

SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

The Parish Magazine of the Seven Churches

St Peter Upper Slaughter – St Faith Farmcote – St James Cutsdean – St Andrew Naunton
St Mary Lower Slaughter – St Michael Guiting Power – St Mary Temple Guiting



Our first Benefice wedding ...

JULY/AUGUST 2020 Interim Edition

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Churches and School working together to share God's love in our communities

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DEADLINE for the next issue TO BE ADVISED.

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DEAR FRIENDS ...

We do hope you are well, and have been keeping you all and our wider communities in our prayers.

We felt that it would be good to produce another interim edition of our magazine, to share some good stories and to give you a bit of an update on our church life together. As our country takes some steps forward, and our communities begin to open up again, we are doing so too – but cautiously and endeavouring to do all we can to protect one another.

This edition of the magazine is again being produced largely digitally, but do let Katrina know if there is anyone who would like a paper copy and we will get some posted out.

We hope you enjoy reading some news from us all.

With love and prayers,

Katrina, Sue and Catherine

MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW CURATE, CATHERINE

Thank you for helping Alexander, Alan and me feel so very welcome. We are hugely excited to be here and are really enjoying get to know you all and this beautiful part of the world.

I have really enjoyed both the conversations we have shared on Zoom, over the phone and email, and meeting people over garden fences as I've been exploring our parishes. It is a very odd time to start a curacy, but has proven to be a superb opportunity to think creatively and enhance hundreds of years of tradition set by curates gone before me.

I have taken much personal joy from stepping foot inside our beautiful buildings for prayer and I'm particularly excited to start worshipping together for evening prayer in some of our churches over the coming weeks.

One of my favourite moments of the week so far has been Sunday morning, when everyone greets one another before the beginning of our 9:15 Zoom service. Organised chaos! It is such a joy to hear everyone speak at once and makes me wonder what Pentecost must have been like!

I write this on St Swithin's Day. A day both rainy and sunny, I think it a sign that we cannot know what the future will hold. As the old rhyme goes "St Swithin's Day if thou dost rain, for 40 days it will remain, St Swithin's Day if thou be fair, for 40 days will rain na mair." 2020 is unlike any year in history. The next few weeks and months will hold both times of rain and shine, of both darkness and light. Journeying these uncertain days together, supporting and caring for one another as you have been, brings brightness to that rain and warmth to that shine. I feel so blessed to be together with you all in our wonderful benefice.

Catherine

WORSHIPPING IN THIS TIME ...

Since the beginning of July, it has become possible again for us to re-open our buildings for private prayer and public worship. We can do this, provided a detailed risk assessment is worked through and put into action, that the buildings are well cleaned and that distancing and hygiene measures are put in place. Each of our church communities has been looking at these and working towards them, making local decisions and we are pleased to say that by the end of July, some of our church buildings are open for private prayer and some are opening for some services. We are trying to do this gradually and safely, in order to limit risk and keep our communities as healthy as possible.

During July and August, our pattern for worship each Sunday will include a 9.15am online Zoom Morning Prayer and a 6pm Evening Prayer service which will rotate around some of our churches. For the coming weeks, these will be:

2 August – St. Michael and All Angels', Guiting Power

9 August – St. Mary's, Lower Slaughter

16 August – St. Andrew's, Naunton

23 August – St. Peter's, Upper Slaughter

30 August – St. Mary's, Temple Guiting

6 September – St. Michael and All Angels', Guiting Power

You can join us on Zoom each week in the morning, following this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7979867589?pwd=h6UaQN2VhIdx79AlafPNV50YxJVtZA>

Meeting ID: 797 986 7589

Password: 815669

It is possible to join in **by telephone** also, you should be able to do this by phoning: 0203 481 5237 and entering the above Meeting ID and password.

If you would like to visit one of our church buildings during the week for private prayer, do have a look on the local noticeboards for opening times and procedure.

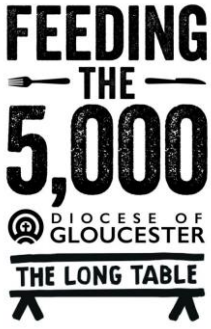
In addition to our regular worship, we are now able also to plan for weddings, baptisms and funerals services within our church buildings. We are limited to a maximum of 30 people in attendance for these services, but it is good to be able to offer them again.

