

THE

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

ST. ANDREW'S HERALD

St. Andrew's Church Chippenham with St. Nicholas' Tytherton Lucas



Photo: Marc Allum

Rod & Sue's
Farewell

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updates

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No. 53
May 2023

THE ST. ANDREW'S HERALD



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

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Open Mon, Tue, Wed and Fri
Morning for general enquiries
and Monday 6pm-6:30pm for
Wedding and Christenings
enquiries

To get in touch or book the Hall,
please email us at kingalfredhall@gmail.com

Photo: Gavin Macrae

"The Lord is your Keeper, Your Defence at Your Right Hand"

I take encouragement from St Paul who, when saying farewell to the Christians at Ephesus, broke down in tears as he knelt by the water's edge, embracing his sisters and brothers in the faith before embarking on the ship that would take him away. I think that gives me permission to be a bit emotional as I write this!

Sue and I have been overwhelmed by the messages of goodwill and support that we have received from so many people. But we feel that it is us who owe the greater debt of thanks, because Chippenham has been such a lovely place to live, we have made so many friends and felt so encouraged and affirmed by you all.

But for me personally, the greatest privilege has been to minister in two churches that I have genuinely looked forward to being in every single Sunday. And beautiful though both buildings are, it is the people in them that have made ministry such a joy! If I've had any success, it is because you folk have responded with an unwavering "Yes!" to the vision of an inclusive, joyful and compassionate church which I have always wanted to share.

Nothing made this cleared to me than lockdown. When Sue and I went alone into St Andrew's every Sunday to ensure that worship took place in our sacred space, we were in tears at not being able to throw open the doors and welcome everyone in. Yet we felt that so many folk were actually there anyway! Sitting at dining tables with bread and a glass, a cross and a candle, we were together in a way that most people don't get the chance to experience. That is the power of sacrament.

Then we went a bit bonkers with outdoor communion and "Walk-through Carols" – but it was all accepted with that positive openness that makes St Andrew's and St Nick's so special.

Being together matters.

It matters so much that it's worth finding mildly insane ways of making it happen!

And what I want to say as a farewell message is that it matters so much that you must keep making it happen after I'm gone. Being together (and I mean of course, being of one mind in Christ) is the good news we have – and it is (and always has been) God who sustains you in sharing it, not me!

So, with God's loving arms enfolding you, with the care of Anton, Eryl, four new Parish Worship Leaders, fine church wardens and countless other hugely dedicated people to sustain you, and in time, a new parish priest to love you and challenge you, you are in the best of hands!

Thank you, with all my heart.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

Rod xx



Farewell to Rod & Sue

Sadly the day of Rod & Sue's farewell arrived all too quickly from the time Rod announced his retirement last autumn. On 30th April 2023, the church was full with 180 people which included our own congregation, St Nicholas Tytherton Lucas, friends, family, and even friends from one of Rod's parishes in Gloucester where he had been priest.

The Eucharist Service prepared by Rod was very special with hymns of meaningful words; led by our organist Paul Fortune, the choir sang beautifully with a special setting of "And Can it Be" by Dan Forrest Revd Anton and Eryl took various parts of the service and Margaret Harrison gave the special intercessory prayers. The passing of the Peace took place towards the end of the service and was a lengthy one as Rod wanted to exchange the Peace with as many people as possible.

Jenny Norris, Churchwarden, then gave a speech of thanks to Rod (and to Sue) for all they had been to us throughout their nearly 9 years at St Andrew's and presented gifts to them both. Over the past few weeks generous donations had been given for Rod's leaving gift and a cheque for £3000 (which would go towards an Electric Bicycle for Rod to keep fit!!) – a framed pictures of St Andrew's Church, and printed plaque listing many of Rod's attributory characteristics listed at the recent Visionary Day led by Anton, and flowers and a gift token for Sue.



Following coffee and some of Rod's infamous punch (we shall miss the many occasions where we have enjoyed partaking – especially nice hot punch on a cold winter's day!) everyone made their way over to the Hall for a shared lunch. Under the extensive preparation and planning by Dorryta Hayward and with the help of the Social Events Committee members and other volunteers, the King Alfred Hall had been set up to seat 130 people. There was a long centre buffet table for a wonderful selection of luncheon items, together with a super selection of some mouth-watering desserts. The St Andrew's Singers provided some musical entertainment.

