
CROSSPIECE



The Parish Magazine of St James's Church, Cambridge

May, June, July 2021

Issue No.104



From Good Friday

..... to Easter Day



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Words from the Vicarage

Dear Readers

Back in April 2020 when it became obvious that we were going to be living in a lockdown scenario for more than a few weeks I undertook to better myself, in the same sort of spirit of blinkered optimism that one might begin a new venture every January 1st only for it to fizzle out by the second week of February. I endeavoured to start using social media more effectively to keep in touch with friends. I signed up to learn the piano (virtually) and I downloaded an app that would offer a daily spiritual reflection. I pinned up a running schedule on the noticeboard that would train me for a marathon.

Within a few weeks I had neglected the piano lessons, deleted the app and found myself spending so much time looking at nonsense videos of people falling off swing ropes or road rage incidents on social media that I gave up looking. The running has remained pretty consistent, give or take some time out due to injuries or illness.

Why do I set myself unrealistic goals? Perhaps it's something to do with wanting to reach beyond myself, to achieve beyond my previous capabilities. I think it was also partly a response to being in a lockdown and the fear of 'empty time', of not knowing when work was turning into leisure as there were no clear boundaries between home, work and school.

Now that we are looking towards things opening up once more there is a similar temptation to do too much. Just because we can doesn't mean we should. I think St James' church is being wise in spending time assessing where we are now before we spring too quickly into filling the calendar with a batch of activities. We've been considering what the past 12 months have felt like, taking stock of where we are now and looking ahead to where we might go from here. And all of that with God in mind.

I remain hopeful that we will celebrate, pray and meet together as these weeks progress. I especially look forward to those casual moments when we stop and talk to one another in an unplanned way. I've heard people say on a number of occasions how they miss those improvised moments of chat which only happen when we are free to be out and about.

These past 12 months have taught me to be hopeful but not unrealistic. I haven't learnt to play the piano, I haven't become spiritually charged and I still struggle with Facebook etc. But you can sponsor me when I run the London marathon in October!

All good wishes for a happy, healthy and safe summer.

Revd Steven Rothwell

Walking not running:

Congratulations to Eleanor Pippard who completed her million steps in a hundred days, with days to spare. It was the equivalent of walking from Cambridge to Inverness. (*see previous issue of Cross-piece*) This was the Arthur Rank hospice challenge. In looking at the web page I see that there were 267 fundraisers, and that £29,300 was raised, exceeding the target of £10,000.

Welcome and thank you

On Sunday 25th April the Annual Meeting of the Parishioners was held at 11am on Zoom following on from the Sunday service. As part of the business of the meeting five new members were elected to the Parochial Church Council: Jon Griffiths, Paul Cairns, Rachel Shirley, Jennie Brandon and Gordon West. We welcome them and value the contributions they will make to our church life. Hatty Harris was confirmed as our churchwarden, although we very much hope we will be able to find a second warden to assist her in due course, as Pam Butler, has stepped down from her warden's role.

Pam has put in faithful service over a long period of time, indeed has served as churchwarden for more years than any previous warden at St James, where it is usual practice for someone to hold the position for four years. In fact she has served for the past seven years, and was also warden for three years at an earlier time. Everyone connected with St James owes enormous gratitude to Pam for all she has done, as not only has she been a committed and

efficient churchwarden, she has gone far beyond the expected duties.

Revd Steve Rothwell spoke on behalf of us all as he expressed his gratitude. To summarise what he said (his actual words are in italics): Pam has been *consistent* and *caring* throughout. She *fills in* whenever necessary and *picks up details* of what needs to be done. She has amazing *connections around the community*. She has *chaired the fabric committee*, been *part of children's work*, *prepared rotas*, organised the *Bring-and-Buy and Coffee Mornings*, and the annual *pumpkin picnic*. He expressed everyone's *heartfelt gratitude*.

Pam replied that she valued the staunch support of many. In thanks for all she has done she has been sent flowers, a voucher is on the way and John Bartholomew has made her a replica of the St James cross that hangs at the east end of the sanctuary and also on the outside wall of the transept.

Pam handing out raffle prizes at the summer event in 2019: a big smile for the winner



Welcome to Minecraft Church!

