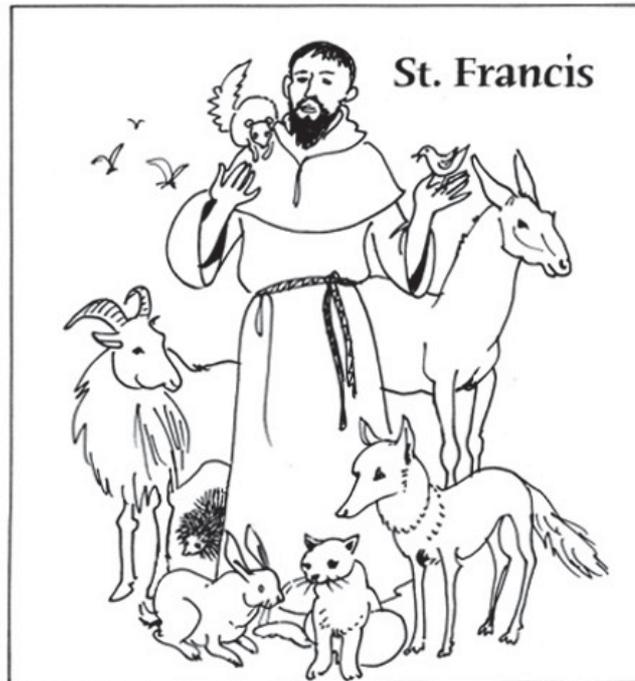


FOREST FIRE

October  2015



MAGAZINE

for the

Mid-Wyedean Churches

All Saints, Newland; All Saints, Staunton; Good Shepherd, Broadwell;
St John, Coleford; St Peter, Clearwell & St Saviour, Redbrook

Normal Service times:

St John's @ St Margaret Mary, Coleford	9:30 am most Sundays
All Saints, Newland	9:30 am most Sundays
All Saints, Staunton	9:30 am most Sundays
Good Shepherd, Broadwell	11:00 am most Sundays
St Peter's, Clearwell	11:00 am most Sundays
St Saviour's, Redbrook	16:00 all age worship 18 Oct 2015 (Third Sunday of the month)

Times may vary, please refer to the pew sheet or the Mid-Wyedean website
'www.mid-wyedeanchurches.co.uk' for further details

For this month's letter, I thought you might want to read extracts from Bishop Rachel's sermon from her inauguration service. It was a special occasion as receiving a new bishop always is, but of course, also an historic occasion as +Rachel is the first ever Diocesan Bishop in the Church of England.

She writes about how we live our Christian lives everyday - which is wonderful as I already hoped this could be our focus in the parish for the coming months.
Sarah

I am truly excited about the adventure ahead, not least getting to know this amazing part of the country which is unfamiliar territory.

Although the name of Gloucester was not unfamiliar to me (I'd like to say that's due to my familiarity with rugby, but sadly that's not true and I've got a lot to learn - so it's good to be arriving at the same time as the World Cup!)

The name of the *City* of Gloucester is actually familiar to me from my childhood - Not only the Beatrix Potter story of the Tailor of Gloucester but also that nursery rhyme when we splashed in puddles:

Dr Foster went to Gloucester in a shower of rain
He stepped in a puddle, right up to his middle, and never went there again.

As I recently recalled those words amidst some rather persistent rain, it made me want to know the origin of the rhyme. And I discovered that the rhyme is believed to be connected with Edward I in the 13th century. He supposedly travelled to Gloucester, fell off his horse into a puddle and refused to return to the city. I suppose that was out of a sense of anger and humiliation - perhaps fearful of what others would think of him given his status.

At the start of my ministry here as bishop it is very important to remember that I am a flawed human being - just as you are. We have all stumbled and fallen numerous times throughout our lives, and will continue to do so. And one of my hopes as I come here as bishop is that we will be willing to be vulnerable with one another - Not to hide our human weaknesses or to see ourselves as above others, but rather to respect and value one another in our different roles and lives, and enable one another to get up again and again, knowing God's love and forgiveness.

But back to that nursery rhyme: Why tell this rhyme to children?

Well, it has been said that many years ago before modern roads, this rhyme was a warning to children that what might appear to be a shallow puddle could in fact be much deeper.

