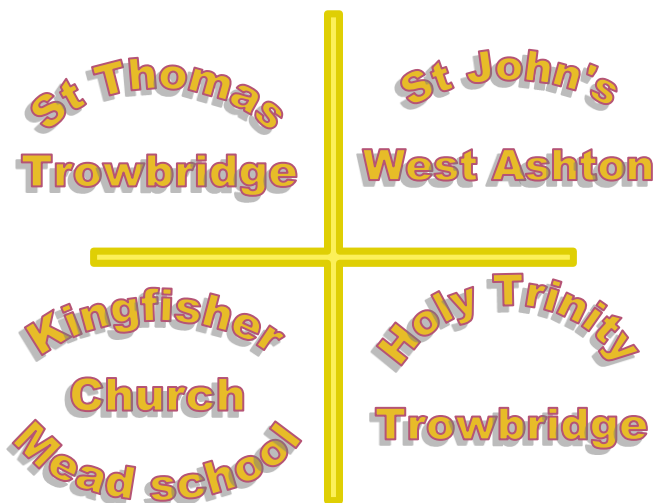


St Thomas', Trowbridge and St John's, West Ashton Monthly News April 2024



“The hand is the hand of God. The nail is the nail of God. And as the hands of Jesus opened for the nail, the doors of heaven opened for you.” —Max Lucado, American pastor & author

One Last Easter in Trowbridge!

Saturday 23 March was the 25th anniversary of my licensing as Vicar of St Thomas' and West Ashton, with my first services in the parish being on Palm Sunday 1999. The Good Friday March of Witness the following week was my first experience of Christians working together which has been such a big part of my time in Trowbridge. Forgive the reminiscences, but it's quite a year of



anniversaries for me: 5 years of marriage; 25 years in Trowbridge; 40 years in ordained ministry; and 50 years since, aged 15, I became a follower of Jesus. That's partly why it seemed like the right time to finish – as well as reaching state pension age in May!

What's the verdict after 40 years in church leadership – 25 of them here in Trowbridge? What have I learnt in all that time? The truth is that, over that time, you see the best and worst of Christians and the church! A Christian publisher once said to me (after telling me, not to my great surprise, that there wouldn't be a market for what I had just written), "*What I would really like would be for someone like you to write the whole truth about leading a local church... now that would sell!*" I didn't have to think for long before I realised why no one had... and why I certainly would not be doing so! We care too much about the people we live and worship with to 'dish the dirt'... and it probably wouldn't show us in a very good light either!

So, what can I say after all that time? I may be a bit less sure and strident than I was then; I may have more unanswered questions, and hopefully I'm a little more tolerant and *older and wiser!* But here's the thing: *I still believe that the Cross of Jesus changes everything.* That central Christian message still makes sense to me, just as it did when I first properly understood it aged 15. Even then, I realised that there is something tragically wrong with the world, and with the human race in particular. And I could see that a radical solution was needed to put things right... more radical than anything human beings are capable of.

As a teenager, it made sense to my heart, and it still does, that in some mysterious way I will never fully understand, Jesus' death and resurrection is that radical solution. The Bible gives a number of pictures of how it worked: a sacrifice for sin; a scapegoat; a benefactor paying off our debts; an advocate pleading in our defence; a physician healing a deadly disease; a champion fighting on our behalf and defeating sin, death and the devil. All those analogies speak deeply to me, but none of them fully explains how the Cross will eventually put everything right. And yet, deep within, I believe it will. Generations of people, like me, have heard that message, and instinctively known it to be true.

Many things have changed in the last 25 years – even more in the last 50 – but, for me, this one thing remains the same: *the Cross of Jesus changes everything*. I look forward to sharing this final Easter with you all in Trowbridge and West Ashton. Every blessing.

Allan

Answers to last month's quiz

1.Blackbirds 2.Sandpiper 3.Skylark 4.Dragonfly 5.Bull 6.Turtle Dove 7.Earwig
8.Mite 9.Daddy longlegs 10.Woodpigeon 11.Moorhen 12.Rattlesnake
13.Kingfisher 14.Snow Bunting 15.Bustard 16.Hare 17.Lizard 18.Panda
19.Goldcrest 20.Nightjar 21.Swift 22.Spoonbill 23.Nuthatch 24.May Fly
25.Grouse 26.Otter 27.Mole 28.Razorbill