PRAYER LINES ...



We have set up a prayer network – a group of people who are willing to receive any requests for prayer and to pray for anyone in need. It is set up as a simple email group, co-ordinated by Jean Bird, and an email is sent to all the 'pray-ers' asking them to remember a particular person when there is a need. If you would like to be remembered in prayer, please contact Jean at jaybeepip@aol.com or Rev'd Sue Pestell

on susan.pestell@gmail.com.



The community response in our Benefice to the needs of our neighbours has been tremendous during this crisis. In the same way, when we asked for help for the “Feeding the 5000” initiative we were overwhelmed by the offers of support and encouragement for such a worthy cause. We had an amazing number of volunteer drivers come forward to deliver food, as well as people allowing us to use their cooler bags and boxes and ice blocks; the use of freezers, transport for the freezers and permission from the trustees of Lower Slaughter Village Hall to house them. We are deeply grateful for all of this and to all of you.

Although “Feeding the 5000” is winding down now, “The Long Table”, which is the project in Stroud which the Diocese teamed up with, will still be able to supply us with meals for the vulnerable.

The Long Table has a vision for all to be able to eat good nutritious food. The new family style meals will be available in family sized portions and can be bought or paid for according to means, or not paid for at all if that is the need. We do not say they are free, because they will have been paid for through grants and the meals that have been paid for.

By vulnerable we mean a lack of financial means, but also those who are poorly, who have been bereaved or who are working all hours – anyone who just needs the comfort of a hot meal from someone who cares.

Our neighbourhoods have been blessed by those who have kept an eye and listening ear out for those in need. “The Long Table” meals may be another way to offer love and support.

Sue

COMMUNITY MINISTRY ...

WEDDING AT LOWER SLAUGHTER (see cover photo)

It was very special for me, to be able on 25th July this year to lead a wedding service again and to see two people make those wonderful promises to one another in one of our churches. David and Sarah (who have been together since their school days) 'tied the knot' in a ceremony with just 6 of their nearest and dearest around them. There were beautiful outfits, stunning flowers, a lovely reading and fantastic recorded music. It was a beautiful, intimate moment - not hampered by the face masked Rector, or the sanitising and distancing that was necessary. Despite the hygiene precautions (antibac and sanitiser alongside the marriage registers!) it remained a fabulous celebration of love. Congratulations to you both!

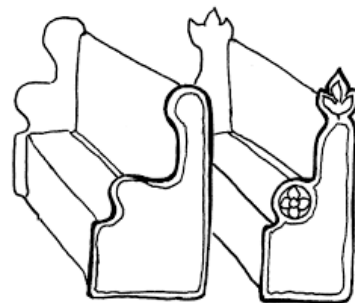
FUNERAL AT TEMPLE GUITING

The family of Eileen Strange would like to thank everyone who attended her funeral service at St. Mary's on 21st January. Thank you too for many donations - the charities Myasthenia Gravis and Campden Home Nursing both received £300.00.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS ...

Lower Slaughter

As I write these few lines at last we are starting to see light at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel. Life is starting slowly to resemble the “more normal”. People slowly returning to the workplace, shops open, the leisure and tourism sector gradually opening their doors. If one thing this “lockdown” time has taught us it is to appreciate life, the simple things we all took for granted - seeing our families, a trip to the pub to meet friends, a night out at the cinema, a new haircut. We have a saying in Scotland “You never miss the water till the well going dry” – how true this is even in the 21st century!



July 12th was a red letter day in our Benefice – the first service in one of our church buildings since 15th March, Evening Prayer at Naunton. How wonderful it was to walk into church and to see some of our church family in the flesh instead of on Zoom. The first service of Evening Prayer for Lower Slaughter is 6pm on 9 August. Please do join us and give thanks to God for keeping us all safe during this pandemic.

“School’s out for summer” and we wish the children a happy and adventurous time and hopefully they will all be able to return to full-time education in September.

We pray for all the people who have lost jobs and businesses and hope they soon find employment.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and hopefully people will be able to have some time out. The weather has been kind to us during this difficult time, it has enabled us to enjoy our gardens and nature, how peaceful and calming it is to listen to the bird song. In one of our Zoom services we listened to the Liverpool FC anthem “You’ll never walk alone” – how appropriate this is for Christians as God is always with us.

