

Around The Spire



Saint James' Church *FREE* magazine for the
parishioners of Quedgeley & Kingsway



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Keeping a Holy Lent

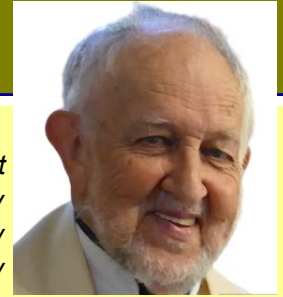
The Venerable David Sutch TD

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Issue 98

February 2024

From the Editor...



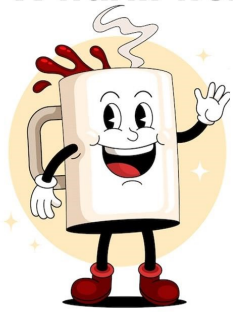
Welcome to this month's edition of **Around the Spire**. The magazine aims to interest all those living within the Quedgeley & Kingsway communities. This month we have a variety of articles. Fr. Gordon reviews Caroline Meek's recently published book about the Quedgeley & Kingsway area. We have an assortment of photos from the Tea@2 Christmas Party, Messy Christmas and Christmas Fayre and an interesting community article from the Q Club. If you have a story to tell or would like to submit an article that you think may be of interest to our readers, drop me a line at hugh.broad@yahoo.co.uk

Enjoy the magazine!

Fr. Hugh

A warm welcome awaits you!

at



Tea@2

Wednesday

2.00pm- 4.00pm

Tea/Coffee Bingo

Home made cake Quiz

Assortment of refreshments

£3.00 per person

Services at Saint James' Church Quedgeley

You are warmly invited to...

Morning Prayer - 9.15am daily during term time

Holy Communion - Wednesday 10.00am

Holy Communion - Sunday 10.30AM except for the first Sunday in the month when said Communion is at 9.15am.

STJ'S Family Service - First Sunday in the month 10.30am



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Out & About with the Revd. Mark



This 'Out and About' is a chance to reflect on the great joy of carol singing. Few ancient practices have avoided taking on some of the stuffiness that can accumulate around traditions like carols have. It was a joy to sing after the tills in Tesco's before Christmas and to be joined by any who wanted to sing along. The St James choir gave a backbone to our singing and kept us on track and many just stopped for a minute or so - a carol or two - as they completed their Christmas. Smiles, love and joy all round.



A different and equally special experience of carols took place as a band of us moved from Waterwells into Kingsway stopping and singing carols at the new homes in that area. It was a privilege to take this centuries old but still life-giving tradition around these new homes for the first time ever. Thank you to Revd Gordon and Sylvia for hosting with help from Fr. Ian and Jill. Thank you to all who sang and to the Barn Owl pub who hosted our final round of carols on a dark and damp December evening.



The Venerable David Sutch TD

TO KEEP A TRUE LENT

(spelling in Olde Englishe)

Is this a fast, to keep the larder leane?
And cleane from fat of veales and sheep?

Is it to quit the dish of flesh, yet still
to fill the platter high with fish?

Is it to faste an houre, or ragged to go,
or show a downcast look, and sowre?

No: 'tis a fast, to dole thy sheaf of wheat
and meat unto the hungry soule

It is to fast from strife, from old debate,
and hate, to circumcise thy life.

To shew a heart grief-rent; to starve thy sin,
not bin; and that's to keep thy Lent.

Robert Herrick

Fast from criticism; feast on praise.
Fast from self-pity; feast on joy.
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.
Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence.
Fast from jealousy; feast on love.
Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.
Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.
Fast from selfishness; feast on service.
Fast from Fear; feast on faith.
Fast from anger; feast on patience.
Fast from concern; feast on compassion from others.
Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.
Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.

The February Hymn Quiz

Many of the hymns we sing at St James are familiar, but I wonder how often we appreciate the poetry in them? Below you will find selected lines from verses of more hymns and songs we sing.

Can you identify, from the extracts below, the first lines of each of the hymns or songs the words relate to? You will find the authors (in brackets) to give you a clue.

February

The Lord has promised good to me, his word my hope secures (John Newton)

All our efforts are nothing worth unless God blesses the deed (A C Ainger)

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove (Isaac Watts)

He comes the broken hearts to heal, the pris'ners to free (G Kendrick)

O let me hear thee speaking in accents clear and still (J E Bode)

Angels bow down before you, worship and adore (Mavis Ford)

Chris Baldwin



From the Editor's Desk by our Editor Fr. Hugh Broad



WHAT MAKES YOUR EDITOR TICK?