St John's Update

March has seen Lent, Holy Week and Easter preparation. St John's had their annual fire extinguisher inspection, all passed ok. Mothering Sunday saw an attendance of 25 with Allan leading the worship. Thanks to Jean Covington for providing colourful posies for all the ladies at this service. The churchyard has been cut twice so far this year and I am somewhat baffled why the moles have returned, leaving their little mole hill calling cards. As we are a rural church set in beautiful countryside, they have hundreds of acres/fields to make their home, but the "determined few" pick the churchyard - bless them (in more ways than one!). Palm Sunday saw an attendance of 20 and as you can see by the separate photograph, a surprise visitor arrived at the end of the service. Frosty is a West Ashton celebrity and her owner Clare Humphries says that Frosty at 27 years old is always calm and takes all events in his stride. He was very relaxed and enjoyed the carrots which were fed him by the congregation.

(His coat was surprisingly soft that you just wanted to cuddle him). St John's has a service on Good Friday, 29 March - "An Hour By The Cross" at 2pm. The Easter Sunday Service will be on 31 March, at 10.30am.

"Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son, endless is the victory thou o'er death has won".

"Loving Saviour, You willingly died to save us from our sins. On this day of remembrance, give us a deeper sense of gratitude for this amazing gift. Amen.

Happy Eastertide to You All.

Jean Robertson



Ugandaid

Our lovely Church family have been so supportive of Pauline and I and our involvement in Ugandaid since 2011. As you know Steve and Helen Edwards from Ugandaid are joining us on April 28th .

We asked Steve for some prayer points and he's come up with the following, which are part information and partly prayer points. We thought you may be interested in some background information.

Steve's prayer points and information:

- First and foremost, we are deeply grateful to God for all that he has done. On so many occasions he has taken what, little, we have to offer and multiplied it beyond our wildest dreams. I'm thinking of our time, our energy, our gifts (or lack of) and of course financial resource.

A few headline figures:

- a. In 2002 the first 6 students were sponsored, now we have sponsored over 920 places at NVI
 - b. Over £1 million has been raised and sent to NVI: sponsorship and capital projects (building of the Mechanics Facility, the recent refurbishment of the Domestic Technology Department, refurbishment of three toilet blocks in the girls dorms, building of a new boys toilet block).
 - c. We've introduced nearly 300 different people to NVI through 535 spaces on our annual team visits.
 - d. 17 of the 300 have gone on to work on their own projects in Uganda, in different areas, such as evangelism, hospice, the slums, healthcare training and agriculture
- There are some key people in Uganda that support us, some since the very beginning. Without these people life would be very much more difficult. Please pray for their health and that of their families; thankfulness for their generosity of heart and that God blesses them abundantly:
 - a. NVI: The Director Edison, Joseph Kanninga, who acts as our co-ordinator (one of his many roles).
 - b. Our hotel: The owners, the Otile family and their staff.
 - c. Coach: This has been provided free, for years, currently by Farouk. And every year we are blessed by Katende, the driver

who collects us from Entebbe and returns us back, safe and sound.

- d. For the many friends we've made over the years, who are always willing to support us in what we are doing, in any way they can.

2.The students. After the students have been at NVI for a while, there is one sentiment that is always expressed, the fact that the individual has been given hope, where before there was none. We pray that:

- a.The new students, all 36 settle in well and feel cared for by NVI and their fellow students

- b.That they have hope, that may dare to dream and take advantage of this opportunity they have been given.

- c.For their health and wellbeing.

- d.That they will grow, in strength, in confidence, into the men and woman God intended them to be

2.NVI the challenges:

- a.Funding. As in all walks of life there, NVI is in need of modernisation, new equipment and additional infrastructure. They have had some support from Japan, the Netherlands and Germany, but it is has been fairly small scale. Please pray for God's provision.

- b.There have been a few new appointments, and we pray that they settle in well and prove to be best placed. There are still two key roles they are trying to fill, Deputy Director of Finance and Deputy Director of Training. Pray that they are able to fill these positions soon, with the right people.

2.The Country: The current President, Yoweri Museveni came to power on 29th January 1986 and is now the longest serving President. This in part has been because term limits were removed in 2005 and since then the upper age limit of 75 was removed (he'll be 80 this year). The presidential elections are every five years, with the next one due in February 2026. There is talk that one of his sons will be going up against him. During one election year, on being asked who a friend wanted to win the reply was, Amin used to steel from you, then kill you. Museveni just steels from you and they were scared of what the opposition could be like. Better the Devil you know! What to pray for, where do you start:

- a. For equality in its entirety
- b. For peace
- c. For justice
- d. For God's word to reign

As it turns out, pretty much the same as for the UK!

