

Benefice of Goring & Streatley with South Stoke



Sunday 8th May

Easter 4

Welcome to Church

Alleluia, Christ is risen....

..... He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Good News from Jo!

“I have some great news to share with you all, I've been officially designated a 'pioneer priest' by the diocese. Pioneer priests have been part of the Anglican church for a while now, and in short, it means that I will be spending more time with people in our communities, discovering the love of God together. I'll be continuing my role here as a pioneer curate.”

Jo has made a short video (which will be on the website) or do speak to her.



The Collect, the prayer for the week

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life:
raise us, who trust in him,
from the death of sin to the life of righteousness,
that we may seek those things which are above,
where he reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

This weekend:

8:00am	BCP Holy Communion at St Mary's
9:30am	Holy Communion at St Thomas'
11:15am	Family Service at St Mary's
11:15am	BCP Holy Communion at St Andrew's followed by APCM
5:00pm	Discoverers

Christian Aid Week 15th – 21st May



The combined effects of the global pandemic and the war in Ukraine pushing prices up has made things even more difficult for people living in poverty. Christian Aid works with local partner organisations throughout the world to

bring hope to those facing crisis.

This year we are planning to deliver envelopes to people's homes with a note asking them to take their donations to *Jack's* or *Inspiration* for Goring and Streatley, or the Village Shop in South Stoke. If you are able to **deliver the envelopes in your road or one near you**, please collect the relevant folder from St Thomas' Church on Sunday 8th May or Sunday 15th May for roads in Goring, or volunteer your help to your Church Wardens for roads in Streatley and South Stoke. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

St Andrew's Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting for St Andrew's will take place this Sunday, 8th May, after the 11:15am service.

Copies of the annual report and accounts can be seen by clicking [here](#) and [here](#) or paper copies will be available in the church.

St Andrew's coffee morning

The monthly coffee morning with cakes will take place in St Andrew's this Wednesday, 11th May, from 10:30am. All welcome!



Visit by the Bishop of Oxford

Our bishop, Rt Revd Steven Croft, will be visiting our deanery this month. You are invited to meet him to hear what he has to say and to let him hear your views and ask him questions on Wednesday 18th May at 7.30pm at The Ark, Shiplake Church, RG9 4BS.

For more details please ask a member of our ministry team, or contact Leigh in Shiplake at: benefice.sdh@gmail.com

All are welcome.

St Mary's concert, Sunday 15th May at 4pm

Pianist Ikuko Inoguchi will be giving a concert which she herself describes as "inspired by songs - German lied and chorale, French and Russian bird songs and the singing and dancing of the Japanese raccoon dog".



The works will include Jean-Philip Rameau's *La Rappel des Oiseaux* and *Les Tendres Plaintes*, Franz Schubert's *Sonata in A minor*, Glinka/Balakirev's *L'Alouette*, Noriko Koide's *Un Poco Don Poco* and Ludwig van Beethoven's *Sonata in E major*.

Tickets are £10 full, £9 concessions and will be sold on the door only. However advance bookings can be made by email to StMarysConcerts@hotmail.co.uk or by text to 0776 233 9853 and a ticket will be reserved ready for you to pay on arrival. There will be tea afterwards in the Morrell Room.

Diary for next week:

Tuesday 10th May

2:00pm Funeral of Bill Armstrong at St Mary's

Wednesday 11th May

10:30am Little Lights at St Mary's

10:30am South Stoke coffee morning at St Andrew's

10:30am BCP Holy Communion at St Thomas'

The readings will be Acts 12.24 – 13.5, Ps. 67 & John 12. 44-end

Saturday 14th May

8.30am Benefice Prayer breakfast in the Canterbury Room

1:30pm Marriage of Robert and Anna at St Mary's

Sunday 15th May, Easter 5

8:00am BCP Holy Communion at St Thomas'

9:30am Good News service at St Thomas'

11:15am BCP Holy Communion at St Mary's

11:15am Good News service at St Andrew's

3:00pm Wild Church

Zoom request for Wednesdays

We can always Zoom a Wednesday morning service so long as you ask by the night before, or we would love to give you a lift to the service.

