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THE  WINDOW
News and Views from the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames

Madrid 2019

Bishop Henry Scriven

We first came to Spain in 1984 and worked for the Spanish Anglican Church for 6 years in Salamanca and Madrid. From 1990 till 1995 I was the Chaplain of the British Embassy Church of St George in the centre of Madrid and we left (I must say, very reluctantly) when I was appointed Suffragan Bishop in Europe.

Now that I am retired and a person of leisure (!) I was asked to return to Madrid and do a three month locum when the chaplain left after Christmas. So back to our old haunts, to a few people we knew 24 years ago.

We lived in the flat that the church owns about a mile away from the church in a very fashionable residential area of central Madrid. We were surrounded by many well known 'brand' shops and many bars and restaurants. St George's has a lovely patio with an old fig tree and a vine where we meet after the services and also hold functions like bazaars and book sales. There is a building with an office and a small one bed roomed apartment which is let through Air B&B. The hall is on another side and the church with a small memorial garden is on the other. The services are every Sunday at 8:30, 10:00 and 11:30, each with a distinct and quite loyal congregation. Once a month in the evening we travel one hour up towards the mountains to El Escorial where we have an evening Communion service for a few people who live in that area of greater Madrid. That makes for a busy Sunday!

Coming back to parish life after 24 years of oversight ministry was a bit of a shock but also a great privilege. I was involved in pastoral ministry – counselling, visiting and just being available to all sorts of people who drop by the office – as well as leading worship and preaching. The church is very international and ecumenical. The challenge is to minister to the old timers, many of whom are married to Spaniards or children of 'mixed' marriages, as well as welcoming newcomers who might be visiting or planning to stay for ever. My churchwarden was a young lady whom I not only baptised but also confirmed; she was effectively my boss!

What's the big challenge? As in every church, making disciples and not just church goers.

Bishop Henry is an honorary assistant bishop in this diocese and presides and preaches in the parish.



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download from the
Churches' websites on the
back page

This month in *The Window*

We look backward to the momentous day in the history of St Helen's when the tower was rededicated on May 1, 1886. We also hear about the important work of Christian Aid and details of how money collected during Christian Aid Week helps many of the poorest communities in different parts of the world. Please give generously.

News from the Parish

Holy Week and Easter

This was certainly a busy week in the parish and thanks must go to all the teams who brought all the many services and events together. There was a good attendance across all three churches from far and wide with many local folk and visitors too. Who says the Church of England is dead?

A particular highlight was the St John Passion at St Helen, ably managed by Peter Foster who assembled a large company of musicians and singers to bring together an impressive performance of this significant work.

The Good Friday CiA procession was also a challenge and a witness through a crowded market place.

Annual Meetings

At the ADCMs and APCM, the following wardens were elected:

St Helen's: Linda Hobbs, Geoff Meen

St Michael's: Peter Squire, Joyce Kelly

St Nicolas: Andrew Coker, Paul Last-Rindsell

Clergy news

We are pleased to welcome onto the team of honorary assistant clergy, the Revd Ros Rutherford, who has recently joined us and will be assisting across the parish. The Revd Dr Jane Baun, currently chaplain of Wadham College, Oxford, will also be assisting. It is good to have so many clergy with us.

Congratulations to the Revd Professor John Barton, whose latest book *A History of the Bible: The Book and Its Faiths* ISBN 9780241003916 was published recently by Allen Lane. It has already received several five star reviews including in the *Sunday Times* and *Church Times*. A full review will appear in *The Window* before the summer.

The Dorothy Springer Trust

Peter Penfold, Patron of the Trust

St. Helen's has been supporting the Dorothy Springer Trust (DST) in Sierra Leone over the past four years. Established in 2010, this UK registered charity is changing the lives of disabled people in Sierra Leone through the provision of training scholarships in information and communication technology. DST has trained 72 students to date. One such student is Andrew Lansana.

This is his story-

'I was born in Kenema in Eastern Sierra Leone on 17 August 1990. I contracted polio at the age of 6 months. My mother died when I was 13. Through determination and hard-work I completed my primary and secondary education and graduated from the University of Sierra Leone in Freetown. However, life remained a struggle to acquire the basic needs of life such as food, shelter, clothes or even acceptance within my family and community. Thanks to DST my life has been transformed in so many ways. Following my DST training and with assistance from DST's Employment Bureau, I now have a respected job as an accountant with a leading hotel, the Family Kingdom. I am a proud father of a 5 month baby girl whom I can support and I am now hoping to enrol for my Masters in Public Administration at the university.'



