

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



A Joyful Indian Celebration at Christ Church

One in Christ - Together in Mission

Swindon Gilbert & Sullivan
Society Presents:



18th -22nd April 2023, 7.30pm, Sat Matinee 2.30pm

Arts Centre, Devizes Road, Swindon, SN1 4BJ

Adults: £15, Under 16's : £8

Book Tickets via the society: swindonGS@hotmail.com

Wyvern Box Office: 03433100040

Online: swindontheatres.co.uk



Your Contacts

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Minister: The Revd. Rach Collins, 147 Drove Road, SN1 3AQ
Tel: 529263 e-mail: rach.collins@methodist.org.uk

Web site: www.bathroadmethodistchurch.org.uk

Newsletter: fortnightly: allison_davies_1@yahoo.co.uk

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

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

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Weekly news items: parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk

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

PARISH OFFICE/PARISH CLERK at the Community Centre, SN1 3HB.

Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Early evening/Saturday morning appointments available by prior arrangement, Tel. 522832.

email: parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk

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

email: chris@christchurchswindon.co.uk

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Minister: The Revd. Robert Jordan, 152 Drove Road, SN1 3AG
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WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER CHURCHES IN OLD TOWN

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Dear Friends,

Focus on the task in hand

By God's grace it has been an enormous privilege baptising 18 adults since last Easter. Each of them have remarkable stories to tell about how they have discovered Jesus's amazing grace, love and Good News, through their many life challenges. It has been very exciting seeing their growth in faith through their participation in the Fellowship of Faith which meets on the first and third Wednesday of every month 7-8.30pm in Christ Church. This was formed on the evening of our Partnership Confirmation 8th May 2022 when 2 couples, James and Alex, Simon and Ali, confirmed in our Partnership the previous year, offered to take things forward. All are welcome, so please come and join us.

We learn in Matthew's Gospel that when Jesus was baptised as an adult by John the Baptist, he heard a voice from heaven say, 'This is my son, whom I love, in him I am well pleased'.

Friends, may we, in our own challenges and experience hear afresh the voice of the living God, encouraging us to be secure in our Father's love for us and his presence each step of the way. Immediately after Jesus's baptism the spirit of God led Jesus into the wilderness where he was tested by the devil, who wanted him to take short cuts to success by attacking the most crucial foundation, Jesus's identity as the Son of God and his precious relationship with his Heavenly Father.

On 22nd February Ash Wednesday we will enter again, across our Partnership, the season of Lent lasting 40 days and 40 nights preparing for the momentous events of Holy Week and Easter. For Jesus, the Wilderness was where he met with God in an incredibly personal way. My prayer for myself and us is that this will be true across Swindon in all the challenges and temptations we are facing personally and together.

As baptised Christians, full of the Holy Spirit, please focus on the task in hand which is to grow in our Christian faith following Jesus where he leads us in the power of his Holy Spirit.

We are very blessed to have six outstanding speakers with huge experience of Christian ministry from across five denominations to help us to answer the ➤

questions, Who is Jesus? How can we continue Jesus's Christian mission today? Where was Jesus then, and vitally, where is Jesus now?

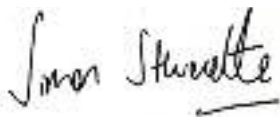
We are very fortunate that the series will be professionally filmed by Matt Collins and will be available by live stream and You Tube for you to catch up if you can't make a session. Thank you Matt for this very generous offer.

We also are very blessed that over the Palm Sunday weekend 31st March and 1st April SALOS, our very gifted Swindon Musical Theatre Company, will be presenting Godspell the Musical in Christ Church. Please do join us. This production is based on the Gospel according to St Matthew which is the Gospel the church is concentrating on this year in its Revised Common Lectionary across the world. This uplifting, joyful musical presents a contemporary view of Jesus as his followers and disciples re-enact many of the parables and scenes of his life.

Jesus's message of kindness, tolerance and love come vibrantly to life in this wonderful, not to be missed show which is rich in humour and pathos. I have been blessed to experience this joy through SALOS rehearsals in Christ Church. I have been encouraged and challenged by their wonderful singing, Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord, Day by Day, and Learn your Lessons Well. As we look forward to all that God will teach us across our Partnership this Lent let me end with these words from Day by Day:

'Three things I pray, dear Lord: To see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly Day by Day.'

God bless you SALOS as a musical company, God bless our 6 gifted ecumenical speakers, and God bless each one of us that the Lord Jesus might enable us to focus on the task in hand which is to renew our baptism, grow ever more strong in Jesus and share his wonderful Good News across our town of Swindon.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Skerrett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

FAMILY EVENTS

BAPTISMS

We welcome into the family of the Church

CHRIST CHURCH

Jan 29 Jude Hudson Birks
Elliott Fegan

DEATHS

We extend our sympathy to the loved ones

CHRIST CHURCH

Jan 2 Joan Hall, 87 years
11 Eileen Dorothy White, 86 years
25 Barbara Mary Furguson, 95 years
Feb 1 Colin Pignatelli, 78 years
3 Joan Eileen Linnegar, 90 years

IMMANUEL

Jan 30 John Robert Cummings, 90 yers

FLOODLIGHTING

Jan 19 For Irene Dawes - Happy Birthday, all the best, missing you.
All my love, Andrew

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 for floodlighting. If paying by cheque, please make it payable to 'Christ Church PCC' and post it to the PARISH OFFICE, COMMUNITY CENTRE AT CHRIST CHURCH, SWINDON, SN1 3HB at least a week before the date of the floodlighting. GIFT AID: If you are a UK taxpayer and wish Christ Church to reclaim the tax, you may Gift Aid your donation, at no cost to you, by providing your name, the first line of your address and your post code. Thank you for supporting Christ Church and its work in the community.

email: parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk Tel. 522832.