6. UgandaAid:

- a. That we don't waiver from our calling
- b. For new blood to start taking the reigns (succession)
- c. For guidance on future fundraising, particularly with current economic pressures on everyone
- d. For health, strength and an indistinguishable flame in our hearts

7. Edison is currently applying for a visa, for him and his wife, Hellen to come over in June. Pray that God has His hands on the application.

As you can see, much too much for the weekly prayer sheet! Anyway if you're able to join us for lunch on April 28th to bid for the amazing promises, to chat more to Steve and Helen or to enjoy soup, bread and fellowship, we'd love to see you!

Blessings from Jane Bullock and Pauline Butler.



Sunday 28 April

A simple soup, bread & cheese lunch, after church

Family £5, Adult £2

(profits from this to church funds)

Please sign up on the list at the back of church

Followed by an Auction of Promises for UgandaAid

(if you can't attend your bids can be given to Val)

A notice board of Lots will be available in church from 7 [April](#)

The Morning Break - Easter Special



As we came to the end of a very encouraging Autumn and Winter session serving coffees followed by a light lunch of soup, rolls, cakes etc, we rounded off with a well-attended special Easter event. We began at 11 with Easter biscuits served with coffee followed by a lovely lunch. After the meal we enjoyed some seasonal offerings culminating in a brief word from Allan. Along with most of our regulars, we were delighted to welcome a new visitor Pauline and her sweet little granddaughter Ella together with Sheila, her daughter and her little grandson Benjie. All the visitors left with a delightful little bag of Easter goodies put together by Kay and a lovely Easter Card that Marjory had made for us. By common consent it was a very enjoyable event.

We are very grateful to the 27 volunteers who have faithfully supported this community project and for coming up trumps with offerings of delicious food for this Easter Special, and preparing the rooms.

Beginning April 5th we switch from soup and rolls to an earlier start with coffee, cake and a chat! If you are free any Friday morning between 10.30 and 12, please feel free to drop in.

Geoff Tate and Linda Puttock

APCMs 2024

St. Thomas' and Kingfisher: Tuesday 30 April 7-30pm at St Thomas'.

St. John's: Friday 3 May 7-30pm in the church.

What is the APCM? The Annual Parochial Church Meeting – when Churchwardens, Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) and Deanery Synod Reps are elected; Annual Reports and Accounts are presented; and matters of importance for the parish are discussed... especially what will happen when Allan retires in June!

What are Churchwardens? Elected officers of the church who have responsibility for the practical running of Sunday Services, care of church buildings and generally assist and support the Incumbent (vicar). Currently they are Paul Edwards and John Chettleburgh (St Thomas'/Kingfisher) and Jean Robertson (St John's).

What is the Parochial Church Council (PCC)? A group of elected and ex officio members who share with the Vicar and Churchwardens in all major decisions regarding the parish and serve as trustees of church finances under charity law. There are four vacancies for St Thomas' PCC this year.

Who is eligible to vote at the APCM? Anyone resident in the parish, plus those on the Electoral Roll, can vote to elect Churchwardens. Only those on the Electoral Roll vote in elections to the PCC.

What is the Electoral Roll? A list of those who are regular worshippers or supporters of the church. If you are not on the roll (or are not sure) please check with John Reynolds (St. Thomas'/Kingfisher) or Joan Bond (St. John's). To be eligible you must be over 16, baptised (in any Christian church), and resident in the parish **or** have been a regular worshipper at the church for at least six months.

In other words... this is important! Participating in the governmental structures of the Church of England is a way we can all help turn our

vision for the Trowbridge area into reality. There is no perfect form of church government, but this one works pretty well!

So what should I do? Make sure you are on the Electoral Roll and come along to the APCM if you possibly can. Prayerfully consider standing for the PCC (or nominating others – with their permission!) Pray for and support those who are elected.

NB Finance Team. This year, we urgently need to identify, ideally 3 people, to form a Finance Team with a view to eventually taking over from Pat Kerbey (Treasurer).

Last year I replaced all the windows in my house with those expensive, double-pane, energy-efficient kind. Today, I got a call from Home Depot who installed them. The man complained that the work had been completed a year ago, and I still hadn't paid for them.

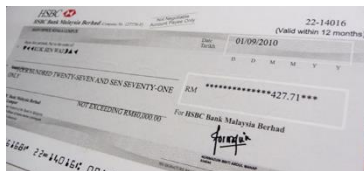
HHHelloo.....just because I'm blonde doesn't mean that I am automatically stupid. So, I told him just what his fast-talking sales guy had told me last year... that these windows would pay for themselves in a year.

