

**Swindon Old Town Partnership of Churches
Anglican - United Reformed - Methodist - Est. 1969**

PARTNERSHIP MAGAZINE

JUNE 2022

80 PENCE



**Partnership Confirmation at Bath Road Methodist Church
Sunday 8th May 2022**

One in Christ - Together in Mission



**Old Town Partnership of Churches
PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS
SUNDAY 5th JUNE
ALL ARE WELCOME**

- 4.00 pm** Garden Party at Christ Church Community Centre and grounds. Please bring food to share: sandwiches, cakes, scones or any other finger food. Drinks will be provided.
- 4.30 pm** Jazz music and community singing
- 5.45 pm** Christ Church bells to be rung
- 6.15 pm** Assemble in Christ Church for Civic Service

6.30 pm CIVIC SERVICE

attended by Sarah Troughton, Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire

Theme: The Servant Queen and the King she serves

Preacher: Mrs. Margaret Williams MBE

Organist: The Rev'd. Geoff Gleed

Worship led by choirs from the Old Town Partnership

Service conducted by The Rev'd. Canon Simon Stevenette

An opportunity for all to join in this historic event.

Your Contacts

BATH ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

Minister: The Revd. Mark Barrett, 147 Drove Road, SN1 3AQ

Tel: 529263 e-mail: markrev55@aol.com

Web site: www.bathroadmethodistchurch.org.uk

Weekly news items: marietai1@gmail.com

CHRIST CHURCH with ST. MARY'S, Cricklade Street

St. Mary's, Commonweal Road (off The Mall)

Vicar: The Revd. Canon Simon Stevenette, The Vicarage,

26 Cricklade Street, SN1 3HG. Tel. 529166

e-mail: simon@christchurchswindon.co.uk

Associate Ministers::

Revd. Daphne Hardwick. T. 693721; daphne@christchurchswindon.co.uk

Revd. Norma McKemey. T. 845917; norma@christchurchswindon.co.uk

Web site: www.christchurchswindon.co.uk

Weekly news items: parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk

Friends of Christ Church: c/o The Parish Office. email: sec.focc@gmail.com

PARISH OFFICE: at the Community Centre, SN1 3HB. Mon & Fri 9am-1pm

Tel. 522832. e-mail: parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk.

PARISH CLERK: To book an appointment, please phone 07746 415477,

Thursday evening 5.30-8.00pm, Saturday 9.30am-1.00pm or

email: parishclerk@christchurchswindon.co.uk

COMMUNITY CENTRE: Manager: Chris Smith, T.617237 or 07582 305760

email: chris@christchurchswindon.co.uk

IMMANUEL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, Upham Road

Minister: The Revd. Robert Jordan, 152 Drove Road, SN1 3AG

Tel. 513039. email: robert.jordan1@btconnect.com

Secretary: Stephen Brain, Tel. 524514. email: sbrainstev@aol.com

Web site: www.immanuelurc.org

Weekly news items: immanuelweeklynews@yahoo.co.uk

WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER CHURCHES IN OLD TOWN

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTOR:

Mr. George Kennedy, Tel. 772589. george.kennedy@mybroadbandmail.com

MAGAZINE EDITORS:

Mrs. Diana Swann, 58 Sandown Avenue, SN3 1QQ. Tel. 529897

e-mail: d.swann6a@gmail.com

Mrs. Margaret Williams MBE, 39 Sandown Avenue, SN3 1QQ. Tel. 421102

e-mail: margaret@christchurchswindon.co.uk

PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL:

Chairman: Daniel Pitt, Tel. 521732; email: fdpitt@yahoo.co.uk

Treasurer: David Bevan, Tel. 336667; email: david04bevan@yahoo.co.uk

PARTNERSHIP WEB SITE: www.sotpc.org.uk

Partnership Letter

Immanuel Manse
152 Drove Road

Greetings to you all,

Can you believe it? And yet it is true – you’re holding the June edition of the Partnership Magazine in your hands. That means that half of 2022 lies ahead because half of 2022 lies behind. I’m sure you have “never” heard this before – but time does fly, doesn’t it?

But I don’t want to write about the speed of time, I want to ask you who your “heroes” are? Those people you look up to, who inspire you to be the best version of yourself, whose words challenge you still today, even if they were said long, long ago. People who remind you that despite the lowest feelings there is hope; that it is worth walking towards that hope even if the road is bumpy.

I have a few “heroes” in my life – they don’t know that, but it is true. It was one of those who taught me that we should be careful with the concept of “hero”, because too often we turn them into superheroes, and then they lose their humanity. The people I look up to don’t change in a telephone booth like Dr. Who in the Tardis, they don’t have a cave in the basement of their house like Batman; they are women and men who have struggled with life and not always done things the best way; because of their humanity they are vulnerable and even broken. What makes them heroes is what they have done through that brokenness.

Let me share then those people who are heroes to me and also share a quote from each one that explains why I look up to them. Here I go:

Desmond Tutu: “Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness”.

Helen Keller: “Although the world is full of suffering, it is full also of the overcoming of it.”

Martin Luther King Jr: “We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.” ➤

Maya Angelou: “When you do nothing you feel overwhelmed and powerless. But when you get involved you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better”.

Saint Augustine: “Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”

Anne Frank: “The final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands”.

Nelson Mandela: “May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.”

And finally, a quote from Gustavo Gutierrez, the Peruvian theologian who changed the understanding of theology for so many of us in Latin America: “The poverty of the poor is not a call to generous relief action, but a demand that we go and build a different social order.”

Ok, it may be too many heroes, but each of them comes to me for different reasons and at different times. You might have found a common thread through all those thoughts – they all relate to situations of hurt, pain, difficulty, injustice – but they challenge us to go beyond, not to be anchored down by the difficulties, each of these “heroes” have struggled in more ways than one, and all call us to hold on to “HOPE”, that is why I want to share them with you.

