

crossstalk

Easter 2006



St. Mary's Church Cogges
making Christ known by word and deed...

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Choose life...

I write to you today on the first day of Lent - having just come back from taking an assembly in The Blake Primary School.

We had great fun together seeing how many times three very willing participants could toss a pancake in thirty seconds. On a Tuesday

night I always wonder where the next idea will come from and by 10 o'clock on Wednesday morning there's always a lightness in my step having spent a great half hour with the children.

Lent - the time when Christians try to engage at a deeper level with Christ's forty days in

the desert without food and water. The tension, for me, has always been between what I ought to 'give up' and what new things I ought to begin - what things I ought to detach myself from and attach myself to - fewer giant chocolate buttons and more prayer - that sort of thing.



The Clergy Team



Vicar:
Revd
Andrew Sweeney



Curate:
Revd
Miriam Keen



NSM:
Revd
Tim Edge



Associate Minister:
Revd
Penny Joyce



The recent statistics charting the alarming rise in credit card debt is frightening and, as is so often the case, it's those who can least afford it who suffer the most. There is no such thing as free credit. There are companies who specialise in enabling the least financially able, often those on benefits, to purchase virtually any household item. Society's attachment to material purchases invariably ends up empowering the few who factor the credit.

Someone once said, *'The best thing about getting old, it has to be said, is that all the things you couldn't have when you were young, you no longer want'.*

The inspirational life of Jesus has much to teach modern society about choices that bring real freedom – he was able to spend forty days with God, apart from the world, only to return and fully integrate himself into it. He shared the pain, the pressures, the

suffering, the cruelty, the admiration, the criticism of the world as one who was truly human. He understood that empowerment required time in his Father's presence – detachment. He also understood that detachment only increased his compassion for the needs of world – attachment.

Paul the Apostle wrote, – 'Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind'. Spiritual growth, such an important dimension to full and rounded lives, is demonstrated by the attitude we have towards this world. Jesus promises liberty for those who recognise their spiritual poverty and Godly dependence – maybe that is the biggest lesson we have to learn from Jesus' time alone with God.

This year we can approach Lent as an opportunity rather than a requirement. After all, it is meant to be the church's

springtime, a time when, out of the darkness of sin's winter, a new and empowered people emerges.

Let me leave you with this prayer for Lent,

Dear Father in heaven, the choice for your way is sometimes hard – please help me to choose the thoughts that are your thoughts, words that are your words and actions that are your actions.

Please, Father, give me strength and courage to live this season faithfully, so that when Easter comes, I will be able to taste with joy the new life you have prepared for me.

Amen.

PS. By the way, 23 tosses of the pancake was the record.

Andrew Sweeney



Cancer Research UK...

Nigel Everett, a member of our congregation recently completed a sponsored abseil down the inside of the London Underwriting Centre in aid of **Cancer Research UK's Bobby Moore Fund**.

The drop was **210 ft** – not for the faint-hearted! Nigel has raised about **£500** so far but you can still donate via:

www.justgiving.com/nigleeverett2006 or by calling me on 779375.



A golden glow...

Imagine a swathe of brightly coloured daffodils along your way as you walk across Langel Common between Cogges and Witney. Such thoughts led some of us at St. Mary's to get busy planting bulbs last October. We enjoyed doing it, and much appreciated the help of a good number of children who were passing by at the time. We hope that those young people, and all our community, will enjoy seeing the results of those activities soon.



Christian Aid...

We were delighted to raise over **£630** from our area of Witney, especially as it was the first time that we had collected on **Madley Park**. Thanks are extended to all those on Madley Park, Blakes Avenue and Eton Close who gave so generously to our collectors. The next **Christian Aid** Collection Week will be **14th - 20th May**.

Building Work at St. Mary's...

The building work will commence on **1st May** 2006 for approximately 12 weeks. For health and safety reasons the contractors insist that there is no public access to the churchyard during working hours, Monday to Friday. We apologise for any inconvenience that this may cause. The Churchyard will be open in the evenings and at weekends.



Easter Egg Hunt around the Madley Park estate April 16th.

Join us on **Sunday 16th April** for a repeat of our most successful Easter egg Hunt around the Madley Park estate.

Start at the school at **3 pm** and follow clues. An Easter egg for all who participate.

This will be followed by craft, tea and games.

Cost £2 per child and all children and toddlers must be accompanied by an adult.

Neighbours...

Since Jesus explained what it was to be a good neighbour with the parable of the "Good Samaritan", the Church has always wanted to be a place where no one is excluded, and where faith is worked out in practice.

We are a large Church, where there are many acts of kindness and sharing of problems, but with size people can be mistakenly overlooked. On the other hand, we are blessed with a congregation which includes those who have special gifts that can be offered to those around us, including the wider community.

"Cogges neighbours" was proposed by the PCC as a group who could work on these issues. Andrew, our Vicar, identified a number from the congregation who have pastoral

sensitivity, and over the past year we have worked together to build up a trained team. This training will continue to be a part of their regular meetings, so that there may be supported responsibility. We now have a pool of about a dozen people who are ready to take on pastoral visiting. Therefore more Parishioners can receive extended pastoral care, as Andrew can suggest to those he visits that named pastoral visitors from the Church might call where appropriate.

