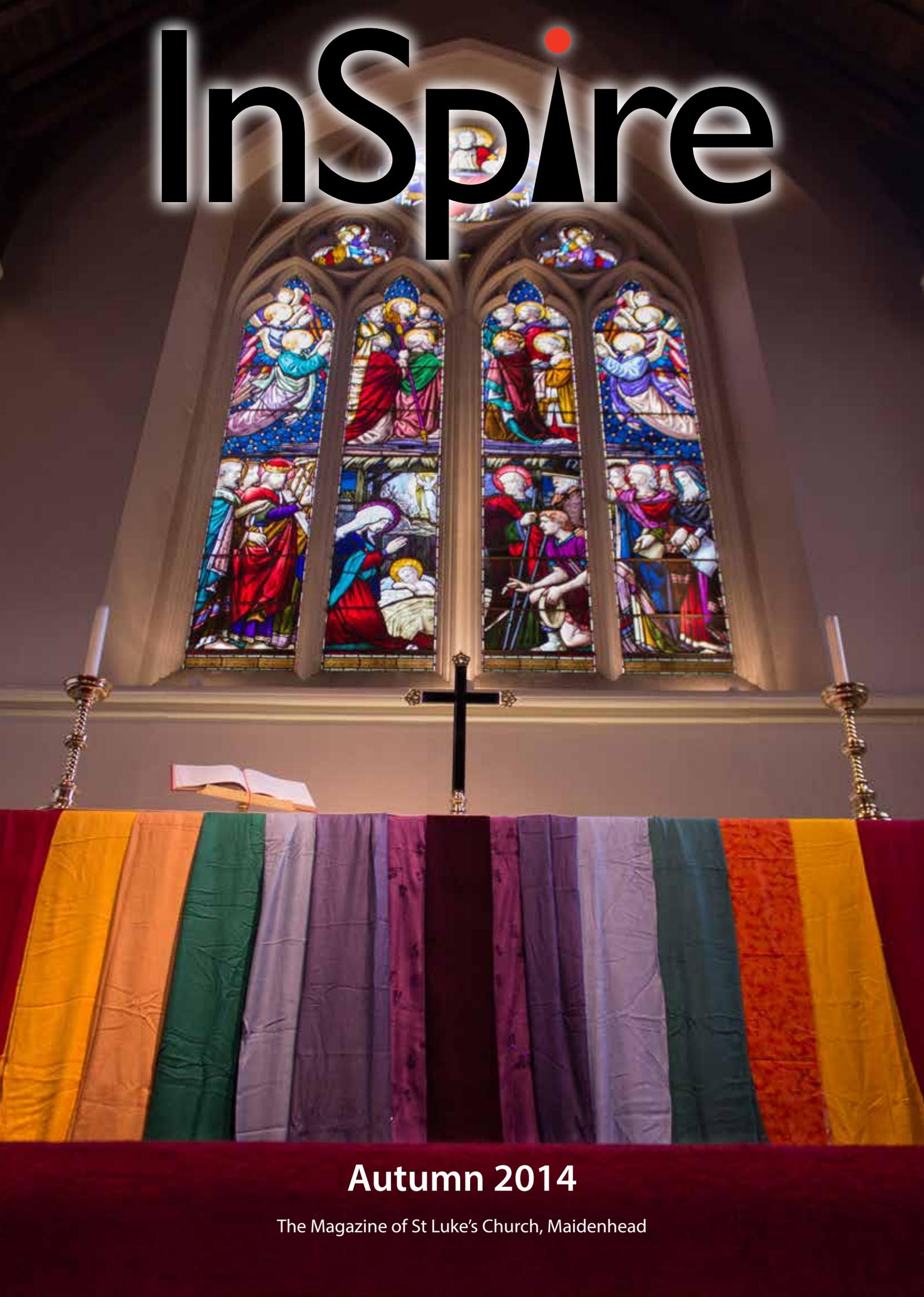


# InSpire



**Autumn 2014**

The Magazine of St Luke's Church, Maidenhead

# Cakes, Creativity, and Challenge

At the end of a busy summer, vicar **Revd Sally Lynch** reflects – and looks forward to the future.

**W**hy do people assume that August is quiet in the church? This year in particular it has been really quite busy. We've enjoyed our garden party – thankfully avoiding anything worse than a light shower – and we've created a Noah's Ark in the church, complete with animals and displays about environmental concerns... and several huge rainbows.

The rainbow is a powerful symbol of hope and of God's presence with his world; his promise to care for it and to be alongside his people. I think the rainbow is going to be an important symbol for us at St Luke's as we step out in faith over the coming years.

For a long time we have reflected, talked, and prayed about the re-ordering of our church building, in order to be more effective in our mission and to offer a resource to serve this community. Now it is time to act. Spurred on by the secretary of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) – who suggested that we had mused for long enough and that now we really needed to see some action – the Re-Ordering group brought some firm proposals to the PCC in July and August and the PCC has approved the appointment of our architects and plans, as well as spending on Phase 1 of the project. We are now sending our proposals to the DAC and, if approved, will then apply for a faculty to begin the work. This le-



Photograph: Don Luff

gal process if quite slow so, even if a faculty is granted at the earliest opportunity, it is unlikely that we will see any actual work take place before Christmas. The whole project has been divided into three phases:

## Phase 1

will provide an improved welcome area in the south-west corner of the church. A simple servery will allow us (and those who hire the church) to offer refreshments much more easily at the back of church and a run of new, purpose built cupboards will look much smarter and fresher. The church office and choir vestry will be re-built in what is currently the parish centre and allow for efficient, confidential, and secure admin-

istration. The current kitchen will remain usable until the end of Phase 3, when the clergy vestry will be re-located there. A new storage box behind the high altar will locate the frontals right where they are needed.

The aim is to complete Phase 1 within one year of starting, funding permitting. We do, in fact, have sufficient in our reserves to cover the cost of Phase 1 (around £100,000) but it is important to retain as much as we can of this for future work and so, on 27 July, I challenged us all to see if we can raise £25,000 by personal giving and creative means over the summer holidays.

## Phase 2

will allow for a levelled dais (probably by means of versatile staging) which will be far more flexible for different services and for concerts etc. It will also allow us to bring the choir in

front of the screen at times. We will enable access for all to the chancel and chapel by means of a ramp and glazing in of the chapel will allow it to be heated and used independently. Additional glazed main doors will make the church more welcoming – even when they are locked.

## Phase 3

aims to rebuild the parish centre to the north west of the church and will include additional toilets and a new kitchen. The churchyard can then be landscaped as a nice place to sit and rest, and more parking spaces can be provided.

This is clearly an ambitious project and is the result of hours of discussion – and of much prayer too. I have a clear vision of St Luke's as a place and a community (building and people) of wholeness and healing in the centre of this parish. We are



# Cakes, Creativity, and Challenge

a place where God is made available to all people through loving service. If we believe that we are called to build God's kingdom here then we need to step out in faith just as Jesus' first disciples did. I love our stained glass windows and one of my favourites is that which shows Peter stepping out of the boat on a stormy Sea of Galilee to walk towards Jesus. He only started to sink when he looked down (Matthew 14. 22-33). My prayer, and the challenge to all of us, is to keep our eyes (and every other bit of us) fixed on Jesus as we move on with the project.

This really is a whole church undertaking. Every single person can play a part. Thank you to those who have given, often sacrificially, towards our target total. Thanks too to all those – especially young people – who are growing the £2s that I gave out earlier in the summer. I suspect that our waistlines may grow with the building: we have already enjoyed some delicious cupcakes and have more cakes coming, as well as jars of jam. Folk are planning pop-up suppers and Sunday lunches to raise money too. Please can we also have some non-fattening fundraising?!

So, please do get involved. How might you help with raising money? Do you know of any grant-making bodies to whom we might apply for funds? Do you have bright ideas to share? Once the bulk of the work is down, would you be willing to help paint and decorate the new areas in order to keep costs down? And, do you know if any of the original firms who worked on this church are still in existence, so that we might consider using them? Are there good firms that you would recommend as we go out to tender?

We are entering a terrifyingly exciting time in our faith journey as church in this place. That seems appropriate as we approach the 150th birthday of this church. I know that each of us will find challenges along the way. Please do commit this work to your prayers. Do keep an eye on the blue boards in church which will keep us all updated on progress. And above all, let's keep our eyes on Jesus and remember the symbol or the rainbow – God's promise that he will never leave us.