The Partnership Magazine – Monies collection for 2023

Dear Magazine readers,

Thank you to everyone who has already paid their subscription for 2023.

To cover the increasing costs of producing the Partnership magazine, it has been necessary to increase the cost to £1 per issue or £10 for an annual subscription of 10 issues. This remains very good value.

Subscriptions are now due for 2023 and there will be three ways to pay as follows:

1. By sending a cheque for £10, payable to the Partnership of Churches, to George Kennedy, 31 Vasterne Close, Purton, Swindon, SN5 4EZ.
2. By paying your magazine distributor £10 either in cash or as a cheque payable to the Partnership of Churches. The distributor will then forward the payments to George Kennedy as above.
3. By Bank Transfer to the Partnership's bank account the details of which are:
 - Account Name – Swindon Old Town Partnership of Churches
 - Account No. – 00193543
 - Sort Code – 30-98-41

If you decide to pay by this method please email both George Kennedy (kennedygeorge62@gmail.com and David Bevan (david04bevan@yahoo.co.uk) to let them know that you have paid. Please use "Mag" and your surname as the reference.

If you do not wish to subscribe, you can buy individual issues at one of our Partnership churches.

If you still have difficulty obtaining or paying for the magazine please contact either George Kennedy (01793 772589) or Daniel and Caroline Pitt (01793 521732)

With best wishes and thanks. *The magazine team*



PARTNERSHIP OF CHURCHES LENT SERIES 2023

Venue: Christ Church, 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm

Theme:

Who is Jesus? Christian Mission today, Jesus then and now.

The programme for the evening will be:

Start 7.00 pm, 15 minutes worship, 40 minute talk,

Refreshments for 20 minutes, 40 minutes of question and answer,
finish 9.00 pm.

Wednesday 1st March	The Rev'd. Jonathan Edwards, Pilgrim Centre
Wednesday 8th March	The Very Rev'd. the Dean of Bristol, Mandy Ford
Wednesday 15th March	The Rev'd. Susan Durber, Regional Minister, United Reformed Church
Wednesday 22nd March	The Rev'd. David Gray, Methodist Superintendent Minister.
Wednesday 29th March	Dr Eric and Marguerite Holliday, Holy Rood Roman Catholic Church, Deacon/GP and Psychotherapist
Wednesday 5th April	The Rev'd. Dr. Cathy Okoronkwo, Vicar of St Barnabas, Gorse Hill and All Saints Ferndale, Racial Justice Adviser



Sad News from Traidcraft

You may already have heard the news that the pioneering fair trade company Traidcraft has had to cease trading after over 40 years. This notice appears on the Traidcraft website from its directors:

‘It is with tremendous sadness that we announce that Traidcraft PLC has gone into administration.

‘The business has been in a weak financial position for some years and the Covid-19 pandemic presented a significant new set of challenges. Just as we were emerging from the pandemic, like many other retailers, we faced the combined effects of the war in Ukraine, rising energy prices and increased transport costs.

‘Sadly, despite the heroic efforts of our team at Gateshead, low consumer confidence during the critical autumn trading period led to a sales result significantly short of what was required to sustain the operation. December sales were also negatively impacted by the uncertainty created by Royal Mail strikes.

‘After much deliberation and following advice from external advisers, we have come to the conclusion that the only honourable course of action is to appoint administrators. Our hope is that by doing this in a timely manner, we can minimise the impact on our suppliers and creditors.’

It is heartbreaking to bring the Traidcraft PLC story to an end in this manner but we can at least take some consolation from the knowledge that we have been a major force for good in the ethical retail sector for over forty years. We have championed the cause of trade justice to the point where we now have better standards and procedures in place to protect the rights and dignity of growers and producers all over the world.

‘We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to all those who have journeyed with us as employees, board members, shareholders and suppliers. We would particularly like to thank our loyal band of “Fairtraders”, many of whom have been with us since the very beginning. ➤

The mission to combat trade injustice and poverty is far from complete. It is important to recognise that Transform Trade (previously Traidcraft Exchange, the charity arm of Traidcraft) will continue its vital work supporting producers and fighting for trade justice and people centred trade.

Our hope and prayer is that others will also emerge to pick up the torch that we have carried for four decades.

Board of Directors, Traidcraft PLC
January 2023'

Traidcraft has always sold a lot of its products through churches and similar outlets, known as "Fairtraders". Bath Road and Immanuel have both run regular stalls and can still continue doing so while stocks last. So please keep shopping with us and thank you for all your support in the past.

Dorothy and George Kennedy

Do you enjoy singing?