And suddenly that rhyme seemed to connect with what I want to say today because I want to focus on the **waters of baptism**:

What might *look* merely like a trickle on the forehead or even a plunge in a font or baptismal pool, is actually much deeper than we might expect.

Thank you Fergus and Amaya for greeting me at the font and sprinkling me with water, because unlike that puddle in the nursery rhyme, the waters of baptism are *not* waters to flee and to never go near again... although they are risky. And the Greek word from which we get the word baptism can be translated as 'to drown.'



In recent months that word has extra poignancy as the media continue to bring stories of people drowning at sea in their efforts to flee their homelands. A few months ago I was struck by a scene of people escaping Eritrea, singing hymns on a crowded boat as they sought a new life. And they were singing in praise of their God whose life is stronger than death.

And that takes us back to the **drowning of baptism**.

Not a drowning to be feared or mourned, but an invitation to life stronger than death.

In the Apostle Paul's letter to the church in Corinth which we heard read today, we are reminded that those who have said 'yes' to Christ have died with him. "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We have been raised with Christ from the waters of death. No shallow puddle. And as we begin a new chapter of ministry here in this diocese, I want us to go back, to return, to reflect once more on our baptism so that we can journey forward together with a renewed sense of confidence and purpose. And those of you here today who would *not* wish to identify yourself as a follower of Christ, I hope you might dare to be curious. Possibly, if you will forgive the pun, to dip your toe in and see where it might take you.

So let's go back and think a little on the waters of our baptism: What does it mean for our lives *now* amidst all the ups and downs? What might it look like in this diocese if we dared to truly grasp hold of the truth that we have been drowned in the deep waters of baptism and have been raised with Christ from the waters of death?

A couple of years ago Guy and I decided to take up canoeing and at the end of our first canoeing class we did indeed have to capsize.

I can promise you that the Thames in Tower Hamlets is not a place I would choose to do this. It was a dark evening in March and the water was extremely murky and very cold. No shallow puddle. I couldn't get out quick enough. And as the little group staggered up the path from the dockside we left puddles of water and footprints all the way which glistened in the city lights of the dark evening.

A 21st-century theologian called Michael Jenkins says of Christian baptism: "*we are soaked to the skin in the death of Christ. Our union with Christ drips from us... We trail wet footprints of this drenching wherever we go; we never dry off.*"

One of my great hopes and prayers is that as the Anglican Church in this diocese we will be people of all ages and backgrounds who amidst both the struggle and joy of our lives, renew and increase our confidence to trail the waters of our baptism across every part of this diocese... and beyond; and that those baptismal footprints will be transforming.

Our Gospel reading today comes just after Jesus has called his first disciples - fishermen who would have known all about leaving wet footprints! Very soon after Jesus has called them he teaches them with those strange, profound words that we heard read: Blessed are the poor in spirit... Blessed are those who mourn... Blessed are the meek... (Matthew ch.5 v.1-16)

Extraordinary words that should unsettle us and challenge us.

Jesus says to his followers: '*You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world*' (Matt.5v.13-14). This is echoed by Paul when he talks about Christ's followers being '*ambassadors for Christ... since God is making his appeal through us*'. (2 Cor 5v.20)

Amidst our joys and struggles how are the people and places of our daily lives encountering the light of Jesus love and hope in word and action -where we live, or work, or shop, or spend leisure time? How does who we are as followers of Christ impact on the hopes and needs of those around us... and even in the way we engage with complex wider world issues such as those people drowning at sea?

Let me read some *more* words, which should also be unsettling and challenging. This time words from the diocesan vision statement:

The Diocese of Gloucester seeks under God to be a resilient, dynamic and transforming gospel presence in and around Gloucestershire.

Surely, this is all about being salt and light; letting our light shine before others; being those 'ambassadors for Christ'.

As I draw to a close, I have a challenge for us which is about how we might encourage one another to better see and understand ourselves as those who have been called to join in with God's work of reconciling the world through Christ, in all that we are and do. And in that, I have a specific challenge about the way we introduce ourselves to one another. The challenge is this:

If you are someone who identifies yourself as a baptised Christian, before you tell me the place where you worship or a church role you might have, can you share with me something of where you spend your week - where *you* are called to be that transforming gospel presence Monday to Saturday, as well as Sunday.

