must be placed in the cold, dark earth before it can come to life. Jesus had to fulfill what was spoken of him. He was to suffer, to die, to be buried, before he was to rise again in glory. As we died with Jesus on Good Friday, so we too rise again to sing his praise and glory on Easter Day.

As the host of yellow gold daffodils outside the window have spent a period of burial in the earth and have now sprung to life again heralding the coming of spring and new life, so Jesus' death and resurrection brought with it not only new life but everlasting life for all who believe in him, put their trust in him and follow his ways.

May the risen Christ of Easter bring you many blessings and much happiness as you draw closer to Him.



Liz Dowding, Associate Priest



Which bit of the church service do you prefer?

In his book *Following Jesus*, Tom Wright, recently Bishop of Durham, writes:

Following Jesus involves heart, mind, soul and strength.

A church without sermons will soon have a shrivelled mind, then a wayward heart, next an unquiet soul and finally misdirected strength.

A church without sacraments will find its strength cut off, its soul undernourished, its heart prey to conflicting emotions and its mind engaged in increasingly irrelevant intellectual games.

Whatever our natural preferences, let's be sure to bring balance to our Christian development.



Paul, your Vicar



Works on St Thomas' Tower, April – August 2017

Some of you may know that the church has been planning repairs to the tower for some time. These are necessary because rainwater is coming in through the roof on to the bell frames and down the internal walls via cracks in the pointing. It came to light recently that repairs are also needed to the stonework on the outside of the parapet as some of the facings are beginning to separate and could fall off.

In the last few days the church has been notified of the award of two major grants, so with the existing grants and other funds raised, we are now in a position to proceed with the works. These are best done in the summer months as there will be scaffolding around the tower and a temporary roof. The work is likely to start towards the end of April and will last approximately four months. During most of this time, the contractor will be working on the stonework and re-pointing so, to avoid vibration, it will not be possible for the bells to be rung.

The contractors will have a compound in the West Drive so, during the week there will be no access to the West Drive and at weekends there will be very limited access for one or two cars only and no space for turning. The fire escape through the baptistry and West Door will, however, be maintained. We appreciate that these works will cause some inconvenience, but we hope that you will understand the urgent need to secure the tower which is the oldest part of the building.



Brenda Kerr Muir and David Beddall, Churchwardens



Christian Aid Week 2017, 14th – 20th May

Christian Aid Week was set up 60 years ago to help fund work supporting refugees in Europe following the Second World War. In 2017, Christian Aid is still helping refugees. Millions of people worldwide are facing dying in a refugee camp rather than dying in a war. They risk their own and their children's lives fleeing conflict, leaving behind everything they know. When the alternative is terror, bombs and bullets, almost anything is better.

Christian Aid Week gives each one of us the opportunity to help our neighbour; to help build a world where everyone has a safe place to call home. Christian Aid is asking for our communities to stand up and help those with so much less than us. Delivering the iconic Red Envelope through a door is an act of witness, proclaiming Jesus' good news to the poor. It's a sign of his kingdom, visible to the whole community. It is also a clear demonstration that Christians won't stand by while our neighbours are suffering.

Before I went to Theological College, I worked here in Oxfordshire for Christian Aid and was fortunate enough to see first-hand the charity's work in Cambodia. This was a wonderful opportunity to see Christian Aid in action, to see how the money we give is used to change lives. Sadly it also showed me how that work is just the start. I saw situations that broke my heart, people living in such extreme poverty that should not be in the 21st century. So, this Christian Aid Week, let's think again about how in one week we can change lives, by helping our global neighbour, by taking part.

HOW? This year we are trying new ways of supporting Christian Aid Week. We still urgently need people to deliver the Red Envelopes but, instead of having to collect, *Inspiration* in Goring has kindly agreed to be a drop off point for the envelopes. We are also hoping to do a bucket collection at the railway station during morning and evening peak hours so we will need people to wear a red tabard and hold collection buckets. Please let Natalie Maletas know if you can help: christianaidcollection@st-thomas-goring.org.uk

And this year, at the start of the week, why not come along to the Christian Aid Week service on Sunday 14th May at 5pm at St Mary's, Streatley? We would love to see you there!

 Steve Johnson, Assistant Curate



Concert by Midori Komachi and Sophie Rosa

Midori Komachi and Sophie Rosa, both violinists, will be giving a concert in St Mary's on Saturday May 20th at 19:30. Tickets will cost £12 full and £10 concessions, and will be available on the door. The program will be:

EJ Moeran: *Sonata for two violins*

Alan Rawsthorne: *Theme and variations*

Bela Bartok: *Duos for two violins*

Louis Spohr: *Duo for two violins Op.67 in A minor*

Handel-Halvorsen: *Passacaglia* (arranged for two violins)

Enquiries and advance bookings to

StMarysConcerts@hotmail.co.uk



Goring Chamber Choir presents *Magyar Melodies*

Sacred music, folksong and dance music from the Hungarian region

Goring Chamber Choir will present *Magyar Melodies* at 7:30pm on Saturday 13th May at St Thomas' Church, Goring. The programme will include sacred music by Zoltan Kodaly, including *Jesus and the Traders*, *Ave Maria*, and *Missa Brevis*, plus folksongs and dance music from the Hungarian region. Conducted by Frances Brewitt-Taylor with Steve Bowey (organ) and Janet Pound (piano).