Readers will be well aware by now that from this February a new chapter is opening for your Editor!

So what does the really mean, as some of you have been asking!

The first point to make is that I will still have quite a big part to play in the life of this lovely parish of St James, catering as it does for Quedgeley and Kingsway with its host of activities of all kinds to cater for some 27,000 population.

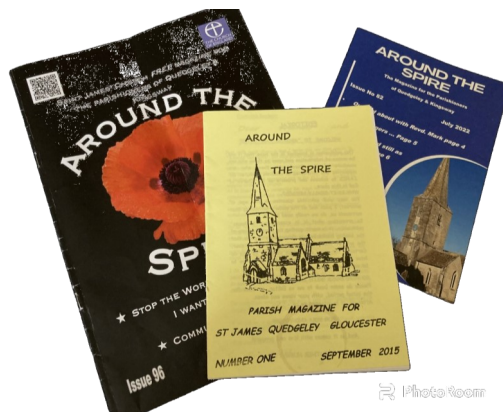
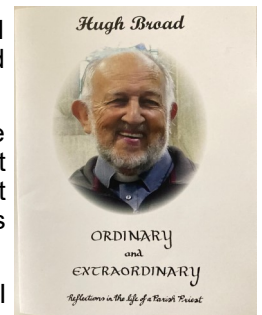
Now in my mid eighties and somewhat unsteady on my feet, it was high time to take stock, and with the help of Bishop Robert who takes care of us retired clergy and support of Revd Mark our parish priest, I will now take less involvement in the conduct of worship, specially on Sunday mornings. For me and for many priests, the heart of our spiritual life is to celebrate the Holy Eucharist - you may know this as the Mass or Holy Communion. I am so pleased that I shall still be able to conduct this on Wednesday mornings on a rota with the other priests.

But the life of the priest is of course far more than that! The life of personal prayer - Morning and Evening Prayer is in some form a big part of our own spiritual life and all this leads to in a regular pattern of prayer - for loved ones; the life of the Church; all the needs which we see all too clearly, and for ourselves.

For me, I am an avid reader and always have a couple of books on the go, some of which I have read again and again, some for the first time. If you see the book lined shelves and contents, you would see what I mean.

Following from that comes my love of writing on all sorts of our life and faith. I have no pretence of being an author, but some will have read my biography - Ordinary and Extraordinary - a print run of 150 came a real surprise and a new edition is a present consideration. Others are leaflet forms on various subjects where people have expressed real interest - one on Prayer which is asked for by some of the non-churchgoers, I deliver this magazine too.

At the heart of what makes me tick, as you may have guessed, is AROUND THE SPIRE! I started this 98 issues ago at the suggestion of Father John the parish priest at the time. It was my aim from the start that this should be a community publication and not just a church magazine, and that it should be FREE. This has been made possible by some very generous donors.



We began the journey in 2015, now nine years later we produce the mag A4 size and distribute over 250 copies. Plus it is advertised on the web and viewed in many different countries.

I will share more about *Around the Spire* in another issue.

So that, dear readers, is just something about what makes me tick!

None of it would be possible without the support of my dear wife Jackie and our family. It all makes for a life to be cherished and to thank God for!

So this comes with love and many prayers!

FATHER HUGH

- as I have been known for the last half a century!



Through the lens...



There is a saying 'A picture is worth a thousand words'. Certainly any professional photographer will agree as they try to capture the rare and sensational moments.

At Saint James' we don't have many 'sensational' moments. However, a rare and very significant event took place on Sunday 13th January, when Fr. Hugh hung up his Sunday robes for the last time.

Fr. Hugh officially retired many years ago. Although judging from his work load in the past years, not many would have guessed that he is 'retired'. So it was a bittersweet moment, amongst the congregation, when it finally happened.

A member of the congregation who has attended the church for many years sat thoughtfully and then said '*He's a wonderful guy, I'll miss his sermons but at least he'll get more time to himself*'. Another remarked '*It's a sad day, when one of my parents died he was amazing, compassionate and caring couldn't have asked for more*'. One of the congregation who hasn't been with us very long commented, that he is a lovely man who always greets her by name.