Perhaps you are a carer, a teacher, a young person at school, a grandparent, an engineer, a volunteer... I don't know - but I'd love to get a glimpse of all the different places where different individuals are trailing their wet baptismal footprints as disciples of Christ, and I want to urge us to be constantly encouraging one another to understand that *being* church is what we are *sent out* to do:

Today's service culminates in a 'Sending Out for Mission and Ministry' - saying Yes to the work of the Holy Spirit in us as we seek to share Christ's hope and love and be that *transforming gospel presence*.

The 'Sending Out' will include being sprinkled with water from the font, just as I was when I entered. And we will have the opportunity to recommit ourselves together to living out our baptismal calling as we are sent out to be ambassadors for Christ, living those radical beatitudes.

In the power of the Holy Spirit may we grow in confidence to leave our unique wet footprints of our baptism wherever we go - Not to try and hide them or wipe them clean.

And of course we *will* fail and fall, but unlike Edward Ist may we dare to get up again and again, and continue the journey... *For the love of Christ urges us on* (2 Cor 5v.14).

Let me finish with the words I said at the font when I first entered the cathedral this afternoon:

I am Rachel, a pilgrim and servant of Jesus:

I have come as one seeking the grace of God

so that, journeying together as the fellowship of the baptised and the body of Christ,

we may proclaim the love of God

and that God may be worshipped, trusted and adored by all. Amen.

COLEFORD CHURCHES

(the News Sheet of Coleford Churches)

COMING EVENTS

If you have any exciting events planned and would like them mentioned on these pages please contact me either by phone or e-mail. Information below.

October

- Friday 2 Presentation Evening & Dinner Dance at Whitmead Forest Park, Parkend, 3 course meal and entertainment, £25, 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm, in aid of Forest Pulse and Great Oaks Hospice.
- Saturday 3 The Mallards Pike Walk for Heart Health (open to all fitness levels) - first Saturday of the month, 10.15 am, for more details contact Chris Howell, 836813.
- Sunday 4 The Elms Harvest Service, 3.30 pm, Churches Together Event.
- Sunday 4 English Bicknor Harvest Festival Service.
- Monday 5 Singing for the Brain, 1st & 3rd Monday of every month, 11.00 am until 12.30 pm at Main Place, Coleford. Run by Alzheimer's Society for people with any form of Dementia and their carers.
- Tuesday 6 CAMEO meet at Good Shepherd, from 2.30 pm.
- Wednesday 7 Walk for Health Initiative, 10.30 am from Main Place, approx 1 hour, more details contact Chris Howell 836813.
- Wednesday 7 **NO** Active Balance Class at Coalway Methodist Church (Weekly omitting the first in the month).
- Thursday 8 Craft Club meets at Good Shepherd, 1.30 - 3.30 pm.
- Saturday 10 Quiz Night, with Ploughman's supper, 7.00 pm for 7.15 pm, at Catholic Church Hall, everyone welcome.
- Sunday 11 Good Shepherd, Broadwell, special Sunday when people who would like transport to Church can have this arranged just phone Katherine on 834378 for more information
- Sunday 11 Christchurch Church, Messy Church, 3.00-5.00 pm. Refreshments, crafts, celebration and afternoon tea. All age (no unaccompanied children) email messyceb@gmail.com for more details.
- Wednesday 14 Walk for Health Initiative, 10.30 am from Main Place, approx 1 hour, more details contact Chris Howell 836813.
- Wednesday 14 Active Balance Class at Coalway Methodist Church (Weekly omitting the first in the month) 10.30 - 12 noon.
- Thursday 15 Craft Club meets at Good Shepherd, 1.30 - 3.30 pm.
- Thursday 15 "Hot Potato" Night at White Horse at Staunton, 7.30 pm. (3rd Thursday).
- Saturday 17 "Coffee and Chat" get together at St Margaret Mary Church Hall, hosted by "St John's" congregation, open to everyone, not a fund raiser just a chance for a drink and a chat, giving more time than on a Sunday morning. Everyone is welcome from all churches or none, 10.00 - 12 noon. (3rd Saturday).
- Saturday 17 Redbrook Village Hall, Evening with Dick Brice, 7.30 pm, £10 to include Ploughman's supper. Contact 01600 712711 or from Village Stores.
- Saturday 17 Diocesan Quiet Day in Cheltenham.
- Monday 19 Coleford Baptist Church, Coffee Break, 10.30-12 noon, need a lift then contact Maureen Etherington on 836303. (3rd Monday)
- Monday 5 Singing for the Brain, 1st & 3rd Monday of every month, 11.00 am until 12.30 pm at Main Place, Coleford. Run by Alzheimer's Society for people with any form of Dementia and their carers.
- Monday 19 Parish Service Singing Group meet 7.00 pm at Good Shepherd.
- Tuesday 20 CAMEO meet at Good Shepherd, from 2.30 pm.
- Tuesday 20 *Deadline for November edition of Forest Fire*
- Wednesday 21 Walk for Health Initiative, 10.30 am from Main Place, approx 1 hour, more details contact Chris Howell 836813.
- Wednesday 21 Active Balance Class at Coalway Methodist Church (Weekly omitting the first in the month) 10.30 - 12 noon.
- Thursday 22 Craft Club meets at Good Shepherd, 1.30 - 3.30 pm.
- Sat/Sun 24/25 **Summer time ends** (hour "falls back" - gain an hour).

