



Notes from the Riverbank

The newsletter for St Thomas of Canterbury Church in Goring,
St Mary's Church in Streatley and St Andrew's Church in South Stoke

June 2017 – 39th edition

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● Welcome to the thirty-ninth edition of "Notes from the Riverbank."

All contributions should be sent to Toria, the editor, by the 17th of each month at the usual email address webcontent.thomandmary@gmail.com. The on-line versions of the calendars are maintained by Glenn Cooke using the same email address. Bookings for the church or Canterbury Room should be made by contacting the UB Parish Secretary Jenny Hall at jandjh2@btinternet.com. We aim to produce the on-line and printed versions of each issue by the 25th of each month.



Evensong at St Paul's

Singing Evensong can be a challenge even for an experienced chorister, but when the venue is St Paul's Cathedral in London (and the Lord Mayor is present) the challenge takes on an extra dimension. This is what choristers from St Thomas' and St Mary's churches undertook on Saturday 6th May when 15 trebles and 19 adults took part in a Royal School of Church Music event.



Evensong requires singing in a number of different formats including hymns, a psalm in Anglican chant, and an anthem. Most of the music we had to learn was straightforward, but the anthem – Basil Harwood's *O How Glorious* – was decidedly tricky, especially in St Paul's. Wonderful as the dome of the Cathedral is, it creates some extremely challenging acoustics underneath. The participating choirs stood no chance of staying in time if they relied on sound alone – they had to look up and watch the conductor. This was also a challenge given that over 300 singers from more than 30 church choirs were taking part!

Nonetheless the experience proved about as exhilarating as church choir singing can get. As we processed out of the main body of the Cathedral to the crypt below at the end of the service, we had at last a chance to take in Wren's wonderful architecture while listening to Elgar's *Crown Imperial*. Everything felt magnificent. For an ordinary church chorister, it does not get much better than this.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Elizabeth Parkinson and Michael Howell, who both put in a huge amount of work in training the choirs, paperwork, and many other tedious but necessary tasks in order that the visit could take place.

 Pauline Garrett



Pastoral Letter

We are once again in the midst of an election campaign; the news is full of manifesto promises and posters, and signs are going up along the roads and in gardens. As I write, I am also preparing the Christian Aid Week talk, which this year focuses on refugees. We are living in a country that we so easily take for granted – an opportunity to vote, access to medical care, education and homes... The list goes on. Yet for refugees, they are fleeing dictatorships, war, persecution or the effects of natural disaster. They are looking for safety, somewhere to call home and feel safe. The word that keeps coming to mind is that of *hospitality*. Many times we are called to be a community that is hospitable, yet I wonder how many of us find it easy?

We read in *Acts 2* about the early Church modeling one way of being hospitable, who, as followers met together, broke bread together in their homes and ate together. Jesus himself found eating together a very important element of hospitality during his ministry. Just think how many times we read of Jesus involved in miracles, discussions and teaching where food was involved. Examples include the feeding of the 5,000, the BBQ on the beach, and Maundy Thursday – the memorial meal. This is a meal that we still celebrate together today, as we remember.

We read elsewhere in *Romans 12:13* to practice hospitality, and recently in the Benefice we have held the Alpha course where hospitality was a key element of each evening. Being welcomed with a glass of wine, beer or a soft drink followed by an amazing meal spoke to the participants in so many ways. Hospitality in any form is a very important part of our outreach as a Benefice and once again the Alpha course reminded me just how important hospitality can be in engaging with people. Ian Adams in his book *Cave, Refectory, Road* says that "There is something both humble and full of possibility in the simple practice of sharing food with others. The table becomes the place of hospitality, engagement and encounter."

But what else can we be doing to offer hospitality? It will of course depend on our individual situations, but we can continue to support the initiatives of Alpha and the other ways we connect as a Benefice over food; I love sharing a meal with friends and it maybe that we make a concerted effort to invite friends and those not so well known to us around for a meal. Recent reports show that in rural areas, more people are risk of loneliness; how can we help in this?

Hospitality should not be something that we take lightly, as it is key to the outworking of our faith and one that speaks volumes to people. So maybe, if we can, let's start by setting an extra space at our meal tables, and see what happens!

