What’s happening in the life of St Andrew’s and St Bartholomew’s

What’s new for the summer?

At last! Hints of summer sun in the last few days. So, what is new for this summer? Here are a few things:

APCM – our annual general meeting to elect new members of PCC, hear about our financial position, and get a vision for the future. Please try to be there. It is really important to get a good turnout. Thursday 26th April 7.30pm at church.

Party in the Parish. Monday 7th May. A fun day of many activities in and around the church and centre. Last year we hosted over 1000 villagers, and it would be wonderful if we could all see ourselves as hosts this year too. Come and join the fun.

Interviews for potential Associate Vicar. Wednesday 23rd May. Please continue to pray for the right person to join the team. How exciting to receive a new broom to stimulate our faith? Just pray please.

Ben’s Farewell. Sunday 10th June. Ben will preach his final sermon in the morning and we will then have a presentation after the morning services. The afternoon is booked for a Confirmation and Baptism service at Peter and Julie Ingram’s pool in Churcham, led by Bishop Rachel. A day not to miss. More details on both later.

Viney Hill weekend 6th-8th July. Camping in the Forest of Dean. We hope to have some activities on the Saturday that everyone can join in on. Details later.

Sermon Series? We are going to do an 8 week series on ‘Asking and Seeking’, and then a 6 week series on the beginning of Exodus. At FUEL, in the evening, the series is on The Creed.

The Courtyard. We are still in negotiations between architect, builder and DAC over plans for the courtyard. A much needed space for children’s work on Sunday and other activities mid-week. Still early days to say more, but I hope we can progress this quickly ready for the autumn. Again, more details in time. There is still much else continuing, including a Marriage Course starting on 18th April. This is for all our marriages, not necessarily for marriages in difficulty. We all need an occasional MOT in our marriages. Talking of which, our daughter Daisy Hill is getting married to Ben Fisher on 19th May at 2pm. A far more important event than the other one happening that day. We hope to see many of you at the church service, and you would be most welcome. Come and have tea and cake afterwards in the hall.

Happy New Summer!

—Jonathan

“Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight, At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more, When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death, And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring again.”

C.S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED URGENTLY IN CHURCHDOWN

Ripples - Our Church Charity Shop

Ripples is struggling through lack of volunteers. Over the past few months some volunteers have had to give up for various reasons, mainly illness. We are now desperate for help on either a regular basis or maybe now and again. We have been so pleased to welcome one new volunteer who will be joining the team in April.

Recently, our faithful volunteer Terry died suddenly. We miss him very much both as a friend and as a volunteer, helping us to set up the shop each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning from about 9.30-10am. We are desperate to find an able-bodied person to give a hand.

If you feel you can help alongside other volunteers during a morning or afternoon, either in the shop or as a help in the morning to set up the shop, we will be so pleased to hear from you and to welcome you to the Ripples’ team and this will enable us to keep Ripples open.

Please telephone Alan and Jill on 01452 712329.

Many thanks.

Alan and Jill Flower

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED IN GLOUCESTER

Volunteers needed to help provide Breakfast to Homeless and Vulnerable People

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it (Hebrews 13:2)

For over 10 years a small group of volunteers have provided a free cooked breakfast for homeless and vulnerable people once a week. We take over the coffee shop (The Monk’s Kitchen) in the cathedral from 7am to 9am every Thursday morning and cook and serve a free breakfast for between 25 and 45 people. There is a cooked meal available for homeless people in Gloucester every weekday. Thursday is the day we provide this.

We need more volunteers to be able to do this comfortably. Do you think you could do this? My experience is that it is enjoyable thing to do. The team of volunteers are interesting and fun and it has been a privilege to get to know some of the regulars who attend.

If you can cook, that is great; there is a team of four who cook the meal but we need 6 other people to serve and clear up. If you are interested please contact me and we can arrange for you to come and observe what we do. If you think you may be able to help then you could join the rota later in the year.

Derek Conaty
01452 864442, 07729124948,
derek.conaty@cantab.net

Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty?
(Matthew 25:13)
The Thursday Knitting Group continue to support good causes. Bootees are being made for babies in Nazareth House, Cape Town, South Africa. The home provides a loving, stable and secure home for abandoned, neglected, disabled and orphaned children. Crocheted and knitted hearts are also being made for Sue Ryder Hospice, Leckhampton. These will be sold at the Malvern Spring Show.