*InSpire* magazine is generally published thrice a year, except this year only two editions will be printed – the next, in Winter 2014/15. The editor wishes to thank everybody who has contributed to this issue. Disclaimer: Any views expressed in this magazine are solely those of the article's respective author(s), and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor; St Luke's Church, Maidenhead; the Diocese of Oxford; or the Church of England – unless stated otherwise.

For details of our many events and services, please see: [www.stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk](http://www.stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk)



## A Note From The Editor

**H**ere's my problem. Every Sunday morning, all of us address our "most merciful Lord", when outside there's a cruel and bloody war on. It's trapping fleeing families in the Kurdish desert's baking heat, and then, there, they're starving to death.

Nutters are running around with the heads of those who happened to disagree with them. Worse, the brutality of it all is being live-tweeted, taking Isis to the laptops and iPhones of potential radicalists in the West. The supposedly 'Islamic' extremists are using the internet to spread their homicidal message, with the result being hundreds of young Western impressionables flocking to fight in the distant jihadist war.

If you live in northern Iraq right now, you have two options. Convert to a deranged version of Islam, or die. If you choose the latter, you can expect a public and humiliating execution – punishment for the apparent crime of being a Christian. "There's a park in Mosul", a CNN correspondent reported recently, "where they beheaded children and put their heads on a stick." That's only the start of it – there's dark corners on the internet, filled with unspeakable pictures of the most horrific crimes against humanity.

What we are witnessing is medieval bloodshed with a frightening modern twist. And, to be honest, I don't know what to do about it all.

What I do know is this. More than ever before, the nightly news is certainly making me question my faith. If God really is "almighty", what's he doing decapitating his followers? And how, by any measure, is it "right to give thanks and praise"?

Such a stark juxtaposition between the words on the service-sheet and the words in the newspaper makes it hard to be a Christian in Britain today. But, I'll tell you what: it's a million times harder being a Christian in the Middle-East. Perhaps our creed should be abridged – "Christ, have mercy."

**Andrew Burdett, September 2014**

# ST LUKE'S AND WWI

St Luke's resident historian **Ann Darracott** discusses the Great War Memorial Chapel.

St Luke's was open on 4 August, as were many other churches, to mark the centenary of the start of World War I. As with many communities throughout the country, this war – the War to End All Wars – had an enormous impact on the congregation of St Luke's and led to the creation of the Memorial Chapel out of what had been the organ loft and vestry. There is a

model at the back of the church made by William Harper in the nineteenth century, which shows what the church looked like originally.

The chapel was dedicated on Sunday 21 October 1923, and the service-sheet for that ceremony includes a Roll of Honour of the 229 men who died in the conflict. These included Eustace Spindler (whose sister

gave the font cover we still use today) and Thomas Tannatt Pryce who died on 18 April 1918. Pryce was fighting at Vieux-Berquin in France, and is the only Victoria Cross holder recorded in the chapel. The Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy, was given posthumously.

Born in the Netherlands to Welsh

parents he was, before the war, a member of London Stock Exchange and is thought to have lived in Maidenhead. His body was never recovered and so his name is among those recorded on the Ploegsteert Memorial to the Missing in Belgium.

The original service of dedication is to be repeated at 6:00pm on Remembrance Sunday (9 November) using the same hymns and lessons.

If you know of any descendants of the men remembered in the chapel, do encourage them to attend the service, when they will be able to see the names of the fallen on the wood panelling.

Below: an impression of the west wall fresco, produced by 11-year-old Ella, while her gran reflected on the men who went to battle in WWI.



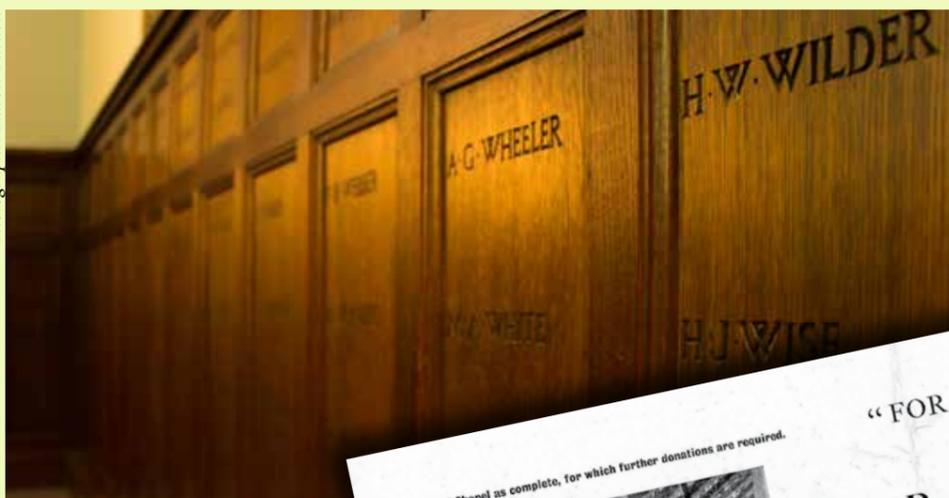
# Sit a while in peace

An anonymous **Gran** visited church on the day we marked the centenary of the outbreak of World War I.

*We came to St Luke's on the fourth of August,  
My granddaughters and I,  
We sat in the chapel,  
We read the names,  
We said the prayers.  
And I fell to thinking  
How these men, one hundred years ago,  
Were living and loving,  
Working and resting.*

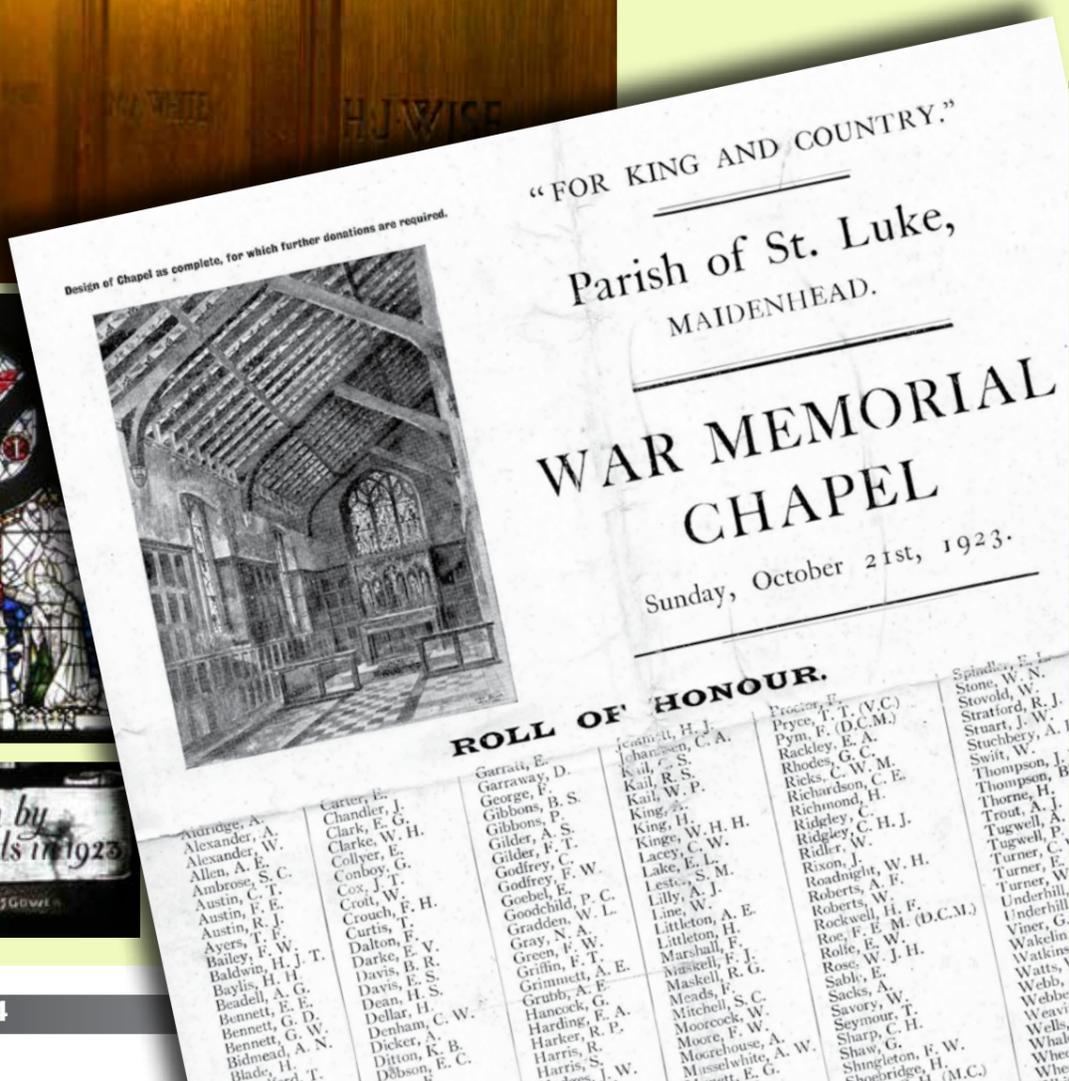
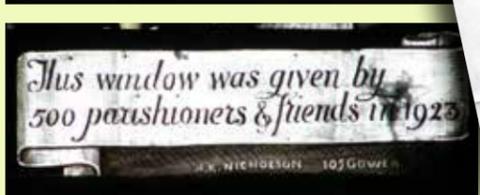
*Did they hear the drums of war?  
They did not know they were part of a doomed generation.  
We – two, three, four generations on –  
Remember, and are thankful, for now, to revel in the peace.*