It's apparent from the comments not only from the congregation but further afield that Fr. Hugh is loved and highly respected by all those who have been privileged to meet him. We are lucky in that Fr. Hugh will still be joining us on a Sunday, as a member of the congregation. The good news is that he still hopes to officiate at celebrating the Eucharist on a Wednesday morning and continue in his role as Editor of the parish magazine.

So Fr. Hugh, enjoy your 'semi-retirement' and Thank you for all you've done and continue to do.



"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"

(WORDS OF JESUS FROM JOHN 10:10)

'Lights in their own generation' Fr. Ian Robb



Christian men and women who led the way and reflected the light of Christ in their own day; we give thanks for them in the month ahead:

1st February: Brigid, Abbess of Kildare. Born in the 5th century, baptised by St Patrick, and called to be a nun and then eventually Abbess of the monastery at Kildare. By her prayers and holiness of life she influenced the formation of the Church throughout Ireland, where she is, with Patrick, the patron saint.

2nd February: The Presentation of Christ in the temple. It is 40 days since the birth of Jesus: Mary & Joseph present him as the first-born to God. The prophet Simeon declares him to be "The light to enlighten both Jews and Gentiles". In her heart Mary knows that her life will have pain and joy in equal measure.

3rd February: Anskar, Apostle of the North. A French monk who died in 865. He was called to minister in north Germany, Denmark, & Sweden. He was notable for speaking out against slavery and was an advisor to the kings of Denmark, where he is now patron saint.

10th February: Scholastica, Abbess of Plombariola. Sister of St Benedict, born in 480. She too gave her life to Christ and when Benedict became abbot of Monte Casino, she settled nearby at Plombariola where she founded a nunnery based on the rule of life compiled by Benedict.

17th February: Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda. Originally trained as a teacher, Janani was called to the priesthood and was ordained in 1956, becoming bishop of Northern Uganda in 1969 and Archbishop of Uganda in 1974. He was prominent in opposing the undemocratic and harsh rule of Idi Amin, which he believed was in contradiction of the Christian way of life – this led to him being murdered on the president's instructions. We honour him as a martyr for the faith he held dear.

23rd February: Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. Honoured as one of the earliest Christian martyrs. He had been Bishop of Smyrna on the western coast of what is now Turkey for over 40 years when the persecution of Christians began. Following his arrest he was given the chance to renounce his faith and save his life; he answered: "I have been Christ's servant for eighty-six years and he has done me no harm; can I now blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" He was immediately burnt at the stake. His congregation buried his remains outside the city walls and promised to celebrate the Eucharist on his anniversary. He died in 155AD.

27th February: George Herbert, priest 1593 – 1633. After graduating from Cambridge, George was appointed Public Orator to the university and then a member of Parliament. He seemed destined for a life at court, but instead offered himself for ordination and was made deacon in 1626, and ordained priest in 1630. He was appointed vicar of Bemerton, near Salisbury where he spent the rest of his life. He was a prolific writer, his hymns being especially popular. His major work "The Country Parson" was widely-read and his collection of poetry, "The Temple", earned him a leading place in English literature. He encouraged attendance at the Sunday Eucharist and also at the weekday recitation of Morning and Evening Prayer: as he wrote, "Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise thee."

The Season of Lent this year begins on 14 th February – Ash Wednesday – when we remember Jesus' time of preparation for his earthly ministry, a time which he spent away from the distractions of daily life so that he could concentrate on building up the vital relationship with his heavenly Father. Following his example, Lent is now for us a time of preparation for the great events of Holy Week and the joyous feast of Easter.

Watch & Pray

Service in church at 10.00am

Ash Wednesday
Wednesday February 14th



The beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday falls on February 14th this year and coincides with St. Valentine's Day. The Ash Wednesday service will take place as usual at 10.00am at Saint James' Church.



