

# **St Mary's Parish Magazine**



**May - June 2025**

**50p**

## Notes from the Editor

As we continue to wonder and rejoice at the Easter story and what it means for our Christian faith, don't forget that the Church has three other important feasts just around the corner. Ascension Day falls on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May, Pentecost (Whitsun) on 8<sup>th</sup> June and Trinity Sunday on 15<sup>th</sup> June. These are all important festivals in the Church's calendar and St Mary's will pull all the stops out to celebrate them. If you haven't already got them marked in your diary, do it now!!

The end of June sees the Choir's annual Summer concert which this year features J S Bach's epic setting of the Magnificat, Mary's song of praise to God when her cousin Elizabeth greeted her as mother of the Lord. A particularly challenging work for the Choir to perform, the evening of June 28<sup>th</sup> promises to be a night to remember!

Finally a prayer to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day on 8<sup>th</sup> May:

*O God of truth and justice, we hold before you those men and women who have died in active service, particularly in the Second World War, whose sacrifice brought Victory in Europe. As we honour their courage and cherish their memory, may we put our faith in your future; for you are the source of life and hope, now and for ever. Amen.*

**Tony King - Editor**

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# REFLECTIONS FROM THE RECTORY

Do you like change? I was asked at a meeting recently for advice from a local church about how best to approach a potential conflict amongst members in their church. The contentious issue centred around whether to keep pews in the church or remove them! Some parishioners wanted to remove the pews for chairs, thus allowing the church to make more use of the space in the nave for the community and others wanted to safeguard the tradition of having pews in their church.

The season of May/June is one of change from Spring to Summer, where nature around us flourishes, trees are full of leaves, the bees are out and the days are longer and warmer. It won't be too long before we look ahead to another change as Autumn arrives and then on to Winter and so the cycle repeats.



Change is all around – new technologies, new political landscapes, climate change and personal change in our lives as we

grow older and adapt to new demands, the expected and unexpected . In it all we try to find our way to flourish and in the words of Mahatma Gandhi *“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”*

Our most important transitions and changes in life are to become more Christ-like, to be changed into the likeness of our Lord . It is a tall demand and requires prayer, courage, will and above all Grace. We can do nothing without God's grace or at least nothing truly worthwhile. We are reminded in the great hymn 'love divine all loves excelling' of the beautiful words.....'changed from glory into glory till in heaven we take our place , till we cast our crowns before thee lost in wonder love and praise'. As we look at the glory of the changing season we are reminded of our need to allow God's grace and presence to work in and through us even in the darker/harder times of life – just look at the Easter story !

Whether you are a metaphorical pew or a chair person in life, shouldn't get in the way of looking for and seeing the beauty around us in nature and in people- even when well hidden! Let's continue through the seasons to be change into his likeness, the one who gives us light and life and sits on the throne/pew / chair of heaven – to him be the glory!

***Father Angus***



# EASTER EGGS

The egg seems to have been one of the most adaptable symbols in myth and ritual across Europe and Asia, and most religions have some egg symbolism or other. It is often connected with Spring, and in the Christian festival of Easter an egg can symbolize new life, birth, regeneration, or other qualities, depending on the context required. The emergence of a chick from the egg can be symbolic of Christ rising from the tomb, or the egg can even be seen as the stone rolled away from the tomb on Easter morning. It is perhaps this symbolic versatility rather than any intrinsic properties that has ensured the egg's enduring attraction to people looking for metaphor.

On a more prosaic level, eggs were an essential part of the staple diet of rich and poor alike, but were banned for the forty days of Lent. This enforced abstinence goes a long way to explaining why eggs should feature so widely in Shrovetide customs, just before Lent, and at Easter when the people celebrated their return. Eggs were often given as gifts, or as tribute, or as payment in kind for rent or service to a superior in a social hierarchy, such as a medieval manor. In farming communities, eggs acted as a minor currency, and, being under the control of the women of the household, provided a modest but steady income for the family, in addition to much-needed protein at mealtimes.

*Steve Roud*



# THE MASTER'S HAND

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took the small boy to a concert featuring a world-famous pianist. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE."

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that her son was missing. Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't stop, keep playing."

Then leaning over, the pianist reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.

That's the way it is with God. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful. Next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit, keep playing." Feel His loving arms around you. Know that His strong hands are playing the concerto of your life. Remember, God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called.