What we share with these I have mentioned and with the ones you may be thinking of, is their humanity; their longing, their commitment to a better world for all people, not just for some. And it is through that humanity that we build bridges that communicate; we are part of the web of life that keeps us together, even when we stumble.

Within the whole life situation I have experienced, the one issue which is crucial to me is Human Rights – and this covers the areas of health, education, workers’ rights, economic justice, environmental justice, political justice, racial justice... this comes from my life in Argentina before moving here, and it has not decreased since coming to UK. I would say that the Bible in one hand and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the other represent the depth of my conviction in this.

We are living in difficult times – wars in places like Yemen, Ukraine, Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia; conflicts in Myanmar and the Uyghur people in China. There are economic struggles for many including our country; Human Rights violations are in so many places; there is discrimination due to sexual

orientation, race, language, age. Are these the situations that determine our era? Is there nothing that can be done? Of course there are things we can do; we all know that! So what are we doing and how are we doing it? Do those people we call our “heroes” help us in this?

It is then that I seek the company of people who can teach me to live in hope and connect our humanity. This is the challenge we face as individuals, as nations, as believers in Jesus Christ, as people of God in the world today. This is the journey I hope we are all embarked on at this time, because this is OUR time - a time to live in hope, in faith and in love.

So let me end with my final quote, one that has held me together so often in life, and has grounded my ministry, my faith, and my hope. It comes from Jesus, who in John 10 says:

“I have come that all may have life and have it in all fullness.”

May the love of God sustain us, may the fullness of life in Jesus nurture us, may the peace of the Spirit challenge us, so that we may never give up!

Peace to you...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. H. ...', with a horizontal line underneath.

A date for your diary:

On Saturday 24th September, 2:30pm at Immanuel there will be a celebration for the 50 years of the United Reformed Church with the participation of the churches in the area. The Synod Moderator has agreed to preach at this service. It will be followed by a time to meet and chat with other people over a cup of tea or coffee and cake.

FAMILY EVENTS

BAPTISMS

We welcome into the family of the Church

CHRIST CHURCH

May 16 Devon John Kenneth Coulthard

CONFIRMATION

We welcome into the family of the Church those who were confirmed at the Partnership Confirmation Service at Bath Road on Sunday 8th May

Dean Tyler McCulloch, Behbood Mozaffari, Aisha Lee Murfin,
Duski Nabe, Zanyar Salehi, Alice Jayne Stanton, Joanne Vatcher.

RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE VOWS

April 23 Andrew David Raeburn and Rowena Hazel Raeburn

DEATHS

We extend our sympathy to the loved ones

CHRIST CHURCH

Mar 20 Michael John Smith-Bishop, 74 years
April 20 Ethel May Herbert, 91 years
April 21 Doreen Stubbs, 89 years
April 22 Margaret 'Peggy' Miles, 92 years
April 27 Pat Chant, 88 years

IMMANUEL

Mar 4 Greville Campbell, 87 years
Mar 19 Joseph (Joe) Tooth, 83 years

FLOODLIGHTING

Apr 22 In memory of a dear father David John Heavens on his 80th birthday.

If you would like to sponsor the floodlighting of Christ Church in celebration of a birthday, wedding anniversary, special occasion, to advertise your Company, or in memory of a loved one, the minimum gift per evening is **£30.00**. Please visit www.christchurchswindon.co.uk/flood to book and pay. If paying by cheque, please make it payable to 'Christ Church PCC' and post it to: Parish Office, Community Centre at Christ Church, Cricklade Street, Swindon SN1 3HB.

WILTSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST



Saturday 10th September, 10.00 am - 6.00 pm

This is an annual national sponsored event, organised locally by County Historic Churches Trusts. Wiltshire Ride + Stride (or its predecessor the Great Cycle Ride) has been going since 1984 and has raised over £1.5 million for the county's churches. 50% of the money raised goes to the participant's chosen church and the other half to the County Historic Churches Trust.

Participants may be cyclists, walkers, horse-riders or drivers of mobility scooters. They can be of any age, but under-13s must be accompanied by an adult.

All denominations are welcome.

Visit as many churches as you like, planning your own route.

Seek sponsorship from friends, relations and colleagues, so much per church visited or a lump sum.

Sponsor forms, instructions and details of places of worship that are open can be downloaded from the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust web site or get in touch with your church's local contact. You can also take part on your mobility scooter.

Bath Road

David Sinclair phone 07768775288 email: .sinclair.302@btinternet.com

Christ Church with St Mary's

Arline Stovell phone 520691 email: royandarline@gmail.com

Immanuel

Liz Gleed phone 721364 email: liz.gleed@gmail.com

The Old Town Partnership requires a new Administrator

The Old Town Partnership is seeking an administrator to support the running of the Partnership. A description of what the role entails is below:

1. Meetings management:

There are 3 OTP Council meetings a year. The Focus Group (FG), which coordinates activities within the OTP, meets about 8 times a year.

For all meetings:

- (i) Liaise with FG and relevant church secretaries/incumbents over the setting and agreement of meeting dates, e.g. where dates need to be re-scheduled.
 - (ii) Liaise with chair over the preparation of agendas
 - (iii) Send out agendas to relevant recipients in each of the churches
 - (iv) Take notes of meetings and review with chair to produce agreed minutes
 - (v) Send out minutes of all meetings
2. Liaise with respective church diary secretaries/administrators over the coordination of special services and events and the avoidance of date clashes.
3. Help with planning and coordination of OTP events and services.
4. Draft and prepare letters on official OTP headed paper, as requested following meetings, and send out, finding suitable addresses etc.
5. Ad hoc assistance with respect to OTP issues, as necessary.
6. Honorarium available (subject to agreement).