Photograph: Andrew Burdett



Left: the wood-panelling and stained-glass window in the Memorial Chapel.

Below: the original 1923 order of service for the dedication of the chapel.



I was honoured to be asked, as a recent Queen's Scout Award recipient, to read at a county service held to commemorate the start of the First World War (Andrew Burdett writes).

Organised by the Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire, it was decided to hold the 100th anniversary service on 6 July – rather than 4 August – so as to enable as many young people to attend as possible. Among them, trumpeters from Cox Green School; members of the Army Cadets, Air Cadets, and Sea Cadets; and children from 22 schools around the county.

The 400-strong congregation, which left only standing-room at the packed Reading Minster, included soldiers from Arborfield Garrison and distinguished guests. I was impressed to see Theresa May, Maidenhead MP, joining various local mayors in attending.

The service began with music from the Waterloo Band, followed by a welcome by Revd Canon Chris-

## A Service of Remembrance to Celebrate Berkshire's Soldiers



Photograph: Get Reading

topher Russell. Prayers were led by members of the multiple faiths represented: Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, and Catholicism.

My reading, Rupert Brooke's beautiful verse *The Soldier*, was one of two World War I poems recited in the hour-long commemoration; the other was *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae, read by a Queen's Guide.

It was a real privilege to participate in the service but, much more than that, it was enormously humbling. That I can live to experience England's "sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day" fills me with delight.

In what is an ancient place of Christian worship, this multi-faith, all-inclusive service was a proud celebration of freedom itself. I am thrilled to have been a part of it.

# Stanley Spencer:

An exhibition at the Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham looks  
**Andrew Burdett** was invited to look around.

Meeting me warmly at the glass door of the Stanley Spencer Gallery, volunteer Shez Courtenay-Smith wastes no time in welcoming me in. The converted Wesleyan chapel – the very building in which Spencer worshipped as a boy – is, despite its

small proportions, surprisingly commodious inside. “When we refurbished in 2006, the designs included this new mezzanine floor, which allows the space to be used more effectively. It is, now, a really lovely place to spend time.” I immediately confess that, though I have often passed

the gallery, which is sited at the top of Cookham High Street, I have never before stepped inside. Nodding as I talk, it’s a line she’s heard before. “We have visitors from all over the world – from the USA and Canada, to South America and even Australia – yet many local people don’t appreciate what they have on their doorstep.” Indeed, the gallery contains the world’s largest collection of Sir Stanley Spencer’s works, many of which are set in the surrounding area.

The gallery’s latest exhibition coincides with the centenary of the start of WWI and examines the effect the war had

on the young artist. Stanley was one of five Spencer brothers, all of whom fought in the Great War; his older brother Sydney died at Epehy in September 1918, and is the only holder of the Military Cross remembered on the Cookham village war memorial.

The unveiling of that very memorial

# Artist’s Conflict

at how the artist recovered from the atrocities of World War I.

was painted by Stanley in 1922. Although the artwork is now owned by a private collector, the original canvas is currently on display at the gallery as part of its *Paradise Regained* exhibition.

It’s a truly striking image. Against the peaceful background – Spencer’s verdant stomping ground, unchanged since he was a lad – stands the defining new landmark which symbolises what has changed: in just a few short years, sleepy Cookham lost scores of her men.

“This is Spencer’s distinct take on the ceremony”, says Shez, adding: “Like many of Spencer’s works from the time, it avoids the pain of war. It features frivolous elements, which contrast with the grievous reality of the carved name of Spencer’s brother. It’s an image of hope.”

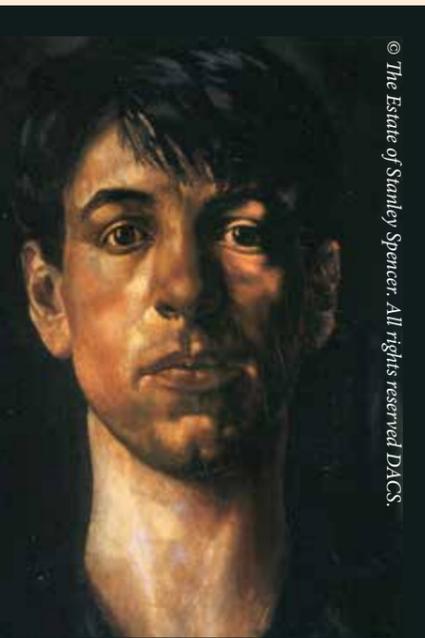
At first, Stanley did not actually serve on the front-line: on account of his diminutive stature (he was 5ft 1in), his mother had advised him to apply instead for ambulance duties. For the first thirteen months, he worked

.....  
 Cont’d on Page 9...



© The Stanley Spencer Gallery.

Sir Stanley Spencer was born in 1891 in the family home in Cookham High Street. He quickly developed a passion for drawing, taking lessons from a local artist and, in 1907, attending the Maidenhead Technical Institute on Marlow Road – a stone’s throw from St Luke’s. A year later, he began at the Slade School of Fine Art (part of University College London), studying and taking inspiration from the techniques of the Old Masters.



© The Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved DACS.

Self-Portrait, 1914

Regarded as one of Britain’s greatest twentieth century painters, his works depict joyous and vivid fusions of the ordinary with the extraordinary; of the earthly with the spiritual. Those of his paintings that are set in his beloved Cookham speak of

the village, the river, and the surrounding hills; commons and meadowland from a less materialistic age than ours, yet with a timeless quality, often touched by the trauma of his wartime experiences.



© The Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved DACS.



© The Stanley Spencer Gallery.

< Unveiling of Cookham War Memorial, 1922

# The Last Supper — Art Analysis

Words: Dr Shez Courtenay-Smith

The Stanley Spencer Gallery's exhibition *Paradise Regained* explores, in particular, Spencer's re-building of his life and re-connection with his birthplace over the post-war years. It was at this time, whilst struggling to regain his earlier vision and confidence amid the long shadow of his war experiences, that he finally derived solace from the very fabric of his village, regained his artistic equilibrium, and became poised to move on to the next phase of his life and artistic career.

Amongst many notable exhibits is one of Stanley Spencer's best-known religious paintings, *The Last Supper*. Further interpreted in the context of this critical span of years, *The Last Supper* seems to impose a frozen moment of awe and fear-filled suspense onto the multiple and sometimes turbulent layers of transition which feed into its making.

The first hint of underlying transition comes in the choice of setting for this painting: a Cookham malthouse. It is well-documented that Spencer was fascinated with the malthouses visible beyond the garden of Fernlea, his Cookham home. Their architecture was indeed intriguing, with a succession of striking pyramidal-shaped tiled roofs topped by conical hoods or 'cows', serving as ventilators. We are not sure to

what extent Spencer may ultimately have been conversant with the detail of transformations that took place within the malthouses. In fact, he once indicated that, in his childhood, he "didn't enquire what the malthouses were for" but recognised the feeling of wonder and meaning that they gave him. We learn that, later, Spencer did become familiar with the interiors and that "his imagination was staggered at the vastness of the malting floors and the strange ritual of the spreading of the barley on it"<sup>1</sup>. We may guess that, by then, Stanley was indeed acquainted with the mysterious transmutations that once occurred, as the barley-grain soaked and swelled in a 'steeping pit', was then spread out and subjected to successive processes causing germination and growth, and was finally kiln-dried to the desired colour and specification.

