



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

July/August 2017 – 40th edition

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● Welcome to the fortieth 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.



Sunday 25th June: The Ordination of Steve Johnson

We all gathered at Dorchester Abbey to support Steve Johnson on this very special day. We were very fortunate to find seats in the side aisle, where we had a clear view of Bishop Colin's seat and the whole Ordination Service. It was a very uplifting service, especially at the moment of Ordination, when our Clergy gathered around Steve as Bishop Colin laid hands on him in this age-old Ceremony. Another moving moment was when Lindsay went up, together with her three girls, to the High Altar for Communion.

We wish Steve all the best for his continuing Ministry in the Benefice.



Sally Horton



Saturday 1st July: The Ordination of Wendy Middleton

From the north and the south, from the east and the west they came, to fill Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford where nine ordinands from the Archdeaconry of Dorchester were to be ordained deacon. Amongst them, Wendy Middleton to serve in our own Benefice of Goring and Streatley with South Stoke. The service was led by Steven, Bishop of Oxford, who completed the ordination by laying on of hands and giving each deacon a copy of the New Testament.



Colin, Bishop of Dorchester, gave the sermon – as insightful, personal and gracious as usual. Recalling his own ordination forty years earlier and reflecting on its significance with the benefit of experience he offered the advice: "Once a deacon, always a deacon." The service brought the congregation together with the ordinands through music, prayer, scriptural reflection and the familiar liturgy of our Anglican heritage. Wendy was supported by family and friends from the Benefice and beyond and by the ministry team. Following the service, deacons and supporters gathered in Tom Quad in the summer sunshine to meet, talk, congratulate and, of course, to photograph!

It was an uplifting and optimistic occasion and we are fortunate that committed and dedicated men and women continue to come forward to lead in witnessing the Christian message.

Thank you, Wendy, and all the ministry team.



Pastoral Letter: On getting old

When Charles approached me I thought he was a complete stranger. He gently enquired if I were Leighton Thomas. "Yes", I replied, "I am the very same." He still looked uncertain but then began, slowly at first and then much more quickly, to ramble on about events and people that we both remembered very well. In my mind I could almost hear him say to himself, "This can't be Leighton Thomas; he's old and very much changed!" With a little embarrassment on his part he continued the unfolding of his reminiscences, while I was giving my own secret reply: "Charles, I really am the same man as I was 35 years ago. I haven't changed a bit, not personally, not in my real self. In spite of these outward and visible distortions of face and features I really am the same guy!"

I write these things because as you read this note I will have attained that "Oh, Oh, Oh" station in my life, what the Old Testament describes as the marking up of four

score years. I realise of course that many readers of this newsletter will already have reached this milestone, but I am personally thankful that I have seen more anniversaries than, let us say, my father (67) or one of my late sisters (79). My mother's ultimate anniversary hangs before me (82) but I have a long way to go before I reach that of my elder sister (90), or, to put it another way, hope to qualify for membership of the much subscribed and fictional Goring and Streatley Nonagenarian Club. I have even further to travel if I am to reach the multiple years of Job (200) and Abraham (175). Methuselah will always remain the ultimate record scorer in these particular stakes, but who would want to live to the age of 969, I wonder: "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything"? Moses, in Biblical terms, was exceptional. When he died at the relatively youthful age of 120 "his sight was unimpaired and his vigour had not abated." Lucky man!

Moses was a walker and my medics advise me to engage in a similar exercise of daily leg-stretching. When we walk we help the blood to circulate and, in the course of our perambulations, we meet people. The notion of life as a Pilgrimage or as a journey is commonplace and has, since the time of John Bunyan, been taken up by poets and hymn writers. As I look over my life I recall persons with whom I have travelled, sometimes for a few moments, others for long periods, giving me pleasure and instruction and guidance, and a considerable amount of joy.

It is this metaphor perhaps more than any other that gives me a feeling of upliftment and encouragement. The two people who walked to Emmaus on the night of the resurrection unknowingly enjoyed the company of the risen Lord, and when they finally recognised him they pleaded with him to abide with them just a little longer. But he was disposed to go further, we are told. The road continues. And when we have reached the point of physical exhaustion and mental collapse and the fear of imminent oblivion (as the Bard puts it in the above quoted passage) he will come to us, recognize us, call us by name and walk with us. He will finally take us into his arms and carry us.