Tickets £12, concessions £10, students £5 available from Inspirations in Goring, a choir member, or at the door. <http://www.goringchamberchoir.org.uk/>



St Mary's Annual Church Meeting

This will take place after the 11:15 service on Sunday 9th April, and will be followed by a Bring & Share lunch at 1pm in the Morrell Room.

 Angela Bulmer



Friends of Music at Goring 2017 Concert Programme

Friends of Music at Goring are pleased to announce their programme of concerts for 2017:

Wednesday 3rd May – Oliver Wass (harp)

Wednesday 21st June – Michael Foyle (violin) and Maksim Stsura (piano)

Wednesday 4th October – Anna Szalucka (piano)

All concerts begin at 1pm in St. Thomas' Church. Tickets £10, available from Inspirations in Goring in advance, £12 at the door, or from Joan and Nigel Fountain (phone 873341).



At our first concert on 3rd May, Oliver Wass will play music by JS Bach, Britten, Ravel, Mussorgsky and De Falla.

Oliver received his first harp lessons from his mother, a professional harpist, and while at school played as principal harp in the National Youth Orchestra. Later, he pursued his studies with Imogen Barford at the Guildhall School of Music, where in 2016 he won the School's prestigious Gold Medal.

Oliver has a busy concert schedule and, in addition to solo recitals, he is a member of the Pelleas Ensemble – a flute, viola and harp trio – winners of both the Grand Prize and Audience Prize in the St Martin-in-the-Fields Chamber Music Competition in 2016.

See also <http://www.oliverwass.co.uk/>



Thy Kingdom Come – join us to pray!

Last year Archbishop Justin encouraged us all to pray for our communities in the run-up to Pentecost and it proved a wonderful time to come together and pray. This year we again will be joining the Global Wave of Prayer between 25th May and 4th June, to pray that friends, families and neighbours come to know Jesus Christ.

Across the Benefice, prayer events of all shapes and sizes will take place during the 10 days. We are still finalizing this year's plans so there will be a more detailed programme in next month's *Riverbank*. Until then, do visit the website:

www.thykingdomcome.global and watch some great videos. You will also be able to see the videos before the 9:30am service at Goring from 30th April to 21st May.



Steve Johnson, Assistant Curate



Ideas for the remainder of Lent and beyond

Give up harsh words – use generous ones;
Give up unhappiness – take up gratitude;
Give up anger – take up gentleness and patience;
Give up pessimism – take up hope and optimism;
Give up worrying – take up trust in God;
Give up complaining – value what you have;
Give up stress – take up prayer;
Give up judging others – discover Jesus within them;
Give up sorrow and bitterness – fill your heart with joy;
Give up selfishness – take up compassion for others;
Give up being unforgiving – learn reconciliation;
Give up words – fill yourself with silence and to others and God.



An anonymous piece, probably from Latin America, found by Liz Dowding

United Benefice of
Goring & Streatley
with South Stoke



Benefice Calendar - April 2017

			<u>Goring</u>	<u>Streatley</u>	<u>South Stoke</u>
Su. 2nd	Lent 5	Holy Communion	8.00	11.15	
		Family Service	9.30		11.15
		South Stoke APCM			12:00
		Evening Prayer	16.00		
		Discoverers	17:00		
Tu. 4th		South Stoke Prayer meeting 2.30pm @ Crossways			
We. 5th		Schools' Easter Service in Rectory Gardens	10:00		
		Midweek Holy Communion (note change of venue) followed by coffee		10.30	
Su. 9th	Palm Sunday	Holy Communion with procession before Streatley service	9.30	8.00 11:15	11.15
		Streatley APCM followed by Bring and Share Lunch		12:15	
		Stillness on Sunday		17.30	
We. 12th		Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
Th. 13th	Maundy Thursday	Holy Communion with foot washing		20:00	
Fr. 14th	Good Friday	Meditation	14:00		
		3:15 @ The Lock			
		Compline			18:00
Sa. 15th	Easter Eve	Easter Vigil		20:00	
Su. 16th	Easter Day	Holy Communion	8.00	11.00	
		Family Service & Said Holy Communion	9.30		11:00
We. 19th		Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
		South Stoke Coffee Morning			10.30
Th. 20th		Pick-a-Flick & Lunch showing 'Local Hero'	10.00		
Su. 23rd	Easter 2	Holy Communion	9.30	8.00	
		Holy Communion with confirmation			11.15
		Discoverers	17:00		
		Goring APCM	19:30		
Mo. 24th		Mum's Out Tonight 8pm, 18 Wallingford Road, Goring			
We. 26th		Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
Fr. 28th		Come on Board Scrabble (Canterbury Room)	15:00		
Sa. 29th		Coffee & Cake (Canterbury Room)	10.30		
Su. 30th	Easter 3	Holy Communion Godparents' Sunday	8:00 10:30		
		Adventure+ canoeists overnight stay	16:00		

Morning Prayer: South Stoke@9.30am every Friday; Goring@9.15am on 6th and 20th April. The ministry team pray the service of Morning Prayer together three times each week on Monday, Thursday and Friday at 8am during term time, and 8:30am during school holidays.