Andrew Lansana with Dr Abdulai Dumbuya



Peter Penfold at the Family Kingdom Hotel

Much of DST's success is due to Dr Abdulai (Abs) Dumbuya, himself a polio victim. He established the Dorothy Springer Trust in grateful memory of the 'anonymous benefactor' who made it possible for him to acquire his doctorate in engineering at Loughborough University and later a senior position with the Transport Research Laboratory in Bracknell before returning to his homeland. He is now seen as a role model for the disabled throughout Africa. Through his efforts and with the support of benefactors such as Easthampstead Baptist Church and St Helen's Church, DST is recognised as one of the leading organisations assisting the disabled in Sierra Leone.

Christian Aid Week 12th to 18th May 2019

Rob King, Christian Aid organiser for St Helen's



Once again, this year around 100 people will be going out during Christian Aid week asking for money from people in their street. Some will be friends or family; many will probably be complete strangers. They won't get paid and they won't keep any of the money they collect, it will all go to Christian Aid. Last year around £7,000 was collected in this way. For many of those collecting it will be because of a strong belief that what they are doing is helping to make a difference to many far less fortunate people. For some it is also to show that they care and are prepared to get out on to the streets and in this case be the human face of Christian Aid in Abingdon.

Where does the money go?

Christian Aid works on many different projects. It is currently tackling many issues around the world, these are just a few:

EqualiTea – Bangladesh

Focus: Enabling 1,000 marginalised tea farmers in northern Bangladesh to join 'producer groups' and take advantage of a growing, high-value market opportunity.

Bigger picture: Tea sales across Bangladesh are growing an average of 14% every year, while production is growing at just 3%. It's one of the few crops that survives in Panchagargh's sandy, acidic soil and in this region alone only 2,800 acres of the potential 40,000 are being used for tea cultivation.

Empowerment through maternal health - Burundi

Focus: Working primarily with Burundi's highly influential faith leaders, in five regions, to challenge the attitudes of religious institutions towards sexual health.

Bigger picture: With 90% church attendance in sub-Saharan Africa, the aim is to influence cultural norms across the country and empower women through improved access to family planning services.

Collective action for adolescent girls – Nigeria

Focus: Tackling the culture of discrimination against women, and especially adolescent girls, in Kaduna state in northern Nigeria. This is being tackled through community groups with a balance of men and women, boy and girls, set up for the purpose of positively influencing cultural stakeholders, including faith leaders.

Bigger picture: By the end of this two-year project, an estimated 300,000 people (5% of the population of Kaduna state) will have been reached with messages promoting the rights of adolescent girls. The state is the third most populated in the country and is considered the most politically and religiously influential area of northern Nigeria. The hope is that approaches established here can be replicated across northern Nigeria, helping to build a wider culture that supports adolescent girls.

Honey hubs – Kenya

Focus: Trialling the use of primary processing honey 'hubs' across four districts in Kenya, providing farmers with central resources where they can access processing facilities, training, buying and marketing services.

Bigger picture: Despite an underserved market for honey in Kenya, small-scale farmers struggle to produce enough good quality honey to sell. Beekeeping is an important source of income for thousands of people living in poverty-stricken arid areas.

Christian Aid is an organisation that channels funds through local community groups and church organisations – but it helps anyone who is poor of any denomination, any faith or no faith. The money raised during Christian Aid week does not go to governments, nor fund individuals; it goes to projects run by these 'partner' groups or organisations. When you get a knock on the door from a Christian Aid collector, please give if you can and if you are a tax payer please fill out the Gift Aid section of the envelope (last year in Abingdon an additional £2000 was raised through gift aid).

Abingdon Celebrations May 1st 1886

Silvia Joinson

Saturday May 1st 1886, the feast of St Philip and St James was a day of celebration in Abingdon for the re-opening of the tower. It is hard to imagine St Helen's without its spire, tower and bells and this was a theme in the bishop's sermon.

'Long the river near at hand had rolled by, and no sound of music was wafted o'er its waters, the river wondered where it was; but when the bells were once more vocal, as they had heard them that day, and the spire should once more throw its shadow over the water, the heart of the river would be gladdened because the work had been completed to the glory of God'

Thirteen years earlier the tower was condemned and the bells silenced because they could not get a certificate saying it was safe to ring them. The tower was found to have subsided and the masonry was cracked which meant the spire might fall down. To remedy this the foundations had been underpinned which in one place required concrete to a depth of thirteen feet. The staircase which had been in a ruinous state was reconstructed with stone from Portland, York and Milton under Wychwood.