Sunday 25	Mid Wyedean Benefice Service at Good Shepherd, 10.30 am, followed by bring and share lunch.
Wednesday 28	Walk for Health Initiative, 10.30 am from Main Place, approx 1 hour, more details contact Chris Howell 836813.
Wednesday 28	Active Balance Class at Coalway Methodist Church (Weekly omitting the first in the month) 10.30 - 12 noon.
Thursday 29	Craft Club meets at Good Shepherd, 1.30 - 3.30 pm.
Saturday 26	Coalway Methodist Church charity coffee morning, from 10.30 am, all welcome.
Saturday 31	"Skylight" at Mitcheldean Playing Fields (Alternative to Halloween) Fireworks etc.

The Forest Community Cafe At The Angel, Coleford

The Forest Community Café is open at The Cavern Bar of The Angel Hotel, Coleford (entrance via St John's Street) from 10am until 12 noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All are welcome so please do come along, many do. (We are going to have an item on this wonderful local resource hopefully in the July edition of the magazine, well done Eve and her helpers and "The Angel" for providing the venue for this resource.)

Cafe And Church At Salvation Army - Broadwell

Sunday - 17.00 - Family Service
Monday - 11.00 Knit and natter
Tuesday - 10.00 - Cafe open.
16.30 - Cookery
Friday - 10.00 - Cafe

Look on website to see full details of what is on offer and phone numbers to contact - salvationarmy-fod.org.uk

Community Transport

Search for Community Transport on the district council website www.fdean.gov.uk

Or contact

Anna-Marie Hitchings - Tel: 01594 812613 or Anna-Marie.Hitchings@fdean.gov.uk

Family History Help Desk at Coleford Library

On the first Friday of the month between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm, Chris Howell will be at Coleford Library

St Margaret Mary's Church Hall - High Nash -

Busy Bees Parent/Carer Toddler Group

Every Tuesday the group meet in the Church Hall, 9.30 - 11.45 am. For children 0-5 years - parents/carers stay and chat while the children play.

Little Angels - Parent and Toddler Group Mount of Olives Church.

Tuesdays 10.30 am - 12.30 pm, in term time.

Coleford Baptist Church - Tiggywinkles

Parent and toddler group meet Friday mornings from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm during term time. Only £1 per family. For further info contact Margaret Woodward on 832025 or Sally Thomas on 833943. It is a chance for mums, dads, grandparents or carers to meet in the large hall, play and craft activities and offer drinks for the adults, fruit and milk for the children.

THE DEADLINE DATE WILL BE ON THE 20th OCTOBER

TO ALL READERS/CHURCHES - PLEASE PASS ON ANY DATES OF SPECIAL SERVICES OR EVENTS THAT YOU WANT PUBLISHED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ROBERT RIVERS, HIS E.MAIL ADDRESS IS DETAILED BELOW.

This news sheet is produced by Robert Rivers - Tel No 836593 - rivers_robert@hotmail.com
Produced by St John's Church, Coleford, on behalf of the Coleford Covenanting Churches.
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STAUNTON AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Abbey Dore Court Garden was our last visit this year and 17 members and friends braved the rain showers to enjoy this amazing venue in Herefordshire.