Imagine going to sleep as usual one night, but waking up somewhere very different. Your bedroom has disappeared and you are standing in a desert, which appears to be made out of Lego. The square sun shines brightly on cuboid hills and valleys. You look down and see a flashing disco floor planted incongruously on the desert plain. In front of you is a wall with a number of notices pinned to it:

*Thou Shalt not Grief**

Thou Shalt be Kind

Thou Shalt Respect Other People's Ideas and Builds

To your right is a giant Cross with three beams of purple light shining from it. It's Lent so you suppose that makes sense. Suddenly you notice a blue arrow in the distance, pointing to a hole in the ground. When you get there you are invited to take a boat. So you jump in and row fast along a tunnel of ice. Before long you land and walk out into the daylight. In front of you is a city made of the same white rock as the surrounding desert. Looking up you catch a glimpse of the golden gates of a vast temple complex. Welcome to Jerusalem!

This is the world of Minecraft Church. Not a real world of course, but a virtual one created by a group of our church children using their computers. Minecraft is what's known as a 3D sandbox video game... because it's a bit like the sort of world building we all did at the beach when we were young. It's also the best-selling video game of all time. In 2020 it had 126 million monthly active users.

In the game players explore a Lego-like landscape. They find, mine and use raw materials to build houses, walls, tunnels, palaces — anything! They can decide to compete or cooperate. Our Minecraft Church world is a place of co-operation of course (hence the Rules pinned next to the disco floor). 'Griefing' is

Minecraft for destroying other players' builds: obviously we needed a Commandment to prevent that. The world is open all the time, but only those who are on the Access List can enter and play.

So, what's been happening in Minecraft Church? So far the 'congregation' has been pretty focused on building the sort of features that Jesus might have encountered, with some twists! There's a model of the Temple, based on the scale model in the Israel Museum in modern day Jerusalem. The boys who built it (Ben and Sandro) also built market stalls inside at which calves are sold and money is changed. Artistic touches include golden gates that open and shut, thanks to the use of a unique material called redstone. And a bunch of llamas has appeared unexpectedly.

There are two Mounts of Olives, and two Empty Tombs. One tomb, made by Emily B is set in a flower filled valley. When you enter you see the shelf on which Jesus's body once lay. Outside is a lamb, and an angel keeps watch. The other, made by Theo, is underneath a model of the Crucifixion, and has a redstone device to roll and unroll the stone. Tilly is making a gigantic ship: Noah's ark, moored in the sea far away.

What next? I'm hoping that the children will fix some times to build together. Maybe there'll be something new for Pentecost! In the early days of the project, when the children were being home schooled, we made a film of Jesus's journey into Jerusalem. I tried to share it so that others could get a glimpse of what's going on, but I still haven't worked out how to do that. Funnily enough, that's one of the best things about this. The children are all so much more skilled than I am. In fact I can hardly get my own avatar (RevAnneStrauss) to move, so they really are in charge.

In the future, it would be great to come together in the Minecraft world for worship! I've

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The temple, by Ben and Sandro

Palm Sunday



The empty tomb, by Emily B

been inspired by a curate in St Alban's Diocese called Kevin Collyer. He's a lot more techie than me...and he started his Minecraft Church with a virtual Christingle. You can read more about him here:

<https://pioneer.churchmissionsociety.org/2021/03/welcome-to-minecraft-church/>

Let me know if your child would like to

join and build. Also, if you're a Minecraft fan yourself, you could probably think of many ways to go further with this. Please get in touch: I need all the help and advice I can get!

Revd Anne Strauss

*Yes, adults, we do know that "grief" is a noun and the verb is "grieve", but this is Minecrafspeak.

Crosspiece – Circulation and Costs – a ten year history

At the end of 2010 I took over the distribution of our bi-monthly *Crosspiece* magazine from Jonathan Pinhey, who had been doing it since its beginning in 2003. At that time (2010), there were 90 subscribers, each paying £3.60 per annum (60p per single issue). There were 10 distributors, who delivered the magazine to subscribers' homes and collected the money once yearly in advance. Some copies were also given out at church and four were sent by mail. Now we have 6 distributors and more copies are handed out at church. The circulation has fallen to 66, including free copies, and 12 copies are mailed to more distant subscribers.