For more information, please contact Daniel Pitt (the Chair of the OTP)

Email address: daniel@christchurchswindon.co.uk

Telephone Number: Mobile 07834 704350. Landline: 01793 521732

Christ Church with St. Mary's

Tribute to the Rev'd. John Stevenette



John Stevenette, a retired Priest, father, Grandpa and friend to many died peacefully at Princess Lodge Nursing Home in Okus on Saturday 7th May. Many of you over the years will remember my father as someone who enjoyed a good conversation. He was always, with my dear Mum, Angela, an encourager of people and loved chatting about life, faith, gardening and his beloved Jazz

John was ordained in the Church of England in 1961 and served his curacy in Newhaven where I was born. He then became Vicar in several rural parishes in East Sussex before moving to Byfleet in Surrey in 1978. He was Vicar for 8 years at St Mary's before moving up to Whittlesey in the Ely diocese in 1986. John and Angela then moved to

the Winchester Diocese in 1990 where John served as Vicar in the Itchen Valley benefice. Retirement in 1998 took them both to Abingdon where John lived for 21 years. For most of that time he remained very active in ministry and was licensed in the Oxford and Bristol Dioceses to minister at services and to take funerals. Once a month Dad regularly took our Wednesday 10am Holy Communion service at Christ Church as well as offering to cover some services when I was away on holiday. He got to know many of you during that time and enjoyed his retirement ministry very much.

Sadly, John's health declined slowly with the onset of Alzheimer's. He managed extremely well for several years living independently in Abingdon following the death of my mother in 2009, with the support of family and a team of carers. Latterly, in January 2020, John moved to Swindon to live with us as a family as his Alzheimer's Disease became advanced. We have many happy memories as a family of Dad enjoying sitting in our garden, especially during the hot summer of the first lockdown. Highlights include memorable trips facilitated by Bernard Oxborrow around Coate Water and Lawn on Bernard's motorised scooter with bunting flying and jazz playing! Most memorable was the day of his 90th birthday in September 2021 where many people waved as he was being driven along.

Following a minor fall on 1st May 2021, John spent three weeks in hospital before being transferred to Princess Lodge Care Home for 24-hour nursing care. As a family we visited very regularly and Dad always had a smile on his face and was pleased to see us despite losing his mobility. He was very well cared for by the staff there and died peacefully in his sleep.

My father always had time to sit and listen, he was never in a hurry, and always had a smile on his face and a glint in his eye. One of his most remarkable gifts was being able to live in the present moment and being constantly grateful and thankful for everything. We will all remember him with fondness for his deep faith, a life well lived and a generosity of spirit which knew no bounds.

The Rev'd John Stevenette's funeral service, with Holy Communion, will take place at St Leonard's Church, Sunningwell, where Angela is buried, on Monday 6th June at 12 noon. Sunningwell is in the Oxford Diocese just outside Abingdon.

As with Mum, there will be a parallel service led by members of the Christ Church staff team for Swindon friends to which all are welcome at Christ Church at 12 noon on Monday 6th June. Please pass the word around and remember us in your prayers on that day.

The words on John and Angela's headstone sum up their legacy:

'Their generosity of spirit knew no bounds'.
As John rests in peace may he rise in glory.

God bless you Dad as you journey on to the next adventure in eternity.

With our love and prayers. Every blessing and thanks again,
The Stevenette family

PS From someone who only knew John over the last 20 years.

There are two memories of John which make me smile every time I think of them and they are:-

Firstly, on the day I called at the vicarage on New Year's day when it was announced that I had been awarded an MBE. Simon insisted that we all had a drink to mark the occasion which we did and John said "This is the first time I've had a sherry before breakfast!" The other memory I enjoy is of John dancing to jazz music in the vicarage garden on his 90th birthday.

John, thank you for all you brought to our parish in your latter years.

Margaret Williams



**Friends of Christ Church Annual Lecture
"Wales to Westminster"
Thursday 16th June, 3.00 pm in Christ Church**

The Friends are pleased to confirm that the Right Hon. Sir Robert Buckland QC MP will be the guest speaker at the annual lecture. There is no entry fee but donations towards the work in the Jubilee Memorial Garden would be appreciated. **All are welcome.**

When we had the re-ordering of Christ Church and we heard there was to be a large screen fitted, some people were a little alarmed; would it be an eyesore to a beautiful old building? Would it hide the high altar? So everyone was pleased when we knew that the screen was to be hidden when not in use and would come down magically when required and disappear high out of view when not in use. Little did any of us think at that time how useful this screen would be when we met after the closure of our building because of the pandemic! The use of books was prohibited and so the projector and screen became essential aids to our worship. So well done to Daniel Pitt, Mike Palmer and Stephen Grosvenor for their perspicacity in the reordering!

Our thanks are also due to Janet French who has worked tirelessly to put the words of our services, so beautifully illustrated, on to powerpoint presentations each week and to Stephen Grosvenor who then puts these on to our web site and streams them so that those at home or housebound can join with us in worship.

In June Janet will have a well earned holiday so we might not be able to have powerpoint presentations every week but I'm sure we will all survive by using our hymn books! *Margaret Williams*



**Tea & Chat at the Goddard Arms Hotel
Tuesday 7th June, 2.30 pm**

Everyone is welcome to this monthly event and we look forward to seeing you.

If you would like to know more, please phone Margaret Williams, 421102.

This is the Word from the Lord given to Josette Crane on Good Friday which she passed onto us to weigh up prayerfully and respond to as a church.



Red:

What does God the creator want our church to stop doing?

Amber:

What does Jesus want us to get ready for?



Green:

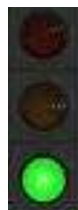
What is the Holy Spirit prompting our church to do now?

Go! Go! Go!

What is God saying to us as a Partnership, as individual churches and personally in our own lives from these profoundly spiritual questions from Good Friday?

It would be good to hear your responses.