A six acre plant lovers' garden with formal, wild and river areas set in glorious countryside. There is also a further 4 acres of meadow full of unusual trees. Initially you will be greeted by bamboos, trees and shrubs with several borders adding colour and interest. Brick paths divide the walled garden into nine areas. Two long borders with good collections of helleborus, paeonia, astrantia, and ferns take you down to the river. Beyond, a 4-acre arboretum of young and unusual trees leads to one of many seats where one can sit and enjoy the peace of the garden. A small nursery specialising in herbaceous perennials is a real joy with an excellent selection of plants for sale. Charis Ward who has developed this garden over the years is a fountain of knowledge about the plants and is only too happy to share her experience.

Following our tour, it was a real joy to come back to a very welcome cup of tea and wonderful home-made cakes.

Our September meeting was marked by a return to the village hall after the garden visits during the summer months. Naomi Cryer was our speaker who gave her illustrated talk on the creation of a pond at her home.

Last year a group from the club had a private visit to her garden which is registered with the NGS and we all commented on the beauty of the pond which is set in a picturesque location.

Naomi showed pictures from the commencement of the pond construction four years ago to the mature pond which now exists, She explained that pond plants are divided into six broad groups and pointed out the various plants she had chosen within each group.

Next month we have a talk on Trees in our Gardens on October 12th.

If you would like to hear about our speakers for the remainder of the year do give Derek a call on 01600 775392, we welcome visitors to our meetings and would love to meet you!

Calais migrant church leader happy to stay in camp

Mima, the Ethiopian pastor of the church in the so-called 'Jungle' refugee camp in Calais has said he is no longer trying to get to the UK. Instead, he believes God wants him to stay and help distressed people in the camp.

In a recent interview with Premier Radio Mima said: "Maybe Jesus has brought me here. For me it's a better than to go to England." And in a message to Christians in the UK, he said: "If you can, come and visit us and see. If you can't do that - pray. Pray for the immigrant people...the ones who are dying on the Mediterranean Sea, those who are dying on the train station when they try to go to England. All Christians need to pray for these people. Ask Jesus to give us protection and send the angels. We're eating once a day. We don't have any facilities. People are dying."

In light of recent criticism of the migrants from various quarters of British life, the Church of England has called for more sympathy for those in the camp. The Bishop of Dover, the Rt Rev Trevor Willmott, told Premier Radio:

"Some of those people in Calais at the moment have come from the most horrific situations, where they've been subject to violence; where they've had their homes destroyed. And we have to say to ourselves what would happen to us if we were in that place? We're very fortunate in England, we've got freedom."

October 2015

A message for Bible Sunday, 25 October from the Archdeacon of Gloucester, the Ven Jackie Searle

'I rejoice at your word, like one who finds great treasure' Ps 199:162



One rainy day, a few years back, I spent a happy half an hour in the Sir John Ritblat Treasures gallery of the British Library. 'Treasures' is the right word. Along with scribbled lyrics by John Lennon and hand-written script from Charlotte Bronte and Shakespeare, was a 4th century fragment of the gospel of St John. I stood in awe and looked for a long time at the neat Greek script on ancient, torn parchment. I thought of the original writer, the careful copying, the safe keeping and guarding of such treasure over centuries.

It is so easy for us to take the Bible for granted, opening it up as we can these days on our tablets or screens. Bible Sunday is a reminder to rejoice at God's word, like one who finds great treasure.

We remember with gratitude the authors, the copiers, the guardians, the translators, the printers, the publishers, many of whom risked or gave their lives that we might access this treasure in our own homes, in our own language, every day. Let us value this treasure and, like them, make sure we pass it on.

Pinterest board

The Diocese of Gloucester has now joined Pinterest, the virtual online scrapbook. The aim is that we can collect useful websites, resources and information which our followers can see at a glance. We have a board where you can view all the Anglican Church websites in the Diocese, a board of quotes and inspiration and a seasonal resources board where you can find free printables, tools and resources and helpful hints about using social media to help your church in its mission. Visit Pinterest and search glosdioc to find our page and don't forget to follow us for the latest updates.