On top of this gradual decline in numbers, the pandemic hit us in March last year with a more acute problem. It has been much more difficult to collect money during the past year. Our distributors have not been able to collect cash on the doorstep, and we have not been meeting in church. For 2020 most deliverers had collected from their subscribers by March and the start of lockdown, and the receipts were only moderately less than the year before. This year however is a very different story: five people have paid £5 each so far, and we are very grateful to them. But for 2021 we need a new way to collect *Crosspiece* subscriptions.

Regular subscribers can pay by cash or cheque direct to Sue Wilson, church Treasurer, or for those who use online banking, by bank transfer (BACS) to the St James church a/c, (details are on page 2 of our stewardship form, which is on the St James website). It is still possible to pay cash direct to me, as a few people have done. The annual price of *Crosspiece* has not increased since 2014, and so the Editors would like to suggest that those who are able might like to make a donation of £5 for *Crosspiece* for the year 2021. It would be particularly appreciated if those of our congregation who normally read the magazine online would do the

same. In that case we should again be able to cover the printing costs of *Crosspiece*, as we did until about 2015.

We continue to give free copies of *Crosspiece* to newcomers, visitors, clergy, ordinands and our partner churches. Copies of recent issues are also normally available in the foyer rack in church for anyone to refer to and read. As we start to open up our building for a more normal pattern of worship, *Crosspiece* provides useful information about past and forthcoming events, and a "who's who" of church officers, as well as interesting articles. Previous issues can be read on the St James website.

As the original distributors of *Crosspiece* dropped out, I recruited new ones where possible, but also started giving out more copies at church on Sundays. This is fine for regular members of the congregation, but there used to be subscribers living mainly in the Godwin Way/ Gunhild Way area, whose contact with St James had been largely through social activities (such as the Friendship Club and 1980 Club), or whose children had attended Scout, Cub or Brownie groups attached to St James. I used to deliver to some of them myself, and many seemed very aged and infirm, but they clearly valued this connection with St James. This cohort has now disappeared, and we have lost our contacts in this substantial area of our parish.

This is perhaps inevitable as the age profile of the area changes, but have these folk been replaced by those who now attend the Pumpkin Picnic or Kids Matter? If so, this younger generation, who access their information online, are unlikely to become regular readers or subscribers to *Crosspiece*.

Any comments and ideas to the Editors please.

Mary Calladine

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Reflection on Psalm 23: sermon by the Very Revd Peter Judd, Sunday April 24th

“I am the good shepherd.” Where did Jesus get the inspiration for this? Well, Psalm 23 must be a factor. Although I have taken countless funerals with the 23rd psalm we are all so familiar with, I never really paid it much attention until I spotted a little book *The Lord is My Shepherd* by a Rabbi called Harold Kushner. With him as guide let’s look again at Psalm 23.

“The Lord is my Shepherd” – to say that is already to have taken the leap of faith – it is to acknowledge that we are not alone in an indifferent universe but that we are precious and cared about and cared for.

The next line is: **“I shall not want.”** Really, is that so? A very ill woman interrupted the vicar at her bedside reading the 23rd Psalm: “But, vicar, I do have wants. I want to get better. I want to see my grandchildren.” We all have wants, yearnings and aspirations. These are not going to go away but the sentence implies that we won’t lack support. With the good shepherd with us we will get through.

Some have been lucky enough to have a lockdown buddy at home to help them get through this pandemic. Others are alone but, hopefully, they have found other networks of support. But with God and others we will get through. We are not alone.

“He makes me to lie down in green pastures.” One of the discoveries of lockdown has been the green pastures: Cherry Hinton Park coming into leaf again, the birdsong in the garden and in the streets, the surprising silence of early lockdown days and how refreshing it was – and a slower pace. Was all that rushing around really beneficial?

“He leads me beside the still waters” Water is life-giving and potentially death-dealing. Water out of control is a terrible force. Under control – still waters – it restores my soul. One of you was saying that you don’t know how

the doctors, nurses and staff at hospital keep going, being so generous with their care. The psalm is telling us that the good shepherd knows what we need – we need still water so we can face and fight another day.