If so, Swindon Co-operative Ladies Choir would love to hear from you

The pleasure of singing is well documented. There are physiological as well as psychological benefits, so I am very pleased to have found a new group to sing with, a year after my previous choir closed. I have joined Swindon Co-operative Ladies Choir, which meets on a Friday afternoon from 2.00 pm until 3.30pm at Immanuel Church. We sing a range of traditional and well-known songs, always in two part harmony and often in rounds. The choir is fairly small at present, so new members would be very welcome.

For more information call Pat on 01793-782194. *Janet*

Rotary - Swindon Cares

Saturday 20th May, 7.30 pm... please make a note of the date

The High Sheriff of Wiltshire's Annual Concert in aid of Rotary Swindon Cares, raising money for the Swindon Domestic Support Service, will be held at Christ Church on Saturday 20th May at 7.30 pm. Details will be published in the April magazine.



Partnership Projects

Over the years since we have been working together as a partnership of churches we have raised money and awareness for many worthy projects, the most recent being raising money for the Desai School in Kenya.

We try to alternate our projects between those which are based in this country and those based further afield and it is always good to hear news of the recipients after we have finished raising the money. With this in mind, I had an email from Eddie Thomas recently providing me with some news and video of the school for which we raised money in 2006.

Do you remember our Kagitumba project? We raised money to build the school in Kagitumba and Eddie Thomas who was the civil engineer for this project was our contact. It is so good to know that the school has grown since those early days and I print below a part of the email that Eddie received with the video. As Eddie said to me "From a little acorn grow-eth a mighty oak!" M.W.

Dear Eddie,

Praise the lord.

Please find attached here below, a video picture of Pupils and class room buildings of Kagitumba Primary School shared by Bishop Rutanga Dismas. The school has grown so much, more buildings have been built and pupils (at the time of your last visit), have graduated from different universities including USA. Surely God used you to accomplish such tremendous work that is still progressing. May He continue to give you strength. If any further possibilities exist, Bishop says that they still need to expand the school.

In His service.

Evening worship Invitation - Christ Church 6.30pm weekly

We have been very blessed since the beginning of September by returning to weekly evening worship at Christ Church. This idea was prompted by Mike Frost Foster who encouraged the PCC to make more of our Ecumenical Partnership. This we have done. We have received many appreciative comments for the quality of the bell ringing from the Christ Church Tower before the service, the music led by Tim Eyles our Director of Music and the Christ Church Choir and sometimes Toast Music Group,

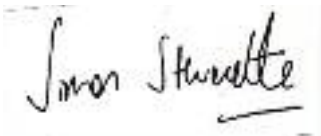
It has been a joy having regular visits from Rach Collins, Robert Jordan and John Cheek, Student Minister in Training from Lawn community Church for the informal services.

In March the programme will be as follows:

5th March	Evening Communion led by The Rev'd. Norma McKemey
12th March	Informal Worship led by The Rev'd. Rach Collins
19th March	Prayer Book Evensong led by Ailsa Palmer
26th March	Informal Worship led by The Rev'd. Robert Jordan

All are welcome to join the congregation which has grown up to 35 people per week, including newcomers and many of our new friends from Iran. The success of this venture illustrates wonderfully the central words from our Partnership Covenant 'to do nothing apart that we can do better together'.

To God be all the Glory for the great things he is doing among us. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Thank you everybody for making this possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Skuratte". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

Bath Road

All services start at 10am.

05	March	Morning Service taken by the Worship Leaders
12	March	Holy Communion, The Rev'd. Rach Collins
19	March	Mothering Sunday, The Rev'd. Robert Jordan
26	March	Morning Service taken by Wendy. Allen

Open House - Mondays 10.30 am to 12 noon

Please feel free to come along. We are also looking for volunteers to help run it. All you need to be able to do is make tea and coffee and cut up a cake or two. If you are able to help, please let me know.

Thanks Keir. 07749726446.

Bath Road Church Community Breakfast

9.00 am to 11.00 am

Saturday 11th March

£1.00 for a bacon roll with tea or coffee

All are welcome



MOPS

(MOPS stands for Mix Of People)

2nd and 16th March

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 hour listening to a speaker or doing an activity.

2nd March: Easter cards, Janet Hunt

16th March: Speaker, The Rev'd. Rach Collins

ORGANISERS; Brenda Hewitt, Tel. 683926 and Janet Hunt, Tel. 521934

Outcome of our financial Stewardship Campaign

You may remember we were projecting a loss of £4,500 for 2022/23, and losses like this every year thereafter. We asked individuals to consider their level of giving and for those who could to increase their financial contributions and to either sign up to pay by standing order and/or to Gift Aid their giving.

Thanks to a number of you, we saw an increase in giving of just under a total of £40 a week.

Sadly, we're not out of the financial woods yet. We're still projecting a loss of £4,100 by the end of 2022/23 (think how grim it would have been if we had not undertaken this financial exercise), primarily as a result of increased utility costs. Two caveats here:

The good news - until we're through March, we won't have an entirely clear picture what our end of year position will look like, so it is possible we won't post such a loss.

The bad news - It is unclear what effect coming off the Winter subsidised energy tariff will have on our financial position; it is almost certain our utility costs will rise, the question is by how much and by how much we use before the end of the Methodist Year on 31st August.