Throughout, where practicable old stone had been used. The two circular string courses were new; the spire ended up being a foot taller. The peel of bells had been increased from 8 to 10, with the addition of two new trebles.



On May 1st the church was full; the service began at 11.15 with the entrance of the procession through the west door made up of many local clergy, the bishop, various dignitaries and the Mayor and Corporation preceded by the mace. During the Benedictus the new glass in the baptistery window was consecrated by the bishop. This was in memory of G.L.M. Gibbs, brother of the previous vicar, whose widow was present.

After the service 200 guests attended a lunch in the newly constructed Corn Exchange off the market Place. (now the Pablo lounge) This included toasts and thanks to many who had contributed to the project. One of these was the church's near neighbour J.C. Clarke who had given the workmen the use of a plot of grass. He was the owner of the large clothing factory (now St Helen's Court) and the last MP for the borough.

The town rejoiced and the details are recorded in a pamphlet issued the following Christmas.

What's on in the Parish

Devotional

Thursday 2 May

Moving into Stillness

Circle dancing to music from Taizé
9.45 – 10.45 - St Michael's and All Angels

Saturday 4 May

World Labyrinth Day – Walk at One

12.00 – 14.30 St Michael and All Angels
For people to walk and pray the Labyrinth.
All welcome.
We hope a good number of participants can attend at 1 pm to join the 'Worldwide Walk at One'. Followed by prayers and a simple bread & cheese lunch.

Sunday 5 May

Faith Forum

+TRADITIO+
Personal testimonies of faith seeking understanding
Professor John Barton on Austin Farrer
9.15 – 10.00 Parish Hall at St Helen's
Breakfast from 9.00 am

Tuesday 7 May

Mothers' Union

10.30 - Parish Centre at St Helen's
2019 Theme: Listen, observe, act-in step with God
The Revd Rob Glenns, Vicar of Radley,
Kennington & Sunningwell

Tuesday 28 May

Silent Reflections

19.30 - St Michael and All Angels'
Prayerful activities in the sanctuary with option of coming together to share your journey at the end of the session.

Social

Thursday 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 May

Circle Dancing

11.00-12.00- St Michael's and All Angels
Traditional folk dancing and modern steps in a circle to a variety of music. No prior experience or partner needed. Contact Mary 520608

Friday 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 May

Friday Morning Sale

11.00-13.00 St Nicolas' Church Yard
Produce, baked goods, plants and handicrafts

Tuesday 21 May

St Helen's@lunch

12.00 Savages, GC, Blewbury
No need to book, just turn up. Contact Susan Scott 522960 if you need or can offer a lift.

Wednesday 29 May

Lunch Club

12.30 St Michael's Church Room
Booking essential £5.50
Contact Jane Duce 522591 to book.

If you would like anything included in this Diary, please contact the editors through the email on the front page.

Puzzle Page: Borrowed Animals

Rod Hunt

The following clues are objects, actions, items, expressions, classifications, characteristics etc which use animal names. e.g. tiger lily. The answers may be a word, phrase or compound word and may be noun, verb or adjective.