Hellooooo, it's been a year, so they're paid for, I told him. There was only silence at the other end of the line, so I finally hung up. He never called back. I bet he felt like an idiot!!!

Finance Team:

14 years ago shortly after Geoff and I came to St Thomas' I remember sending an email to Margaret in the church office saying if she needed any help at all with admin just to let me know – I think I included finance in that too.

As a result of that I ended up in the role of Assistant Treasurer – which was very much getting cheques (remember them!!) signed, paying invoices and bookkeeping.



Somewhere during the 14 years I found myself in the role of Treasurer – I am not quite sure when, but I suspect it was over 10 years ago.

The PCC and I have now agreed that looking to the future we need to set up a Finance Team to cover various aspects of that role, rather than it resting on the shoulders of one person.



The ideal would be to have a team of 3 – with individual roles within the team and each member supporting one another. I think the role can fairly easily be split three ways with the make up of that team being the deciding factor in who does what!!

Is this something that you can be part of?

You don't need to be a 'Rachel Riley from Countdown' type whizz with figures, but you do need to have an awareness to spot the obvious (an example being if you post an entry of £1,000 and get a minus figure of £900 the original entry should probably have been £100!).



If you feel that you may have something to offer please have a word with me asap. Or perhaps you know something about somebody that makes you think they would make a real contribution to this team – encourage them to talk to me or let me know who, and I can chat to them – no press ganging, I promise!

I am happy to head up the team for the foreseeable future, but 2024 really is time we got this started now – and it would be very good if we could announce this team at the APCM at the end of April.

And I can't tell you how much most people appreciate you in this role – as they don't want to do it!!!

Pat Kerbey
22 March 2024

**Be grateful that no matter
how much chocolate you
eat, your earrings will still fit.**

Guide Dog Update

Gucci, 9 months old, 28.2kgs and lovely as ever.

She continues well in her basic training and the likely way forward for her will be that she is spayed at the end of June and then will move up to 'big school' (the advanced training centre) for the specialised training in August – this tends to last about 5 months and then another month spent training her and her new, blind owner together.

These timings could be thrown if she has a false pregnancy, something that happens to many of these lovely ladies, usually about 6 weeks after the end of their 'season'.

We went to puppy class last week – for various reasons she hasn't been to many and she was very excited. The floor of the hall was very slippery and she slid her way across - it was like her being on an ice rink! Fortunately I managed to keep my feet better than she did

She still loves playing with her selection of toys - but currently a large smoked shank bone is being enjoyed a lot. I am not fighting her for it but it does smell delicious, just like smoked bacon – apologies to vegetarians and vegans reading this!

We hope to take her to the beach at some stage soon, and look forward to her reaction to the rolling waves – she likes still water and puddles, but waves may be a different matter and all that salty air watch this space. Our planned visit was abandoned due to rain.

What is a dog's favourite tv programme?
Dog's Behaving Very Badly! Gucci was amazed by this little dog on Tuesday evening – I don't think she could make out how small it was and its fashionable clothing – all Gucci gets to wear is the Guide Dog Puppy in Training jacket



Cats Quiz

What do you know about CATS

No, this is not about your furry creatures that sleep on the sofa.

All the answers to the following clues begin with the letters CAT

1. Debacle, disaster, calamity
2. Shrill hoot of disapproval
3. Principal church of Diocese
4. Glass reflector on highways
5. Person who provides food
6. Substance to increase rate of chemical reaction
7. Negative electrode in an electrolytic cell
8. Structure in which water is collected
9. Underground burial place
10. Class or group of things, persons possessing some qualities in common
11. Tube in body passage for withdrawing fluid
12. Ensnare or deceive as by trickery
13. Used for violin strings
14. Twin hulled vessel
15. Narrow ramp used by models at fashion show
16. Baseball fielder behind home plate
17. To provide what is required
18. Short sleep or doze
19. Ship device to launch aircraft
20. Broadminded, liberal, comprehensive in interests
21. Alphabetical list of items
22. Large waterfall or rapids
23. Wormlike larva of butterflies, moths etc
24. Second wife of Peter the Great

That's it for now. Dictionaries away.

Springtime

Lord of green and growing spring -
Whose gentle power
Waylays us in an unexpected flower -
Today we bring
Garlands of mingled hope and fear:
But you are here
Though fears prevail and hopes are few:
God of springtime, make us new.