We also need to factor into our calculations that in 2023/24 the Circuit assessment (the money needed to fund our ministerial team, their admin, pensions and transport costs, the running of Methodist HQ and outreach programmes etc.) will increase by 6%. The North Wiltshire Circuit is working on what our proportion of that financial obligation is likely to be.

Steve Sparkes,
Chair, Property and Finance Committee

'JERUSALEM JOY' by Roger Jones

We have been invited to join in this half day workshop on Saturday 1st April, 12 noon at Cricklade United Church. Cost £5, including lunch and ending with a performance at the end of the afternoon.

Please contact June Rhodes if you would like to come and sing.
email: June19dvr@gmail.com or phone 07933 626951.



Old Town Community Craft Fayre

Bath Road Methodist Church
Swindon

Saturday 11th March 2023

From 0900—1200

Set up from 0830

Tables are free— Donation will be gratefully accepted

Contact Sharon to book your table

Email: SharonVatcher@aol.com

Mothers Day Runaways

Thursday 16th March, 7.30 pm at Rodbourne Methodist Church

Mothering Sunday can be tricky for a whole host of reasons. Our Mothers Day Runaways service is a chance to reflect and bring to God some of those difficult to talk about topics such as childlessness, infertility, miscarriage, infant death, death of a mother, abuse, estrangement and the many other life stories that impact this date.

The worship will last about 30 minutes and will walk the path of lament and hope as we seek the God who sees us and loves us.

To find out more or talk about these or other issues please get in touch with The Rev'd. Rach Collins

Wonders of computers?

Eric Sparkes writes... His son, Tim, testing a computer Search engine, was asked to compose a poem on a car failing to start in the manner of Shakespeare. This is what it's programming generated - amazing!

A car that won't start,
Oh what a sight to behold!
A curse upon the engine,
For not working as it should.

Thou art a stubborn beast,
This car of mine,
With nary a spark to ignite,
And no power to shine.

What foul sorcery is this,
That keeps the engine cold?
I pray to the car gods,
For the strength to be bold.

I turn the key with vigour,
Hoping for a sign,
But alas, the engine sputters,
And refuses to combine.

Oh car, my trusty steed,
Why doth thou forsake me now?
I beg of thee, start this day,
And allow me to take my vow.

But alas, the car doth not listen,
It sits and idles no more,
Leaving me stranded and alone,
On this cold and lonely shore.

Walton Park Hotel, Clevedon. Weekend away, 26th-28th January 2024



Walton Park is a very comfortable clifftop hotel by the sea, in Clevedon, a 1 hour drive from Swindon and we always make arrangements to share lifts. It has been booked from Friday 26th January to Sunday 28th January 2024. A weekend of fellowship, discussions, meals and fun together, including groups and activities for children. If you feel you would just like to come and stay and do your own thing, then that's fine too.

Accommodation is available in single, twin, double or family rooms all of which are en-suite. There is a lift to all floors and an accessible room. All will be on a full board basis, starting with the evening meal on Friday and ending with Sunday lunch.

The cost of the weekend is £190 for adults and £90 for children under 12 at the time of the weekend. Places are limited and will be secured on a first come, first served basis. If you would like to book, please complete a booking form and return it to Liz King, Adrian King or Gary Walker. Please pay a £50 deposit either by cheque payable to Bath Road Methodist Church or by BACS payment to Bath Road Methodist Church, Sort code 30-98-41, Account Number 00092941.

Further payments will be due in July 2023, 50% of the balance, and January 2024. Booking forms are available at the back of the church.

If you would like more details, please speak to
Liz King (07843 723484) or Gary Walker 907853 648877.

Christ Church with St. Mary's

Godspell coming to Christ Church A musical based on the Gospel of St Matthew

We are pleased that SALOS has chosen Christ Church for their next production of "Godspell"! Please make a note of the dates in your diaries now and get your tickets as soon as possible. The performances are on Friday 31st March at 7.30 pm and Saturday April 1st at 2.30pm and 7.30pm. Ticket prices are £15 for adults and £10 for children. *Details are on the poster on page 23.*

Godspell – Christine Senior reminisces on a Quest outing to see this show in 1971...

Reading that SALOS are going to be performing "Godspell" in Christ Church on 31st March and 1st April brought back memories of seeing the original West End Production at the Roundhouse when I was a teenager and a member of the ecumenical youth group "Quest". The performance had a profound effect on me at the time, especially the invitation at the end to go on stage to share in the bread and wine. I still have the original cast recording (1971) and remember David Essex as the lead and Jeremy Irons as John the Baptist walking through the audience to the stage singing "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord". Marti Webb and Julie Covington were also in the cast. The production was at the Roundhouse November 1971 to January 1972 before moving to Wyndhams Theatre in February 1972.

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



All are welcome to this monthly event

The Friends of Christ Church Christmas Market Raffle

The Trustees would like to thank all those who donated prizes for the raffle which raised £240 for the Friends' funds, especially Barnes Coaches, the Old Town Co-op and Swindon Town Football Club.

What is the DNA of our Churches across the Old Town Partnership?