Shopping to help the homeless

The Church Housing Trust will be getting £1 every time people purchase from online clothing and fashion boutique Style Loyal.com The Church Housing Trust helps those without homes to rebuild their lives. To start shopping for a good cause, visit www.styleloyal.com

Pray for the Rugby World Cup

Is your church holding an event to celebrate the Rugby World Cup? Diocesan Sports Ambassador the Revd John Longuet-Higgins would like to encourage prayer across the diocese for all the events that are happening. A prayer calendar is on the diocesan website www.gloucester.anglican.org/church-outreach/rugby-world-cup Send your events to kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk

Faith in the world: Councillor Paul McLain, Cabinet member for children and young people and commissioning at Gloucestershire County Council.



Have you or someone in your church ever considered becoming a foster carer? Gloucestershire County Council is in need of foster carers for children of all ages but especially older children, teenagers and children with additional needs.

All children are different, and to meet their needs, the county council is looking for a wide variety of people from many different backgrounds. For some fosterers, faith is a motivating factor. What all foster carers have in common is a desire to care for young people to help them achieve their full potential. Foster carers need to be patient, tolerant and resilient and having a good sense of humour is very useful.

Foster carers with the county council receive substantial support including a dedicated fostering social worker, monthly home visits, ongoing training and monthly support groups. In addition foster carers receive a weekly maintenance and skills allowance that can amount to more than £300 a week if you foster a teenager. Fostering families with a church background may also benefit from having a supportive church community around them who are willing to listen, help and understand.

If you are over 21, have a spare room (or rooms for siblings) and feel that you are being called to foster, contact the county council's fostering team on 01242 532654, find a drop-in event or fill in an enquiry form at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/fostering

Events and training

The Times and Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival, Bishop Rachel, Lucy Winket and Joanna Jepson

Wednesday 7 October, 2pm to 3pm

A conversation about the role of women in the Church and the future of the Church of England.

To book visit www.cheltenhamfestivals.com

A concert with the Beacon Gospel Choir and Out of the Ashes Music Group

Saturday 7 October, 7.30pm

Venue: St Bartholomew's Church, Lower Cam

Tickets £10 including light refreshments, available from Marilyn King on 01453 545772.

Proceeds to St Bartholomew's Church.

Desiring God, led by the Revd Dr Anne Phillips

Sunday 10 October, 10am to 3pm, St Nicolas'

Church, Cheltenham

A day of reflection and prayer with talks. Cost £12. To reserve a place contact the Revd Pauline Green on 01454 311936 or pgreen@clara.co.uk
See more at www.snfglos.org.uk

NHS thanksgiving service

Wednesday 21 October, 5.30pm, Gloucester Cathedral

If you would like to show your gratitude to the NHS staff who have cared for a loved one, please come along to this special thanksgiving service.

Exploring Christian Vocations

Saturday 31 October, 10am to 4pm, 4 College Green, Gloucester.

Exploration day, led by the Revd Pauline Godfrey. Contact nkent@glosdioc.org.uk for more information or to attend.

Have your say at www.facebook.com/Diocese.of.Gloucester or email Katherine at kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk. Follow us on Twitter at [@glosdioc](https://twitter.com/glosdioc), or see our website: www.gloucester.anglican.org or blog <https://glosdioc.wordpress.com>

COFFEE AND CHAT

On 3rd Saturday of each month there will be a coffee and chat morning at the church hall of St Margaret Mary in Coleford, from 10 until 12, for the two congregations that share the Church especially but everyone is welcome. A chance for fellowship in our community - this is NOT a fund raiser.

QUIZ NIGHT AT ST MARGARET MARY HALL, SATURDAY 10TH OCTOBER, 7.00 PM FOR 7.15PM :-

Quiz night with Ploughman's supper in St Margaret Mary Hall, an opportunity to meet up with Father Barnabas and our Roman Catholic friends again, following the very successful beetle drive last year. All welcome. £5 suggested donation towards the cost of refreshments.

CHRISTIAN AID BAG PACK AT CO-OP ON AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY SATURDAY

Thanks to those church members who helped, the generous shoppers who gave, and especially the Co-op for allowing us to do the bag pack.

The money raised was a wonderful **£419.98**. Special thanks to Enid who did the organising and extra special thanks to Harvey from The Good Shepherd, who sat happily in his pushchair whilst the bag pack was taking place, and generated a lot of interest - don't say we don't make them aware of charity work at an early age!!!