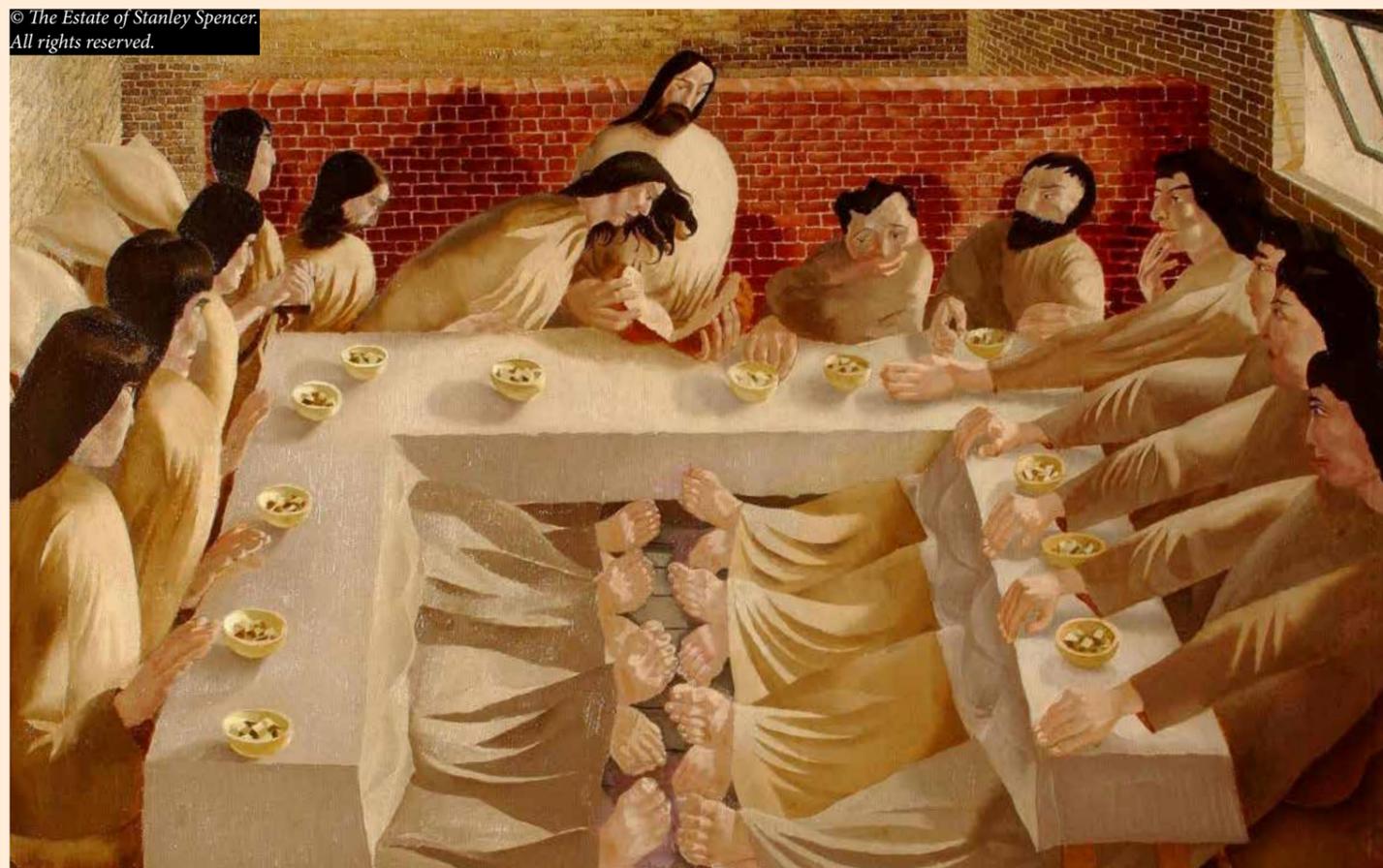
A second transition at the very heart of this painting is of course the transubstantiation, specifically that of the bread into the body of Christ, since there is no sign of wine in the painting. The miraculous change in a grain-based substance strikingly parallels that of barley into malt in the malthouses, though of course being of a very different and deeply religious significance. However, it might not have appeared to Spencer that the

one, and not the other, had a religious meaning, since he saw religious significance in most things in and around Cookham, and also later stated (in criticism of his own painting) "...I could not get the feeling of the place [the malthouse] which was indivisible from a concept I had of Christ"<sup>2</sup>.

A third transition is more in the nature of a complex and interrelated set of changes, surrounding the 'state of things' before and after the Last Supper. Whilst Jesus approached the Passover ceremony with keen purpose: "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15), he also engendered at that time a pervasive uncertainty and fear by alerting his disciples to things to come. The mere mention of his own anticipated 'suffering' and his revelation to the disciples that one of them would betray him, created both sadness and confusion, movingly captured in *The Last Supper*.

In a broader context, the Last Supper marked the end of one dispensation and the opening of another, more particularly the end of the Old Covenant and the start of a New Covenant. In the biblical accounts we learn that the bread was the body of Jesus, which was to be eaten in remembrance of him, and the wine was Jesus's blood of

© The Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved.



the New Covenant, "which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:27-28). The full meaning and significance of these words could never have been grasped by the disciples in such a moment of fearfulness regarding Christ's imminent betrayal and death. However, Spencer would have been well-acquainted with the biblical texts, just as he would almost certainly have discerned the parallel between the troubled thinking of the disciples as they approached a devastating change and his own troubled thinking as he prepared to leave his village and commence his war effort. In both instances, things would never be the same again. Spencer later described himself as having felt at that time "crushed" as a painter when obligated to leave behind both his work and his beloved Cookham.

The Stanley Spencer Gallery was recently named by ArtFund as one of the UK's top five 'unmissable' small art galleries, and has also been awarded a coveted Michelin Green Star.

Between April and October, the gallery is open daily, 10:30am to 5:30pm. Throughout the rest of the year, the gallery opens from 11:00am to 4:30pm, Thursday to Sunday only. Admission is £5 for adults, £4 for concessions, and free for children.

*Paradise Regained* runs until 2 November 2014.



## Cookham: Stanley Spencer's Sanctuary

...Cont'd from Page 7

in the UK, volunteering with the Royal Army Medical Corps and stationed at Beaufort Hospital in Bristol. However, in May 1916 he was transferred to overseas duties and, after ten weeks' training, was sent to Macedonia with the 68th Field Ambulance unit. It was there that he saw the worst of the war, especially after volunteering to join the Royal Berkshire [Infantry] Regiment.

"Unsurprisingly, the horrific effect of war had a huge effect on the young Spencer," Shez explains, "so his return to Cookham was like finding refuge." Nonetheless, he was deeply troubled when he resumed work on *Swan Upping*, the painting he started before enlisting. "It is not proper or sensible to expect to paint well after such experiences", he wrote.

But paint he did, and the immediate post-war years spawned many of his finest, most revered works.

"It was his salvation, in many ways," concludes Shez, "to refuse to dwell on the horrors that he saw." He painted wartime images, of course, but always with a sense of looking forward.

Spencer continued painting until his death in 1959, never finishing his long-planned *Christ Preaching at the Cookham Regatta*. Today, it hangs at the centre of the gallery, a poignant reminder of the man who lovingly called this village his home, and who this village proudly calls its own.

<sup>1</sup> Stanley Spencer: A Biography; Ken Pople; 1996

<sup>2</sup> 1937 writing mentioned in <http://www.kwantes.com/SSG%20website/cookham.html>

# NOAH'S ARK

St Luke's  
summer ARTS project

## Words and Photographs: Andrew Burdett

Parishoners and locals joined together for our summer arts festival, held over the last week of August. This year's theme was *Noah's Ark*, and all were welcome to participate.

The five-day event kicked off on the Wednesday, with a screening of the contemporary Darren Aronofsky film, which stars Russell Crowe, in the church. Popcorn was aplenty, as attendees drew inspiration for the rest of the week.

Over the next few days, the dais was transformed into a grand ark, made of a combination of cardboard and timber. Paper-plates became portholes. Papier mâché balloons became animals. Sheets of foil were cut to create doves for a display behind the altar.