Christ of sad and solemn Lent,
We watch you go
Towards a cruel trial whose end we know:
And so present
New wreaths of joy to crown your pain:
For you will reign.
Such is our faith - so strangely true:
God of springtime, make us new.

Almighty Victor, Easter King -
Who played and won
And proved that love sustains the stars and sun -
We dare to bring
Our fragile lives for grace to fill
With glad goodwill:
And speak, in simplest love, with you.
God of springtime, make us new.

JC

Cautionary Tale when Emptying Church Waste Bins

St John's has one black general rubbish bin and two green waste bins. The two council owned bins are located near the church, while the other green bin is sited at the lower end of the churchyard. While tidying the churchyard on Thursday, I noticed that the green waste bin located in the churchyard needed emptying. I went to clear the plant debris only to find a broken glass container within the green waste. It was just by luck that I was wearing gloves as this glass could have caused serious injury. As you will see in the photograph attached, the bin clearly states "For Green Waste Only". Plant pots and flower wrapping are often found in this bin but not such a lethal broken glass vase. I was lucky this time thanks to my gloves. So, if you empty any church bin (normal or green waste), please check it is safe to do so to avoid injury.





Quiz Night



Saturday 20th April 2024
at 6.00pm

Tickets £3.00 each

Maximum of 4 people per team,
but teams can be formed on the night

Castle Street, Trowbridge, BA14 8AR. Phone 01225 752459

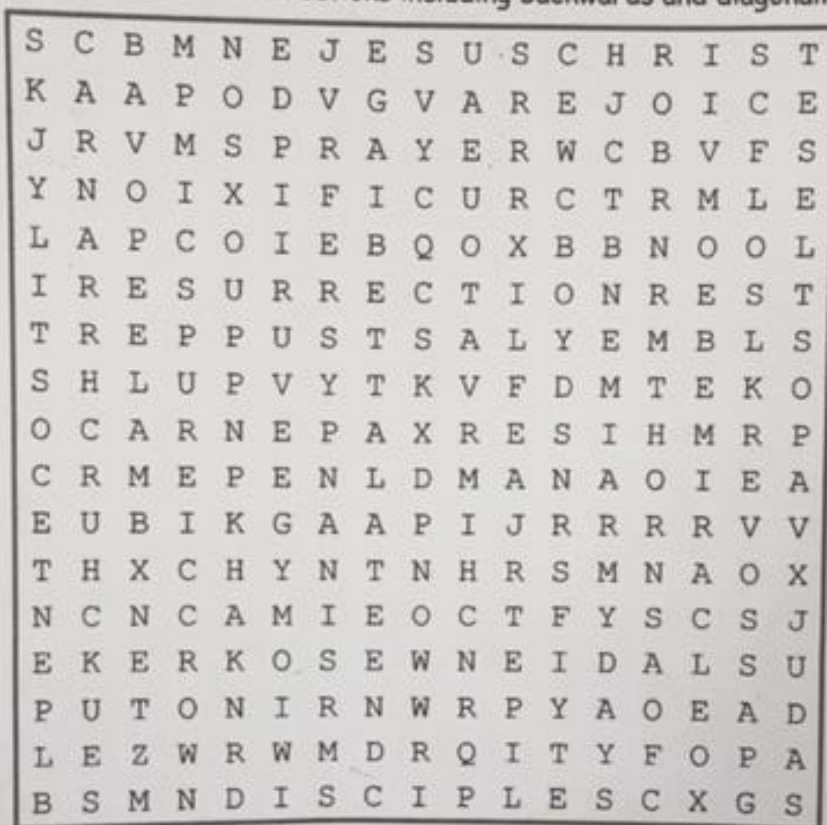
www.salvationarmy.org.uk/trowbridge



Easter Story

WORD SEARCH

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



APOSTLES
BETRAYAL
CAVE
CHURCH
CROSS
CROWN
CRUCIFIXION
DISCIPLES
FAITH
GOOD FRIDAY

JESUS CHRIST
JUDAS
LAMB
LAST SUPPER
LENT
MARY
MIRACLE
PASSOVER
PENANCE
PENTECOST

PRAYER
REDEMPTION
REJOICE
RESURRECTION
RISEN
SAVIOR
SON
THORNS
TOMB



AT EASTER TIME



I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD:
THE GOOD SHEPHERD GIVETH HIS LIFE
FOR HIS SHEEP.

JOHN 10:11