Thank you gratefully,
Simon Stevenette



**Fancy a new hobby?
Interested in learning an enjoyable new skill?**

Christ Church Handbell Ringers are inviting everyone to come and try ringing handbells. No need to read music, you only have to count up to four. For further details please contact Jane Humphreys on 07778 974717

Our churchyard

Some people have remarked on the, somewhat, wild appearance of a couple of the grassy areas around the Church and Community Centre. This forms the first part of our land management plan to encourage wildlife by improving plant diversity. On advice from a local ecologist, we are encouraging certain older parts of the churchyard to recover by not intensively mowing. We have been advised that some of our green areas contain ancient original grassland and are worthy of protection. This will encourage more, rare native species of plants to thrive which in turn helps pollinators and smaller animals. ■

Baptisms at Christ Church on April 17th



Photo: Janet French



Photo: Judith Hawkins

OLD. TOWN BEER FESTIVAL



The 9th Old Town Beer and Cider festival took place at Christ Church over the weekend of Saturday 14th/ 15th May in what was the first Old Town Beer Festival to be held at full strength since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. The event was officially opened at 12 noon on the Saturday thanks to our friends at Swindon Town FC and by star players Rob Hunt and Jordan Lyden as well as Chief Executive Rob Angus.

There were more than 46 different beers and 30 ciders and we managed to source some brilliant church related names such as Coffin Lane, Font and Stairway to Heaven. Most of the beers came from local breweries to Swindon although we also acquired some from as far afield as Nottingham and Birmingham. The majority of ciders came from Somerset.

There were around 50 volunteers with whom the event couldn't have happened. They helped with such a variety of tasks including setting up the racking, manning the bars, cleaning up spillages and helping with the mega set down. We are so grateful to all the volunteers.

More than 1000 punters came through the doors, some who had been before and some who hadn't including a few people who had been to all of the previous 8 festivals.

The weather was fantastic with highs of 20 degrees. Thankfully the sun always shines on our events at Christ Church. Someone above always seems to be on our side! ➤



Chris Smith, event organiser said 'people love this event, every year they talk about the surreal experience of drinking a pint in a pew'.

This year we wanted to support a couple of smaller charities who sometimes get missed. The Swindon Blind Association were our

nominated charity and Christian Aid were there too as we began the Christian Aid Week. As well as giving these charities the opportunity to fundraise, the whole event is our big annual fundraiser for Christ Church and the Community Centre. Monies aren't yet finalised but it is hopeful we will make £10,000, which will be a huge help in rebuilding our deficits following Covid. We are also thankful to more than 20 local businesses who got behind us and sponsored the event, including our main event sponsors The Hop Inn and Los Gatos, our ticket vendors, Magnum Wine shop and our brochure design company Gel Studios.

On Sunday 15th we closed the festival with a concert by an excellent Christian Group from Gloucester 'Out of the Ashes' a Jazz, R & B and Blues Band with Gospel Roots. The church was really rocking as they played songs such as Polly Polly, Breathe on you and Pray that Prayer. We highly recommend that you look them up and perhaps even subscribe to their Youtube channel: <https://www.outoftheashesmusic.uk/>

The Rev'd. Simon Stevenette said 'It was a great evening of music, story and reflection. The whole event is such an amazing opportunity to have conversations with our local community, many of whom don't normally come to church. We really love being a big part of our local community'.

Next year, will be our 10th year anniversary and we hope to come up with some innovative and creative ideas to make it the best one yet.

Cheers! *Chris Smith*

Photo above: l. to r. Rob Angus, Chief Executive, Swindon Town Football Club, players Rob Hunt and Jordan Lyden with Chris Smith our Community Centre Manager and organiser of the Beer Festival.

June Diary

Morning Prayer takes place every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 9.00 am in the Lady Chapel at Christ Church and online on Wednesdays and Fridays.

An independent group, "Walking for Health" starts from Christ Church every Monday morning, 10.30 am except on a Bank Holiday.

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------|----------|--|
| 01 | Wed | 10.30 am | Christ Church, Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion |
| 04 | Sat | 7.30 am | Christ Church Morning Prayer followed by Men's Breakfast in the Community Centre. |
| 5 | Sun | 8.00 am | Christ Church, 1662 Holy Communion |
| | | 9.00 am | St. Mary's, Holy Communion |
| | | 10.00 am | Christ Church, All Age service |
| | | 4.00 pm | Platinum Jubilee celebrations, <i>see inside front cover</i> |
| | | 6.30 pm | Civic Service in Christ Church |
| 06 | Mon | 12 noon | Service in Christ Church to remember The Rev'd. John Stevenette, <i>see page 9</i> |
| 07 | Tues | 2.30 pm | Tea & Chat at the Goddard Arms |
| 08 | Wed | 10.30 am | Christ Church, Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion |
| | | 6.30 pm | Healing Group |
| 12 | Sun | 8.00 am | Christ Church, Holy Communion |
| | | 9.00 am | St. Mary's, Holy Communion |
| | | 10.00 am | Christ Church, Holy Communion |
| 15 | Wed | 10.30 am | Christ Church, Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion |
| 16 | Thur | 2.00 pm | Friends of Christ Church Annual Lecture, 'Wales to Westminster' by Sir Robert Buckland MP. |
| 19 | Sun | 8.00 am | Christ Church, Common Worship Holy Communion |
| | | 9.00 am | St. Mary's, Holy Communion |
| | | 10.00 am | Christ Church, Informal Holy Communion |
| 22 | Wed | 10.30 am | Christ Church, Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion |
| 26 | Sun | 8.00 am | Christ Church, Holy Communion |
| | | 9.00 am | St. Mary's, Informal Holy Communion |
| | | 10.00 am | Christ Church Holy Communion |
| 29 | Wed | 10.30 am | Christ Church, Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion |

Immanuel

**Services at Immanuel
10.30 am every Sunday**

Mauddy Thursday



After two years of not being able to hold this celebration, this year we rejoiced in welcoming to Immanuel, about 35 people to a simple meal of some very delicious soups (3 possibilities!) and bread. A chance to chat with other people and enjoy a good time.