Till you grow old I am he. And when grey hairs come, I will carry you still. I have made you and I will carry the burden. (Isaiah 46.4,5)



Leighton Thomas



From the Vicarage: A reflection on Anglican Worship

An article from Bishop Colin Buchanan, published in *Praxis, news of worship*, June 2017.

Many moons ago I was a Church of England representative on the Council of the old British Council of Churches, the major national ecumenical instrument of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The different denominations in turn took responsibility for organising and leading our corporate worship at, say, Swanwick. Anglicans, Baptists, URC, Methodists and Salvation Army folk all had a go (Rome was not in membership), and imaginative leadership went into providing varied non-sacramental orders. The events varied denominationally in the hymns chosen, but they varied as much, I think, with the leaders' individual creativity.

So we all went along, sang the hymns, heard the word, assented to the prayers, and, when so bid, placed the pebbles in the wicker basket.

But the coming of West Indian Pentecostalism in the post-BCC world did not well fit this programme. To ask a leader from, say, the New Testament Church of God to lead an ecumenical group in the Council of Churches of Britain and Ireland (now Churches Together in Britain and Ireland) was a recipe for near-failure or a kind of soft implosion. Why? Well, because the corporate worship of Pentecostalism is corporate – the congregation is alive; bodies are swaying; faces are moving; arms are aloft; and there is a dynamic afoot, even an electricity, between the leader and the people. How then are such worship-leaders, well bonded with their people in their home assemblies, to stir into liveliness an atomized congregation of ageing orderly ecumaniacs, each used to formal worship, each unaccustomed to freedom of expression in worship, each well drilled in not rocking boats or stepping out of line in normal Sunday congregational life? I leave that scenario to your imagination – it is fairly strong in my memory.

However, perhaps it has something to say to our Anglican (and often ageing) congregations. My own Sunday activities vary between helping keep the show on the road in vacant parishes, going rather further than that in taking responsibility for leading worship in a vacant parish through the whole of Lent and Holy Week to Easter, and at intervals acting as a fall-back bishop doing confirmations when a front-line bishop is not available. I do therefore have opportunity to compare notes on how the services go.

It is very regular for folk to comment favourably at the door about confirmation services, even to the point of saying “How much livelier that was than most Sundays”. Now I do not think this evaluation is attributable to COB’s input (though I do my best). Rather I am able to reply: “The congregation makes the difference: with a confirmation, they get there earlier, they sit further forward, they love the candidates, they are expectant before we start, they are ready to sing, and they do not need cranking up as they may on some Sundays”. Of course the candidates add to this – not least with testimony, but also simply by being on show, being named, being identified, as believers. But it is the surging engagement of the congregation at large which is really distinctive.

Can that be prolonged? Can a minister so lead a Sunday congregation (perhaps by steps hardly visible from one week to the next) that a change comes over the whole sluggish scene? I think this is what we should mean by liturgical formation?



Paul Boughton



Services at St Mary's Church in Streatley

At the meeting of St Mary's PCC in June, discussion took place on the future format of Sunday services. A request had been made at the APCM in April to restore a second service of Matins in the month. After considerable debate, the majority members of the PCC voted to retain the existing format so a second Matins will not be restored.



John Rogers and Cynthia Hutt, Churchwardens



Parenting Children Course

This September, as a Benefice we will be running a parenting course. As we all know, children do not arrive with an instruction manual and yet no role we undertake is more important. Family life is under great pressure today and parents face bewildering choices and often conflicting advice about how to parent effectively. Being reminded that we are not alone in the challenges we face and picking up ideas from other parents can make a huge difference.

The Parenting Course is based on a course devised by the National Parenting Initiative and is for any parent with children in primary education. While the course is based on Christian principles, it is relevant and helpful for any parent with or without a Christian faith or church background.

We would love both parents to attend the course, but we recognise that this can be challenging for those with young children and so we are hoping to offer babysitters, if you find it difficult to find someone.

Topics covered in the course include:

- Laying strong foundations
- Love in action
- Setting boundaries and managing behaviour
- Building character
- Growing a confident child

Each evening will start with desserts and refreshments which will be followed by a talk and then discussion in small groups.