“He guides me in straight paths for His name’s sake.” The Old Testament has 10 commandments, Alcoholics Anonymous has 12 steps, Joe Wicks has “work hard, have fun, be kind.” There are plenty of wolves out there, even in lockdown. They try to get us with scams, hoax phone calls, dangerous apps, you name it.

But we are not left without guidance, the psalms, the parables, the beatitudes, the universal keys of kindness, compassion and community, see us through the jungle. As the old ordination service puts it so nicely: “We are to seek for Christ’s sheep dispersed abroad in this naughty world.”

Then the tone of the psalm shifts to darkness. **“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death”.** You probably watched the funeral (or some of it) of Prince Phillip, beautiful and evocative in its pared down simplicity but then the figure of the Queen, small and alone – and needing help to get through the valley of the shadow of death as we all do and with that help **we fear no evil.** Death is part of life – inevitable and painful – but, as the Queen said, “Grief is the price we pay for love.”

“Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” It’s the shepherd’s staff or crook – symbol of care and kindness that gets us through the dark days. I’ve been reading the Reverend Richard Coles’ book *The Madness of Grief* written after the death of his partner and how he got through those days. But what about the rod? The rod of punishment? This is a symbol of justice. Is the universe indifferent to “the evil that men do” or is there a grain of justice

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embedded in the universe? A psychiatrist once said: "To me the hope of love is better than the certainty of justice." Yes, life is possible without justice but it is infinitely more dangerous, precarious and tragic. We need the staff – the care – and also the rod – the justice. And where there are both, **we are comforted**.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies." We all make mistakes, misjudge people, get relationships wrong, receive hurts, give hurt, struggle and fail. Imagine a supper where all our differences would be healed (maybe Harry and William had such a supper.) God wants to heal us and heal our differences and our wounds. **He anoints our heads with oil** like the sovereign at the coronation because each of us is special.

As the horse says in the beautiful children's book *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the*

Horse "that we are sharing with our grandchildren: "Always remember that you matter, you're important and you're loved and you bring to the world things that no-one else can."

And we can be thankful. When we discover gratitude that's when we discover **"that my cup runneth over"**. And then we find that **"goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life"** as day follows night.

And **"I shall dwell in the House of the Lord for ever"**. God will call us home. As the Countess of Wessex said of the death of Prince Phillip: "It was just as if someone had taken his hand and off he went."

Amen

A Tribute to Ethel Bentley

29.5.27 – 19.3.21



Ethel with Margaret and Ray Revell

Ethel died peacefully at Home Close Residential Home in Fulbourn on March 19th this year. She and her husband Jim had been stalwarts of St James' Church for more than fifty years. While not among the founding fathers of our church, when it first opened in 1955, they were in that second group,

joining in the 1960s, when the congregation and church were growing and maturing.

Jim and Ethel were born and brought up in Bingley, Yorkshire. They moved to Cambridge from Lincoln in early 1966 to a newly built house at the southern end of Almoners Avenue. Their children Alan, then aged 8, and Anne, aged 5 years, were growing up and starting at new schools; and the back gardens, previously farmland, were undeveloped. Life at home was busy, but from the beginning the Bentley family involved themselves with St James' Church and the local community. Jim took the Sunday School, and later became the church Treasurer, and on retirement from that position, the Auditor of accounts. Ethel took on the task of laundering surplices, and was an enthusiastic contributor to church sales, coffee mornings and Christmas and Spring Fairs. She also led intercessions at the Eucharist, where they were a regular presence and they both served on the sidesmen's rota.

Jo Knight, next-door-neighbour, has contributed this memory of Ethel: "We moved to Cam-

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bridge on 1 April 1966, the day after a General Election. Our three sons were close in age to Alan and Anne. Our next-door-neighbours, Jim and Ethel, immediately introduced themselves. They had moved into this new housing development a few weeks previously. Ethel's words, which I have never forgotten, were, "I have made an Irish stew, and there is plenty for all of us, so when you feel ready for a break just come round". What a wonderful welcome! We remained the best of friends, sharing many happy times together right up to her death."