Others showed their creative juices in different ways. Research on global warming (just one of the modern-day issues that the story of Noah raises) was presented beautifully. A stunning watercolour, painted during the Festival, was displayed on an easel alongside the relevant Genesis extract.

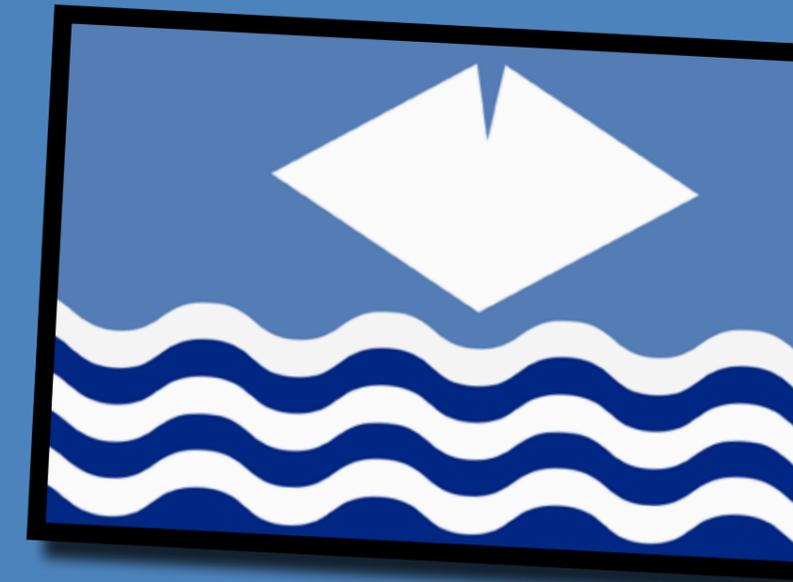
On the Sunday, a special celebratory service was staged in place of the usual 10:00am Eucharist, with a range of music provided by the choir. Finally, a bring-and-share lunch brought the curtain down on a great, all-embracing week.



# NOAH'S ARK

## St Luke's Tour of the Isle of Wight

Following successful biennial trips over the last ten years to Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Yorkshire, and, in 2012, Norfolk, this year's bank holiday excursion was to the Isle of Wight.



All aboard for the grand church tour!



# Saturday, 3 May 2014

# Sunday, 4 May 2014



Left, Antony Gormley's *Sound II* sculpture, on permanent display in the crypt of Winchester Cathedral. Above, more adventurous members of the party scaled the narrow tower steps to the top of the cathedral roof, offering panoramic views of the city.

Below, Big John, one of the Brothers at the Hospital of St Cross almshouse, shows St Luke's congregation members around the little-known attraction, just outside Winchester.



Top half of page, clockwise from top-right, arriving at Havenstreet station on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway; Matthew Burdett enjoying the breeze; and Joan Harby peering out of the carriage window.



Left, Rhidian Jones with a Haven Falconry owl, part of a railway station sideshow; and, below-left, Joan Harnby, Helen Poynter, and Phillis Sigsworth with a wooden carving of an owl, seen in the grounds of Osborne House, right and below-right.



**Monday, 5 May 2014**



Bottom and lower row, roughly half the party chose to walk along Tennyson Down to reach the Needles, middle, top row.

Top-left, Andrew Burdett paddling in the sea. Top-right, returning to mainland at the end of the trip.

# Well Worth Going

A new social group, building friendships between local people of different backgrounds, enjoyed a day out to Worthing.

**Sonya Clarke** went along.

On Thursday 21 August, a day blessed with beautiful sunshine, a coach arrived at church for a 9:00am departure to Worthing. 9:00am came and went, as did 9:15am, but by 9:30am all were accounted for and – with a variety of walking aids and enough food to feed an army stowed away on the coach – off we went.

After a less-than-direct route, we eventually arrived in Worthing at 11:45am and thankfully the glorious sunshine prevailed, albeit with a rather strong westerly wind blowing.

Some of us went straight for lunch (let's get our priorities right), others made for the shops, but the majority set up deck-chairs on the pebbles and out came this enormous picnic. Most of the younger ones braved the water for a paddle as did those who were with Gill

Curry, I for one did not, can't stand walking on pebbles without shoes.

Having topped up on retail therapy those of us that ventured into town joined up with the rest of the group on the beach. Laughter rang out, food was still being consumed, bargains compared. In fact one of the ladies was so taken with a pair of sandals that another lady had bought, with only a short time to go before we set off

to come home, dashed off to the shoe shop to purchase a pair for herself.

This was the first outing I'd been on with this group and I can say that I hadn't laughed so much in ages. I tried new foods, learnt a few words and will be looking forward to another adventure with Baljit and the ladies. Thank you to Baljit for having arranged this outing.



Photograph: Gill Curry

## What is the Friendship Project?

**Sonya Clarke** explains...

Friendship Project meets every Thursday morning in the Parish Centre of St Luke's Church from 11:00am until 1:00pm usually ending with a shared lunch. Some weeks a guest speaker comes and some weeks we just share each other's company. We are a mixed group of people, from different cultures in the parish; some are looking for and making new friends, others are just sharing life's experiences and enjoying the opportunity of being together in such a friendly atmosphere. The clue about this group is in the title 'Friendship Project'.

If you would like to know more about this project please do contact me, Sonya, on 632626, I would love to share with you the fun I've had in so short a time.

# Happiness

Poem and Watercolour: Jean Jackson

*Where can we find this fleeting happiness?  
It comes and goes and is as transient  
As rainbows in the sky with summer rain,  
Or cloud across the moon.*

*For happiness is like a precious jewel,  
Suspended, glowing, in its own pure light.  
It shines amid the gloom of humdrum life.  
Stretch out your hands to clasp  
And hold it close, and cherish it, and wish  
That time would cease its motion evermore –  
The Jewel embraced for all eternity  
But such will not endure.*

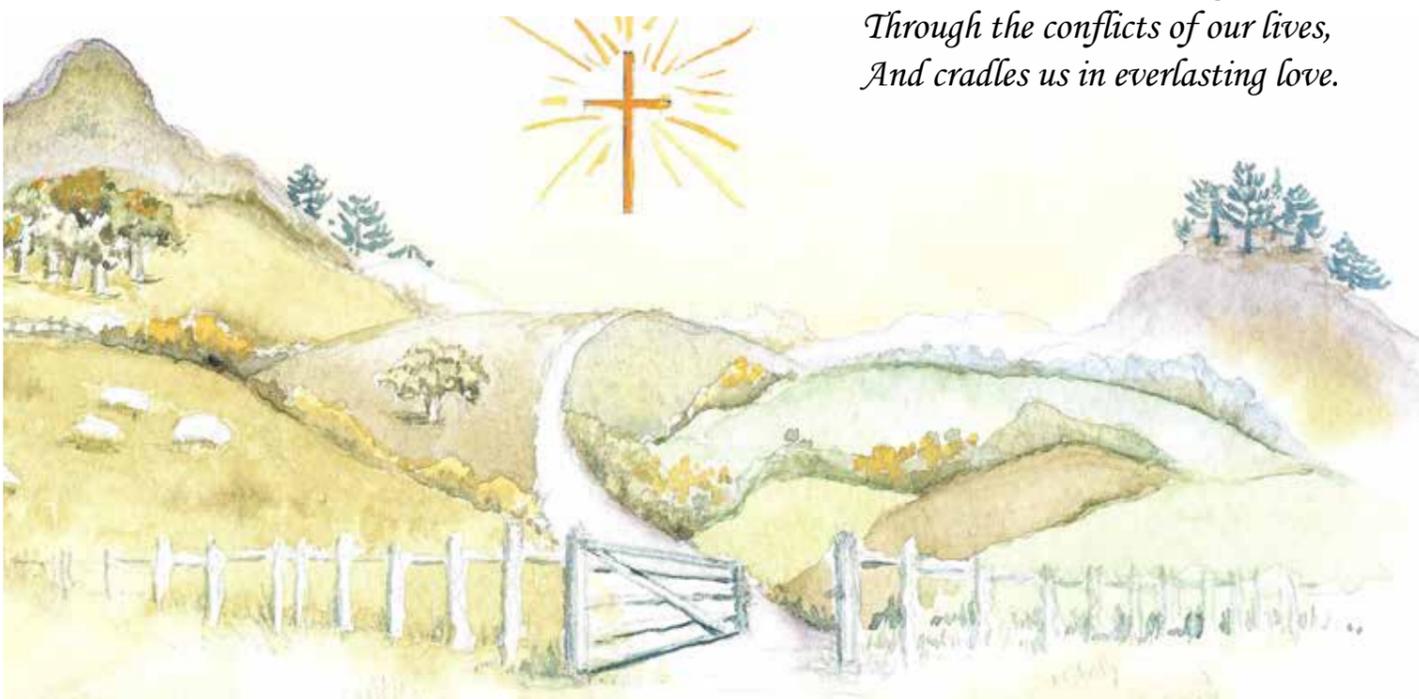
*Oh, cast your eyes across to war-torn lands  
And search the depths of human misery.  
Take pity on the desolate, weeping child.  
Shall we be happy still?*