- | | |
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| <p>1 A sharp chop with the edge of the hand to the back of the neck.</p> <p>2 Weeping or expressions of sorrow that are insincere.</p> <p>3 Speed of something done very slowly, you want done more quickly</p> <p>4 Having the feet turned inwards.</p> <p>5 Stubborn and obstinate.</p> <p>6 Hypothetical connection between distant regions of space-time.</p> <p>7 Workman's short (and mulish) coat.</p> <p>8 Swimming style using circular movements of the arms.</p> <p>9 Mischievous behaviour such as practical jokes.</p> <p>10 Wrinkles etched in the corner of the eyes.</p> <p>11 Massive, huge, tight embrace.</p> <p>12 Frame for drying garments in kitchen or utility room.</p> <p>13 Person habitually active into the small hours.</p> <p>14 A mock trial where law and justice are disregarded.</p> <p>15 An heavy adjustable spanner with large jaws.</p> <p>16 Long period of time during which asset prices consistently rise.</p> <p>17 The bigger of two, or biggest of several portions.</p> <p>18 Small police patrol car originally black (or blue) and white.</p> <p>19 Tournament where each competitor plays in turn against every other.</p> <p>20 Class for boxers who weigh above 115 and up to 118 pounds.</p> <p>21 A very wide-angle lens with a field of vision covering up to 180°.</p> <p>22 Streets used by drivers at peak periods to avoid congestion.</p> <p>23 Where loop of string is woven between fingers to form a pattern.</p> | <p>24 Complete mess or bungle being the unintended consequence.</p> <p>25 Publishing house of inexpensive paperbacks founded in 1935.</p> <p>26 Sprung device with two plates that close to hold papers together.</p> <p>27 Sirius.</p> <p>28 Striped pedestrian passage across busy streets.</p> <p>29 Having large, expressive wide-opened, innocent looking eyes.</p> <p>30 Easily frightened; cowardly (in a cardio sense).</p> <p>31 A fabric pattern of broken checks often in black and white.</p> <p>32 Sausages cooked in batter.</p> <p>33 Physically adroit 'breaker-in-and-enterer'.</p> <p>34 High, round, close-fitting neck on a knitted garment.</p> <p>35 Foolish, hopeless search for or pursuit of something unattainable .</p> <p>36 Expression meaning a problem/difficulty no one wants to discuss .</p> <p>37 Unnoticed observer of a particular situation (often a wish to be).</p> <p>38 Grumman F9F, U S Navy's first successful carrier-based jet fighter.</p> <p>39 Person of very straight, slender form and moving in a sinuous way.</p> <p>40 One trained in scuba diving in a tactical or work-capacity.</p> <p>41 Intentionally ambiguous or misleading statements or sentiments.</p> <p>42 A sharp bend in a road, route, race or course.</p> <p>43 A loop formed by a horseshoe bend in a river.</p> <p>44 Rubber encased reflectors used in road marking for night safety.</p> <p>45 Hairstyle where hair is pulled together & banded to hang at the back.</p> |
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Answers to last month's puzzles:

1. 5π 2. $3/8$ 3. 25π

For the methods see Catriona's twitter feed @Cshearer41

Services in May 2019

Divine Service at St Helen's Church, West St Helen's St

Morning Praise	09.15	Second Sunday with the opportunity to give thanks for new babies.
Sung Eucharist	10.30	Every Sunday with Junior Church
Morning Prayer	09.10	Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays)
Evening Prayer	17.10	Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays)
Junior Church	10.30	Sunday – starts in Church
Wednesday Church	10.30	Every Wednesday. Holy Communion in Church followed by refreshments.

Divine Service at St Michael and All Angels', Park Road

Family Mass	09.30	First Sunday of the month, with Thanksgiving and Welcome
Sung Mass	09.30	Every Sunday
Thursday Mass	12.30	Every Thursday followed by a light lunch
Tues Said Mass	19.30	Every Tuesday except the last one.
Silent Reflections	19.30	The final Tuesday evening of the month

Divine Service at St Nicolas' Church, Market Place

Holy Communion 1662	08.00	Sundays in May (June at St Helen's)
Morning Prayer	11.15	(Matins) 1 st Sunday in the month
Holy Communion	11.15	2 nd and 4 th Sundays with Junior Church
Third Sunday Service	11.15	A short, less formal Service on 3 rd Sundays
Family Communion	11.15	5 th Sundays in the month
Junior Church	11.15	2 nd and 4 th Sundays

Sunday Evening Services 17.30 at St Helen's Church

5 May	No evening service
12 May	Taizé
19 May	Choral evensong
26 May	No evening service

**Parish Communion for Ascension
Day: Thursday 30 May**
St Nicolas' Church
7pm

The services and events listed here are correct at the time of going to press – please consult the weekly Pewsheets or Newsletter if in doubt, or see the online version of The Window on the websites below.

To arrange baptisms, weddings and funerals contact the Parish Office.
Clergy are available in the Parish Office between 19.00 - 20.00 on Wednesdays.
Please call the office to book an appointment.

Team Rector: The Revd Dr Charles Miller

Team Vicar: The Revd Paul Smith

Associate Priests: The Revd Mary Williamson
The Revd Jennifer Brown

Directors of Music: Dr Peter Foster (St H), Glynne Butt, Graham Howell (St M)

Parish Administrator: Mrs Jenny Balshaw

Parish Office: St Helen's Court, Abingdon, OX14 5BS
01235 520144

Normal opening hours 10.00 to 13.00 weekdays, except Thursdays – closed

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