This was followed later by a simple celebration of Communion, where we were reminded that in spite of

their contradictions, denials, betrayals and cowardice, Jesus sat round the table with the 12 disciples and they all shared bread and the cup and how the grace and love of God invites us to share the table as well. It was a delightful evening,

Easter Sunday

It was a joy to find the church so beautifully decorated, from the entry porch, the chapel and then the church. The choir now back in their place, the organ sounded amazing - due to the organist, of course! Then, during the service, the decorating of the cross with flowers that was later placed outside at the front of the church. It looks amazing.

It was also wonderful to greet the congregation and quite a few visitors to our service. Without doubt a truly resurrection Sunday to celebrate!

See photos on inside back cover.

Robert Jordan

Good Friday 15th April - Stainer's 'Crucifixion'

It is some years since the joint choirs of the Partnership have been able to sing together – pandemic rules prevented so much! But we came together On Good Friday in a performance of Stainer's "Crucifixion".

With local soloists, Clifford Friend (bass) and Sir Peter Beale (tenor) the joint choir managed to muster enough singers to put on what was quite a startling performance – only one rehearsal a few hours prior to the evening meant that everyone was on their toes and watching every beat of the conductor (Geoff Gleed).

Special thanks must go to the organist who took us flawlessly through rehearsals and performance – Tim Eyles the Director of Music at Christ had tested positive for Covid and so at the last moment Ian Crabbe stepped in. We are so fortunate in the partnership to have such dedicated singers and musicians who can produce such a calibre of performance.

The congregation in a well-filled Christ Church that evening was highly appreciative.

Speaking in Tongues

What do you think? Is it real? Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it first century or is it for now, for the church or just individual specially chosen people? Are you uncommitted? Or is the following enough?

My Savior and my Substitute, all hail.
A crown of thorns a world to Thee assigned.

The spirit of prayer and the power of prayer may be wrapped up in the answer. Do we long for God Himself and communion with Him and positive answers to our prayers? David did, 'As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after Thee.' Ps. 42. And, excuse me asking, but are we filled with the joy that John speaks of in his first Epistle. If tongues speaking are a gift from heaven, it must produce this joy both for Him and for us.

I suggest we have done with all doubt and fear and wholeheartedly agree with God's word when He says, in Mark 16:17: These signs shall follow them that believe; in My Name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; be assured that the Holy Spirit is the Giver of good gifts.

Barbara Furguson

From the Church Annual General Meeting...

Two important votes were taken at the Church AGM held this week:

- 1) By a unanimous decision (with several letters of support from members unable to attend) the meeting voted to support the application of our minister to extend his ministry within the URC beyond the standard retirement age. This means that if the application is accepted by the South-West Synod and the Ministries Committee of the URC, Robert will continue as our minister for a further three years from January 2023.
- 2) All three nominees for the position of elder within Immanuel Church were duly elected to serve for a period of three years. Maria Kawonga, Don Macarthur and Helen Marson will be inducted at a service in the near future. The thanks of the meeting were extended to Glenys and Derek Walker who have stood down after their years of service.

In addition, the meeting confirmed, for a further year, Steve Brain and Sue Goodall in the roles of Secretary and Treasurer and reports were received from the Secretary and Minister.

Keeping in touch

There are times when it would be really useful to contact a lot of Immanuel all at the same time - not for a chat, but to sort out some problem or to ask an opinion. A few weeks back, due to several key people being sick or absent, we found that we were missing something vital for the Sunday service the very next day. The problem was solved after a great many phone calls. If we had a church Whatsapp group (a facility available to smart phone users) we would have been able to put out one message asking for help and we may well have been able to resolve our problem more quickly.

If you have a smart phone, would you consider joining this group? Never used WhatsApp before? It is relatively simple to use and if you have no one to help you get started with it, Ceri Bevan or David Leadbeater would be happy to give you a hand. Then all you have to do is give your mobile number to Steve or Robert and they will put you into our group...and Bob's your uncle... you're part of the team! Please give it some thought...

Bath Road

Services at Bath Road in June (all at 10am):

- | | | |
|------|----------|--|
| 5th | 10.00 am | Service taken by the Worship Leaders |
| 12th | 10.00 am | Morning Worship, Rev'd. Mark Barrett |
| | 6.00 pm | Leaving Service for the Rev'd. Mark Barrett,
taken by the Rev'd. David Gray |
| 19th | 10.00 am | Morning Worship, Pulpit swap. |
| 26th | 10.00 am | Morning Worship, Rachel Browning |

Bath Road Church Community Breakfast

9.00 am to 11.00 am
Saturday 11th June

£1.00 for a bacon roll with tea or coffee
All are welcome



Easter Egg Rolling: Best decorated egg - Adeline (adult), Jack (children).
Dhillon's egg rolled the furthest. *See photos on inside back cover.*

Christian Aid Quiz

We raised £200 and had a fun, sociable evening too. Many thanks to everyone who supported the event in any way. *Janet Hunt*

MOPS

(MOPS stands for Mix Of People)

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 2.30pm to 3.30 pm in the Crossland Room at Bath Road Methodist Church.

The usual format is to spend the first half hour chatting and the second half listening to a speaker or doing an activity.

- | | | |
|------|------|---|
| June | 2nd | No meeting - Bank Holiday |
| June | 16th | Memories of the Queen's Coronation.
Bring your photos, mementos etc. |
| July | 7th | Chatting |
| July | 21st | Lydiard Park |



Join us for our first

**OLD TOWN COMMUNITY
CRAFT FAYRE
AT
BATH ROAD METHODIST
CHURCH - SWINDON**



Saturday, 11th June 2022

From 9:00 - 12:00

set up from 0830

tables are free - donations gratefully accepted
to reserve your table contact Sharon on:

Made with PosterMyW

07791 557352 / sharonvatcher@aol.com

Amazing generosity

We wanted to say a BIG thank you to you all for your support both financially and spiritually in the preparation for and arrival of our new extended family. We put the call out on Tuesday 12th April to ask for help and by Good Friday, 14th April, you had helped raise over £2,000 towards food and necessities for 17 people. We are more grateful than words can say for your amazing generosity.