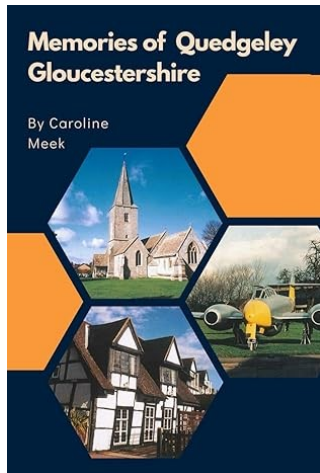
This month Fr. Gordon reviews

Caroline Meek's book

Memories of Quedgeley



Memories of Quedgeley Gloucestershire by Caroline Meek (Kindle Direct Publishing £12.00 ISBN: 9798862693004)



Caroline Meek is the author of this wonderful new book about Quedgeley. She writes with the authority of, not only someone who was born, went to school, married and has lived all of her life here, but someone who has lived at the heart of that community, and been personally involved in many of the events she writes about. It is her personal reminiscence.

She starts by setting Quedgeley in its geographical and historical context and follows up by writing about significant events in it's growth from a largely rural and Farming community, with an important basket making industry, to it's being an important retail, commercial and dormitory, and, seeing as we now have a town council, I must describe as our town today.

She tells us of the principal buildings that have been found here – St James Church being the oldest and described in loving detail, the Quedgeley Estates, The National Filling Factory #5, where up to 6000 people worked during the Great War, 57 year history of RAF Quedgeley, the Village Hall, the Methodist Church, Health Centre and Severnvalle Shopping Centre.

She doesn't duck from a couple of minor controversies – the Housing Estate built on the site of RAF Quedgeley being named as 'Kingsway' and not 'Manor Farm' as voted for by the people of Quedgeley. As a Kingsway resident I quite like the idea of living on the poignant pathway taken by King Edward II from the scene of his murder at Berkeley Castle to his final resting place in St Peter's Priory – now Gloucester Cathedral. But the renaming of the pub outside Tesco's from the locally inspired 'The Basket Maker' to the ever so bland 'Haywain' was surely wrong.

Caroline tells the stories of many community clubs and organizations which provide much of the glue to our community. The Mothers Union, WI, Youth Club, Scouts and Brownies, Infant Welfare Clinic and - at the opposite end of the age scale – the Golden Age Club.

She finally writes about a number of well known local personalities who have helped to make this community what it is today. Many of whom will be fondly remembered by those who knew them.

The story could be described as a Love Letter to Quedgeley; it is a stimulating read and is accompanied by no less than 109 fascinating illustrations.

I commend Caroline's book to you. If you have lived in Quedgeley a long time it will give you much to recall. If, like me, you are a 'comer in' you will learn much about the community that you are now part of.

You can obtain the book from Amazon or from the Author.

Fr. Gordon

Creation Care, ECO-systems or EGO-systems From Revd. Mark



When we think of the prefix 'eco' we might think of 'economics' or we might think of 'ecology'. That term 'eco' has the same route in both and that is 'oikos', which means household. Eco-NOMICS means the laws which govern the behaviour of the household. Eco-LOGY means the study of the household.

The study of the household (ecology) leads to a more accurate and precise understanding of the laws that govern the household (economy). These two disciplines are ultimately one and the same thing. As we better understand the ecology of our planet, so the economy of our world also adapts. Why doesn't this always happen?

Well I wonder if this comes down to the logic of the household versus the logic of ego and individual power. This is a competition not of ecology and economy, which are ultimately one and the same thing but a competition between ECO-nomy and EGO-nomy.



As a Christian, the term 'I am' only makes sense in relation to the Creation around me - other people, other creatures and all the Created world, I understand myself as a member of 'household of Creation'. I am an ECO-nomist. The alternative is to be purely interested in myself with no interest in others, to be an EGO-nomist.

Frankly I do not find myself as interesting as I find others and the World around me. What are you 'ECO-nomist' or 'EGO-nomist'?

Artificial Intelligence - making it work for you!

The Venerable David Sutch TD



Over Christmas with my eldest Son who is a professor at Cardiff University and who mentioned the use of Artificial Intelligence the students use to write their essays, and with his future Son in Law who uses AI at work, I asked for the link as follows

User

Write a 10 minute sermon based on the Beatitudes

ChatGPT

Title: "**Blessed are the Heartful: Living the Beatitudes in Today's World**"

Good morning/afternoon/evening, dear friends. Today, let's delve into the timeless wisdom of the Beatitudes found in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 5. These profound teachings from Jesus offer a roadmap for living a life deeply rooted in compassion, humility, and love.