It was a very emotional day for everyone. Rod has been such a caring, loving priest to us all and it is going to be very empty without him. He knows he goes with every good wish and much love for a long, happy and well deserved retirement.

Ros Harford

*With thanks to **Wendy Reeves** and **Anna Cheung** for the photos*





Chippenham Town Council Civic Awards April 2023

Many congratulations to two members of our congregation, **Dorryya Hayward** and **Sylvia Gibson**, who have been given Chippenham Civic Awards. These will be formally presented in July and are very well deserved indeed!

Dorryta Hayward is recognised for her committed service and long-standing Chairperson to Chippenham Flower Club and its role within community; Dorryta is in charge of organising Club meetings and a varied program of demonstrators, workshops and outings for the Club's members. Over the years, using her expertise, she has used her skills to fundraise for various local causes including the Multiple Sclerosis Society, St Andrew's Church Roof Fund, The Spire Fund, The National Osteoporosis Society, Julia's House, Rise Trust, the Chippenham Men's Shed and Springboard Chippenham and works with local uniformed groups such as the Chippenham Guides to produce Mother's Day gifts.

Sylvia Gibson is a long-standing member of the local community who has been Chippenham Mayor twice, and has been involved in many community groups and roles over the years, from the Rotary, to U3A to the Twinning Association to name a few. For example, Sylvia has dedicated 25 years to enhancing the links between Chippenham and its twin towns La Fleche and Friedberg, in addition to fundraising for the association and promoting the French and German Languages amongst local primary and secondary schools.

Whitsunday Then and Now

My first Whitsunday, as a parish clergyman was not only a long time ago it was also worlds away. The parish was in the Don Valley between Sheffield and Rotherham. The steel works dominated the area. It was densely populated with rows of nineteenth century housing. The plumbing was a cold water tap in the house and toilets lined up in the yard outside. Of the 16,000 population most would say they were Church of England, but only a tiny handful attended church regularly.

However, on Whitsunday we went to the people. They came out in their new summer clothes or the best they could afford. Led by the choir and followed by members of the congregation we processed in turn to every street in the parish. We had a cart for me to stand on to preach about the meaning of Whitsunday.

Nowadays the context is so different. A more secularised society expects that religion will be private, a matter of individual choice. The choice is seen as being between atheism, agnosticism and religion, an intellectual question which is seen as decided by whether we can prove God exists or not. This avoids a basic issue, the question of who we are.

Modern society is increasingly inclined to assume that we are totally independent self-sufficient individuals. However, the reality is that we are essentially relational beings. From birth we will not survive or grow and become persons without other persons to relate to. Discovering that there is a transcendent reality we call God whom we can come to know and trust is what matters most.

When I stood on a cart in Sheffield to preach to those who gathered I have no recollection of what I said. However, I am clear about what I would want to say today. Whitsuntide is about the gift of the Holy Spirit to sustain our trusting relationship with God. It is largely ignored by society. Unlike Christmas and Easter it is largely lost in bank holidays and half terms. Nonetheless it is the life blood of the Christian Church, the medium of our spirituality, the sustainer of faithful discipleships. Because we are relational beings, and because relationships are built upon trust between persons the Holy Spirit is vital to us as the enabler of our relationships with each other.

Some Christians focus their spirituality narrowly on Jesus, but Jesus himself spoke of his ascension to the Father and his gift of another counsellor or comforter to follow him. The Holy Spirit is the still small voice speaking to us, the sound of sheer silence, the source of new insights which come to us especially in moments when we listen and set aside the noise of the world for a moment.

The Holy Spirit is concerned to develop our personhood to the full. That is why we describe the work of the Holy Spirit in relational terms like, counselling, guiding, enabling, empowering, strengthening, comforting.

Bryan Pettifer

The following piece of prose was written by Mike in 1972 just before I met him, it is the last chapter from a work of his inner most thoughts, feelings and dreams. This was read during his funeral service on 14th April. For once I will let Mike have the last word.

Jen Corton

A Twist of Sand by **Michael Corton**, 1972

Upon this beach the wet sand is drinking in the salty wash.

I know not why I am here again, or why I taste this sunlight sea-view; in addition, I know not why I feel all the feelings that I have compiled in my past, all the people, places and the like who have filled my head to come to life again from the mysterious depths of memory.

But I find a kind of solitude here, where the waves die near me to make me glad that I am living.