With the children growing up and Jim commuting to London by train daily, Ethel worked in the Accounts Department at Sindall's builders, and she and Jo volunteered once weekly at Ida Darwin Hospital in the Occupational Therapy department. Ethel involved herself in the local community, joining a cookery club and running it for years with Jo and others. She joined the Queen Edith's branch of the Townswomen's Guild, and was its Treasurer for ten years. On retirement, Ethel joined U3A Cambridge, and was particularly involved with the gardening group. She was also one of a trio who catered for U3A social events, such as the regular New Year and Summer parties.

Ethel loved her garden and was justly proud of it. In the early days, when the children were small, the garden had been the place for football, badminton and other children's activities, but when the children left home, Ethel and her neighbour, Jo, created a combined garden to rival that of any state-ly home. "We never planned it that way", said Jo. "It just happened that we liked and planted similar shrubs and plants". The boundary dividing the two properties was a soft line of shrubs, with a gap at the end of the gardens, so that each had easy access to the adjacent garden. The impression from the patios and rear windows of each house was of a single double-width entity. The gardens sloped downhill from the houses, and each patio had a curving row of steps leading down to the lawns, fringed with gently curving flower borders and shrubs. The absence of straight lines and rectangles of lawn added to the sense of space. In July 2002, the Cambridge Evening News featured the "gardening neighbours" in a central double-page spread; "twice the benefit for half the work" as they put it.

Sadly, Ethel's efforts were cruelly curtailed when, in a fall on her garden steps, she fractured

first her patella and then later broke two further bones in her leg. She never recovered fully, and developed a neuropathy which further affected her balance and mobility. Eventually she had to have a below-knee amputation of her right leg.

But Ethel was indomitable and would never give in. She continued in her regular place serving behind the cake and preserves stall at the monthly church coffee mornings, leading intercessions in church, and as Treasurer of the Townswomen's Guild. The "click-clack" of her sticks going up the church nave to the altar rail on Sunday mornings exemplified her dogged determination. She did not want to submit to the priest bringing the bread and wine to her seat. She was unfailingly cheerful and optimistic, and made light of her problems. She always insisted that she and Jim were fine, lucky to have so much help with good friends and neighbours, and were managing well.

But she could also be exasperating with her constant flow of chatter and refusal to admit defeat. Finally, in summer 2018, Anne persuaded her parents to accept places at Home Close Residential Home in Fulbourn, quite close to her own home, where Ethel could receive the skilled personal care that she needed, and Jim could relax and enjoy a well-earned rest. They were both happy there and never regretted their move. Ethel led a full, varied and fulfilling life, sustained by her Christian faith, an example to us all of a life well lived.

Mary Calladine

PS: I am very grateful to Jo Knight for her reminiscences and the photograph below. There will be a memorial service later this year.



Ethel and Jim Bentley with the Knights

A good feed

the brain does not create
consciousness
which can then survive death
the universe is divine conscious-
ness
of which ours is a fragment
an inspiration of God's breath

perhaps identity is God
is that what orders experience?
the "I" that perceives
the channel of belief
the root of reason –
the wind is freezing

the comforting breast of the far hill
fertile, growing our four-hourly
feed
slowly turns light to energy
the bread of life from the Father's
seed

Linda Appleby

A Message for our Times

Our grand-daughter manages to combine her work as a classroom assistant with a busy career as a performing artist. She loves singing and the theatre and this is perhaps as well as her husband is a theatre director, running the North-West Theatre Arts Company in Manchester. They work with young people, running a stage school at weekends and in the holidays, and also working with theatre in education. They produce shows that are taken into schools, and many are aligned with the curriculum.

They have managed to keep going in some form during the pandemic, and recently we grandparents were invited to view a streamed performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. The young people involved had often been members of the theatre since they were very young and some of those performing in the play were hoping to go on to drama school. The play itself was cut to 75 minutes,

but the words were all Shakespeare's. We found it a very moving experience for a number of reasons.

The publicity for the play states: "*Shakespeare's classic story of conflict, family feuds, hatred, sacrifice, and above all love, is transformed in this contemporary production. The Montagues are an affluent black family and major financial supporters of Manchester City Football Club. By contrast, the Capulets are a white family heavily involved in Manchester United Football Club. Both families have been feuding for years.*" Well, no need to go on; we all know the story. Good old Shakespeare. How relevant he is for all time. How wonderful that the plot can be transposed to our times and even to a specific locality. The young people of Manchester get his message.