1. **Blessed are the Poor in Spirit:** In a world that often glorifies wealth and success, Jesus calls us to recognize our spiritual poverty. It's an invitation to humility, acknowledging our dependence on God. Let us find richness in our dependence on the Divine, and in doing so, cultivate empathy for those facing material and spiritual poverty.

2. **Blessed are Those who Mourn:** Mourning is a universal human experience. It's a reminder that in times of sorrow, we are not alone. Jesus encourages us to find solace in God's comforting embrace and to extend that comfort to others. Our shared sorrows can unite us and lead to collective healing.

3. **Blessed are the Meek:** Meekness is often misunderstood as weakness. Yet, it's a call to gentleness and humility. In a world that celebrates power and dominance, Jesus urges us to embrace meekness, fostering understanding and cooperation rather than asserting ourselves over others.

4. **Blessed are Those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness:** As followers of Christ, we are called to be passionate seekers of justice and righteousness. Let us strive for a world where everyone has enough, where justice prevails, and where God's righteousness guides our actions.

5. **Blessed are the Merciful:** In a culture that can be quick to judge, Jesus calls us to embody mercy. Let our hearts be open to forgiveness, understanding, and compassion. As we receive mercy, may we extend it to others, creating a ripple effect of grace.

6. **Blessed are the Pure in Heart:** Purity of heart goes beyond outward actions; it involves the motives and intentions behind our deeds. Let our hearts be free from malice, filled with love, and dedicated to God. A pure heart allows us to see God's presence in every aspect of our lives.

7. **Blessed are the Peacemakers:** In a world marked by conflict, Christ calls us to be agents of peace. Let us bridge divides, heal wounds, and work towards reconciliation. Peacemaking requires courage, but it is through this pursuit that we reflect the very nature of God.

8. **Blessed are Those who are Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake:** Standing for righteousness may lead to challenges and persecution. Yet, Jesus reminds us that such difficulties are not in vain. They bear witness to our commitment to truth and justice. Let us endure with faith, knowing that God's kingdom is our ultimate destination.

In closing, as we strive to embody these Beatitudes, may we be a source of light and hope in the world. Let us remember that living out these teachings is a continuous journey, and through God's grace, we can become vessels of love and blessings to those around us. Amen.

David Sutch

On our doorstep — Community news from the area

From service to smiles, we welcome you!



If you aren't familiar with us, we're the Q-Club community centre and we are just a stone's throw away from St. James Church, you can't miss us!

As an integral part of Quedgeley, we focus on bringing people together to grow and learn, thus creating a happy, safe haven for everyone. It is also our responsibility to bestow opportunities for engagement and provide a space for you, the local people of Quedgeley, to use our facilities as a focal point for you and your needs.

That's why our community hub is a salient outlet for our youth, as well as a number of local businesses who, fortunately for us, provide the Q-Club with an assortment of homemade cakes, brownies, and pastries - which we're sure you'll agree, if you've had the pleasure of tasting before, are absolutely delicious.

Just before the COVID-19 pandemic, we were incredibly lucky to receive a grant from the Big Lottery Fund, presented by the then mayor, Steve Morgan, and Quedgeley Community Trust representative, Graham Smith. Since then, we have been able to allow parents, carers, and grandparents to get the most out of our centre with our amazing soft play area, letting their little ones go wild and making unforgettable memories for all involved.

If you haven't already, give us a follow over on our Facebook social media page for regular updates on events and, you may even get to see special previews of new cakes in our café! <https://www.facebook.com/QClubQuedgeley>

Opening times:

Monday-Wednesday: 9:15am – 2:00pm

Saturday: 9:00am – 12:30pm



Theresa Fisher our Community Champion at Tesco certainly ensures that 'Every little helps'. She has been working tirelessly since the end of November preparing and planning fund raising activities and charity events to run over the Christmas period. Does she ever sleep we ask?

To name a few activities that Theresa has helped to support:

Linc - Leukaemia & Intensive Chemofund, Gloucester Children's Christmas Party, Teens in Crisis, Teckels, Gloucester Bundles and Stonehouse Rotary.

She also attended and read a lesson at the annual Carol Service at St. James' Church and invited the choir to sing at Tesco, one evening.

We understand that Theresa did take Christmas Day off to spend with her family but is now planning her next set of fund raising activities for the New Year.

Well done Theresa and thank you for all that you do for the many organisations in Quedgeley and beyond.