Dave and I would like to thank all our friends, both near and far who sent cards, good wishes and prayers for Dave and me as he underwent serious surgery in Gloucester Royal Hospital. I am pleased to say that he is now home and making an excellent recovery, although it will be a while before he is 'back to normal'.

We would also like to express our thanks to our many friends at Christchurch church who have been so supportive to us both during Dave's stay in hospital.

Joan and Dave Atherley.



Lesley and Alan's daughter, Sarah, duly completed her charity cycle ride on August 21st, just making it "home" before darkness fell completely. The ride took over thirteen and a half hours, with ten hours twenty-three minutes being spent actually in the saddle. It was very challenging, with a head wind against in the first fifty miles and several steep climbs in the final fifty. The total distance covered was over 150 miles.

Sarah is very grateful for the support she received from friends here in Coleford, even though she left home some years ago. Her efforts have so far raised over £1,300 for the Forest of Dean Children's Opportunity Centre, based here in Coleford.



Photograph taken at a Baptism Service in the Church of the Good Shepherd. Extra chairs had to be put out and the regulars were sat up in the choir stalls, they too were full. It is good to see our church filling up in this way.

What does baptism mean? It marks the beginning of life in Christ, the only new identity that fundamentally and eternally

matters. Other identities come after this, we are Christian first and foremost not male or female (gender), not Jew or Gentile (ethnicity), not rich or poor. Sometimes people look upon baptism as a naming ceremony, but this is NOT what it is really about. In the past, in many parts of the world people would (and still do in parts of the world) often take a new name when they become Christ's (their Christian name), but baptism is not about naming but about belonging to Christ. This is so serious and fundamental that in parts of Africa baptism candidates are asked 'are you prepared to die for being a Christian?'

There was a person who having been baptised as a baby, remembered nothing about it and was not brought up in a Christian, or even a churchgoing family (yes there is a difference). When this person, at the age of 18, became a Christian they wanted to be baptised but was firmly, and kindly told they could not be. However they were told that they could renew the baptismal promises, or could be confirmed but could not be re-baptised because baptism is once and for all. It is still Church of England policy to this day not to re-baptise.

This could be a good topic for 'Hot Potato' - have you never been to this? Then do come along and enjoy some good, light hearted discussions not always on religious topics.

JS GS

Thank you, Dr Luke! By David Winter

This month Luke, the writer of the third gospel, has his feast day - 18th October. He was, we learn from the letters of St Paul, a 'physician' - an educated man and probably the only one of the writers of the New Testament who was not a Jew. In modern terms he was Turkish. Paul took him as one of his missionary team on a long journey around the Middle East, and they clearly became close friends. Under house arrest later in his life Paul could write, 'only Luke is with me'.

However, it is his Gospel which has established him as a major figure in the history of the Christian Church. Mark's Gospel may have more drama, Matthew's more prophetic background and John's a more profound sense of the mystery of the divine, but Luke offers us a Jesus who is utterly and believably real. He was also a masterly storyteller. Try, for instance, the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). Read it (this time) not as a sacred text but as a brilliant piece of story-telling.

There are more women in Luke's Gospel than in any of the others, but also more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners' and tax-collectors, more 'outsiders' who are shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. This, for many of us, is the great Gospel of compassion. Thank you, Dr Luke!

Bookings

If you would like to find out about or arrange a wedding or a Christening (they are free) in one of the churches, then you can contact either Revd Sarah Bick on 01594 835476 or Revd Alan Wearmouth on 01594 832660



Baptisms

06/09/2015	Thai Cody JONES
06/09/2015	Theo Eric JONES
13/09/2015	Ava-Grace Rose WOOD
20/09/2015	Harley Alfred GORDON
20/09/2015	Lily Mia KEIGHLEY
20/09/2015	Charlie JENNINGS
20/09/2015	Leo JENNINGS
20/09/2015	Star JENNINGS
20/09/2015	Preston JENNINGS.



We pray for those baptised and their parents that they might come to know the love of Christ

Wedding

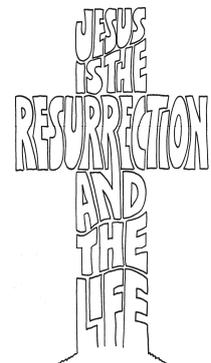
04/09/2015	Georgina AKERMAN and James BRAITHWAITE
12/09/2015	Robert Reuben SMITH and Tanika BARLETT-SMITH
19/09/2015	Curtis GREEN and Melissa MOULD.