Another task of "Cogges Neighbours"

is to run and oversee "Community Forums". Here those with professional care responsibilities across the many agencies that work within the Parish of Cogges can meet to pool ideas and concerns. This has already brought about the planning of youth workers for Cogges and enabled a variety of ideas to be shared between carers, though of course never compromising confidentiality or professional guidelines.

To be a good neighbour is to make sure no one is left out. With these initiatives,

we do not want to replace the existing excellent bonds of neighbourliness and friendships, but to make sure no one is excluded, and to share best ways forward together: that is to love without condition as God first loved us.

Rev'd Tim Edge
Chair of "Cogges Neighbours"



Adventure Plus...



'What am I going to do with the kids for 6 weeks in the summer – sometimes they drive me up the wall' – said (at least) one local mum last summer!

As this is the newsletter from the local church, you'd expect a Christian response!

So that help is: Do unto others as you would want them to do to you. Drive them up the wall – but how to do that? That is where **A+** can help.

Based here in Witney, **A+** has been providing adventure activities for children and young people for the past 10 years, locally at places like Cokethorpe School and Hill End, and further afield in Somerset, North Wales and Scotland.

This summer **A+** will be providing our Total Adventure holidays for 9-12 year olds at Windmill Farm, near Clanfield - a superb residential centre with a purpose-built climbing wall, and is a great venue for other activities such as canoeing, mountain biking, archery, fencing crafts and photography. This is a day camp, but there is a chance to bring your tent and stay over for a BBQ and camp out on the Wednesday night. Sound like fun? It is – Loads of fun!

For 12-17 year olds we will be at the Quinta Centre near Llangollen, where the activities get even more adventurous, and for those who love camping we will be offering an adventure camp under canvas set in beautiful Berkshire deciduous woods, with a full range of adventure activities.

So this summer don't let 'em drive you up the wall, give yourself a well earned break and *let us help them* climb the wall for themselves!



For dates and prices why not call **A+** on 01993 703308, or email enquiries@adventureplus.org.uk

Cogges, Madley Park, South Leigh What's on over Easter?

10th and 12th April 9pm
Service of Compline St. Mary's Church
Late evening prayer

11th April 9pm
Taize Service St. Mary's Church

13th April 7pm
Holy Communion St. James, South Leigh

13th April 6.45 for 7pm
Passover Meal Blake School Hall
All welcome, tickets available from the church office

14th April 10.45am
CTiW Walk of Witness Starting from High St. Methodist Church
An opportunity to come together for a service in the market square

14th April 12 - 2.00pm Exploration of the Easter Story **2.00 - 3pm** Meditation
Good Friday St. Mary's Church
Interactive exploration of the Easter story suitable for the whole family

16th April 6.00am
Easter Dawn Service Priory Paddock
A quiet service of Holy Communion to welcome in Easter Day

16th April 8.00am
Easter Day St. Mary's Church

16th April 9.30am
Family Service St. James, South Leigh
An opportunity for the whole family to celebrate together

16th April 11.00am
Family Communion St. Mary's Church
A opportunity for the whole family to celebrate together

Further details available from Parish Office 01993 779613

Parish News...

Baptisms: Charlotte Elizabeth Cobley
Service of Thanksgiving: Ella Stevens
Funerals: Joan Newell, Kathleen MacCabe, Dennis Pratley, Patrick Salmon, Harry Haley
Memorial Service: Jane Griffiths

2nd April	5th Sunday of Lent	16th April	Easter Day	14th May	5th Sunday of Easter
St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion	St Mary's 6.00am	Holy Communion at Priory Paddock	St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion
St James 9.30am	Morning Prayer	St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion	St James 9.30am	Holy Communion
St Mary's 11.00am	Morning Worship	St James 9.30am	Family Service	St Mary's 11.00am	Holy Communion
St Mary's 6.00pm	Evening Prayer	St Mary's 11.00am	Family Communion	21st May	6th Sunday of Easter
9th April	Palm Sunday	23rd April	2nd Sunday of Easter	St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion
St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion	St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion	St James 9.30am	Family Service
St James 9.30am	Holy Communion	St James 9.30am	Family Communion	St Mary's 11.00am	Family Worship & Baptism
St Mary's 11.00am	Holy Communion	St Mary's 11.00am	Morning Worship	St Mary's on Green 6.00pm	Joint Service
St Mary's 6.00pm	Celebration	30th April	3rd Sunday of Easter	25th May	Ascension Day
13th April	Maundy Thursday	St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion	St Mary's 7.30pm	Holy Communion
St James 7.00pm	Holy Communion	St James 9.30am	Morning Prayer	28th May	7th Sunday of Easter
14th April	Good Friday	St Mary's 11.00am	Morning Worship	St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion
High St Methodist 10.45am	Walk of Witness	7th May	4th Sunday of Easter	St James 9.30am	Morning Prayer
St Mary's 12-2pm	Exploration of the Easter Story	St Mary's 8.00am	Holy Communion	St Mary's 11.00am	Morning Worship
St Mary's 2-3pm	Meditation	St James 9.30am	Morning Prayer		