Children’s knitwear is made for the Pied Piper Appeal for Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. Warm clothing and crocheted and knitted blankets are made for Samara’s Aid. These projects take place at our regular Thursday morning coffee shop. Yarn, needles, crochet hooks and tuition available. All welcome.

Anne Ewart
Thank you to everyone who donated/bought cakes on Mothering Sunday. You helped to raise £325 for the Make a Mother’s Day Appeal. This supports MU programmes around the world - enabling women to improve their family’s lives and change their communities for the better.

THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN this year has the theme “facing the challenge of empowering rural women and girls”. A delegation of seven MU members and staff from around the globe attended the Commission at the end of March. Their input is important as they have direct experience of the issues, and they represent the voices of MU members globally. We will try and update on this, but in the meantime please look at the MU website for ongoing information. www.mothersunion.org

> Pub and pudding for Women!

> Has your social life got an empty space in it on the second Tuesday evening of every month? And would you like to get to know some more people from church?

> If so come along to the Old Elm for a drink and a pudding (optional of course) a chance to chat, meet friends and make new ones.

> First evening is April 10th.

> Look forward to seeing you there.

Lucy, Sarah, Laura.

There are over 30 million deaf people in the world who don’t use a spoken language but a signed one, and over 400 sign languages in the world. Many cannot read either, partly due to poor literacy in many countries and also because reading can be more difficult because the letters correspond to sounds that people have never heard. If you are intrigued by this and want to know more, and how they can access God’s word come along on:

**Tuesday 17th April at 7.30pm**

**Translating the Bible into sign language**

*Tim Grove*

*in the church lounge*

Longfield provide a wide range of free services to adults in Gloucestershire affected by life-limiting illnesses. As a follow up to last year’s talk about this we are having an afternoon trip there to have a short tour of the facilities followed by afternoon tea.

**Thursday 19th April**

**Afternoon tea at Longfield in Minchinhampton**

£5, plus transport costs if minibus needed

If you haven’t already booked and want to see if there is still available space please contact Janet on 530931 by Sunday 8th April at the latest.
MENTORING: The Mentor's perspective

As a mentor, I have found it a very interesting and rewarding experience. Most people can do with someone to talk to, and provide help and encouragement with day to day problems, or worries, and they may need help to bring God into the situation.

I feel it is very important to follow the guidelines we were given. My mentees and I agreed to meet for four months with a review after two months. At first we would meet every two weeks, and meet at the church, in the one-to-one room, if available, for about an hour. We also exchanged mobile numbers in case of emergency problems, or the need to change dates and times. After the initial four months were complete we agreed to meet monthly.

At first I felt it was a huge responsibility. I prayed before every meeting to give me peace, to ensure that God helped me to ask the right questions, and for Him to be with us throughout our meeting. And also to make sure that I was given the right and appropriate bible readings, goals, targets and prayers.

I found it was both rewarding and tiring. It is a huge privilege to Mentor someone, to walk alongside and help them find ways to walk closer to Jesus. I would encourage anyone to look at whether they could be a mentor. Building a relationship of trust and confidence can be challenging, but knowing that there is a positive end in mind makes this very worthwhile.

For more information about mentoring please talk to Susie.

MENTORING: The Mentee’s perspective

I came to my first session not quite knowing what to expect. I was full of physical and emotional pain, with so much pain held in I felt lost amidst it all. The storms in my life had wreaked havoc and I’d found different and unhealthy ways to prop myself up.

There in the one-to-one room I found a friend who would listen, not judge, no matter what I said. So slowly my story unraveled. Slowly I’m learning to put more and more trust in God in all of my circumstances.

Oh there are slips and slides along the way but I’ve not given up. Having a mentor is like having someone to walk through the storms with you. If you are out in the cold and rain (or snow) it always helps if you have someone walking beside you; and that’s what it feels like. We know, of course, that God is in overall control, but sometimes we need God in the flesh.

So, slowly I’m beginning to find me, finding the gifts I have, like writing poetry, cooking and baking. I no longer feel embarrassed that I walk with an aide, and am reading GOOD books, especially my Bible. If I am tempted to neglect or put myself down I feel a gentle nudge to return to what I know is true about me and the world I live in.