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*Schoolmaster: Now you're sure you've got the Catechism all buttoned up, Foster?*

*Foster: I'm still a bit hazy about the Trinity, sir.*

*Schoolmaster: Three in one and one in three, perfectly straightforward. Any doubts about that see your maths master.*

***Alan Bennett – Forty Years On (1968)***

# WHAT IS PENTECOST?

Pentecost Sunday is a significant event in the Christian calendar each year. It's a day which goes back to the Early Church, and transcends denominational boundaries. It is one of the movable feasts in the Church calendar. This is because it depends on when Easter falls. In the Church calendar it falls fifty days or seven Sundays after Easter Sunday. It can therefore fall on a different Sunday in May or June each year.

Pentecost is actually the Greek term used for the Jewish holiday 'Shavuot'. Using the Jewish calendar, Passover is followed by Shavuot, which was called the Feast of Weeks. In the Holy Land, it was the Harvest Festival for the first fruits of the wheat harvest. The Feast of Weeks was seven weeks. The Hebrew words for seven and week are related, so it was a week of weeks, or 49 days. The Sabbath following a week of weeks is the fiftieth day, as explained in Leviticus 23:15-16. The New Testament was written in Greek, and the Greek word for fiftieth gave us the word Pentecost.

In the first two chapters of Acts, we read that at Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples who were gathered in Jerusalem. Saint Peter stood up and preached telling the story of Jesus to the crowds. That Harvest Festival was the first fruits of the great harvest of souls.

According to Acts 2:41 about 3,000 people joined the Church. These people were local Jews, Jews of the Diaspora, and some Gentile converts to Judaism. According to the list in Acts 2:9-11 the people returned to their homes in what is today Mediterranean Europe, the Middle East and northern Africa. A few chapters later in Acts 8:27, we also read of the man who returned to Ethiopia. These places are the very geographical areas where the Early Church was strongest in the first centuries AD.

Unlike the celebration of Christmas, which is not recorded in the New Testament, Pentecost seems to have been very important to Saint Paul. In Acts 20:16, we read that Paul was anxious to attend Pentecost in Jerusalem, and 1 Corinthians 16:8, we read that he remained in Ephesus so that he could mark Pentecost. It may thus be the oldest Christian festival.

In the British tradition, Pentecost was traditionally known in English as 'Whitsun', short for Whitsunday. Its use is first recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in 1067, as '*hwitan sunnan daeg*'. This most likely

comes from the term White Sunday, because historically people wore white gowns on Pentecost, and in some countries they still do.

The time around Whitsun was called Whitsuntide. In medieval times it was one of the three festival weeks, along with Christmas and Easter, when workers had a week's holiday from work, and so it became associated with many festivities. It was considered the start of the summer, and traditionally people bought or made new clothes for Whitsun.

The day after Whitsun was Whit Monday. Most people did not work that day, so in many towns it was a day to hold fairs. On Whit Monday it was also the custom that Sunday schools went on parades carrying banners through the towns and villages and finished with a big party. It was a time when children from churches of different traditions would come together. A modern version of ancient Whitsun celebration traditions happens in Sussex, when thousands converge for the Big Church Festival.

Bank holidays were introduced into the UK by the 1871 Bank Holiday Act, and Whit Monday was one of the first bank holidays. Railway companies, and later bus and coach companies, offered special Whitsun day excursions. In 1971, the British government reviewed the 1871 Bank Holiday Act, 100 years after it was introduced and it was decided to fix the bank holiday as the last Monday in May. Whit Monday became what is now the late May or spring bank holiday. As it became less associated with Whitsun many of the traditions associated with Pentecost dropped away. Nevertheless, it still falls on Whit Monday some years.

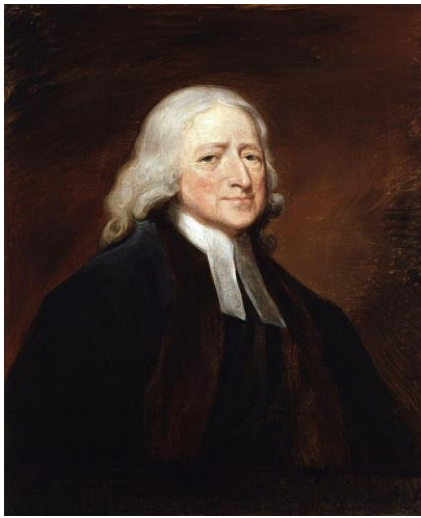
In 1904, when the Welsh Revival occurred, spiritual phenomena happened which reminded people of the first Pentecost, and it gave rise to what became known as the Pentecostal movement. This is now a worldwide form of Christianity. When pentecostalism occurs within mainstream denominations it is usually called the charismatic movement.