We thought you might like to know a little more about our family. There is a lot of the story I have not included – it is too sad and too personal but I hope this will give you a little insight into those whom you are helping.



2 of the girls are missing (Yana and Eva) but here are David (3) in the high chair, then going left, Bohdan (18), Sofia (5), Nadiia (Grandmother), Kristina (17), Tymofii (19), Andriy (13), Luda (sister who lives in RWB), Sveta (mother), Slavik (father), Sviatoslav (16), Elisey (8), Daniil (12), Iliya (10), Anna (daughter of Luda), Alina (15).

In 2014 there was a Russian invasion of the Dombas region of Ukraine. Everyone was terrified and many people displaced, including our own special family who fled to the suburbs of Kyiv. The father is a builder. He built his family a home as they settled into the area and normal life resumed. ►

In 2022 the terror returned. Fear and anxiety set in as Russia once again invaded Ukraine. This time the mother, Sveta, overwhelmed with fear and anxiety was to say she did not care about their material possessions, she just wanted her family to be safe and so they cooked some food and drove in 2 cars to the border of Ukraine and Poland. There were many in the queue to cross the border, on foot and in cars, many were without food and drink. It took them 3 days to get to the border and then they had to wait – they had only managed to take enough food with them for 2 days. Fatigue and anxiety were uppermost as they inched their way forward, trying to make sure the 2 cars stayed together and nobody squeezed in between them. The eldest son at 19 was so shell shocked at one point that his brother had to take over the driving.

There was nervous tension as the guards on the border tried to decide whether or not to let the elder boys leave Ukraine as all males over the age of 18 are required to stay and fight. They would let the rest of the family through but not the lads. A change of guards one day brought a change of fortune – they were allowed to leave.

They arrived in Poland and were well cared for. They rested for 2 weeks and would have stayed but there were stories that some guards were looking for any males over the age of 18 who had left the Ukraine to take them back to fight. The only way to be sure they could stay together was to get to England where the mother's sister lives in Royal Wootton Bassett. The older boys would then be safe.

They arrived in England with one rucksack between them. Their sister, Luda, has been working tirelessly to care for them and find them somewhere to settle.

On Easter Monday they arrived at The Gables. Mattresses, sofa beds, bedding and towels had all been magically procured – given, bought, lent and everything was ready. Even our old toys – Steve's cars, the dolls house my Dad made me when I was a young girl, with all its furniture, the big bus and trucks he had made for his grandsons when they were little, the table football that Steve and his brother Andrew used to spend hours on, and my old rocking horse I used to ride across my bedroom when I was in a strop (and no, it didn't have any wheels!) – all at the ready, along with toys, games and colouring books that have been gifted.

They soon found all the toys and filled the house with laughter. Some of the older ones play the piano – and play it beautifully. We are yet to hear the violin that one of the lads plays. ➤

They attend Swindon Evangelical Church in Old Town who have been superb in transporting them all and supporting them with food and other needs. The younger ones attended holiday club during Easter week and it is hoped to register them in school very soon. We are managing with odd words and phrases, an old Ukrainian dictionary that belonged to Steve's father and, of course, Google translator.

Without being asked toys are all put away before bedtime and tables are cleared after eating. Every night before going to bed the whole family kneel and read the Bible out loud, taking it in turns to read passages. They then all take it in turns to pray, finishing with the Lords prayer.

Their own home outside Kyiv was still standing as I type this and was being used by another family who were homeless. They too are helping others whilst being helped themselves.

Gemma is a bit bewildered but has won them over – they were scared of dogs but not anymore! She takes all their attention and just walks away when she's had enough. We are teaching them to leave her alone if she is in her bed.

It is a privilege to have them with us and to witness not only yours but their amazing generosity.

Between the Swindon Evangelical Church and ourselves, we have found and secured a flat in Gorse Hill, above the Duke of Edinburgh pub which is now closed. We have committed to funding the rent for a year so if you would like to continue supporting this family to help them regain their independence over the coming year, please do get in touch with us.

Steve, Barbara and Gemma barbaraaftelak@gmail.com Tel. 01793 792917

Matthew Cammish

Open Day - Saturday 11th June 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

We have received numerous requests from people asking to view the possibly unique records my headmaster, M J. Cammish, maintained of his preaching activities over his very long life. The master record book he maintained is a most remarkable work. At the end of his days, my headmaster wrote a paper on his preaching activities, highlighting those services that remained a vivid memory and the highs and lows. A copy of this paper will be available for all visitors to take on the day. Refreshments will be provided.

Glebe Farm is located between Chippenham and Malmesbury in Lower Stanton St Quintin, SN14 6DB .

Bath Road Church in the news!



We've used the scaffolding on the church front as a good excuse for a little local PR to boost awareness of our community and our building.

Over the end of April and early May, we were featured in the Swindon Advertiser, on Radio BBC Wiltshire and Swindon 105.5 Radio. It included the stone masons Rob and Alex installing the newly-carved finial on its pinnacle, good for another 140 years we hope!

If you'd like to read the articles or hear the broadcasts, follow the links below. Due to copyright reasons we cannot print the articles in our own publications. Alternatively, a copy will be pinned to a poster board downstairs at church for a few weeks.

In summary, the articles explained why we have the scaffolding up, includes pictures of the views, and explained the church's facilities, some of our user groups and that it's available to the wider local community for use and worship. The radio broadcasters interviewed myself and our stonemasons Rob and Alex. Swindon 105.5s Shirley Ludford interviewed myself along with the steeplejack appointed to fit the lightning conductor.

<https://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/20097646.gallery-storm-damaged--church-offers-unique-views-swindon/>

<https://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/20097521.scaffolding-goes-repair-listed-storm-eunice-damage-old-town-church/>

On BBC Sounds - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0c4f9kg>

As for when the scaffolding's coming down, we've met a hitch. The other finial was previously considered sound but the steeplejack noticed it was no longer secure to its base. For safety reasons I instructed the steeplejack to remove this second finial, whereupon, despite his most careful efforts, it fell apart in his hands.