So where do I go from here? I’m still flexing these forgotten muscles, physical and emotional. I’d like to carry on seeing my Mentor for a while longer, then who knows, I may be able to help someone else like me, and know the joy of them finding their own reality in God and in themselves.
We are continually striving towards the A Rocha Gold Eco Award and have been currently raising awareness of our work here at St. Andrew’s Church amongst other churches within the Gloucester Diocese. It is fantastic news that Gloucester Diocese have signed up to the A Rocha Eco Award system, to become an Eco Diocese. This involves the encouragement of all churches to work towards being green, through worship; leadership; buildings; land and community.

Thank you to everyone who has been recycling used postage stamps; old felt tip pens; used coffee pods to help raise funds for charity. Just to remind you that you can now recycle broken and unwanted jewellery, to raise funds for Mothers’ Union, by using the prepaid designated envelopes from the Mission Board in the concourse. Ink cartridges and mobile phones can also be recycled within the box in the main corridor and they raise funds for Gloucester Food Bank.

Did you know, our Communion Wine is Fair trade and organically produced with the help of ducks! Yes, this isn’t quackers but true! The wine is obtained from Stellar Organic Winery in South Africa, who use Indian Runner Ducks within the vineyard, to naturally rid the crop of snails and other pests which would otherwise damage production. The ducks then help further, by fertilising the land naturally!

The church coffee is obtained from a local supplier Ethical Addictions, who ‘farm direct’ with the coffee farmers in Tanzania and Brazil. Farm direct ensures the coffee is obtained direct from the farmers who are treated fairly. Ethical Addictions get to know the people directly and finds out what help they require to live and work within an improved environment. This has been achieved by investing in projects that help with the provision of fresh water and efficient wood-burning stoves.

Ethical Addictions also supply the Ecoffee biodegradable cups made from organic bamboo. These are currently on sale at church for £5 per cup.

If you would like to find out more on how to be green and what we are doing at St. Andrew’s, please let me know.

Chantal Whitehouse
Viney Hill Weekend 6-8 July 2018

What is it?
A camping-lite break at The Christian Adventure Centre, Viney Hill. We have exclusive use of Cross Meadow from Friday 4pm to Sunday 4pm. There are pre-erected bell tents, a couple of timber tents (sheds), hot showers and a clubhouse with fully equipped kitchen. Activities are run by qualified instructors either on-site or in the Forest of Dean.

Who is it for?
Families with children/teens across a range of ages and abilities.

What does it cost?
Costs include all meals, from Friday dinner to Sunday lunch, and a 3 hour activity session. Adults and over 8s £50; 5-7yr olds £30; pre-school £18

How do I find out more?
Check out the Viney Hill website: http://vineyhilladventure.org/cross-meadow/
Speak to Garry or Chantal Whitehouse, Sarah Smith or Alison Summerskill (07812000663)
All services will be at St Andrew’s unless otherwise stated

1st April  Easter Sunday
6.30am    Sunrise Service at St.Bartholomew
8:00am    Holy Communion at St.Bartholomew
9am       Holy Communion at St.Andrew’s
10.30am   Easter Celebration at St.Andrew’s
7pm       Easter FUEL

8th April  Second Sunday of Easter
9:00am    Holy Communion
10.30am   Family Worship
11am      Matins @ St.Bartholomew
7pm       FUEL

15th April  Third Sunday of Easter
9.00am    Holy Communion
10.30am   Family Worship
7pm       FUEL

22nd April  Fourth Sunday Of Easter
9.00am    Holy Communion
10.30am   Family Worship
6pm       Holy Communion at St.Bartholomew
7pm       FUEL

29th April  Fifth Sunday Of Easter
9.00am    Holy Communion
10.30am   Family Worship
7pm       FUEL

6th May  Sixth Sunday of Easter
9am       Holy Communion
10.30am   Family worship
6pm       Churches Together Evensong@St.Bartholomew
7pm       FUEL

Weekday Services
9:00 am Monday to Friday in the Quiet Room - Morning Prayer
10:00 am every Thursday in the Quiet Room – Holy Communion