Where the course has been run previously, there has been good feedback; one participant said: "I'm feeling much more positive, more determined to have fun as a parent." And another: "I feel much encouraged and inspired by ideas for family time and have realised the importance of fun and security and of family life itself."

The course is free and will run on Thursdays from 21st September and then 5th and 19th October, 2nd, 16th and 30th November. Sessions will run from 7:45pm until 9:30pm and will take place in the Canterbury Room, Goring.

To let us know you are planning to come, or to request a possible babysitter please contact Steve Johnson, Assistant Curate via parenting@thomandmary.com



Proposed new Church of England Primary School for Goring 2017

We have received a request from the school governors to draw your attention to the proposals which have been put together for a new school. While the PCC remains neutral on the matter, the governors are keen that church members familiarise themselves with the proposals. The Board of Governors and the Diocesan Board of Education are in support. The information is on the school website at:

<http://www.goring.oxon.sch.uk/goring-primary-school/new-school-2/>



Brenda Kerr Muir



Donation 15th May 2017

On Sunday 15th May there was an envelope in St Thomas' collection plate which contained a significant donation towards PCC funds. As we do not have an address to which the PCC Treasurer may express our appreciation formally, we do so now through the Benefice newsletter. Very many thanks.



Brenda Kerr Muir and David Beddall, Churchwardens



Organ Recital by Bryan Almond

3pm Sunday 16th July in St Thomas' Church, Goring

Bryan Almond, assistant organist at St Mary's Primrose Hill, will be playing a varied programme including works by Widor, Vierne, Gigout and Dupre.

Entry is free, but donations to our organ fund would be welcomed. The recital will be followed by tea and cake in The Canterbury Room.



Organ Recital by Michael Howell

3pm Sunday 13th August in St Thomas' Church, Goring

Michael Howell, Director of Music at St Mary's Streatley and St Thomas' in Goring, will be playing a varied programme including works by Buxtehude, Bach, Mozart and Rheinberger.



Entry is free, but donations to our organ fund would be welcomed. The recital will be followed by tea and cake in The Canterbury Room.



Janet Pound piano recital

Janet Pound will be giving a Summer Piano Recital in St Mary's on Sunday 23rd July at 4pm in aid of St Mary's church funds. The recital will be followed by tea in the Morrell Rooms; donations for tea. Tickets are £8 full, £7 concessions, available from Inspirations in Goring from July, or on the door. Enquiries please email

StMarysConcerts@hotmail.co.uk



**Andrew Patterson Organ Recital
3pm Sunday 10th September in St Thomas'
Church, Goring**

Andrew Patterson, Director of Music at St Giles' Oxford and resident organist at Blenheim Palace, will be playing a varied programme including works by Bach, Vierne, Yon and Elgar.

Entry is free, but donations to our organ fund would be welcomed. The recital will be followed by tea and cake in The Canterbury Room.



**Ride and stride for churches
Saturday 9th September 2017 10am-6pm**

Last year this event raised nearly £120,000 for Oxford Historic Churches Trust - a remarkable achievement as the weather was very wet. Despite the rain, St Thomas' participants contributed £224 so do put the date in your diary and consider taking part this year. Sponsorship forms are available and you may wish to set 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. We have those forms too! Sponsored or otherwise we'd be grateful for offers of help so that the whole day is covered. Please add your name to the Welcomers' lists in church. Half the money we raise always comes to our own Church funds and this year OHCT has awarded St Thomas' a significant grant towards the repairs to the church tower. More information at <http://ohct.org.uk/ride-stride/> and <http://www.berkschurchestrust.co.uk>



St Thomas' Church Coordinator: Brenda Kerr Muir
St Mary's Church Coordinator: Angela Bulmer
St Andrew's Church Coordinator: Harry Hogg



Music for reflection on George Michael's birthday, 25th June



Photo by Ron Bridle.



Midori Komachi and Sophie Rosa Violin Duo Concert at St Mary's



Midori Komachi and Sophie Rosa gave a wonderful concert in St Mary's on Saturday 20th May. Although still in their 20s they are both extremely accomplished virtuoso violinists who usually play in top London venues and we feel very fortunate that they decided to visit us.

They presented us with some of the most challenging and spectacular violin duos that exist which made for a thrilling and thoroughly enjoyable evening. Their programme included EJ Moeran's *Sonata for Two Violins*, Alan Rawsthorne's *Theme and Variations*, Béla Bartók's *Duos for Two Violins Sz.98*, Louis Spohr's *Duo for Two Violins Op.67 in A minor*, and Handel-Halvorsen's *Passacaglia* arranged for two violins.