We pray for these couples that their love may come to mirror the love of Christ.

Funerals

03/09/2015	Beverley (Mr) PEWTNER
07/09/2015	Summer Elizabeth May SMITH
17/09/2015	Cyril EDEY
28/09/2015	Joyce BEACH.

We pray that they may rest in the love of Christ and those who mourn may find comfort in the love of Christ.



Family Feast and Fun "Pie Night"

As promised, the Family Feast and fun afternoon returned to the Salvation Army centre in Broadwell on 27th August, for its last run of the summer. Many thanks again to Emma and Richard for leading the activities for the children and young people.



Once again, our group of Mums and volunteers got inspired in the kitchen and produced a feast for the eyes and the tummys with a giant steak and mushroom pie, and a butternut squash, sweet potato and bean pie for the vegetarians.

Funnily enough, it was the meat eaters who were going in for seconds of the Veggie pie, as it was so tasty. Combined with potatoes, cabbage and carrots, it formed a healthy and satisfying meal.



The few leftovers were soon packed into containers and snapped up for take-aways. Rice pudding and peach flan were on offer for pudding, reminding many of Sunday dinner with Granny, which was probably the last time many people had eaten rice pudding made from scratch and baked in the oven



The general feeling was that the three sessions had been a great success, inspiring a number of the participants to be more adventurous with their cooking, and showing just what can be done on a limited budget. Some people wanted to continue through the autumn, once a fortnight, but unfortunately, we don't have the staff or resources to do

that, so our next meeting will be in the October half term, when we just might stage a version of "Ready, Steady, Cook" turfing out our fridges and freezers and make a meal of whatever turns up!

If you have any suggestions, comments or offers of help, then please contact Anne Harley email annedave123456@gmail.com, or Viv Prescott at Forest of Dean Salvation Army email Vivienne.Prescott@salvationarmy.org.uk

If you know of anyone who would benefit from coming along, then the same applies



EDITH CAVELL

Edith Cavell was a British nurse in charge of a hospital in Belgium during the First World War. She saved the lives of soldiers from both sides and helped Allied soldiers escape from German-occupied Belgium during the First World War, for which she was arrested.

Her strong Christian beliefs led her to help all those who needed it: she said, "I can't stop while there are lives to be saved."

Despite international pleas for mercy, she was shot by a German firing squad. The night before her execution, she told the Revd. Gahan, the Anglican chaplain who gave her Holy Communion: "Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone."

In the Anglican Church, 12th October is her commemoration day. This year Nurse Cavell is featured on a special £5 coin to mark the centenary of the war.



PROPER POORLY

In the Middle Ages certain saints were associated with particular ailments, and became known as patron saints for people suffering from those illnesses. Can you guess who you might have asked to pray for you...

If you had toothache?

Dentista Apollonia Peter

If you had a migraine?

Aspren Aspirin Anthony

If you had a sore throat?

Blaise Flannel Godelina

If you had sore knees?

Neale Gangulphus Sebaldus

Worst of all, if you got the plague...

Agricola Adrian Quirinius

Answers at the bottom of the page.



Doctor, Doctor I feel like I'm biscuits!

You mean the square ones?

Yes!

The ones you put butter on?

Yes!

Oh, you're crackers!



Answers: 1. Apollonia 2. Aspren (honestly!) 3. Both Blaise and Godelina 4. Gangulphus 5. all of them

Mid-Wyedean Churches

All Saints, Newland; All Saints, Staunton;
Good Shepherd, Broadwell; St John, Coleford;
St Peter, Clearwell & St Saviour, Redbrook

Benefice Website - www.mid-wyedeanchurches.co.uk

Ministry Team:

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The Revd. Alan Wearmouth, "Windhover", Broadwell Bridge, Broadwell. (Dean 832660)
(alanw22uk@yahoo.co.uk)

Licensed Readers:

Mrs. Anne Harley & Mr. Chris Howell

Arrangements for Baptisms, weddings etc. should be made in the first instance to Rev Sarah Bick.

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