In evangelical and charismatic churches, where there is less emphasis on the liturgical calendar, yet a great emphasis upon the Holy Spirit, Pentecost has been increasingly promoted and adopted as a great celebration. Pentecost transcends the denominational lines, and allows Christians to celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Christian Church. Some churches like to think of it as the birthday of the Church.

***Neil Rees***

# THE WESLEY BROTHERS

John Wesley (1703–1791) was an English cleric, theologian, and evangelist who was a principal leader of a revival movement within the Church of England known as Methodism. The societies he founded became the dominant form of the independent Methodist movement that continues to this day.



Educated at Charterhouse and Christ Church, Oxford, Wesley was elected a fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, in 1726 and ordained as an Anglican priest two years later. At Oxford, he led the "Holy Club", a society formed for the purpose of the study and the pursuit of a devout Christian life. After an unsuccessful two-year ministry in Savannah, Georgia, he returned to London and joined a religious society led by Moravian Christians. On 24 May 1738, he experienced what has come to be called his evangelical conversion. He subsequently left the Moravians and began his own ministry.

A key step in the development of Wesley's ministry was to travel widely and preach outdoors, embracing Arminian doctrines. Moving across Great Britain and Ireland, he helped form and organise small Christian groups (societies and classes) that developed intensive and personal accountability, discipleship, and religious instruction. He appointed itinerant, unordained evangelists—both women and men—to care for these groups of people. Under Wesley's direction, Methodists became leaders in many social issues of the day, including the abolition of slavery and support for women preachers.

Although he was not a systematic theologian, Wesley argued against Calvinism and for the notion of Christian perfection, which he cited as the reason that he felt God "raised up" Methodists into existence. His evangelicalism, firmly grounded in sacramental theology, maintained that means of grace played a role in sanctification of the believer; however, he taught that it was by faith a believer was transformed into the likeness of Christ. He held that, in this life, Christians could achieve a state where the love of God "reigned supreme in their hearts", giving them not only



outward but inward holiness. Wesley's teachings, collectively known as Wesleyan theology, continue to inform the doctrine of Methodist churches.

Throughout his life, Wesley remained within the established Church of England, insisting that the Methodist movement lay well within its tradition. In his early ministry years, Wesley was barred from preaching in many parish churches and the Methodists were persecuted; he later became widely respected, and by the end of his life, was described as "the best-loved man in England".



Wesley's younger brother Charles (1707 – 1788) was an English Anglican cleric and a principal leader of the Methodist movement. Wesley was a prolific hymnwriter who wrote over 6,500 hymns during his lifetime. His works include "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing", "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today", "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling", "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing", and "Lo! He Comes With Clouds Descending".

Born in Epworth, Lincolnshire, he was the father of musician Samuel Wesley and the grandfather of musician Samuel Sebastian Wesley.

He was educated at Oxford University, where his brothers had also studied, and he formed the "Holy Club" among his fellow students in 1729. His brother John Wesley later joined this group. Charles followed his father and brother into ministry in 1735, and he travelled with John to Georgia in America, returning a year later. Following their evangelical conversions in 1738, the Wesley brothers travelled throughout Britain, converting followers to the Methodist revival through preaching and hymn singing. In 1749, he married Sarah Gwynne, the daughter of a Welsh gentleman who had been converted to Methodism by Howell Harris. From 1756 his ministry became more static and he ministered in Bristol, and later London.

Despite their closeness, Charles and John did not always agree on questions relating to their beliefs. In particular, Charles was strongly opposed to the idea of a breach with the Church of England in which they had been ordained.

# HATCHMENTS EXPLAINED

A funerary hatchment is a depiction within a black lozenge-shaped frame, generally on a black (*sable*) background, of a deceased's heraldic achievement, that is to say the escutcheon showing the arms, together with the crest and supporters of his family or person. Regimental Colours and other military or naval emblems are sometimes placed behind the arms of military or naval officers. Such funerary hatchments would therefore generally be restricted in use to members of the nobility or gentry, and were hung on the wall of a deceased person's house. They were later transferred to the parish church, often within the family chapel therein which appertained to the manor house; the lord of the manor usually held the advowson of the church. In Germany, the approximate equivalent is a *Totenschild*, literally "shield of the dead".

The funerary hatchment was usually placed over the entrance door of the deceased's residence at the level of the second floor, and remained *in situ* for six to twelve months, after which it was removed to the parish church. The practice developed in the early 17th century from the custom of carrying an heraldic shield before the coffin of the deceased, then leaving it for display in the church. Funerary hatchments also survive displayed in homes or local museums. In medieval times and later, helmets and shields were sometimes deposited in churches, and helmets (made for the purpose) survive for example in the churches of Iron Acton in Gloucestershire and King's Nympton in Devon.