*For happiness is likened to a star  
Which (when our cares diminish, fade and die)  
Appears as a tiny gleam,  
Then grows and warms us with a radiance  
divine.*

*We'll hold it fast, this brightly shining star,  
And build a fortress round it in our hearts,  
Lest some dark thing creeps in to steal its light.  
'Tis all in vain.*

*Alas! Too quickly passes happiness.  
The jewel shatters and the star is dimmed,  
Lost in the darkness of encroaching storms.  
Elusive happiness, of such fragility, may dwell  
In quiet contentment;  
But not in ecstasy.*

*And so, in trust, we'll step inside a gateway  
To the One whose hand will guide us  
Through the conflicts of our lives,  
And cradles us in everlasting love.*



# LESSONS IN LIFE AND HORTICULTURE

Words and Photographs: Louisa Ellins

**W**hen James and I moved out of our old top floor flat, one of the only non-negotiables was a garden. (The other was a dishwasher – which has fully justified its status.) As our second summer here nears its end, I'm enjoying my time outside more and more. There's plenty to do, but with knees on the grass, hands in the soil, and the sound of the wind gently rustling the branches, the peace is only occasionally broken by the piercing call of the red kites wheeling overhead.

This year I've grown a few plants from seed. I don't think I'll ever get bored of seeing the first timid shoots appear, before the plants grow and grow; it's amazing how a tiny tomato seed can become a plant at least a metre tall (and still growing) in just a few months.

I've also gained a new appreciation of creepy crawlies – suddenly the spider or woodlouse isn't such a problem when it can scuttle back into the soil, or under a stone.

The garden still has a lot to teach me, but this is what I've learnt so far.

### We all need room to grow

My tomatoes flourished when I finally got round to transferring them from pots into grow bags. I planted cornflower and sweet pea seeds in a shallow tray. They briefly flourished, but when I didn't pot them on the delicate blooms wilted.

### Expect the unexpected

The garden is always surprising me. The clematis is supposed to flower in May; this year we've seen a few flowers in July and August too. When I stripped back the diseased leaves and all looked hopeless for my rose, a perfect little bud stood there despite the odds.

### Good things come to those who wait

The sight of the first tiny peppers and tomatoes – no bigger than peas – makes all the work worthwhile. There's also no substitute for the taste of home-grown produce (as long as I get there before the slugs).



**Sometimes you can't plan for success**

I planted nasturtium seeds in a container. I also planted some by accident when seeds dropped on the ground. Which ones look more impressive?

### Delight in the frivolous

As I write, the flowers in the hanging basket are pirouetting outside the window. Not literally, of course, but I love the way fuchsias resemble tiny ballet dancers.

What would they perform in pink and purple tutus?



### Failure isn't the last word

I grew radishes but left them several months too long. While they were no longer edible, the white flowers were still very pretty.

.....  
"There is no gardening without humility. Nature is constantly sending even its oldest scholars to the bottom of the class for some egregious blunder." — Alfred Austin (1835 to 1913), poet

You may enjoy these learning opportunities:

## The Eucharist Mini Teaching Series

Six Wednesdays, from  
1 October



The next in our teaching series is designed to help us think about the different aspects of the communion service and about the whole purpose and impact of holy communion. We meet at 8:00pm in the Parish Centre.

## Turning to Christ Pilgrim Course

Six Thursdays, from  
9 October

This new Anglican course explores our shared faith using a variety of media. Prepared by Bishop Stephen Cottrell, it is going down very well elsewhere. This first part of the course is designed for all who would like a refresher about the basics of Christian faith: for those who might be considering confirmation, have had children baptised, or simply want to explore what being a Christian is all about. We meet from 8:00pm to 9:30pm in the Parish Centre.

## Faith Journey

Words: Serena Tajima



It feels like ages ago that I first started exploring this sense of 'calling' to ordained ministry. I remember when I first felt it over Easter about four years ago and wanted to start Theological College that autumn! However the process slows you down and for good reason, because the enormity of what you are accepting takes a while to sink in.

Going through a Bishops' Advisory Panel is a weird and exhausting experience! You know you're being observed over the whole three days you're there and, whilst you try to just be yourself, at the same time you can't help trying to show your strengths. Afterwards, you genuinely feel none the wiser as to whether they agreed with your sense of calling or not.

When I received their decision, which was that I had been recommended with conditions, my happiness was a little subdued. I think I had always just expected a 'yes' or 'no', so it took a

while to realise that having conditions was not a bad thing or a reflection on my sense of calling. The conditions they gave me were first to do some mentored studying and then to find a placement within a church for at least nine months. These conditions give me a great opportunity to immerse myself into doing God's work before going to Theological College, and really test what I think God is calling me to. My current job at British Airways has always made it difficult for me to do as much at St Luke's as I would have liked to, so I must now leave work and do what I believe is my vocation.

When I started to look for a placement I tried to find something that could work around my job, but I just kept hitting brick walls. I then found an internship run by the Church of England called the CofE Ministry and Experience Scheme, for people aged between 18 and 30 exploring their faith and vocation. The internships are based

in cities around the country, so I spoke to the London-based team. Although the scheme was full-time and I was older than their usual candidates, the more I heard about it the more I felt that it was what I should be doing. I couldn't ignore the fact that I'd called at the right time – just as somebody had dropped out and they were about to re-advertise the vacancy. It was exactly what the Panel wanted me to do, and I seemed to be what the London scheme was looking for as well.

After putting to rest the idea of staying with BA on just a part-time basis, I went for some interviews and was accepted onto the Diocese of London Internship scheme. It was open to eight people in total; I'll be living with three of them in a Bethnal Green flat. I met with two churches within the Stepney Diocese and decided to work with Christ Church and St John and St Luke's Anglican Church, both on the Isle of Dogs. As well as the church placements, I will also be going to lectures at St Mellitus Theological College and doing assignments on Theology and Reflective Practice.

The next three years are going to be very exciting; I have been offered some fantastic opportunities and so much support. Thank you all for your love, support, and prayers.

# Local Walks

Roger Bevitt reflects on a summer of weekly evening rambles.

In late-March, near Littlewick Green, our Sunday afternoon 'winter walk' lived up to its name when we met with a flock of field-fares but a singing skylark said spring is here. The Summer evening walk on 1st May was rained off, and a week later bluebells were past their best unlike their late flowering last year.

So what were some of the highlights of the rest of the Summer walks? In Burnham Beeches – a location we approach with nervous excitement as navigation is tricky even before it gets dark – we found the Hartley Court moat, the ancient Druid's Oak, and the beautiful ponds. As on a previous occasion, there was a family of Mandarin ducks on the Upper Pond – a lovely sight.

Walking near Hambledon in June, I began to wonder: will the so-called Egyptian Goose (actually a duck), which we first saw 15 years ago, continue to multiply in these parts like the Canada Goose, which was rare here when we were teenagers? Walk-

ing back down the valley from the village was particularly enjoyable, with a full moon straight ahead, brightening the dusk.

It must be admitted that not all walks turn out to be delightful. The next one (which my wife Jilly would like to point out was planned by me) might best be summed up as 'having had its ups and downs'. It started well as we gathered in Eton Wick with the promise of an easy, flat walk via Eton College and the Thames towpath, encouraging some of our more senior walkers to join us. Jean TD came on her horse to see us off (and to ask what time we'd be back for drinks). It was a bit hot for walking but the back lanes took us to Eton Great Common easily enough. But the Common turned out to be rough, tussocky grass with no visible path, and the way to the planned route was impassable. Instead, we followed the 'Common Ditch', where soon the path became overgrown by brambles,

nettles, and thistles. The sweating men had to slowly bash down the vegetation with their sticks to force a way through. We did reach Eton, but were too weary to fully appreciate the fine old College buildings and the charm of the Thames. Before we got back, I was feeling sick and lagging behind the more senior walkers and Jilly was troubled by a clutch of 'insect bites' – later diagnosed as shingles.