Far up higher reaches of the beach is the fine dry sand. In my hands it just runs away ... like life. It cuts a little ... well, sometimes living can hurt. I clench some of the sand in my fist and it teams out of every conceivable exit, a strange kind of cycle. Life is also like the sands of time in a glass timer; it runs out and seems no more ..., at least to our living eyes.

I soon realise how weak I am in the strength of the almighty light. One could feel so hopelessly lost in the midnight blue shadows. One could feel so incredibly small, as if a single grain of sand on an endless beach. Nobody could honestly be lonely until comparing themselves with a grain of sand on a beach or a tear in the ocean.

Edwin Brock wrote 'Five ways to kill a man, here are the last few lines ...

Simpler, Direct and much more neat is to see that He is the living somewhere in the middle of the twentieth century, and leave him there.

He is right ... with all the people in this world, we could so easily be lost. I have nightmares of the world population standing shoulder to shoulder, but sweet dreams of the world population making love ... when I look at the nightmare and the sweet dream more closely I realise that the latter (sweet dream) would lead to the first (nightmare) anyway!!

And we live a day at a time and look at our pasts with amazement and wonder, and say ...

"Where are the lost tribes?" to our sad reflections in the sea. If we just become a little more optimistic we could think along the lines of my final words ...

Our feelings should become our realities, for only with our 'peace' should we make our wings and only with our 'laughter' should we cry.

Michael Corton

Mothers' Union Update

On 5th April I attended St. Bartholomew's Church, Corsham Mothers' Union's powerful production of 'I Witness', an Easter play consisting of a series of ten monologues by inanimate objects which witnessed Christ's final days. It was both moving and thought provoking.

Denise, our branch leader, led our April meeting entitled 'An Easter Reflection'. After a light hearted quiz relating to flowers connected to Easter, we shared recollections of Easters past with memories including village donkey-led processions, making palm crosses and baking hot cross buns on Good Friday. Looking forward to Trinity Sunday, we then listened to the hymn, 'Holy, Holy, Holy' and examined its origin and message.

Sue Haslop





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North Wiltshire Symphony Orchestra

The North Wiltshire Symphony Orchestra will give its next concert in St. Andrew's church on **Saturday June 10th at 7.30 p.m.**

Tickets are £12 adult; £1 accompanied children.

Available from: www.wegotickets.com/northwiltsochestra; Neeld Community Hall & Arts Centre 01249 446699 or their website; at the door and from orchestra members.

***Looking back** We are delighted that so many came to support our last concert, focussed on film music. This is always popular, but the sell out audience was a joy. We do hope that you will continue to support us and do please book ahead because some people had to be turned away last time.*

***June Concert** After our big Mahler venture and night at the movies we return to the traditional format of: Overture, Concerto and Symphony for an evening of Romantic German music of the late 19th century. All the pieces are full of memorable tunes, many based on the folk music of the time*

***Concerto** The highlight of the evening will be Max Bruch's concerto for violin and viola. We are very fortunate to have the renowned **Philip Dukes** as viola soloist. He is one of the world's leading players with a stellar career over the last 30 years performing solos in major venues throughout Europe. **Sara Stagg** will join him on violin. She leads not only our orchestra but Bath Concertino, the Argyle orchestra and others. Her recent concerto performances have been of works by Arnold, Vivaldi and Mozart. Bruch is only known for a few works and this work is less often played than his ever popular 1st violin concerto, but deserves a much wider audience.*

***Symphony** Brahms took over 14 years before he was satisfied with his first symphony because he was so self critical and he felt the shadow of Beethoven towering over him. The work is in four movements in which the key is constant variation and development of simple musical themes. After a rapid first movement the second has an “autumnal mood” with lots of finely spun and silken melodies. Brahms asked that the third “be played a little bit fast and graciously”. The final movement makes use of an Alpine melody that he had noted years before. He also quotes from Beethoven’s Ode to Joy and ends with the victorious sound of exultant celebration.*

***Overture** Weber’s opera *Der Freischutz* is a typical story of romantic love. The young forester is faced with a trial by shooting if he is to win his bride. But there are magic bullets and a wolf’s glen to complicate his way. The overture includes themes from all the main scenes of the opera with particular roles for the horns.*

***Future concert** November 18 programme t.b.c.*

The NWSO acknowledges with thanks the permission of the Rector to perform at St. Andrew’s church and the continuing help of the Church Wardens and other staff in staging our concerts.