For those who are not able to join us in church on Sunday morning it is our hope that you will be able to take time to stop, find a special place, switch off all distractions, light a candle perhaps, and join in spirit, and by God's Spirit worship and be built up together.

Suggested wording for those unable to join us in person:

This is the day which the Lord has made....

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

*The Lord is here, **His Spirit is with us.***

Lord Jesus, lead us as we come before you now.

The Collect (*please see above*)

Psalm 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd;
therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Readings

Our readings this Sunday are Acts 9: 36-end, Psalm 23 and John 10: 22-30.

Judith Hogg has written a reflection on the reading from Acts:

Acts is full of accounts of earth-shattering moments such as the conversion of Saul and the conversion of Cornelius, a gentile Roman centurion. Tucked in between these events is a small intimate scene in an upstairs room in Joppa that had been occupied by a woman who had been ill and just died. Her name was Tabitha, or Dorcas in the Greek.

We know little about her, but she is the only woman in the New Testament who was called a disciple, so would have been an active member of the church there. Her reputation was made from sewing clothing for the poor widows, of whom there probably were a large number as Joppa was a seaport and the menfolk would have been sailors. During bad weather fishermen were often shipwrecked and drowned. Their wives and children lost not only their husbands and fathers, but also their income.

It was said that she was always doing good and helping the poor. She could sew and so she sewed to the best of her ability. She opened her heart to Jesus and out of gratitude offered her one gift to Him. She was sewing for Jesus. In a practical way she was caring for the most vulnerable in her society. The widows seemed to be immensely proud of all the clothing she had made for them and took great delight in them. I suspect they were not just utilitarian, but were works of art that were treasured.

Tabitha was using her passion, sewing, to serve God. I don't think that she did it to gain a reputation as a wonderful seamstress. Her motivation was to glorify God. What lights our fire? What energizes us? What are we passionate about? Is it baking, or making delicious chocolate truffles with which to bless people (eg, Ben), or fixing or driving? These are just as important as teaching or preaching. Do not despise the gift of helps, or undervalue practical serving.

Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mt 5:16). This is our motivation. In the recent 'Sharing Jesus' course, we thought about the place of actions in sharing Jesus with our friends. Acts of kindness may well cause people to ask what motivates us and give us the opportunity to speak of Jesus.

Then the blow fell. She became sick and died. The widows were greatly distressed. But someone remembered that Peter was staying in Lydda, about 10 miles away, so they sent two men to urge him to come. They

clearly believed that he might be able to help. Peter made himself available at a moment's notice, available to God to use him, and he came right away. In our hurried world we can limit our availability, so we need to listen to God when demands are made upon us and ask Him to show us when we should drop everything and go.

The Bible mentions only seven people who were raised from the dead, and Tabitha was the only adult one among them. Peter simply copied what he had seen Jesus do in a similar situation and Tabitha was indeed raised. God used the gift entrusted to him. The news spread all around Joppa and many believed in the Lord. I find Jesus' injunction to raise the dead a hard matter, but we can certainly pray specifically for the sick and see God answer.

Long ago God told Moses to work with the rod in his hand. Tabitha used a needle in her hand. What might He use in our hands? What gifts has the Lord entrusted to us and what will we do with them?

Hymn

<p>1 Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee. Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in endless praise.</p>	<p>2 Take my hands and let them move At the impulse of Thy love. Take my feet and let them be Swift and beautiful for Thee.</p>
<p>3 Take my voice and let me sing, Always, only for my King. Take my lips and let them be Filled with messages from Thee.</p>	<p>4 Take my silver and my gold, Not a mite would I withhold. Take my intellect and use Every pow'r as Thou shalt choose.</p>
<p>5 Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine. Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne.</p>	<p>6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour At Thy feet its treasure store. Take myself and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee.</p>

Prayers for this week

Thank you to Mike Codner for this week's prayers.