Rotary Stonehouse



On our doorstep — Community news from the area

Adrian Whereat is an amateur photographer. He can often be seen with his camera along the Gloucester Sharpness canal. He has taken some rather stunning photographs of the Kingfisher that appears to reside somewhere between Elmore and Sims Lane Bridges. If you happen to be walking along this stretch and see Adrian say 'Hello'. There's a wealth of wildlife up and down the canal bank and it's great that it can be captured through the lens of a camera.



QUEDGELEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

There is plenty for our WI to look forward to in 2024 but this year will be slightly different as we will be hearing from the speakers at the beginning of the meeting instead of after the business. January sees the return of Paul Murphy on the life of Sid James, February is our 99th Birthday Supper and in March we will hear from a Community Social Health Advisor. April will be another visit from Kate and Angela Peake with their talk on Costumes of the Victorian Seaside and May means Resolutions and a Social Evening. In June our speaker will be the Rev. Mark Siddall on life as a Scientist and Priest and July will be Fraud Awareness and Advice. August is our annual outing then back to normal for September with a talk on Coloured Gemstones and in October we will hear from Morgan Tabis from Sohootiful who will be bringing at least one owl with her.

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

If anyone is interested in these talks, either as a visitor or new member they will be made very welcome. We meet at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of every month in Quedgeley Village Hall. More details can be found on our website www.quedgeleywi.co.uk or facebook.com/quedgeleywi.

Fund Raiser for Families in Ukraine Saturday 3rd February 10.00am – 12.00 noon

In St. James' Church Refreshments, Stalls, Raffle - Everyone Welcome!



Pause for Prayer

Every morning at 9.15am

During term time.

Pop in after the school run

Join Revd. Mark in Morning Prayer

STJ's Family fun, laughter,
and worship, snacks, coffee
Tea afterwards.

1st Sunday in every month 10.30am



0800 804 8044
DailyHOPE

A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

News from Field Court Infant Academy

At Field court Infant Academy the Reception class produced some excellent work. They were awarded their Golden certificates. Well done to everyone!



The pre-school have had an exciting couple of weeks too. Winter finally arrived at Little Explorers! They rescued penguins and sea animals from ice, explored a winter wonderland small world, created beautiful winter pictures, and made ice balls! They learnt about how things melt and have used tools safely.



Year 1 had a brilliant first day back. They were introduced to the new writing text 'Leo and the Octopus' where they learnt facts about the underwater creature and made an octopus to hang on the classroom ceiling. This was lots of fun!



Since its inception in 1907, the Scouting movement has supported generations of children across the globe. It has taught them life-long skills and built on community values, so that they can make a positive contribution to society. Sir David Attenborough, David Beckham, Sir Tony Blair, Sir John Major, Neil Armstrong, Barack Obama, Mariah Carey and Taylor Swift, are but a handful of famous people who once proudly wore the universally known fleur-de-lis badge.

From its headquarters on School Lane in Quedgeley, the 48th Gloucester Quedgeley (St James and Kingsway) Scout Group uses a combination of indoor activities, outdoor adventuring (including an Austrian Scout Camp over Summer 2024) and volunteering initiatives to help the local community and our children accomplish ambitions. The Group's success is evidenced through its ever-increasing waiting list for new joiners and a demand that has led to the establishment of a second Scout Troop as well as plans to open a new 'Squirrels' troop; which will open up scouting opportunities to children from the age of 4.

For further details on scouting, please visit <https://www.scouts.org.uk/>. Should any person be interested in volunteering and supporting the 48th Gloucester Quedgeley Scout Group, as a leader, or on an ad hoc basis, please contact Michelle Norris (michellenorris.cubscouts@gmail.com).



GLOUCESTER 'FEED THE HUNGRY'

For the six weeks running up to Christmas, we as a Church were collecting items for this charity which is based in the city centre as a charity based on the needs of the homeless and others in urgent need.

We managed to collect 8 full boxes of foodstuffs and 2 large boxes of new underwear.

On December 18th Ian Pearce and myself delivered all these to the Food Bank premises in Eastgate Street where it was very well received.

I would like to thank everyone for their kind contributions and Ian Pearce for his help with the heavy lifting and transport.

A thank you letter from the Charity can be seen on the church noticeboard.

JACKIE BROAD





Thank you for reading your local council's news which is our first insert since Christmas and the New Year which all feels a long time ago now!