At the universities of Oxford and Cambridge it was usual to hang the funerary hatchment of a deceased head of house over the entrance to his lodge or residence.

In the 21st century the display of funerary hatchments has largely been discontinued, except in the case of royalty and occasionally by the higher nobility, but many ancient funerary hatchments survive displayed in parish churches throughout England.

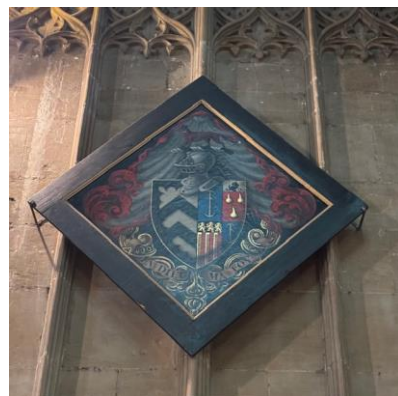
## Male and female usages

For a bachelor the hatchment bears his heraldic achievement (shield, crest, supporters and other appendages) on a black lozenge. For a spinster, her arms are represented upon a lozenge, bordered with knotted ribbons, also on a black lozenge. In the case of a married man with a surviving wife, within his funerary hatchment is an escutcheon displaying his arms impaling the paternal arms of his wife. If she should

be an heraldic heiress her paternal arms are placed upon an inescutcheon of pretence, and crest and other appendages are added. The dexter half of the background is black (the husband being dead), whilst the sinister half of the background is white (his wife still being alive).

For a deceased woman whose husband is alive the same arrangement is used, but the sinister background is black (for the wife) and the dexter background is white (for the surviving husband). For a widower the same is used as for a married man, but the whole ground is black (both spouses being dead). For a widow the husband's arms are given with her own, but upon a lozenge in place of an escutcheon, with ribbons, without crest or appendages, with the whole of the ground black. When there have been two wives or two husbands the ground may be divided in a number of different ways. Sometimes the shield is divided into three parts *per pale* (vertical divisions), with the husband's arms in the middle section and the arms of each of his wives to each side of his. Sometimes the husband's arms remain in the dexter half and the two wives have their arms in the sinister half, divided *per fess* (horizontal divisions), each wife having one quarter of the whole shield, that is one half of the sinister half.

Below are some of the hatchments in St Mary's chancel.



# NEVER A CROSSWORD!

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	13						14			15		
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		19							20			
						21		22				
23								24				
25						26						

## ACROSS

1. The devil makes it if cruel. (7)
4. The Spanish return in a taxi to see a man from Judah. (5)
7. Roadside assistance man sees a prophet. (5)
8. The noise a long car makes! (7)
9. Volunteers feel nothing for religion. (3)
10. Neat eruption of a volcano. (4)
11. Truce results in container for wine and vinegar. (5)
13. Lady with a degree made Queen. (5)
14. Greek character in a car we hear. (5)
19. Strange moods in this unholy city. (5)
20. Adam's son forced to bale out. (4)
21. What to use when one is lubricating, initially. (3)
23. Where the Rector lives or what he does in the pulpit! (7)
24. Almost pick the chosen ones. (5)
25. Time to fast, with nothing slow! (5)
26. American sheep wandering round the city. (7)

## DOWN

1. Go north to get yeast. (6)
2. National Trust choir from ancient city. (7)
3. Not fussy initially about where to get baptised. (4)
4. Charles has blue coloured vestment. (8)
5. A simple source of illumination? (5)
6. Burial site resulting from argument in the pub? (6)
8. Rooster in the company of Calvin Klein. (4)
12. Man in fiery furnace with cardinal gone bad! (8)
15. He makes beer for the Israelites. (7)
16. Artist lies about Middle Eastern country. (6)
17. Another minister of sorts starts to see a prophet. (4)
18. Crushed petals for the offertory. (6)
19. Sidney talking about Phoenician port. (5)
22. A salacious look, we hear, at Jacob's wife. (4)

# THOUGHT FOR FOOD

## Mediterranean chicken and rice

### *Ingredients:*

- drizzle extra virgin olive oil
- 2 large chicken thighs, boneless, skin on
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 250g/9oz baby plum or cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 large roasted red pepper from a jar, sliced
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 400g tin cannellini beans, drained
- 150ml/5fl oz hot chicken stock, made with stock cube
- 70g/2½oz large pitted green olives
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 250g/9oz packet microwave rice (brown or white)



Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 10 to 30 minutes

Serves: 2

Heat a large, lidded frying pan over a high heat, then add a drizzle of oil and fry the chicken thighs skin-side down for 2–3 minutes until crisp. Flip the chicken thighs, add the garlic and tomatoes and fry for a further 2–3 minutes. Remove the chicken and set aside.