Keep safe and well,

Marion Marshall

*** Since writing this, we are sad to announce that Mollie Watson, who lived for many years in Lower Slaughter, has died. Her funeral service was held on 22 July 2020. ***

St Andrew’s, Naunton

We have been pleased to start opening the church daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.. Annabelle Barton is leading a team of volunteers who have kindly given their time for

supervision and cleaning, and I am deeply grateful to them all. Their work was shown to good effect in Katrina's lovely picture of the freshly cleaned church on Twitter.

On Sunday 12th July we had the double pleasure of our first service in St Andrew's for four months, and the first with our new assistant curate, Catherine Cowie. It was Evening Prayer. For the time being, we expect to hold this service once a month. The usual notices of it will be posted round the village, and by e-mail. We had arranged the church so as to allow space between households, but the available space was not full, even with a good congregation, so do please come to the next service if you would like to.

David Renney, Churchwarden

St Michael and All Angels, Guiting Power

In these dark times a light is beginning to show through, despite all the odds. Zoom Sunday Services have continued uninterrupted throughout the "lockdown", access to St Michael's for personal prayer has gone ahead, and we now look forward to our first post-"lockdown" evening Benefice Service on 2nd August at 6pm at St Michael's. We have all enjoyed the online Zoom services, a rare chance to chat and join in worship with friends and neighbours from other villages in the Benefice.

Throughout the Coronavirus period of safeguarding, life has continued. The village has pulled together - shopping for the elderly and infirm has been organised on a weekly basis by local volunteers, delicious food has been cooked and delivered at very reasonable costs by The Farmcote Estate and even Sunday lunches cooked and delivered to the elderly by Michele & Kevin Boote free of charge, transport to and from Doctors Surgeries and Hospital also arranged. A truly magnificent effort by the village itself, villagers and church members involved at every turn assisting the village initiatives.

Sadly Church finances have been badly hit, no activity or collections, leaving us in a precarious financial position. Despite the total lack of activity in the Church building, fundraising has gone on, thanks to a continued flow of bric a brac donations from the village and around, Julia has been selling items online and raising some funds. St Michael's will be holding a bumper Bric a Brac Market outside in the Churchyard on Saturday 29th August, 1pm to 5pm, Please let us know if you can donate any bric a brac for the sale.

Finally, after 3 years of planning, work has started on the new toilet and store building in the Churchyard. It is expected to be finished about early September. The toilet will be open for public use as well as for Churchgoers, a great addition to the new playground equipment that has been added to the nearby children's playground facilities which is now open. We have been waiting for this toilet facility since 1180!!! Thank you Roland for your persistence in raising the finance and seeing this project through.

We all look forward to a period of normality, although I fancy that the online Zoom Service may still have a part to play. Best Wishes,

Mike Edwards, Churchwarden

Temple Guiting School

We have had an amazing last few weeks of term. We reopened after lockdown on June 2nd with only 3 Bubbles – a group of no more than 15 children that cannot mix with any other bubbles. We gradually added a new bubble each week until all the children were offered a place back in school by 29th June. We were one of the very few schools who were able to offer this. We were very fortunate to be able to use the Village Hall in Temple Guiting to house 2 of our bubbles each day. Every available centimetre of space was used including the library to make sure our bubbles didn't mix. Having the Village field was brilliant too because it meant we could all go out to play in our bubbles and run around without contact.



To help keep ourselves healthy and clean we have had to learn new rules for washing hands, we now have a few songs we sing to help us scrub for 20 seconds but also so we remember to keep clean. We have now got 2 very shiny new stainless outside sinks so wherever we are out playing we can always wash hands.

To welcome everyone back to school one of our very talented staff created a banner so each time a new bubble started they had a warm welcome and knew we had missed them.



Although many things had to change, we have managed to keep doing Assemblies via a Zoom call, completed a sports day even though we couldn't invite anyone to watch and had a socially distant picnic and celebration for our very special Year 6 leavers. Our term has not ended quite as we had planned but we can honestly say the smiles and laughter of the children when they returned has made everything so worth all the cleaning, distancing and risk assessing. It has been a wonderful few weeks, we all feel ready for a holiday and are so looking forward to a new start in September.

Have a good summer everyone.

Ann Barry, Headteacher