 Revd Steve Johnson, Assistant Curate



Two invitations from the Henley Deanery

Henley Deanery Synod Open Meeting
7.30pm Wednesday 28th June
Canterbury Room, St. Thomas Church, Goring

Revd. Dr. Joanna Collicutt, Diocesan Advisor for Spiritual Care for Older People, will help us to think about how our churches can offer spiritual care and welcome for the elderly, and particularly those affected by dementia.

This is an open meeting of the Henley Deanery Synod; all interested church members are invited to attend.

An evening with Bishop Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford
7.45pm Thursday 20th July
St. Peter & St. Paul, Shiplake

All PCC members and church congregations are invited to an evening with Bishop Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford. We will gather in the church for a short time of worship, followed by an address from Bishop Steven and ample time for questions from the floor. Refreshments will be served on the terrace of Shiplake College (weather permitting).

The evening is part of Bishop Steven's day in the Deanery where he will meet with the clergy and people involved in mission and ministry across the Deanery. He is keen to meet as many people as possible and to learn about us, and what we are interested and involved in. Do come and give him a warm welcome.

Parking: Please park either in the car park outside the Church Rooms or along the lane running down to the church. Car sharing is advised wherever possible.

Refreshments: We would be grateful for donations of homemade cakes. One cake or two cakes per parish would be wonderful. Please bring them to the church on arrival.

RSVP: An indication of numbers attending would be helpful. Please email heatherl2410@hotmail.com. Thank you.

We look forward to seeing you.



Come and Sing Evensong

There will be a *Come and Sing Evensong* in St Thomas' Church at 4pm on Sunday 4th June. Directed by Michael Howell, we will be singing *Introit: Beati mundo corde* by Grayston Ives, *Responses* by Sanders, *Canticles in C* by Stanford, and the anthem *Let their celestial concerts all unite* by Handel. Practice times are as follows:

7pm-7.30pm Friday 19th May
7pm-7.30pm Friday 26th May
7pm-8.15pm Friday 2nd June
2pm-3.30pm Sunday 4th June



Elizabeth Parkinson (872020) or parkinsonfamily1@btinternet.com



Marking a double ordination

The last weekend in June and the first in July are probably a first in the long histories of Goring, Streatley and South Stoke. Two people will be ordained to serve in the parishes of this Benefice.

- **Sunday 25th June**

Steve Johnson will be made a priest by Bishop Colin Fletcher, the Bishop of Dorchester in Dorchester Abbey at 10:30am; everyone is welcome at this service. Once he has been made a priest, as well as all the things he has been able to do as a deacon, he will also be able to take communion services. Steve, Lindsay and their family have brought such riches to the Benefice community in their year with us. As well as their warmth and friendship, many of us have been particularly grateful to Steve for leading us through our first Alpha course and for bringing his experience of world mission to enable us to begin a relationship with Steve Poulson as he begins his ministry in Honduras.

- **Saturday 1st July**

Wendy Middleton, a long-time member of the church family, will be made deacon at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford in a service beginning at 10am. Wendy has been a wonderful example to us of understanding that the backbone of ministry in the church is offered by lay people; her consistent encouragement of young people in the Benefice – especially in Discoverers – her encouragement of us all to think of the needs of others through Christian Aid week and her pastoral care. Wendy now senses God calling her to a developed and ordained ministry which will enable her to lead us in prayer and worship as well.

- **Sunday 2nd July: Celebrating the Ordinations**

Do keep lunchtime on Sunday 2nd July free to celebrate this double ordination; further details to follow! At 10:30am our celebration will begin when Steve and Wendy will lead a family communion service for the whole benefice at St Thomas'. The family communion is an experiment which we anticipate eagerly.



St Thomas' Organ

Our organ may sound good at recitals or our weekly services, but it is actually in a very poor condition. Much of the organ's electrical mechanism dates from the 1930s and is failing; some of the parts are now obsolete.

A small committee has been formed with the remit of commissioning an initial report from a professional organ advisor and then deciding the best way forward: renovating our current organ; buying and adapting an organ from another church; or building a new organ (pipe, hybrid or digital). Whatever option we decide to take, the priority will be to provide an instrument capable of supporting our large congregations which sing so well, together with sufficient variety for the sensitive accompaniment of our choir's extensive choral repertoire, and we will need to raise money to pay for it.

Over the next few months we are holding various events to help with our fundraising including a series of Sunday afternoon recitals on 16th July, 13th August, 10th September and 8th October, all at 3pm and all followed by refreshments.