Good and gracious God, be our shepherd and our guide: lead us out of darkness and into life and light eternal; deliver us from all evil, guide us into the ways of goodness and peace; and when we wander, bring us back to you and your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever, **Amen**

Holy and Gracious God, We pray for the people of Ukraine, for the country

and its leaders, in particular the President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy. We pray for all those who are afraid; that your everlasting arms hold them in this time of great fear. We pray for all those who have the power over life and death; that they will choose for all people life in all its fullness. We thank the countries that are opening their arms to Ukrainian refugees in large numbers. We pray for world leaders that they are inspired by the wisdom and courage of Christ. And we pray for the people of Russia, that their country will in future be governed fairly and without autocracy and corruption.

Faithful Shepherd, lead us from darkness to light,

May we dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Lord, we pray that isolated and persecuted churches may find fresh strength in the good news of Easter. Help us to make your Church a haven where all your flock may be offered sanctuary. We do not seek a hiding place from the outside world, but rather to draw strength, from your presence amongst us.

Faithful Shepherd, lead us from darkness to light,

May we dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

We pray for the leaders of our nation, and all those who work to make us safe and guard our freedoms: the freedom of speech, the freedom to worship, the freedom from want, and the freedom from fear. We pray that those whom we trust with this responsibility may not abuse this trust.

Faithful Shepherd, lead us from darkness to light,

May we dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

We pray for all those who shape the minds of the young and impressionable. We pray for teachers, broadcasters and all those who use social media to interact with others. And we pray for our clergy and ministers in our Benefice. Lord, you proclaim your truth in every age by many voices.

Faithful Shepherd, lead us from darkness to light,

May we dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

We give thanks and pray for those who provide us with food through farming and agriculture, for those who provide for us in shops and supermarkets.

Faithful Shepherd, lead us from darkness to light,

May we dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Lord, sustain us, we pray that, in the midst of all life's changes, we may never be separated from our Good Shepherd, who guides us to the springs of life. Lead us always to the living waters where you promise respite and refreshment. We pray for all who are ill, lonely or struggling at this time. Faithful Shepherd, lead us from darkness to light,
May we dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Lord, our Shepherd, who brought again your Son Jesus Christ from the valley of death, comfort us all with your protecting presence that we also may come home and dwell with him in your house for ever. Faithful Shepherd, lead us from darkness to light,
May we dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Daily readings for the coming week

Monday am:	Ps 103	Exod. 32. 1-14	Luke 2. 40-end	pm: Ps 112	Eph. 4. 1-16
Tuesday am:	Ps 139	Exod. 32. 15-34	Luke 3. 1-14	pm: Ps 116	Eph. 4. 17-end
Wednesday am:	Ps 135	Exod. ch. 33	Luke 3. 15-22	pm: Ps 47	Eph. 5. 1-14
Thursday am:	Ps 118	Exod. 34. 1-10, 27-end	Luke 4. 1-13	pm: Ps 85	Eph. 5. 15-end
Friday am:	Ps 33	Exod. 35.20-36.7	Luke 4. 14-30	pm: Ps 36	Eph. 6. 1-9
Saturday am:	Ps 16	1 Sam. 2. 27-35	Acts 2. 37-end	pm: Ps 80	Matt. 7. 15-27

We are asked to pray for Pat Ankerson, Katherine Pound, Otis Thorne, Mary Bulmer, Jo Harvey, Clive McCann, the Gregory Family, Rose Fay and all their families.

Among the housebound we pray for Jean Dixon.

RIP We give thanks for the hope and promise of the resurrection for all our departed loved ones in Christ. We lift to God the recently departed including Fran Howie, John Keates and Bill Armstrong and pray for their families and friends.

For further information please check www.thomandmary.org.uk