Steve Sparkes, Property and Finance

MP launches fund in autistic daughter's name to help families of children with additional needs or disability



Sir Robert Buckland with Wiltshire Community Foundation Chief Executive, Fiona Oliver and the Chairman of the Trustees, Ashley Truluck.

MP Robert Buckland has launched a charity fund with Wiltshire Community Foundation, inspired by his experience as the parent of an autistic daughter. Millie's Fund, named after his 19-year-old daughter, will support the education of young people with additional learning needs or a disability in Swindon by funding IT equipment such as laptops or iPads, out of school activities, travel costs or study trips.

The Swindon South MP has set the fund up with a £12,000 donation that has been doubled by the Community Foundation's Swindon Match Fund. But he is setting his sights on growing it further with more fundraising and by encouraging donations. The fund capital will be invested by the Community Foundation and the income used to make grants so that it becomes a lasting resource for the town.

"I decided the best way to make sure money was there for families was to set up a bespoke fund with Wiltshire Community Foundation," he said. "I chose

it because I wanted the fund to be administered professionally and in a sustainable way and run to very high standards.”

“It was an easy decision to collaborate with the community foundation because of the work it has done in Swindon and Wiltshire. I’ve often publicised the funding it has available to local groups.”

He said he and his wife Sian’s experience of bringing up Millie, who has a twin brother George, has given him an insight into the struggle parents of children with additional needs and disabilities face.

“Setting this fund up seems to sum up my own experiences and do something positive about what on some levels was quite a challenge for me and my family,” he said. “It’s something that none of us ever expect to happen but you have got to make something good out of all these situations and this is my attempt to do that.”

Over the years he has helped dozens of families who have struggled to get a diagnosis or the right support. “For me it’s more than just about my own family experiences, it’s about what more can be done to improve the system and to make life just a little bit more negotiable for those families,” he said.

“I hope this will be an additional resource for families in the Swindon borough bearing in mind we have a number of them struggling on lower income levels and many of them have youngsters with additional needs and with disabilities.

“The equipment they could get, whether it’s a dyslexia pen, an iPad or something that can assist with learning, can often be a game-changer and it’s that sort of lasting impact that I want to see from any grants and awards that are made from the fund.”

Wiltshire Community Foundation joint chief executive Fiona Oliver said: “We are very proud Robert has chosen to work with us on this fund, which will support our existing education support grants. We are looking forward to seeing the fund grow and hearing the stories of the families it goes on to help.”

Sir Robert said he thought long and hard before naming the fund after Millie, who is at secondary school. He said: “Millie is a very kind and loving person and she has many, many friends in school who have severe disabilities and significant needs. I know that, were she able to articulate what she wanted, she would be very supportive of wanting to help other people.” ➤

Grants of up to £1,000 are available from the fund. More details of eligibility and how to apply can be found at:

<https://www.wiltshirecf.org.uk> Support individuals

Donate to the fund at

<https://localgiving.org/charity/wiltshirecf/project/milliesFund/>

or if you would like to organise a fundraising event contact Mr Buckland's office at robert.buckland.mp@parliament.uk. ■

When I needed a neighbour, Were you there, were you there?

These are the first two lines of a modern day hymn by Sydney Carter (1915-2004) and throughout the pandemic I have been reminded of his hymn.

Those of you who are listeners to BBC Wiltshire will be aware that they have been running a campaign 'Make A Difference', inviting nominations of people who have made a difference to other people's lives over the past two years of coping with Covid.

I am fortunate to have neighbours who are making a difference to my life. In spite of coping with serious health problems in their own family, the latest of which is their 31 year old son being diagnosed with cancer, they do a weekly shop for me. Another neighbour has taken me for hospital visits and to STEAM for Covid vaccinations, A friend, also living nearby, makes daily calls to people whom she knows are living on their own and it is always a pleasure to hear her joyful voice when I pick up the phone. So, when I needed a neighbour, they have certainly all been there for me. Anon.

MINDFULNESS, NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Othona Retreat Centre. 6th–10th July 2022.

Tim Stead will be leading this retreat at the very beautiful Othona Centre on the Dorset coast. Do book now through this link (further details below):

<https://www.othonawestdorset.org.uk/civCRM/event/info?id=2027>

Retreat details



Every day now we hear more about the environmental crisis which is already devastating some parts of our world and threatening the existence of many species on earth. There are many ways we can and need to respond to this but what does the ancient practice of mindfulness have to offer in these days?

Contrary to some popular misconceptions, mindfulness is not just about staying calm - even though this will help in times of crisis such as these - but, much more, it teaches a way of seeing the world which can have an enormous impact on our relationship with the rest of nature.

In these four days we will spend our morning sessions in the chapel learning simple mindfulness practices, our afternoons outside in the grounds of Othona, practising bringing what we have learned into our relationship with the rest of nature and in the evenings we will reflect further with the help of films by John O'Donohue and Bruce Parry and on the last night celebrating our relationship with the season around a fire with song, reflection and simple ritual. Because in the end, it will not be new knowledge which saves us, but a shift in perspective.

Come and experience what this might feel like as we enjoy this beautiful part of the world.

***Tim Stead** is an accredited mindfulness teacher who runs 8 week courses, Quiet Days and Retreats in both secular and faith contexts. He is particularly interested in connecting contemporary mindfulness with the spiritual traditions. He was also a founder member of the Oxford Forest Church group which explores spirituality in nature. ■*

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee



This month we celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. She is the longest reigning monarch in British history. Up until recently she attended church every week and still did a full week's work at the age of 96!

It is her commitment to serving God and the nation which stands out in her life. Even before she became Queen, she made a promise, which she has kept for over 75 years: 'I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service' (21st birthday broadcast, 21 April 1947).

What is the secret of the Queen's consistency of character and service? In 2002 she said this: "I know just how much I rely on my faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings and to put my trust in God." These are wise words from somebody who draws her strength from the Christian Faith and can inspire all of us who want to make our lives count!