As we enter Lent, it is great to have this year, for the first time, a Bible verse shared across the whole Partnership: Jesus said to them again 'Peace be with you, as the Father has sent me so I send you'.

Please can I encourage you, on behalf of Rach, Robert, our Messy Church leaders and myself, to join us each day in praying our joint Prayer for Growth:

God of mission,
Who alone brings growth to your Church,
Send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions and power to our witness.
Help all our Partnership churches to grow in numbers,
Spiritual commitment to you
And service to our Swindon community,
Through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Amen.

In addition, please help us at Christ Church to find out what is our essential DNA, who are we, where are we, how are we moving forward, through God's grace?

Our vision is to be Christ's Church in the community.

Our mission is:

- By proclaiming Christ through teaching and example:
- By welcoming and serving all through hospitality.
- By encouraging people to find God through worship, faith and prayer.
- By providing a spiritual home and resources for the local community.
- By transforming Swindon and beyond with God's hope and compassion.

Our values: We will do this with humility, grace and respect, listening prayerfully to God and our neighbours.

I am very grateful to David and Liz Day for sharing this gift from Bath Abbey which they discovered on a recent visit I do think these words are very relevant for all the gifts I see across our Old Town Partnership. ➤

We are called to be a community of:

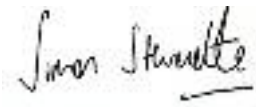
- Thanksgiving:** A House of prayer for all nations
- Telling:** An attraction helping visitors and locally encounter God
- Teaching:** A forum for learning and discovery at every stage of maturity.
- Tending:** An oasis, refreshing lives with hospitality and fun, healing and peace.
- Transforming:** A beacon for public engagement with peace and justice
- Treasuring:** A landmark known for outstanding care of the environment

I look forward to hearing your ideas as together we discern what is the essential DNA and life blood we offer through our Old Town Partnership.

Jesus said;

'I have come to you that you may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10;10.

Every blessing,



Joyful Indian Celebration at Christ Church

We have been enormously blessed over the last 20 years at Christ Church by the Shinde family.

Nitin is a social worker with Swindon Borough Council, specialising in Foster Care, Nikita is a Sister on Saturn Ward at the Great Western Hospital, Steven works for Network Rail at Reading Station and is about to train to be an Engine Driver, Shalom is a student at Commonweal school.

We have also been blessed by their wider family including Manda, Nitin's mother and Madan, Nitin's father, a retired Priest who died a few years ago. In addition to their professional work, the Shinde family are very involved in the life of Christ Church, for example helping with our Audio/Visual, All age worship and as musicians in our Toast Music group. At the beginning of the Pandemic the Shinde family helped to set up a national Asian Christian Fellowship called 'Jesus our Victory' and I have had the privilege of speaking at their youth gathering online. ➤

On 15th January, the Shinde family accepted my invitation, with the help of the Asian Christian Fellowship, to organise an Indian Celebration Day at Christ Church. This is to illustrate our passion to be a church for all nations and that we are the rainbow people of God.

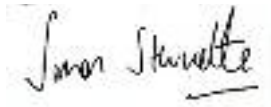
We had a remarkable day on the 15th January which surpassed my expectations. The offering at our Sunday service was profoundly joyful, meaningful and deeply spiritual. The Community Centre was wonderfully decorated and 100 people stayed for the whole day. This involved joyful singing, testimony and an amazing delicious Indian banquet which was a gift to us all from the Asian Christian Fellowship. Nitin and Steven compered the day with humour and fun, for example with Indian games involving sweets bobbing on a line and a quiz. The climax was some very energetic Bollywood dancing with many guests joining in and learning new moves!!

As I remarked in my thank you speech, it was an amazing day...nowhere else in the country would the vicar be doing Bollywood dancing at 4pm and then leading Prayer Book Evensong at 6.30pm!!.

Plans are already progressing for a similar celebration next year. We are also planning other cultural celebrations for example a Ukrainian celebration and an Iranian celebration with music and delicious food. Further details to follow in due course.

Thank you so much to our Asian friends for all their hard work, the delicious food and all they gave to us. Please pray that we will grow in joy through these celebrations discovering more fully our Christian unity amidst our God given diversity.

Every blessing,



Margaret's Seville Orange Marmalade made £70 for Christ Church funds.

Thank you, Margaret, for your many hours of hard work in your kitchen. We all enjoy the result.

Bishop Lee - Retirement

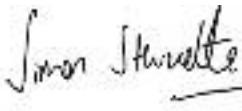
Please see the statement below from Bishop Viv, following Bishop Lee's announcement of his intention to retire on 30th April 2023:

Bishop Lee has served as Bishop of Swindon for 18 years with great compassion and deep faithfulness, modelling the virtues of creativity, generosity, bravery and openness which our Diocese holds dear. Committed to evangelism, +Lee led the work to bring the Pattern Church to life in Swindon. As a Christian and a scientist he has contributed nationally to debates on scientific and medical research. More recently, as a pastor, he led our work on 'Living in Love & Faith' enabling many to explore the issues in sexuality which continue to divide the church.

'I am deeply grateful for his welcome to me in 2018, the training he gave this 'newbie' Diocesan Bishop and his continued companionship of me and other colleagues. We will miss him greatly. The Diocese of Oxford sent +Lee to us and I am glad that he and Liz have found a home back there. May he and Liz know the affirmation of many as they prepare to say farewell.'