Add the red pepper and smoked paprika and fry for a minute, then add the cannellini beans, stock and olives. Give everything a good stir then return the chicken skin-side up to the pan.

Scatter over the lemon slices (if you're not a big fan of lemon, add fewer slices to the pan) and put the lid on. Cook with the lid on for 10–15 minutes, giving everything a stir every now and then, until the chicken thighs are cooked through.

Two minutes before serving, add the rice to the pan and stir with the vegetables to heat through – or if you prefer, heat the rice in the microwave as per the packet instruction. Serve the rice on plates with the chicken on top (plus a dry white wine!).



# SUMMER

There's more to summer than relaxing on the beach. While there is plenty of value in rest, you'll also want to take advantage of the many restorative and personally fulfilling opportunities that this unique season provides. Here's a few ideas for living out your faith this summer:

Christ instructs us to love one another and yet, mired down in our usual to-do lists, we fail to follow this basic command. We are built by the master Creator to have fulfilling relationships, and for a Christian there are few worthier pursuits than to spend time with loved ones. If you've spent months away from them, summer may grant you the time you need to maintain or even strengthen these bonds. You'll enjoy catching up in person, rather than over the phone or social media. It's not all about light-hearted conversation. As a Christian, you are called upon to care for others. Keep an eye open to suffering around you. Be prepared to provide emotional and spiritual support where it's needed. Your friends and family members should know that they can unburden themselves of their worries and fears in your presence — and that you're always happy to help.

If you've fallen into a habit of only praying on Sundays or when you're worried about an upcoming event, it's time to break out of the trap and establish a more routine prayer life. Summer provides you with more time to relearn how to pray, and the impact prayer has in our lives as believers. If you struggle to get started, begin by thanking God for the many blessings you've received throughout the year and during the summer.

Opportunities for volunteerism abound during the summer months. Many churches including ours have ways to serve in a small way on Sundays and beyond. Dedicate yourself to a worthy cause and determine where your talents can best be utilized. Whether you commit to a few hours here and there or go all out with an in-depth volunteer project, you will gain a greater sense of confidence as you see how your efforts benefit others in your community.

Make this summer a season of intention. There's nothing wrong with relaxation, but you'll come away feeling far more rejuvenated if you take this time to invest in your faith journey.

## LUNCHTIME RECITALS AT ST MARY'S

**Fridays 1:15 – 2:00pm**

9 <sup>th</sup> May	Fumi Otsuki - <i>violin</i>
16 <sup>th</sup> May	David Thomas – <i>organ</i> (Shrewsbury)
23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Katherine Cooper – <i>mezzo soprano</i>
6 <sup>th</sup> June	Hannah Maxwell – <i>voice</i>
13 <sup>th</sup> June	Parmetto Trio
20 <sup>th</sup> June	Oliver Hancock – <i>organ</i> (St Mary's Warwick)
27 <sup>th</sup> June	Davide Paleari – <i>organ</i> (Basilica San Vittore, Varese)

*Admission free – retiring collection*

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## AND FINALLY .....

### CROSSWORD SOLUTION

**ACROSS** 1 Lucifer 4 Caleb 7 Aaron 8 Clangor 9 Tao 10 Etna 11 Cruet  
13 Sheba 14 Alpha 19 Sodom 20 Abel 21 Oil 23 Address 24 Elect 25 Lento  
26 Ephesus

**DOWN** 1 Leaven 2 Corinth 3 Font 4 Chasuble 5 Light 6 Barrow 8 Cock  
12 Abednego 15 Hebrews 16 Israel 17 Amos 18 Plates 19 Sidon 22 Leah

### Who's Where in The Warwick Team

Contacts in our partner churches in the Warwick Team include:

**All Saints**

Revd Diane Thompson (Team Vicar)

492073

**St Nicholas**

Revd Linda Duckers (Team Vicar)

496209

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Friends of St Mary's Choir	07549 534339
Collegium	498851
St Mary's Scholars	403940
St Mary's Study Group	07799 682872
Flowers	857351
Church Guides	403940
Gift Shop	403940
Sunday School	312861
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