We now move into the more serious part of the year where the annual budget is set for the forthcoming financial year. A time for thinking about what we've achieved so far and further aspirations that will benefit the community. A time for considering what we already do and how we manage current expectations against an ever challenging budget and resources. With this in mind the draft budget will be considered on 19th February and we welcome anyone within the community to contact the council should they have any comments they might wish to make beforehand.

On a lighter note we welcome two new members of staff, our litter wardens, one covering Kingsway and one covering the Fieldcourt area. If you see them around please do say hello. One of our councillors, Janet Weston was awarded her 5 year long service award last month. Well done Janet and many thanks for your loyal service.

Work on Druids Oak Play area has commenced, despite the very cold and challenging weather. We hope that by the time you come to read this, this project will have finished or certainly close to finishing and ready for use in the Spring by our younger generation.

You will be aware that this council is very proud of the fact that we hold the Gold Status in the Local Council's long service award scheme. The time has come for us to be reassessed as this happens every 4 years to ensure that we continue to meet the standards necessary to hold this level. Our application has been submitted and we will find out in April whether we have been successful.

And finally, by now we are sure you are aware of our latest initiative, a Community Pantry. Our councillor leading this is Cllr Vicky Ranford who in turn has set up a facebook page purely for this project. She can be located on Facebook by putting in Victoria.ranford@quedgeley.town.councillor. Her aim is to provide our local community with a place to go if in need. She has already identified a room at Kingsway Sports Pavilion which with the help of local grants, has fitted the room out with a fridge/freezer/shelving etc. She has also been overwhelmed by local people wanting to volunteer to run the pantry. More definite details are yet to come, however needless to say this will be up and running very shortly and is a real example of what we expect of our councillors in working with the community.



As you can see the council continues to remain visible and proactive for the benefit of our local residents and yet we still have 2 vacancies. Therefore if you feel that you have something to offer and wish to join the council please contact the clerk on Office@quedgeley-tc.gov.uk

The Town Council Office is situated in the same retail park as Matalan so please do pop in and meet your friendly town council staff. Our normal opening times are Mondays – Fridays, 9.30am – 2.30pm. We are also available on email, Office@quedgeley-tc.gov.uk or you can visit our website on [Quedgeley Town Council](http://QuedgeleyTownCouncil.gov.uk)

[Council \(quedgeley-tc.gov.uk\)](http://quedgeley-tc.gov.uk).



The Town Council Office is situated in the same retail park as Matalan so please do pop in and meet your friendly town council staff. Our normal opening times are Mondays – Fridays, 9.30am – 2.30pm. We are also available on email, Office@quedgeley-tc.gov.uk or you can visit our website on [Quedgeley Town Council \(quedgeley-tc.gov.uk\)](http://QuedgeleyTownCouncil.gov.uk).



Quick Quiz — Where are we this month?

Look at the photo on the left. Where will you see this sculpture?

Answers next month!

What I am praying about ... Revd. Mark

You know in one way we are all exactly like children. No matter what age we are, every one of us is getting used to being that age. When we had children I had to throw out so much of how I understood the world and begin again. As a dad I was in a brand new phase of life. Right through life there are challenges that return us to the first steps of a brand new journey. Like the children moving from the small pond of primary school to the large pond of secondary school and then on to work or university.



Even as we get older and retire, constantly 'everything is made new'. That word 'retire' though is deceptive and many of us give so much in early retirement. Perhaps though in retirement there are many new stages and things to get used to. Becoming a grandparent, the death of loved ones, our own children reaching adulthood. All of these things are brand new experiences to us, experiences in which in so many ways we are just like children, moving from primary to secondary school. A story of gain and loss, of pain and healing, struggle and acceptance.

As I work and live in this community of love here in Quedgeley, my prayer is for all of us living and working and praying through all these changes. Whatever stage we are at, God is with us and I thank Him and pray for his grace and mercy for all of us, His adopted children in Christ. AMEN.

Tea@2



We had a good attendance at the start of the year. Home made cakes, biscuits, crisps and scones were on offer. There were copious cups of coffee and tea being served. If you'd like to join us on a Wednesday afternoon we start at 2.00pm. There is a lively quiz also a chance to win a prize at Bingo. The cost of the afternoon is £3.00. So don't be shy pop along, meet the crowd and make new friends.