The Queen has been an example of joyful, wise, and generous service on behalf of others all her life. Six months before her coronation she asked the nation and Commonwealth to "pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making and that I may faithfully serve Him and you all the days of my life." Paul urges us to pray for all in authority, "that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." (1 Timothy 2:2).

St. Barnabas Day, 11th June

Barnabas, Paul's first missionary companion

Would you have liked to go to Cyprus on holiday this year? If so, spare a thought for the Cypriot who played such a key role in the New Testament.

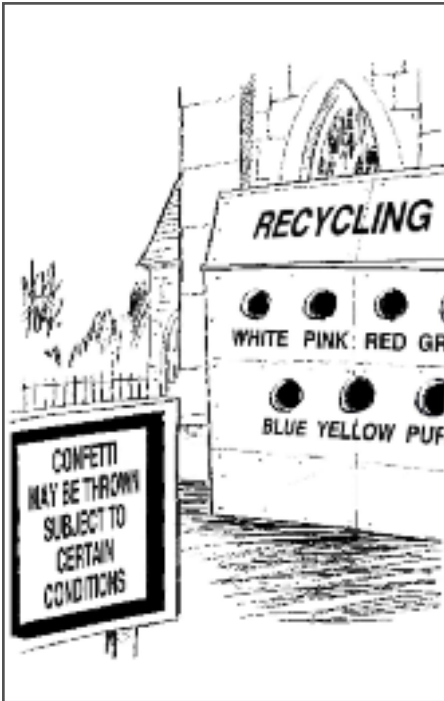
He was Joseph, a Jewish Cypriot and a Levite, who is first mentioned in Acts 4:36, when the Early Church was sharing a communal lifestyle. Joseph sold a field and gave the money to the apostles. His support so touched them that they gave him the nickname of Barnabas, 'Son of Encouragement'.

Barnabas has two great claims to fame. Firstly, it was Barnabas who made the journey to go and fetch the converted Paul out of Tarsus, and persuade him to go with him to Antioch, where there were many new believers with no one to help them. For a year the two men ministered there, establishing a church. It was here that the believers were first called Christians.

It was also in Antioch (Acts 13) that the Holy Spirit led the church to 'set aside' Barnabas and Paul and to send them out on the church's first ever 'missionary journey'. The Bible tells us that they went to Cyprus, and then travelled throughout the island. It was at Lystra that the locals mistook Barnabas for Zeus and Paul for Hermes, much to their dismay.

Much later, back in Jerusalem, Barnabas and Paul decided to part company. While Paul travelled on to Syria, Barnabas did what he could do best: return to Cyprus and continue to evangelise it. So, if you go to Cyprus and see churches, remember that Christianity on that beautiful island goes right back to Acts 13, when Barnabas and Paul first arrived.

In England there are 13 ancient church dedications and not a few modern ones. Barnabas the generous, the encourager, the apostle who loved his own people – no wonder he should be remembered with love. ■



Full
enhanced
DBS
and
fully insured

I can offer help with

- light cleaning
- shopping
- personal care
- light gardening
- medication
- meal preparation
- companionship
- outings

Tel: 07743 067503

Email:

tmhomehelp@gmail.com

ADVERTISEMENTS

To advertise in this magazine, please contact Mr. David Bevan telephone 01793 336667; email: david04bevan@yahoo.co.uk

Whilst care has been taken, no responsibility can be accepted for statements made by the advertisers, neither can we be responsible for any losses caused by any errors or omissions in the advertisements.

**COPY for the JULY/AUGUST MAGAZINE
by SUNDAY 12th JUNE, please.**

Contributions ahead of the deadline are always welcome.

**Please send to: Mrs. Diana Swann, 58 Sandown Avenue, SN3 1QQ
email: d.swann6a@gmail.com**

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views of those held by the Old Town Partnership of Churches.

Hillier

Funeral Service

A tradition of caring since 1923

- ☛ Family run and independent
- ☛ 24 hour service every day
- ☛ Pre-payment plans
- ☛ Hillier Bereavement Care

A caring support service for the bereaved



www.hillierfuneralservice.co.uk



HEAD OFFICE

170 Victoria Road, Swindon SN1 3DF
Telephone: 01793 522797

CHAPEL OF REST

The Broadway, Whitworth Road,
 Swindon SN25 3BL
Telephone: 01793 522145

EMAIL

enquiries@hillierfuneralservice.co.uk

Established in 1900, today's Hills Group is a dynamic Wiltshire business that covers a wide area of western and southern England.

The Group's operations remain dedicated to three core activities:

- Specialist waste management services and recycling solutions
- Production and sale of ready-mixed concrete, sand, stone and gravel
- Building high quality new homes and undertaking contract building projects

Working today...
 ...for a better tomorrow



www.hills-group.co.uk

T: 01793 781200

Bath Road Methodist Church, Easter Egg decoration



Winner of the children's best egg, Jack



Winner of the adult competition
Adeline

Dhillon's egg rolled the furthest

Immanuel United Reformed Church Easter decorations



DEACONS *for* DIAMONDS



Come and view our superb range of new, bespoke and second hand diamond rings.

DEACON & SON (SWINDON) LTD

Established 1848

Items featured subject to stock availability

11 - 15 WOOD STREET, OLD TOWN, SWINDON, SN1 4AN

TELEPHONE: 01793 522072/527530

www.deacons-jewellers.com

B&C MORSE

Painting • Decorating • Property Maintenance

- Local family business
- Interior and exterior painting and decorating specialists
- Wallpaper
- Coving
- Window frames and boards repainted
- Facias and soffits painted or replaced
- Associated building and maintenance work
- Discounts for OAP's
- Competitive rates
- No job too small



For a FREE quotation please call us on: 01793 536867 OR
CHRIS MOBILE: 07754 498760 • BRIAN MOBILE: 07876 074759
EMAIL: chrismorse1974@yahoo.co.uk