Simon writes...

'We are enormously thankful to Lee and Liz for all they have given to us within the community and to Christ Church. Especially we thank God for Liz's support for Messy Church as part of the Core Team since it started around 10 years ago. We assure them of our love, friendship and prayers as they prepare for their retirement at the end of April. God bless you, Lee and Liz and your family.'



World Water Day is 22nd March

We take clean water for granted. After all, when did you last turn on the tap and expect filthy water to come out? But sadly, bad water is still a daily reality for billions of people. The United Nations wants to help them by ensuring that everyone can access clean water by 2030. It is part of the so-called '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' and it is an enormous challenge.

Meanwhile, this year each one of us can do at least something to help on 22nd March. A donation to Water Aid will help provide safe water to marginalised communities worldwide. Simply go to: www.wateraid.org/uk

MARCH DIARY

Morning Prayer at Christ Church

9-9.30 am Monday, Tuesday and Thursday in the Lady Chapel
apart from the first Saturday when it is 7.30 am.

9-9.30 am Wednesday and Friday, virtual Morning Prayer

Telephone 0800 260 5903 to join by phone

Use this Pass code 69404 36078

Call Stephen 07885b217077 if you would like to join and need advice.

Every Wednesday, 10.30 am-11.00 am - Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion

- | | | |
|---------------|----------|---|
| 01 Wed | 7.00 pm | Partnership Lent Talk in Christ Church |
| 03 Fri | 7.30 pm | Great Western Chorus with GWH NHS Trust
Choir Concert in Christ Church |
| 04 Sat | 7.30 am | Christ Church Morning Prayer followed by
fellowship breakfast in the Community Centre. |
| 05 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 |
| | 3.00 pm | Messy Church at Bath Road Methodist Church |
| | 6.30 pm | Christ Church, Holy Communion |
| 07 Tues | 1.30pm | to 3.30 pm Afternoon Tea in the Community Centre |
| | 2.30 pm | Tea & Chat, Goddard Arms, Old Town. |
| 08 Wed | 7.00 pm | Partnership Lent Talk in Christ Church |
| 12 Sun | 8.00 am | Christ Church, Holy Communion |
| | 9.00 am | St. Mary's, Holy Communion |
| | 10.00 am | Christ Church, Family Holy Communion |
| | 6.30 pm | Informal Evening Worship |
| 14 Tues | 1.30 pm | to 3.30 pm Afternoon Tea in the Community Centre |
| 15 Wed | 7.00 pm | Partnership Lent Talk in Christ Church |
| 17 Fri | 6.00 pm | for 6.30 pm Swindon Music Festival starts at
Christ Church. |
| 19 Sun | 8.00 am | Christ Church, Holy Communion |
| | 9.00 am | St. Mary's, Holy Communion |
| | 10.00 am | Christ Church Informal Holy Communion |
| | 6.30 pm | Christ Church, Choral Evensong |

21	Tues	1.30 pm	to 3.30 pm	Afternoon Tea in Community Centre
22	Wed	10.30 am	to 11.00 am	Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion
		7.00 pm		Partnership Lent Talk
25	Sat	7.30 pm		Swindon Choral Society Concert in Christ Church
26	Sun	8.00 am		Christ Church, Holy Communion
		9.00 am		St. Mary's, Informal Holy Communion
		10.00 am		Christ Church, Family Holy Communion
		6.30 pm		Christ Church Evening Worship
27	Mon	7.30 pm		Christ Church PCC meeting in the Community Centre
28	Tues	1.30 pm	to 3.30 pm	Afternoon Tea in the Community Centre
29	Wed	10.30 am	11.00 am	Christ in Quiet with Holy Communion
		7.00 pm		Partnership Lent Talk
31	Fri	7.30 pm		SALOS performing 'Godspell' in Christ Church

First crossing of Antarctica

The first land crossing of Antarctica was completed 65 years ago, on 2nd March 1958, by the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, led by Vivian Fuchs. The team of 12 men travelled 2,158 miles from Shackleton Base to Scott Base (via the South Pole) in 99 days, using six vehicles.

The journey – nearly 22 miles a day, much of it in appalling conditions and obstructed by huge crevasses – started from the Weddell Sea and ended at McMurdo Sound. It was well prepared and strongly supported. The advance team at the Shackleton Base had to over-winter in weather much more severe than they had anticipated, but still they remained healthy.

Mount Everest conqueror Edmund Hillary, starting at the 'end', was responsible for laying supplies for the crossing party and forging a route for vehicles through the western mountains, but he and his group also made an unscheduled dash for the Pole, becoming in the process the third group to reach it, and the first to do so in vehicles.

The expedition had been timed to cash in on the worldwide interest created by the International Geophysical Year, a global project designed to stimulate scientific co-operation. Under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth II, the expedition was funded by the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. The continent was not crossed again until 1981. ■



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SALOS

Presents

Godspell

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JOHN-MICHAEL TEBELAK

MUSIC & NEW LYRICS BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

Originally Produced on the New York Stage by

EDGAR LANSBURY / STUART DUNCAN / JOSEPH BERUH



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Friday 31st March 7.30pm

Saturday 1st April 2.30pm & 7.30pm


Performed at

Christ Church, Swindon, SN1 3HG

Tickets -

Adult £15 / Child £10

www.SALOS.org / 07731 183857



This amateur production is presented by Music Theatre International All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI www.mfishows.co.uk

A small supply of tickets are available in the Parish Office.