The ability to help someone else, is a wonderful feeling.

Are you starting the New Year thinking about volunteering for a local charity?

HOME START
Stroud and Gloucester

- Help others to overcome their challenges and flourish
- Share your experiences and knowledge, as well as gain some new along the way
- Be a part of a rewarding charity and make a difference within your community

Could you spare 2/3 hrs a week or even a month to help a family with young children?

Our new FREE volunteer training course starts in February.

For more details visit our website, scan the barcode OR email: enquiries@homestartsd.org OR call 01453 297470

HOME START
Stroud and Gloucester

HOME START
Stroud and Gloucester

POSTNATAL GROUP SUPPORT

BEST START

FREE 6 WEEK GROUP WITH HELPFUL WEEKLY TOPICS FOR MUMS & DADS
(Getting to know baby, Sleep, First Aid, Teething, Introducing solid foods, Baby massage, Play ideas)

Come and chat to other parents with babies aged 0-6 months in a relaxed environment and get up-to-date advice, reassurance and support with your baby's development whilst sharing your parenting experiences.

[f @homestartstroudandgloucester](https://www.facebook.com/homestartstroudandgloucester) groups@homestartsd.org www.homestartsd.org



For our younger readers

A picture for you to colour. Ash Wednesday falls on Wednesday February 14th this year. It is the first day of Lent, it marks the first day when Christian people will make self-sacrifices or give things up until the beginning of Easter. Many Christians attend an Ash Wednesday service at their church. During this service the priest or minister may rub the sign of the cross on their foreheads using ashes. The ashes represent mourning and repentance. Sometimes the ashes are gathered from the burning of the palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday.



STJ's Follow the star and launching rockets

At STJ's in January we followed the star along with the three wise men (Magi). Only this time the youngsters decided to do it with a difference and launch their own rockets! The service was great fun and no one got wet, although one or two members of the congregation decided to bring in a brolly—just in case. The service concluded with the usual yummy snacks and drinks.



November & December News...



Our Tea@2 Christmas Party took place on December 13th. Many thanks to Field Court Infant Academy who joined us and sang some well known Christmas songs. Also to Father Christmas who took time out to distribute gifts to pupils and our Tea@2 crowd.

Messy Christmas...



It was a busy afternoon at **Messy Christmas**. There were around 70 children and their parents and carers. A variety of activities were on offer to keep the youngsters occupied including 'donkey rides' kindly provided by Revd. Mark, decorating Star shaped biscuits, making paper holly wreaths and star decorations. The catering team once again pulled out all the stops. A huge 'Thank You' to all who supported us in this venture.

Our next messy event will be during the school Easter break. Watch this space for more information of this coming event.

More news in brief...



Our latest addition to Saint James' worshipping congregation is adorable baby Micah. Micah was born during November to Jess and Corey. He is now becoming a regular attendee. Proud grandparents Lu and Ian Pearce are always on hand to give support, although Micah seems quite contented and happy in his new surroundings.

Carol Singing at Tesco's



Our annual tradition of carol singing at Tesco took place on 14th December when the choir of Saint James' sang carols for about 1hr. We also collected over £100 towards the up keep of Saint James' Church. Harvey Phelps came into Tesco with his Mum, but couldn't help but join in. Well done Harvey.

Christmas Fayre



Our Christmas Fayre raised well over £2,000 many thanks to all those who supported us either by volunteering to man the stalls, helping in the kitchen, getting the hall ready or clearing away. Whatever you did it contributed to the success.

And finally ...



Prospect Training and Q Club have partnered with Quedgeley Community Trust to offer a warm and welcoming space for anyone who may need it. Free Wi-Fi is available and drinks will be subsidised by QCT making coffee and hot chocolate at £1.00 a cup of tea at 50p. To learn more, contact Richard on 01452 542590 or via email at richardb@prospect-training.org.uk



For more information click on <https://gloucestermensshed.weebly.com/>



Covenant Sunday 21st January 2024

From the 18th –25th January The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place. The church was packed out as our friends from the Quedgeley Methodist Church and their minister the Revd. Dr. John McNeil joined us as we shared their Covenant Service, renewing our covenantal relationship with our Lord.

Two younger members of the congregation took part in the service, by reading the gospel and verses from the bible. They both read very well and shows we have up and coming talent in our congregation!



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