Since the end of July we've been doing variants of old strolls, eating early-ripening blackberries as we go. A walk south from Waltham St Lawrence was extended as far as Hungerford, a hamlet we hadn't reached before. At Wooburn, we first climbed out of the valley on its east side returning via Hedsor village, all to the music of bell-ringers practising. At Little Marlow, we enjoyed a stunning sunset; the sky in glorious pink and blue with a few dark clouds for contrast.

*Check the weekly pew-sheet for details of the rambles' latest walks.*



# Wiveliscombe Wanderings

Keen St Luke's rambler **Roger Clarke** removes his walking boots for long enough to give *InSpire* readers an update.

'Where is Wiveliscombe?' I hear you asking, well some of you anyway. For the uninitiated, Wiveliscombe or 'Wivey' as it is affectionately known by the locals, is a small, historic market town in Somerset, a few miles west of Taunton. It is situated in the wonderful countryside in the Brendon Hills, just on the edge of the Exmoor National Park, and was chosen as an ideal base for our October 2013 walking / social weekend.



bridge is a waterslide, and here, according to the novel, Jan Ridd first met Lorna whilst fishing for loaches. The sun shone and the scenery was ever-changing, but eventually we had to turn away from Badgworthy Water and climb up through Hoccombe Combe and onto Brendon Common. The views from Brendon Common are typical of Exmoor: a relatively flat landscape, punctuated by many small valleys or

A group of twelve of us had booked for the weekend. For various reasons, numbers have reduced over the years, but if you enjoy walking rambles you are more than welcome to join us on any of our future excursions.

We had booked into the White Hart Inn in the centre of Wiveliscombe, and we'd arranged to meet for dinner there on Friday evening, 4 October. The White Hart is a traditional coaching inn, some 350 years old, and is geometrically fascinating. I think it is true to say that no two rooms were alike; in fact, the room allocated to Sonya and I did not have a right-angle in sight – and as for the floors... well, they went in all directions! Character, and then some! After a very enjoyable meal, we all retired for the night and looked forward to Saturday's planned walk.

The day dawned bright and clear and after breakfast those who were walking made their way to the village of Malmsmead for a six-and-a-half mile ramble in Doone Country. Malmsmead was made famous by the author RD Blackmore in his novel, *Lorna Doone*. (Malmsmead was where Jan Ridd brought his bride, Lorna.) Leaving the village behind, we walked south to join Badgworthy Water and, a little later, passed the Blackmore Memorial. The stone, set in stunning scenery, is inscribed:

TO THE MEMORY OF RICHARD DODDRIDGE BLACKMORE WHOSE NOVEL LORNA DOONE EXTOLS TO ALL THE WORLD THE JOYS OF EXMOOR. THIS STONE WAS PLACED HERE BY THE LORNA DOONE CENTENARY COMMITTEE 1969.

Further along the route we crossed a footbridge over the stream emanating from Lank Combe. Just above the

combes and big skies. From here, we made our way back to Malmsmead by interconnecting tracks having enjoyed a really interesting walk in Doone Country.

Sunday was again a sunny morning and, after breakfast, we all tramped along to St Andrew's Church to join them for morning worship. As usual, we were made very welcome by the congregation and stayed afterwards for coffee and a chat. The locals have really made walking a feature of Wiveliscombe and there are many 'Wivey Walks' which can be enjoyed; consequently our walking group proved of interest and our comments were welcomed. After the service we all made our way to Clatworthy Reservoir. Walkers would be circumnavigating the complete reservoir, a distance of some five miles, with those less able joining us for a short stroll before returning to their cars. It is always nice to get the whole group together, walking at least a little way and chatting as we go – and the sunshine always helps. The walk around the reservoir was not flat, as you might imagine. Many reservoirs in the West Country have been made by flooding valleys and so there was a certain amount of 'up and down' as we went along. The reservoir sides were quite steep in places with occasional offshoots where small combes had also been flooded and much of the way was wooded with a variety of trees, including beech, oak, silver birch, and rowan. Altogether a very pleasant stroll in gentle surroundings and warm sunshine, before again returning to the White Hart for our evening meal.

We had enjoyed good company, good food, good walks (and other activities), and excellent weather, and Monday was upon us amazingly quickly, or so it seemed.



## More Cake, Vicar?

The vicarage tea-party raised £250 for church funds.

Photographs by Andrew Burdett



Generally on the Monday of our trips we have a walk planned, although many will decide to head off early, in their different directions towards home. This Monday was no different and only three of us decided to go for the full hat-trick! Our final walk utilised part of the South West Coast Path (SWCP) and started close to Selworthy Beacon, high above the sea and with spectacular views in all directions. The Beacon looms above Minehead at a height of 308 metres (1011 feet above sea-level in old money!) and is reached by the aptly-named Hill Road, with its twists and turns and steep climb. In fact, it was a challenge just to find the start of this road from the centre of Minehead. We parked our cars opposite a small quarry and, being the silly people we are, decided that a scramble up the quar-

ry wall was a challenge not to be missed. Once above the quarry we navigated ourselves east and a little downhill by some very small paths in the heather, until we found the SWCP. We then turned west and found our way to Selworthy Beacon itself. En-route we had great views to Exmoor on our left and the Bristol Channel and South Wales to our right. Returning to the cars we passed quite a lot of evidence of ancient man as there were several cairns / barrow remains which I believe may date back to the Bronze Age.

As we arrived back at our cars, a small shower of rain descended upon us but, too late to dampen our spirits, we had enjoyed another four-and-a-half miles in God's fresh air. We certainly have much to remember of our three great days in this beautiful part of the South West.

# It's Goodnight from Me...

Although the Thursday Group has come to an end in its current form, it went out in style at its final summer party.

Photography: Andrew Burdett



## Sonya Clarke

It seems some considerable time since our last report and sadly this will be the last report I make. At the AGM in August of this year I stepped down as Group Leader/Secretary and, as no new leader had been found, Thursday Group has come to an end.

However, that doesn't mean to say that we have not enjoyed our final year; we certainly have. We had a good variety of speakers including *Maidenhead Advertiser* editor Martin Trepte, former Winter Olympian John Moore, and even a panel of St Luke's faces for a vibrant Questions & Answers evening.

In May, during our final meeting, Kevin Baughan shared the history of House of Barnabas, which inspired one attendee to make a visit. We also enjoyed a wonderful summer party at the home of Ann and Richard Burdett (the garden was absolutely beautiful, as was the food) and were so pleased that



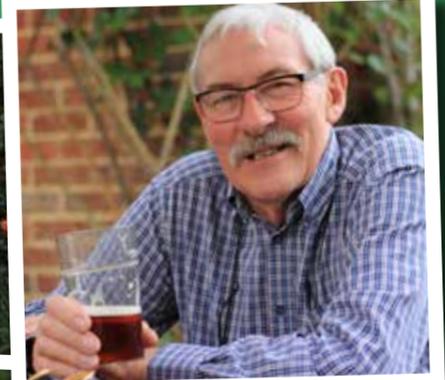
some previous Group Leaders could come along. We were even blessed with a warm evening and only a very few drops of rain!

At our final AGM in August we presented Sequela Foundation and Alzheimer's Support with cheques to the value of £450.00 each, a truly remarkable effort raising funds for charity.

Over the last twenty years or so Thursday Group has enjoyed many a shared evening and who knows, in the future another group may well take off where we as not just the people of St Luke's but also the people of God can come together in friendship and fellowship.

My heartfelt thanks are to all, those who have served on the committee at different times, as well as those who supported the group, each bringing their own gifts and talents.

Let us now look forward to the future, trusting in God that at the right time and in the right way something else will come forward.



## In the Beginning...

### Enid Barber

It was a vicar's wife who started it all. Mary Sumner held mothers meetings in her parish and included women of all walks of life – something very unusual in 1876. This grew into the Mothers Union, which gradually spread worldwide with the aim of 'strengthening and supporting Christian family life'. At present, there are 3.7 million members still working hard for women's causes. Mary Sumner was eventually buried in the grounds of Winchester Cathedral, along with her husband.