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Safeguarding officer:

Jill Bradley 07971 013645
email: happybeadsuk@gmail.com

Director of Music: Position vacant

The Music Group:

Grae Worster on mgw1@cam.ac.uk and 846295

Church & Community Activities

NB: these may still be suspended.

Choir practice:

Mondays 6.30 –7.30pm

Meditation group: Fridays 1.30-2.00

Beavers (6-8 yrs):

16thcmbridgebeavers@gmail.com

Cubs (8-11 yrs) at QE School:

Stephen Harrison 07548 765421

Scouts (10½—14) at QE School:

16thcambridgescouts@gmail.com

There were so many things we loved about this production. The young people spoke their lines in their Manchester accents but with real meaning and understanding. They dressed like young people today: Juliet with her nose stud and ripped jeans, Romeo in his Thomas Cook holidays t-shirt. His friends had their Man City shirts and the lads would argue together while kicking a football. The sets were very simple, and the backcloth outside the stadium bore the slogan "Show racism the red card".

Some exchanges between characters were text messages or phone calls (still using Shakespeare's words), and Juliet's father spoke to Paris, the fellow he intended she would marry via Skype. The Chief of Police issued his message to the feuding rivals "Upon pain of death, all men depart", which somehow did not seem an archaic way of telling them all to clear off home.

There were two incidents that moved us most. When the feuding youths argue, they get out

their knives and Tybalt is killed. It really did seem like an all too common incident we have heard reported on the news. The other scene was when Juliet's father tells her she is going to marry Paris the next day whether she likes it or not. When she refuses and frantically pleads in vain not to have to go through with it, tempers flare and he hits his daughter and then her mother.

This was a production for the young people of our times, not a dull reading of an old text round the class with little understanding. We are very proud of what they achieved. The footnote to this is that our grand-daughter's husband was born in Manchester into a Punjabi Sikh family and we know of violent racist threats he has had to face throughout his life. Knife crime, domestic abuse, racism: Shakespeare, you do not cease to be relevant.

Jennifer Day

Calendar of events: May, June and July 2021

It is still difficult to publish many fixed dates, but we can give an indication of church life continuing at home and in the community. Please consult the weekly sheet for updates.

As we continue to work within the government roadmap out of lockdown, we are now **opening up the church for Sunday 8 o'clock Holy Communion**. Our 10 o'clock Sunday services will continue via Zoom for the time being.

Morning Prayer will be held via Zoom at 8.45 am on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Mid-week Eucharist is on Wednesday, at 10.15 am, **in church**.

Bible reading and Compline. Please join us on Wednesday, at 8 pm, via Zoom.

The church will be open on Monday between 10 am and 12 noon for individual quiet prayer and will remain open on Wednesday after the Eucharist, also until 12 noon. You are very welcome to come in to church but please respect social distancing rules of 2 metres, wear a mask, and use hand sanitiser upon entering and leaving the church. Please do not touch Bibles and other literature.

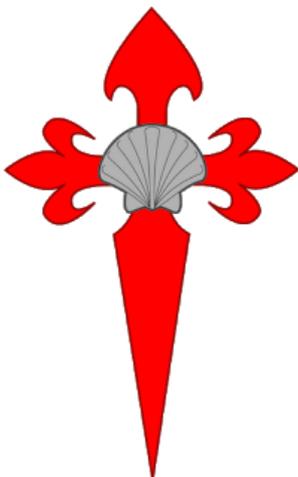
Dates for your diary:

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 9th—15th May: If you were in church during this time you may have seen that some envelopes were available for donations. St James has always supported Christian Aid week and in the past organised street collections. Please do not forget this charity, especially at a time of great need because of the pandemic. You can still donate following this link:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

PENTECOST: Sunday May 21

INDUCTION AND COLLATION OF REVD STEVEN ROTHWELL AS THE VICAR OF ST JAMES: June 21: What this means is that he will no longer be just Priest-in-Charge, but Vicar. This will make no visible difference to his present duties and position, except that it confirms his legal status. We await further details.



PATRONAL FESTIVAL: St James Day (25 July) falls this year on a Sunday. However, as the school holidays will have already begun, it is proposed to mark this on the previous Sunday. Details to follow.