Refreshments will be available in the interval in the usual way. Do enjoy them and thus support WellBoring



Parish Noticeboard

Services at St. Nicholas' Church, Tytherton Lucas

14th May	<i>Evensong</i>	6.30pm
28th May	<i>Holy Communion</i>	9am (<i>note new time</i>)

We are now in vacancy, awaiting the appointment of a new Parish Priest. Please check service times in the Church notice board or contact me for updates. Services dates and times may have to change during this period.

Sheila Laurence

01249 740687

100 Club Draw for last month

£100: 80 £40: 81 £25: 86

Margaret Harrison

A successful quarter peal was rung...

Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association
St Andrew's Chippenham, Wiltshire

Sunday, 30 April 2023 in 45m

1260 Doubles (1p/2m)

60 Stedman, 720 Grandsire, 480 Plain Bob

1 Jane Ridgwell	2 Carole Simpson
3 Sara Bye	4 Richard Iles
5 Andrew K Woolley (C)	6 Morley Bray

Rung following a farewell eucharist and luncheon to thank Rod Key for his nine years as Parish Priest at St Andrews. With best wishes to both Rod and Sue for their retirement.

EVENTS AT ST ANDREW'S

Friday 26 – Monday 29 May

Chippenham Folk Festival

Saturday 27 May All Day

All Day Coffee Shop (in King Alfred Hall)

Saturday 17 June 7.30pm

The Village Singers - Summer Concert

*The programme will include: A selection of Bruckner Motets
Magnificat (attrib. Durante) - Pergolesi Beatus Vir - Monteverdi's
Vespers and Les Miserables, a Musical Medley*

Tickets: £10 - U16s go free

www.villagesingers.co.uk

ALL DAY COFFEE SHOP AT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH
FOR THE FOLK FESTIVAL

ON SAT 27th MAY 2023 10 AM – 4 PM

Tea, Coffee, Cakes,
Light Lunches (Soup, Salads)

(The All day Coffee Shop is to raise funds for St. Andrew's Church)

Volunteers required to serve tea/coffee/refreshments: If you can help, please see **Dorryta** (Tel. 653322) & add your name to the list at the back of church.

Who's Who?

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Sue Wood

Giving Officer

Gavin Macrae 659922

Electoral Roll Officer

Ros Harford 812190

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Prayer Circle

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100 Club

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When You Pray

Let your door stand open to receive Him, unlock your soul to Him, offer Him a welcome in your mind, and then you will see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the joy of grace. Throw wide the gate of your heart, stand before the sun of the everlasting light.



St Ambrose
(339-397)

A Final Word

Sitting here in Singapore, I have been so touched by the photos and stories sent to me from Rod and Sue's farewell. I truly wish I was able to have joined, but still felt as if I was "there" – I can feel the warmth, kindness and joy present, as well as the emotion of saying goodbye.

When Rod first sent me his final opening piece for this magazine, I was particularly struck by this passage: *"If I've had any success, it is because you folk have responded with an unwavering "Yes!" to **the vision of an inclusive, joyful and compassionate church** which I have always wanted to share."* If I had to describe Rod and his preaching in three words, I think inclusive, joyful and compassionate would be perfect. We will all have many examples from our own interactions with Rod when he displayed such characteristics.

Overall, it is the JOYFUL church which I have found the most compelling. I will never forget the joyful final hymn for the Easter 2018 service which was when I truly "got" what Easter was all about – the resurrection wasn't merely a 'triumph' over death, but also a source of great happiness as it gives us hope for our own salvation. This is something to be truly joyful for! And likewise one of the most emotional services with Rod, was that glorious summer's day in 2020 when we were all able to come together once again following months of isolation and lockdown. That was a moment of true joy shared by everybody in the church family.

So thank you Rod for sharing your wonderful – and very Christian – vision of church with us. It has touched all of our hearts and brought a lot of joy.

Remy Osman – Editor

Church Services

St. Andrew's Parish Church, Chippenham with St. Nicolas' Tytherton Lucas

St Andrew's Church Chippenham

9am Eucharist

Alternating between traditional and contemporary language, this is a said service.

10.30am Eucharist

The main Parish Eucharist with singing and congregational hymns. Led by our robed choir on the 1st, 3rd and some 5th Sundays and the singing group on 2nd and 4th Sundays.

Evensong

6:30pm Second Sunday of the Month

St Nicholas' Tytherton Lucas

Evening Service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

3.30pm during the winter months October to March

6.30pm during the summer months April to September.

Please see inside on page 16 for more details.