Immanuel

**Services every Sunday at 10.30 am with
Holy Communion on the third Sunday of the month.**

The Rev'd. Robert Jordan will be taking the services on the 5th, 12th and 19th February. On February 26th the service will be taken by The Rev'd. Roy Lowes.



**Tea & Chat
Tuesday 14th March, 2.30 pm
at Immanuel in the Hall or Parlour**

A time to meet up with friends old and new and simply enjoy each other's company over a cuppa and some cake. We would love to see you.

TEA SERVICES

After many months of waiting, the Tea Service are returning to Immanuel. Please book the following two dates: **March 12th and May 21st at 4.00pm.** A good time, singing well known hymns, having a great tea, and a time to meet other people. Come along, bring a friend.

Used Printer Ink Cartridges and Mobile Phones

An easy fund-raising thing most of us can do is put our used printer cartridges and phones in the box in the porch (NOT EPSON). You can collect these at work and/or from neighbours, the more the better. I will then collect them, box them, then send off and wait for the money to come into the bank account.

Sue Goodall

United Reformed Church 50th Anniversary Service

The United Reformed Church (URC) is delighted to announce a new date for the Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration. This will now take place on Saturday 15th April 2023 at Methodist Central Hall Westminster and the Open Church House event at 86 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9RT will also take place on the same date from 10.00 am -12 noon.

Note: The original event had to be cancelled due to train strikes.



Swindon Old Town Partnership of Churches
Anglican - URC - Methodist est 1969



Immanuel Church

Upham Road, Swindon

26th March at 10:30am



Passion Sunday

Excerpts from

Messiah

(G.F. Handel)

with

Readings & Hymns

(No Sermon)

Immanuel Choir

All welcome to this 1 hour service

One in Christ - Together in Mission
Partnership web site www.swindon-stps.org.uk

TEA and CHAT at Immanuel Tuesday 14th March 2.30 pm - 4.00 pm

In the article on the sad end of Traidcraft we are reminded of the importance of continuing our support for all those working for Trade Justice around the world. Transform Trade, the charity arm of Traidcraft, is once again encouraging us to host a Big Brew (very much like the annual Macmillan Coffee Mornings in September)

As our March Tea and Chat afternoon comes at the end of Fairtrade Fortnight, our World Concerns Committee has asked to make it a Big Brew 2023. It will be very much 'as normal' except that we are asking for voluntary donations for refreshments, all of which will go to Transform Trade. Also, all the Traidcraft goodies we have left in our Traidcraft cupboard will be on sale. So, please invite all your neighbours, friends and family to join us for a time of fellowship together over a Cuppa, Cake and Chat whilst, at the same time, raising much needed funds for this very worthy charity. We look forward to seeing you there

If you would like further information on how to support Transforming Trade, please go to www.transform-trade.org or contact me, Liz Gleed 07768 120364

It is important to recognise that Transform Trade (previously Traidcraft Exchange, the charity arm of Traidcraft) will continue its vital work supporting producers and fighting for trade justice and people centred trade.

Aldbourn Band Concert

The Aldbourn Band have been coming to Immanuel on the last Saturday of January for the past 55 years: this year they promised us a "Night at the Movies" and true to their word took us through a dozen or more pieces from film soundtracks from the 1940s to some more recent blockbuster films. Undoubtedly they proved that they fully deserve the accolades heaped upon them: it really was band music at its best – no wonder they are ranked at number 11 in the world!!! A packed church was reluctant to let them go but after an exciting encore we ended the evening with a rousing rendition of "The Day Thou Gavest".
Geoff Gleed

u3a Swindon...There's never a dull day with U3a

Spring is here – a perfect time for a fresh start and trying something new. Is there something you've always wanted to do ? To learn or brush-up on a language? Dance or sing? Investigate your family tree? What about doing a craft or some creative writing? Perhaps you'd like to join a book club or a walking group. or perhaps try something completely new like hand-bell ringing or playing the ukulele. You might have an interest in science or literature or yoga or games. Or perhaps you'd like to go to the theatre or a concert or on a day trip or a holiday. All this, and much more, is available for you in the u3a.

There are no age limits – u3a was designed for people who have reached that stage in their life when they have more free time to enjoy themselves. Without the pressure of work or exams or bringing up a family you can relax in the company of like-minded people who want to take part in exciting activities together.

Swindon has a particularly active u3a. There are over 130 interest groups which meet all over Swindon and the surrounding area. They cover a vast range of activities which will keep your mind and body active. In addition to the interest groups there is a monthly meeting with interesting speakers and opportunities to go on day trips and holidays and outings to the cinema and the theatre. There's never a dull day with the u3a!