Most churches had a Mothers Union, including St Luke's. After a while, some of the younger members decided they did not really want to join the 'oldies' (nothing new under the sun) so a Young Wives group was created for those under 30 years of age.

One of the founder members at St Luke's was Muriel Bevitt, Roger's mother. Then another change. The Young Wives did not want to leave their group at that specific age, so the 'Young' was dropped and it became simply Wives Group, and continued to attend the annual Deanery Festival. Leaders of all the groups in the Deanery all met together, too.

Over the years we all became more broad-minded. Why should single people be excluded? Why not the divorced? What about the men? After much discussion it was decided to change the name to Thursday Group and to be all-inclusive – which it remained until the end. Thursday Teas were started for people who would appreciate some company and a chat. Prayer letters, produced by the Pastoral Care Team, were delivered mainly by the Thursday Group.

Meetings were held in peoples'

homes as well as the hall. Speakers were mostly local, others invited. When I was very new to Maidenhead it was Jan Cheek who invited me to join the others for coffee. What a big step that turned out to be!

We did not spend much money, but we did raise a large amount for charity over the years – mainly by holding raffles and jumble sales.

Now Thursday Group has closed, I wonder what will follow? Who will be inspired with another kind of 'all-inclusive' social activity?

# Sunday Club at Beale Park



Photograph: Nikola Sorrell

**As a summer holiday treat, a group of 37 adults, children, and babies departed from church in a convoy of cars, each carrying lush picnics and heading for Beale Wildlife Park in Pangbourne (Ann Burdett writes).**

The sun shone and we were able to enjoy the beautiful gardens, bronze sculptures, miniature train rides, giant sandpit and enormous paddling pool, adventure playground (complete with pirate ship), lake walks, and, of course, the essential coffee shop. Best of all were the animals: among these, meerkats, pigs, wallabies, monkeys, raccoons, goats, reindeer, and birds of all sorts.

The highlight for me though was watching the friendship and interactions between all the generations, from zero to 70+.

If anyone would like to receive the termly Sunday Club newsletter, which details other such events that we organise for our young people (regardless of whether you have toddlers or children/grandchildren of your own) either [ann@arembc.com](mailto:ann@arembc.com) or ask Ann Burdett for a printed version.



## Coming Soon at St Luke's

### Visiting Preacher

Sunday 21 September 10:00am

Rev'd Monika Weisner, Pastor of St Matthew's Lutheran church, Connestogo, Canada will preach.

### Thames Pilgrim Path

Saturday 27 September

Join Bishop John on his Thames Walk journey; welcome him to our parish with tea at 4:00pm; or attend the Ray Mill Island service at 5:00pm.

### Harvest Sunday

Sunday 28 September

Send Bishop John on his way from Ray Mill Island at 9:30am, then walk back to church in time for the service at 10:45am. A bring-and-share lunch follows.

### Ladies Breakfast

Saturday 11 October 8:45am

Speaker Phyllis Sigsworth and breakfast for £5.

### Book Share

Tuesday 14 October

Johanna Raffan hosts an evening for anyone to come and talk about a great book they've read.

### Quiet Day

Saturday 18 October

Healing and Wholeness, led by Sonya Clarke and Noeline Page. 10:30am to 4:00pm

### Patronal Festival

Sunday 19 October

Celebrate the feast day of St Luke at 10:00am.

### Harp Recital

Friday 31 October

Elizabeth McNulty offers a beautiful concert from 1:00pm, with lunch available from noon.

### Memorial Service

Sunday 2 November

Service for anyone who has loved and lost, especially over the last year. Starts at 4:00pm, followed by tea.

For more details and to keep up-to-date with the latest events, see the pew-sheet or website.

# From the Registers

## We welcomed into God's church by baptism:

Barnaby Craig	Chloe Whiting
Summer Prater	Zoey Nash
Harry Blackwell	Maerose Lambert
Poppy Wood	Gethin Cox
Zac Wood	Ella Cottrell
William Eves	Aaliyah Tull
Hudson James	Ellena Campbell
Seth Molony	Guy Newell

## We celebrated the marriages of:

Benedict Priestly and Cordelia Ruffles  
 Mark Nash and Sarah Williams  
 David Harris and Jadranka Jovanovic  
 Wayne Little and Stephanie Carr  
 Peter Taylor and Anaka Ward  
 Paul Williams and Rebecca Whitmore  
 Ivan Mitchell and Anna Lush

## We commended into God's care at their funerals:

John Norris	Rex Hugo
Joan Parker	Doris Simpson
Beryl Jenkins	John Henry
Robert Newman	Ronald Birch
Leonard Lynch	Joyceline Wyman
Mark Willard	Ronald Bennett
Kenneth Dovey	Dorothy Barnard
Daphne Lewis	Shirley Sattler
Victor Garroway	Wendy Logie
Margaret (Peggy) Swansborough	Penelope Lawrence
	Robert Dymond



**Vicar:**  
Revd Sally Lynch



**Associate Priest:**  
Revd Terrie Robinson



**Licensed Lay Minister:**  
Sonya Clarke

## The Church Office

Open Tuesdays  
and Fridays,  
10:00am to  
12:00pm.

admin@stlukeschurch  
maidenhead.org.uk

☎ 01628 622733

## Who's Who at St Luke's?

**Ministry Team**  
Reverend Sally Lynch 01628 783033  
Reverend Terrie Robinson 01628 634017  
Sonya Clarke 01628 632626

**Churchwardens**  
Johanna Raffan 01628 680913  
David Sopp 01628 673617

**Assistant Churchwardens**  
Don Luff 01628 638602  
Peter Goford 01628 638238

**Flower Organiser**  
Joan Harnby 01628 622140

**Electoral Roll Officer**  
Jill Bevitt 01628 6633464

**Gift Aid Secretary**  
Ann Cooke 01628 472147

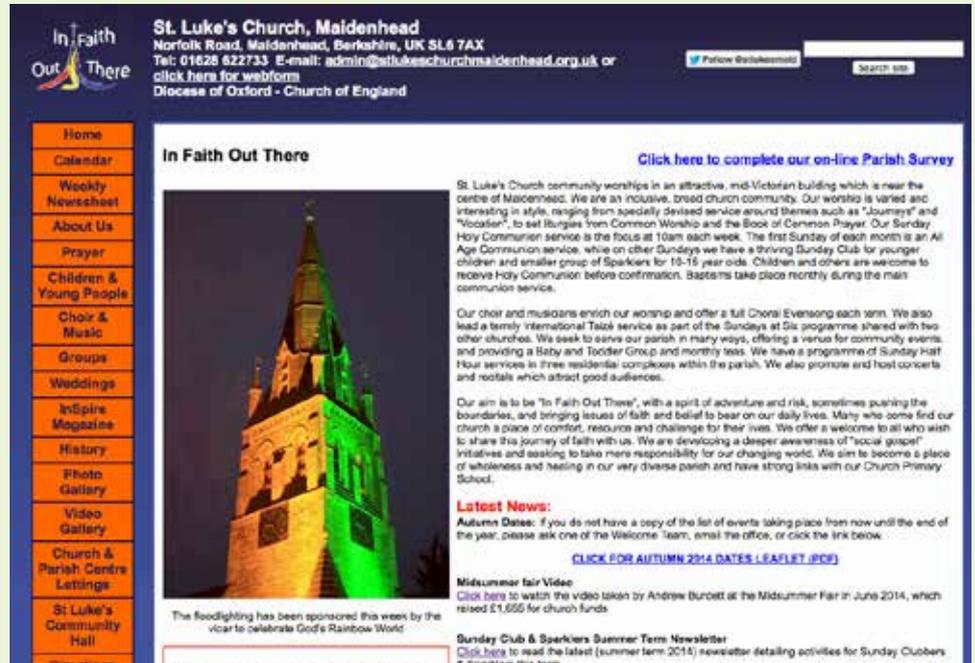
**Director of Music**  
John Cotteril 01628 636514

**PCC Secretary**  
Raph Hinchliffe 01628 784727

**PCC Treasurer**  
Richard Burdett 01628 631486

**Parish Administrator**  
Nicola Buckland 01628 622733

## The Church Website



To view the latest pew-sheet, learn about the history of our church, or find out more about St Luke's many prayer and discussion groups,

find us online at  
[www.stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk](http://www.stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk)

## And Finally...

"How would you tackle the drink problem?", a rather pious lady asked a priest of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield.

"With a corkscrew", he replied.

Seen in Smile, Please! by Phil Mason