For those who missed this concert they really enjoyed their trip to St Mary's and are planning to return in 2018 or 2019.



Stella



The editor of Riverbank will be taking her customary break next month so will see you all again for September's issue. Until then, have a wonderful summer!

United Benefice of Goring & Streatley with South Stoke



Benefice Calendar - July 2017

		<u>Goring</u>	<u>Streatley</u>	<u>South Stoke</u>
Sa. 1 st	Ordination of Wendy Middleton 10am @ Christ Church cathedral, Oxford			
Su. 2 nd	Trinity 3 Holy Communion	8.00		
	Benefice Family Holy Communion Service	10.30		
	Evening Prayer	16.00		
Tu. 4 th	South Stoke Prayer meeting @ Crossways			14:30
We. 5 th	Midweek Holy Communion and coffee	10.30		
Fr. 7 th	Streatley Primary School leavers' service		14:00	
Sa. 8 th	Marriage of Simon and Samantha		14:00	
Su. 9 th	Trinity 4 Holy Communion	9.30	8.00 & 11.15	11.15
	Baptism	14:00		
	Baptism	15:00		
	Discoverers - end of term social	17:00		
	Stillness on Sunday – God's Love for Us		17:30	
Tu. 11 th	Celebration of the Life of Roger Nias	14:30		
We. 12 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
Su. 16 th	Trinity 5 Holy Communion visiting preacher at 11:15, the Diocesan Director of Ordinands	8.00	11.15	
	Good News Service visiting preacher as above	9.30		
	Mattins			11.15
	Organ recital by Bryan Almond Followed by tea and cake in the Canterbury Room	15:00		
We. 19 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
	South Stoke Coffee Morning			10:30
	Goring Primary School leavers' service	19:00		
Th. 20 th	Pick-a-Flick & Lunch - 'Tea with Mussolini'	10:30		
Sa. 22 nd	Marriage of Neville and Celia	12:00		
	Marriage of Richard and Rachel		13:30	
Su. 23 rd	Trinity 6 Holy Communion	9:30	8.00	11:15
	Sung Mattins		11.15	
	Piano recital by Janet Pound followed by tea in the Morrell Room		16:00	
We. 26 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10:30		
Fr. 28 th	Come on Board Scrabble (Canterbury Room)	15:00		
Sa. 29 th	Coffee & Cake (Canterbury Room)	10:30		
Su. 30 th	Trinity 7 Holy Communion	8.00	10:30	
	Baptism			14:30

During the months of July, August and September we will be studying the Apostles' Creed during our sermons at the 9:30 and 11:15 services, beginning on 9th July and continuing weekly from 23rd July. For more details: call the Vicarage (875651) or look at the Website www.thomandmary.org.uk.

United Benefice of Goring & Streatley with South Stoke



Benefice Calendar - August 2017

		<u>Goring</u>	<u>Streatley</u>	<u>South Stoke</u>
We. 2 nd	Midweek Holy Communion and coffee	10:30		
Su. 6th	Transfiguration Holy Communion	8.00	11:15	
	Good News Service with baptism	9.30		
	Family service			11:15
	Evening Prayer	16.00		
We. 9 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
Sa. 12 th	Marriage of Gavin and Sara		16:00	
Su. 13th	Trinity 9 Holy Communion	9.30	8.00 & 11.15	11.15
	Organ recital by Michael Howell Followed by tea and cake in the Canterbury Room	15:00		
	Stillness on Sunday – BCP evening prayer		17:30	
We. 16 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
	South Stoke Coffee Morning			10:30
Su. 20th	Trinity 10 Holy Communion	8.00	11.15	
	Good News Service	9.30		
	Mattins			11.15
We. 23 rd	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
Sa. 26 th	Coffee & Cake (Canterbury Room)	10:30		
Su. 27th	Trinity 11 Holy Communion	9:30	8.00	11:15
	Sung Mattins		11.15	
We. 30 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10:30		

During the months of August and September we will be studying the Apostles' Creed during our sermons at the 9:30 and 11:15 services.

For more details: call the Vicarage (875651) or look at the Website www.thomandmary.org.uk.