The membership fee (currently £35) allows you join as many groups as you wish. To find out all the interest groups on offer and much more: visit www.swindonu3a.org.uk; telephone the office on 01793 614629 between 10am and noon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; or visit the Swindon u3a Facebook page. *Gill Brain* (Chair Swindon u3a)

Gill Brain (Chair Swindon u3a)



SWINDON MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Swindon Music Festival starts in
Christ Church
on Friday 17th March at 6.30pm.

In contrast to previous years, the evening will start with the adult choir class and the church choir class. In the church choir class, starting at around 7.00pm, St. Sampson's Church Choir, Cricklade will be singing the hymn "Be still for the presence of the Lord" for their hymn and "Ave Maria" by Simon Lindley as their anthem. Christ Church Choir will be singing "Jesu lover of my soul" to the tune Aberystwyth for their hymn and "A prayer of St Richard of Chichester" by L.J. White as their anthem. The evening will continue with three classes for solo singers starting with the novice class. This will be followed by the sacred/spiritual song and oratorio classes, in which Caroline Pitt will be performing "Let us now praise famous men" by Vaughan Williams and "How beautiful are the feet" from Handel's Messiah. The evening continues with the brass classes followed by the church organ classes, in which each organist will play two contrasting pieces.

The adjudicator for the Friday evening will be Adrian Goss, a pianist, organist and choral director and chair of the Adjudicators Council. He will make comments on all the performances.

The Festival continues on Saturday 18th March and from Tuesday 21st to Saturday 25th March (not including Thursday 23rd) in the Arts Centre in Devizes Road, Old Town. Morning sessions start at 9.30, afternoons at 1.30 and evenings at 6.30pm. No classes on Monday 20th March.

Timetable

Saturday 18th:

Morning: Guitars, Ensemble, Strings

Afternoon: Junior Vocal, Junior Choirs. Evening: Adult Vocal (inc. Caroline)

Tuesday 21st: Morning: Woodwind, Afternoon: Junior Piano, Recorders

Evening: Instrumental, Adult Piano

Wednesday 22nd: Morning: Junior Piano. Afternoon: Junior Piano, Instrumental

Evening: Beatrice Plaum Challenge Cup (Piano) Instrumental Championship.

Thursday 23rd – No Classes

Friday 24th:

Morning: Junior Vocal. Afternoon: Junior Vocal

Evening: Junior Vocal Championship, Adult Vocal

Saturday 25th: Morning: Adult Vocal (including Caroline)

Afternoon: Adult Vocal (including Caroline)

Evening: Senior Vocal Championship, Supreme Championship

ADMISSION PRICES

£3.00 per session (16 and under FREE)

Except:

Wednesday evening 22nd March: £5.00. 16 and under £1.00

Friday evening 24th March: £5.00. 16 and under £1.00.

Saturday evening 25th March: £7.50. 16 and under £1.00. £3.00 after 8.00 pm.

Tickets are available at the venue prior to each session.

The Festival deserves a much bigger audience – this year it celebrates over 112 years of supporting music in Swindon. Previous participants have included the late Diana Dors, also Jamie Cullum, Sarah Covey, Polly Leech and Harry Apps who are forging musical careers.

There is such a wide variety of music that there will be something for everyone during the eight days. We really need to support the young talent - and the older competitors like support too! At a previous year's final concert the adjudicator said several performances would have graced the West End stage – so come and hear future stars. She also commended our exceptional teachers.

Our world class accompanist is Paul Turner who is renowned for his sensitive and alert accompaniments; "he has that sixth sense of timing which is the true accompanist's particular gift" (Eastern Daily Press). He is also so kind to everyone including nervous novice singers.

Please do come along to support your Partnership musicians. There will be a small charge for listening.

The detailed programme listing all the participants, price £3, will be available from Christ Church on 17th March,. You can also purchase them from Holmes Music and the Arts Centre or from the secretary, Yvonne Walker on 07710 243302 (price £6 to include £3 postage).

Remembering Wiltshire born Sir Christopher Wren,



300 years ago, on 8th March 1723, English architect Sir Christopher Wren died at the age of 90. Best known for designing St Paul's Cathedral, he was also a ground-breaking anatomist, astronomer and physicist.

A founder of the Royal Society, Wren served as its president from 1680 to 1682 and was highly regarded by such eminent scientists as Isaac Newton and Blaise Pascal. But it is as an architect that he is best known: beside St Paul's, regarded as his masterpiece and

completed in 1710, he directed the rebuilding of 52 churches after the Great Fire of London in 1666 – though he did not work alone, heading a team of creative minds that included Nicholas Hawksmoor.

Born at East Knoyle in Wiltshire, Wren was the only surviving son of Christopher Wren the Elder, who became Dean of Windsor. He was a sickly child but lived a long life, despite his family being affected by the Civil Wars that broke out in 1642. He married twice but both his wives died very early – one of smallpox and the other of tuberculosis. Although Wren lived 90 years, he was married for only nine of them but had four children.

Two factors may have contributed to Wren's success as an architect: one was basic – his decision to move into that field because of the dearth of architects in the mid-17th century; the other was more dramatic – the Great Fire of London which necessitated so much rebuilding in the city and gave him the opportunity to shine.

Robert Hooke, the scientist and architect who was a friend of Wren, said: "Since the time of Archimedes there scarce ever met in one man in so great perfection such a mechanical hand and so philosophical a mind." ■

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