Elizabeth Parkinson



Music for Reflection



Everyone is welcome to visit St Thomas' Church, Goring-on-Thames from 3pm to 4pm on Sunday 25th June when there will be an hour of reflective music for choir and organ. This will be followed by refreshments in The Canterbury Room.

This event is in response to the many people who visit our Church to spend some quiet time praying or reflecting. Although the event is for anyone who would like to attend, we are aware that 25th June would have been George Michael's birthday and there may be many people visiting the village that day who may want to spend some time at our Church. The event is not a formal service or a concert. The door will remain open and people are welcome to join us for a short time or for the whole hour. There will be no charge for the music or refreshments but, if people wish to, there will be an opportunity to make donations towards our organ fund.



Elizabeth Parkinson



Friends of Music at Goring

FoMG invite you to come and enjoy a recital of music for violin and piano played by an internationally known duo. The next concert will be given by Michael Foyle and Maksim Stšura on Wednesday 21st June at 1pm in the church of St. Thomas of Canterbury, Goring when they will be playing music by Mozart, Poulenc and Brahms. Tickets are £10 in advance, obtainable from Inspiration in the Arcade, or by email from Nigel Fountain nigelfountain@tiscali.co.uk, phone 873341, or £12 at the door.



Michael Foyle was born in Ayrshire and made his first appearance as a soloist at the age of eight in the Edinburgh Festival. During his school days he was leader of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and in 2008 was winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year Tabor Prize. After training at Royal College of Music in London he undertook postgraduate study in Vienna with Maxim Vengerov and Pavel Vernikov. Since then he has established a wide reputation as a soloist, playing concertos in major venues across the UK, Europe and Russia.

Maksim Stšura was born in Estonia, and began piano lessons at the age of six. He studied first at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, Tallinn, and subsequently at the Hochschule für Musik, Hamburg. He then came to London where he received a Master's degree from the Royal College of Music, London, and where he is now completing a doctorate.

Michael and Maksim started their collaboration as a duo in 2012, since when they have given performances at Wigmore Hall, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, St James' Piccadilly, Purcell Room, and in many European centres. They have received commendation in the national press for the compelling conviction of their playing.



United Benefice of
Goring & Streatley
with South Stoke



Benefice Calendar - June 2017

		<u>Goring</u>	<u>Streatley</u>	<u>South Stoke</u>
Th. 1 st	'Thy Kingdom Come' lunchtime prayer	noon		
Fr. 2 nd	'Thy Kingdom Come' lunchtime prayer	noon		
Sa. 3 rd	Wedding of Joe and Amelia	14:00		
Su. 4th	Pentecost Holy Communion	8.00	11.15	
	Family Service	9.30		11:15
	Come and Sing Evensong	16.00		
	Discoverers	17.00		
Tu. 6 th	South Stoke Prayer meeting @ Crossways			14:30
We. 7 th	Midweek Holy Communion and coffee	10.30		
	Streatley PCC Meeting 8pm @ Gatehampton Manor			
Sa. 10 th	Wedding of Garry and Olivia			14:00
Su. 11th	Trinity Holy Communion	9.30	8.00 & 11.15	11.15
	Stillness on Sunday		17:30	
We. 14 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
	South Stoke PCC Meeting 8pm @ Crossways			
Th. 15 th	Pick-a-Flick & Lunch - 'A street cat named Bob'	10.30		
Su. 18th	Trinity 1 Holy Communion	8.00	11.15	
	Good News Service	9.30		
	Mattins			11.15
	Discoverers	17.00		
We. 21 st	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
	South Stoke Coffee Morning			10:30
	Goring PCC Meeting 8pm (Canterbury room)			
Fr. 23 rd	Come on Board Scrabble (Canterbury Room)	15.00		
Sa. 24 th	Coffee & Cake (Canterbury Room)	10.30		
Su. 25th	Trinity 2 Holy Communion		8.00	
	Steve Johnson's Ordination 10:30am at Dorchester Abbey			
	Sung Mattins		11.15	
	Music for Reflection	15:00		
Mo. 26 th	Mum's Out Tonight 8pm, 18 Wallingford Road, Goring			
We. 28 th	Midweek Holy Communion	10:30		
	Deanery Synod (Rev Dr McGrath)	19:30		

1st July: Wendy Middleton's Ordination 10am, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford

2nd July: Benefice Family Holy Communion 10:30am followed by celebratory lunch with Steve and Wendy

For more details: call the Vicarage (875651)